

BZZZZZ

At the Vancouver Art Gallery, Chinese artist Huang Yong Ping used live crickets, scorpions and reptiles to comment on conflicts among different peoples and cultures. But his *Theatre of the World*, part of a 2007 exhibition, generated debate over artistic freedom when the local humane society intervened.

Growing concern over the environment is a major motivator for the current interest in insects. Artist Aganetha Dyck says hundreds of artists around the world now work with bees, which have experienced mysterious population crashes in recent years. "Artists are frustrated seeing what we humans are doing to destroy the natural world around us," she says. "Artists are



TOP: **Aganetha Dyck**, *Drawings from the Hive*, pen and ink on braille paper with bee marks and chews, 2002.

ABOVE RIGHT: **Aganetha Dyck** with **Richard Dyck**, *Hive Scan*, digital photograph, 2007, 24" X 30".

ABOVE: **Aganetha Dyck**, from the *Masked Ball Series*, beework on figurine, 2008. At Michael Gibson Gallery, London, Ontario.

AGANETHA DYCK

Veteran Winnipeg-based artist Aganetha Dyck gets plenty of buzz for her interspecies collaborations, as she calls them. She has inserted everything from shoes to football helmets into hives, allowing the bees to wax and honeycomb them in endlessly fascinating ways.

Dyck began working with bees in 1991 after seeing an advertising sign for honey that a beekeeper had inserted into a hive. "I was seeing a mystery, a life force's work of amazing proportions," recalls Dyck, who has exhibited across North America and Europe. "I had discovered the work of ancient sculptors and builders, thinkers perhaps. Without hesitation I realized I had discovered new collaborators, a new studio, definitely a new way of seeing. Opening the first hive was not unlike visiting a foreign country, hearing a strange language, feeling a new warmth and vibration, inhaling a new scent."

Dyck has picked up numerous honors — including a 2007 Governor General's Visual and Media Arts Award — and is increasingly concerned about the environment. "Working with the bees has taught me that we humans are not alone in creating nor managing the world we live in ... It is time to investigate thoroughly how we are interconnected with the small of the world."