

Sculptor captures life

Most are slouching in old chairs. Some are hunched over coffee or beer; others stare pensively off into space. If they weren't so small, you'd think they were real. These are the little people: the funny, sad, life bitten little people of Joe Fafard.

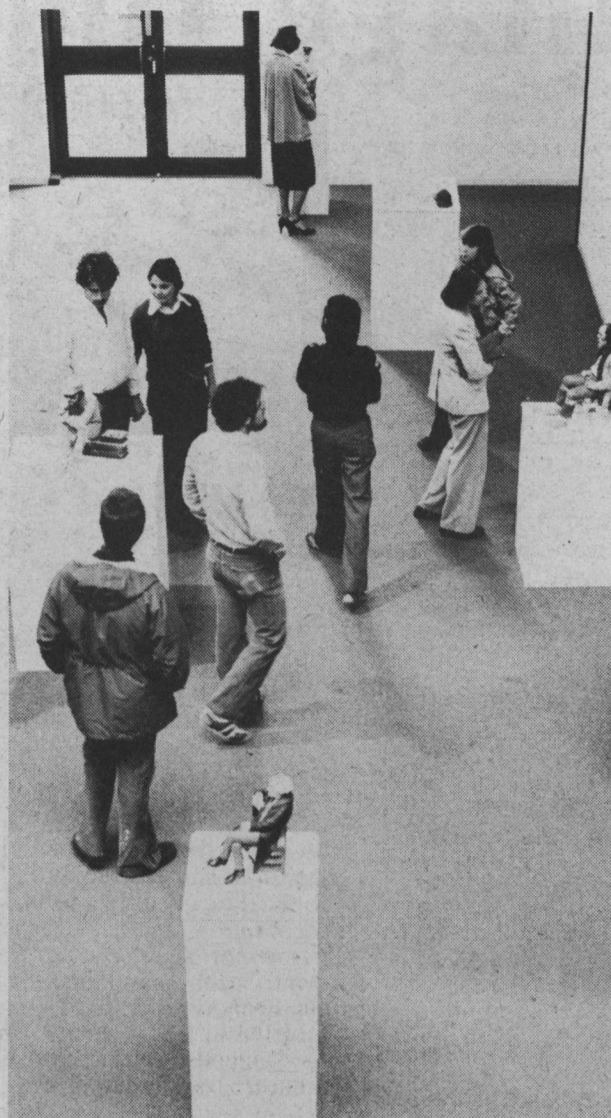
Recent Sculptures is the name of Fafard's exhibition now on show at the Edmonton Art Gallery. Fafard is a sculptor from Pense, Saskatchewan who is currently sculpting small, clay, polychromed figures. The figures, representative of work from 1974 until 1979, are character studies of his fellow townspeople and of historical Canadians. His work is described as superficial realism because certain aspects (heads, hands, feet) that suggest character are slightly enlarged.

Fafard renders realism in incredible detail. Beads of sweat glisten on the punchdrunk face of *The Boxer* who slouches on his stool. The work-boots of *The Carpenter* and *Bernard* are so old and worn and undisciplined that they sprawl outwards like splayed feet. Beneath his bright green, plaid shirt, the sunken chest of *Frizzley Bear* belies the strength and vitality one assumes was once his.

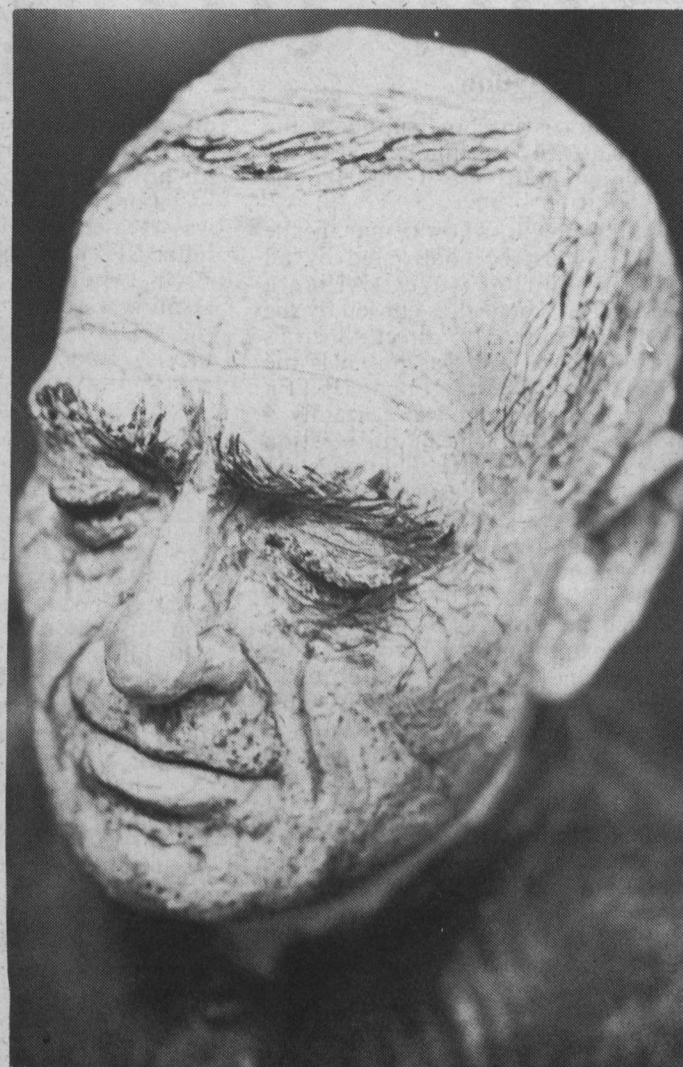
Fafard excels at realistic expression and gesture, telling us about his characters by the way he has them posed. *The Carpenter* looks cool and metaphysical beneath his sunglasses as he rests beside his open lunch box on a pile of lumber. *The Commissionaire* is an old man in uniform sitting up straight and dignified. However, his hands, folded as they are between his legs, indicate a weariness or resignation. The massive brow and finely focused eyes of *Gabriel Dumont* suggest a man as strong and powerful as his legend.

Among the sculptures there is one unique figure. This is the figure of a naked woman laying on her stomach with her head tucked inside her folded arms. She is unique not because she is naked, but because she is a woman. Perhaps the only weakness of Fafard's exhibition is that of 19 sculptures, only one is of a woman.

Fafard has sculpted life into his tiny characters. In doing so he has scraped bare our memories as we recognize, in his characters, people we have known and perhaps have forgotten. This is a noble but difficult achievement; Joe Fafard has succeeded. *Recent Sculptures*, is on display until October 21 at the Edmonton Art Gallery.



Part of the crowd looking at Fafard's exhibition at the Edmonton Art Gallery.



M. Le Cure

photos by Russ Sampson



Manitoba



Veteran

Bands have strangled view of world

Record review by Jeff Wildman

When listening to the aggressive music of *The Stranglers* and *Tubeway Army*, terms like "Punk" and "New Wave" do not apply. Progressive music is what these two groups play.

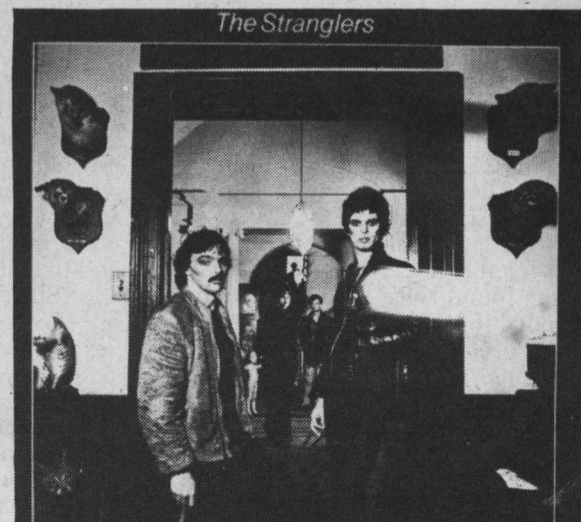
Tubeway Army is a three man group from England who rely heavily on synthesized keyboards. *The Stranglers*, also from England, are four nasty boys whose bark and bite is indistinguishable. Both groups play loud and aggressive music and they share

"Punk's" legacy that life is a dirty affair.

The Stranglers, on *Rattus Norvegicus*, scream coarse language and are explicit about wanting sex and good times instead of love and social responsibility. Their sewer tour of frustrated sexual desires and teenage anger at the confusing "grown-up" world, makes them critics of the rat race which spawned them. However, it seems as though their credentials are suspect.

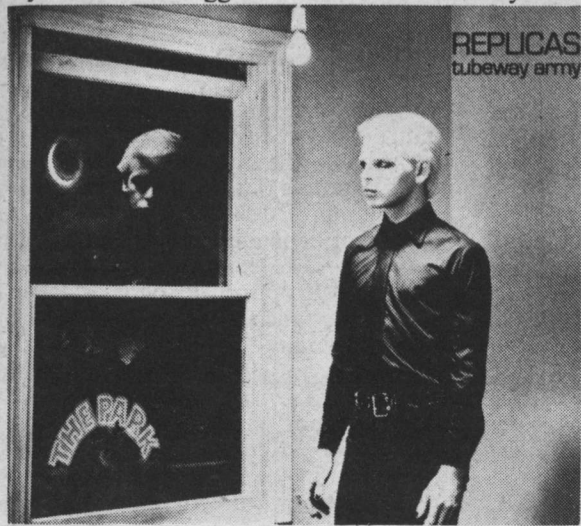
The Stranglers share the affectations of pseudo-punks who claim to know the seamier and crueller sides of life. Mentioning cockroaches, rats, sewers, dirty rooms, bare light bulbs, ripped, worn and torn emotions make *The Stranglers* appear mean and tough. This seems to be slightly false. Their streetwise poses are belied by an essentially spoiled middle class attitude to material success and social position. I'm tired of people who haven't been there telling me what it's all about. However, I don't wish to rob from *The Stranglers* what is a genuinely gruesome presence.

More interesting and more authentic to the avant garde of progressive music and the streetwise affectations of "New Wave" is *Tubeway Army*. On *Replicas*, they delve into the world of desensitized, robotic human beings. The experiences of taxi-boys in London provide the grim and fascinating quality of social insight that seems to be threaded through the more sincere progressive music of artists like Patti Smith and *The Talking Heads*. Songs like "praying to the aliens" or "are friends electric?" strike a chilly note as jaded



male prostitutes try to retrieve some sense of value for their lives.

The most interesting thing about these two groups is their imaginative and controlled use of production values and synthesizers. The quality of music on both albums is superior. Both groups display a numbed and hostile view of the world. *The Stranglers* and *Tubeway Army* are evidence that punks with pins in their cheeks accelerated the arrival of a new vitality for post-disco rock.



REPLICAS
tubeway army