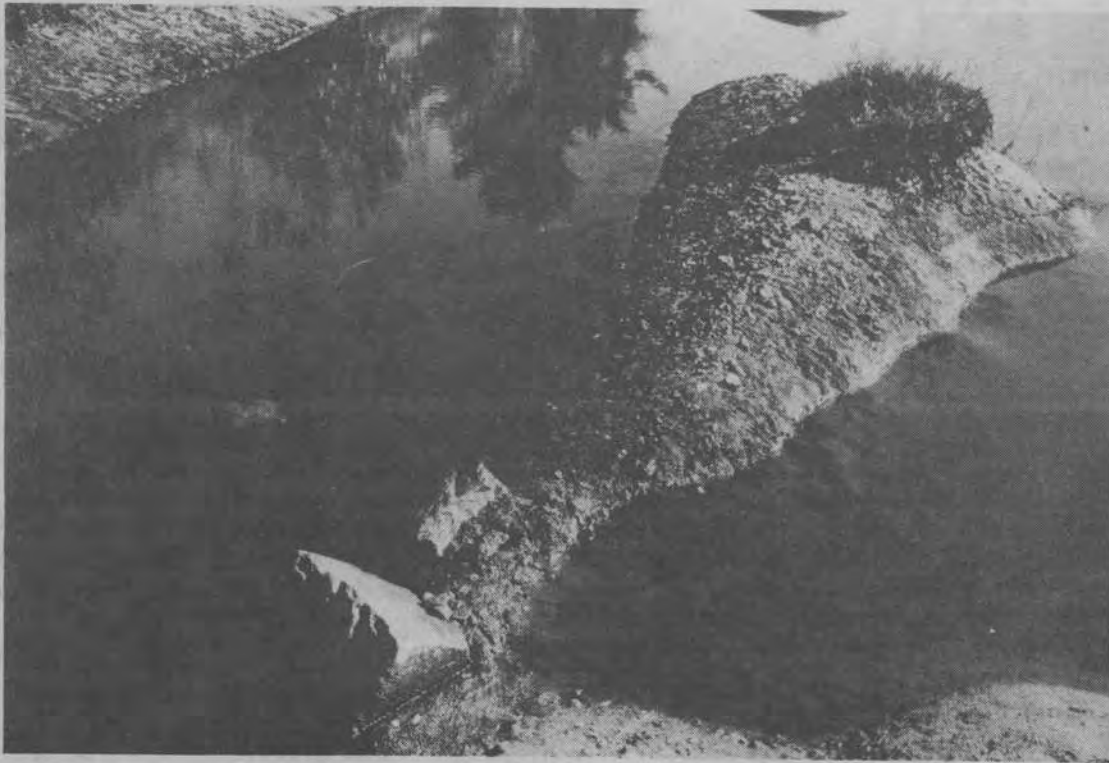


Pen&Inc.

Newsletter of Hamilton Artists' Inc.

Vol. 3 Issue 1

Winter 1991



Normand Rajotte

from "Dans les
coins oubliés,
à la recherche
des dieux
tranquilles

Reacquainted with the Landscape

The following is a direct transcription of an "Artists' Talk" given by photographer Normand Rajotte at the opening of his exhibition at the Hamilton Artists' Inc., November 30 to December 29, 1990. Normand's talk, a strong personal reflection on his development, initiated substantial dialogue between the artist, members and staff present. We greatly appreciate Normand's permission to print this transcription.

Normand Rajotte:

"I started being interested in photography eighteen years ago while living in Drummondville, a city situated in the centre of industrial Quebec. At first, as I was isolated, my inspiration came from popular French and American photographic magazines. With this information I began to develop a personal, autodidactic photographic language. After a while myself and two other photographers decided to implicate ourselves in our milieu and to make a social portrait of our city.

This was during the mid-seventies, dynamic years in Quebec, contestation was part of our daily life, opinions were openly manifested in public. Being engaged like everyone else in such social movements we began documenting our small city's environments.

Just to show you what kind of relationship we had together: to execute our project the three of us applied for a grant. Only one of us received a bursary. We decided to share equally the amount of money. We did it again for another grant.

We decided to do this survey because we were fed up with official images, the same old noble faces of the place photographed in all local hebdomads. This was not representative of our region and we wanted to show another facet, one of the working class with low wages, young people and friends in everyday activities. The result was published as a book in OVO's edition under the title "Trans-Canadienne, sortie 109"

(Trans-Canada Highway, exit 109).

Fifteen years later I took a look at this document as a truthful testimony. It is an important historical period where censoring was not a fact of our activities. For that reason it is representing daily life in a crude vision, where humour can be present. Today, when I look back to this body of works, I feel that I was naive but extremely free.

After the edition of the book, I decided to move from Drummondville. I arrived in Montreal in a poor neighbourhood. I started a project which consisted of photographing the children living there. But I never finished this project for the following reasons: I had the impression of being part of a movement very present at that time, which consisted of representing the 'miserable'. My neighbourhood was full of photographers on the weekends searching for such punching images. To help me move away from this urban environment I decided to make a photographic series on agricultural fairs. This was my last project dealing with documentary photography, until now.

Then I lived a period of reflection. I was questioning the efficiency of my work since the diffusion was extremely limited and so not participating in change or progress. And also, I was not emotionally implicated in what I was doing. Since that time I decided to take pictures dealing with visual spaces where I was at ease. It was the beginning of a series of landscapes.

Before, I hated this kind of work and never wanted to deal with it. The references of such images came from Ansel Adams where his work deals with the gigantic and cold visions of 'paysage'. It also came from postcards, travelling magazines and so on.

What changed my attitude was first discovering the poetic work of Minor White. Then, one day, I saw the book **American Landscapes**, published by the museum of Modern Art, New York, the image by Edward Curtis called the *Mythic Stone - Hidatsa*. In this photograph I rediscovered the mixture of banal

and magic places where I liked to go when I was young. This was the beginning of a new approach of my life through the camera.

In 1983 I started photographing landscape with a content dealing with geographic sites and emotional feelings close to me. These 'paysages' were the limits of human organization and natural environments. I returned to the playgrounds of my youth, at the frontier of the revitalized world, to rediscover the fantastic of ordinary nature which is motionless and moving at the same time.

I projected in these landscapes my fantasy to harvest mirages transformed in photographs, to keep some traces, some evidence of what I have seen. This body of work was presented in 1985.

Here is a text written by R. Baillargen concerning my works:

... Rajotte gets reacquainted with one of the major photographic styles (landscape). He does so, however, in a very unique way. His search leads him to look for places that are remarkable not so much for their grandiose character as for their archetypal aspect. These are places of the sacred, of mystery where vestiges of mythologic, ghostly presences are sought for. Parallelism of places, of sites that all have one common intent: to lead us to discover the strange power of certain telluric forces that lie dormant in the folds of the ground, in the rock crevices, or under the opaque surfaces of turbid and stagnant waters. The atavistic fears are mirrored in Rajotte's pictures. We can sense in the latter what remains at adulthood of the unexpressed elements of our childhood tales and legends.

Since then I continued exploring this subject. You can see the results on the wall. This series was produced at different sites: the Eastern townships of Quebec, New England, the south of France and the north of Spain. During the last years I decided to enlarge my world by sometimes travelling away from playgrounds of my youth.

Thanks."

**The Hamilton Artists Inc.
Exhibition
Programming Schedule**

*Sarah Link
Walter Hickling*
"Artists of Influence"
January 11 to February 9

"The New/Renew Show"
(Co-curated by
Pat Kozowyk/Kathy Bresnahan)
February 15 to March 16

"KID INC"
Marilyn Lemon & Violet Costello
March 22 to April 20

ZONE PROGRAMMING SCHEDULE

Artsound Programme
January 11
Music by Nicol/Daigneault/Hickling

March 22
Violet Costello visiting Artist's talk

March 23
Marilyn Lemon Artist's talk

Pen and Inc. is published bimonthly by the Hamilton Artists' Inc., 145 James St. N., Hamilton, Ont., Canada L8R 2K8.

If you would like to advertise in Pen & Inc. Please give us a call at 529-3355. Opinions expressed are those of the writers and not necessarily shared by the H.A.I. membership.

Please address letters to the Editor at the above address. Writers in Pen & Inc. must be H.A.I. members. Deadline for next edition submissions is November 8/90.

1991 Board of Directors

*Gary Spearin - President
Robert Mason - Past President
Cees Van Gemerden-VicePresident/Secretary
Donna Ibing - Printspace
Renee Johnston - Treasurer
Lorie Callander - Newsletter
Diane Cizek
Mary Keczan-Ebos
Sarah Hodgson
Fiona Kinsella
Yob Yang*

The Hamilton Artists' Inc. Gallery is a charitable non-profit artist run centre which belongs to CARO and ANNPAC. Membership is open to artists and patrons alike.

We now are operating 900 square feet of exhibition space as well as general office space and The Printmaking Studio one door north on James Street, Gallery hours are Tuesday to Friday 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**PRICE LIST FOR
PEN & INC NEWSLETTER**

Full Page: \$400.00
1/2 Page: \$200.00
1/4 Page: \$100.00
1/8 Page: \$50.00

Business Card: \$27.00

All ads are subject to Board Approval

Split Ideas

Thanks to the "humble" comment book, provided by Artist/Curator Mary Keczan-Ebos for the exhibition **The Split Subject**, a very exciting dialogue was established between artist Victoria Shymlosky and viewer Anne Milne. With permission of both individuals, we are pleased to be able to re-present this exchange. Interested readers should consult Mary Keczan-Ebos's catalogue, published by the Hamilton Artists' Inc., for background information.

Anne Milne:

Though **The Split Subject** may come from Kristeva's "clive" and be connected in this way to Feminism, I would have liked to have seen some acknowledgement of other splits, particularly, I suppose, the split which occurs within women artists trained by/within male structures, ideologies, methodologies -- structures intended to produce "manly", individualistic work for the market. Only Susan Boychuk's work seems to address women's formal concerns (materials and textures). And there seems nothing of the collective here or of the process of healing the cliven(?) woman.

In terms of content, Vicky Shymlosky's work on the 3rd floor is extremely problematic. Her "Sexploitation" works strike me as ill conceived and I read them as re-exploitative. The complex issue of pornography and the rights of sex-trade workers within the context of feminism seems not to have been considered. Shymlosky's "Misuse of Ideology" also exploits. Why the Ayatollah and not the Pope? Why Freud and Einstein identified by their race/religion when the others, ie. Darwin, are not?

Anyway, thanks for exposing the split. Obviously, much more needs to be said.

Victoria Shymlosky

1. I knew my sexploitation piece would be problematic. It is part of the triptych. I wanted to use actual cut-outs from these magazines to best illustrate the point. Nudity is not the problem!!! It is how the body is used to portray

sexuality. More to the point pornography is created by a society, certain individuals and companies who make a fast buck on the degradation of normal sexuality. Women and men, their bodies unclothed, clothed, semi-clothed, are beautiful. The audience, the consumer of pornography, is much part of the problem. No, I didn't buy the magazine, I got it from a male friend. The images I used were not offensive. We all know of existing material far worse.

2. The *Misuse of ideology* piece involves the presentation of the five key thinkers of the 20th century, each one is clearly identified. Their ideas have greatly influenced modern society, culture, science and politics.

Their theories and ideology in the same vein have been misused by the likes of Mao, Stalin and Hitler. Freud and Einstein had to leave their native country, Germany, because of their Jewish heritage, before WWII. Einstein is the modern scientific hero who was forced to help create the atomic bomb despite his pacifist views. Nazi Germany and Hitler were working on making an atomic bomb, thankfully they were unsuccessful! The symbol and the image of the tree of knowledge and atomic bomb next to each other is central to the meaning of the piece. **Knowledge can be dangerous as well as enlightening.**

At the top of the tree and bomb sit the unholy trinity. A religious leader the Ayatollah who was responsible for the "hostage crisis" as part of his "Holy War" campaign. The Klu Klux Klan, a so-called Christian organization as it views itself, is the blatant example of prejudice and violent vigilantism. At the other end are the portraits of the "three little tyrants", infamous for the havoc they wreaked upon their nations and other nations.

My piece was created to stimulate dialogue and analysis. If a viewer wants to misinterpret a message by magnifying an element they see that is their choice.

Sincerely, V. Shymlosky

Read: **Who is a Jew?** by Rabbi Schohet.

Printspace News by Doug Carter

Printspace/Hamilton Artists' Inc. had its 10th annual fundraising sale of original prints and works on paper during November in the Inc. gallery.

This year the sale was by silent auction and for the first time a 'closing party' was held at the end of the 3 week hanging period. The highest bid at 9:00 pm, November 23 won the right to purchase the work. In a number of cases, 2 or more people were actively bidding against each other at the 9 o'clock closing so a public 'bid-off' was held and there was much spirited action especially on the prints done by Jennifer Dickson and George Wallace.

Printmaker Alan Flint of Open Studio, Toronto and currently a Hamilton resident is hosting a series of workshops at Printspace exploring materials and techniques beyond the traditional. To date workshops have covered drypoint on aluminum, tin and certain plastics, styography (using 'blue' SM styrofoam of the type commonly used in the construction industry, for relief printing) and experimental etching grounds.

These techniques lend themselves to fast, cheap and in many instances ecologically sound printmaking. Much excitement is being generated amongst Printspace's regular users by these workshops.

Printspace is available for artists to come and make prints. Rates are \$6.00 a day, \$28.00 for 8 days worth of time, \$55.00 a month or \$160.00 per year and include inks, grounds, acids, solvents and cleanup-materials. For more information about Printspace usage please drop by or call 523-6603.

**KANGUK
PHOTO**

CEES VAN GEMERDEN
93 Colbourne Street,
Hamilton, Ontario
L8R 2G6
(416)525- 8538

ART DOCUMENTATION

**Slides
Colour
B&W**

Long time "ACTIVE" member Cees Van Gernerden requested that the following correspondence between himself and Richard Allen M.P.P., regarding Mr. Allen's "Milk Calendar", be made public through the Pen & Inc.. The exchange has been reproduced in its entirety.

ROOM 331
MAIN LEGISLATIVE BUILDING
QUEEN'S PARK
TORONTO M7A 1A2
(416) 965-6404

CHAMBRE 331
ASSEMBLEE LEGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO
QUEEN'S PARK
TORONTO M7A 1A2
(416) 965-6404

Ontario
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
RICHARD ALLEN, Ph.D., M.P.P.
HAMILTON WEST

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Once again I am planing to produce a Hamilton Artists Calendar for 1991. The calendar last year was very well received by the 25,000 households in Hamilton West. I invite you to volunteer pieces for reproduction in this calendar.

The works will be reproduced on offset press in black and white. The lay out is 8 1/2 X 11 horizontal similar to the well known "Milk Calendar". There will be a short informative paragraph about the artists included on an inside page.

All forms of graphic art and photos of three dimensional art are welcome.

Financial compensation for submissions is ,unfortunately, not available, however the exposure of your works to 25,000 Hamilton households should be a considerable advantage.

Please deliver all submissions to the constituency office by September 7th. We will endeavor to improve our communication to the artists who volunteer their works to ensure that they are kept promptly informed of the status and whereabouts of their works.

For more information please call Bill Thompson at my Constituency Office at 527-2556.

Sincerely,
Richard Allen
Richard Allen
MPP Hamilton West
RA/wct
OPEIU 343

Cees van Gernerden
93 Colbourne Street
Hamilton, Ontario
LSR 2G6

August 28, 1990

Richard Allen, Ph.D.
M.P.P. Hamilton West
196 Locke Street South
Hamilton, Ontario
L8P 4B4

Dear Sir:

Re: Call for Submissions

As an artist struggling at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder, I was saddened and dismayed to find your call for submissions requesting "volunteer" art pieces in a recent mailing received from the Hamilton Artists' Inc.

The line, "we cannot afford to pay you but we will give you exposure", has been used since time immemorial, usually by that exploitive segment of the entrepreneurial class. You, as social critic and former cultural critic, should know that the principal patrons of the arts in Ontario and indeed in all of Canada have been and are the artists themselves, and in many cases their spouses and families. Also, you stood on the steps of Queen's Park with us in solidarity and in support of our main slogans, "Art is work" and "Artists should be paid for their work"!

Again, and in closing, I would expect this "volunteer" submission request to come from an (exploitive) tory or even a liberal candidate, but certainly not from a prominent NDP candidate.

Sincerely,
Cees van Gernerden

/cv
c.c.: Hamilton Artists' Inc.

P.S. I will support the NDP candidate in my riding with my vote!

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QUEEN'S PARK
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(416) 965-6404

Ontario
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
RICHARD ALLEN, Ph.D., M.P.P.
HAMILTON WEST

September 25, 1990

Cees van Gernerden,
93 Colbourne Street,
Hamilton, Ontario.

Dear Cees:

Re: call for submissions / your response.

I wholeheartedly agree with your observation. Last year when we did the first calendar, when I learned that caucus communications was sending out the art for photographing to a commercial firm, I tried to find ways to get money from the legislature account that covers these costs to pay the artists for the use of their work, and got nowhere.

I regret that that remains the state of affairs. Yes, it is exploitive in one of its aspects. When we asked whether it was better for the arts in Hamilton to do it or not to do it under these circumstances, the almost universal reply was to do it.

I can only plead that the Speaker's office sets the policy, not me and not the party. I would hope that would be one of the things we would change now that we have a little more say.

Sincerely,
Richard Allen
Richard Allen MPP
Hamilton West
RA/mf

To date we have received a substantial amount of correspondence as a result of the following letter drafted by the Board of Directors of the Hamilton Artists' Inc.. A long letter of explanation was sent to the board by the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern development, Tom Siddon, P.C., M.P., along with "NOTES FOR AN ADDRESS TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS BY PRIME MINISTER BRIAN MULRONEY ON THE HOUSE RESOLUTION WITH RESPECT TO OKA, SEPTEMBER 25". Recently we received a "COMMUNIQUE" outlining Minister Siddon's announcement of an "OKA Negotiating Committee". Due to the amount of material we are unable to print it in Pen & Inc.. However, the aforementioned documents are available to anyone who wishes to read them at the Hamilton Artists' Inc..

Hamilton Artists' Inc.
143 James Street North,
Hamilton, Ontario.
L8R 2K8
Phone: (416) 529-3355

Prime Minister Brian Mulroney
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario.
K1A 0A6

August 28, 1990.

Dear Sir,

We strongly oppose the tactic of calling in the army to solve what has now become internationally known as the "Oka" incident. We believe that only through intelligent negotiation, not with the help of brute force, will an agreement be reached to resolve the dispute in a civilized and non-violent manner.

During your term as Prime Minister Canada has lost it's international reputation as a peace loving country. Shame, Shame, Shame.

Sincerely,
The Board of Directors.
Hamilton Artists' Inc.

cc: Stan Keyes MP, Hamilton West.

Administrator's Report

by Andrew T. Hunter

I am faced with two separate yet not wholly distinct tasks as I write this report. As Administrator of the Hamilton Artists' Inc., I have a fair bit of information to pass on to the membership regarding significant changes and events which have taken place over the last several months. In addition to this, I have acted as an interim editor of *Pen & Inc.* while the newsletter goes through another transition as we welcome a new editor. The reason I refer to these two items as not being wholly distinct is that a strong theme of dialogue runs through both topics.

Probably the most important event to take place since the last newsletter was the Annual General Meeting, November 18, 1990. I am confident that the individuals who found the time to attend would agree with me when I say that it was a highly productive and informative event.

Though the written reports presented by the staff and Committee Chairs were very informative, I strongly feel that the informal dialogue created between all present was the most positive result of the afternoon's proceedings. Copies of all the reports are available at the Inc. for anyone who wishes to read them. The discussions which followed however can not be so easily represented and though it has been well documented in the A.G.M. minutes (thanks Annerie Van Gemerden) the interactive nature of the exchange has certainly been lost. This exchange of ideas, which is ongoing I should add, is what keeps the H.A.I. moving ahead and the staff informed of the needs of the membership. One of the most significant items to arise from these exchanges was the re-evaluation of the H.A.I. membership structure.

Some of you may remember my last report, which was printed in the fall issue of *Pen & Inc.*. In it I talked at great length about the need for more involvement on the part of members in H.A.I. events. This has been a standard theme for Ray Cinovskis and myself at regular Board meetings. It has also been an issue for the small group of highly active members who devote extensive amounts of their volunteer time to the gallery.

After much discussion among the 1990 Board of Directors, it was decided to explore the possibility of establishing "Active" and "Non-Active" membership categories for the H.A.I.. A Membership Committee was formed to create new categories to be presented for consideration at the A.G.M.. I am pleased to announce that the new membership structure was approved by a majority of members present at the A.G.M. and the appropriate changes will be made to our by-laws. The new categories, including prices and membership rights, have been printed in full in this issue. Should you have any questions please feel free to contact Ray or myself at the gallery.

The other major item of importance at the A.G.M. was the election of a new Board of Directors. The list of 1991 Board members has been printed in this issue, however, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all new Board members and specifically to welcome and congratulate Gary Spearin who became the new President at the first meeting of the new Board of Directors.

Also of note is the fact that Jane Gordon agreed to stay on for one more year as Selection/Curatorial Committee Chair. Jane will use this year to gradually remove herself from the process and pass her experience and expertise on to a new Chair(s). Mr. Robert Mason will continue to be involved with the Board as Past-President and to do all the things he does so well, I believe "Hobnobbing" was the term I used at the A.G.M., plus letting us use his kitchen for Board meetings. I would recommend that members consider coming into the gallery to look over the minutes of the A.G.M. to become familiar with the issues concerning the Board and staff.



The window of the H.A.I. gallery set up as a memorial to the 14 victims of the Montreal Massacre, December 6, 1989. Initiated by the Bay Area Artists for Women's Art, the project encouraged individuals to mark the 1st anniversary of the massacre by placing objects and statements in the window.

Now for the newsletter. Lawson Hunter who has been editor of *Pen & Inc.*, and a good deal responsible for its present format and content, stepped down after the last issue. I would like to thank Lawson for the time and energy he devoted to an often thankless task and to wish him all the best.

Our new editor, who has already started working on an issue which will come out in the spring, is Lorie Callander. I am very excited about working with Lorie. Her highly informed review of the Hamilton Artists' Inc.'s *Split Subject* exhibition, curated by Mary Keczan-Ebos (printed in *Spotlight Magazine*, November 1-15, 1990, Volume 3/38, page 19) was well received and appreciated by the artists and curator involved in said project. Lorie will bring a new and exciting perspective to the Hamilton Region.

As for this issue, I have simply attempted to present a number of alternate voices. Way back at the beginning of this report I mentioned "dialogue" and it is this which I have tried to present and encourage through this issue.

The texts presented range from the transcription of a fairly traditional artist's talk, given by Normand Rajotte at his opening on November 30, 1990, to the rather surprising exchange which occurred between Anne Milne and Victoria Schymlosky through the *Split Subject* comment book. The correspondence reprinted between Cees Van Gemerden and Richard Allen, M.P.P., illustrates a very direct and productive form of dialogue open to us all. I am sure the result will be both interesting and informative and will hopefully encourage others to participate.

Finally, I should thank Brian Smylski at the *Arts Journal* for his assistance and for technically producing this issue. I am looking forward to continuing what has been a highly productive relationship. To the membership, I would encourage all to keep in touch and informed, there is far too much going on at the Inc. for me to report in the newsletter. The minutes from all Board meetings are available and, once again, I encourage everyone to consider getting more involved.

16th Annual Members' Show April 26 to May 18, 1991

The Hamilton Artists' Inc. is considering organizing a thematic exhibition of works by "ACTIVE" members as an alternative to the traditional group show. Jane Gordon, Selection/Curatorial Committee Chair, has recommended that "TROC" (The Rest Of Canada) be considered as an appropriate theme for the 1991 exhibition.

For more information, or comments, please contact the gallery.

Lost & Found

One pair of Prescription Eyeglasses.
Please contact the gallery

New format of *Pen & Inc.* coming in the Spring. If you would like to be a part please contact Andrew

H.A.I. Video Compilation Tape

The Hamilton Artists' Inc. is exploring the possibility of creating a group/compilation tape of recent video work by Hamilton and Region artists. If you have work to submit please send your name, address, telephone number and a short description of the work (including running time and format) to:

Ray Cinovskis
Hamilton Artists' Inc.
143 James Street North,
Hamilton, Ontario
L8R 2K8

Third Space Exhibition Wayne Phillips: "Recent Work" January 11 - February 9, 1991

Wayne is a former student of O.C.A. where he specialized in printmaking. He also holds a Graphic Arts Certificate from Mohawk College. Wayne is primarily self taught as a painter/artist yet he acknowledges the influence the O.C.A. experience has had on him. His Group/Solo exhibitions, art related community involvements and awards date back to 1978.

One of Wayne's key assets is his ability to diversify. He is comfortable within the realms of the fine, contemporary and graphic art worlds. The themes of Wayne's work focus on spiritual and human aspects of the social condition. He also likes to experiment with the concept of the "fusion" of various branches of art.

Wayne is the Art Director, Graphic Artist, Coordinator and founder of the Hamilton Arts Alliance.

New Membership Categories

1. **ARTISTS MEMBER (Active)** - Individual \$25.00, Family \$35.00, UIC/Social Benefits \$15.00

- For working artists
- Voting rights at A.G.M. (election of Board of Directors)
- Participate in member's exhibition
- Use of the 3rd Space
- Artist card/discounts
- Volunteer time required*

2. **ACTIVE MEMBER** - \$25.00

- For Educators, Administrators, Non-Artists
- Voting rights at A.G.M.
- Volunteer time required*

3. **SUPPORTING MEMBER** - \$15.00

- Artist or Non-Artist
- No voting rights
- Mailings

4. **INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERSHIP** - \$25.00 (minimum)

- An information membership
- Tax Receipt
- Mailings

5. **DONOR** - \$50.00 (minimum)

- Individuals who wish to support the ideals of the Hamilton Artists' Inc.
- Tax Receipt
- Mailings

*Volunteer time = a minimum of two functions per calendar year (ie. participation on H.A.I. committees, gallery sitting, installation, bingo, etc.).

Note: A list of volunteers will be printed regularly in *Pen & Inc.*