

A. The sculpture above is called: a) Awareness; b) Confederation; c) Behemoth; or d) Alka Seltzer on a Stick. Where is it located? And would you buy one for your apartment? (Answers on p. 11).

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PHOTOS by PETER HSU and THOMAS MCKERR

It is 1962 in the modest home of a member of the board of governors; the drapes are drawn and the only sounds in the room are the concentrated slurps of tea and the click click of the slide projector.

It's just another day of just another week with just another one of those decisions: how to get a \$350,000 art collection in 10 easy years or less.

The papers are shuffled and the throats are cleared; it is a historic moment, the first meeting of the York committee on art. After a trapeze around the Stong farmlands (once the grassy pastures of our pioneer forefathers), to integrate art to the environment, the committee feels ready to delve into the depth of history.

HEAR YE

But, of course, all art must be contemporary, to blend into the new architectural world that awaits us at York. Ladies and Gentlemen of the committee, we will see blossom before us a community of scholars, the hope for the future, the future leaders of the nation. It is our duty to choose works of educational and aesthetic value, to stimulate an already stimulating university environment, to bring the public and our students closer to the blissful discovery of culture, and might I add, an even greater encounter with the contemporary Canadian scene.

Selecting the treasures over a cup of tea

How the art made it to Downsview

Beyond Cornelius Krieghoff, beyond Tom Thomson and A.Y. Jackson, and on out to the wild ecstatic discovery of sundials in the courtyard, blinking escalators, and college banners that reflect the cream of banner design, banners that we'll wave before us heralding a new world, a new community. Ladies and Gentlemen, I give you York.
(Temporary pause for throat clearing, a sip of tea, and a revelry in the breath-taking history of the words.)
The art, if I may proceed, should be human in scale so that people may climb upon it, so that vandals may reach it with ease, so that those who want to strike the indefinable texture of genius may do so.

The art should be located in accessible places, so that those who cross daily between the concrete towers of learning will bask in the reflections of great artistic splendour, raising their eyes in reverence and awe.

The art must be flexible and adaptable to new and unforeseen conditions, such as the blistering snows of outer Siberia, the winds that whip and strike, the students that ignore and abuse, the faculty that walk with their heads down, locked in the pressures of academic contemplation. Our environmental art shall, in conclusion, become a symbol of all that York stands for.

Each of us here on the committee has been set a monumental task. We are gathered here in a special mission from our president, and we can not take our duties lightly.

(Pause for general consensus and a toast to tea and history.)
The lights fade once more, and the click click of the slide projector continues as this historic committee bestows its imprint on the walls and walkways of future generations.

Campus art vandals try hard to leave signature on territory

Increasing vandalism on the York campus, particularly with respect to art objects, has deeper implications than mere destruction, said professor Irwin Silverman of York's psychology department.

"Vandalism of art is a symptom of greater problems, such as York's punitive bureaucracy and its inability to develop as a community," Silverman said in an interview.

According to all the data collected, he remarked, vandalism is most likely to occur where it is difficult for individuals to perceive their environment as their own territory. When one can not see himself in his environment, he may feel a need to leave an imprint on that environment.

Silverman compared York's colour and architecture to the bleak and institutional settings of apartment complexes where most of the studies have been done. He said York lacks the atmosphere associated with many universities, such as "knots of students, interaction, and pleasant surroundings."

"Instead," he said, the first thing students encounter as they enter the university is a guard with his arm raised."

The bureaucracy of grades and requirements further alienates and restricts student-professor interaction he said, as well as joyful and playful thinking.

The total constellation of an unpleasant environment, lack of community, and bureaucracy creates hostility. Because few outlets exist to manifest this hostility, "sticking a cigarette into a painting becomes one way."

Silverman did not feel that the vandalism of art was a strike against modern art, but instead a strike against

formalist bureaucracy. In this sense, it becomes an act of hostility and alienation rather than evaluation, and "even if you put up a Rembrandt the same thing would happen."

Interestingly enough, when asked if he was aware of the removal of art, Silverman admitted he rarely takes notice of the art around York, because he usually "walks around the campus with his head down."



E. Sandy Wiggin does a two-step on: a) Waffle; b) Participation in Light; c) Floor/Wall Piece; d) Cube Edge.

How the art treasures progressed from the display case into storage

In September of 1974, following \$35,000 worth of damage and theft to the York art collection over the previous two years, curator Michael Greenwood removed all art from the campus buildings.

He described this action as one of "public responsibility", taken for lack of better alternatives at that time. If the damage and theft had been restricted to a few isolated cases, such drastic measures would not have been necessary; but Greenwood said the decision was prompted by "the culmination of a series of disasters".

The constant pressures of security,

concern for insurance, and particularly the loss or damage to irreplaceable art objects, resulted in the curatorship becoming a "nightmare", and a duty that Greenwood felt he could not carry out unless the art was taken down.

Damage to and loss of art since the collection began has been extensive, and in many cases its senselessness is difficult to comprehend.

Before this year, much of the damage has coincided with Green Bush evenings. The vandalism has included cigarette burns in canvases, the use of a hacksaw on the solar clock, a jar of jam thrown at a painting, and extensive damage to the marble statue Adam and Eve, formerly in the Winters courtyard. In December of 1973, vandals ripped the blue metal sculpture by Coso from its moorings on the science square outside Farquharson, and dragged it 15 feet down concrete steps.

Thefts have included sections of a Joyce Wieland wall hanging, five original Eskimo prints, three Harold Towns and a Vaserly print.

Greenwood is dissatisfied with the present state of affairs, and would prefer that the works not be in storage; but the alternative is that "if they're out there, they might not be out there for long".

Reaction from the York community to the removal of the art has been one of complacency, despite several articles in Excalibur. Dr. Joe Green, dean of fine arts, said that the move to bring the work in "was disappointing", but that he had "expected more of an outcry and concern. Instead York gave a big

yawn". He added that "some direction or push from the community would have been and still would be helpful."

Consideration is now being given to means of bringing the York art collection back into the community. Green suggested "areas of high security", while Greenwood pointed out that the recent major thefts were from masters' dining halls, which are considered fairly high security locations.

Other considerations include armoured-plated frames, but Greenwood pointed out that "the expense of this would be incredible".

Ideally, York would have a permanent home for its collection, which was to have been one of the functions of a proposed 'art centre' (Fine Arts Phase IV - as yet unbuilt). However, with the ever-increasing economic crisis at the university, such a centre is unlikely to be constructed in the near future.

A small partial showing of the York art was held earlier this year in the Fine Arts Phase II gallery, and another is planned for next year.

Greenwood concluded that "sometime, somewhere, the collection will have a place", but that at the present time the future of a valuable and exciting contemporary collection is undecided.

The art will remain under lock and key.

Answers

Here they are: A: Confederation, by Lise Gervais; B: in the Stong inner court, by Gerald Gladstone; C: Presence, by Armand Vaillancourt; D: Mating Couple, by Robert Kaiser; E: Floor/Wall Piece, by Michael Hayden; F: Four Squares in a Square, by George Rickey; G: Model of Man by Alexander Calder; H: Rainbow, by Hugh Leroy. Confederation is hiding in the Central Square outdoor cafe, Rainbow is in the Scott library water-course, and Mating Couple is in Vanier. Four Squares is on the podium level of Central Square, the Floor/Wall Piece is in the Fine Arts foyer, and Model of Man is outside Burton Auditorium. Presence is near Stedman.

Before 1972 cutbacks annihilated it, big names graced York art committee

During the mid-60s, whenever a new building sprang up on the York campus, 5 per cent of the construction cost was funneled into a budget to cover acquisitions of new artwork for the surroundings.

It was from this budget that an art selection committee, formed in 1962 by the university's first president, Murray G. Ross, drew the funds to purchase York's present \$350,000 art collection.

And it was the annihilation of this budget in 1972, when building cutbacks were announced, that ultimately forced the committee to fold.

The art committee began 13 years ago with four members, including the chairman, Mrs. J. D. Eaton, a member of the board of governors; George Tatham, former dean of arts; Professor Rubinoff, formerly of York and now of Trent; and Mr. C. Horne, a Canadian painter and conductor of some of the first art classes at York.

However, the body was relatively inactive until 1964, when the main York campus was opened; at this time, several York faculty members and Ross Dawson, head of campus planning, joined the committee.

The procedure used to choose each artist and the location of each work was a combination of the efforts of the architects and the members of the committee.

It was deemed undesirable for the "faculty and student body as a whole to pass judgment on the recommended art". No students sat on the committee until 1970, and even at that, there is little evidence that they were active.

Michael Greenwood, who joined the committee in 1968 when he became curator of York's art, said "students were asked several times to stand on the committee" but that the committee "was unable to find students willing".

Prior to Greenwood's joining the committee, several other notables became involved, including Ron Bloore,

then director of art, and now fine arts professor; Mrs. Samuel Zacks, art collector; and Mrs. Dorothy Cameron, prominent Toronto art consultant, who acted in that capacity to the committee.

Unbeknown to much of the York community, the York art collection is large and impressive. There are about 30 contemporary sculptures of considerable size, which Greenwood has described as basically "environmental pieces".

As well, there is a collection of over 200 Eskimo carvings, and three electrical pieces, including Michael Hayden's escalator piece in the Scott library, and his floor-wall piece in the Fine Arts foyer. The banners for the colleges were designed by such prominent artists as Jack Bush, Yves Gauchier, Harold Town, and Ken Lochhead.

But it is the painting and graphic collection now locked away which is perhaps the least known and most impressive. The storage rooms brim with works by York faculty members with works by York faculty members Doug Morton, Ken Lochhead, David Samilla, and Ronald Bloore, as well as other important contemporary artists whose works will increase in value with

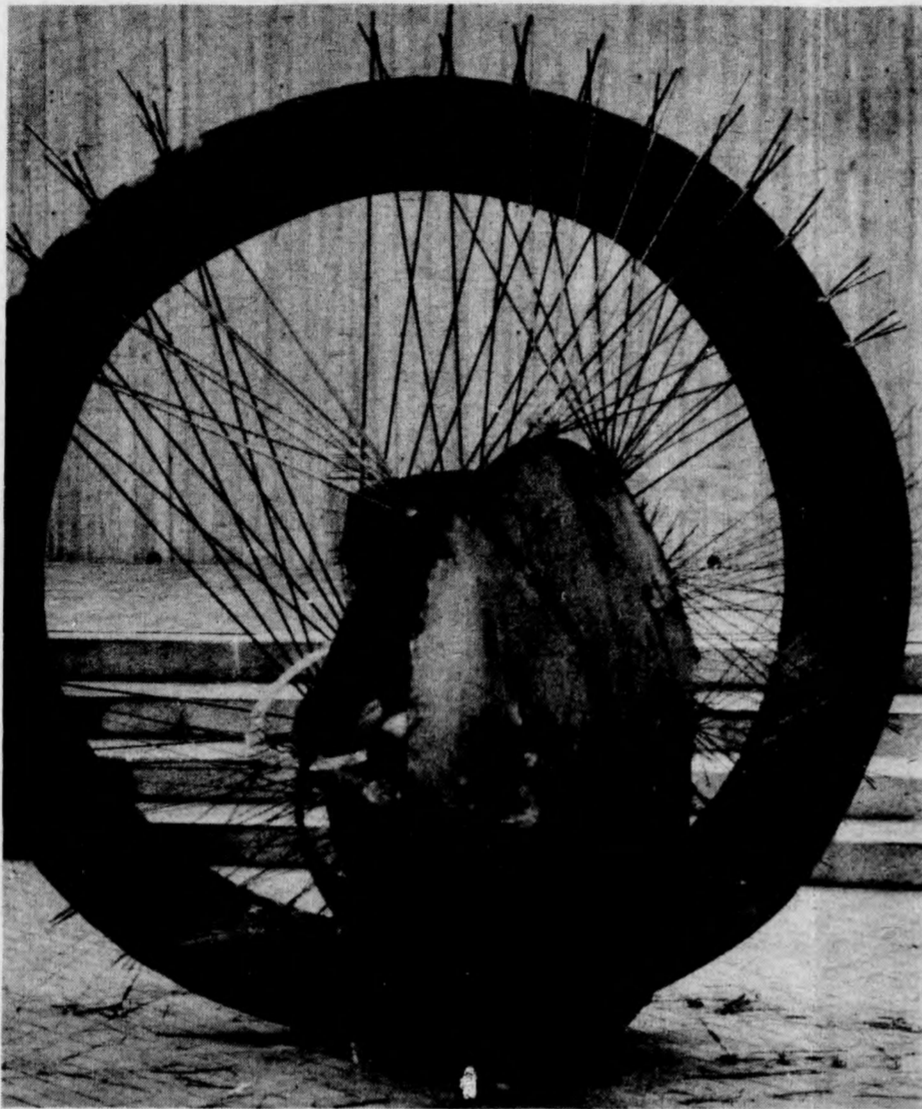
time. Albert Franck, John Meredith, Claude Tounsignant, Josef Albers, Karel Appel, Jack Chambers, Harold Town highlight a list that goes on and on.

The collection also includes 11 Honore Daumier lithographs, acquired by a committee member in Europe one summer. The posters in Burton auditorium are Toulouse-Lautrec lithographs.

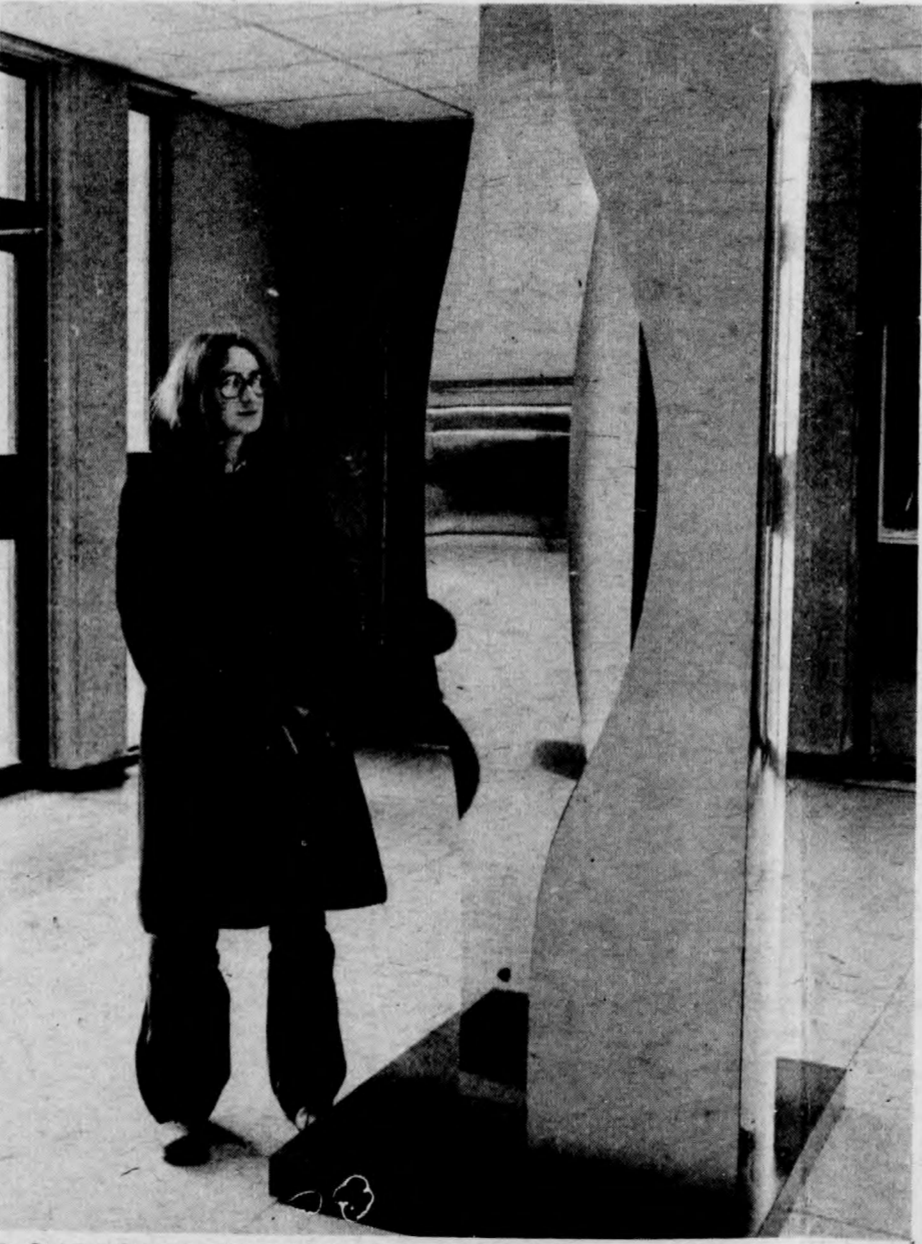
At the present time, there is no committee for further purchases of art, although fine arts dean Joseph Green said plans are "moving ahead for a committee with a new focus, that would serve as a founding board for the York gallery and the whole visual environment".

Greenwood sees the new committee as "imminent" and is "anxious to explore the ways and means of a financing operation". As of yet there is no budget to work with.

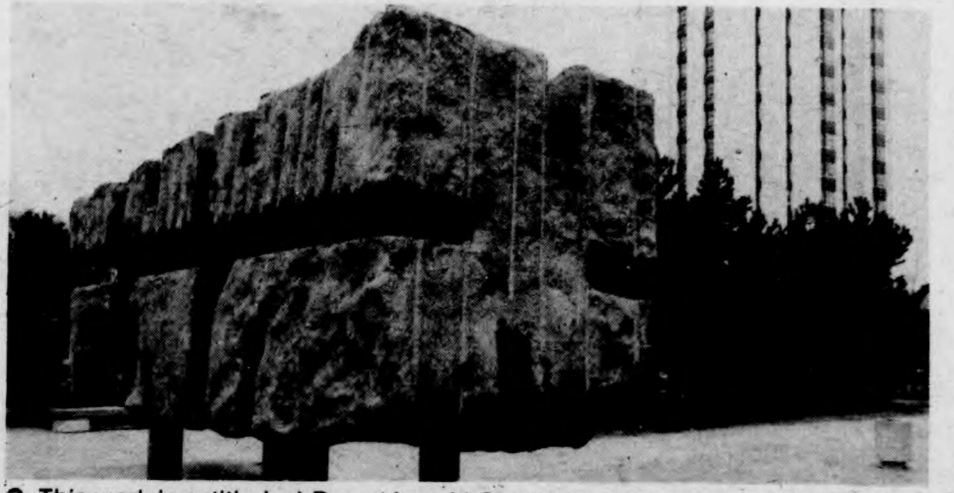
The new committee, says Greenwood, "will have broader terms of reference," and hopefully will include a sub-committee to act as trustees of AGYU. Greenwood said any interested students would be invited to sit on the committee.



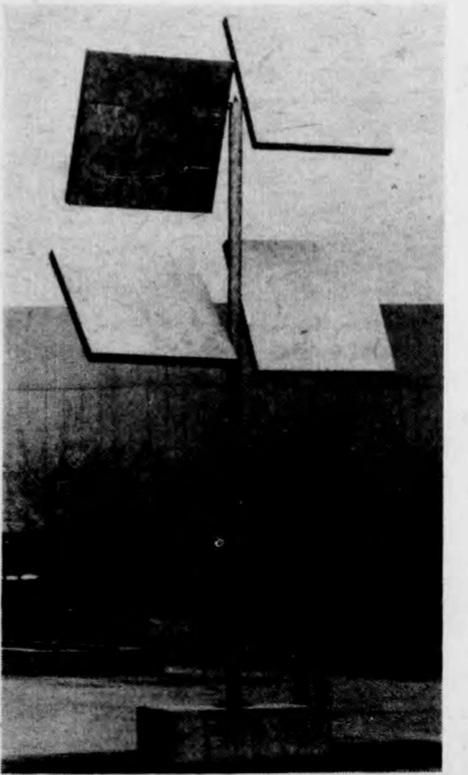
B. This delightful piece has no name. Is it situated in: a) the Winters courtyard; b) the Stong courtyard; c) outside the Phase II building; or d) in Curtis Lecture Hall L? (Answers on p. 11)



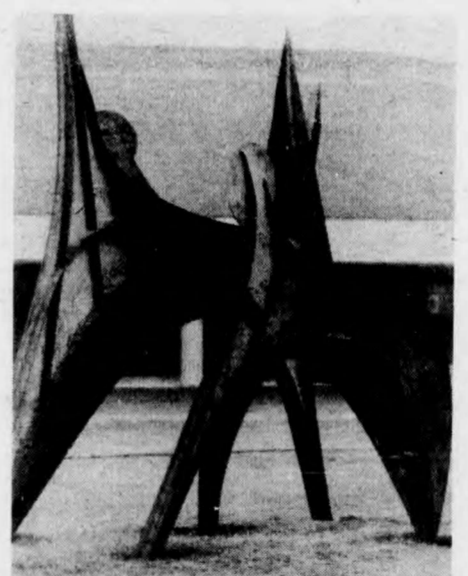
D. Shirley Brown admires this piece called: a) Concavex; b) Mating Couple; c) Twining Figures; or d) Amusement Park. (Answer on page 11.)



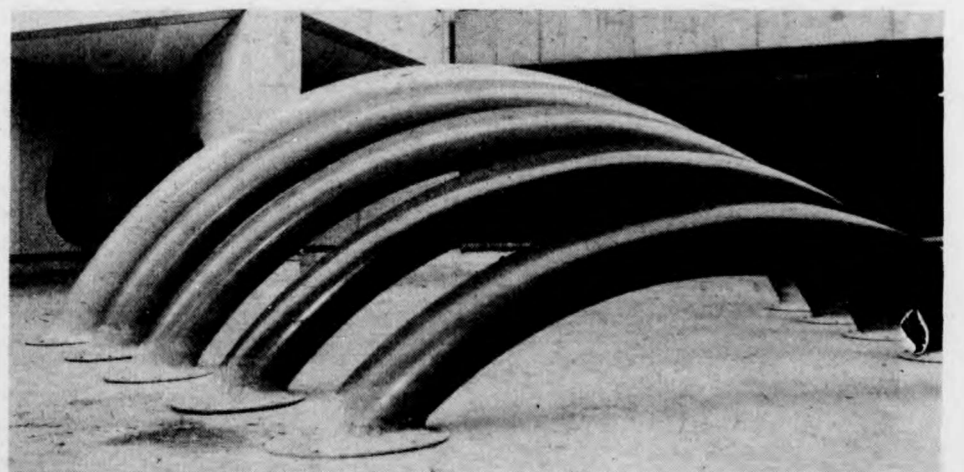
C. This work is entitled: a) Dog at bay; b) Swastika; c) Presence; or d) Alienation. Can you read the plaque on the side?



F. This piece is: a) Windmill; b) Four Squares in a Square; c) Domination of Man; or d) Fly Swatter. Would you sit under it?



G. Everyone's favourite: a) Young Dancers; b) Model of Man; c) Jubilation; d) Heavy Metal.



H. A weird one: a) Rainbow; b) Cylindrical World; c) Future Shock; or d) Centuries.