

No meek little Lamb in St. Lambert show at Le Balcon d'Art

ARTseen

Bernard Mendelman

Steven Lamb, 40, is a painter of social comment. The people he portrays are grotesque, their features bold, distorted and exaggerated. Colours and clothing clash, sometimes giving the appearance of a comic strip. Yet you find yourself drawn to his sly satire and broad slapstick. What remains precise about Lamb is his keen observation of popular culture.

Born in Bulgaria, Lamb was a victim of communist oppression. He got his formal training at the Academy of Fine Arts in Sofia. After successes at several solo shows throughout Germany, he garnered himself an invitation to Cuba. When the plane landed to refuel at Gander, Nfld., he got off and never got back on. Obtaining refugee status, he worked as printmaker and illustrator in Newfoundland. In

1993 he came to Montreal and the following year became a Canadian citizen. He now resides in N.D.G.

At Le Balcon d'Art, some of the paintings that delighted me in this Lambitious show were *The Coachgirl*, with its whimsical approach; *Dancing Butterflies* with its wild fantasy; and *Once upon a Time... the Storm*, with its anecdotal connotations. *Exhibition is on until Nov. 17 at 650 Notre-Dame, St. Lambert. Info: 450-466-8920.*

Claude Vermette's exhibition at Galerie Bernard, continues the gallery's policy of informing the public on what has been happening to those artists who were part of *les automatistes*, the radical group of Montreal abstract painters of the 40s (Previous exhibition was for Pierre Gauvreau). Among Vermette's many accomplishments were decorating

several Metro stations, as well as Dorval and Mirabel airports. He also designed parts of the 1976 Olympic installations. During his career, Vermette has exhibited in Japan, Belgium, France, Spain, Italy, Finland, Denmark and New York. Abstraction comes to Vermette by instinct, as shown in the choice works over the past 10 years, assembled by the gallery. *Exhibition remains at 90 Laurier W. through Nov. 20. Info: 277-0770.*

At Galerie d'Avignon, Rose Maloukis and Shirley Katz share the spotlight in the gallery's current show. Maloukis in *The Earth Remembers Joy* presents a series of paintings based on the idea that if we stop hurting the earth, it will heal itself. Katz has concentrated on the female figure. Her nude *Martine* and *The Woman in Red* convey a feeling of isolation. Both artists come with impressive backgrounds. In 1998, Maloukis was one of 16 winners from more than 9,000 entries in America's prestigious *The Artist's Magazine's*



The Coachgirl, by Steven Lamb at Le Balcon d'Art

annual competition. Katz is head of the Department of Painting and Drawing at the Saidye Bronfman Centre. *Exhibition remains at 102 Laurier W. until Nov. 21. Info: 278-4777.*

At Galerie Jean-Pierre Valentin, watching Jeannette Perreault's progress has been like reading her diary. So much of her work consists of her personal experi-

ences. Enjoying breakfast as she gazes out of the window of her kitchen, the intimacy of dining in a favourite St. Denis street cafe, lingering over a cup of coffee at the Santropol, and her fascination with the ornate railings and low windows of Paris structures. There is a *joie de vivre* here. She has created a world that pleases her and at the same time man-

ages to please us. Her vibrant colours overwhelm me, in paintings that have a fluid expression and dynamic composition. She continues to grow, each exhibition showing a further development. Perreault's new show, *Journal*, opens with an artist's reception Saturday afternoon, Nov. 13. It continues at 1490 Sherbrooke W. until Nov. 26. Info: 939-0500.