

# York Professor Harry Pollock's poetry collection springs with the opulence of human experience

by Lilac Cana

*The He and the She of It*, a new book of poetry by York Professor Harry Pollock, springs with the opulence of human experience. This set of 43 poems captures the essences of a lifetime.

**arts**  
film • theatre • galleries • music

In *Finnegan's Wake*, James Joyce proclaims:

"Well you know or don't you kennet or haven't I told you every telling has a taling and *that's* the he and the she of it."

## BOOK

**The He and She of It: Selected Poems**  
written by Harry Pollock  
published by Whitney Publishers  
58 pages

Pollock, a teacher, scholar, performer and researcher of Joyce's work, employs this message to bind his poems together.

From "Ecce Puella," an account of birth, to episodes of Love in its many stages and forms ("The Quick of You," "Cosi fan tutte" and "Lesbia"), and moving gradually towards the territory of Death in "Sic Transit," "Twilight" and "October Night Song," the poems tell of a circular voyage.

Most poems in this collection are brief, direct; they create the effect of

capturing specific moments in Time. "Mnemosyne" (goddess of memory) is merely 10 lines:

"Thoughts of you like butterflies brightly hued wing about my brow. Gossamer memories that cruise and soar and glide. The lepidoptera frivol in motionful delirium. My summer awaits your return."

And "Aphrodite" is not your average love goddess in this passing commentary:

"When she screwed She mewed. Like a kitten. God, but she was thin. Luminous eyes in a Wan, bony face."



Pollock alludes to Greek and Latin historical figures to enhance the classically organic feeling of these "talings."

Longer poems, too, contain rhythms which link them to ageless mythologies. In "Ulysses and Calypso," the famous love story of the adventurer Ulysses (Odysseus, in Greek) and the nymph Calypso is the backdrop for a more modern affair, set in the 60s, being recalled from the 80s.

The lovers, dining in a Greek restaurant (probably somewhere on the Danforth), enjoy "goblet(s) of retsina" and "the feast of lamb and aubergine." Suddenly, "The skena dissolves" and they are in "Calypso's condominium and/Calypso's bed" sharing "two tabs of L.S.D." They have become "psychedelic pilgrims tripping out with Baba Ram Dass as he intones 'Tales of the Maharishi'"

recorded in some remote Indian Ashram."

The scenario moves quickly from "Calypso and I are on a/sexual roller coaster approaching/Nirvana" to "Farewell/she decrees. /Penelope awaits your return."

*The He and the She of It* covers a wide range of subjects. Structurally, the poems range from free verse to Shakespearean sonnets and a villanelle or two. There's a bit of this, a splash of that.

There are poems about Toronto ("Cityscape," "Our Town") and a tribute to Glenn Gould, and musings about the academic life ("Nihon Jin" is about an anal-retentive "Professor of Social Sciences. M.A. Ph.D.," whose "academic specialty is/self-destruction").

All in all, Harry Pollock's Selected Poems are — how else to put it? — extremely enjoyable. *The He and the She of It* affirms a sense of wholeness and furthers understanding of the human spirit.

# Photography focuses on interior spaces

by Lee-Anne Moore

Lynne Cohen's photography, currently featured at the Art Gallery of York University, is comprised of a series of photographs focusing on interior spaces. There is a disquieting element inherent in the collection; the artist explores feelings of claustrophobia and relates them to a distrust apparent in society.

Cohen documents the interiors of frightening places alluding to violence and/or death: target ranges, mortuary schools, warehouses and scientific laboratories. The images are disturbing. The photographic work shows Cohen's modernist influences and deals directly, and unapologetically, with the contemporary world.

Implicit within the photographed images is a preoccupation with deception and illusion. Cohen is fascinated with the ways in which things are not what they appear.

Cohen works with an old-fashioned view camera to manipulate long exposure times in an effort to capture the stillness and sterility of the locations. The viewer is discouraged from any direct identification with the photographs because of the absence of human form.

"My aim," Cohen says, "is to make pictures about the absence of human life packed with human presence... I would like my photographs to reveal a struggle between reality and illusion, between the authentic and the simulated, to tell stories so filled with plot that they are incomprehensible."

Is this a true reflection of technological society as it is emerging into the twenty-first century? The perspective of the camera lens reveals a cold world devoid of compassion.

The exhibition is fascinating because it is an invitation to learn something about ourselves and be con-

fronted with dangerous aspects of our world and society.

Lee-Anne Moore will be giving a guided tour of and lecture on the Art Gallery of York University's exhibition of the works of Lynne Cohen at 12:30, Tuesday, March 10.

# York theatre student Mohamed creates *The Monster*

by Sally Szuster

Derek Mohamed's *The Monster* is not conventional theatre. As a matter of fact, calling it theatre is dubious.

*The Monster* is "a rock concert, an art exhibit, a play — a multi-media project," Mohamed said. With recorded music, slide projections and visual arts, the piece is an attempt to recreate images of modern urban living.

"I want to de-emphasize the concept of 'the play'" Mohamed explained.

## PREVIEW

**The Monster**  
written and directed by Derek Mohamed  
starring Josh Ball and Krista Ellis  
Centre for Film and Theatre  
March 10 to 14

*The Monster, or How to Commute Through the Looking Glass Never World*, is the story of two people who need one another but are stuck in an environment of despair and misery.

The play, which is filled with images of travel, portrays the worldview of an urban commuter. "Just as Alice in Wonderland and Wendy in Never Never Land," Mohamed remarked, "I went to Toronto."

Mohamed's ability to distance himself from what he discovered in the city allows him to accurately portray it.

Despite the show's sombre nature, Mohamed maintained that the bleak stories are comical. "I just want the audience to have a good time," he said. "It's like being drunk with your friends on the subway and suddenly realizing how really dirty the place is..."

*The Monster* features live music by Random Killing, a band Mohamed described as "high energy, thrash, nuclear core." "I want people to go crazy," he said.

By inviting the audience to participate in the action, Mohamed seeks an active audience/performer relationship. "I want to welcome the audience into the space and make them believe they're in a different world."

Mohamed, a third year Theatre Studies student at York, controls many creative aspects of his production. As well as writing *The Monster* over the past year, Mohamed directs and acts in it.

pm. His performance will include works by Stamitz and Mozart. For more information on either of these concerts, call the music department, 736-5186.

York's finest dancers-in-training take the stage in Spring Dance '92, the dance department's annual year-end downtown concert. The program includes Darcey Callison's *Angelology*, Arwin Carpenter's *Sang-Froid*, *Sola Scriptura* by Alvin Tolentino, Holly Small's *Cheap Sunglasses* and *Big Circle*, a collaborative work created and performed by the musicians and two dancers of the York Dance Ensemble. The highlight is the world premier of Anna Blewchamp's restaging of Gweneth Lloyd's ballet *The Wise Virgins*.

Spring dance '92 appears at the Betty Oliphant Theatre, 404 Jarvis Street, Friday March 13 (8 pm) and Saturday, March 14 (2 and 8 pm). Admission: \$15, student \$10. Tickets available through the dance department (736-5137) or at the door one hour before curtain.

# campus events calendar

Spring is in the air. Grass is growing. Trees are blooming. Theatre productions are being put up. As well as Derek Mohamed's *The Monster*, previewed elsewhere this issue, you can see *From Within the Shelter*, written by Romeo Ciolfi and starring Oliver Sutherns and Lisa Ciolfi. You can find it in the Samuel Beckett Theatre, 112 Stong College, from March 17 to 21. Shows start at 8 pm, and there is a matinee Friday, March 20 at 2. Admission: Pay What You Can.

A. R. Gurney's *Love Letters*, starring Armen Kazazian and Robin Gurney, appears at Samuel Beckett from March 11 to 14. Showtime is 7 pm; PWYC. For more information on either of these shows, call the Samuel Beckett Theatre, extension 77326.

In the Fine Arts II Lobby, Beyond the Yellow Brick Road productions will present David French's *Salt Water Moon* (March 16, 18, 20) alternating with Jane Wagner's *The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe* (March 17, 19, 21). Showtime is 8 pm. Tickets: \$3 per show, \$4 for both shows.

On Friday, March 13 a *Cabaret* will be held at the Underground. Tickets are \$4 in advance, \$5 at the door, and can be purchased at the FA III box office or the Student Centre Info booth.

The *Tim Posgate Quartet*, featuring former York music students Posgate on guitar, Andy Milne on piano, Kevin Dempsey on drums and Steve Holly on base, blows some hot jazz at 12:30, March 11 in Dacary Hall, 050 Mclaughlin. For more information, call the music department, 736-5186.

Percussionist Ken Shorley appears on Thursday, March 12 in Dacary Hall as part of the *Student Recital Series*. The programme includes original compositions by the fourth year music student and York graduate Michael Robinson, as well as works by John cage, William Cahn and Aaron Copland. The performance starts at 7:30.

Violist Jeff Wilkinson appears in Dacary Hall the following day at 7

