

The other side of art

by Stephen Shay

Halifax's newest art gallery may change the way you think about art.

Vintage clothing, art posters, books, magazines, and small collectables of the type you might find in your grandmother's attic are all considered art in this gallery.

"We'd like to change the way people view art. Art is all things," says Other ART co-owner Kris Rogers.

You tend to see what Rogers believes when looking around the store. Quality colour separations of 1930s postcards. The vibrance of a late 70s Joni Mitchell tour poster. The craft behind a seemingly simple cast-glass vase.

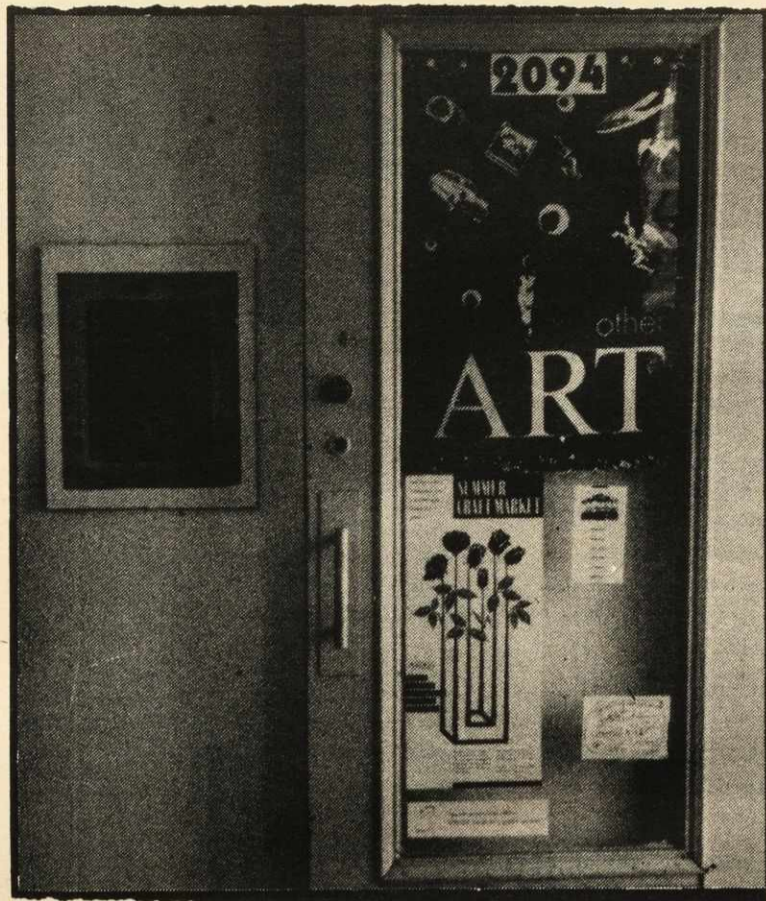
Two fashionable young women have just left the store and Rogers philosophically speculates that even haircuts and the way we dress can be considered art forms. "Art shouldn't be limited by what the established art galleries define as art. We have to be more open-minded than that," she says.

Longtime residents of the North End, both Rogers and her partner, Brenda Keddy, feel they have something they can offer both the local art community and the local residents.

"We want to be an outlet for young local artists, but it's just as important to have the local community exposed to this sort of gallery. Maybe they will start to look at things differently and maybe even gain more pride in our community," says Rogers.

"We're not out to change the cultural heritage," explains Keddy. "We just want to blend in with what's already here."

And when you look at what is there you tend to agree. Göttingen Street is changing. Once lined with fashionable shops like the New York Dress Salon, the street had faded to pawn shops, taverns, and low-income



ROCHELLE OWEN PHOTO

Two women. A vision. A door. Other art.

housing. Now, Göttingen appears to be in a revitalization period. Old junk shops are closing and new shops quickly open in their place.

Located between an old bookstore that dabbles in antiques and a trendy-looking architect's office, it seems an obvious location for a storefront gallery. Nonetheless, Other ART is the first gallery in recent memory to locate in the North End.

In keeping with the community approach, the co-owners have put out a call for local Black artists to exhibit their work at Other ART. The North End is home to most of Halifax's large Black community.

Works now on display — and for sale — at Other ART include pottery by Joan Bruneau, t-shirts by Zab, and jewellery by New England artist Anne Taintor as well as local sculpture, photographs, paintings and collages.

"It's great to have a good variety of art forms represented. We hope to import some works from other cities as well and maybe even host some poetry readings," says Rogers.

Plans are already on the canvas for a politicized art show centring on the theme of Remembrance Day.

And while the traditional art forms are represented, Rogers admits, "The collectables are our bread and butter." A high turnover rate on the collectables may indicate the prices are right for the adventurous bargain hunter.

"After all, we do have to make a living," chuckles Rogers.

Other ART, 2094 Göttingen Street.

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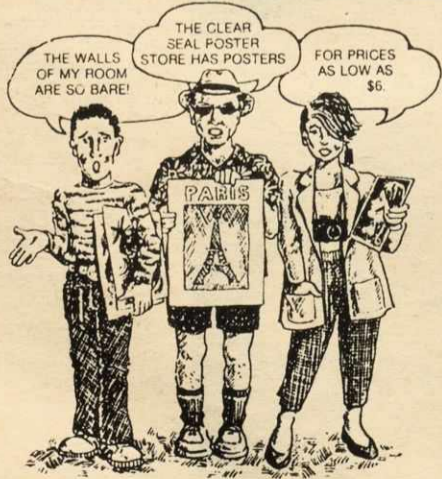
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