

TORY FOLLIARD GALLERY

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Fact on one hand, illusion on the other

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Nothing is quite as it seems in the nocturnal landscapes of Bethann Handzlik and the cast-glass apparitions of Janusz A. Walentynowicz, agreeably teamed through Jan. 29 at Tory Folliard Gallery, 233 N. Milwaukee St.

Handzlik, who teaches art at Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., works in what appears at first glance to be a romantic manner, capturing the dusky nuances of moon, clouds and sky during the hour before the dawn.

Actually, as it turns out, she is more reporter than romanticist, responding accurately and concisely to what she perceives during pre-sunrise forays into the countryside. Her finished images are intuitive rather than calculated.

Indeed, Handzlik frankly admits she borrows from nature — "imitating it, abstracting it, responding to it." Whether she is brushing oil paints onto a panel or constructing a grid out of blocks, she is learning from light and color.

Her grid paintings in this show are, she says, "responses to the poetry of Seamus Heaney." Reading a poem from the Irish Nobel laureate again and again, she feels, is much like "going into the landscape. It almost becomes a physical space for the imagination..."

The resultant pictures have much of the layered richness of a Joseph Eriber oil, plus more than a trace of the rhythmic cadences of Heaney's lines. Increasingly, motifs lifted from the landscape are finding their way into her gridded constructs.

For all their undoubted flair, then, these are modest and unassuming objects. They derive their power from nature's ingenuity, not Handzlik's. This clear-eyed artmaker is simply intelligent enough to find beau-

On Art



JAMES AUER

ty in a time of day few people see.

Quite a different sort of aura hovers about the cast-glass sculptures of the Polish-born, Illinois-trained Walentynowicz.

A wonderfully skilled illusionist, he uses techniques of molding and reverse painting to conjure up volumes where none exist.

The effect created by Walentynowicz is that of a hand-painted, three-dimensional bust — most often a face and upper torso — buried within a cloudy mass of glass, almost like a fly trapped in amber or an explorer frozen forever within a block of polar ice. It's riveting.

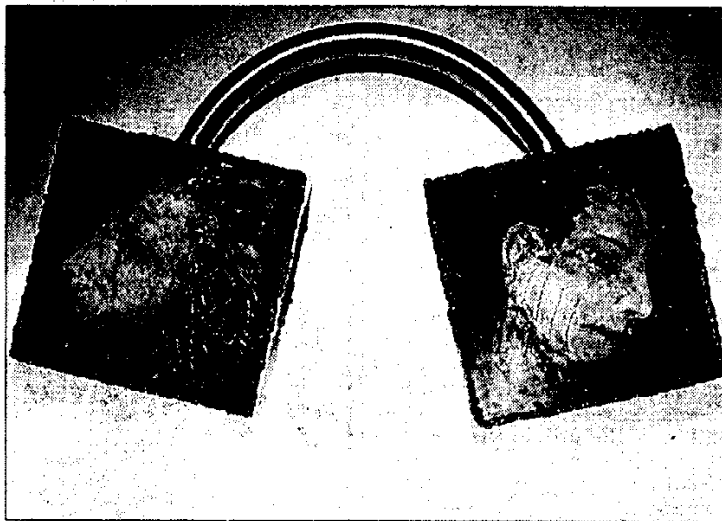
What has really happened, of course, is that Walentynowicz has modeled a form and poured molten glass over it. He then removes the glass, leaving an impression of the form. Finally, he has painted the convex interior so it is dimly visible through the glass.

Mount the result in a customized steel frame, and, hey presto! you have an amazing — and, just possibly, unique — viewing experience, one that combines a sense of antiquity (Pompeii, anyone?) with a kind of postmodern poignancy. The best of the lot: "Madeleine, Her Garden."

Viewing hours at Tory Folliard Gallery are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday. Admis-



"Mid Summer Night" by Bethann Handzlik captures a landscape at a time that people rarely see.



Janusz A. Walentynowicz offers a sense of the past and the postmodern, as in "White Lion," a work in glass, steel and oil paint.

sion is free. For information, call 273-7311.

Briefly

Two art-world birthday boys of different generations marked milestones a week or so ago: Bruce Dorow and Guido Brink. Neither is being specific about the details. . . . Arthur Thrall is back in his studio after being struck in the eye and robbed on the street in broad daylight just

before the holidays. A cruel, cowardly attack on a gentle, creative person. . . . In case you missed "Julia Margaret Cameron's Women" during its successful run at the Art Institute of Chicago, you can catch it, Jan. 28 through May 4, at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. . . . Fred Stonehouse of West Allis will be showing his new collage work Feb. 4 through 28 at the Pump House Regional Arts Center, 119 King St., La Crosse.