

# Yellow, Red, Blue, Gold and Silver

↳ EXHIBITION: The elegant art of Carole Desmarais (Coradi)

Gusta van Dobbenburgh  
Curator

When you see her stroll around campus, during a coffee break from her work at the library, with her inseparable companions; her husband Martin and her little Chi Hua Hua dog Amo, you would say that she grew up in an oriental environment, or at least lived in faraway oriental places at some point in her life. Japanese-type slippers, her hair-do, the facial make up and even her soft-spoken manner is reminiscent of that part of the world.

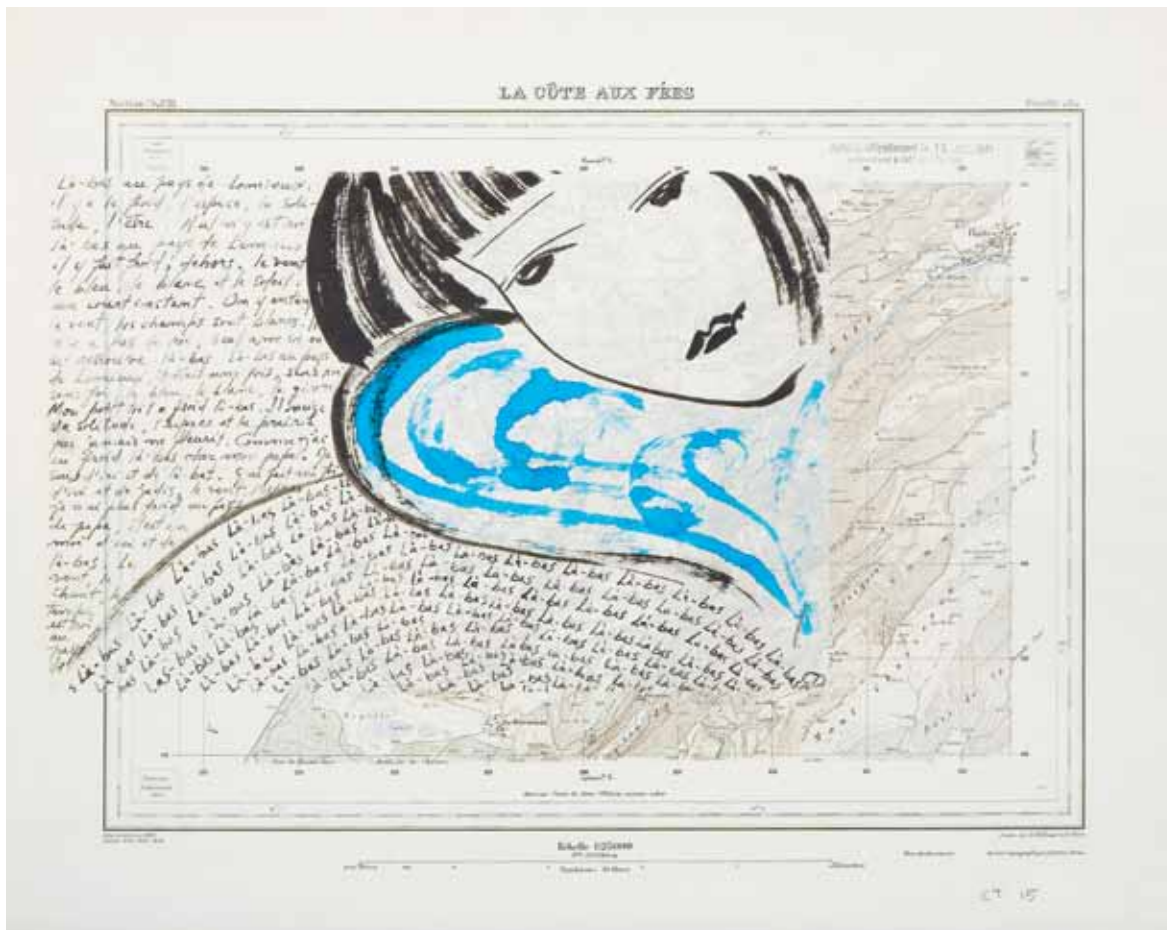
But Carole Desmarais never chose deliberately for an oriental style in her life or in her work. «It went by itself» she tends to say. And she could not have come from a place further remote from the oriental style that her current work radiates. Canadian-born Carole comes from a family of artists, which stimulated and influenced her artistic career greatly. She always drew as a child, began to take lessons in oil painting early on, and had the opportunity at a young age to take classes at the Ecole de Beaux Arts in Montreal. She also took private classes in oil painting in Canada.

As an adult she moved to Winterthur, Switzerland, where she began to take classes in Chinese ink drawing, from a teacher who had been to China. As we talk about her experiences as an art student she makes a statement that I can fully relate to: «every time I felt a teacher began to influence me too much with his or her own style, I left.»

Progressing in her own work, she began to teach others, mostly adults, but one of the youngest students she once had was thirteen years old, who became inspired and later on pursued an artistic career in photography.

When it comes to her current work, she mainly uses acrylic paint, the medium that appeals most to her right now. Every painting she sets up, she starts out with putting down vertical lines. An interesting aspect: she uses one size paint brush for all the lines.

Carole usually paints women and children. «It's very funny» she laughs, «even when I paint a



male figure it comes out in feminine lines.» When I ask her if she is inspired by religion she answers: «The feminine shapes may make a Madonna-like impression, and they are often blue (the classic color for the biblical Maria figure), but my art is not religion-inspired.

The women in my work are usually leaning forward, as if they are carrying a heavy load, for I find that women, no matter where they live, seem to carry the main burden of worries and problems of the world around with them, and suffer most.» In their suffering, Carole's women are elegant and serene, as are the color combinations in her work. Her pieces have an iconic flavor to them, and speak to us in calm images, whether surrounded by an abundance of transparent circles, or imbedded in waves of golden and silver lines. The other colors are very often the primary ones: yellow, red, and blue.

«These days I tend to put more

of those circles in my work then I used to; they almost look like soap bubbles.»

Artists always keep experimenting and changing, and part of this exhibit will also be art on printed paper. Carole tells me that she used pages from books that would otherwise have been thrown out. «At the campus library where I work they were cleaning out books and theses for which there was no use any longer. I have always loved to work with paper, and asked if I could get some of those books. I add figures, drawings, lines, and calligraphy to what I see and read; whatever associations I have with them comes out. I have even experimented with musical scores and maps», she explains. Carole has exhibited throughout Switzerland and of course the Lemman area.

As we began our conversation for this article on a beautiful late summer's morning, she told me

she also loves fashion and fabrics; especially fabrics with an interesting texture. The road to design is wide open, and who knows whether she'll create some beautiful women's fashion at some point as well, so we could wear her art, with our heads up high.

Enjoy the show! ☰

Carole Desmarais (Coradi)  
«Sur Impressions»  
November 17 -  
December 19, 2008  
Opening: Thursday,  
November 20, 18h-20h  
Room ELA 010  
Monday through Friday  
8h45 - 17h00