

MONTREAL
Angela Grauerholz
 MUSÉE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN

Angela Grauerholz's photographs are rooted in uncertainty and displacement. As this first museum solo show indicated, the viewer is never quite sure where a shot was taken. In *The Library* (1992), two men talk in a book-crammed room; in *The Conversation* (1994), two anonymous men are engrossed in a discussion; and in *Disappearance* (1994), an elderly woman in a garden walks away from us. These photographs could have been taken anywhere in Europe or North America. The German-born, Montreal-based photographer gives us no ready visual clues to anchor the image in a particular place. Her strategy works particularly well as a visual metaphor for the psychic rootlessness of the immigrant.

Grauerholz also obscures the element of time in her work. Many of her photographs are drenched in the sepia tones that were popular at the turn of the century. *The Leap* (1992), an image of a woman running out of a forest, was part of the artist's much-praised exhibition at Documenta IX in 1992. It seems to come straight from the 19th century. And



Angela Grauerholz, *The Conversation*, 1994,
 Cibachrome print, 47½" x 71¼".

Musée d'art contemporain.

Draped Foot (1993), a close-up of a woman's bare foot, her leg swathed in cloth, is downright biblical in feeling.

Grauerholz uses soft focus in all her shots, and often viewers must change position in front of her images to find the work's focal point—yet another way of suggesting the psychic dislocation of a recent arrival. It is her ability to produce photographs that can be read on many levels that makes Grauerholz's work so intelligent and evocative.

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