



In this sequence of paintings by Monica Tap, the artist evokes the visual perception of travelling at an accelerated speed through the landscape, much like we see it from our cars today.

Exhibition explores two approaches to landscape

Toronto artists Mara Korkola and Monica Tap tackle notion of motion on foot or by mechanization

By Robert Reid, Record staff

CAMBRIDGE — Despite detractors who assert the contrary, landscape remains a significant subject in Canadian art.

The issue isn't whether the landscape is a legitimate subject for contemporary art, but how artists interpret and give visual expression to the subject.

A case in point is *Sequence and Passage*, an exhibition on view through Jan. 2 at the Queen's Square branch of Cambridge Galleries featuring recent, serial oil paintings by two Toronto-based artists.

In their different ways, Mara Korkola and Monica Tap deal with the notion of movement in and through the landscape. Whereas Korkola's movement is the traditional one of walking in the woods, Tap's movement is one of mechanized move-

ment whether train, bus, truck, car or all-terrain vehicle.

The more evocative work is Tap's six large paintings (152 x 216 centimetres). A graduate of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Tap is an associate professor at the University of Guelph.

She continues her ongoing investigation of time and representation by combining digital technology with conventional painting.

The *Going to the Sun* series begins with digital videos of the landscape shot from a moving vehicle.

The result is an abstracted, post-expressionist hybrid with remnants of representation.

Tap builds her paintings from lozenge-shaped blocks of colour. She balances light (white, creams, lime greens) and dark

Sequence and Passage: Mara Korkola and Monica Tap

Cambridge Galleries Queen's Square
1 North Square, Cambridge

On view through Jan. 2

Information and gallery hours available at 519-621-0460 or online at www.cambridgegalleries.ca

(browns, russets, grays) areas by suggesting a sense of sunlight penetrating trees and foliage.

The resulting blurry images evoke the visual perception of travelling at accelerated speed through the landscape, which, in actuality, is how many Canadians view the landscape these days.

The sense of passing, both in terms of time and place, is symbolic.

The natural world has undergone rapid change in the last century through industrialization, urbanization, mechanized locomotion and the myriad forms of pollution caused by these factors.

Nature as it has existed for millennia is not only in a state of transition, but is van-

ishing — before our very eyes, as it were. Similarly, the way we respond and react to nature is rapidly changing thanks to digital technology.

Korkola attended the Ontario College of Art before graduating from Wichita State University and University of Texas.

Her two dozen small panels (20 x 25.4 centimetres) constitute four series, all titled *No Place*.

In contrast to Tap, Korkola places the viewer in the landscape.

The paintings are rhythmical variations on a common visual theme. Each series features the same landscape portrayed at different times and from different vantage points.

Her approach to the landscape is up close and personal.

Her intimate pictures of autumn depict leafless birch trees and evergreens amidst a cacophony of yellows, mustards, russets, browns and oranges.

Tap and Korkola share an interest in the continuing relevance of landscape in contemporary art, even if their means and methods vary.

Both view nature and painting landscape in terms of transition.

rreid@therecord.com



No Place, 241 by Mara Korkola.