

The Arts

at the Art Center

new talent

by Sheelagh Russell

At the present time until February 6, the Studio section of the UNB Art Centre is featuring an exhibition entitled New Talent, the work of three students - G.K. Roberts, Sheila Kurtz and Galen Merrill. The display consists of a wide variety of artistic mediums, ranging from sculpture to water-colours, pencil sketches and prints, and does much to gain approval for the talent of the three contributors.

G.K. Roberts' sculptures are worked in the mediums of clay and plaster of Paris. The representations of human figures are handled with an accuracy of form which does not destroy the fine delicacy of expression, and display both an understanding of the subject and ability of material.

The subjects are largely allegorical or mythopoeic; for example, "screw", "Amour", "Samson Agoniste", "The Dead Christ", whose handling gives even the heroic elements something of a tragic fragility, while the bodies' proportions are aptly and finely rendered. The faces themselves carry in their lines a true aware-



Photo by Ken De Freitas



on the right, sculptures by Blues Roberts

ness of expression. Especially moving is the restraint with which a certain guardedness is portrayed in such works as "Sorrow" and "The Lonely One", having the elusive texture of classic statuary combined with a firmness of emotional grasp.

Sheila Kurtz's works are especially marked by the shadow of sympathetic rendering of simple detail. The prints seem to dwell in an enchanted landscape of mythic beasts, heroic actions and elaborate decoration, made more tangible by warmth and starkness of colour, while the lithographs display a delight both in nature and in the lines of the human form.

The pictures may portray, through choice of medium, colour and design, the opposite atmospheres of lushness and stark simplicity, handled with a light but clear and accurate touch, whether the subject is a moated castle of simple lines of yellow on clear blue, the delightful print, "Cloe", an indulgence of imaginative aura settled in a delicate wash, or an imaginative working in oils.

Galen Merrill's watercolours and pencil drawings have for subject mainly the human form employed in various attitudes and expressions. Shading and outline are the primary techniques utilized in the sketches, while the delicate splashes of colour in the watercolour, "Marjorie's House" lend stability to the portrayal.

An interesting allegorical interpretation of the Russian Revolution is offered in "Never Again", through a design that has many of the elements of poster art; other allegorical renderings are found in such works as those entitled "Love" or "The Brothers", and the artist's talent is favourably displayed in the gentle lines of the figure, "Phideaux".

The New Talent display, while diverse in medium, subject matter and treatment, is mutually complementary in two respects: first in that the artistic work is warmed by something beyond real experience, a certain colouring of life that may take mythopoeic or allegorical forms; and secondly and most importantly, in that the artists share no common talent, a presaging of future works.

Editor's note:

This edito. I in a way is about bureaucracy and inefficiency, but mostly its about the way things get done (or rather, don't get done) at UNB. On September 24, 1971, the editorial said the "Academic and Campus Planning Committee" would prepare a preliminary report for the Senate by December. This preliminary report would suggest some immediate short-term proposals for the creation of a Fine Arts Department at UNB. This would be in time for any staff increases to be included in the Spring budget. The final report was expected to be completed by this Spring.

Last week we went to Dean Condon's office to ask for a copy of the preliminary report, Dean Condon is the head of the Senate Sub-Committee investigating the feasibility of forming a Fine Arts Department at UNB. Asst. Dean Shaw, a member of the committee, informed us that no preliminary report was prepared, and that he didn't expect that any proposals would be made for two years. Two years! They've already had seventeen years of discussion on the topic! Everybody we've spoken to concerned with forming such a department agrees that its a good idea. This includes both Dean Condon and Asst. Dean Shaw.

According to Dean Shaw, the recommendations are so slow in formation because of the many channels they have to go through. The Higher Education Committee must ultimately make the decision as to whether a new department should be added to the Arts Faculty. Before the report will even reach this level, it has to go through several boards and committees within the University, and the policy decided on in this instance will form a precedent for future instances.

Before any of these bureaucratic levels are reached however, the research has to be compiled and a report submitted. In September the Academic and Campus Planning Committee were planning several trips to Universities in the Maritimes that had Fine Arts Department to compare notes and to see what sorts of programmes UNB should offer which wouldn't conflict with existing programmes in the area. Dean Shaw says that the committee has made no trips this fall and that the only progress that has been made this fall is the writing of several letters!

How do other University's manage to introduce new fields of study so quickly while it takes us at least nineteen years to introduce a department that most other University's already have? Other Universities are continually initiating new programmes of study that are concerned with such current concerns as the environment, women's lib. How can UNB graduates expect to compete with these students of more modern training? Must the Atlantic Provinces be forever behind the times?

Dean Shaw suggests the most effective way of getting some results from these committees is for pressure to come from the student body. He says that as more and more students enroll in the existing classes the University will be forced to expand its Fine Arts programme, and points to the twelve drama courses in the English Department, some of which would eventually be included in a Fine Arts Department.

It looks as though more pressure is going to have to be exerted by the student body, as Dean Shaw suggests, to get a little action around here. If you are interested in having courses on film, music, art, painting or any of the arts, support the existing facilities. Visit the Art Centre at Memorial Hall where you can play your choice of their large selection of records, read magazines and look at the interesting exhibits. Attend the concerts sponsored by the Creative Arts Committee and the Resident Musicians. Go to the plays the Drama Society produces. And write letters to the Brunswickan encouraging the administration to more fully develop the arts at UNB.