

Fyfe's paintings should be left to posterity

By R.D. MACPHERSON

Understanding Peter Fyfe's artwork is no less difficult than understanding Peter Fyfe himself. For the viewer of Fyfe's paintings, it is worth the effort to gain the broader meaning which is ostensibly clothed in caprice. As for Fyfe the Man, the artist, we should let posterity perform the assessment—it's easier that way.

Last week's IDA show presented the largest selection of Fyfe's paintings this year. He and studio partner Yves Rouselle had earlier mounted a short catalogue of small paintings, which revealed little of either's seriousness about painting—an obstacle towards a fuller appreciation of Fyfe's art. In a facile analysis there is, however, much to enjoy in purely formal terms about his paintings.

Fyfe's technical ability is really quite remarkable; he could easily

regress into the contrived representationalism that marks so much of the mainstream Canadian painting scene, such as the work of Dany and Colville, who allow their technique to inform their content. Fyfe seems his fluid representational ability in order to give greater



TENNIS, ANYONE? Fyfe's "Court Jesters."

weight to his ideas.

That he works from an extensive collection of naive photographs, culled from the depths of those family picture albums piled high under the proverbial coffee table, seems to complicate the issue. Fyfe insists that these ready-made images free him from compositional concerns, that he gains freedom of expression in exchange: he can concentrate upon those painterly concerns like brushwork, strokes, color and detail, etc. Implicit in the selection of photograph, therefore, is the conceptual/ideological determinant. It is however, only in the most recent works that we can appreciate an imbalance in the dialogue between the ready-made composition and the artist—a positive imbalance which suggests the painter is reaching a full control of his material and his technique.

This is not to deprecate the earlier works; in fact, it makes the series justifiable, for we can understand the conflict as it is revealed serially, and

we can sense the dialectic as it is graphically chronicled.

Further observable syntheses occurring within Fyfe's canvases are the influences of other students; notably, Celia Neubauer and Rouselle. Neubauer's brute celebration of the mundane, her ability to dramatize the trivial, have informed Fyfe in paintings such as "Sleeping Door and Killer Fern." Similarly, Rouselle has had effect; in the same piece, Rouselle's talent for the singular, dynamic contrast is emulated by Fyfe with success. This is largely because Fyfe simply pilfered the trademark door from Rouselle's inventory of images. Overall, however, Rouselle's and Neubauer's losses were not Fyfe's gains. Fyfe had to take his modelling paste, red paint and photo scrap-book into more, and not less, complex areas.

Enter "Finding Canvas in the Woods." Fyfe asserts this is a sexually charged painting, but we know

cont'd on p. 16

PARTY

with Campus Marketing

YOUR BEST DEAL TO FORT LAUDERDALE

FEBRUARY 14-23

YOU DRIVE (TO THE PARTY)

\$159

WE DRIVE (THE PARTY STARTS HERE)

\$299

INCLUDES:

- Round trip motor coach transportation to beautiful Fort Lauderdale (WE DRIVE Packages Only). We use nothing but modern highway coaches.
- Eight Florida days/seven endless nights at one of our exciting oceanfront hotels, located right on the Fort Lauderdale strip. Your hotel has a beautiful pool, sun deck, air conditioned rooms, color TV, and a nice long stretch of beach.
- FREE pool deck parties.
- A full list of pre-arranged discounts to save you money in Fort Lauderdale.
- Travel representatives to insure a smooth trip and a good time.
- All taxes and tips.

SPEND A WEEK — NOT A FORTUNE

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND SIGN UP

CALL TOLL FREE

1-800-423-5264



Campus Marketing, Inc. is a U.S. based corporation offering tours in Canada and therefore is not covered by the current Travel Industry Act. Campus Representatives exist only to expedite materials and escort tours.

Campus Marketing, Inc.
P.O. Box 2788
Glen Ellyn, Illinois 60138



Sponsored by Campus Marketing

EXPERIENCED PROFESSIONALS IN COLLEGE TOURS

Excalibur's weekly
guide to arts
events on Campus.

If you are planning an arts event drop by Excalibur at 111 Central Square or call 667-3201 and ask for Elliott or Dave.

Theatre Theatre Theatre Theatre Theatre

Reading of new play by David Burgess, *The Great One*

Samuel Beckett Theatre, Jan. 22 and 23, 12-1 p.m.

Readings Readings Readings Readings

Reports from the Anti-Face, poetry readings by Rafael Barreto-Rivera, Claudio V. Duran, Margarita Feliciano

Fellows Lounge, 004a Atkinson, Jan. 21, 8 p.m.

Film Film Film Film Film Film Film Film Film

Department of Humanities Film Series: *The Cinema of Ideas*, a Humanities perspective on three films about education

Jan. 17: *Educating Rita*, Nat Taylor Cinema, 7:30 p.m.

Admission free, reserve tickets available in Humanities office or Masters office

Jacqueline Benyes, *Photographer*

Samuel J. Zacks Gallery, until Jan. 17

D4, the fourth year Visual Arts design area show

Samuel J. Zacks Gallery, Jan. 20-24

Installation by Joan Frick

Glendon Gallery, Jan. 19-Feb. 16

Ron Shuebrook, *Recent Reliefs and Drawings*

Art Gallery of York University, until Jan. 31

Galleries Galleries Galleries Galleries Galleries

Heidi Giblon and Christopher Combs, *Portrait Plays*

IDA Gallery, until Jan. 17

Knotton, Ross, Hassall, *Recent Works*

IDA Gallery, Jan. 20-24

The Joy Division, paintings by Alan Plant

Founders Gallery, until Jan. 19

Life Fossils, Shawn Hill

Founders Gallery, Jan. 20-26

a l e n d a r