

HAMILTON ARTISTS' INC.

*

BLUHUSZER

1986

Hamilton, Ont.

The summer issue



* BLUHUSZER

Hamilton Artists' Inc. Newsletter
Summer, 1986 Hamilton, Ontario

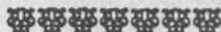
PRODUCTION THIS ISSUE

ON THE EDITORIAL THRONE
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from "Thomson's Photographs"
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by Town & Silcox

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acknowledges the support of The
Ontario Arts Council, The City of
Hamilton, its members and friends.

A special thanks to Jack Kay for
support beyond the call of duty.

HAMILTON ARTISTS' INC.

143 JAMES ST. N. HAMILTON, ONT., L8R 2K8
(416) 529-3355

PERSONNEL

Administrator: Joan Urquhart
Board of Directors: Linda Duvall, Owen Ford, Jewel
Foster, Teri Freeman, Lucy Gerritsen, Donna Ibing,
Bryce Kanbara, Brian Kelly, Pat Kozowyk, David
Martin, Mária Panko, Susan Prosser, Jocelyn Salem,
Audrey Shimizu

SPACE/LOCAUX

Main floor gallery: approximately 400 sq. ft. 62 running
ft. 11.5 ft. ceiling. Upper gallery: approximately 270 sq.
ft. 62 running ft. Track lighting in both galleries. Small
office area on main floor. Third floor used for members
current and recent works.

EQUIPMENT/MATERIEL

Access to 16mm projector and silent reg/super 8
projectors, screen, slide projector

LIBRARY/BIBLIOTHEQUE

Small library on second floor contains books,
periodicals, articles, useful to artists as well as centre
documentation.

HOURE/HEURES D'OUVERTURE

Tuesday to Friday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Saturday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

HAMILTON ARTISTS' INC. was established in 1975 to
provide not only much needed exhibition space for area
artists, but also as a centre to promote the exchange of
ideas and to encourage dialogue between artists and the
community. We are primarily interested in showing work
which would not gain easy access to commercial gal-
eries and work which has not had wide exposure in
Hamilton. Some priority is given to artists who have not
exhibited widely. Performance, films, music, lectures and
workshops are scheduled on an ad hoc basis.



HAMILTON ARTISTS' INC is a charitable,
non-profit, artist-run organization
which belongs to CARO (Canadian
Artists' Representation--Ontario)
and ANNPAC (Association of National
Non-Profit Artist-run Centres).

Membership is open to all artists &
art-lovers in the Hamilton area.

General Membership ... \$ 7.
Artists 15.
Supporting 20.
Institutional 40.

(Make cheques payable to
Hamilton Artists' Inc.)






Little did Jeffery know, he would soon be an apprentice in the sun.

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BLUHUSZER is published by Hamilton Artists' Inc. four times a year -- (on or about the Solstices of Spring & Fall and the Equinoxes of Summer and Winter. Opinions expressed are those of the authors and are not necessarily shared by the Inc. in general.

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'Amilton Artists' Inc Newsletter

WHAT'S IN A NAME? PART ONE

This publication was once known as THE BLUE HUSH. To some members this name was inadequate, so when production was in their hands they changed it to ZERO. This name, in turn, was inadequate to other members. In an extravagant example of noble compromise the editors of the last number tried to reconcile THE BLUE HUSH and ZERO camps by calling it BLUE HUSH ZERO.

There is no looking back. We have done a bit of scumbling here, not obliterating what has gone before but making full use of the under-painting and letting it show through. This issue hails you under the banner BLUHUSZER.

BLUHUSZER

THE FUTURE OF BLUHUSZER

Since the production of this organ of the Hamilton Artists' Inc is subject to the benevolent dictatorship of a rotating volunteer editor and volunteer staff, there is no real guarantee what the name of the next issue will be. This is as it should be. This is a democratic organization: if you are interested in assisting this publication in any way, give your name to the Board of Directors care of Joan at the Inc. The position of next issue's editor is now open.

YOUR PARTICIPATION

Regardless of the name, this publication's production staff welcomes participation in any of its many forms from any of its readers. We need your opinions, ideas, letters, drawings or articles. We look forward to seeing at least half of BLUHUSZER devoted to Letters To The Editor--or more accurately: Letters To the Inc Membership and the Hamilton art community in general. Help us maintain an exciting art dialogue.

my

"Let's not cry over Spilt Inc." -- oao PROVERB

"Clarity is not necessarily the enemy of mystery" -- Glenn Gould

CONTRIBUTIONS TO BLUHUSZER

You will save the production staff a lot of work (re-typing, etc.) if, before submitting it, you double-check your letter or article for spelling and grammar mistakes, have a friend read it, seriously consider his or her suggestions, then type the finished product so it is photo-ready for lay-out and paste-up. The typed manuscript, on white paper, should be single-spaced in columns about 5½ inches wide. This will give the editor/art director a standard format from which he/she can improvise.

For the Fall issue of BLUHUSZER the deadline is September 12, 1986. Make submissions to BLUHUSZER c/o Hamilton Artists' INC., 143 James Street North, L8R 2K8. For further details phone 529-3355 or JAW-FELL.

~~The Hamilton Spectator~~ NOW

WHAT'S IN A NAME? PART TWO

HAMILTON NOW, the exhibition of contemporary Hamilton art to be held in the Old Library Building this summer, has been in the works for over a year. After months of organizational work you can imagine the pleasure of several Inc members when they saw the large word NOW in colour on the first page of The Hamilton Spectator's entertainment section: "At last," they thought, "The Spectator is finally giving good coverage to Hamilton's visual arts. Usually if the Spec is going to print a feature story with photos that actually feature art work, it is on an exhibition at the Art Gallery of Ontario or the Royal Ontario Museum or, if local, on local shows of Modern Greek Art or Harold Town ... but now, at long last, they are about to give a splendid preview (several weeks in advance to help get Hamilton ready) of HAMILTON NOW and our local artists." Alas, on closer examination it was discovered this was not The Spectator giving us their support but merely The Spectator scooping our name.

INC. PRIZE WINNERS

The Inc is unique in the quality of its membership. Within the past year the following have had prize-winning work in at least one exhibition: Brian Johnston, Susan Boychuk, Justine Giuliano, Will Krisza, Debbie Lindeman, Janet Tulloch, Gunars Rusins, Dave Martin, Judy Joure, Soroya Erian, Berthe Rodger, Lorraine Popyk, Chris Ruland, Heidi Razum, Stephen Aird, Alan Oddy, Herb Barrett, Freida Smee, Michelle Marcotte, Wayne Allan, Valerie Nichol, Dan Patterson, Elizabeth Barbaza, Dan Riegler, Gerald Farrell, P. Mansaram, Katherine Porter, Jocelyne Salem, Doreen Wilson, Lorna Schueler, Cees Van Gernerden, Hermi Vasari, Jane Gordon, Susan Prosser, Vera Uss, Louie Di Stefano, Robert Chan, Dan Jianu, Annerie Van Gernerden, André Perusse, Helen Ritcey, Richard Patz, Donna Ibing, Karen Barbaza, Alfred Joyce, Dale Barrett, Darryl Stefanik, Pat Kozowyk, Leah Valian, Peter Beckett, Robert Yates, Teri Freeman, Bryce Kanbara, Frank Zavarella, Audrey Shimizu, Anne Wysmyk, Debra Waddington, Lucy Gerritsen, & Linda Duvall. Congratulations to all. Keep up the good work.

And a belated congratulations to Robert Yates on winning first prize in the Downtown Banner Competition. The City of Hamilton, however, seems to have decided such things should not be let loose in the streets, and are not using his designs. Yates wants to let all those prematurely told to watch for his banners this summer that they can stop watching. He had nothing to do with the banners now in place.

VANCOUVER. AND AGAIN: VANCOUVER.

As this goes to press, President Kanbara and Administrator Urquhart are representing the Inc at the annual ANNPAC (Association of National Non-Profit Artist-run Centres) Conference (this year in Vancouver). Among other things they will meet with artists from La Chambre Blanche of Quebec City to discuss the exchange show of Hamilton and Quebec art arranged by Jocelyne Salem for later this year.

This trip is a trial run for Bryce who will return to Vancouver for three weeks at the end of July on an Ontario Arts Council Curatorial Research grant. He will research the concept of regional art in contemporary Canadian work, contrasting current art trends in Hamilton with those in Vancouver.

6

THE ARTS ENRICH

A large, stylized graphic of a hand holding a banner that reads 'OUR LIVES'. The banner is made of strips of newspaper text, and the hand is rendered in a high-contrast, graphic style. The text 'OUR LIVES' is written in large, bold, black letters along the length of the banner.

BLUHUSZER

letters to the editor



Dear Blue Hush,

Why don't you print more
letters to the editor and
less of your dumb articles?

Love (XOXO),
Betty Soarre

***Balls to you, Betty! No one
expects our general readership
to be able to approach your
high standard of letter writing.
(--Tina Sheed, for the editor)

Baytides Café



Fresh fruits and liqueurs are used to create scrumptious sundaes and marvellous milkshakes. Try Strawberry Fields, a Beach Ball, Chocolate Devil or a Kahlua Krunch.



FULLY LICENCED
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Hamilton
(416) 522-2882

Bring your guitar
down to
BAYTIDES CAFÉ
and enjoy
the open stage...



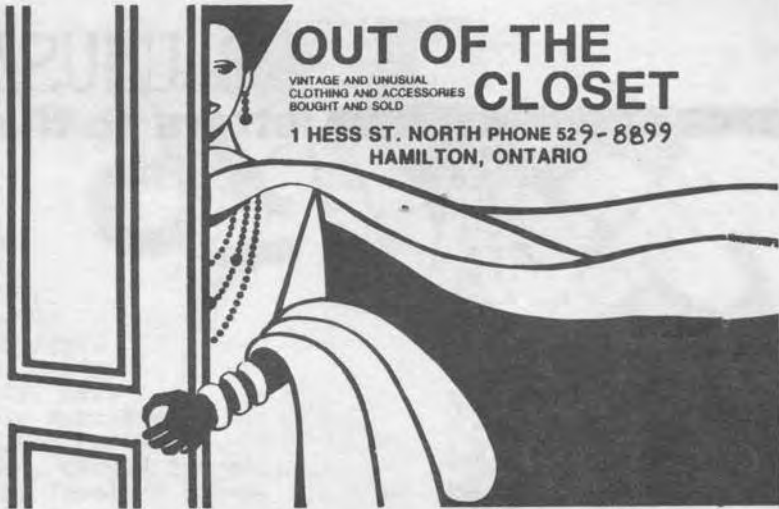
Baytides Café



OUT OF THE CLOSET

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3 Act play



This summer The Inc. has commissioned local playwright **BILL LEBANS** to write a 3 Act play. A portrayal of an Artist's career. Each Act will be held on a different floor of the INC. & will represent one stage in the Artist's progress. The sets for each floor, to be designed by artists Brian Kelly, Cor Heesters & Robert Yates, will stand as exhibitions themselves when the play is not being presented. Sept 19 to Oct 11.

PREMIERE:
Sept. 19

Installation Artists:
COR HEESTERS, ROBERT YATES,
BRIAN KELLY.

Interested Actors: AUDITIONS July 6 & 7
DATES ARE TENTATIVE: please leave
resumé, name & Number at Inc. & 9
we'll call you.

Hamilton



A major exhibition of the works of contemporary Hamilton artists.

to be held in the old Public Library

JULY 17 TO AUG. 10

HAMILTON NOW

July 17 to August 10; opening July 17, 8 p.m. at the 'old library' next door to City Hall.

The collective voice of contemporary Hamilton and area artists becomes a gala survey exhibition in July to celebrate all living artists in these parts. This exhibition is intended to complement our concurrent Hamilton Art Retrospective

The Honourable Lily Munroe, Minister of Citizenship and Culture, will open the exhibition on July 17, and performance events will be scheduled throughout the show's duration to celebrate Hamilton artists. Support from Ontario Arts Council and the City of Hamilton is graciously acknowledged for this project.



HAMILTON ART RETROSPECTIVE: 1910 TO 1950
 July 10 to August 10; opening July 10, 8 p.m. at the Art Gallery of Hamilton, followed by a late night soiree at Hamilton Artists' Inc.

We are interested not only in the achievements of individual artists, but also in the ebb + flow of artists' groups which have played a part in our cultural heritage. The book are over two thanks Council

HAMILTON ARTISTS' INC. forming the cul exhibition years

CLIMBING THE COLD WHITE PEAKS

A SURVEY OF ARTISTS IN AND FROM HAMILTON 1910 - 1950

our cultural mination of work. Much goes to The Canada



John Sloan Gordon



The Hamilton Foundation and The City of Hamilton for financial support. And to the Art Gallery of Hamilton for its cooperation. We are grateful to the artists, friends, families and for lending works and providing valuable information.

The exhibition opens concurrently at the ART GALLERY

OF HAMILTON and HAMILTON ARTISTS' INC.

Thursday, July 10

JULY 11 - AUG 10

"Climbing the Cold White Peaks" the book, by Stuart MacCuaig sells for \$10 -
 Designer: Brian Kelly
 Photography: James A. Chambers.



I've just got
back from a job,
money at last!

ON ARTS Funding

BY OWEN FORD

Why does Coca Cola make a commercial for television that shows a large group of swinging, nicely-dressed young people walking, dancing and drinking Coke? The reason is that outside of make-believe no such crowd, singing praises to a soft drink empire would occur. Coca Cola bought those people and then presented them to a large audience through the machinery of mass media.

As artists, we accept the distinction between commercial art and some purer stuff, a 'fine' or 'high' or 'avant-garde' art that is our chosen pursuit. To understand the apparent marginal position of the latter in this society, we might look at the relationship between commercial art, high art and the society that nourishes them.

Though the Coca Cola commercial employs forms and methods that belong to the pure arts (e.g. the use of actors, their make-up, positioning of the camera, choreography - all visually appealing), commercial art's primary purpose is promotion. In the more sophisticated examples (now well established) a lifestyle is promoted and associated with the product. The lifestyle is groomed to correspond with a certain conception of public taste. The premise is that the product will be associated with the lifestyle and that demand for it will be generated.

At the root, then, of commercial art is an ulterior motive (sales) whereas in pure art (in a Modernist sense) ostensibly, the forms of the art itself have an intrinsic value in relation to the society which the artist reveals. A Rothko or a Chia provides visual material that prompts experience in the viewer; experience that lies at the heart of the work - its raison d'être. The experience provided by commercial imagery, while no less tangible, is not advanced for its own sake. The distinction is hardly subtle - consider the use of repetition of a product's logo or data in advertising to drive the message home. This is not visual experience for its own sake but for ulterior motives, essentially propaganda.

We could go out on a limb here and suggest that for this reason, this superficial borrowing of high art format and experience, the subtler and less definable values of that experience are obscured, much as media sensationalism erodes the meanings of words.

Later media, like television, have evolved and grown because of their utility as promotional tools for the economic sector. They have developed sophisticated forms of visual language that remain effectively beyond the financial reach of any high art sector that would explore the medium for its own purposes.

In this society - Hamiltonian, Ontario, Canadian, North American, Western capitalist society - the greater part of image production, traditionally the province of the artist, is coupled with the motives of the commercial world.


We might ask how much of an effect this has on pure art form forms. It's a contentious point, perhaps, but I'd suggest it exerts a profound and retarding influence from the point of view of funding. Money-energy is put where it is expected to boost sales in commercial art and consequently involving some form of art but based on the self-interest of the supplier.

Commercial art must remain within the ethical boundaries of the modern states status quo; a system which has consistently suppressed much of what is valuable in art (Van Gogh, Munch, Picasso, Duchamp, an endless list).

Why are artists complaining about underfunding in the arts? Our society does not know how to value art nor where to place it within itself, unless it is subsumed into the dominant economic reality.



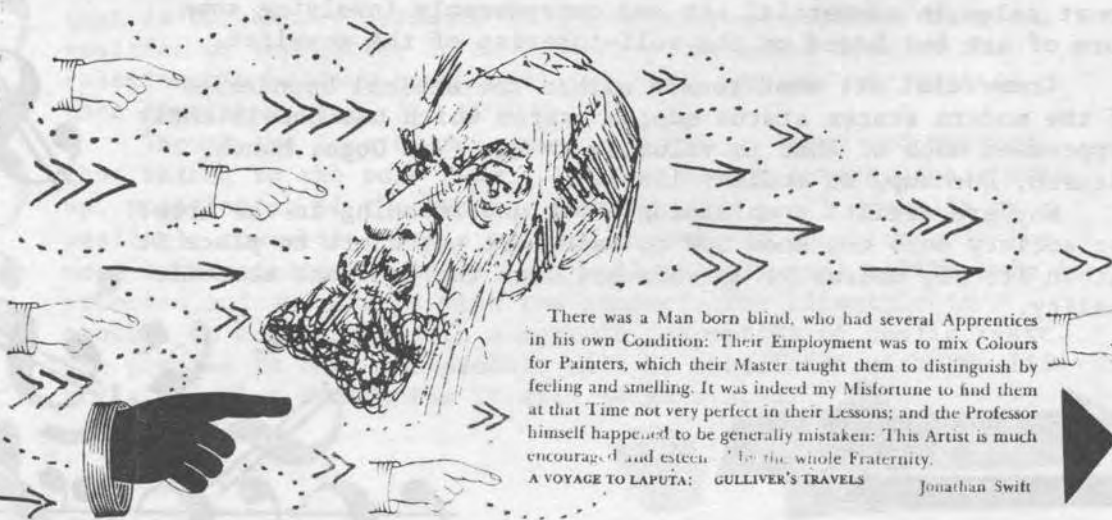
ARTS ADMINISTRATION TRAINING AT BANFF



Our current Administrator recently attended a three-week intensive Arts Administration Training Program at The Banff Centre's School of Management. Now back and armed with a suitcase full of current management tips, Hamilton Artists' Inc. would like to publicly thank The Ministry of Citizenship and Culture, The Canadian Museums Association and The Banff Centre's Scholarship Fund for making this venture possible. As suggested in Banff, a healthy life is an examined life and it is never too late to improve. In addition, we are indebted to Peter Greene, John Gilchrist and Barbara Flaten of the Banff Centre's School of Management for a well run program with stimulating input from administrators from across Canada. Good coffee and great morning jokes were interspersed with workshops on marketing, finance, computers and human resource skills as they apply to the arts.

The Banff Centre is a unique institution offering a wide range of arts and arts management programs year round, with well equipped visual arts studios in addition to performance arts facilities. The environment is amiable and highly conducive to learning. Many visual artists find themselves at Banff in an interim year between BFA's and Masters programs elsewhere. More established artists often make use of the Leighton Artists' Colony (a studio retreat) while on Project Grants.

Anyone interested in learning more about the Banff Centre's programs, facilities or scholarship fund, please call Joan at the INC.



There was a Man born blind, who had several Apprentices in his own Condition: Their Employment was to mix Colours for Painters, which their Master taught them to distinguish by feeling and smelling. It was indeed my Misfortune to find them at that Time not very perfect in their Lessons; and the Professor himself happened to be generally mistaken: This Artist is much encouraged and esteem'd by the whole Fraternity.

A VOYAGE TO LAPUTA: GULLIVER'S TRAVELS

Jonathan Swift

Get out your white cane!!! Put on your dark glasses!!!

IT'S TIME FOR

PROFESSOR BRAILLE'S ART LESSON

$$\begin{array}{r} 2 \\ + 2 \\ \hline 2+2 \end{array}$$

In advance of Recognitions by Robert C. Yates



LESSON #1

Today, class, we will try to determine if a text book is necessary for this course of study.

Below are some children's drawings from a book by Prof McCarty. They hope to teach us how to determine which child is considered the best little artist by the art experts.

If we try to see through the teacher's eyes, we can observe that "the very good child" seems to have a more developed sense of real life observation than her two class-mates ... but as far as making pleasing visual objects is concerned, is there any possibility that the person who did the grading here got it precisely backwards? What do you think? Which drawing do you like best?

The "poor" artist, uninhibited by the faculty of outward observation possessed by the "very good" child, is free to express himself with an immediacy the "very good" child seems to have lost.

Unfortunately, after taking home a series of report cards with "poor" grades in Art, this spontaneous child will be taught a complete indifference to things visual.

Those children who survive their early art training may go on to study art at the university or college level. They will probably begin their higher training with H.W. Janson's The History of Art or some other book very much like it.

What went before is child's play. Here the real mystification begins. Don't be too surprised if we find the same judgments used by Professor McCarty to assess children in a class room applied to grown-up artists on a world scale.

For starters, Janson's international history has not one reference to Canadian artists. But we mustn't let this bother us too much; our minds should be raised to the achievements of Humankind, not limited to provincial nationalism. Let's see what Janson has to offer.



VERY GOOD



GOOD



POOR

from Children's Drawings, by Professor Stella McCarty.
The Williams and Wilkins Company, publishers.

In his Introduction, Janson compares an engraving by Mantegna (c. 1493) with a similar drawing by Durer (1494). He says of Durer's drawing: "although it follows Mantegna's design detail for detail, somehow (it) retains the quality of an independent work of art as well."

Remember that Durer is recognized by the experts as an historically significant artist -- in the category Janson calls "creative" as opposed to a mere copyist or craftsman.

Janson goes on: "Durer's drawing represents (it does not copy) the engraving in the same way that other drawings represent a landscape or a living person, and... its artistic originality does not suffer thereby."

Janson lets us know that "an experienced eye" will see the similarity between the two works. Seeing them reproduced side by side, I will go one step further. I say even an inexperienced eye can see the likelihood that the Durer is a tracing. If the drawing was placed over the engraving and they were held up to the light, I wouldn't be at all surprised if the outlines of all the figures coincided exactly. I am not praising the accuracy of Durer's eye, but suggesting his great drawing is a common tracing of Mantegna's outlines, subsequently filled in with the facial expressions and means of hatching that came most naturally to him.

All of this is not terribly important. How artists work are as varied as we are and should be no cause for wonderment. Part of an artist's training and method will always be copying and even tracing. This is no big deal. But what we should wonder is this: What is the author of a book like this trying to tell us? Are we being asked to deny the experiences provided for us by our own eyeballs? Are we being taught how to be proper art "groupies"? Are we being told which artists are to inspire in us an unquestioning numbness as our minds move to mush?

Janson presents us with a photo of a sculpture which is perhaps the most perfect example of the idealization of the male human form, and we are to admire it as one of the high achievements of Greek art. It is a Roman copy.

"The most famous Kouros statue of that time," Janson tells us, the Doryphorus by Polyclitus, is



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5. ALBRECHT DÜRER. *Battle of Sea Gods*. 1494. Pen drawing, 11^{3/8} × 15". Albertina, Vienna

6. ANDREA MANTEGNA. *Battle of Sea Gods*. c. 1493. Engraving, 11^{3/8} × 15^{1/8}". The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (Rogers Fund, 1920)



DÜRER

MANTEGNA

Our works are structures of lines, surfaces, forms, colors. They attempt to approach reality. They hate artifice, vanity, imitation, tight-rope walking. To be sure, there are tight-rope walkers of varying talent. But art should lead to the spiritual, the real. This reality is neither objective reality, nor the subjective reality of thought, that is, ideality, but a mystical reality, toward which we stand in the relation of the eye in the following Neoplatonic image: "It removes itself from light in order to see the darkness, but it does not see; for it cannot see the darkness when there is light, but without light it does not see; by not seeing, it sees the darkness in the way that is natural to it."

JEAN ARP
(from *ON MY WAY*, New York, 1948)

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the History of Art
HORST W. Janso
Art CLASSIC
SATURDAY

known to us only through Roman copies whose hard, dry forms convey little of the beauty of the original. Still it makes an instructive comparison with the Kritios boy."

Does Janson convince you that he is familiar with the original Doryphorus? (He has chosen a Roman copy of Doryphorus to contrast to the earlier Greek original (Kritios boy) to demonstrate to us how far Greek art had progressed.)

The most typically "Greek" sculptures reproduced in Janson (The Discus Thrower, The Barbarini Faun, The Dying Gaul, etc.) are all Roman "copies". The originals are no longer with us.

Something is very wrong here. Any of you who have ever held a tool in your hands, just imagine the accuracy to be expected in copying something by carving it out of a block of marble. The Romans were not xerox machines. Why aren't these copies (which are good enough to stand as examples of Greek art) considered by Janson in the same light as Durer producing great art by using a Mantegna as a model to work from?

I don't know either.

Artists are people doing jobs of work: sometimes for others, sometimes not; sometimes inspired, sometimes not. Some suffer a prejudice against them; others are chosen to enjoy a shower of favours. They all make things with their hands, to varying degrees of success, and through varying degrees of effort and struggle.

We live in a time when it is right to discourage the idea of expanding empires. In fact, it seems appropriate to praise what we believe to be the beginnings of democracy. In Janson this translates as a prejudice against Roman art in favour of Greek art.



EXCONS

THE
KRITIOS
BOY

GREEK ART

Janson gives
new meaning to
the phrase
"It's all Greek
to me."



THE
DORYPHORUS

ROMAN ART

Why shouldn't we see these Roman sculptures ("copies") as work equal to that done by the Greeks? Or, if not equal, why don't they at least appear under the classification "Roman Art" in a history of Art?

Is there any reason to perpetuate the elitist beliefs espoused by Janson as he talks of these splendid products of hard-working human hands while belittling their makers: "We wonder whether the copy does not make the design seem harsher and less poised than it was in the original." Look at the Doryphorus. Do we really share Janson's wonder? The real wonder is that such things are brought into being at all. Somebody actually took the trouble to make it.

We should never forget that these anonymous workers of the past were individuals and sweat came to their brows too. They were artists and they had the rare and beautiful vision of "Rightness".

Professor Braille would like to know why we can't extend our goodwill and democratic impulses to embrace all Mankind including those of the past (and future). Why not see their efforts for what they were (namely theirs) and stop denying them their place in the history of our civilization or pretending they walked less than upright.

What notion of art do texts like Janson's try to teach us? Do you think this dogma should be the material on which students of art should be examined, and depending on the answers they give, be told they have "passed" or "failed"?

Janson has written a very thick book. We can, like it, go on and on. Let's flip forward, closer to home, up to the Twentieth Century where the art world, with a charming innocence, has learned to sit up, crawl, and drool "Ga-ga goo-goo" in front of Picasso.

Using the painting The Old Guitarist (below right) as evidence, Janson dubs Picasso "a twenty-two year old genius". What would you think if I told you that it is rumoured that 10 days before Picasso painted this masterpiece, he received a postcard from Max Jacob who had been visiting Orvieto Cathedral? The postcard allegedly showed a detail of The Last Judgment by Lorenzo Maitani, c.1320 (below). Maitani is not distinguished with the title "genius", but is merely mentioned once in passing by Janson as one of history's many minor craftsmen.



Have we any reason to believe the mail was late and Picasso did not see the above/left before painting the above/right? While the young Picasso executed his work of genius, where do you suppose he had Max's postcard pinned up? Tell me more: Which of the above do you think is the more meaningful depiction of "outcast" and "victim" (these are Janson's words to describe Picasso's blue figure)?

A Digression: At this point do you suppose you should be asking yourself the old chestnut of a question: SHOULD I BELIEVE EVERYTHING I READ?? Do you find this question similar to the question: DO I BELIEVE EVERYTHING I READ?? We are able to see similarities everywhere we look, if that is what we are looking for. And so can those who write art criticism. Looking at art in this way is somewhat akin to cloud watching, where it is easy to imagine we can see Picasso's influence on God.

Consider this: Was the unknown artist of The Gero Crucifix (thought to have been executed c.975-1000 A.D.) inspired by the 1958 Hollywood movie, Guns For San Sabastian, starring Anthony Quinn?

Are you sure?

With what we know of the successes of modern forgeries, are you still sure?

Does it matter?

Why, or why not?



QUINN
Doing his thing.

A Further Digression: Before we go too much further, Professor Braille would like you to know that grading marks in this course of study will be awarded only for the questions asked. Please understand you will get nothing in the way of marks for your answers. Answers are their own reward.

A bit more on Picasso. Not the artist but the sociological phenomenon. It is hardly necessary to note that just about every art commentator speaks of him in terms an earlier time would have saved for the saints.

Anyone who saw the Picasso exhibit at the Musée des Beaux Arts in Montreal last year could not help but see that he is the most influential and imitated artist of our time. As part of the jostling crowd peering at Picasso's portrait of his son in a harlequin's outfit, you were in the presence of perhaps the most influential painting in history. Every furniture store in the world has an endless supply of original soft-focus paintings of youths with big bright eyes, and all of them pay homage to this, the great granddaddy of them all.

This is not a lesson in cynicism. A healthy skepticism in things of this nature never hurts, however. Like all the great teachers, Professor Braille is first of all concerned with his pupils. The important thing here, dear reader, is your eyeballs. Read what you are reading now in the same spirit you would read any art book.

If the name of an artist is inflated by the experts and the media to a size where it actually obscures the work, if we really want to see the work, we must deflate the name and push it down and out of our field of vision.

How can I be honest and how can I see things for what they are when everything seems to conspire against it? (A bit on the rhetorical side, but good questions anyway.)

Anyone who calls himself an artist is not very aware of his abilities if he cannot say, "Lots of my work is more deserving of my fellow humans' consideration than most of Picasso's". This statement does not deny the prolifically unedited Picasso his important place in art history.

If art is to become socially significant and a liberating element in our lives, we are obliged to dispense with the mindless "groupie" attitude which is encouraged by most art hype.

To this end, here is your homework assignment: Get two postcard reproductions of paintings. One, an international "great"; the other, more down-home. (Suggestions: Picasso's Demoiselles d'Avignon, often considered a major turning point in art, and perhaps Tom Thomson's West Wind because it is considered big in his work, although neither approaches being either's best.) Now go to your toilet and tape up

7
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21 Juin - 10 novembre
85

the two paintings side by side at eye-level while comfortably sitting. (This is to guarantee you look at them for at least a minute or two every day.) Leave them there for at least a year, resisting giving birth to any opinion for at least nine months. Then: You will see what you will see.

For my part, having conducted this experiment, I grew to prefer one painting over the other.

We don't have a text book yet. Let's look at another one, A Concise History of Modern Sculpture by Herbert Read, and hope for the best.

Read opens his book by contrasting Daumier and Rodin. Of the time between Michaelangelo and Rodin he writes, "there is the odd intrusion of Honoré Daumier, who as early as 1830 was producing busts as superficially 'modern' as any works of Rodin. But Daumier was a caricaturist, and the kind of deformations made by the caricaturist to secure his satirical emphasis have nothing in common with the formal conceptions of a Rodin... Any resemblance with the stylistic forms of modern art is therefore purely coincidental."

(Here we go again; have mercy on us.)

To prove Rodin is a serious artist, Read quotes Rodin himself: "The main thing is to be moved, to love, to hope, to tremble, to live. Be a man before being an artist." Read explains to us that "these are the words of a humanist, of an artist who was always concerned to serve humanity and to give his work a public setting." (What a stench; it is time to hold our noses again.)

Read's illuminations are the proverbial candle in sunlight when he is contrasting Rodin and Daumier. Daumier is the one who gave his work a public setting and he served humanity by protesting an oppressive government and was thrown into prison for his trouble. (Professor Braille could also dogmatically insist that furthermore, Daumier was a far greater artist than Rodin--but if it is true, and such labels mean anything to you, you will discover it for yourself.

I think we can dismiss the picayune opinions of Herbert Read with greater ease than he dismisses the great work of Daumier. His book will not be on our course of study. And Lesson #1 is drawing quickly to a close.

The only real lesson for you here is something you already know: By far the best thing about any art book is not the text but looking at the pictures.

You can safely conclude that no text book is necessary for this course of study. All that is required for Professor Braille's Art Lessons are your usual white cane and dark glasses.



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What Is ART ?

the art for art's sake approach by David Avon

The definition of anything is the Word as the meaning of itself. The approach to any definition or meaning of art could be made in an oblique way by taking a period of its history (such as art for art's sake) and enlarging upon it.

For example: Is it a question of art in relation to itself or is it a question fo art in relation to its social existence? The phrase 'art for art's sake' is not logically admissable for nothing is for its own sake. Everything is in relation to another thing. It was only when artists in the 1860's refused to conform to the values of society, withdrew from it and withdrew unto themselves, that such a phrase came into use. They did not withdraw from society to be outside of it but withdrew from it as a criticism and thus were still part of its social life. Art is not an end itself but is part of the human consciousness and social order.

Nowadays 'art for art's sake' should be a strange idea just as a human activity art should serve a useful purpose if it is not to be a frivolous occupation. Wealth exists so that man may use it, science so that she may be man's guide. Likewise art must serve some essential purpose and not be an idle amusement. Artistic activity--this making of drawings and pictures and books etc.--is not a thing done just for the fun of doing it. No artist was ever content to have his fun and then throw the result of it away. The book has to be read, the overture performed and the drawing seen. Art is a communication. Behind every work of art is the artist's appeal to his fellows: don't you see what I mean - don't you see what I'm getting at?

The Hamilton Artists' Group (Inc. is an ugly word) could be called a society. Each member of it is craving to show his work as a communication of his artistic activity and, as a member, is not outside of the society.

Therefore no member could subscribe to such a dictum as 'art for art's sake', for he already belongs to a society where his work is sometimes juried and sometimes refused and is therefore at the pleasure of the society and not himself.

The story of art is not merely the story of men who do things but the very complicated and always shifting relationship between these men and their fellow men. The Group is not made for the One but the One for the Group. Society is not made for the artist but

the artist for society. Art is not made for itself but for its communication. A word is not named for itself but for the object as the same thing.

Two questions could be asked:

1. What are the principle social conditions in which the idea of 'art for art's sake' arises and is strengthened
2. What are the principle social conditions in which the so-called 'utilitarian' conception of art arises and is strengthened with the tendency to accord to works of art 'the significance of judgement on the phenomena of life'? The creation of art is a social act; it is the act of communicating ideas and emotion by the artist to other men.

If you have listened carefully you will have noticed that I have not been talking about art at all but about Logic; of art as the logic of its grammar. How we define a word (art) as its own definition is the same as what reason, explanation or meaning we offer as its valid inference. What we are offering in this article is one valid inference of its assumed definition. How we posit a word as the proposition of its meaning is the logic of how we arrange parts of speech as its grammar.

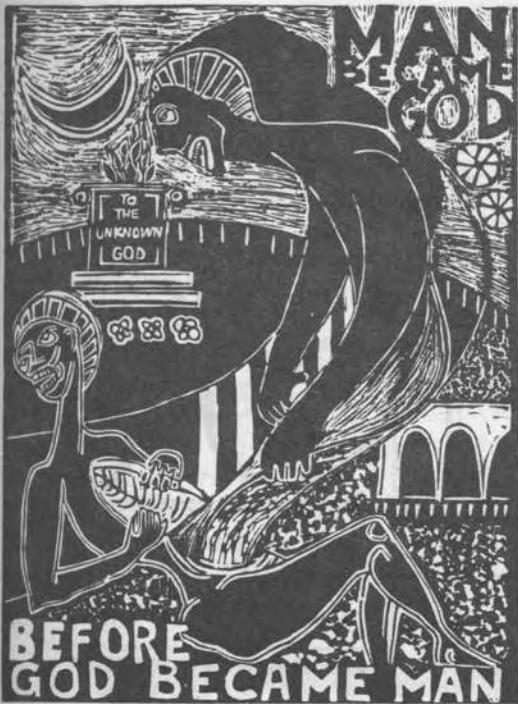
Thus there can be no discrimination between art as a thing in itself and art as the utilitarian thing. It neither belongs to the artist nor to society, but is the relation of both as the same thing.

We cannot defend or reject 'art for art's sake' without bringing into discussion the political ideas and the reaction against such ideas by those who initiated the movement. This we do not wish to do. We can end the definition by quoting Gautier and de Banville, Pushkin and Maxime de Camp. Pushkin expressed his idea of the poet's task in the following so often quoted lines:

not for the world, ambition-torn,
rage of war and profit's cares,
for inspiration we were born,
sweetness of harmony, and prayers.

Here we meet the theory of 'art for art's sake' in its sharpest formulation. Next from Gautier: *





from "MEDITATIONS OF DAVID AVON, A MAN OF THE WORLD"
a series of prints by BRIAN JOHNSTON, 1979

'no you idiots, no, you cretins, you cannot make soup out of a book or a pair of boots out of a novel. I swear by the guts of all past, present and future Popes--no, a thousand times ,no! I am one of those who consider the superfluous essential. My love for things and people is in inverse proportion to their utility.'

And again from Pushkin when he says of the poet:

You're king, so dwell alone. Your free path treads wherever your free mind, your steps may lead; Perfect the fruits your secret thoughts have bred,

And for your achievement ask no meed.

Lastly from Maxime du Camp the following:
La forme est belle, soit! quand l'idée est au fond

Qu'est ce donc qu'un beau front, qui n'a pas de cervelle?¹

and

"Like so many writers who create art for art's sake, M. Delacroix has produced COLOUR FOR COLOUR'S SAKE. History and mankind serve him only as an excuse for the combination of well selected shades."

Well, have we survived the meaning of 'art for art's sake' as its definition?? I don't know, but what we could do is replace 'art for art's sake' by another phrase of the same calibre. We could redefine art as what we are doing today as exhibited in this gallery.

A new definition of art would be really something new and exciting - a new creativeness - but I doubt very much whether the members of this gallery could use language to define a word as the meaning of art, for they are interested in art as a mere pastime without serious study.

Since most of the members of this gallery are women it is only necessary to prove the point of definition by saying to them on some occasion 'if you wear men's clothing - trousers, shirts, etc. - are you not a transvestite?' Or 'if you are a man can you not be a feminist?' and note their reaction. If they cannot handle such an every day question by way of definition how could they redefine art as the same thing? I leave it with you.

¹ Form is beautiful--yes, when it is based upon an idea.
What is a beautiful face without intelligence?



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Who didn't sneak down a side street around 1974?

Who hasn't sacrificed his poise and sense of humour?

Who isn't trying to be serious?

Who goes by anything resembling a morality of conviction?

Who isn't busy suffocating somebody? And in the name of what?

Who goes for broke anymore?

Who isn't broke? And why? And at what cost?

Who isn't hard of hearing? And why isn't he?
Can't he hear?

Who gives a wet fart if your daughter is a figure skater?

Who knows one man capable neither of insult nor being insulted?

Who listens to his heart?

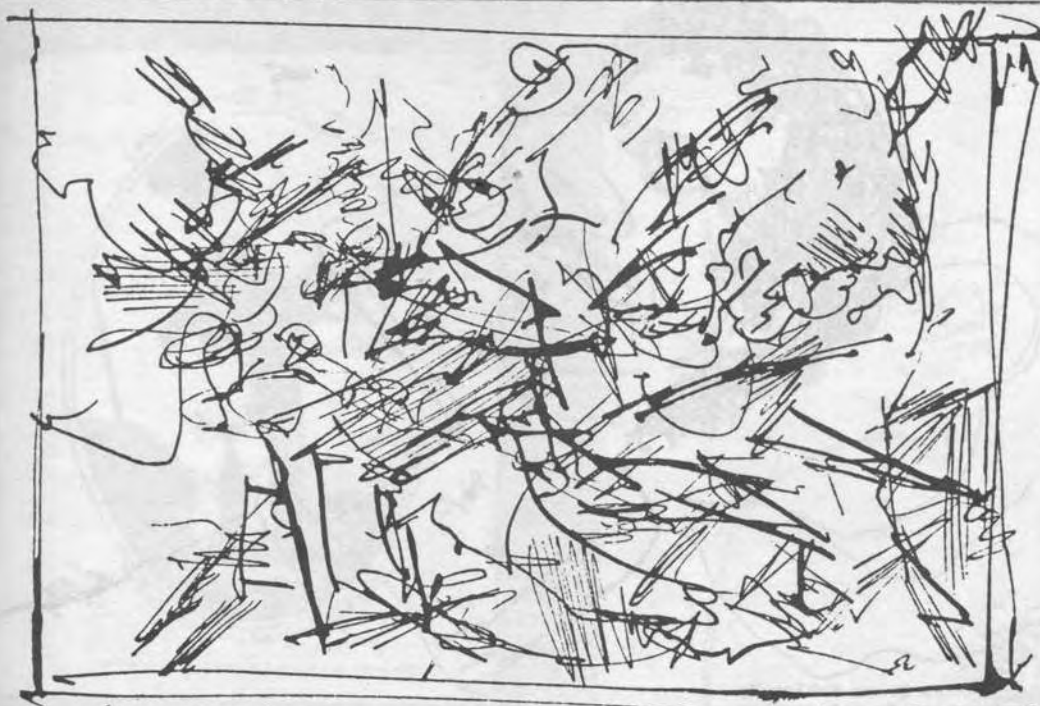
Whose mind is open as the grave?

Who has not cursed that witless ball of frozen stone, our moon?

Who hasn't got a standing invitation to betray the entire creation?

Who wouldn't trade B.C. for Minnesota? Don Cherry for Gregor Samsa?

Who doesn't dwell with Regret as with a hated sister?



jazz drawing

by Peter Beckett

Who seriously wonders if Oblivion isn't the greatest
of treasures?

Who hasn't, with a terrible cry, released Jesus Christ
from his life?

Who has not muttered against the Jews? And who can
weep for this place?

Is there any healing outlet for our grief and fury?

Who can manage anything more than a brief suspension
of disbelief?

Who wasn't bombarded for six days and six nights when
he was 12?

Whose life is getting friendlier to him?

Who knows His mercies are new every morning?

Who hasn't got his Stalingrad medal?

Someone has drawn the blinds. You perhaps?



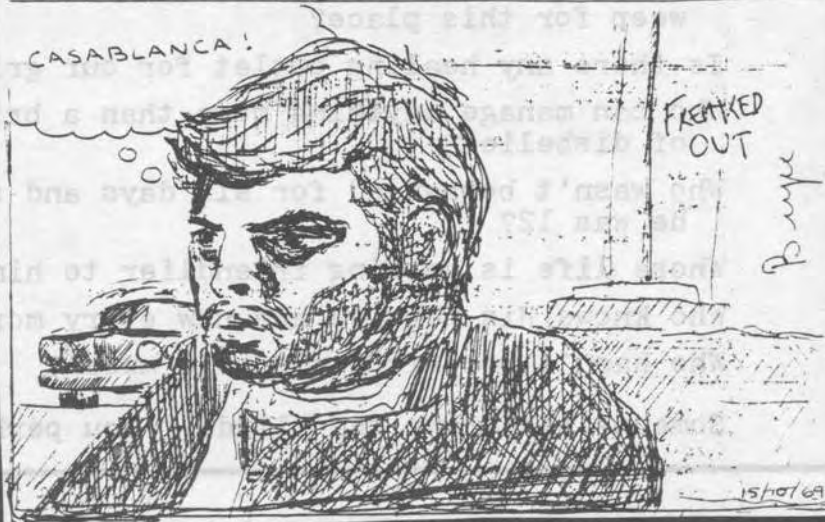
A Portrait of Russ Brown Waking Up Yesterday Afternoon To Yet Another New Day. Several Years Before His Governor-General's Award, And About One Hour Before His Breakfast, He Wonders What He Has To Wear To Either. A Quick Sketch of a Moving Target by PAUL DYMENT.

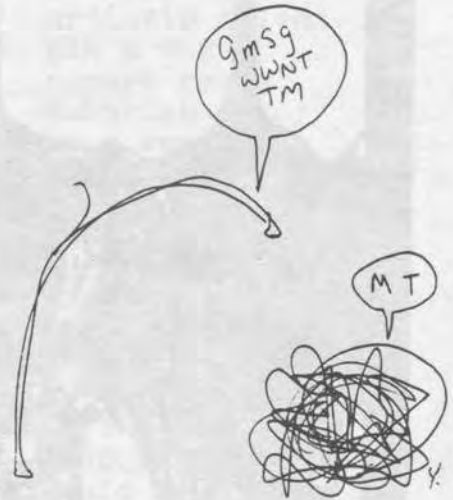
'What tragedy is loftier
Than mine'

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OF THE
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PART III

THE TURMOILS OF **YOUNG YATES** artist. D.O. © 11 00

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Bryce Kanbara

un souvenir de la jeunesse




WILLIAM QUIGLEY KIDSTON
Hamilton artist
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34 The dates are not yet set for the Kidston Retrospective.
If anyone knows the whereabouts of any of this artist's
works, drop a line to the Inc.


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GRETZKY HAIKUS

Before you escape from your pen, compose a haiku (or a poem in the spirit of haiku) on the brilliant Edmonton Oiler captain, Wayne Gretzky. (17 syllables: 5-7-5) All poems submitted to the Inc by September 21 will be exhibited at the Inc. and a selection of the best will be published (maybe with an introduction by Howie Meeker, Robert Markle, Rocket Richard or some other hockey celebrity).

Send your haiku to:
YNE HAIKZKY
c/o HAI (the Inc)



DEAR JOHN

Watch for graffiti as high art. Art in Public Places: Dear John will be a series of mural installations in private public places throughout the North End of Hamilton. Details later.

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* BOARD OF DIRECTORS this *
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* the Inc for the Nominating *
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MUSIC GALLERY CALLS FOR SUBMISSIONS TO SOUND SCULPTURE EXHIBITION for July and August of '87 in Toronto's High Park. To feature the work of 10 artists selected from submissions received. Deadline for initial proposals is Sept 1. Send drawings and proposals to: **SOUND SCULPTURE EXHIBITION, c/o MUSIC GALLERY, 1087 Queen Street West, Toronto M6J 1H3.**



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We are now accepting exhibition proposals from artists on a quarterly basis. Please submit 10 slides, a resumé and a brief statement of intent for the proposed show by **July 16** for consideration in our 1987 exhibition schedule. Hamilton Artists' Inc. pays artists' fees and gives some preference to beginning artists and to local artists, or more established artists exploring new directions in their work. However, we welcome innovative group proposals and proposals for community-based shows. Gallery floor plans are available upon request.

And More . . .



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O Ease My Spirit.

O ease my spirit increasingly of the load
Of my personal limitations and the riddling differences
Between man and man with a more constant insight
Into the fundamental similarity of all activities.

And quicken me to the gloriously and terribly illuminating
Integration of the physical and the spiritual till I feel how easily
I could put my hand gently on the whole round world
As on my sweetheart's head and draw it to me.

Hugh MacDiarmid.

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CLIMBING THE COLD WHITE PEAKS
A Retrospective Exhibition of
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at Hamilton Artists' Inc &
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July 17 - Aug 9

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1st floor of the Inc
TERRY KINSELLA paintings
2nd floor

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UDO KASEMETS with
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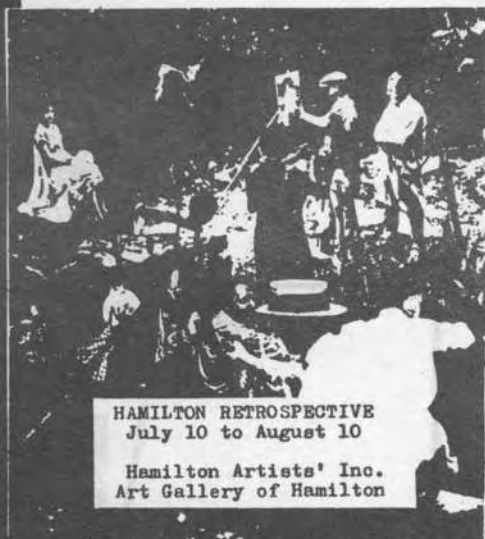
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