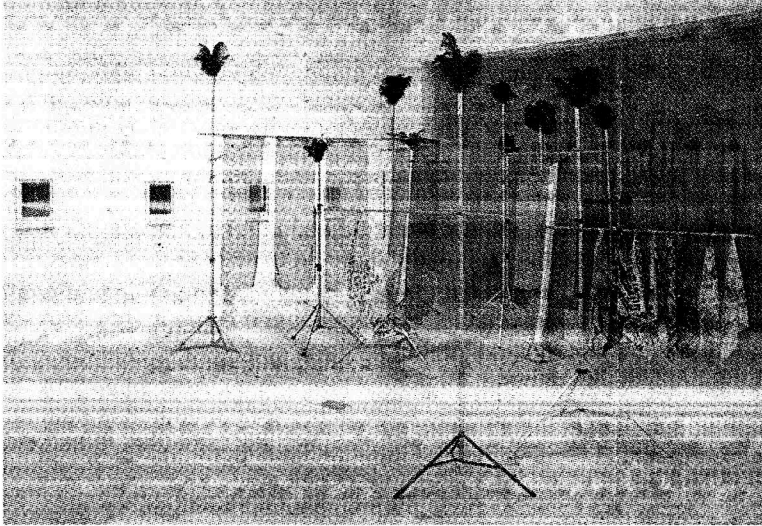


The Art Gallery of York University (AGYU)

Karolina Wisniewski
Staff Writer

“Out There, Centre Stage” is the title for the Art Gallery of York University’s winter program, and the exhibit they have put on is undoubtedly worthy of a standing ovation. Not only has the gallery space been completely transformed, and all expectations subverted, but the AGYU has once again held true to its “out there” mantra by extending some incredible installations into the lobby of the gallery, as



well as the vitrines outside of it.

The first installation that one comes into contact with, is the work of Gwen MacGregor and Lewis Nicholson, titled “New Time (Before, there were stars).” Their work is projected out onto the hallway of Accolade East by virtue

of the audio out post. The piece is a 24-hour loop of sea clock sound recordings that continuously permeate into the world of the passersby, transgressing the traditional boundaries of experiencing the art object by removing it from the context of the gallery. The monotonous drone sets an eerie yet intriguing setting within the gallery, and perhaps even more interesting, are the subtle changes found within the loop. Theoretically, if one were observant enough, they would be able to trace their own movement by

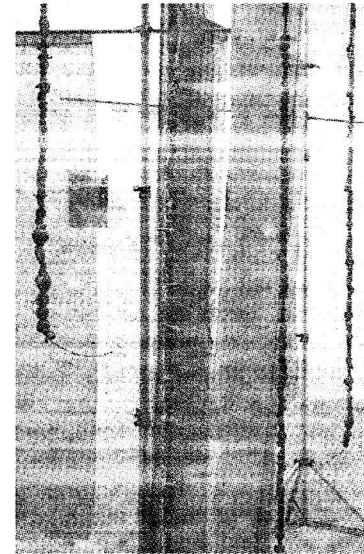
listening to the recordings of “New Time” upon passing it, just as the ships for which it was originally recorded used to do.

In the lobby of the AGYU is Oliver Husain’s film “Q”. Husain’s work continues within the gallery space with his much hailed installation, “Hov-

ering Proxies”. The first portion of an exhibition is a relatively traditional gallery space, featuring intricate displays of boldly colored scarves and photographs hung on its walls. It is only after closer inspection that one finds the jumbled up and disorienting fragments of text. Thankfully, gallery materials are provided to organize the fragmented text into its intended order which then provides a new context in which to appreciate the work. Another intricacy that one may not become aware of instantly is that the series of photographs displayed, form the panorama of a garden. The theme of the garden is referred to in the exhibition notes that Husain has written. The notes alert the viewer that they are now part of this exhibit and also allude to what lies beyond. The second portion must be entered through a curtain, which initially appears as a large empty room. Once again, Husain asks us to investigate the situation at hand. It is only after turning around to face the direction from which we came, that the viewer comes face to face with the hovering proxies that are brought to us by a film projection. One hardly begins to grasp the relevance of what they are seeing when they become aware that they themselves have now become the hovering proxies. Husain’s work will be open for viewing until March 14th.

Moving further into the gallery space, one will find the work of Alex Wolfson and Bojana Stancic entitled, “And so,

the animal looked back...” Wolfson and Stancic’s piece is an exemplary instance of experimental theatre. It features equally compelling set design and performance. Stancic’s visual concept has created a captivating theatre space that is both futuristic and personal, as one is confronted with their own distorted reflection in the mirror-like covering of the walls and ceiling. On the stage, we find a projection of a play written and directed by Wolfson. The video is taped from a live performance that was held in the theatre on January 28th and 29th. The experience of watching the ghostly image of a performance unfolding in the same space the viewer stands in, but not physically taking place there, is all at once unnerving and fascinating. The visual concept of the space and theatrical content of the play blend together seamlessly



as it pulls the viewer into their world. Just as the exhibition opened with live performances, it also closes with them as well. The performances will be held on March 11th and 12th at 7:30 pm. Tickets may be reserved by contacting the gallery. Wolfson and Stancic’s exhibit will be on display until March 14th.

Last but not least, in the vitrines located on the exterior of the AGYU, is the work of Brendan Fernandes, “Relay League”. Each of the three vitrines feature a different piece that is meant to echo some of the ideas of the works found within AGYU’s walls. The first contains the subtle light pulsations of a Morse code message. A rapidly flashing neon African mask, an interesting juxtaposition of primitivism and post-modernism, is found within the second vitrine. Finally, in the third vitrine, is the bizarre image of a searchlight working its way through an ambiguous space. Fernandes’ work is on display until June 6th.

“Out There, Center Stage” is the result of tireless work on the part of AGYU staff as well as the artists who have created a set of delicately yet assuredly interconnected installations. The current exhibition is a definite achievement and calls upon viewers to introspect, actively consume the artwork and enjoy the experience. Take a bow, AGYU.

All photographs are courtesy of the Art Gallery of York University. Photo credit: Cheryl O’Brien.