

Alex Tavares

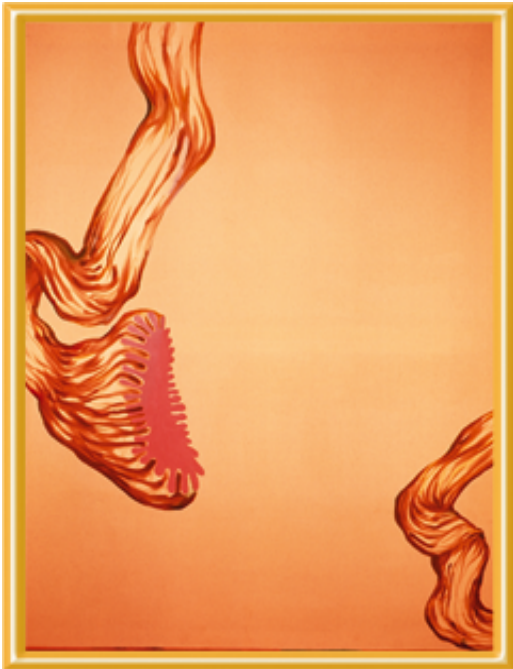
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Drape Series

by Kay Kritzwiser

from *The Globe and Mail*; Toronto, Canada

11 March, 1972



At Picture Loan Gallery, 3 Charles St. W., Zanzibar-born Alex Tavares, while in Toronto, has climbed the slow route up through Toronto libraries to his present one-man exhibition. He came to Canada as a landed immigrant in 1969 and has lived in Saskatchewan, but all his previous experience has been mainly in art education and exhibitions in India, Spain, Goa and Nairobi.

His Drape Series includes natural canvases, each supporting a swirling fold of paint. After he finished the series, Tavares wrote a concrete poem and chose it from the titles of his paintings. The underlying theme then becomes, "Calling all in unfurl (sic) their banners of celebration."

"Unfurl unfurl unfurl the banners of celebration" 1970

But don't dismiss the theme as a poetic effusion by any means. Tavares works his painted drape into a message ranging from lyrical ("tickling the ostrich for her feathers") to the menacing violence of the drape, "And pour incense in forms of clouds."

The very rigidity of the drape's end makes an unusual tension in some, particularly in contrast to the clean linen surface. Sometimes it becomes a fanged snakemouth, sometimes a knotted muscular area about to strike. This is an interesting show, presumably only one statement of the unusual variety, including sculpture, murals and surrealist paintings, which previously characterized his work.

"And pour incense in forms of clouds" 1970

