

# Nothing routine about the artist or his works

By STEPHANIE INNES  
Staff Reporter

Labelling Tom Hodgson a creature of habit would be like calling Saddam Hussein a good neighbor.

Although Hodgson's artwork is primarily abstract, it follows no routine and is impossible to categorize.

An ageless quality is the most evident characteristic about Hodgson, 66, who calls his contemporary works "process" art.

"The process of doing the thing is the subject," says Hodgson of his art. "It sounds pretty abstract, I know, but it makes sense."

Hodgson, who has lived in Port Credit with his second wife Cathy for the past three years, will show his most recent oils, acrylics and watercolors at Toronto's Christopher J. Cutts Fine Arts gallery in an exhibition that begins tomorrow. The exhibition will run through Oct. 23.

"With realism, you have a process with a goal, now the process is more important than the end product," says Hodgson who went through his most realistic phase in the early seventies as a reaction to Pop Art.

"Now it's process for its own sake," says Hodgson. "My most recent painting was inspired by a blue spruce tree outside my cottage. However, except for the blue-green coloring, it really doesn't look anything like what I saw."

Hodgson gets his inspiration from just about anything from ordinary objects like floor tiles and ceiling patterns, to people. Glenn Gould is the subject of a painting that hangs in Hodgson's living room. Water is a constant resource for Hodgson's works.

Having grown up on Toronto Island, Hodgson took up canoeing at an early age, paddled for Canada at both the 1952 and 1956 Olympics in Helsinki and Melbourne respectively, and still paddles at the Mississauga Canoe Club.

Due to his longtime involvement with the sport, canoeing has supplied Hodgson with a degree of artistic inspiration. For example, his 1987 painting Rivi Backwash, an acrylic on canvas, took its inspiration from the annual Rivi canoeing regatta held at Oakville's Burloak Canoe Club.

A former student and teacher at the Ontario College of Art, Hodgson has utilized his artistic talents as both a creative and commercial artist. He has worked in the art department for advertising companies E.W. Reynolds, Foster, and Vickers & Benson, and his commercial designs for Odeon

Theatres were included in the 1951 Third Annual of Advertising and Editorial Arts.

In 1960, Hodgson received the Baxter Award at the Ontario Society of Artists annual exhibition, and in 1975 he wrote and published a book entitled *Creativity is Change*.

Between the years of 1953 and 1960, Hodgson joined up with a group of painters who called themselves the Painters Eleven and included as members Jock MacDonald, Jack Bush, Harold Town and William Ronald. The Painters Eleven were influenced by a form of painting called abstract expressionism, a term used to describe painters preoccupied with the act of painting as a prime instrument of expression.

"When you're young, you're so keen to do, try, and every experience is an adventure. When you're old you pull it all together, which is what I do in my art now," says Hodgson.

The Christopher J. Cutts gallery is located at 23 Morrow Ave., Suite 204, in Toronto. Prices of Hodgson's paintings range in price from \$800 to \$13,000. Tomorrow's opening will be held from 5 to 9 p.m. For information, call the gallery at 532-5566.