

Porn law plan offends local culture group

By DOUGLAS SAGI

Proposed new federal laws against pornography will not work and will frustrate discussions of human sexuality by serious artists and others, a spokesman for an arts and cultural group opposed to censorship said Wednesday.

Sara Diamond, of the Coalition for the Right to View, said prohibiting pornography will have little effect on the flow of the material it is intended to ban.

"Violent pornography and child pornography will still be available" through underground outlets, she said.

Diamond, a Vancouver video artist, is a member of the Vancouver Art Gallery board of trustees, though the board is not a member of the Coalition for the Right to View.

She was reached at the Vancouver Artists League Strategies for Survival Conference that was in mid session when it learned of Justice Minister John Crosbie's legislative plans Tuesday afternoon.

The conference, attended by 200 artists and representatives of arts organizations from across Canada and some delegates from abroad, Wednesday passed a resolution opposing Crosbie's proposed amendments to the Criminal Code.

Coalition members include the Vancouver Artists League, the Faculty Association of the Emily Carr College of Art and Design, several book stores and publishers, independent artists, writers and film makers and trade union organizations.

Diamond said the proposed legislation will result in legitimate artists, in video and other visual forms, being harassed by police untrained in determining the difference between art and pornography.

She said the difference between the two is subject of a debate throughout society that is a long way from reaching a conclusion.

"People do not agree on what is art and what is pornography. I've sat through video shows and slide shows and heard all the arguments and I still don't know," Diamond said.

She said there is a separate debate on the merits of erotic material that is not pornographic.

"... The problem in our society is that we don't talk enough about this stuff and we're not going to have a



SARA DIAMOND: "People do not agree on what is art and what is pornography."

discussion if the images aren't available."

She said conference delegates generally were in favor of the justice minister's efforts to prosecute pornography producers who used children. The delegates also approved his attempts to combat child abuse.

"We felt he should aim at the producers of pornography, not the actual images," she said.

She said Crosbie is trying to respond to right wing elements who want all pornography banned as well as feminist groups who oppose child abuse and sexual violence against women.

His legislation is a mix of law "thrown together" to "eliminate any visual discussion of power within sexuality, sexual violence and sex per se," she said.

Diamond said the coalition favors spending government money on combatting child abuse and violence. Some members had suggested training policemen to make better judgments when there were complaints about artists producing illegal pornography.

"They say the defence of artistic merit can be used, but when an artist is arrested, his work is seized and he goes before the courts. It can take years."



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work is most notable
surrealist bases.

small, meticulous
water or outerspace
abstract forms. Lin-
drawings of realistic
the cats sitting on
Bullock's drawings
subject is fantastic

plished photo-col-
surrealist fashion;
es with parts of the
rn; and Ladislav Gu-
— creates intricate

women and floating
pipes that might be
s of musical instru-
k, precise technical

th Group, Guderna
an artistic career that
Milan and Berlin.

ery happy, optimistic
uses convention."

solstice event in the
oetry-readings and

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