

culture

Artseen does time in cop shop

Imagine standing at one end of a tunnel that leads into the nothingness of darkness, edged by crumbling concrete walls, only to discover it is

ART

an abandoned passageway once used to transport inmates from Windsor's courthouse to their dank, smelly cells.

Imagine finding yourself inside a stark cell that bears names and lives scratched like cryptic hieroglyphics on the walls. Imagine being under the glare of lights in an interrogation room where the smell of truth and lies still lingers in the air.

Welcome to *Artseen*, Windsor's non-profit, artist-run centre for the

contemporary arts. *Artcite* managed to find an ingenious location for its eighth annual off-site showcase of new and experimental art. Over 70 area artists invaded the former Windsor Police Headquarters, filling the recently vacated building with visual art, site-specific installation, film, video, and live performances.

For some artists, *Artseen* offers a chance to mark their participation and involvement in the local arts scene. "I love the Windsor arts community coming together with so many different types of art," says painter and photographer Ko Bhamra. "I'm thrilled to be part of it."

Some artists are interested in how viewers react to their surroundings and the art. Detroit artist Scott Hocking displayed "Sisyphus the Bowler".



Bowling for dollars? Kids turn art into a true Windsor past time.

Using the aforementioned tunnel, the artist's installation involves at least 100 bowling pins standing at the end of the tunnel. Hocking states with amazement as two boys turn his art into a bowling alley. "It's very interesting to see if people will interact. They make the choice as to whether or not they're allowed to," he comments.

"It's interesting because I work a lot with art work involving kids and it's ironic to

me that of all the people who have come down and looked at this, the kids are the ones who have done it; who have said, 'Alright, we want to bowl' and not really thought about the fact that it's art."

But what is most fascinating about *Artseen* is the inevitable blurring between the art and the building as interest shifts back and forth between the site-specific works and the site itself. Many of the pieces borrow

and steal from one another, yet depend on each other for relevance. The artists, in turn, manipulate this codependence between their work and the space.

For his piece, called "The Kitchen Police", performance artist Graham MacLeod moved into the kitchen at the old cop shop. He plays with the space like it's his own as he bakes cookies, boils tea, and greets each viewer like an old friend.