

KASIA BYTNEROWICZ | PRESS RELEASE

January 15, 2005 – An exhibit of ten paintings by Kasia Bytnerowicz opens on Monday, February 14th at the Solomon R. Baker Library at Bentley College. It is the artist's first solo show, and there will be an opening reception on Thursday, 17 February from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. The exhibit will run until Thursday, 17 March.

Two large multi-panel compositions and eight small, detailed paintings represent her latest work in her primary medium of oil on canvas. They are all part of an ongoing project entitled Terra Nova, which depicts fallen leaves, petals, stems, and flowers strewn across a cracked terrain of sidewalk. Each large, multi-panel piece portrays one season of a four-season cycle; summer and autumn are represented here. The smaller paintings present intimate, detailed views of the subject.

To recreate the texture of a concrete sidewalk, Bytnerowicz mixes sand into the gesso before applying it to the canvas. The surface is painted with many small dots of different color. For a contrasting smooth surface on which to paint the leaves, she then applies modeling paste. The leaves are painted on top of the paste in a more traditional manner with multiple glazes of glossy oil paint.

The sidewalk is a ubiquitous feature of the increasingly urban worldwide landscape. Homogeneous slabs of concrete represent the human effort to control our environment through mastering the forces of nature. However, such control is tenuous at its strongest, as even these durable monuments are digested back into wilderness. Civilization is like the giant Antaeus, a son of Gaia who was invincible as long as he remained in physical contact with her. Herakles held Antaeus aloft, severing him from the source of his power, and strangled him to death. The cracks in the pavement and the fallen leaves and petals reflect how all living things and their creations share the same fate.

Kasia Bytnerowicz was born in Warsaw, Poland. She received her B.A. in Studio Art from Williams College. She now lives in Revere, Massachusetts.