

Gallery Graphics, York and Algonquin

Roger Amoroso is away for five weeks, and we shall do our best to compensate for his calm, delightful presence by looking at as many art exhibitions as we can and reporting on them briefly. The prints from Moosehead Press at Gallery Graphics are by several different artists; two of them in particular caught my eye. Joe Fafard's four-colour lithograph

Bird looks down from a bird's eye view on a fenced enclosure with nine animals. At first glance they look vaguely like beetles; then you realize they're black goats — but the shadows they cast are those of cows. It's neatly executed and intriguing. Another lithograph called *The Sailor* by Kelly Clark shows us a large floppy green fish sitting on

a mountain top, seen from the ocean. It has a nice startling, surreal quality, perhaps inspired by Monty Python cartoons. York Gallery's current show of paintings and drawings by Bernard A. Poulin does the gallery's reputation little good, and makes me seriously wonder about its future as an art gallery. The Poulin show frankly looks like the detailed, realistic and sincere productions of reality we see in framing shops all over the city. Portraits in pencil and oils of children, commissioned by their parents, and a few scenes of children in doorways or against walls that look vaguely like Alex Colville until you step up close and realize that they have neither true clarity nor any madness — that they are perfectly safe, secure and soulless. It was a pleasure to leave the York and pay a brief visit to the small exhibition of plants, flowers and pressed leaves done by the horticulture students at Algonquin College, handsomely arranged around a small pond with a sprinkling fountain. It may not be art, but at least it was living and breathing, and smelled sweet and green. By the time you read this, it will be gone from the Algonquin gallery, leaving a lovely breath of fresh air, while Poulin's stale, comfortable vision continues at the York until March 17.

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