

whitespace
Artist Meet & Greet @ Retro Suites Hotel: Thursday, April 3, 5 – 6.30 p.m.
Official Launch of International Exhibition @ Thames Art Gallery: Thursday, April 3, 7 – 9 p.m

The Thames Art Gallery, along with exhibition partner Retro Suites Hotel in Chatham, are excited to present *whitespace*, a multimedia exhibition that explores both public and private space: how they are perceived, interpreted, and intersect.

Elke Utermoehlen and Martin Slawig (from artistic organization “black-hole factory” in Berlin, Germany) have created a “distant and imaginary” view of Chatham-Kent, based on data gathered through an internet data-mining program. Echoing the theme of the exhibition, the video will be presented in two locations – the Thames Art Gallery and at the *Retro Suites Hotel* in downtown Chatham.

Quebec artist Genevieve Chevalier’s installation incorporates elements of French Canadian furniture that pay homage to Chatham-Kent’s francophone heritage. She combines history, the act of collecting, and contemporary culture.

London-based artist Derek McLarty’s paintings challenge the “fancy and bourgeois” themes often associated with visual art, by providing a common thread of everyday objects amongst his artworks. His representation of anonymous and empty school rooms and restaurants reach into the memories of the viewer setting the stage for presentation of this exhibition.

“We are thrilled with the international flavour of this exhibition”, says Carl Lavoy, Director of the Thames Art Gallery. “blackhole factory in particular are in high demand around the world, having exhibited their site specific work across Europe, North America and South America. That they have chosen Chatham-Kent as one of their venues for their interesting and entertaining work is a real vote of confidence in our community. Especially since they base their work on the community they are exhibiting in – in this instance they are using archival local Chatham newspapers.”

“The Retro Suites Hotel is excited to be featuring black-hole factory’s work,” says Ron Laroche, the hotel’s Marketing Director. “The groups’ similar interests are striking. Both have been successful in marrying different elements to create spaces/pieces that evoke emotion. The Retro Suites Hotel has combined historic buildings with modern décor to create a one-of-kind property. By the same token, black-hole factory has been able to push the boundaries of artistic expression through the blending of traditional and cutting-edge technologies. We look forward to working alongside Elke, Martin & the Thames Art Gallery. “

There are two special events being held in honour of this exciting international exhibition on **Thursday, April 3. An Artist Meet & Greet will take place at the Retro Suites Hotel**, (in the All Shook Up suite) 2 King Street West in downtown Chatham from 5 – 6.30 p.m. Following that, the **Opening Reception for whitespace** will be held at the Thames Art Gallery **from 7 – 9 p.m.** All European and Canadian artists involved with both exhibitions will be in attendance at both events. There will be talks by the artists, delectable h’ors d’oeuvres from the William Street Café, and live jazz music to enjoy. The details for the latest instalment of the Thames Art Gallery Community Arts Initiatives: Cut it Out, will also be announced that evening. Admission to all events is free and everyone is welcome to attend.

whitespace will open on Thursday, April 3 and run until May 4, 2008. The Thames Art Gallery is open 7 days a week, 1 – 5 p.m. Admission is free and everyone is welcome