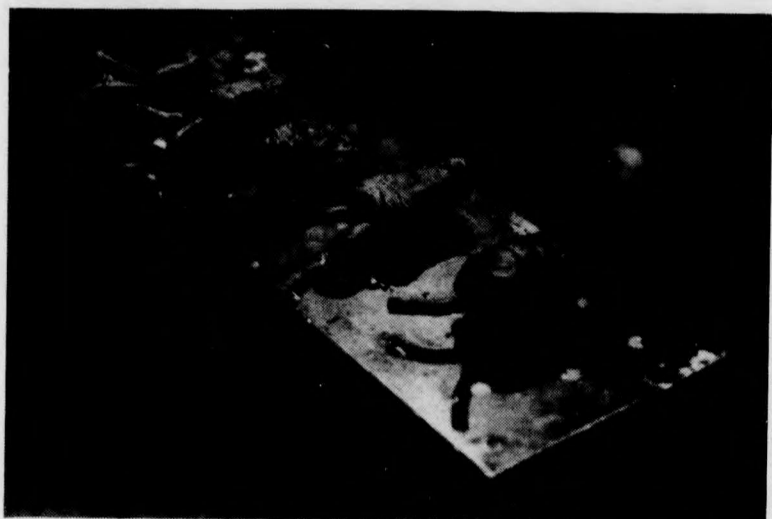


Arts cont'd

provocative identity



Yvonne Vera-Jose

Images of the human body displayed at the AGYU.

by Julie Rosenzweig

The human body as it is represented in images and language is the theme for *Diagnosis*, the exhibit running until February 18 at the Art Gallery of York University (AGYU). The exhibit displays 15 works by four artists: Marc De Guerre, Mark Lewis, Kiki Smith and Jana Sterbac who have provided photographs in large gold or black frames, sculptures polished and sleek, and verse long and powerful.

The works all address issues of identity. At first glance, one might find this exhibit highly provocative

and disturbing because of the nature of the subject matter. Catherine Crowston, curator for the AGYU, says the exhibit is "disturbing enough so that we will in turn question ourselves."

Sterbac's black and white photograph entitled "Generic Man" illustrates how people have been commodified due to a lack of individuality, (the back of a man is shown with a bar code on his neck, implying a price).

Lewis, who was schooled in London, England, and studied with Victor Burgin, displays his art in a very interesting and unusual way. Under each piece is a machine that emits a cheap per-

fume. Lewis says, "This antiseptic smell should create a disturbance playing with the visible." His art displays a series of colliding images of pornography, movies and advertising.

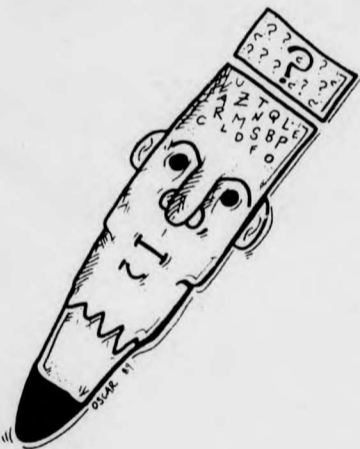
De Guerre and Smith capture the essence of human suffering and disease in their work — from Smith's sleek apothecary-like jars with text such as "blood" and "tears," to the medical language in De Guerre's verse.

Although this was not an aesthetically pleasing exhibit, because it evoked disturbing feelings, the overall impression of the show is that the artists all work well together under the one theme about the human body.



Yvonne Vera-Jose

the writer's block



Ira Nayman is a York student with vast experience as a writer. Ira has written numerous newspaper columns as well as dabbling with CBC television and radio.

by Ira Nayman

Trying to define an overall aesthetic in one's body of work is a lot like raking leaves with an electric chainsaw; it can be done, but it doesn't leave you with much dignity. I always get the feeling artists do what they like, then develop grandiose theories of how they make their creative choices after the fact. (I know that will be true in my case, but I'll try to keep the grandiosity to a minimum.)

Given that people's tastes and values change over time, how I make creative decisions now may not reflect my writing priorities in the past or the future. Years from now, I will likely reject a lot of what I'm currently working on.

Still, I'm going to try to articulate some guiding principles I write with because, well, writers are expected to do stuff like that. A few years ago, I developed an

idea that could pretty well sum up my aspirations as an artist: I want to make fun of everything. As it happens, everything had a bit of a head start; still, a writer's grasp should exceed his reach, or what's an editor for?

My first consideration when working on a scene is how to make it funny. But, every scene must also either move the plot forward, reveal something about the characters or develop the theme. Ideally, I would like to combine as many of these elements in as many scenes as I can. Practically, if I can get three of the four in one or two scenes each script, I'm happy. This tends to make my writing fast (scripts start in the middle of an action, scenes do not go on longer than their premise can sustain them, etc.) and full, and there's always a lot going on.

Thus, my writing tends to go off in all directions at once (how's that for Canadian content!). My works do have coherent plots; although they may sometimes verge on anarchy, I do not believe they plunge headlong into it.

I hope they don't.

This style reflects the comedy I grew up with, and still admire: the Marx brothers, Monty Python's Flying Circus and Woody Allen, among others. Some day, I hope to be good enough to join this select group. But, my writing is also a product of the MTV-crazed '80s; everything has to be faster these days, and comedy is no exception.

Because of what I write, I pretty much have to assume that my audience will be interested and involved with what I write. While this may seem an obvious consideration, it goes against the prevailing television ethos.

Paul Chato, for instance, head of Sitcoms and Talent and the CBC, told me that he wanted scripts in which every scene was "complete" in itself. Each scene, therefore, had to repeat enough of the previously revealed plot to be its own miniature story. As far as I'm concerned, repeating plot points only slows things down and takes time away from new developments (or, for that matter, more humour).

Television programming has developed this way because network executives assume people will be switching back and forth between stations. I believe that if you give people something worth watching, they'll stay with it (I know I do).

But, then, I assume my audience will be intelligent and interested in the world around them (also uncommon in the television industry). In the past couple of years, I have written about: the link between environmental degradation and capitalist greed; the classical myth of romantic love and the modern uses to which it is put; native Canadian political empowerment; the so-called Superwoman Syndrome; and the Iran-contra affair (some subjects are easier to satirize than others). I'm proud of the fact that nothing I've written could be considered "high concept" (executive-speak for low-brow).

On the other hand, I spent my first term at York preparing to become an accountant.

Developing comedy alongside plot, theme and character, assuming the audience is intelligent, concerned and paying attention; these are some of the principles by which I work. Now, where did I leave that electric chainsaw?

SUMMER JOBS

NOW INTERVIEWING FOR
CAMP STAFF POSITIONS

Group Counsellors, Swim Staff, Unit Heads
Also
Activity Specialists in Crafts, Dance, Pottery,
Photography, Computers, Riding, Woodcraft,
Farm Animals, Gymnastics, Camp Shows.

"For the Best Summer of Your Life"

ESTABLISHED IN 1966

GREEN ACRES DAY CAMP

70 acre country setting in Markham

Daily transportation to camp is provided.

For an interview appointment call:

887-1400 Weekdays 9 to 5



Ministry of
Colleges and
Universities
Sean Conway, Minister

**Financial
assistance for
Ontario students
1989-1990**

Apply Now!

OSAP

OSAP applications for
1989-1990 should be
submitted at least 90
days before the end of
the school year.

bank, or any other
lending institution, the
forms necessary to
maintain your
interest-free status.

One OSAP application
lets you apply for:

- Ontario Study Grant
- Canada Student Loan
- Ontario Student Loan

If you have already
applied for assistance
and want to appeal for
additional assistance,
please contact as soon
as possible your
Financial Aid
Administrator to obtain
the deadline and other
information.

If you received a loan in
the past, but not this
year, you *must* obtain
from your Financial Aid
Administrator, your



LOOMIS & TOLES
Artists Materials

Downsview

1140 Sheppard Ave. W.
(416) 630-6219

Toronto

963 Eglinton Ave. E.
(416) 423-9300

Toronto

214 Adelaide St. W.
(416) 977-8877