

One thousand words

Juan Geuer

Doctor, what would you do if you were me?

A double-faced mirror, with a central band and cutouts for the eyes. Look closely into the mirror. You see your face reflected back at you, as you expect. But the eyes — the eyes are not yours! They are those of the person looking through from the other side. Through a unique fusion of art and optics, the transition is seamless, and their eyes are now your eyes; your eyes are their eyes.

The experience is both disturbing and enlightening. Canadian artist Juan Geuer discovered the way to fuse the images. He has travelled with a portable version, showing it to people in museums, galleries, trains and on the street. Besides giving a visual form of “insight,” this deceptively simple artwork often raises awareness about racism and human rights abuses. Each time, you are me.

Geuer was a finalist for the 2007 Premier’s Award for Excellence in the Arts (Ontario). — Cathy Younger-Lewis, *CMAJ*