

the studio wall on either side of the picture. This gives him a point of view, a way in.

Now that he knows where he stands, as it were, he begins to paint by covering the canvas with, surprisingly, Lemon Yellow, or Cadmium Yellow Deep, working up through as many as 20 thin layers of oil paint (including unlikely mauves and purples), until he eventually begins to approach the rich, deep "composite grey" in which his cloudy skies and brimming lakes begin to find their being.

He never actually applies grey paint. Grey happens. The grid, according to Lahey, is then re-established, subverted in paint, re-established all over again, again subverted, until it is felt within the painting as deep structure.

The result is a painting paradox. The finished seascape or landscape is both convincingly real and, at the same time, highly abstract, highly artificial. And you feel both at once.

Prices on request. Opens today and runs until May 17, 22 Hazelton Ave., Toronto; 416-964-8197.

John Brown

at Olga Korper

If, in this country, there is a painter of more entirely delectable pictures than Toronto-based artist John Brown, I don't know who it would be. (I suppose, if pressed, I'd admit that Harold Klunder and John Heward would be contenders.) There may be painters around making work that is more conceptually rigorous, more politically or historically informed, more chicly ironic or stylishly cynical, but for sheer, primary, gut-wrenching, chest-tightening delight, you can't touch John Brown.

Brown's beautiful paintings are the survivors of his own painting processes: He not only brushes pigment onto the big wooden panels he works on, he also sands it off again. And grinds it away. And scrapes it down. And then adds more colour. He sometimes turns the painting on its side, or upside down and works on it that way. And distresses it all over again. And on and on until, somewhere down the line, Brown and the painting agree that enough is enough and that the process is over. You feel sometimes that if he added one more pigmented molecule, the whole thing would collapse.

\$3,100-\$18,000. Until April 30, 17 Morrow Ave., Toronto; 416-538-8220.



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