

Gary Michael Dault

Globe and Mail October 21, 2000

David Urban at Sable-Castelli

Where once, a half-dozen years ago, Toronto artist David Urban's paintings looked edgy and brash, they are now beginning to look dependable. Which doesn't, of course, diminish their obvious quality.

Where once a typical Urban might feature a bright ribbon-like meander of pigment exploring the periphery of a brightly coloured field (like an access road skirting a shopping mall), the paintings of this new show, which for some reason is called North, are slow and thick and dark. Much given to lattices of reds the colour of dried blood and beige-yellows like peeling porch

paint, and often engulfed in fields of choppy blue-greys the colour of a lake in November, these new paintings offer depth where the earlier ones gave width. As powerfully and nervously hatched with shingles of paint as a Cézanne, Urban's recent works — such as *The Mind is a Great Poem of Winter* and *The Night Knows Nothing of the Chants of Night* are visual chorales, maybe even requiems, rather than the minuets that came before.

Something has been, of course, lost — an easy joy, I guess. But much has been won as well. *Prices on request. Until Oct. 28, 33 Hazelton Ave. 416-961-0011.*