



**Photographic image... Artist Anton Molnar's technique of hyperrealism makes his works look like photographs.**

**By CELINE TEO**

SO real are the works of artist, Anton Molnar, that you feel you can reach into his painting of a sumptuous breakfast-laden table and help yourself to a glass of orange juice.

In the midst of croissants and fried eggs and bacon, "Petit de Jeuner a Seefeld" or "Breakfast at Seefeld", presents an upturned cloche which reflects a captivating glimpse of a photographer.

**I** pick what goes into the picture but everyone else is immediately prompted to imagine their own story behind it.

— Artist Anton Molnar

Molnar, who was born in Hungary but now resides in Paris, is a practitioner of hyperrealism or superrealism.

It is a technique that gives paintings an almost photographic property with its intense attention

to minute details. Subjects also include multiple reflections to highlight the technical superiority.

Molnar's latest body of works is featured in a joint exhibition with French artist, Herve Sbarberi, titled, "L'Art de Vivre" or "The Art of Living".

While hyperrealists often confine themselves to less emotionally charged images, not unlike the banal consumer products of pop art, Molnar is inspired by an older epoch.

His themes, featuring worn luggage, bottles of wine

and forlorn women, evoke a romantic response, while his lavish use of deep hues echo the colours and techniques of the Renaissance.

The 41-year-old, who is influenced as much by Warhol as by Rembrandt, said: "I may work using old Italian techniques but it is with a modern vision. The 20th century is a Romantic, but sad, age. It's far too complicated for an artist to just stick to one school of art."

The effect, which is best epitomised in "Parfum de Paris", is almost cinematic. It features a forlorn woman in her negligee, smelling a rose by her window in a Paris apartment. Added Molnar: "I pick what goes into the picture but everyone else is immediately prompted to imagine their own story behind it."

To achieve the effect of realism, hyperrealists often work from photographic images or colour slides projected onto the canvas. Molnar, on the other hand, does it the traditional way, through sketches, armed with a piece of paper, pencil and his intense passion.

The artist, who began his formal art training at 14, said: "In Budapest, we did not have cameras, so you had to sketch or paint the picture. If you couldn't do that, your teacher would give you the boot."

**L'ART DE VIVRE**

**At Opera Gallery,**

**#02-12H Takashimaya,**

**Till April 22, 11 am to 8 pm**