

Contemporary-art fair is a potpourri

By ANN DUNCAN
Gazette Art Reporter

So you want a quick overview of what's happening on the contemporary art front, but you don't want to go traipsing around to galleries all over town?

Why not try the four-day *Entrée Libre* art fair that opens at noon today at the Galerie d'art Lavalin, 1100 Dorchester Blvd. W.?

Organized by the Association of Contemporary Art Galleries of Montreal, the fair features about 100 works from the 11 Montreal galleries and the sole Quebec City gallery that belong to the association.

'No fixed roads'

And as with any art fair, this second, annual version of *Entrée Libre* presents a potpourri of styles, mediums, artistic approaches and, at times, quality. Each gallery is displaying a wide-ranging selection.

"Of course it's a mishmash," Léo Rosshandler, head of the Lavalin gallery, explained in an interview. "But that's what art is today. There are no fixed roads."

Included in the Galerie Daniel stand, for instance, are recent works by two obviously talented newcomers to the gallery — Carlos Gallardo, an Argentine-born artist who just moved to Montreal from Belgium, and Lev Podolski, a Russian artist who moved here about eight months ago.

Galerie Samuel Lallouz's display is surrealistic boxes of found objects by Alan Glass, a former Montrealer who has long lived in Mexico and whose work has rarely been seen in his native city in recent years, Rosshandler said.

Ethereal blue

The stand of Galerie Frédéric Palardy includes an ethereal blue acrylic painting by Denis Juneau, who is one of five Quebec artists now participating in a show Palardy organized for a commercial gallery in Washington, D.C.

Galerie Esperanza's display includes a recent sculpture by Mark Prent, the undisputed master of the macabre, while Galerie Don Stewart's stand includes an airy, abstract metal sculpture by New Yorker James Wolfe, who is now having a solo show at the gallery.

Galerie J. Yahouda Meir is



Gazette, George

Gallery owner Don Stewart looks at work by sculptor James Wolfe at *Entrée Libre*

showing paintings by Sylvia Safdie, Harlan Johnson and Peter Krausz, among others, while Galerie Elena Lee Verre d'art's stand features several distinctive sculptures and mixed-media drawings by Dominique Morel.

Morel, an Algerian-born artist who moved to Montreal 22 years ago, produces a highly distinctive style of work that seems to com-

bine the age, timelessness and imagery of her North African roots with the angst and constraints of modern Western society. Her figures resemble shrouded mummies that appeared to be encircled by wires.

"In the past, our spirit was more instinctive," Morel explained in an interview at the media preview of the fair Tuesday. "But 'civiliza-

tion' puts us in a cage."

Other galleries involved are Galerie Aubes 3935, Galerie Cu Galerie Graff, Galerie M Tétrault and Galerie Made Lacerte, the newcomer from bec.

The fair, which is free of charge, continues through until Sunday evening, and is open from noon to 8 p.m. daily.