

GALLERY GOING
GARY MICHAEL DAULT

Kim Dorland at the Angell Gallery
\$475-\$3,500. Closes today, 890
Queen St. W., Toronto;
416-530-0444

The paintings of Toronto-based artist Kim Dorland seem naughtier at first blush than they turn out to be after a longer look at them. This is both an irritating problem and, at the same time, a source of delight. Dorland can make pigment into flesh with a breezy virtuosity that can simultaneously wow you and set your teeth on edge. In his *Over There*, for example, a comely half-naked woman (with her dog), supine in the bushes but now suddenly alerted, one presumes, to the presence of a nearby disturbance (probably a male disturbance), is so gelatinous, so cake-icing tasty that you're seduced even as you tell yourself the whole thing is too illustrative to get worked up about. And then you feel rather a fool if you proceed to point out — as I am about to — that the shrubbery in which the woman lies concealed is awfully well-painted: brash, vigorous, assured. It's like that old silliness about buying Penthouse or Playboy for the articles.

Maybe I'm missing the point. Maybe Dorland's pneumatic nudes — the girl lying naked (with that damned dog again!) out in the middle of a sunny meadow, the naked girl fondling her horse (what a Freudian farrago!), the juicy naked twins, are just a sort of test of our gullibility or our shallowness. Because there is always that context of beautiful painterliness, all that paint-dappled grass, all those paint-shaggy trees.

If you want to know how well Dorland can paint — when he isn't being a painterly Hugh Hefner — look closely at his *Hunter #3*, with its single twist of black paint making up a creditable hunting dog, and its general atmosphere of sunny good weather generated from several enormous, undigested globs of golden paint clinging for dear life to the canvas surface. Put down those cheeky girls, my boy, and get on with painting!