

Cover Story

"Ringette" seen through the keen and perspicacious eye of John Der

"John Der has the gift of the raconteur who, in a single glance, a single effort, can fix an instant in life and capture the attitudes and gestures of ordinary people" wrote Paul Tex Lecor the painter. Life is his subject, and I recently witnessed his immense talent while window shopping one Sunday afternoon on Sussex drive in Ottawa. This attractive Ottawa street has much to offer the creative impulse of many saunterers, as they can appreciate and reflect the beauty and charm shown in window displays so meticulously created. These shops highlight and promote the talent of Canadian artists that influence fashion trends and capture by the stroke of their brush the beauty of life and the warmth of human behavior. As I passed in front of Art Mode Gallery, I glanced at the many paintings that embellished the gallery walls, although the store was closed, the multitude of colours brought life to the quiet ambiance and it was almost like I was intruding in a world of captured moments coming alive that evening.

While admiring the many painted pictures, my attention was intercepted by the gust of wind coming from a painting just a few feet away. I was amazed, astonished, proud and most certainly speechless as the painting I was applauding depicted a subject so very dear to my heart and of course to so many others, the subject was the sport of ringette. I was deeply touched by the simplicity and authenticity of each figure.

Denis P. Smith from Art Mode Gallery, was very helpful in providing us with the required information enabling us to contact John Der and his agent Denis Beauchamp. Both were very pleased of Ringette Canada's enthusiasm towards the painting and its creator. I was impressed with John Der's delicate, sincere and human reaction towards our request of highlighting his work in the Annual Ringette Review. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for approving such an initiative and offering us the opportunity to promote and share the talent of a Canadian artist that has been qualified as one of our greats.

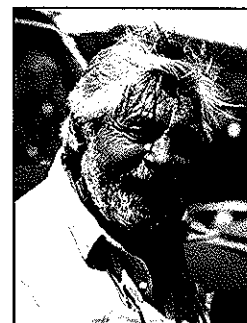
John Der's style has been described as a form of humouristic and social expres-

sionism which is uniquely his own. His work therefore depicts the subjective emotions aroused in him by objects and events. When asked about his impressions on ringette, he replied by saying he was quite impressed with the speed and competitive spirit the players demonstrated.

As we celebrate our 30th anniversary, let us reflect on the many achievements we have accomplished and the pride we all

share for the sport of ringette. Thank you John Der for offering us the honour of sharing your vision of ringette

and providing the art community with such a wonderful piece. *



John Der

— Carolyne Hudson

Biographical Notes

- 1929 Born in Canora, Saskatchewan to parents who were also born in that province.
- 1936 Parents separate. He leaves for Toronto with his mother, a nurse.
- 1941 Enlists in the Merchant Marines and sails for a year on the Great Lakes and then throughout the world.
- 1943 Meets Marjorie Anderson in Montréal and marries her four years later.
- 1946 Leaves the Merchant Marines and becomes a cartoonist for the syndicated newspaper Searchlight, organ of the Canadian Seamen's Union where he works for two years.
- 1949 Birth of his son Gary in Montréal
- 1949-52 Enters the School of Art and Design of the Montréal Museum of Fine Arts as a student of Arthur Lismer, Marian Scott and Jacques de Tonnacour, among others.
- 1951-52 Works as a cartoonist for Mountain Playhouse, Montréal.
Does cartoon strips for Radio - Monde, Montréal: Willie Lamothe, Jean Pitou and Jean Brillant.
Works at the Esquire Showbar on Stanley Street, Montréal, doing caricatures of the jazz greats and audience.
- 1952 Participates in the program Carika-Tours for CBC, the first English Language television program for children.
Draws for Hockey News and Football News.
- 1952 Enters the insurance business where he works as a broker and agent until 1982.
- 1953 Arthur Lismer recommends him to the National Film Board in Ottawa but he continues to work in insurance while painting more or less regularly.
- 1955 Birth of his son Randolph in Toronto, Ontario.
- 1964 Birth of his daughter Jennifer in Saint-Jérôme, Québec.
- 1972 Cofounder of the Atelier 29 in Rosemère which organizes a spring exhibition each year.
- 1982 Following a stay in Florida he decides to leave insurance and devote himself to painting.
- 1983 Holds his first Montréal exhibition since becoming a professional painter.
- 1984 Denis Beauchamp of Multi Art becomes his agent.
- 1988 Important exhibition with Paul "Tex" Lecor in Fort-de France, Martinique

From 1985 to 1992 John Der's work has been shown in the following galleries: Galerie d'Art Beauchamp-Joncas (Montréal), Galerie d'Art Le Bacon d'Art (St-Lambert), Hollander York Art Gallery (Toronto), Kaspar Art Gallery (Toronto), Galerie Michel De Kerdour (Québec City), Galerie d'Art La Corniche (Chicoutimi), Masters Gallery (Calgary), Alex Fraser Galleries (Vancouver) and Galerie Bernard Larocque (Rimouski).