

Signs of the times

Street signs shouldn't just be about parking regulations and tow-away zones, according to photographer Paul Litherland. He thinks signs should also say something about our society. He's using parking-sign look-a-likes to showcase his new art collection, *Hesitation*.

Litherland's traffic-sign photos are installed on St. Laurent Boulevard, all the way from Prince Arthur to St-Viateur. They don't tell you where to park or how fast to go; instead they are comments on societal conflicts with themes ranging from homophobia to institutional insensitivity. They offer a message unlike any other sign on the street.

"Almost all signs are advertising or instructions," Litherland explained. "My signs are explorations of personal interactions, and uncertainty and interactions.

"I am asking, what would the world look like without any fear?"

Litherland's installation came to life with the help of gallery B-32, which promotes artists who aren't necessarily commercially driven. He got a permit from the city to display his art on the street.

"I want art to be accessible to passers-by," he said.

"I made them small like parking signs because when they're big, they start to look like Gap ads."

Litherland, teaches at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, says he hasn't thought about selling his traffic-sign photos.

To view Litherland's installation, just stroll up St. Laurent, night or day— the street lamps light them nicely in the evening. Just take that stroll soon; the signs come down June 1.

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