



Reign of Intent, 2002

has so far constructed independently. The landscape of *Spoiled in Rubies* is more fully realized than in any other work in **This Pale Mouth**. Van Geest depicts spindly trees silhouetted against a rolling red landscape and a wave of kisses pour forth in a sea of blues and greens on the far right. This painting contains traces of the *Pink Carrots* palette in the cresting hills and of the riot of colour in *Field*. The tree trunks carve deep scars into the gentle pink and violet background. The long shadows of the trees bleed red rivers across the foreground to which clusters of kisses are drawn like blood cells to a wound. Here, the literalness of the broken landscape paired with the lip prints is Van Geest's strongest metaphor for healing.

In each of the nine paintings in the exhibition, Van Geest has married grand concepts to intimate experience. Through the patterning of kisses, stoic abstraction becomes logical, unknown landscape becomes familiar, and the politics of the body become personal. Van Geest's kisses are irresistible, and her paintings are complex and quirky. **This Pale Mouth** betrays the labour of the artist, the emotional fabric of the work, and the decisive moment when an artist makes her mark. But mostly, **This Pale Mouth** is poignant and timeless. After all, a kiss is a kiss is a kiss – so sweet.



COVER:

**Spoiled in Rubies**, 2002

Purchased with funds raised by the Art Centre Volunteers and with the financial support of the Canada Council for the Arts Acquisition Assistance Program, 2002  
Macdonald Stewart Art Centre Collection

ABOVE:

**Gems n' Roses** (detail), 2002

**PEARL VAN GEEST** is a graduate of the Ontario College of Art & Design, University of Toronto, and University of Guelph. Recent solo exhibition venues include **This Pale Mouth** at the Macdonald

Stewart Art Centre, Guelph and **Fool for Love** at BUSgallery, Toronto.

**Conductive Currents**, a recent duo exhibition at the Wellington County Museum and Archives, featured collaborative works by Van Geest and Guelph artist Carolyn Riddell. Previous exhibition venues include the Art Gallery of Mississauga, and Toronto-based galleries Tableau Vivant, Nora Vaughn,

Propellor, and DeLeon White Gallery. Van Geest is represented by the Katherine Mulherin Gallery, Toronto. **This Pale Mouth** is Van Geest's first solo exhibition in a public gallery and coincides with the Guelph Arts Festival. Van Geest currently lives and works in Guelph.