

# PLEASE CIRCULATE

**Re: Touching you. Every day. Everywhere. Queer Culture.**

**WHO?** Last week most staff and residents at the Banff Centre received a text piece **TOUCHING YOU. EVERY DAY. EVERYWHERE. QUEER CULTURE.** It was created by **Average Good Looks**, a collaborative group of Winnipeg visual artists currently in residence at the Banff Centre, as part of a larger campaign in Calgary and Winnipeg.

**WHAT?** **Average Good Looks** creates positive portrayals of gays and lesbians for exhibit in the public domain, primarily on outdoor billboards or electronic pixelboards. Their work to date includes:

**Homophobia is killing us.** (billboard, photo & text, Winnipeg, 1991)

**Lesbian. It's not a dirty word.** (billboard, photo & text, Winnipeg, 1992)

**Touching you. Every day. Everywhere. Queer Culture.** (billboard & 2 pixelboards, text only, Winnipeg & Calgary)

**Average Good Looks** is currently developing two new billboard images for Calgary, Edmonton and Winnipeg while in residence in Banff.

**WHY?** The work of **Average Good Looks** is intended to counter the invisibility of gays and lesbians in our culture, to present alternatives to the often negative portrayals of our lives and relationships, and to stimulate thought and discussion about the gay and lesbian rights movement.

Some people who received our message did not appreciate that the work was not credited or presented in any context. While **Average Good Looks** technically "owns" this work, as activist artists we ultimately speak on behalf of a political movement rather than as individuals. Providing context dilutes the text message, preventing the viewer from absorbing it in its pure form and on a completely personal level.

**HOW?** In early February the Banff Centre Department of Communications agreed to run the text on the Centre's TV monitors to coincide with the pixelboard campaign in Calgary and Winnipeg. However they later reversed this decision citing policy restricting artists work from the monitors. They refused to bend or set aside policy on this occasion (as has been done in the past) because of concern that the text would respark the controversy around the recent **Kiss 'n' Tell** performance and video. Without access to the TV monitors **Average Good Looks** chose to circulate its message through the internal mail system.

**FINALLY...** with **TOUCHING YOU. EVERY DAY. EVERYWHERE. QUEER CULTURE.** **Average Good Looks** hopes to encourage an understanding that, whether people realize it or not, gays and lesbians and queer culture are inextricably entwined with the larger culture. We are your friends, family, co-workers, children, and our safety, well-being, and often our lives depend, in part, on your *active* support of the lesbian and gay rights movement.

Sheila Spence  
Noreen Stevens  
**AVERAGE GOOD LOOKS**

MARCH 10, 1993