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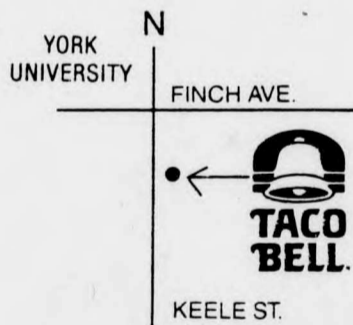


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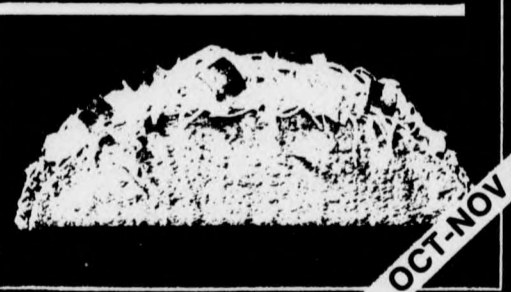
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OCT-NOV

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NACHOS BELLGRANDE



OCT-NOV



By JUAN ESCOBAR

Woodcuts by Nikolette Jakovac and *Works on Paper* by Wilek Markiewicz, now on display at the Samuel J. Zacks Art Gallery, portray a deep understanding and high reverence for familiar everyday objects. Jakovac's bold lines and sharply distinguished objects create an immediate contrast to the subtle colours and forms in the work of Markiewicz. Markiewicz's images tend to be much softer and more relaxed than the tension and vibrancy of life that is to be found in the paintings of Jakovac's *Woodcuts*.

The objects in Jakovac's work seem to be pulling out of their environment, attempting to escape the entrapment of their surroundings. She gives her objects life and they scream in a total assertion of their existence.

For example, "Appearing Tree" a hot blood-red tree emerges from a very cool light brown and yellow landscape composed of smooth shapes and soft lines. There are no distinct forms in the surrounding landscape, only delicate outlines that blend and merge with one another. The lines of the tree are sharp and it reaches upward like flaming fingertips declaring its being. The tree stands alone, unabsorbed by the rest of the painting.

The background in "Red Tree" is ragged and vivid. The landscape is composed of rough strokes and sharp images. Jakovac manages to create the same illusion as in "Appearing Tree." In the centre stands a tree, and although the rest of the painting is as clear and precise as the tree itself, it still stands alone asserting its individuality. The surrounding is a blend of greens and blues while the tree consists of bright reds, sharp greens and yellows. Again the image of fire is again evoked with flaming branches escaping in all directions.

In her portrayal of inanimate objects and still-lives, Jakovac is able to bestow life to her subjects. "Cup," a woodcut, depicts an expressionistic image of a cup and its shadow. The background is basic black and white with slight touches of pink. However, the rainbow colours of the cup give it lively prominence over the dull background; it is alone and yet very much alive.

The most striking piece of Jakovac's displayed work is a woodcut entitled "At Hortus Court." Unlike the rest of her paintings which are of landscapes and inanimate objects, this one uses people as its subject. The characters are seated around a table and yet there is no sign of communication between them. Each

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person is alone but in their solitude they create a harmonious union with one another, a mystical interdependence which exists throughout Jakovac's work.

Jakovac's interdependence of objects culminates in the ultimate expression of "Room for Everything." In this woodcut, many objects which have been encountered throughout her work are brought together in a single room. Here the objects (chairs, tables, cups, etc.) merge into a single collage.

Markiewicz's *Works on Paper* is much calmer in comparison to *Woodcuts*. His colours are faded, more relaxed and his images do not have the rugged edges or the bold lines that dominate Jakovac's work. There is no urgency here, no tension or bursting out of life. Markiewicz's images blend and fade into the background, colours bleed and mix together, nothing is accentuated.

"Roofs and Façades of Toronto" is an expressionistic portrayal of a downtown Toronto street. The atmosphere is soft, the colours vivid and the façades of the houses fuse

together to form a continuous image. There is no sharp contrast in colour, with the exception of a splash of dusted red in the centre of the painting.

In his landscapes, such as "Cottage at Atmetlic" or "Courtyard in Barcelona" the trees are merely a part of a green and blue mass of foliage. There is no distinction or attempt at escaping a suffocating background. "In a Museum" depicts a lone statue staring out of a barred window at the landscape beyond. Finally there is a sense of immediacy and urgency but there is no movement or vibrant life.

With *Woodcuts* and *Works on Paper*, artists living in the same reality, and working with the same subject matter—landscapes, inanimate objects, still-lives—create works of art as different as night and day. What one needs in order to understand the work of Jakovac and Markiewicz is not necessarily an appreciation of the reality in which they live, but an appreciation for their experiences and interpretations of reality.



HOW MUCH CAN A WOODCHICK CUT: An example of Nikolette Jakovac's work *Cat in Chair* (above) and Wilek Markiewicz's *Avila* (top left), recently exhibited at Zacks Gallery

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