

## Texts in English

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# TEXTS IN ENGLISH

## ON SOME RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE APPLEBAUM-HÉBERT REPORT

By Andrée PARADIS

Much has already been written about the Applebaum-Hébert report. Three decades after the publication of the Massey-Lévesque report, another stage of thought on the cultural policies of the central government rather than on culture has ended with the publication of the Report of the Committee on the study of the federal cultural policy. A hundred and one recommendations and a concise approach to the problems raised by the growth of cultural activity. An awareness of what exists, what has been done, what needs to be supported better or, in some cases, what should be abolished.

A priority from which the other recommendations derive: to assure conditions of autonomy for federal agencies responsible for government activities in art and culture by a new Law on Cultural Organizations whose decisions will prevail in conflicting matters over those of the Law on Financial Administration. Without the assurance of a climate of freedom, it is clear that cultural agencies, like the art which they represent, cannot flourish. In the interest of the very special subject with which they are involved, these agencies wish to be free of all political interference and to be powerful enough to control pressure from the public – which is disturbed by the innovative side of the creative experience – and from which it is necessary to seek, tactfully, to obtain a gradual approval. Time, which softens everything and assures more complete conditions of evaluation, is an important factor in creation, and those responsible for cultural action must reckon with it for long-lasting repercussions. Doubtless the best received comment in the Report concerns the creator since, of all the aspects of cultural life, it is to creation that the Committee granted the most importance, while keeping in mind the necessary interest in the artistic and cultural heritage and its preservation. At its beginning the Canada Arts Council wished to be a discreet presence behind the creator; the report of the Applebaum-Hébert Committee takes note of the road covered and of the fact that to-day the creator has a recognized status. This was one of the most serious cultural objectives of recent years, and the Report tries to reinforce the idea that the pursuit of any objective other than cultural, as a means of attaining other social, economic and political ends can have only harmful consequences for culture in general.

The comprehensive spirit of chapter 7, *Literary Creation, Publishing and Reading*, particularly held our attention, our magazine being concerned with some of the recommendations it contains. Having lived the adventure of the specialized cultural periodical for almost twenty-seven years, we are grateful to the Report for having emphasized that periodicals like ours are part and parcel of a whole. This is how we had conceived our rôle from the beginning and how we have worked with the writer, the art critic and the historian to publicize this important dimension of the human experience that is the appreciation of the work of art. To do this, we have benefitted from the co-operation of artists,

photographers, translators, graphic artists, printers, typographers, librarians, directors and curators of museums, bookbinders, booksellers and many administrators.

But we must be aware of the fact that, in spite of the cultural explosion of the recent years, real interest in culture is penetrating only slowly into the different strata of the population. Much remains to be done and, in what concerns periodicals, the means to do it will depend on strategies which, we hope, will be established in the spirit of the policies proposed for the publishing of books. Acting through the Canada Arts Council, the federal government has strongly supported the publication of periodicals. This is a fundamental aid without which most specialized publications could not exist. But, in order to obtain better results, it is necessary to inject stimulants. After recommending to the authorities that they should give more attention to periodicals which, in general, create a sense of belonging among readers with the same interests, the Committee makes the following recommendation: The Federal Government should enlarge its commitment of support for Canadian magazines through both the Canada Council and the Department of Communication. The Council should establish a two-pronged system of grants based on the twin elements of content and demand, similar to the recent subsidy program already outlined for book publishing. The Department should initiate an economic development program for the magazine industry similar to the one recommended by this Committee for book publishing.

The launching of a program of economic expansion for periodicals is awaited. This would save many and not only would encourage distribution on a larger scale but it would assure more diffusion for art and creator; it would also prolong the immense efforts to increase the exposure of all arts and would give rise to a new period of exploration.

Finally, during the year we intend to present commentaries on the recommendations dealing with visual arts and contemporary applied arts, as well as on those concerning our heritage.

Virulent criticism – some of which, doubtless, is justified – has attacked the report since it was issued. This is certainly not the work of reflection on our cultural problems that we expected, but in it, containing a compilation of facts and recommendations, we have found some positive aspects that we could not neglect without paralyzing the efforts at organization undertaken during the last thirty years. It is from this point that we must act.

(Translation by Mildred Grand)

## THE DUALITY OF PETER WALKER

*"I ink, therefore I am."*  
(Peter Walker)

By Jim HANSEN

Unfortunately for Canadian art lovers, but fortunately for me, I've had, over the last twelve years, a most unique opportunity. I've been witness to the creation of a large, exciting body of art work by a restless and energetic sculptor and graphic artist, Peter Walker. Due to the widespread regions in which Peter has chosen to work, and to the direct and uncompromising nature of the work, my experience has been too unique. Perhaps I can redress, partially at least, the ignorance of Peter's work by the Canadian art public.

I am myself a printmaker. My personal value system in judging art is simple. If the work stimulates me to activity, if the work makes this whole tipsy edifice of art worth living in, then it's good. Peter's work has always been a stimulus to me.

Peter's art is exciting for many of the same reasons that Picasso's work affects me. There are parallels here. Peter's interests, as reflected so strongly in his work, are formal, human and plastic. Literally plastic: most of the sculpture Peter has produced in the last twelve years is made of fibreglass and plastic resin. Peter's works are complete and irreversible forms. They are inevitable, satisfying forms. Peter has the same unerring sense of proportion that Picasso had, the same powerful urge to create tangible objects.

An appreciation of Peter's work does not require an intimate knowledge of art history. As seems to be the case in much of contemporary art, mental gymnastics are not necessary. A walk through a group of his works is a pure and straightforward experience of fascinating, fabulous form and caloric colour. If we could digest fibreglass there wouldn't be a scrap of Peter's sculpture in existence.

Most of the sculptures done in the early 70's are assembled from folded and molded sheets of fibreglass. These pieces, although fabricated from sheet material, are three dimensional. The surfaces are gel-coated or spray-painted in bright primary colours. Some works were left in the natural tan translucent state. A small group of flat works to hang on the wall were made during the middle 70's. The early works, however, stand and occupy space as variously-vertical volumes.

The form language of Peter's art is organic and human; its scale is human. Peter's is not a surreal art. His art, although abstract, is solidly grounded in a world very close to him; it's not fantasy: it's tangible, understandable.

There are, however, a couple of stray strands to this work. Peter has a funny bone, a sort of funk rock that he occasionally throws out to us culture mulchers to chew on; for instance, a series of fibreglass garbage bags with resin fingers poking out of various orifices. Another would be a drawing of a boil-like mountain stuck full of faucets (leaks) to be built as a public fountain. I have in my collection a drawing on fibreglass of Peter's mouth with a giant tongue that drops toward the floor. The world is not all nonsensical.

In 1979 and '80, Peter made a series of large brightly-coloured airbrush drawings of male private parts in various painful poses, perfectly-perturbed penises. These were seen for a couple of short weeks, exposed one might say, in the Memorial University Art Gallery here in St. John's. Peter Bell wrote an excited and penetrating review that the local newspaper would not publish, coitus interruptus.

I find, particularly in this two-year period of Peter's work, a kind of metaphor for the bind in which he finds himself. In spite of the ubiquity of



1. PETER WALKER  
Untitled.  
Fibreglass; 1 m 82 x 3,96 x 4,26

## JEAN-MARIE GAUVREAU AND ART DECO

By Gloria LESSER

modern art in our museums and galleries, the day to day existence of an artist working and living in the Maritimes is a spartan and emotionally battering experience. The sensuous is suspect. The connections between the eye and the mind are for the most part utilitarian. Sex is an activity confined to the bed, art to galleries. If the galleries don't use your art it doesn't exist; a catch-22 existence, an engorged phallus in a vise.

Peter is a builder and manipulator of objects and materials close to hand. Many of his fiberglass pieces grow organically from castings he has taken from objects as diverse as a plastic beach ball and a Catholic monstrance. His compulsion to build extends to wonderful playgrounds that can be found swarming with kids in B.C., Nova Scotia, P.E.I., and Newfoundland. A few years back, in a marathon of maple manipulation, he completed all the furniture for a St. John's restaurant; from design work to completed installation in a couple of short months. In Nova Scotia he built several beautiful and functional kayaks using fiberglass and methodologies similar to those for building his sculpture. He built his own studio-house in the woods of Nova Scotia.

Peter came east from Vancouver through his home town of Cayley, Alberta to St. John's, Nfld. on a bicycle in 1970. He settled here for a short time and completed a large fiberglass sculpture for the Arts and Culture Centre grounds. He worked as a part-time fisherman here and as a potato digger in P.E.I. before restlessly moving on to Nova Scotia trying to find a home for himself and his work. The last couple of years he has spent here in St. John's.

Peter's formal training was in art schools in Calgary and Vancouver, where most of his study was centered on commercial and graphic arts. His sculptural interests started in Vancouver just prior to his 1970 trip to St. John's.

Physical and intellectual restlessness are strong characteristics of Peter and are mirrored in an art that is full of surprises. His is an urban art, an extension of the art of Brancusi and David Smith. I get a shock when I remind myself that this art is thirty to eighty years old, ancient history, art from the Stone Age. Peter's art shows us there are still stones unturned.

Peter's work is, however, well off the beaten path of maritime concerns with the exterior environment, which goes a long way toward explaining the neglect his art has suffered. A great sadness for me and a tragedy for this society now and in the future is to watch a resource like Peter Walker year after year short of the money and materials to bring to completion his ideas gathering dust in rooms and barns all over the Maritimes. From this lack of funds his work for the past few years has been confined to drawing and, lately, printmaking.

Peter's sculpture grows out of his incessant drawing and vice-versa. I have a vision of Peter years from now tunnelling through tons of drawings trying to find his last cup of tea. Most of Peter's invention happens in the drawings, many of which are elegant and complete works in their own right.

"I ink, therefore I am", a typical Peter-pun, says a lot about the nature of the man; the ideal torture for Peter would be to lock him up and throw away the pencil. That Peter continues to pour out his ideas in these drawings and prints is amazing to me, a testimony to his courage in the face of an essentially blind and cautious society.

Familiar to *Vie des Arts* readers as a founding member of the magazine in 1956, Jean-Marie Gauvreau's foremost contribution to Canadian culture lies in his international reputation as an expert concerning the applied arts in Quebec, as a professor, lecturer, and author. Since 1925 Gauvreau wrote articles in journals on Quebec artisans, crafts, wood technology, art history and art criticism, and interior decoration.<sup>1</sup>

A professional interior decorator and member of the Interior Decorator Society of Quebec since its inception in 1935, Gauvreau studied his métier at Montreal Technical School on Sherbrooke Street in Montreal. Upon graduation he was appointed to a position on staff, then in 1926 sent to Paris for further instruction at École Boulle. There, he studied building and design of cabinetry with artist-decorator, Vice-President of the Interior Decorator Society in France, M.E.-Léon Bouchet and André Fréchet, Artistic Director of Maison Janselme and the Director of École Boulle. These prestigious interior decorators exhibited at the famous *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes* in Paris in 1925. When Gauvreau returned to Montreal in 1930 to assume directorship of École du Meuble, housed in Montreal Technical School, his training in the style now known as Art Deco enabled him to teach it.

Art Deco expresses the typical artistic production of the years spanning the World Wars, reaching its peak in 1925 at the Exposition. Two distinct, opposing styles reflected the changed social order. Art Moderne is characterized as an attempt to unite arts with industry, embracing the machine age and repudiating the old antithesis of "fine" and "industrial" arts. This style includes the functional, form-oriented, anti-ornament designs of the Weimar Bauhaus and Dutch De Stijl architects and artists. Art Deco is typified by the extensive use of applied ornament of an eclectic nature. Focusing on the decorative arts, Art Deco reflected the scarcity of materials after the First World War exacerbated by the Depression.

The approach to art objects and furniture from the First World War years, especially in France, was frivolous and exotic. This turned to a mode increasingly pure, geometric and simplified in the

30's, concurrent with the time when Gauvreau began to work in furniture design. The Art Deco traditionalists, favouring curved instead of straight lines espoused by Art Moderne advocates, produced furniture featuring fine workmanship and rich materials. While the structure was clearly articulated, ornamentation was still thought a necessary enhancement on an object. In the manner of Émile-Jacques Ruhlmann in France, Jean-Marie Gauvreau seldom advocated decoration, except where it could be sensitively applied, allowing materials and forms to express their nature unadorned.

In Quebec, Jean-Marie Gauvreau modelled École du Meuble after École Boulle in Paris. Based on the Arts and Crafts workshops patterned on the philosophy of William Morris, the school was formed in the spirit of precedents in the first arts and crafts schools in New France. In École du Meuble workshops, designed and handcrafted objects emphasizing geometric patterns, the chief force underlying "modernism" and Art Deco, depended on artisan-craftsman handwork, and so continued in a traditional vein.

Gauvreau's book, *Nos intérieurs de demain* published in 1929 outlined the avant-garde Art Deco interiors he had seen in Paris. In 1981, the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts purchased Jean-Marie Gauvreau's bedroom set, and stylistic influences from Parisian prototypes synthesized from his tenure in Paris are recognizable. This student work, begun at École Boulle, was completed in Montreal in 1930. The suite is made of exotic ebony and amboyna woods and consists of seven pieces: dresser, commode, vanity table and hassock, bed and night tables. Classical proportions and geometrical emphasis on spare rectilinear lines represent Gauvreau's middle-of-the-road approach of 'bon goût'. Semi-circular detailing on the headboard is repeated in the geometric handles on the one-drawer cabinets flanking the dressing table and on the frame for the hassock. Circular forms for mirrors and hassocks found strong expression from the late 1920's. Generally, the 'boudoir' quality of Art Deco finds its quintessence in Gauvreau's suite.

Growing enrollment at École du Meuble necessitated an expansion. In 1940 the school moved to the Marchand Academy, corner of Berri and Dorchester in Montreal. Gauvreau's philosophy to raise the status of Quebec applied arts and crafts and cabinetry in their application to the Quebec furniture industry flourished in practice in the enlarged premises. To cultivate a market for Canadian woods, furniture was designed in Canadian woods, adapted to the extremes of the Quebec climate as well as to the modern age. Gauvreau's objective was to halt consumer importation of American and European period and contemporary furniture. École du Meuble still offered their popular two-year cabinetry trade program, but the curriculum was augmented to include a four-year sculpture program. Advanced studies in furniture design and carving under sculptor Elzéar Soucy prepared students for furniture design in industry. When École du Meuble initiated their professional program in interior decoration, the school was the only applied arts school in America. Collaboration between artists, designers, architects and craftsmen was essential for this enterprise. Gauvreau's talent for the amalgamation and administration of artistic personalities for staff posts served to consolidate that school's position as a formidable alternative to the École des Beaux Arts in Montreal.

Furniture in the 1940's in the Art Deco style in Quebec emphasized horizontal lines. Sofas were longer than standard, and unit furniture which often terminated into curved end elements produced a long, sinuous line. Sofas recessed into niches of built-in side sections created a unified appearance. 'Picture' windows were em-



2. Jean-Marie GAUVREAU  
*Bedside Table, 1928-1930.*  
Ebony and Amboyna.  
(Phot. Montreal Museum of Fine Arts)

phasized by cornices with draw drapery of large-scaled stylized floral patterns, installed over draw casement or sheer undercurtains. Consoles and coffee table bases were sculptural 'free-form' designs with glass tops, which contrasted to the set-back bases of cabinets. Layered and stacked furniture of the 1930's influenced by Aztec-Mayan architecture continued into the 1940's. Gauvreau's office desk, probably designed in the early 40's, now in the office of Andrée Paradis of *Vie des Arts*, was modelled on the semi-circular hunt-table. The desk has hinged cabinet bases which pivoted, a device seen in cabinetry of Art Deco designer, Eileen Gray (1879-1976) in the Salon of 1923.<sup>2</sup>

In 1945 a four-year ceramics program which had originated at the École des Beaux-Arts ten years earlier was transferred to École du Meuble, and a four-year weaving course began in 1948.

To elevate student taste, and for construction studies, Gauvreau installed a museum on the premises. Gauvreau purchased furniture and decorative art as prototypes for students to copy. Period furniture, often copies, was obtained by acquisition, and Quebec traditional art was collected.<sup>3</sup> Original Art Deco furniture or decorative art objects were prohibitively expensive to purchase for teaching purposes, so student works were of necessity copied from magazines.<sup>4</sup>

From the late 1940's, the clean lines and spare forms of furniture of Scandinavian design influenced contemporary furniture at École du Meuble. By the early 1950's, low, armless mattresses on day beds on metal or wood frames, long, low benches with detachable seat pads, and coffee tables with legs set at angles to the bases, were being produced at the school. The industrial aesthetic and use of metal tubing, taught in the school's metal shop, brought Art Moderne concepts to the student repertoire.

In 1958 École du Meuble moved to the Montreal Polytechnic School on St. Denis just north of St. Catherine, and became the Applied Arts Institute, which came under the jurisdiction of the CEGEP of Old Montreal in 1966. Gauvreau and his associates' designs at École du Meuble utilizing hand-crafted cabinetry can be interpreted as a swansong for an era for those romantic concepts personified by devotion to craft. The trend to Art Moderne gained ground in the commercial sector and art goods began ever more strongly to service the masses.

1. The author has used the documents from the Fonds Jean-Marie-Gauvreau at the Bibliothèque Nationale du Québec, Annexe Aegidius-Fauteux. She would like to acknowledge personal communication with Mrs. Jean-Marie Gauvreau, Luc d'Iberville-Moreau, Jules Bazin, Simone Beaulieu, Maurice Corbeil, Henri Bélie, Henri Beaulac, Alphonse Saint-Jacques, Madeleine Arbour, Bernard Morisset, Jeanne Dansereau, Jacques Viau and the late Louis Parent.
2. See J. Stewart Johnson, *Eileen Gray: Designer*. New York, The Museum of Modern Art, 1979. P. 26.
3. The museum collection is now stored in the Musée des Arts Décoratifs de Montréal (Château Dufresne).
4. Observation by Luc d'Iberville Moreau, Director, Château Dufresne, in personal communication with the author, June 20, 1981.



3. Michel PICOTTE  
Aubade, 1976  
Acrylic on canvas; 76 cm x 76,2.  
(Phot. A. Kilbertus)

confines of its earlier origins to infuse within it his own self and his environment. Picotte's "New Landscape" brings a venerable, academically-oriented genre into the midst of the twentieth century, qualifying, transmuting and renewing it with his particular artistic vision.

His early efforts were almost immediately rewarded in 1974, earning for him the then coveted Prix du Québec in painting as well as entrance as a printmaker into the prestigious Basle Art Fair. Superpositioned rectangular fields with pronounced colouristic differences were painted very flatly upon acrylic metallic-based canvases, so that the central horizontal zone would appear to recede from the areas above and beneath it. The resultant spatial impression was furthered by roughened contours that were accomplished by laying down acrylic emulsions with a sponge. Clouds come to mind with these contours, and occasionally a small tree motif was included. Thus, the stark, direct quality of colour and form treated as related but abstract elements in these canvases was relieved by reference to the natural world. By the summer of 1974 Picotte had left Montreal to reside at St. Hilaire on the Richelieu River. He remained active there until 1979.

Employing only minimal references to nature, his concern with capturing the physical reality of space by means of colour juxtapositions and textural differentiations led Picotte to a breakthrough in 1977. The word "breakthrough" is particularly appropriate here, since his canvases became shaped, three-dimensional entities with deep, rectangular and oblong recesses. In these paintings he carried further, in effect, what had been only suggested upon flat surfaces by others such as Michael Snow (*Red Square*, 1960; Toronto Dominion Bank, Toronto) and Josef Albers (*Homage to the Square* series, late 50's and 60's). Virtually the same colours appeared upon the shaped surface of the canvas and within its recesses. These hues, however, would be seen necessarily under different conditions of lighting and would be modified by changes in viewing distances. The forms of the recesses became the determinants of the directions that a suddenly surprisingly broad brushwork took as it played over and within the painting. This was a kind of "pop" diversion for Picotte, an effort to touch directly upon the chords of light and space that are usually handled illusionistically. After some few such explorations, he turned away altogether from his previously rather rigid geometric inventions toward a more poetic mode.

This direction had been prepared since the summer of 1974, when he undertook a sustained series of carefully finished drawings with coloured pencils, a series that still continues to-day.

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## MICHEL PICOTTE: URBAN LANDSCAPES

By WARREN SANDERSON

Expressive at times but not Expressionist, and more rooted in the old Bauhaus tradition than in any "New Wave," Michel Picotte's pathway has been consistent since he took his baccalaureate in painting in 1974 at UQAM. A Montreal painter without the slightest interest in partaking of the fashionable new, his genre is landscape, a subject favoured from the outset in Canada. In a rich development Picotte takes landscape out of the

These works on paper constitute for him the bank of ideas that others might have begun by recording in a sketchbook. Soon the flat colours of his early acrylic panels were replaced by much more varied and subtle studies of the values and intensities of some few hues. Controlling his textures so that they remained relatively uniform, colour areas faded agreeably into one another along their borders in so skillful a manner that movement and continuity seemed intertwined. The notion of colour itself as a dynamic, organically transmuting, unifying element was elaborated in landscapes that reflected an almost mystical atmosphere. In some, parts of the paper were set aflame briefly to gain particular colouristic effects; and perhaps two or three such sheets were then fixed to a single surface to form again a continuum in which the reality of worldly change played its rôle. Toward 1978 the artist returned to oils, and since then he has rarely used acrylics.

Small, lyrical jottings often in ink appeared upon his coloured pencil drawings and became more fully articulated, finding their way into his paintings as ambivalent codifications of trees, buildings and fantastic imaginary animals. Highly variegated, always subtle and often elegant, these markings were invariably dwarfed by the seemingly huge spaces around them. They remind us of Oriental calligraphy written upon painted surfaces to help us understand the narratives illustrated. But Picotte insists that he has had no intention to narrate.

The drawings and paintings from perhaps 1978 into 1981 tell us something quite different indeed. Whatever the size and the media of his works, whatever their colouristic inventions, in each there is a traditional setting for narrative.

Foreground, middleground and background are clearly defined. Rich and subtle colouristic developments reinforce suggestions of vast spaces, with an almost unbroken flat terrain. And within these spaces, often along or near to what may best be taken as an horizon, are very brief and delicate gestures of pen or brush, gestures that describe beings floating between Eastern calligraphy and some strangely organic creatures of the mind's eye. Despite vague inspiration from Jack Chambers (*Victoria Hospital*, 1970, was known to Picotte) and perhaps from Ted Godwin (*G. Corners*, 1964, with similarly delicately diffused colour values), the best context within which to place these words of Picotte is that imaginary world described during the early forties by such artists as Tanguy, Matta, and Max Ernst. The small-scaled cryptographic gestures within the spacious realms of Picotte's paintings and drawings are beings dredged up effortlessly from his subconscious imagination. His art, then, may be considered as a poetic reinterpretation of an earlier descriptive surrealism, whether or not that approach was intentional on his part.

Toward the end of 1978 Picotte's landscapes are broken by empty horizontal and vertical margins that are continuous with the empty margins of the four sides of the painting. An element of ambivalence is introduced and is repeated in many of his works to this day. In such works we may perceive either a continuous vista as if seen through windows within the canvas or the paper surface, or a series of closely related paintings upon a single surface. In some works clouds appear to drift by from one frame into the next, perhaps changing in value and intensity of colour; or waves may be seen in the same manner, again changing in their colouristic aspects. One

notices after a while that the artist often plays against continuity and spatial unity by treating each framed section as an almost independent colour composition: colour effects are treated as variations upon the landscape theme.

Within his self-imposed formats, Picotte's changing environment has had its effects. Take, for instance, the work that he accomplished while residing in Italy from the summer of 1981 into the latter part of January, 1982. Colours much hotter than before come into play in extraordinarily sensitive juxtapositions and transitions. An aspect of linear sequence seen previously rather infrequently is strengthened. Acidly clear, thin horizontal lines are positioned in frequencies that reinforce colour sequences. Whether in India ink, colour, or simply intaglio relief, these provide a new rhythmic vitality that recalls some hard-edge paintings by Kenneth Noland such as *Graded Exposure* (1967, private collection, Chicago). In the drawings this is combined with a sensitive feeling for texture recognizable in his arrangements of parallel pencil markings, and his uses of fixative to heighten surface contrasts.

Since returning to Montreal early in 1982, Michel Picotte's landscape art has proceeded through soliloquies upon remembrances of Italy to reflect the energies of Montreal's urban environment in a new series of "mindscapes". Michel Picotte seems to have come to terms with his particular artistic sensibility when he replaced the idiosyncratic creatures and jottings of his surrealistic evocations with the elegance of undulating cloud and wave motives that grew out of his Italian sojourn. Landscape became seascape and both became mindscapes. The innately calm strength of his vision continues to develop now in symbiosis with the city.

#### FRANCINE GRAVEL (suite de la page 63)

lumière et le mouvement y représentent des éléments importants, cette œuvre repose énormément sur le personnage pour donner sa pleine signification à l'impression générale, en partie insouciance et lyrique, en partie méditative.

Le caractère pensif et mystérieux de *La Belle et le chat* évoque des associations d'idées qui lient cette image aux icônes. Cette peinture montre une femme assise, vêtue de jaune, tenant un chat noir sur ses genoux et encadrée par ce qui semble être une arche ou une fenêtre peinte en tons sombres et bordée d'un décor métallique. Le diptyque *Jour de fête* diffère des œuvres mentionnées précédemment. L'artiste y décrit une scène de carnaval, comprenant de nombreux personnages, des couleurs claires, des ballons qui flottent dans l'air. On note cependant que l'expression des visages n'est pas aussi gaie que les couleurs, les activités, comme le sujet, nous porteraient à le penser.

Deux tableaux détonnent dans cette exposition. Le premier, *After the Performance*, où un homme chauve, accroupi, et son singe, sont éclairés par les feux de la rampe d'une scène vide. Cette image presque macabre est aussi inattendue dans cet ensemble que le triptyque *Summer Fantaisies*, dépeignant un pré où, sous un agréable ciel d'été, des bambins tenant des ballons et des ombrelles, sont occupés à faire des bulles et à d'autres jeux enfantins. Rien, toutefois, de ces gestes ou de ces sentiments, n'est en harmonie avec les autres œuvres de l'exposition. En fait, le diptyque nous porte à croire que l'artiste s'est obstinée à peindre un sujet qui lui est trop étranger et qui, du point de vue thématique, n'a rien à voir avec ses autres œuvres.

La réputation de Francine Gravel comme graveur en creux n'est plus à faire. «J'ai eu comme professeur Albert Dumouchel, dit-elle, et j'ai appris toutes les techniques de la gravure. J'adore l'eau-forte et j'adore les textures.» Combinant la pointe sèche, le mezzo-tinto et la gravure, elle utilise souvent deux et quelquefois même trois couleurs sur la plaque. «Mais, ajoute-t-elle, pour moi, une gravure est avant tout du noir et du blanc, que je traduis ensuite en tons. Dumouchel m'a influencé pour ce qui est de la gradation des tons.» Les gravures et les aquarelles de Francine Gravel traitent des mêmes thèmes que ses peintures. Bien que les couleurs n'y soient pas aussi denses, aussi sombres et aussi diversifiées, les personnages de Gravel y conservent un regard introspectif, préoccupé. L'artiste ne rend pas la profondeur à la façon classique. Au contraire, comme dans l'eau-forte *Tarentelle*, par exemple, son personnage principal écrase, par son échelle, les personnages d'arrière-plan, proportionnellement beaucoup plus petits.

Qu'il s'agisse de peintures à l'huile, d'aquarelles ou de gravures en creux, les

œuvres de Gravel dégagent une atmosphère, une impression unique. Elles montrent des affinités avec l'art du passé, tout en se rattachant à la société contemporaine.

1. Du 2 au 20 octobre 1982.

Bente Roed COCHRAN

(Traduction de Diane Petit-Pas)

GALERIE  
DU PARC  
GALERIE  
INVESTIS-ART

La Galerie Investis-Art portera dorénavant le nom de Galerie du Parc. Toutefois, le nom d'Investis-Art identifiera la section des cours.

#### Activités à venir:

20 février au 6 mars : Denys Morisset  
13 mars au 27 mars : Léopold Tremblay  
3 avril au 17 avril : Maurice Assier  
24 avril au 10 mai : Charles Lemay  
22 mai au 5 juin : Guy Morin

#### Horaire de la Galerie

Lundi: fermé  
Mardi et Mercredi: 10:00 à 18:00  
Jeudi et Vendredi: 10:00 à 21:00  
Samedi: 10:00 à 18:00  
Dimanche: 12:30 à 18:00

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#### ERRATA

Dans notre dernier numéro, il faut lire, dans la note 1 de l'article *Confrontations 82*, à la page 51, Serge Beaumont et non Pierre Bourgault, et Michel au lieu de Claude Goulet. Quant à l'illustration en couleur qui figure dans l'article sur Michel Pellus, elle s'intitule *Far-fetched Fillies* et non *Punny's Dream*. (N.D.L.R.)