

You should know that it is considered definitely low-minded to try and buy any kind of book in Canada, even from a bookseller. —Malcolm Lowry

arts

## Everything old is new again in familiar repositioning at Glendon Gallery exhibition

By HENRY SUM

**R**e-positioning the Familiar, an exhibition of sculpture by five Canadian artists is showing at the Glendon Gallery until October 28.

As the show's title suggests, the work is about the familiar appearance of things and how an alteration of their form creates an entirely different point of view.

Immediately upon entering the gallery, one is confronted by a very elegant specimen case. Richly lacquered in black, the piece stands approximately three and a half feet high and is three feet square. Entitled "The Fish Cabinet" (1980) by Spring Hurlbut, it looks like a cross between a necropolis and an aquarium. One experiences shock and something akin to nausea when viewing the myriad collection of dead fish in the glass cabinet.

Miss Hurlbut apparently became interested in the dehydrated fish sold in Chinese fish markets. She started putting them in bowls of water and watching their transformation from dry stiff matter into states of rejuvenation. Taking the fish to her cottage harbor, she would dip them in the lake and attempt to propel them through the water. "I felt like I was animating the fish," said Hurlbut. The experience was enough to have her pursue the gilled creatures in her art.

Hurlbut constructed the specimen case in a

very orthodox fashion, "as a fitting way to show the delicacy of the fish." With further viewing, the dignified structure of the case, with its swirling mass of fish, becomes a riveting inquiry into life and death.

Adjacent to this piece is another oddity. Ian Carr-Harris's "The Viola Lesson by Balthus" (1974) look like a tall black table with a picture frame on it. The desk is modelled after the secrétaire, a writing desk which hails from the 18th century, and the period of King Louis the 16th.

The subject of the work turns out to be not only the relationship between painting and photography but also a study of voyeurism. According to Carr-Harris, "Voyeurism is a natural state for us. The question then becomes what the content of our voyeurism is."

It appears that the photograph of a painting (Balthus) sitting on the table depicts a heated sexual exchange, possibly even rape, involving an older woman and a young girl. By viewing this picture and searching for the hidden drawer, as specified by the lettering on the table, we become participants in the act of voyeurism.

Finding the drawer and the ghastly photograph therein, we experience a distasteful kind of complicity. When we look at Balthus' reproduction on the table, we are simply titillated, but when we are confronted with the



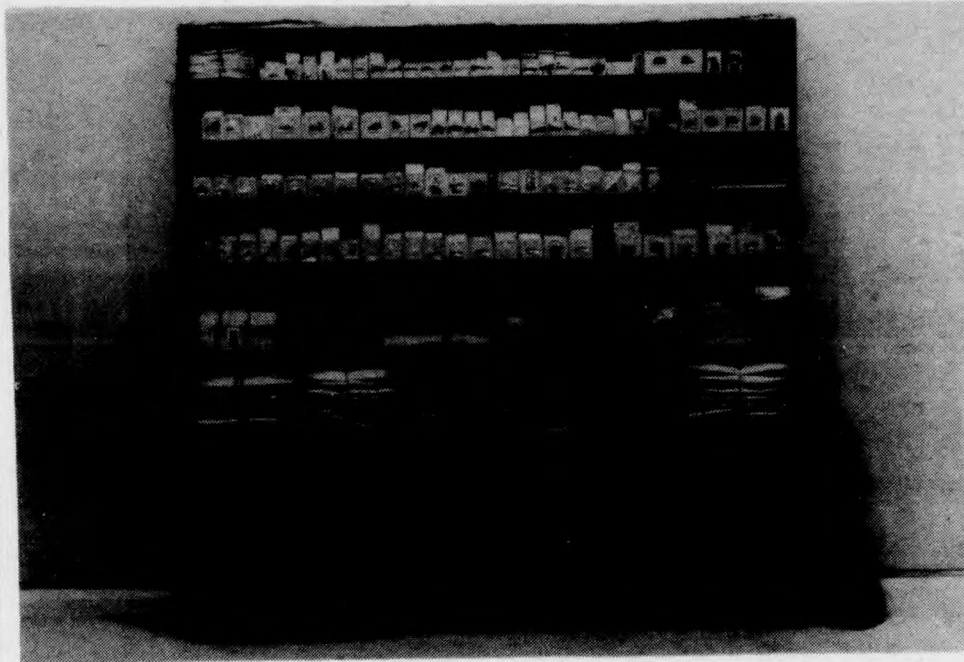
Ian Carr-Harris, *The Viola Lesson*

brutal realism of the photograph in the drawer, we ask ourselves whether such perverse curiosity is really worth the price.

Judith Schwarz's "Gallery Chair, Forest Chair" (1980) are two almost identical green structures constructed in wood lattice. One structure sits prominently in the centre of the gallery and the other is outside in a wooded area. Despite the friendly cottage quality about them, their squarish, orange-crate design makes them look uncomfortable.

We are left to consider how often we take sitting down in a chair for granted and how an environmental change further alters our preconceived notions about chairs.

It would be rather difficult to miss Liz Magor's enormous green shelf-unit. Taking up about half of a wall, it is an offbeat collection of seeds, weeds and wildgrains. Entitled "Sowing Weeds in Lanes and Ditches" (1976), it conjures up the legend of Psyche who was forced by the jealous Aphrodite to sort out an enormous heap of seeds—putting each type of seed into a separate pile—as one of the tasks required in order for her to see her beloved Cupid again. Magor has similarly sifted through mother nature's overflowing store of seeds, meticulously packaging and categorizing them according to their common names. Clay pots and worn tools play a part in conveying a rustic flavor to the piece.



Liz Magor's enormous green shelf-unit entitled *Sowing Weeds in Lanes and Ditches*. "Magor has...sifted through mother nature's store of seeds, meticulously packaging and categorizing them," says *Excalibur* critic Henry Sum of work in new Glendon Gallery show.

## "'BROTHER' IS JOHN SAYLES' BEST FILM YET.

It's 'Mars On The Hudson', 'Cheers Goes To Harlem', and 'E.T. Rides The Underground Railroad' rolled into one."

"SMART AND FUNNY...The Brother confirms that Mr. Sayles is unquestionably one of the most interesting and exciting young directors making movies today."

"Let 'The Brother' work its unique refreshing magic on you...an amazing and amusingly original movie."

★★★ ½. HILARIOUS...loaded with funny scenes and entertaining characters...among the year's most offbeat films."

**THE BROTHER FROM ANOTHER PLANET**

A New Film by JOHN SAYLES

"A science-fiction comedy with more than its share of gags, chills and good feeling."

"THE BROTHER HAS REAL VOLTAGE, the kind that keeps you energized long after you've left the theatre."

"OFFBEAT AND ORIGINAL...an urban, underground answer to 'E.T.'"

STARTS FRIDAY AT THE UPTOWN THEATRE

## ArtStuff ON CAMPUS Continuing

□ Timothy Dougdale's collection of recent photographs opens is on exhibit at the Samuel J. Zacks Gallery until Friday. 109 Stong College. Hours: M-F, 12-5. 667-3055/3061.

□ Warren Grave's *The Last Real Summer* runs until Saturday. Directed by Steven Ross and Karen Conderan. 8 p.m. \$2. Samuel Beckett Theatre, Stong College. 667-3095.

### Oct. 11

□ Graduate student Jeff Nolte has his photographs on exhibit for three weeks. Calumet Student Lounge, Calumet College.

### Oct. 16

□ Winters Reading Series continues with Carol Shields. Senior Common Room, Winters College.

## OFF CAMPUS

### Continuing

□ Sharon Pollock's *Doc* plays until Nov. 4. Toronto Free Theatre. 26 Berkeley St. \$6-\$12. 368-2858.

□ David French's *Salt-Water Moon* plays until Nov. 4. Tarragon Theatre. 30 Bridgman Ave. \$6-\$12. 531-1827.

□ Tennessee Williams' *Vieux Carre*, an autobiographical account of New Orleans during the late 1930s, is presented by Equity Showcase Theatre. Studio Theatre, 235 Queens Quay West. Free. Reservations: 963-9226.

□ *The Dressing Gown*, written and directed by Sky Gilbert, at the Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, 666 King St. W. Through Oct. 21. Tickets \$6.25, \$8.25. Showtimes: W-S 8:30 p.m., Sun. 2:30 p.m. 927-8998 Reviewed this issue.

□ University College Drama plays Eugene Ionesco's *Man With Bag* through to Saturday. Students \$3.50. 79A St. George St. 978-8668. Reviewed this issue.

### Oct. 11

□ Colour Positive, An Anti-Racist Film Festival, screens controversial works from around the globe on consecutive nights until Oct. 17. Several locations downtown, and at the Yorkwoods Library, tonight and next Wednesday. More info: 964-6401.

### Oct. 12

□ Glendon College teacher and poet Michael Ondaatje reads from his new book of poetry *Secular Love* tonight at Theatre Passe Muraille, 16 Ryerson Ave. 363-8988.

### Oct. 12, 8 P.M.

□ Chicago Filmmaker Adele Friedman will be present for a retrospective screening of her work dating back to 1973. The Funnel. 364-7003.

### Oct. 13

□ Kurelek's *Vision of Canada*, an exhibition of the works of William Kurelek, opens at the Art Gallery of Ontario. 317 Dundas St. W. 977-0414.

### Oct. 15, 9 P.M.

□ Christopher Dewdney, Mary di Michele and Judith Fitzgerald are among the readers for a launching of the new anthology Canadian Poetry Now: 20 Poets of the '80's. The Groaning Board, 131 Jarvis St. Free.