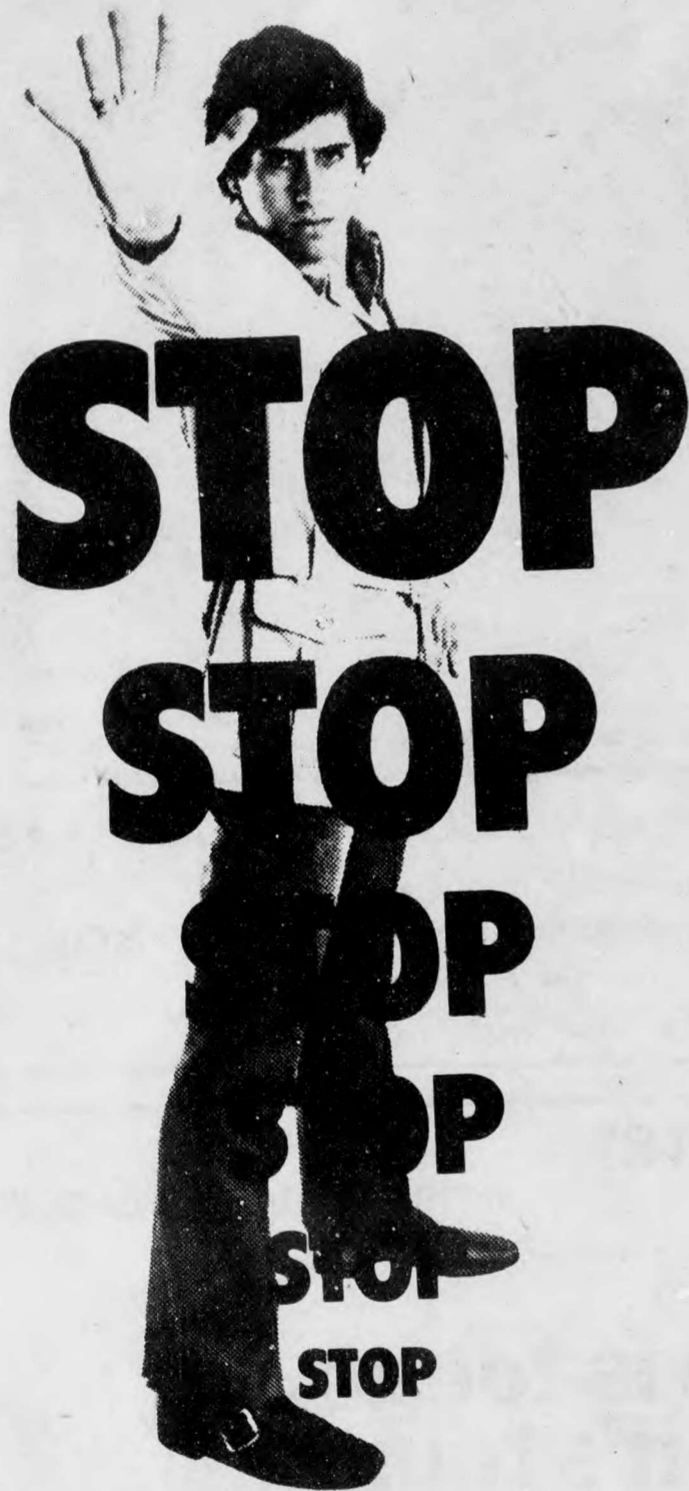


**SPINNING DISCS**

IS NO MORE



**Nine NB artists exhibit works**

By ALAN ANNAND

The Beaverbrook Gallery downtown is presently exhibiting a collection of works by New Brunswick artists. Although only three of the artists featured were actually born in New Brunswick, the remaining six have spent a good portion of their creative lives in the province and therefore earned the right to exhibit side by side with real New Brunswickers. It would be a modest exhibition if it were otherwise. Needless to say, it is folly to attempt to extrapolate a regional style or school from this grouping, for the artists' styles are as divergent as their birthplaces

and artistic backgrounds. Some of the artists are relatively familiar to many people who have taken at least a passing interest in the local scene. Resident artist Bruno Bobak and his wife Molly Lamb have canvases scattered about the UNB campus; the SUB owns a couple of Saint John native Joseph Kashetsky's collage pieces. Lawren P. Harris, Head of the Dept. of Fine Arts at Mount Allison, whose father was in the original Group of Seven, has a number of geometric pieces that are generally eye-pleasing. Miller Brittain, a Saint John native now deceased, has a couple of works depicting religious themes and

a couple that are more or less fantasia. Francis Coutellier, a Professor in the Dept. of Visual Arts at Universite de Moncton, has two large acrylic works. Kathy Hooper, born in Africa and now living in Hampton, N.B., has three works which are vaguely reminiscent of some of Picasso's early work. Jack Humphrey, another Saint John native now deceased, has five works in oils and water colours, accomplished studies of natural subjects. My favourite of the exhibit is David Silverberg, a professor of graphics at Mount Allison, whose three works, replete with gargoyles and nude ladies, reveal a vision that is at once dreamlike and macabre.

**Lady Sings the Blues**

By DANIELLE THIBEAULT

A first class performance by a first class singer. Miss Diana Ross demonstrated a wealth of talent, both as a dramatic actress and as a blues singer, in her portrayal of the talented but fragile Billie Holiday. From the house cleaning jobs of Harlem to the opening night at Carnegie Hall, Billie Holiday lived as true as life itself. We not only saw but also felt with her as life and fate battered her, mercilessly, from beginning to end. Not for a moment did Miss Ross ease off to show that she was less of a star than the one she portrayed with such style and strength of conviction. From the young girl of 15 who preferred listening to blues records

to house cleaning for ingrate Madames, to Billie, who wanted to sing more than anything else in the world; from the whorehouse in Harlem to the arms of Lewis McKay, her patient, ever-forgiving mate; from "Dean's in Harlem" to Carnegie Hall; from bad to worse, and then some, from the beginning to the very end, Diana Ross was Billie Holiday and she was truly a strong and moving performer. The poverty, the degrading jobs, the life of the "Love Child" she sang so well some years ago; the attempts at making a career solely on talent, without the use of "props"; the prejudice; life on the road — the energy-draining venture that would bring with it more damnations and torments than anyone could conjure up in a

lifetime; the drug-addiction that would ensue, and its disastrous effects on her health (both physical and mental), her career and finally her love-life; the arrest, the conviction and the prison life; her new attempt at the "straight" life and her second failure; Carnegie Hall and then nothing; the success that was always at hand but never reached; all these roles Diana Ross played as if she had lived them, one by one, in a forelife. All the characters she knew well and loved, or hated, specifically, each in their own way. There was Mom who she didn't see very often and whose death prompted Billie to seek a cure for her heroin-addiction. There was the piano player (wittily portrayed by Richard Prior) who helped her get her first

break, who seemed also a "friend" most of the time but who let her down when she needed him most. There were also the boys in the travelling band who promised Billie fame and fortune and left her to cope with the cold, hard prejudice of a KKK - agitated South. We can't forget "dear" Harry, the "friend" who only wanted to "help" and gave her the wrong keys. Billie Dee Williams portrayed probably the only true friend and lover Billie Holiday ever had: Lew McKay, handsome, well bred, wealthy, patient and forgiving; the guy who kept getting her out of the ruts she too frequently found herself in. There was also Dean, of "dean's in Harlem," who gave Billie her first break and who would always take her back if she

was hard up for cash. Quite a bunch of people to know in a lifetime and Billie knew them all: they helped shape her destiny. And Diana Ross gave them meaning by a powerful portrayal of the Billie Holiday that was ever so present in their lives. In no way did Miss Ross choose an 'easy' role for her debut in the world of dramatic art; but she carried the responsibility like a blazing torch, warming the hearts of those had doubted her capacity to live Billie Holiday on screen for the benefit of an otherwise blase public.

Three cheers for an award-deserving performance by a first-class artist.

By J  
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