

Prolific alumni splash images across campus

By JANICE GOLDBERG

The Art Gallery of York University houses primarily installation works: multi

Art Re:Union unites York Galleries

media, three dimensional, site specific pieces. Ron Sandor's "... if I should die before I wake ..." captivates the viewer with its large scale and exuberant child-like crayon drawings

and forms. Sandor presents a domestic interior: a child's room in an attic is transformed into a terrorizing cell. Through the window the night sky is ablaze with the energy of glowing planets and stars of bright red, yellow and green. A toy rocking horse has changed into a maniacal fire breathing beast. Sandor's piece humorously explores the dichotomy between reality and dreams.

"York Swings," an outdoor installation by Alex de Cosson, was created especially for the Re:Union exhibition. As the name suggests, the pieces are literally swings—what makes them unique is their monumental scale (approximately 12 feet high). Obviously they are rather light-hearted works. They seem to be punning with the idea of the activity of play in the university setting. As well, like the works of Claus Oldenberg, they raise the question of what subject matter is suitable for monumentalization. The swings are situated around Stong pond. □

By HENRY SUM
Photos by GARY BLAKELEY

Founders Gallery hosts an eclectic collection of photographs by MFA alumni. Daniel Kazimierski's exhibit of prints, for example, concentrates on portraits of old Spanish Civil War volunteers. His photographs evoke the zealous fervor still evident in these men's expressions.

Some prints show looks of moist-eyed nostalgia while others are cropped to capture an individual's far-off visionary look. Still others will exhibit a former fighter proudly displaying framed medallions, passports, and assorted mementos.

Quotations from these men accompany the prints. Despite per-

only difference in these superbly crafted models is that they have a lens at one end and a glass reflector at the other. Both are pointed towards a window where they carry the image of the building opposite on the rear end ground glass.

When confronted with Cynthia Short's wax and steel figure at Winter's Gallery, one has to wonder about co-relations between nature and art. Short's nude female figure stands in a crouched position, seemingly relieving herself on the gallery floor. What the figure actually does discharge is an enormous metamorphosing structure which rests a couple of feet behind the figure's buttocks. The sculpture is appropriately titled "Follow."

Other sculptors represented at the gallery include Ted Rettig and his iconic limestone carvings, Nene Humphrey's primitive wall frag-

ments and Judith Schwarz's demonstrative concrete constructions. Also included are fellow sculptor Robert Bower's untitled circular cedar wall hanging and "The Soldier's Dream," a saw-toothed head reclining on its side, reminiscent of a sleeping muse.

Lynda Gammon's visual vocabulary extends into a different domain. If you've ever spray-painted your car, you'll recognize these rolled-up balls of masking tape which comprise the tail-end of Gammon's sculptures. Made with cheap, trashy refuse, the works have a negligent poetry all their own.

Brian Lewis' "Throne" features a chair made completely out of erect piercing arrows with an accompanying executioner's pendulum. It all seems to suggest that political leaders should be wistful of those they govern and conversely the people should be wary of those that rule.

Other conceptual works in this gallery include Dan Reid's zany duck decoys resting on bedsprings, Deborah Black's leggy earthenware and Lee Paquette's mechanical contour constructions.

Wendy Knox's copper embossings have an eerie presence with their dramatic play of light and reflection, and also their disturbing subject matter. "Last Supper" depicts a domestic dinner scene. The mundane dinner setting is terrorized as the plates of food are consumed by flames. The absence of diners is enigmatic. There is a strange horror to the spontaneous combustion. The copper surface effects movement of light so that the fire has a palpable presence. The work conveys a mood of silent horror.

Ed Pien's untitled installation creates a menacing image of the male nude. The installation is comprised of four black panels surrounded by a black canvas curtain. By only presenting the viewer with a view of the back of the nude, Pien emphasizes the vulnerability of the figures. The nudes, painted on the boards, are modelled so that one gets a sense of their physical entrapment in the two-dimensional surfaces. The installation invites the viewer to walk into and around the panels, to experience the piece from a multiplicity of viewpoints. □



York swings above; finite stairs below



The works in the Samuel J. Zacks Gallery rely largely on the manipulation of formal elements to achieve expression. Joseph Szilva's "Echo" is a playful, exuberant work which combines sculpture with painting to challenge the viewers' perceptions. Relief forms are overpainted to match the bright, colorful treatment of the canvas. Their shapes are shadowed, or echoed on the canvas, so that there is a dialectic between two- and three-dimensional elements.

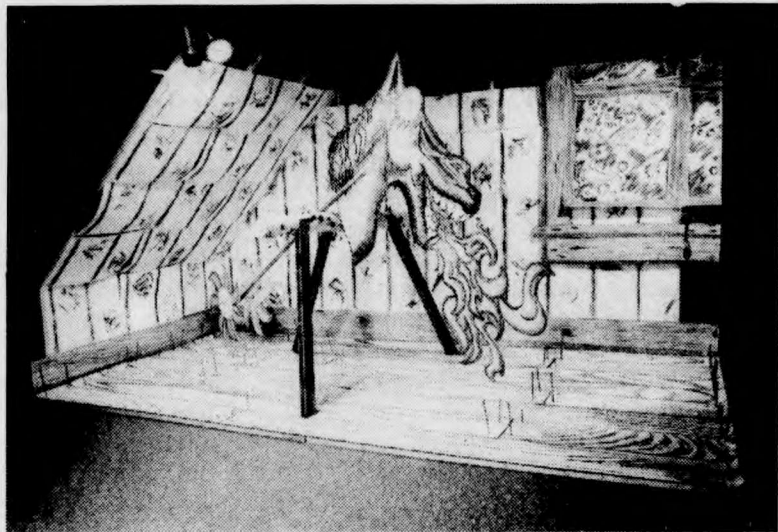
James Mroczkowski's two sculptural pieces, "Empor" and "Grilgot," alter reliefs according to the show's catalogue, seem to be playing on the Western myth of science and technology. Both pieces evoke primitive gadgetry: wooden sticks tied together with string; small structures reminiscent of mousetrap technology; tongue depressors randomly strewn amongst the various partitions; the background, a painted panel, is covered with scratchings and marks which evoke frenetic scientific and diagrammatical doodlings.

Thomas Lax's richly-colored etchings also recontextualize icons of science and technology. "Weather-scapes," a multi-media etching, plays with the motifs of map-making and scientific notation. □

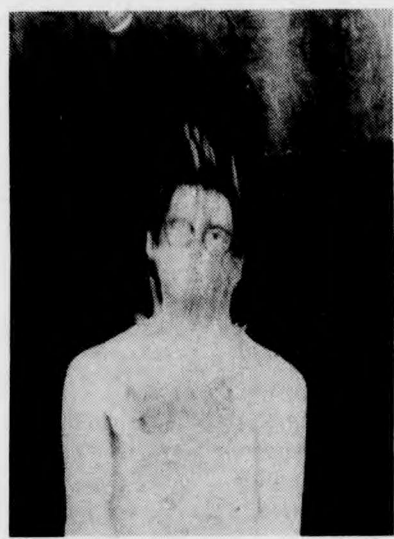
Most of the works displayed in the IDA Gallery share common explorations of dream imagery, archetypes and notions of mythology. Guiseppe de Leo's large high representationalist graphite drawings transport the viewer into a strange, surreal world. Both "Odysseus and Circe" and "Variations on a Serenade Tango" juxtapose classical and mythological imagery with contemporary icons. Di Leo is playing on his own style—the banal, high representationalism infused with surreal and mythical imagery sets up an interesting dialectic between fantasy and reality. "Odysseus and Circe" portrays a young man and woman in a moment of daydream and relaxation. The treatment of both figures is indicative of classical ideals of beauty. Above the two, the room in which they're sitting dematerializes into a sweeping cloud-like formation. An ethereal ionic column barely visible peeps through the evanescent surface. Di Leo successfully creates an ambiguity of narrative and imagery.

Janet Jones' large canvases evoke the energy and mystery of primeval ritual. The diptych "The Fireseekers/The Torchbearers" expressionistically depicts the wild power of swirling flames seemingly leaping off the canvas. Primitive, archetypal figures sway, reaching up to the heavens. Energetic brushstrokes, combined with the use of dark and light, evoke dichotomies between good and evil.

Michael Tait's drawings have a nightmarish, menacing presence. "Run Run" depicts a dream-like vision of the aftermath of a nuclear holocaust. A tiny figure, a silhouette of gold leaf tinged with red paint, appears frozen in motion, desperately trying to escape the crumbling, glowing city behind him. "Falling" evokes a similar terror. The same gold silhouette, again apparently suspended in motion, is dwarfed by the hugeness of the building from which it is falling. □



MFA exhibits are vibrant with 2-D and 3-D movement. Domestic, sexual and mythical angst feature in many of the works.



sonal sacrifice, most of the men express how important it was for them to counter the spread of tyranny. They describe how the entire experience profoundly changed their lives and attitudes for life.

Other photographers in this gallery display more personal and idiosyncratic concerns. Barrie Jones' two almost life-size oil-painted photographs deal with "Looking for Paradise." Visionary and metaphysical, the prints display a female figure shrouded in red cloth while a male figure's hands and head are engulfed by flames. The work comments on states of desire and how each sex deals with them.

The prints of Carol Starr show, among other things, what to do with discarded polaroid shots. Her "Untitled" collage is a polaroidic melange of images. Starr amusingly pastes real Calvin Klein underwear over a female nude photograph. Similarly, in another work, she has a male ballet dancer wear an enormous false dildo while standing on one leg.

Pierre Svatier's two contributions appear to be very subtle visual puns on the differences between low-key and high-key prints. Yet the most inventive and unique of these selected alumni is Christopher Creighton. Creighton has created a couple of unusual camera structures. Entitled "Kamara #1 & #3," they are composed of a miniature 12" by 18" brick kiln and a wood-slat house of approximately the same size. The

There are some Eastern sculptures of the Buddha which show nothing but the concave forms his feet made when he originally stood on this planet. Richard Storm's large acrylic paintings at Bethune Gallery seem to suggest the same idea. Painted with great bravura, these works alternately present footless sandals and pennyloafers adrift in a vague landscape. Bold and furious, the thick brushstrokes of raw, modulated greens are slashed against the canvas, while humble footwear make