

The Gateway

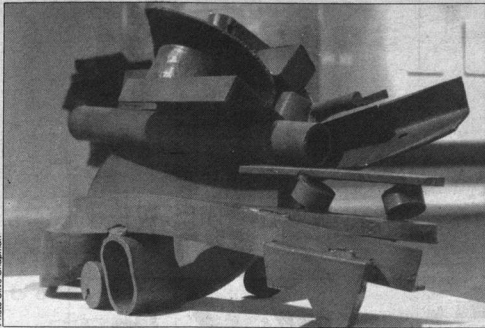


Photo: Dave Chapman

Lyle Lis' "Big Show-off" contains pieces of the old U of A hospital.

Art at McMullen

review by Jonathan Wiseman

When people hear of abstract art, the initial reaction will usually be similar to that of a confrontation with some obscure Gregorian chant: "What is it supposed to be?", "It doesn't really do anything for me" and the clincher: "Is it really art?" The University Hospital's McMullen Gallery is trying to heighten awareness and sensitivity to this artistic format and dispel general conceptions about the "impenetrability" of abstract meaning with their current "get in touch with abstract art" exhibition.

The show has been running since September 8 and will continue until October 31. As it stands, the U of A Hospital is the only such facility in North America boasting an art gallery. It is intended as a retreat for patients and visitors but it is open to the public as well, thereby exposing Alberta's top artists to a broad base of viewers. And these artists are good.

Most of the paintings and sculptures come from the artists' private collections and were selected by the gallery due to a strong tactile element in order to adhere to the "get in touch" theme. These works are not there to intimidate; rather, they are there to touch, to look at, and to make you feel.

The prominent artist here is Jack Bush, who is considered to be the father of Canadian abstract art. From his tiny chalk and pencil "Water Music" to the striking linearity of "Pink Rain", Bush demonstrates his uncanny ability to evoke feelings from simple joy to deep elation. The entire show actually embodies a generally optimistic sentiment: the colours tend to be bright and most artists use

a rather light pallet.

One of my favourite paintings here is Philip Mann's "China Sea". The composition is highly balanced, yet paradoxically, it is turbulent at the same time. One can literally see the tension in the white swirls as the thick gobs of paint appear to be struggling to retain their form. Conversely, the aquamarine background has a calming background and moreover, it unifies the work.

"Ky" by John Key is also very interesting as well as being extremely harmonious. Red and green areas are set off against each other and thus a juxtaposition of complimentary colours is achieved and further emphasized by the plain, white background. What is left here must surely be art at its most fundamental level. Everything is reduced to pure line, shape, and colour.

In addition to paintings, there are also several recent sculptures in the gallery. One noteworthy yet typical example is Catherine Burgess' "Stele II", which is a highly mechanical design constructed from welded steel. It almost seems that this piece could perform a highly specialized industrial function if it were hooked up to a power supply. Although clearly geometrical on one level, the design is actually irrational and non-functional when more closely examined.

For those of you who are not familiar with abstract art, the McMullen Gallery is a great place to get acquainted. A wealth of literature is provided about the art and the facility in itself, and a highly informed staff is present to answer your questions. It's worth a look.

Summers goes solo but sounds too bland

Andy Summers
XYZ
MCA Records

review by Mike Spindloe

Since the final demise of the Police following their *Synchronicity* album and tour, all three band members have been keeping busy: Stewart Copeland with soundtracks and an interest in African music, and Sting with trying to become a movie star pin-up as well as a rock star pin-up, while releasing a couple of fine jazz-oriented albums. Last but not least, Andy Summers has made a couple of experimental albums with guitar wizard Robert Fripp.

Now Summers has returned with his first solo album, which could actually be billed as a duet album between Summers and producer extraordinaire David Hentschel (the man behind the board for some of Genesis' best — and worst — work). Summers sings and plays guitar and bass while Hentschel looks after keyboards and "drum programs". Apart from scattered guest appearances, these two are responsible for the entire album.

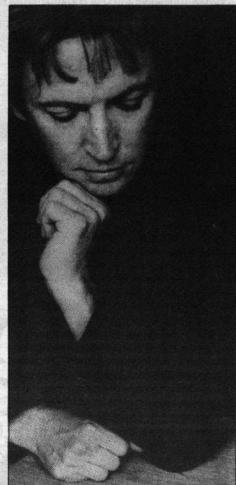
This type of production has some commonly manifested advantages and disadvantages, many of which are evident here. The main advantage is that the artist has direct control over every sound that goes on the record; therefore you hear exactly what he wants you to hear. On the other hand, the lack of a real band can give studio projects a stilted, sterile sound that good songwriting can only partly remedy.

There are no real problems with the sound here. Summers' guitar work stands out, as it should, and there are only a few moments when the drum programs sound, uh, programmed. The unfortunate part, though, is that the songwriting isn't all that good. It's not bad, just bland, and ultimately this album winds up sounding like something between Asia and GTR — two other projects featuring talented people who should have known better.

It's an old story now: real emotion and advantage gets lost somewhere in the drive to satisfy conservative radio programmers. Andy Summers, unlike Sting, isn't a big enough name on his own to do something

different and expect it to sell, so instead he's sold out, or at least wimped out.

What makes all of this even more of a shame is that Summers has a long history of actually doing innovative things, going right back to a stint in an embryonic incarnation of Soft Machine 20 years ago and including



Andy Summers in his first solo record

several albums as a member of seminal British lunatic Kevin Coyne's band, his collaborations with Fripp and even the Police. Hopefully he will look backward for inspiration and comes up with something more interesting next time around.

NEW-AGE FUTON MFG.

"The Ultimate in Furniture Comfort"

4361 - 99 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T6E 5E4

10 am - 6 pm (M - F)
11 am - 5 pm (Sat)
(403) 436-7839

Students' Union

TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

Deletions & Changes

If you wish to have your name and phone number changed or deleted, please come in to Room 259 SUB and leave your info with the Receptionist between
8 AM - 4:30 PM

DEADLINE: 4:30 PM — Friday, October 23/87

If you submitted the Handbook coupon, we already have you on record.

Thinking Law? Think Toronto

Study Law at University of Toronto

*The myths and realities of:
- how to get in
- what it's like
- special programs
- student housing
- financial aid
- admission to practice

When: Thursday,
October 22, 1987
at 3:00
Where: W2, Tory
Building
Who: Joan Lax,
Assistant Dean and
Director of Admissions,
Faculty of Law,
University of Toronto



WORKING HOLIDAY ABROAD? SWAP

Find out about
(SWAP)

STUDENT WORK ABROAD PROGRAMME
INFO MEETING

Place: Education Bldg. North Room 2-115

Date: October 23/87

Time: 3:00 P.M.

TRAVEL CUTS
Going Your Way!