

By Victoria Donohoe
INQUIRER ART CRITIC

Haverford College. Painter Nicholas Cairns and sculptor Michael O'Keefe are exhibiting 75 individual works at Haverford.

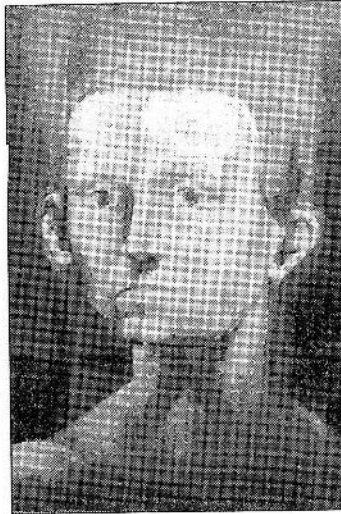
Cairns, who grew up in Haverford, is the son of that college's sculpture professor Christopher Cairns and now lives in Baltimore, while O'Keefe, formerly an assistant in the college's art department, now resides in Brooklyn.

Both are in their mid-20s, serious full-time artists, single-minded about their work, and decidedly out of the mainstream. Few of these pieces display their good qualities in an obvious way; most call for dogged examination to make them explicit.

Cairns in his still lifes, people paintings and drawings and O'Keefe in his sculptures and drawings, analyze their subjects, whether drawn from real life or from an old master source. Such pictures, sculpted heads (some in bronze), and figures *investigate* what they are, as opposed to simply being what they are.

The sensibilities of these artists are acute, combining calculated ideas and strong sculptural and painterly abilities. The quality of some of this probing work rather than the zaniness (occasionally) of their viewpoint is what impressed me most about their work. A finer balance between suggestion and statement would give distinction to their best work.

Haverford College's Cantor Fitzgerald Gallery, Haverford. To May 2. 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Mondays-Fridays, noon-5 Saturdays-Sundays. 610-896-1287.



Painter Nicholas Cairns' "Head" is part of an exhibit at Haverford College that also features works by sculptor Michael O'Keefe.