

MEREDITH, John (John Meredith Smith) (Cont'd)

the Isaacs Gallery was reviewed by Harry Malcolmson⁷ as follows. "Meredith is a painter's painter. His work makes no external references to nature or to the commercial world or to style vogues. It is concerned solely and exclusively with the solving of formal painting problems. In this exhibition, Meredith introduces linear, lasso-like shapes and ladder shapes into a painting space, and then by daringly original color juxtapositions charges the shapes with painting vitality." His other solo shows include Blue Barn Gallery, Ott. (1965); Isaacs Gallery (1967, 69). It was about this time that Barry Lord⁸ wrote a definitive article in *artscanada* on Meredith in which he explained that the artist first produces a coloured ink drawing with pencil, of the design he is to make into a full size painting by making squares over the original design and transferring the design to larger squares drawn on the larger canvas. Some of his canvases are eight feet square and larger. Lord also explained how Meredith produces his various effects and concluded his article as follows, "Meredith isn't comfortable with interpretations of his work as an extension of abstract expressionism or anything else, although his uses of colour and line are evidently firmly rooted in the discoveries of Pollock and Gorky. A long time coming to recognition as a major painter even in Toronto, he has now reached the comfortable stage of selling paintings directly from his studio, and at last is regularly included in Canada's international shows. But he is not anxious to be understood: A consistent son of the age of heroic individualism in art, he values his uniqueness, as man and painter. 'Don't try to explain it all away,' he advised me." The most recent discussions of this artist appear in William Withrow's⁹ *Contemporary Canadian Painting* (1972), and Paul Duval's¹⁰ *Four Decades* (1972). His important group shows include: Montreal Spring Show (1961); Detroit Cultural Centre (1963); "Canadian Art Today", Univ. Waterloo, Ont. (1963, 64, 65); Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York (1963, 64); Sixth Biennial Exhibition of Canadian Painting (1965); International Biennial, Paris, France (1965); Tenth Winnipeg Show (1966); "Canadian Art of Our Time '67", Winnipeg (1967); "Nine Canadians", Inst. of Contemporary Art, Boston (1967); "Canada '67", Union Carbide Bldg., N.Y. (1967); "Eight Artists from Canada", Tel-Aviv Museum (1970); "Toronto Painting, 1953-1965", NGC, Ott. (1972) and others. Meredith is represented in the following collections: Vancouver Art Gallery; Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery, Regina, Sask.; Willstead Art Gal., Windsor, Ont.; University of Waterloo, Ont.; Art Gallery of Ontario; Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Queen's Univ., Kingston, Ont.; National Gallery of Canada, Ott.; The Canada Council Collection, Ott.; Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Mtl., P.Q.; Confederation Art Gallery & Museum, P.E.I.; Museum of Modern Art, NYC; and the private collections of Mrs. Samuel J. Zacks, Tor.; Mr. & Mrs. Avram Isaacs, Tor.; Jessie & Percy Waxer Collection, Tor.; Mr. & Mrs. Edward Levy, Tor.; Dennis Reid, Ott.; Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller, NYC; and many others. In 1968 he married Ursula Keller of Toronto.¹¹

References

- ¹ *North Kent Leader*, Dresden, Ont., Dec. 28, 1967 "Mostly Gossip" by Hugh Templin
- ² *Conservator*, Brantford, Ont., Jan. 23, 1958 "Can Fathom Abstract Art If In Right Perspective" by Dave Billington
- ³ *Artscanada*, April, 1969, No.s 130/131 "John Meredith: Painter" by Barry Lord P. 16
- ⁴ see