

Visual arts

Courageous young artists launch own show



Mitch Smith, left, and Gerald Faulder
... show their works in their own studio starting tonight at 7

By VIVIENNE SOSNOWSKI

Deep in the greying, concrete guts of an old commercial building in Edmonton's downtown no-man's land, is a fresh, white room. It's the newly-spiffed up studio of Gerald Faulder and Mitch Smith, two of the city's young artists who've chosen to ignore the not-always renumerative practice of dealer-wangled shows and launch their own celebration of new work.

And celebrate they should.

The duo, both of whom work in abstraction, (though Faulder has also included a few landscape watercolors), struggle constantly to define, re-define and analyse their own art. It's a brave and gut-risking activity at the best of times. In the contemporary art climate as we know it today, it's nothing if not stubbornly courageous.

Smith's work is, at the moment, hot property. The large canvasses for which we know him well are not on view. Here he shows much smaller works on paper: mixed media numbers that have distilled and refined the strength and resolution of his large stuff. This is the essence of Smith — intensely powerful and undeniably impressive.

**Gerald Faulder and Mitch Smith:
New Paintings**

10330 104th St., second floor
Starting tonight, 7 to 10.30 p.m.

Faulder's work is more emotive. It appears to be a multi-layered dig through the unconscious to the roots of human creativity. The work is a slow burn, but a rewarding one that pays dividends to the exploring viewer who gives it time.

Both artists are graduates from the U of A who've shared the same studio for some years now.

Their show opens to the public tonight, 7-10:30, but also runs Sunday, 2-5 p.m., then Monday through Friday, 6-9 p.m. It's a must-view on this fall's art calendar.

The measly number of applicants meant the application forms could be kept in one Holly Hobby envelope, but the guessing game about who's going to be signed up as the new head honcho at the Edmonton Art Gallery will be over Wednesday.

That afternoon, at a meeting of the board of directors of the EAG, the successor to Terry Fenton as

director of the joint will be produced and his appointment confirmed, says Al Bryan, chairman of the board.

Signs are that the gallery be paying any expensive art to get their guy here: the chief curator and ex-director of Burnaby Art Gallery, Roger Let, may well be our burgeoning artistic leader.

Rumours are that the search committee, a.k.a. Frog Prince Party, eventually to approach art experts rather rely solely on applications: ever their overtures were dismissed by two they tried to woo. Davis, ex-Edmonton Art Gallery head curator, now assistant director of programs at the University of Alberta Institute in Calgary.

