

National Gallery exhibits contemporary art

A major retrospective of contemporary art, *Reflections: Contemporary Art at the National Gallery of Canada since 1964* opened recently in Ottawa's National Gallery of Canada. More than 130 works of art in all media produced by Canadian and foreign artists during the past 20 years will occupy the first, fourth and fifth floors of the gallery.

The large summer exhibition highlights many of the most important contemporary works of art owned by the gallery and presents them in a free-flowing installation that emphasizes themes, styles, materials, formats and content.

"*Reflections* offers a broad overview of the contemporary collection," states Diana Nemiroff, assistant curator of Contemporary Art and organizer of the four-month exhibition. "It is a unique occasion for the public to see the extent of this important collection and also to reflect on the extremely diverse nature of the art production of the past 20 years."

Ms. Nemiroff has selected 42 sculptures and installations, 44 paintings and 48 works on paper to illustrate the complex evolution of recent art trends. Programs of videotapes and experimental films by artists, presented during the course of the exhibition, will also reflect the interest of contemporary artists in new media.

The retrospective begins with a select display of sculptures and works on paper by American Pop artists, including Roy Lichtenstein, Andy Warhol and James Rosenquist. The movement towards radically

simple form in American sculpture of the Sixties, which culminated in Minimal art, may be seen in a number of works by important representatives of the movement, such as Dan Flavin, Donald Judd, Carl Andre and Robert Morris.

The present survey indicates Canadian artists' awareness of international trends, while confirming the original and independent character of their production. Works by Canadian artists such as Guido Molinari and Charles Gagnon, show a fluency of expression in the international idiom of abstract painting, while the N.E. Thing Co. and Michael Snow, the latter internationally known for his experimental films, are represented by works that made a significant contribution to the movement called Conceptual art.

At the same time, as the exhibition demonstrates, the local, regional environment has continued to be a major source of inspiration for a large number of artists whose work has a distinct, personal and difficult to classify character.

According to Diana Nemiroff, "it is the diversity that makes this period such a fascinating one. An explosion of art categories has occurred in the past 20 years. The exhibition reflects the challenge that current art production poses for the National Gallery. The collection should mirror the dynamism and permutations of today's art, while attempting to classify this creative force within the more static parameters of art history and research".

Canadian folk painter featured

The most untainted view of Canada may not be in the work of professional painters, but in what has been called a 'people's art', reflecting the lifestyle, concerns and values of a society. *Francis Silver 1841-1920*, an exhibition of 33 paintings and murals opened recently at Toronto's Art Gallery of Ontario.

Silver's work, a direct response to the social, political, and economic issues particular to his times and the region, is characterized by spontaneity, simplicity, rough draughtsmanship and uncommon colour.

Francis Silver was born Francis da Silva in Portugal in 1841. He landed in Nova Scotia as a teenager, probably as a crew member of a saltfish vessel. He worked as a sailor, gardener, carpenter and coachman, and despite a lack of artistic training, he undertook the painting of murals on carriage houses and basement walls. Soon he was exploring political, religious and social themes through art.

Political issues such as the fisheries dispute in the 1870s and reciprocity with the United States, biblical themes, and local scenes — ships at sea or in the yards — formed Silver's artistic repertoire. His Portuguese roots are in evidence in such details as patterned borders on wood panels.

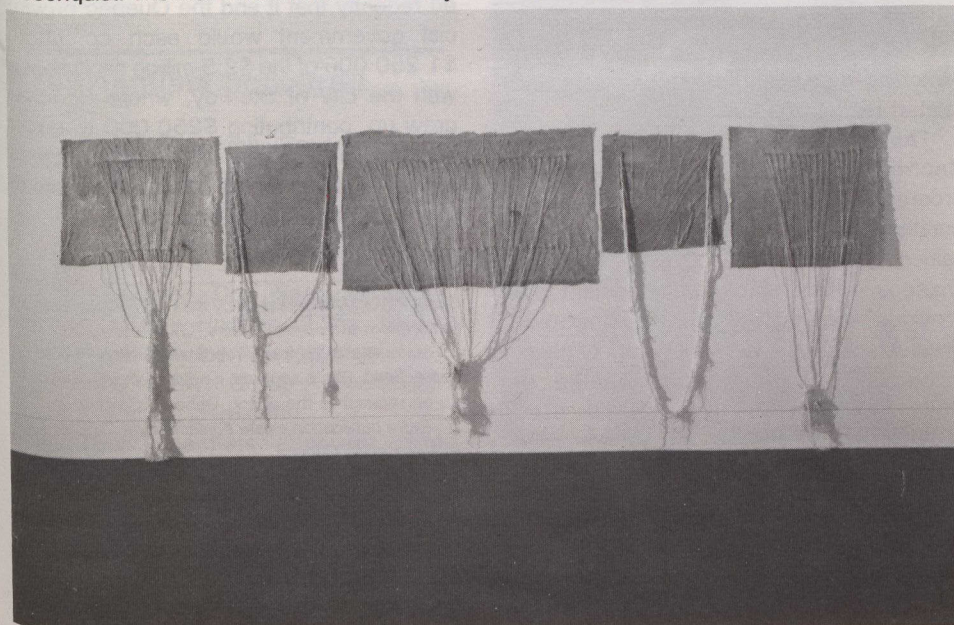
Computers featured at Ontario Science Centre

"The Artist as a Young Machine" is the theme of a new exhibit at the Ontario Science Centre in Toronto.

The show, which runs until October, will explore the relationship between the arts and the computer, offering visitors the opportunity to personally experiment with state-of-the-art machinery.

Its resources include more than 50 computers ranging from micro systems developed by the Science Centre itself and machines made by well-known manufacturers such as Apple, Digital Equipment, Atari and Commodore to mainframes used for sophisticated computer animation.

The hands-on features include touch-draw techniques to create art on a computer screen. Also included are computer paintings using palettes with 16.8 million colour possibilities, and changing the video image of your own face by using the computer's digitizing features.



National Gallery of Canada

For David, sculpture of rubberized wadding and cotton string, by Canadian artist, An Whitlock.