

Above: Johannes Zits poses with Sister's portrait Below: Zits' mother poses with own portrait

Johannes Zits was raised and educated in Edmonton. Zits now resides in Toronto, where he recently completed a BFA degree with hounours at York University. His current show at Latitude 53 Gallery comprises paintings and drawings of individuals that Zits knows well, most often family members and close friends.

Zits' personal mode of expression in these portraits is unique: "With portrait-based painting," the artist explained, 'I am attempting to achieve more than the straightforward depiction of a person's facial

A close relationship with all of his subjects allows Zits to experiment with interpretation: "The portrait subjects in this show are all members of my family, people who I know well and over the longest period of real time. Choosing these subjects allows me greater honesty in the interpretation, compared to the portrayal of people I know less

well, who I might be compelled to render in a more idealized manner. Strong awareness of my subjects and their personalities permits my painting of them to be more emotionally accurate by being less physically idealized.'

Johannes Zits has been doing portraits for only a few years. All of the works in this series were painted from slides. Zits has no pretensions about his works being finished masterpieces; he says he is constantly pushing himself, testing his skills in new areas.

"I'm trying to find out just how loose you can do aportrait," said Zits. His goal is to test the line between "painting a person and painting a symbol."

Though he infuses his own emotion into his painting ("when I'm painting my father I think of all those feelings, things that have happened between my father and myself"), Zits admits that when he exhausts the stock of slides, he would like to work with live New era for

Bernie Bloom, manager of Latitude 53, wasn't certain just how long his gallery has been operating in Edmonton. It might be 12 years, but it's certainly been more than ten.

No matter how long Latitude 53 has been in the city, the important point is that it has been providing a unique, active alternative to mainstream galleries.

Located in a new space (they just moved in June) at 10920-88 Avenue, Latitude 53 has a mandate to not only provide gallery space to new artists, but also to bring art to the

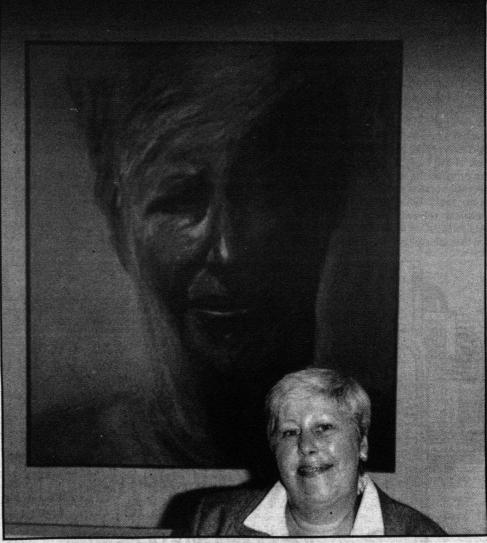
community

With the help of a Canada Works Program (which ends on October 12,) Latitude 53 has developed a community extension program. This program will put art and artists in places where they are not usually found.

For example, you may have seen the large "Totem" kitty corner to the Garneau Theatre. This 40- foot wooden artifact was constructed by Red Deer arttist Norm Wenshler and it will be followed by other exhibits and dramatic performances in Edmonton's parks, retail spaces, and vacant lots.

A new venture for Latitude 53 is a show called A Decade of Posters, which will be at Millbourne Shopping Centre starting Monday, September 17. This show is a departure from their usual menu of photgraphs, paintings, peotry, music and mixed media.

Latitude 53 also has a visiting artists program that cooperates with such diverse institutions as The Ring-House Gallery, Grant McEwan College, and Edmonton Parks and Recreation.



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