



**MARGARET
PRIEST**

Margaret Priest

WHAT MAKES A ROOM A ROOM
Recent Paintings and Drawings

Opens Saturday, September 26 and
continues until October 14, 1987

*Marianne
Friedland Gallery*

Cover:
REMEMBERANCE OF THINGS PAST THAT NEVER WERE
1987, oil on canvas
12 x 12 in.

122 Scollard Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5R 1G2
Telephone (416) 961-4900



THE NEW INSTITUTION
1987, oil on canvas
12 x 12 in.

Margaret Priest

"Two or three things that I know about her"

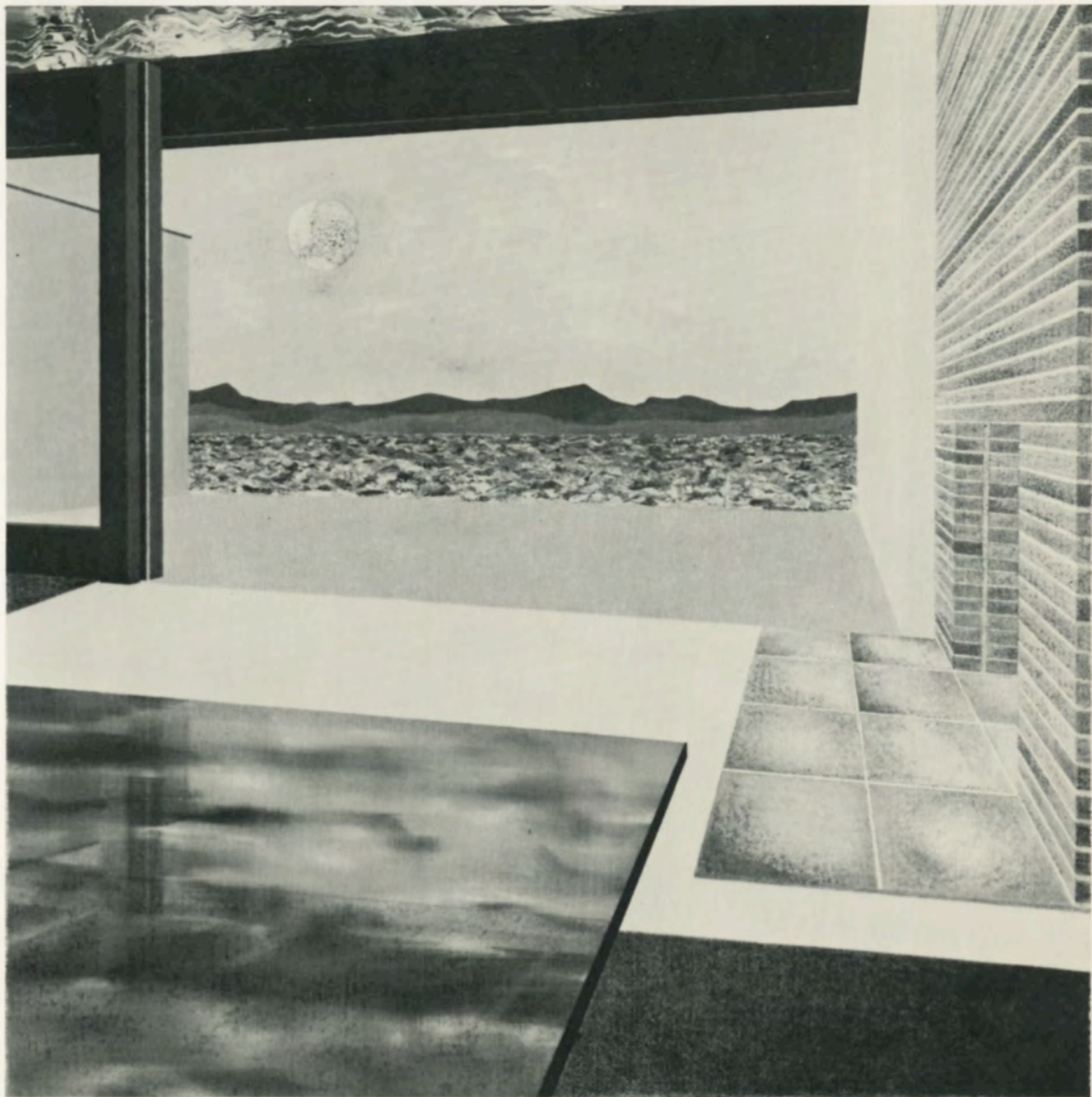
Among the paintings of Toronto by contemporary artists, I discovered "City scape"; an exhilarating image of the fast growing city collaged in front of a serene room inspired by the interiors of Mies van der Rohe. The artist of "City scape" was Margaret Priest. In the sixties she was a post graduate student at the Royal College of Art in London. At that time the College was the British centre of dialogue on the relationship of modern art to popular culture. In this climate her work evolved to bridge architecture and painting.

At a time when our environment is understood as being increasingly significant, the work of Margaret Priest helps us to challenge the ways in which it is commonly perceived. In fact, one can say that she stretches the limits of our visual sense in order to reveal the essential underlying qualities of architectonic space.

The architecture of Richard Neutra, Adolf Loos and Eileen Gray is used by Priest as a vast reservoir of ideas full of feelings and emotion. In her drawings and paintings she offers to us realistic views of these architected rooms. The clarity and precision of the image is reminiscent of the eighteenth century landscape painters Claude Lorrain, Hubert Robert and Canaletto.

Motivating her work is a simple but fundamental question: what makes a room a room? In a world saturated with senseless information, her quest, which takes the form of a decantation through a series of sieves, must be applauded. This search has always been present in Priest's work. Her analytical drawings borrow fastidiously from the body of Modern architecture. The work of the Modern masters are investigated and revealed to us in her two dimensional, flat work. The planes of the pictures come into play with the planes of the actual architectural spaces. Decomposition generated by the Moderns is evidently a privileged sourcebook for an analytical artist.

Continued



THE DARK SIDE OF THE MOON
1987, oil on canvas
12 x 12 in.

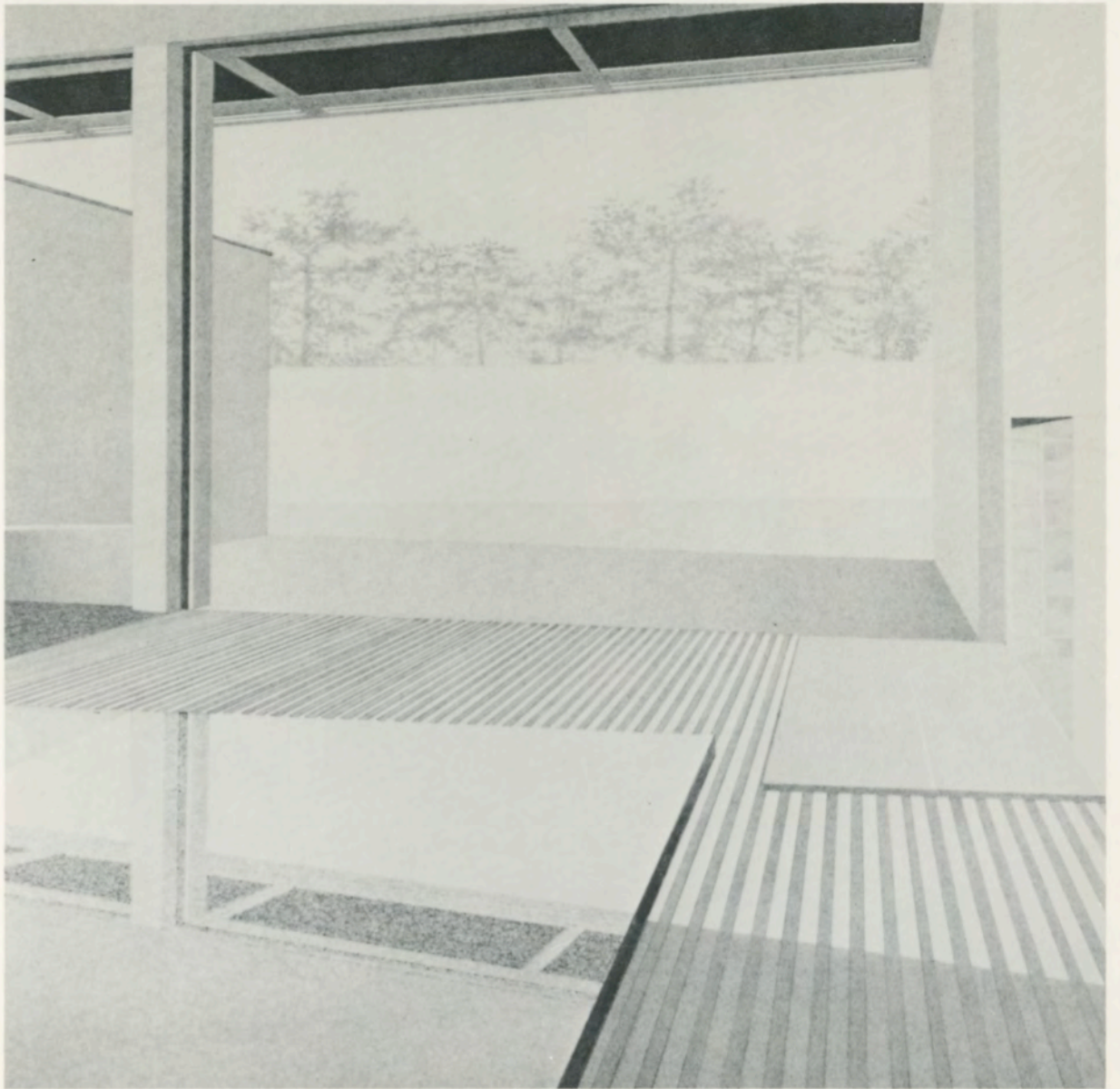
In her search for the essence of a room her work takes the following course. She searches for the sublime in the relationship of the room with the landscape. She transcends the organic through an element like a column or a cactus, which she describes as a "modern built plant". She carefully studies and illustrates the materials and texture of each surface. She evokes the identity of the possible room's occupant by suggesting a sense of craftsmanship. She introduces a piece of art to enhance the self-referential nature of the work.

The rooms she portrays are described in one of two media: oil paintings on canvas or pencil drawings on handmade paper, both set rhetorically in burnished gold frames. In her scenes every edge is represented so as to enable even, in the artist's words, "our shoulder blades to see". The lyrical realism which pervades each room allows us to imagine the sound that our footsteps would make, or the scent that the breeze might bring through the window. As a visual artist she made a clear conscious theoretical decision not to break with the long continuum of drawing and painting. She places herself beyond the contingencies of spoken or written polemics, to allow her work to stand free and declare through the graphite and paint her message. The language that she uses to imply her commentary is that of drawing and painting. Here the ideas are evoked by forms.

In addition to the way in which Margaret Priest helps us to see the spaces built or dreamt by the Modern masters, she manipulates the rooms, totally transforming them. In fact she literally overturns every part of the scene. I believe that the sum of these transformations brings about a return to the original idea. Through the pencil her hand lifts the viewer to fields of her reimagined spaces.

Ultimately her works transport us to a world beyond realism. While tacitly expressing each material element Margaret Priest has revealed the true sense of a room. This is a life enhancing experience. She suggests to us that this new rapport with the environment "makes oneself more of a person". Indeed with intellect, emotions, and feelings her rereading of some of the richest moments of Modern architecture will change not only our perception or our spatial heritage but also of every room in our daily life.

Marc Baraness
July 1987



WHAT MAKES A ROOM A ROOM, # 3
1986, Drawing
Image size: 8 x 8 in.
Paper size: 22 x 30 in.

MARGARET PRIEST

BORN:

Tyringham, England, 1944
Living in Toronto since 1976

AWARDS:

Silver Medal, Royal College of Art, London, England 1970
Arts Council of Great Britain Award, 1970
Arts Council of Ontario Drawings Award, 1981

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

1985, 1987 Marianne Friedland Gallery, Toronto
1983 Theo Waddington Inc., Montreal
1982 Theo Waddington & Company Inc., New York
1981 Theo Waddington Galleries, Toronto
1980 Theo Waddington Gallery, London, England
1976 Felicity Samuel Gallery, London, England
1974, 1970 Arnolfini Gallery Bristol, England
1974 Garage Art Limited, London, England

SELECTED PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

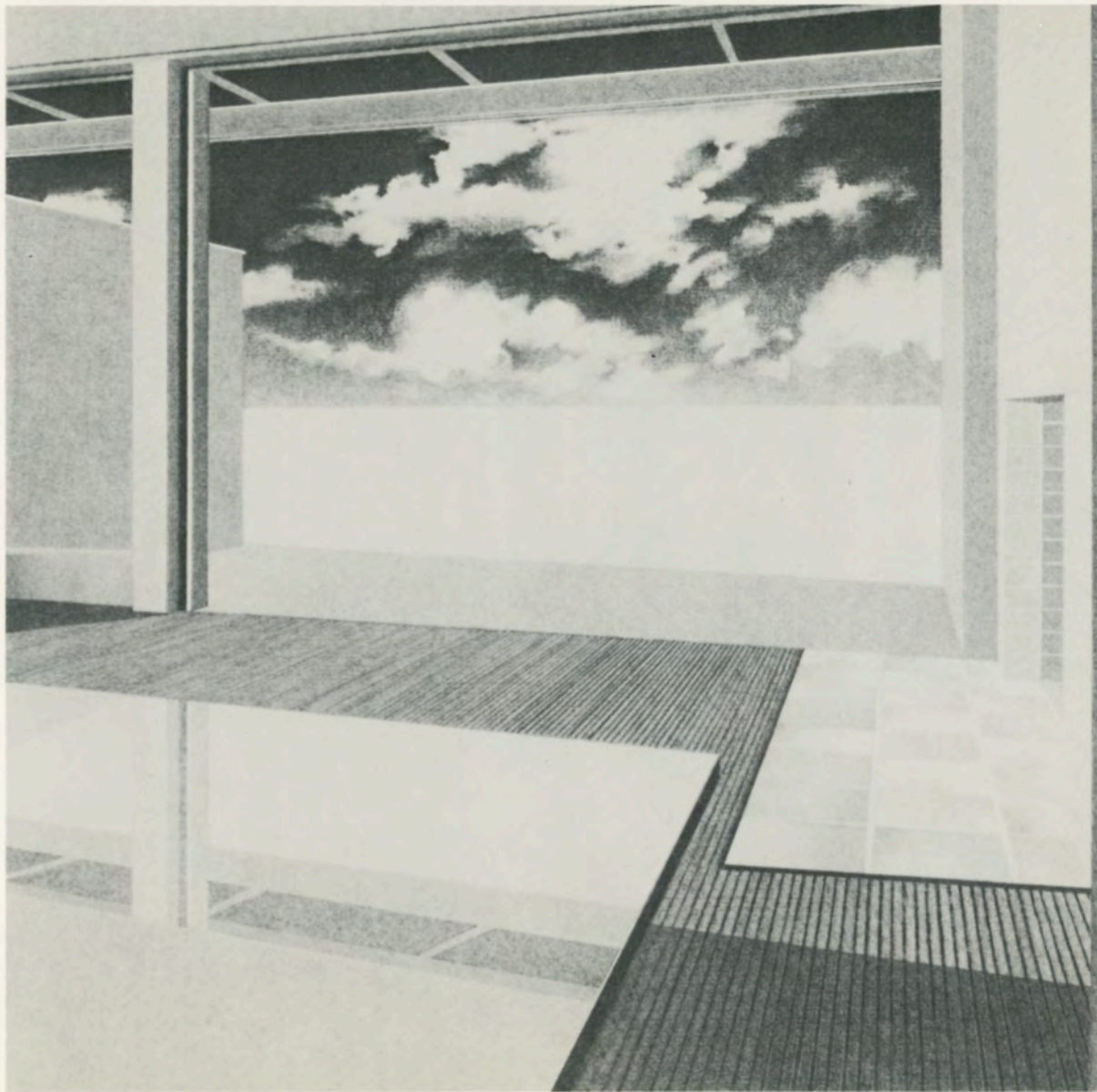
Art Gallery of Ontario
City of Toronto
Arts Council of Great Britain
British Council
Tate Gallery, London, England
Dallas County Museum, Texas
Richard Brown Baker Collection, New York
Art Gallery of Brant, Ontario
Art Gallery of Hamilton, Ontario
Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut
Confederation Centre Art Gallery, Charlottetown, P. E. I.
Canada Council Art Bank

SELECTED CORPORATE COLLECTIONS

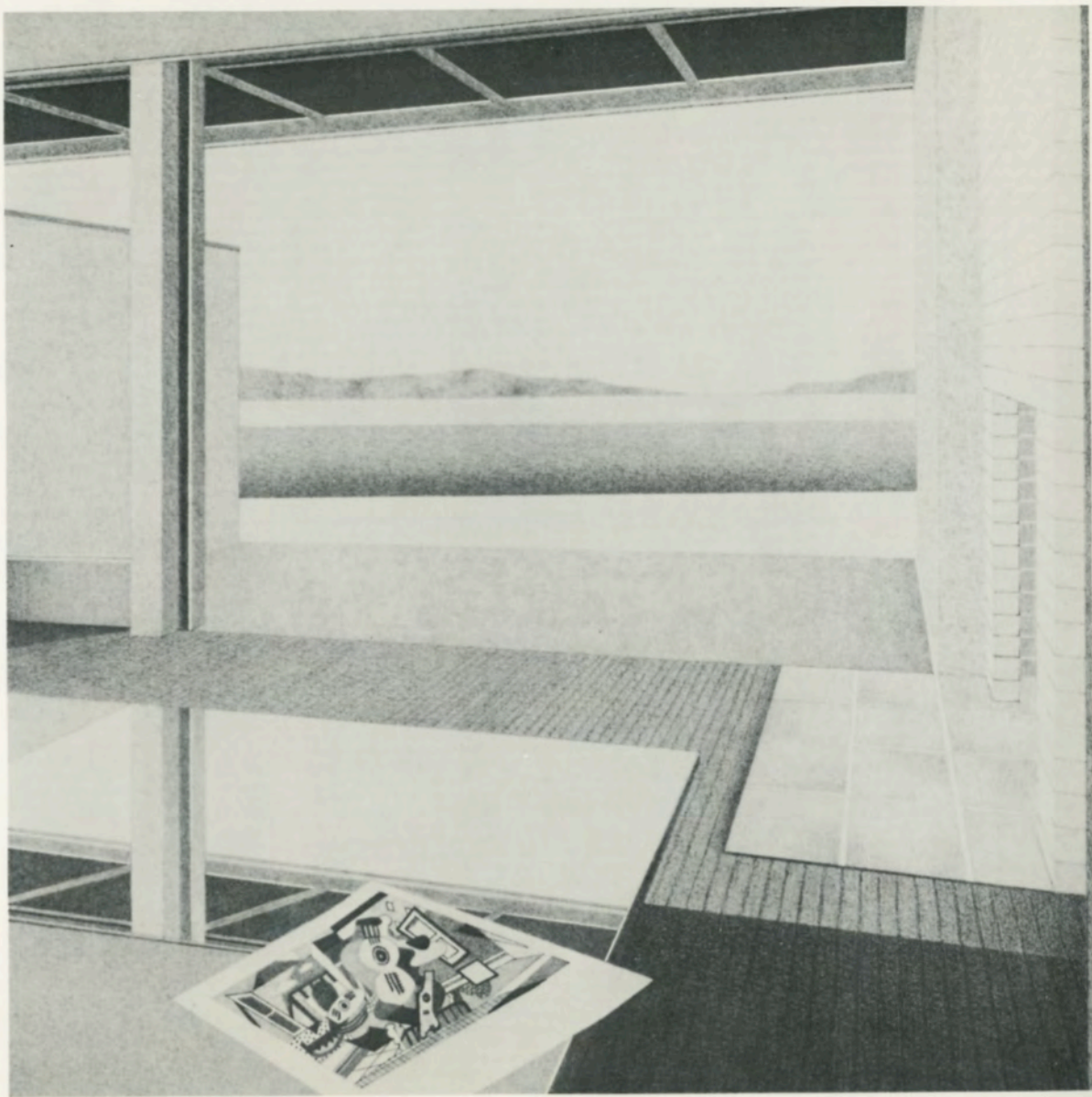
Coopers & Lybrand, Toronto
Goodman & Goodman, Toronto
Osler, Hoskin & Harcourt, Toronto
Pinetree Investment Corporation, Toronto
Woodlawn Design & Development, Toronto
Touche Ross & Co., Toronto
Xerox Canada, Toronto
Toronto Dominion Bank, Toronto
Trilon Financial Corporation, Toronto

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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James Purdie, THE GLOBE & MAIL, 6 August 1977
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Volume XXI/1, 1977
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WHAT MAKES A ROOM A ROOM, # 2
1986, Drawing
Image size: 8 x 8 in.
Paper size: 22 x 30 in.



WHAT MAKES A ROOM A ROOM, #1
1986, Drawing
Image size: 8 x 8 in.
Paper size: 22 x 30 in.



WHAT MAKES A ROOM A ROOM, #4
1986, Drawing
Image size: 8 x 8 in.
Paper size: 22 x 30 in.