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 Toronto; 416-324-

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**Sensual and fragile: In a painting like *Boxers*, DeCoste comes on like some puckish version of a Victorian painter such as Sir Frederick Leighton.**

laboration with local artisans.

The other half of the exhibition continues and expands the body of work with which she has been engaged for some time: a sophisticated graphic claiming of the natural world through drawing. Few artists in this country wield an oil stick with such simultaneous deftness and authority as Keeley does. Her plant stems, seeds, leaves and pod-like forms, scrubbed onto paper with a force that is almost generative, are both delicate and commanding.

**To a Watery Grave at the University of Toronto Art Centre**  
 Until Sept. 30, 15 King's College Circle, Toronto; 416-978-1838

**T**o a Watery Grave is one of those brilliantly conceived, superbly contrived exhibitions curated by independent artist and curator Andrew Hunter, who claims, perceptual flâneur that he is, that, he gets his best ideas just by walking around and looking at things.

To a Watery Grave appears to have come about as a result of his strolling about in graveyards in Prince Edward Island, and by sitting and musing on nautical death on the island's north shore. As he

writes in the beautifully written and handsomely produced book-catalogue that accompanies the exhibition (first mounted at the Confederation Centre Art Gallery in Charlottetown in 2004): "We all have fears. Sometimes they're irrational. For you it might be snakes or bears, darkness or high places. For me, it's water; but not just any water. It is a particular kind of water that frightens me, a particular surface, a dull, opaque undulating surface."

Gathering sea-related, shipwreck-related, death-by-drowning-related works of art and similarly oriented artifacts, the tenacious and apparently tireless Hunter has composed a stunningly encyclopedic hall of nautical wonders — offering the viewer everything from the lurid covers of the Classic comics editions of *Moby Dick* (1947) and Depression-era American photographer Russell Lee's photos of drowned animals (1937) to four exhilaratingly good black and white *Black Paintings* from 2001 ("with their heavy grid of obliterated fish") by Halifax-based artist Gerald Ferguson, and a big, raw shipwreck painting by the late Paterson Ewen which I'd never before seen (it's owned by Museum London in London, Ont.). And hundreds of other fascinating things.

Give yourself sufficient time for Hunter's exhibition. It's big, and everything in it is riveting. Maybe everything real that touches the oceanic is vast like this, and slow and demanding. The majestic language of Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* tolls through Hunter's exhibition like the bell on a buoy: "Ish-

mael's story," Hunter notes, "begins in light, and although he himself is saved, it ends in darkness. The sea becomes a cloak of death, a blank, indifferent surging mask." That's also what the exhibition feels like. It's terrifically entertaining, but, like Melville's mega-novel, it's not to be entered into lightly.

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**"...FALL-DOWN FUNNY. THANK YOU, RICKY BOBBY!"**  
Richard Roeper, CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

**WILL FERRELL**  
**TALLADEGA NIGHTS**  
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