

Rural carvings featured in Art Gallery display

This exhibition of folk art is outside the mainstream of contemporary art, most of these works come from the still waters of rural Nova Scotia. Four types of work are shown: carving, painting, decorated furniture and textiles.

It is predictable that in a rural setting carvings predominate. A wooden population is here assembled, of people, animals, birds and fishes - all from the familiar world of the artist's experience. Most of the carvings are of pine because it is an available wood and is easily worked. Although these forms come from the forest, few carvers leave the wood in its natural state. Most of the carvings are brightly painted with a palette of colour provided by the hardware merchant. Colour assists the carver in his transformation of a tree into the "reality" of a human or animal figure.

Collins Eisenhauer describes his working technique: "using a chain-saw 'to rough it out', then a plane and a knife 'to smoothen it up'. For the smaller carvings he uses only a jack knife. Of these smaller pieces he says: 'I do them with my hand and my brain'."

The folk artist approaches the task of carving without an

academic knowledge of the craft of sculpture. He solves his many technical problems intuitively and with a simplicity and directness that is part of the appeal of his work.

Since carving is three-dimen-

sional, a carver can copy nature precisely. But despite the subject matter of these works they rarely seem to come from the direct observation of nature. They are memory images. The carver has selected for emphasis those

features that he considers essential. This selection of essential characteristics is one of the strengths of the artist's vision. People interested in the analysis of vision, such as E.J. Land, point out that the eye does

not need, or use, much of the information that flows into it from the everyday world. The images of folk art often reveal this ability to select from a wealth of detail.

A carving such as Collins Eisenhauer's "Fiddler and the Cat" shows the folk artist at work as he says: "with hand and brain" arranging the elements of form and space in his carving. The fiddler sits, a compact, absorbed figure in his chair, separated from the dancing cat by a chequered space while the cat dances on and on to music that we will never hear. We feel that we are spectator in a small world of mysterious and suggestive relationships between people and animals. "I try to make them humorous," the carver says and we can imagine a smile playing around his lips as he works, turning the carving in his hand. We see him at work in one of the larger carvings, his self-portrait.

This art has many styles. "Folk" is not one style of art, folk art is not confined to a certain historical period, folk art is not inevitably rural." In this exhibition appear many works assembled by pilgrim collectors who have travelled throughout the Province to find these evidences of twentieth-century folk art in Nova Scotia.



Presently on display at the Beaverbrook Art Gallery, wood and paint carving by Collins Eisenhauer "Man Playing Fiddle and Cat Dancing."

"Taming of the Shrew" features local talent

By ROSEMARIE HOPPS

Shakespeare, as written, has proved a rock on which many a student has found him or herself stranded, uncomprehending and bored. Shakespeare as performed is entirely another matter.

Shakespeare, probably one of the best known and most often quoted authors, wrote to be performed. Only as his works unfold "on the boards" can the full gamut of his power over the stage and the players on it be fully appreciated.

"The Taming of the Shrew", a Shakespearean comedy, is at present playing at TNB, starting each night at 8 p.m.

TNB has not kept entirely to the text of "The Taming of the Shrew" as Shakespeare wrote it. They have included the induction (which is excluded in the most widely seen film version of "The Taming of the Shrew," that which starts Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton) however, they have made Christopher Sly and the hostess of the first 13 lines a modern duo. Starting at line 14, the characters revert to the manner of speech and clothing (except for Sly who remains in contemporary raiments) that we find in Shakespeare's play.

The TNB production had of necessity to move the interruption of the action by Sly, which in Shakespeare's text comes immediately prior to Petruchio's first entrance, to a point earlier in Act 1, Scene 1 so that Sly could return at the appropriate moment as Petruchio. By the 80th line in Act 1, Scene 1 Sly has completely transformed into Petruchio and the action follows faithfully Shakespeare's text.

One other change from Shakespeare's text is introduced in the form of an epilogue wherein

Christopher Sly reverts to the modern character and is taken offstage by a policeman.

I have for the most part only praise for TNB's production of "The Taming of the Shrew". Dan MacDonald, who played Christopher Sly and Petruchio, gave the strong performances his dual roles required. Wilson Gonzalez, a UNB student, played a fine part as the cook in Petruchio's volatile household. Prudence Herber, who

has also taken part in UNB Drama's productions, played dual roles as the barmaid in the induction and epilogue and as "the widow", wife to Hortensio, in the final scene. Prudence is a strong, accomplished actress who carried off her two roles with aplomb.

Lally Cadeau, who played Kate cannot be faulted on her acting ability, however her voice often sounded strained as though she found it hard to project throughout

the entire theatre.

Lighting for "The Taming of the Shrew" was exciting and original. The green and blue lights through which drifted a layer of smoke provided a dream-like, other worldly transition (especially when coupled with the modernistic, synthesized music) between the play and the prologue and epilogue.

Scenery was one basic piece which provided for ease of

location changes and allowed the action of the play to progress smoothly.

Pre-performance music, played by Stephen Peacock, proved a relaxing, authentic entree to the Elizabethan play.

All in all, my judgement is that TNB's "The Taming of the Shrew" is well worth the seeing, whether one is a Shakespeare buff or a novice to the delights of Elizabethan comedy.

"Between Friends" exhibit honours U.S.

For the media, business is booming: no shortage of news-worthy material. Our hundredth birthday party story of ten little provinces and how they grew finds its "happily ever after" challenged to a rewrite by Levesque's Quebec. Our southern neighbour closes off its second century with the dishonourable discharge of one president, the interim appointment of another, and the electorate's displacement of him by a third. The whole face of North America seems ready to undergo political plastic surgery at any moment. The strivings of the press and television cameras to record every crack and fissure of that countenance sometimes overwhelm us.

When this news bombardment begins to wear you down, you might find it refreshing to cast a glance towards Canada's definition in her own eyes and in those of her nearest neighbour. Perhaps if we examine what we are and where we have come from, we will be able to look ahead more insightfully towards where we are going.

"Between Friends/Entre Amis" has this kind of expansive vision

to offer you. A collection of photographs commissioned by the Still Photography Division of the National Film Board, it was issued in special-edition book form as Canada's official gift in honour of the United States' Bicentennial festivities. It is probably as such - billed simply as a volume "about the border between Canada and the United States" - that the work is best known; if its sales record can be taken as any fair indication, it has swept both nations by storm. But these self-same photographs are shortly to become much more widely - and powerfully - accessible to Frederictonians, with their exhibition from March 9 to March 27, 1977, shared "between friends": half of the show will appear at the National Exhibition Centre (corner of Queen and Carleton Streets) and half at the UNB Art Centre (memorial Hall).

Sensitively and captivatingly depicted is the rapport we share with the American people: the nature of the two lands, their inhabitants and their indissoluble bonds. A brief return to the role of our press cameras might help, at this point, to clarify what sets this

exhibit apart. To record the news, certain moments - a grin or a grimace, a shaking of hands or a shaking of heads - are single out, crystallized, preserved for posterity. Pop goes the flashbulb, and the stroke out of time is frozen, a single grain of sand arrested in its tumbling course through the hourglass. But film is sometimes faced with a subtler challenge; causing whole vistas of time and space to open outward from the static image. The finite blossoms beyond its boundaries and strikes a familiar cord in the experience of the beholder. It is this second way of seeing with the lens which is beautifully embodied in "Between Friends/Entre Amis".

National Exhibition Centre hours for March will be Monday - Wednesday from 12:00 noon - 4:00 p.m., Thursday - Friday, 12:00 noon - 9:00 p.m., Saturday 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. and Sunday 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m., while the Art Centre on campus is open Monday - Friday from 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. and Sunday from 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Treat yourself to a change in routine, from the diet of doom and gloom you digest every day. Come

feast your eyes!

The largest single work ever undertaken by the National Film Board, the nine-part film series, "Struggle for a Border", will be screened this month at the National Exhibition Centre in connection with the exhibit "Between Friends". The movies, each one hour long, trace the history of border relations between Canada and the United States from the discovery of America to the present. Come dream with the explorers, diplomats and visionaries, Thursday evenings at 7:30 and 8:45 p.m. and Saturday afternoons at 3:00 p.m. No admission charge.

Tall tales and fantastic folklore are the features of this month's Wednesday storyhours at the National Exhibition Centre as the "Tell a Tale" series zeroes in on Canadian and American legends. Glooscap, Babe the Blue Ox, Johnny Appleseed, Old Storm-along, Annie Christmas and a host of others hope you will come share in the fun, March 16 and 23 from 2 to 3 p.m.