



Approach changes

Adele Duck, whose paintings will soon be on display at Robert Kidd Associates Gallery, has moved from monochromatic colors to brighter ones. She also does abstracts which show a splashier palette than her earlier works. The show opens Feb. 7 and will run through March 4. Hours are 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

When all is said...



by
Corinne Abatt

Youth cult attacked

Sol Kurtzman of the Birmingham Bookstore said he thought I'd like Carson Kanin's new book, "It Takes a Long Time to Become Young." He loaned a copy to me in preparation for Kanin's scheduled visit to the local store last Sunday.

"Of course, I identify with it," Kurtzman said with a smile in his voice. Both Kurtzman and his wife Betty are somewhere in the ballpark. The age group Kanin is writing about—those often forcefully retired in early or mid 60s.

While a lot of people including the Kurtzmans and me were looking forward to Kanin's arrival, Sunday morning he called the Kurtzmans to say he wasn't coming. No question, but from Kanin vantage point in New York City, the weather looked a trifle shaky. But, he would have had a pleasant reception and possibly picked up a few more substantiating stories for his point that age and productivity are not one and the same.

KURTZMAN, WHO WAS minding the store Sunday afternoon, said his wife had decided to go to New York after Kanin called to cancel. She wanted to visit their daughters. Kurtzman added that Birmingham Bookstore was one of a few local businesses that stayed open Thursday and Friday, and business was surprisingly brisk. It was moving right along on Sunday while I was there.

"I think people just got tired of looking at the four walls," he said, "and they were really glad to find we were open."

And when you think about relieving monotony and perking up brain waves, there are few better places than a bookstore or a library.

A lot of local residents just had to get out of their houses and walk a bit

and finding the bookstore open was like finding a an unexpected gift.

Kanin's book, an attack on the youth cult, is full of examples of people who have continued to be creative and productive long past the arbitrary 65 retirement. He cites everyone from Somerset Maugham, Wedgehouse, Nabokov and poets Carl Sandburg, Robert Frost and Archibald MacLeish to his wife, Ruth Gordon and artists such as Matisse, Chagall, Picasso, D'Vinco, Cassatt and many more.

KANIN DOESN'T CARE much for the term senior citizens, and I had planned to ask what names he did like.

He objects to the mandatory retirement age, and certainly his objections are justified, but what do you do when someone who really isn't performing up to par? There probably won't be a gentle way to ease someone out if mandatory retirement is put aside.

He devotes a quick chapter to Maggie Kuhn of Philadelphia, organizer of the Gray Panthers and her denunciations of the way older people are depicted on television. She's positively right—it's cruel and it's stupid and it's all ought to get in that fight.

Kanin's book is good because it confronts squarely a situation that has been going on too long without protest.

It undoubtedly will help build a sense of pride in those with age and experience, but I wish he would have put more of himself into the book.

It is a lay-on-the-line type factual treatment and maybe philosophy doesn't belong in such a statement, but the author, himself is not small potatoes and his personal statement would have been welcome.

The book can be read rather quickly, but it is one that has staying power—something a lot of us will use as both resource material and inspiration.

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