

You are able to appreciate the recent history of Acadian art through just the one exhibit of five artists at the "Gallery on Queen". Nadia Khoury is to be congratulated for opening this handsome space on Queen Street and for curating this interesting exhibit. Four of the senior artists have been hugely powerful.

Claude Roussel and Romeo Savoie are acknowledged to be the fathers of contemporary Acadian art through their teaching as well as through their creating. Best known for his sculpture, here Roussel is represented by his paintings. Language distinguishes the Acadians; Herménégilde Chiasson, heir-apparent to Roussel and Savoie and a poet as well as a visual artist, combines language and art in his paintings. His poetry is accessible to English-speakers in *Beatitudes*, beautifully translated by Jo-Anne Elder, short-listed for a Governor General's Award. These three artists have been influenced by their European travels and by Montreal art.

One of Marie Hélène Allain's sculpture installations is of a group of six real trees impaled in holes drilled in rocks. She has positioned them so that you can walk through them as if wandering through a copse of trees. Out of these two common materials Allain has created an image that is hers alone. She has not imitated and in turn can't be imitated.

Two other striking sculptures are female torsos by Éveline Gallant Fournier. One of them is certainly the most interesting image of all Queen Street's display windows.

The poet and naturalist Brian Bartlett brought me a copy of *H is for Hawk*, a memoir by Helen Macdonald, incorporating the grief she felt after her father's death, her interest in the lore of the training of hawks, her actual purchase and training of a goshawk, and much else, exactly the kind of book I love. The form is perfect, a memoir with several connected subjects, chapters of just the right length, interesting bits of information. One of her literary mentors was T. H. White, who wrote a novel about the goshawk. I'm glad Macdonald didn't succumb to the temptation to make this into a novel.

Connections, connections. Macdonald quotes the poet Marianne Moore in a line that has been ringing through my head: "The cure for loneliness is solitude." I googled it and found out that it was a sentence in Moore's essay of advice to teenagers. I will name-drop here. Once as a teenager I and ten other students had tea with Moore. She was friends with Elizabeth Bishop, whose poetry Bartlett has studied; he even has spent time in her grandparents' house in Nova Scotia. He pointed out another connection: at Westminster Books he was served by our mutual friend, poet and naturalist Lynn Davies.

The New Brunswick Summer Music Festival once again allowed classical music-lovers to hear compositions we'd never heard before and probably will never hear again. I was disappointed that my schedule was such that I only got to one concert, but that one was a doozy. It began with a strange piece, "Nilan", by a Russian/Canadian composer I'd never heard of, Leon Zuckert. The music was contemporary but still understandable.

The second, even stranger piece, was also by a composer I'd never heard of, Nikolai Korndorf, another Russian/Canadian. At the end of this piece (with the odd title "Are You Ready, Brother?"), one concert-goer said, "If that had been on the radio, I would have turned it off." But immediately afterwards, my friend Ted Colson came up to me to say how much he loved it. Ted also remarked that it was a piece much better heard live because there was a lot to see as well as to hear. The pianist, a festival regular Peter Allen, stood up and fished in the innards of the piano, later hit a wood block with a drum stick, managed some strange sounds from the keys. The cellist, Paul Pulford, a member of the old University

of New Brunswick String Quartet, explained why he had two stands--there were no breaks to give time to turn pages. The music was eerie with a transcendental quality. At one point the cello and violin played so quietly and continuously that I realized I was holding my breath, fearful that I would break the spell. This musical, artistic experience will haunt me. I know I will never have the same experience again.

The last piece, "Grand Sextet" by Glinka, was by contrast perfectly understandable. The audience even knew when to clap! The juxtaposition of these two pieces—the second and third—was inspired ordering.

The periodicals for the Summer Festival are handsome, works of art in themselves, designed by Mandy Wright. This year's program outdid itself.

I don't understand why these concerts don't attract more people. You get to hear things you would never hear otherwise. The musicians are first-rate, the price a bargain. They even serve food.