

# Art show successful on its own terms

By VIRGINIA von HAHN

Picture a room filled with metal-rod box frames of various shapes and sizes. The frames are all laced with shapeless masses of red clay with intermittent pieces of black glass jutting out. Each of these frames is an independent sculpture with a mind and character of its own.

**Sculpture: Garden**  
The art of Debora Klyman-Mowczan  
At the Unit/Pitt Gallery  
Until Mar. 24

The sculptures in this room are arranged into groups and above each group hangs a single metal pole. Like the individual sculptures these groups differ as well and each

expresses something unique.

These are the components of Debora Klyman-Mowczan's show at the Unit/Pitt Gallery entitled *Sculpture: Garden*. But the show moves far beyond these basic components. Its artistic puissance and flair lie in the intricacy of the delicate relationship between sculptures, groups of sculptures, and the source of their creation.

In the centre of the room lies this source, or mother-lode — a pile of raw and undifferentiated material. Out of the materials of this mother-lode the sculptures are metaphorically conceived and born. As they develop their own form and character, the umbilical cord that unites them with the mother-lode is severed.

The new creations then gravitate (metaphorically, of course) towards the different poles and redefine themselves within a group. So although the sculptures are all inanimate, there remains a definite sense of motion, flow, and new creation in the room. And although there is a common bond, the mother-lode, which unites the sculptures, they remain independent statements.

Thus the show becomes much more than a mere collection of sculptures. It becomes a collection of independent entities begotten by a common source. They then combine themselves to create new expressions.

So what is the point behind all this? A new approach to an art

form known as fragmentation.

Fragmentation is traditionally the juxtaposition of individual pieces of art to create a meaning, according to Klyman-Mowczan. But the fragments only make sense when in context with other pieces. Outside of this context, a fragment loses all sense. The fragments are dependent on each other and cannot stand alone.

But in this new approach to fragmentation, the pieces are not only able to work together but they also work on their own. Klyman-Mowczan describes her approach to fragmentation as positive and uses it as a vehicle for expression — in the artist's own words, a vehicle with which "plots of cultivated experience are able to take form."

The nature of these experiences is left unclear.

This lack of clarity is the show's crucial flaw. Klyman-Mowczan has created art forms that become a bit too personal, leaving the viewer alienated from whatever statement she intended to make.

Despite this flaw, Klyman-Mowczan's show remains an intriguing one. On the whole her art works well on three levels. First of all, her individual sculptures are innovative and interesting in design. They are also able to work together effectively. Finally, in her approach to grouping her sculptures she has made a novel statement about the way in which art pieces can work together.