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glance to be exposed rocks amid the mosses turn out to be glass castings of portions of human anatomy. The verticality suggested by the overall structure of the work isn't actually in play, for the real aesthetic argument occurs along the horizontal plane, where Singer materializes human intrusion into the natural world as a form of landscape itself. Where Chaconne de Paeton proffers an intangible sculpting of space and time, Enclosure III rejects time as an activating aesthetic element, so that in the narrow confines of its clear plastic tube, what you see is indeed what you get.

— Gil McElroy

Christian Bernard Singer, *Chaconne de Paeton*, 2005. Living moss, unfired clay, white slip, and video projection, installation view.

tion of such materials. Well, almost. Singer's work does foreground the body and physicality, both pertinent to any aesthetic of craft (and especially the making of ceramics and artisanal glass), but that is the extent of it. His intentions lie elsewhere.

With living moss, chunks of unfired clay, and a video projection, Singer tackles the esoteric subject of 18th-century Baroque dance notation. *Chaconne de Paeton*, a floor and wall-mounted piece, maps out, via strips of moss, the rigidly geometrical pattern—all straight lines and right angles—that dancers would trace across a floor while engaged in the highly formalized dance that gives the work its title. Atop this carpet of moss, long thin sticks of clay are laid, composing a variety of intricate shapes—some resemble the hooked staffs of shepherds, others trace gentle curves that criss-cross one another or coil back on themselves, and yet other, smaller forms resemble mathematical symbols. These patterns are based on period dance notation, which denoted the type of step,

the pace, and the gestures of hands and arms. An accompanying video projection shows a dancer articulating the movements traced by the notation, but Singer's sculptural transposition and materialization of arcane (albeit meaningful) abstraction are the critical elements here, asserting an immaterial shape delineated by the movement of human bodies in space and through time.

While the horizontal impetus of *Chaconne de Paeton* sustains unseen dimensions, *Enclosure III* does quite the opposite. For all intents and purposes, it is a terrarium, a miniature landscape consisting primarily of mosses enclosed within a large, vertically mounted, clear plastic tube capped (though not completely sealed) at the top. The rigid formalism of Baroque French dance is absent, replaced by something remotely akin to the untidiness of nature. But there is nothing truly natural about *Enclosure III*: beyond the obvious level of artifice in such an ersatz environment, the landscape it contains is itself in question. What appear at first

WATERLOO, ONTARIO, CANADA

Christian Bernard Singer

Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery

Toronto-based Christian Bernard Singer recently used the architecturally aggressive exhibition space of the Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery as the setting for two works that employ both clay and glass elements while having nothing to do with the traditional craft associa-

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