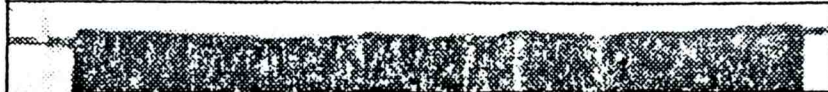


ART

Collaborating with natural history

Henry Lehmann



attribute) from becoming pretty, which is not acceptable in high art taste.

The surfaces of the tarpaulins have been impregnated with gesso which underscores the irregularities and inflections of the thick cloth; Goodwin has attempted to collaborate with the natural history of the materials that at one time served to cover the backs of trucks. Creases caused by previous duty counterpoint and blend in with structural alterations made by the artist. And such dramatic devices as the vertical aperture in tarpaulin help to produce a sense of mystery. But it is the temporal division far more than the imprints of their past that gives these objects real presence. What Goodwin's otherwise overweening instinct for composition has achieved is an exquisitely adjusted relationship between over-all object and the minutiae within. There is the whole seen at a glance from the distance, and

then there is the edgeless field of cloth with its many stains that gradually comes into focus as one scans it square foot by square foot from close up. The time of this scrutiny is carefully cadenced by intermediate divisions such as rows of stitches, folds, and the hanging ropes. Unfortunately these ropes, undeniably linear and graphic, tend — and one thinks here of tarpaulin 4 — to assume a stagey kind of eloquence.

The Curzi is rapidly acquiring a reputation as one of Montreal's most interesting galleries, a place where serious experimental art is shown.

Currently on view at the Curzi are the recent drawings and paintings of Quebec artist Richard Mill. It was two years ago at Vehicule that this artist showed hard-edged paintings that seemed to reflect a minimalist ap-

proach. The plastic language of the new paintings still adheres to a simple and apparently straight forward order. And Mill's preoccupation is still with the concept of picture plane.

Broad grey brush strokes, all equally wide, have been applied in an intentionally perfunctory manner: they either move horizontally or diagonally. And they visually terminate at or just before arriving at the canvas' physical edges. The result is that the brush strokes cover up while the solid black remains background. The images seem to subtly come apart, to separate out into various basic constituents. And within this deductive context each irregularity in the brush strokes becomes charged with a curious emotive significance.

These paintings appear to be concerned with the semantics of painting.