

Realist painter hoping to make art a career

By STEVE PECAR

If he never sold another painting, Gord Pynn wouldn't be unhappy. He paints because he likes to.

But if he didn't sell another painting, a lot of art collectors, as well as lovers of animals and nature, would be the ones to suffer.

Pynn, a 15-year resident of Streetsville, has been painting since he was a young boy growing up in Newfoundland and has combined his artistic talents with his love for nature to produce paintings which recently have been catching the attention of art dealers around southern Ontario.

With an almost photograph-like realism, Pynn's art work depicts nature as seen through the eyes of a man who has a great deal of respect for the outdoors, and who will spend many hours studying a subject in preparation for a painting.

"You can't really paint unless you study everything," says the 33-year-old Pynn. "No two animals or trees are alike and even the simplest thing can be fascinating."

EFFORT, TIME

Even though some aspects of nature may be considered simple by some, simple is not the word to describe the amount of effort and time Pynn spends on a painting.

A full-time ambulance driver in Mississauga, Pynn spends more than 40 hours a week of his spare time painting, and finds it difficult at times to tear himself away from the canvas.

"You almost have to throw yourself into a painting," he says. "At times you don't want to eat or go to bed, you just want to keep going."

It is because of this drive to "keep going" on his work that Pynn has recently decided to try and make painting a full-time profession, but he realizes he just can't quit his job as an ambulance driver and jump into a new career.

"Hopefully, I will be a full-time artist within the next few years, but I won't quit my job until the demand for my paintings

is so great that I can't keep up," he says.

Pynn may reach that point very soon as he is already spending more time painting than he does driving an ambulance, and orders for his work keep pouring in from people who have seen his art at Toronto's Westmount Gallery.

SOLD A FEW

Judy Smith, president of Westmount Gallery, reports she has sold a few of Pynn's works and she thinks he has a great deal of potential and sees positive response from the public.

"Art collectors don't gamble," says Smith. "When they don't like something they won't buy it, but they have shown a definite interest in his work."

One of the most interesting aspects of Pynn's paintings is the realistic scenes of nature he presents — scenes which may startle some, but nevertheless depict animals as they really exist.

"Nature is cruel, that's the way it is," says Pynn. "I try to paint animals surviving or the things they have to do which enables them to survive."

As strongly as he feels about presenting the realism of nature, Pynn feels even more strongly about producing top-quality work.

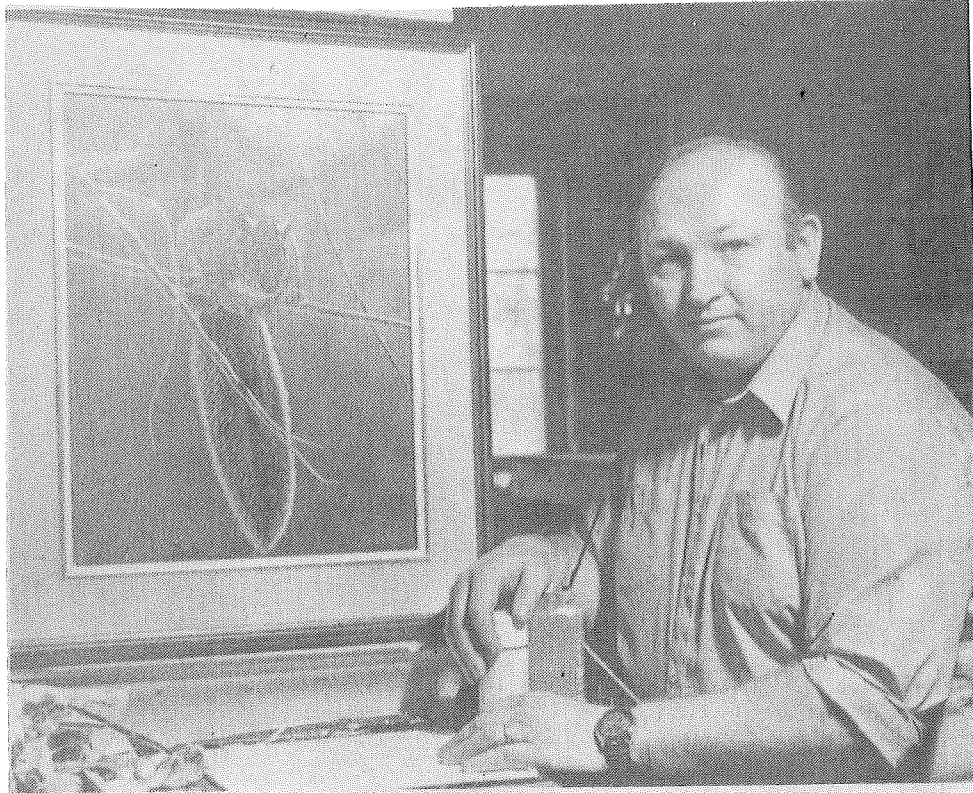
"I've scrapped dozens of paintings because they just weren't right," he says. "If I can't give my best, I shouldn't expect people to buy my work."

SETTLE DOWN

Looking into the future, Pynn hopes eventually to be able to settle down "up North somewhere" with his wife Joanne and his 12-year-old son John, because, as he puts it: "You can't produce the right quality if you're not in the right environment."

For the time being, however, Gord Pynn will continue to produce top-quality paintings from his home in Streetsville, contenting himself by studying animals at places like the Metro Zoo, a local bird sanctuary, or his own back yard (where wild creatures ranging from hawks to raccoons have been known to wander).

OVER
→



Gord Pynn hopes to combine his loves for painting and nature to become a full-time artist. The 15-year resident of Streetsville spends more time at his "hobby" than he does at his full-time job of being an ambulance driver, but says he does it mostly for pleasure.

(Photo by Steve Pecar)