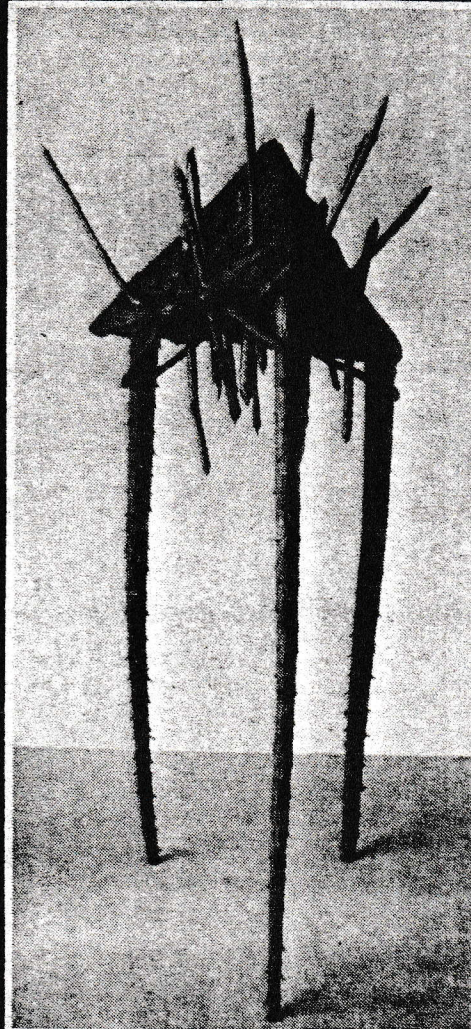


Pick Of The Week



Three of **Coleen Sterritt's** recent tripodal sculptures seem to tell a tale of psychological and aesthetic transition. "Noce a noce" (shown at left) is a daddy-long-legs, its black roofing tar pyramid punctured with scarlet stakes and perched upon a trio of stilts. Reminiscent of the concerns of her past work, the structure is literally a fortress, built for defense. To attempt entry is to confront a barrier of crimson peril. The most recent structures, however, have undergone a change. Massive red huts now stand upon sturdier supports. While the legs and feet are still bristly, the spikes act as protection. For now, the interiors of the works are soft and inviting. To stand beneath "Jig Posts," the tallest of the three, is to be embarrassed by a wholly organic female womb-form. The other, "Hats Off, Mr. 95," is squat and comfortable, more of a home than a fortress. In an adjoining gallery stand five maquettes, as adorable and awful as porcupines, all lurid color and spines, teetering on their feet as though ready to toddle off their pedestals and join their mothers in the other room. Ulrike Kantor Gallery, through Feb. 13.

—Hunter Drohojowska



Robert Hernandez paints big black canvases illustrated with wispy, tentative compositions in strokes of brilliant, almost day-glo color. Reminiscent of the black velvet paintings of some Mexican restaurant, they quite beautifully pack infinitely subtle dramatic narratives defined by such titles as "Poisoned by Hope . . . Faith . . . Charity." In this mammoth triptych, the narrative progresses as though scene by scene, beginning with a figure with downcast eyes holding a hand to the head. The next scene depicts smoky figures that seem to fall through space, plummeting, twisting, tumbling through the darkness. They fall past the security of a scarlet cartooned outline of a church, past the outreached hand of a

shrouded figure, past a snow-capped range of mountains and into a climactic pink explosion. These messages and musings are as dark as the background of each painting, but they are rendered with such loose structure, such care-free line, that it is essential for the viewer to attend to every nuance.

On view in the same gallery are **Stanley Somers'** bright neo-primitive paintings that also tell tales of great personal symbolism. In "Gift for the Muse" (see above), a nude man (the artist) is exposed to the viewer in an Egyptian-style profile view. He bears a pair of birds — one plum, one gray — to a seated woman in a black cocktail dress and heels (his muse?). This

action takes place against a rug patterned with diamonds and birds extending to an elevated horizon line. There, upon a wall, hang paintings within the painting: a pair of nudes embracing, an antelope with a pair of birds on its back, and a primitive mask. This intimate search for symbolism is painted with a tremendous urgency, the search for answers to questions about more than art, about relationships, and life itself. Both exhibitions are on view at Kirk de Gooyer's brand new museum of a space at 1308 Factory Place, fifth floor. (There is an elevator!) Hernandez continues through February 13, Somers through February 27.

—Hunter Drohojowska