

FRUIT OF THE ROOM

For many painters, the prospect of executing a highly detailed 5m x 3m painting of food for a new delicatessen might seem a large-scale commission. But Timna Woollard is used to higher pressures.

Woollard, a fine art and film graduate from St Martin's and Maidstone schools of art, is the portraitist and *trompe l'oeil* specialist who brought to life John Boorman's recent filmic fairy tale *Where the Heart Is*. Six months' devotion were needed to transform a house in Toronto into an ever-changing set whose painterly styles ranged mysteriously across the history of art from Moreau to Rousseau, Bosch to Van Gogh. Nor did Woollard's task end there. She

was constantly on hand to paint and repaint the bodies of the actors, so that a cast including Uma Thurman and Christopher Plummer could blend surreally in and out of the set.

Woollard's six-week commission for the ceiling of Tom Conran's delicatessen (see p9) must have seemed a gentle stroll by comparison, but it does not show. With acrylics on wood panels, Woollard has created luscious images of the fruits, vegetables and other foods on sale below. Her still life has all the rural serenity and obsessive attention to detail of an Italian master. 'Once I get involved with a commission I can't do anything else,' she explains. 'I just throw myself into it day and night.' DR



CHRIS GASCOIGNE

HAMMING IT UP

