



ARTIST

Pat Bacon

TITLE

Untitled, from the series 'The Bloom is Off the Rose'

DATE

1993

DIMENSIONS

17 in H x 21 in W

MEDIUM

Mixed Media

CATALOGUE NUMBER

1993.009

CURRENT LOCATION

2432-2B

PAT BACON

BORN

1949

BIRTHPLACE

Rochester, NY

GENDER

Female

CITIZENSHIP

United States

CULTURAL HERITAGE

European-American

LIGHT WORK RELATIONSHIP

Artist-in-Residence, 1993

LIGHT WORK PUBLICATIONS

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ESSAYS

We turn experience into knowledge through our ability to process complex bits of information. In many cases We turn experience into knowledge through our ability to process complex bits of information. In many cases the complex information we receive is distilled to headlines, slogans, and sound bytes. We have the option of reading the rest of the story, finding out what our friends think, staying up late to watch CNN, doing research in the library, or even wading through hearings on Capitol Hill on CSPAN. In most cases we just don't have the time to get very far past the headlines and are forced to rely on our imagination and common sense to bring the experiences of the rest of the world back home in a manageable package. Pat Bacon took this manageable approach to information when she participated in our Artist-in-Residence program in February 1993. Prior to her residency she had heard a media commentator suggest that 'the bloom is off the rose' when referring to the rock star Madonna. During the first week of her residency as she was formulating her plans for her work she discovered a large formal rose garden a few blocks from Light Work. The hundreds of rose bushes in the garden were trussed and tied to shelter them from the Central New York winter. With Valentine's Day only a few weeks away and the comment about Madonna fresh in her mind, Bacon had located the theme of her work for the month. As in her previous collage work, Bacon brought together images from a variety of sources and experimented with unconventional techniques to produce new work centered around the image and symbol of the rose. In the image to the right the diptych at the center of the collage reduces a colorful arrangement of cut roses to a bleak and contrasting black-and white-Xerox. By placing the diptych on a torn scrap of wallpaper designed with a faint rose motif and scattering real rose petals across the face of the image, Bacon constructs a marvelous tension that pulls the symbol of the rose between our desire to preserve beauty and the inevitability of its' disappearance. In the collage on the following pages the bloom of the rose has disappeared altogether. Arbors that arch over walkways of the silent garden are rendered in the dead tones of a commercially produced brownline print. Like the heaving and settling of the frozen ground, Bacon has torn the print and patched it back together again. Bacon's determined manipulation of the picture echoes the unseen presence of the gardener who wrapped the roses for protection. By making her presence an important part of the picture through her manipulations, Bacon encourages us to think about the image as a process rather than a product. The process of experience that she triggers is our knowledge of anticipation that, come Spring, the roses will bloom in abundance to grace our table and mark our occasions of special importance year after year. Pat Bacon lives in Rochester, NY. Jeffrey Hoone (c)1993