



Scot Bullick is a Calgary based artist.  
He currently works at his home studio and at the Alberta College of Art and Design.

This is a Stride Gallery brochure written by Justin Waddell who has been chosen by the artists because of his particular interest in the project. These publications provide regular opportunities for diverse writers to publish work that furthers critical discourse about contemporary art.

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the Stride Gallery

# MONSTER SCOT BULLICK

Exhibition

September 8 to October 7, 2006

OPENING: Friday, September 8, at 8 pm

FIRST THURSDAY: October 5, open till 7 pm

## Things that go bump in the night.

What is Scot Bullick's work like? Well, he makes monsters. An obvious thing might be to assume, "like Frankenstein?" Sort of, well, not quite. No, not really. It isn't that simple. I mean here is a guy that makes work for himself in almost every sense of the term, and the work never seems to end

As the Director of Stride, I was a little scared of the show. When introduced to the monsters I could not see how everything was related. I saw piles of drawings, a few sculptures, and almost accidentally, a little devil made of felt which stood guard at the bottom of the stairs on the way out to Scot's studio. The board members I was with during the studio visit insisted that this is what they wanted to show at the gallery; this work; and who was I to argue?

I didn't argue, in fact I volunteered to write the exhibition text. It seemed like a challenge both for myself as well as Scot as we didn't want to get lost in any possible high/low rhetoric surrounding his practice. Although oddly enough, when we would meet we would often talk about what we didn't want to say about the work. "Well this is not this, and it is not that... and it certainly isn't this either." Scot had not provided an



artist statement and rarely spoke about how his work could be situated within a contemporary context. The simple answer he gave and often repeated was, "I made it and that's enough for me." It seemed at that point that he was being a bit of a monster.

There is an apparent level of general discomfort within each of the monsters. Many are awkward looking and when gathered together they generate a genuine sense of unease with one another's presence. They are not cute and yet they are not scary. They seem uncomfortable in their own skin and misplaced in their environments. In many of the drawings the monsters have brightly coloured t-shirts on as they stand or pose for the portraits slightly hunched-over and with their arms drooping to their sides. Their expression seems lost. The layers of ink, crayon, and paint build up a texture that is too rough, too detailed, to be cute. "Cute" just doesn't seem to fit work which involves such a history of layered marks and worked surfaces.



him in his pocket for days and even weeks while he "had nothing else to do." Compelled to do *something*, he carved one side of the stone into the profile of a face and the other side into a different and contradicting profile. "It is a two-faced monster head," he insisted.



Some of the monsters were carved from stone. Bullick picked up the stones while vacationing on the coast and began to slowly work away at them with a penknife. He carried them with

three-dimensional doodles than monsters with contour lines drawn in space and occasionally a void filled with cement, fabric, or plaster. During my last visit they were freshly painted bright orange and bright red.



Bullick's reluctance to situate his practice challenged me to find other ways to access the work. Where was it going? Looking for an answer, I was reminded by a friend of a quote by Al Hansen; "wrong materials used in the wrong way and often at the wrong time, this is a simple definition of the avant-garde." Although I am not claiming that Scot Bullick's work is leading the avant-garde into new territory, I am not disallowing it either. Scot Bullick draws, paints, sculpts, carves, and shoots videos. He builds, moulds, bends, layers, and distorts. His practice is compulsive and laborious and in that there is a wild and indiscriminate need to make things. All of his work is related to one another along a single common theme: monsters. With that theme he works and he keeps working. And maybe, this is where it is all going. All through the night Scot works on his monsters and the next day, he is back at it.

Justin Waddell, 2006

