

**Norman Felix Inc.**

*Art Gallery & Management*

# ARTIST helena frei

## biography

Helena Frei is an artist, writer, and freelance curator with an eye for detail and a profound curiosity for the products of the human mind and hand. A lifelong city dweller who has made her home in places as diverse as Prague, Zurich, Paris, London, Turin and Montreal, she was lucky enough to spend most childhood summers running wild in the country. Summers spent in the Bohemian woodlands, the Laurentian lakes and the west coast of the Bay of Fundy gave her an understanding that city and country are adjacent points on the world-wheel – deeply an intimately interconnected rather than polar opposites.

Her passion for creating is another constant thread in her life. Starting from doll clothes she cobbled together at the age of four, she has explored many highways and byways of artistic expression ranging from miniature embroideries to bronze casting. The gift of a camera on her eleventh birthday provided her with the means to record fleeting images that catch her eye, and ever since she had used cameras to capture the ideas and images that underpin her work.

After an erratic education during which Helena averaged one school per year, she graduated from McGill University with a BA in philosophy and psychology and took up computer programming as a day job. Unexpectedly, this mundane occupation became the key to integrating the many elements of her art practice into her current computer-enhanced mix of photo/digital collages, mixed media sculptures, textile-based design and writing.

Late in the twentieth century, Helena enrolled at the Ontario College of Art and Design and spent four years developing her skills. While at OCAD she curated a show at Harbourfront's York Gallery, made liberal use of the college's studios and library, and collected awards in poetry, plastics and sculpture. In 2002 she graduated with honours in Sculpture and Installation. Since then she has continued to make art, write and present her work for the public to enjoy.



In 2006, Helena approached the Gladstone Hotel with a proposal to curate a show of textile work. The very successful Hand-Face-Body was the result, followed by the equally successful BIG FIBRE/little fibre. With the upcoming Hard Twist – New Twist, her collaboration with the Gladstone is in its fourth year.



## artist statement

Graffiti, garbage trucks, street furniture and discarded chewing gum share the stage with plant life in unexpected places in my work. I capture downtown Toronto from a pedestrian's-eye view, casting the debris from the daily skirmishes with entropy that are so much a part of urban existence as the players in the ongoing drama of everyday life.

[www.normanfelix.com](http://www.normanfelix.com)

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