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meeting point

introduction

The Doris McCarthy Gallery and the Kenderdine Art Gallery are pleased to present *meeting point*, curated by Earl Miller. The exhibition presents work by artist-duos, whose collaborations are intrinsic to their practice, or where the concept of pairing generated meaning—art as a site and context for social and political engagement. Looking back to Nicolas Bourriaud and his writings on Relational Aesthetics, *meeting point* offers an updated and refined examination of social art practices. The exhibition's set parameters are the intimacy of pairing and moments of contact, a considered framework that allows for afar-reaching implications. *Meeting point* casts light on the ambivalent side of intimacy—Hanson and Sonnenberg are collaborators, but also liken their closeness to a series of hockey fights; Hansen's *Letter to Home* invites the viewer to the solitary and at times melancholic act of typing (an activity predating computers where one cannot press 'send,' for instant receipt of the message); **Hamilton's** *Hugs and Kisses* denotes affection, but also resignation toward loss of life; and Balem's staging of portraits of state leaders as they appear on their national currencies arranged into moments of quiet intimacy, blurs the lines between private life and the grandness of international policies, relations and trade.

the exhibited work

Anitra Hamilton is a romantic ironist who deflates beauty, romance and friendship by not-so-subtly revealing a powerful underbelly of violence. She seduces the viewer into being mesmerized by objects' appealing surface appearance and meaning, and then surprises with a dramatic comedown. For instance, in *Hugs and Kisses* (1998-2006) **Hamilton** sculpted the image of an "XO" sign-off with Remembrance Day poppies and toy soldiers, making it seem as if this note is a goodbye that could be permanent—a wish of good riddance in the face of death. In *Blue Balls* (1999), she glued a mosaic of robin and starling eggshells over a pair of cannonballs. Not only does this piece indicate how people gloss over or romanticize violence and all things military, but it also serves as a hilarious visual pun that plays on the slang expression for sexual frustration that is the piece's title.



Earl Miller. *Meeting Point* catalogue, Doris McCarthy Gallery, 2009, pp. 24-5, 45, 51