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MARY MYART MALOTT COLLECTION
(formerly Mary Harrell McIntyre)

Filmed by the Archives of American Art,
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Mary Myart Malott, Austin, Texas, August 1981.

MARY MYART MALOTT COLLECTION
(formerly Mary Harrell McIntyre)

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Laguna Gloria, UT shows often outstanding

By MARY McINTYRE

The end of a year provides the occasion for reflection. Art in Austin ran an extraordinary and uneven gamut from the highly sophisticated exhibits provided by the University of Texas and the efforts by the community museum, Laguna Gloria, to reach a public hopefully aware and interested, to the amazingly poor response to the few galleries concerned with the visual expression of contemporary man's thought.

In 1976 three important local galleries closed, and others courageously opened. Laguna Gloria Art Museum expanded really its programs and succeeded in reaching its widest public yet. Laguna pushed its financial and space limitations in an exhibition program necessarily modest but hitting some highlights in American and Latin American art.

St. Edward's University continued in its character of exhibiting works by practicing artists with as much emphasis on the personality and attitude of the artist as on the quality of the art.

However, it is the University of Texas with its incomparable spaces devoted to changing exhibits and its considerable financial resources which unavoidably wins the accolades for bringing to Austin exhibits in depth of international significance. The Michener Gallery alone has more exhibition space allocated to non-permanent exhibits than does the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

THE YEAR BEGAN with the great exhibit of Egyptian art from the Brooklyn Museum. Other extraordinary exhibits were drawn from Latin American art of widely ranging periods: gold from ancient Colombia, *The Barbachano Ponce Maya Art* collection of clay figurines and pottery, retrospectives of Leonora Carrington, Gunther Gerzso, Jose Maria Velasco and Carlos Merida. Nor were the North Americans neglected, with drawings from the New York Studio School, prints from the Clark Collection, solo shows by Willem de Kooning, Maurice Prendergast and Milton Avery.

On the fourth floor of the Undergradu-

ate Library the great permanent collection of literature and art entitled, *Baudelaire to Beckett* went on extended display.

Other permanent collections or collections on extended loan were brought out in part or whole at various times. The *Abstract Expressionist and Imagist Paintings* derived from the Michener Collection, and was organized to celebrate the works of artists represented in a similar New York exhibit of 1961. The *Villanella Cubist Collection* was displayed at least three times to provide comparison with exhibits in the same galleries.

PHOTOGRAPHY WAS actively sought and displayed with regularity at Laguna Gloria, the Austin Women's Center, and at the new nonprofit Southwest Center for Photography. The University of Texas had an excellent exhibit in the Michener Gallery of three Austin photographers using old large view cameras as well as photography sections in both the art faculty exhibit and the art students exhibit.

art

All three of the Austin galleries which closed were displaying contemporary art of quality. The Apers of Fourth Street could partially blame their lack of parking, but their standards of art and presentation were excellent. The Ray Gallery folded after creating a good exhibition space on East Sixth and having only one show. The closing of Kerbey Lane Gallery has left a gap in the promotion and assemblage of good regional crafts, leaving The Shop of Nice Things in the Potpourri, and the Laguna Gloria Crafts Shop as survivors.

The new gallery dealing in the contemporary paintings, sculpture, and prints is Pecan Square Gallery. A good collection of international names in fine prints is found at the new Gallerie Ravel. The Garner and Smith print gallery and art bookstore roused itself to a fine exhibit of Intaglios by the local Tony Bass this part year.

THIS COMPOSITE review of 1976 poses some questions:

Will Austin ever have a significant public art collection on permanent display?

Will the people of Austin ever commit themselves financially and with strength of interest to the much needed growth of the community museum, Laguna Gloria, in addition to the gratuitous enjoyment of exhibitions at the University?

Will we ever become sophisticated and confident enough in our own taste to adequately support local galleries concerned with the original expression of thought?

Prints collector adds to UT donations



MR. AND MRS. CHARLES CLARK
They stand with some of their prints in UT's Harry Ransom Center

By MARY McINTYRE

Special to The American-Statesman

"An adventurous Chevrolet dealer from one of the less exciting border cities jets to Europe to meet artists, see their workshops and collect art.

Charles Clark of McAllen has added 69 prints by contemporary artists to his previous gifts to the University of Texas. All dedicated to Mr. or Mrs. Clark, the prints are on display in the Michener Gallery, Harry Ransom Center, 21st and Guadalupe.

OF INTEREST IS why the Clarks began their collecting odyssey, how their taste has developed and what they look for in an artist's work.

Clark won a citywide art competition as a junior high student in Oklahoma City with a linoleum block print design for a Christmas card. Charles Clark received professional art training, but midway through came to some important self-realizations:

"I could never freeze on paper the ultimate imagery," he stated, "I never felt sufficient imagination to come up with my-own thing. I could duplicate. I have the idea that a lot of other people who have been into art for some time have the same problem."

Eventually settling into the automobile business, and with the interest of his wife, Dorothy — a Californian trained in theatrical design — Clark began modest collecting.

WHILE ON VACATIONS in the 1950s the Clarks purchased oils, sculpture and prints through galleries in Carmel, Calif., Santa Fe and Taos, N.M. "It was the start, but now that art is more traditional and realistic than we prefer," Clark said.

They bought "School of Paris: the Painters and Artistic Climate of Paris since 1910" by Raymond Nacenta, and started seeking out works by the artists represented, and attempting to meet the artists themselves. Prints became of special interest to the Clarks, and the early ones acquired were by well-known artists: Miro, Chagall, Braque.

"Print collecting became adventuring, trying out different artists or imageries," Clark said. They subscribed to publications to find who handled

the artists. As catalogs came in they studied, wrote for more.

IN THE LATE SIXTIES they began spending vacation periods in Europe, meeting dealers and master printers in Switzerland who made possible visits to artists' studios. Acquisitions became predominantly contemporary.

Stimulated by an advertisement for joining a graphics club in St. Gall, Switzerland, through which they could acquire prints for a modest fee, they settled on such an arrangement with Galerie Im Erker.

In 1969, after a Texas Automobile Dealers Association convention in Lubbock, Clark found himself with a three hour lay-over in Austin. He took a taxi to the UT Art Museum and asked to see the person in charge. This meeting of Clark with Don Goodall was the beginning of a fruitful collaboration and expansion of the Clarks' interest into making their collections public. At the opening of the current exhibit, Goodall announced the founding of the Charles and Dorothy Clark Print Room, to be established in the UT Art Building.

ASKED WHAT HE looks for in an artist's work, Clark said he reacts to the imagery first, whether it is visually and emotionally satisfying. Then he commented on the space, how it is used, and what the artist did with space. Next were the color relationships.

He felt that quality in an artist's work should follow a straight line of progression. There may be some deviation but not groping into a lot of directions. He looked for the artist who doesn't work to please others, who works to please himself. He sought a character of "total dedication and total involvement that will bring greatness."

The fascination of seeking and meeting the artists, master printers, dealers and finding their interrelationship is expressed in the forward to the catalog written by the Clarks.

Their intense and educated involvement with the works of art themselves comes through in the quality of their selections. The present exhibit includes well-known artists Max Bill, Lynn Chadwick, Piero Dorazio, Hans Hartung, Antonio Tapies, Ernest Trova, and fine prints done since 1968 by many others.

UT art faculty exhibit shows overall strength

By MARY MCINTYRE
Special to The American-Statesman
Spread out over the two floors of the Huntington Gallery, the University of Texas annual Faculty Art Exhibition presents its multifaceted character.

After 18 years of viewing this prestigious local event, memories abound. At the least, a comparison to last year's exhibit comes to mind and the changes in the works of artistic minds over the years presents a fascinating evolution.

THERE IS EXCELLENCE in many areas. Overall, the exhibit seems stronger than last year's as some of the weaker presentations are gone; however, it is more difficult for the visitor to apprehend in toto as there is more work by more people in more space.

In a few words: it is exciting, boring, beautiful, and disturbing. The third visit still sent this viewer on a roller coaster of emotional range from any one selected display area.

The first area entered is exceptionally strong. David Deming's massive tripod steel sculpture

thrusts at the visitor, yet invites an examination of its spaces, its elegantly rusted and marked surfaces.

PULLING AWAY VISUALLY at the end of this area is Walt Jurkiewicz's painting of a room with a slightly dizzying tilted perspective. This painted space makes the girl in the armchair almost incidental, and the total image more interesting than his standard figure paintings. The deliberate distortion has a relationship to the wide-angle photography of Garry Wingrand, displayed in another section.

Turning around, Yee Jan Boa's thick red and white oil paintings have an impact which clearly displays an innovative and intense mind. His three-year evolution in these exhibits is considerable. Though *Red Painting I* reveals struggle, and there is some compositional relation to the great Hans Hofmann painting in the Michener Collection, it is handsomely resolved. *Red Painting II* is a fully integrated idea both of the method of painting and the composition embodied.

Johnnie Ross, also represented by paintings in this area has made a rich development away from his series based on divisions of a square. In his central, untitled painting, an intriguing and difficult balance is established by diagonal divisions of rectangles, an arc, and greater variety in hue and luminosity.

AS THE VISITOR moves to the section to the north, the predominant visual effect is from exterior light shining through Paul Hatgil's banded translucent sculptures. Created by layers of colored resin poured into molds, they vary in interest according to the richness of the colors and the complexity of interior design.

Don Herron's highly refined ceramic sculptures



Staff Photo by Jim Dougherty

SECOND FLOOR PERSPECTIVE OF UT FACULTY ART EXHIBITION

The multifaceted display covers the two floors of the Huntington Gallery

FACULTY

fascinate in this area. Two of them bear titles relating to a shrine for housing a sacred object characteristic of birds, *Ornithic Reliquart*, as well as projecting this concept visually.

When confronted with John Guerin's paintings of brooding landscapes, memory awakes his previously brighter, lyrical palette and style. These paintings are equally beautiful within a dark, low-keyed range.

A FACULTY MEMBER of long standing, Guerin's artistic convictions have remained vital within a generally traditional concept of space and landscape orientation.

Charles Umlauf selected 10 of his best and most expressive small scaled sculptures as a mini-retrospective for this show. Particularly moving, and unfamiliar to this viewer, is the truncated *Magdalene*.

The single pieces by Vincent Mariani and Carol Rabel stand out in an area where grouping of several works each by several artists offer little of distinction from one piece to the next.

Some of the works by faculty members of several years standing are so familiar and repetitive, and without very effective qualities, that a "ho-hum" reaction occurs. Or such an artist appears to be relieving his own boredom by trying out tricky alternatives.

THERE IS JEWELRY, horticulture, geology and taxidermy by painter Gibbs Milliken. Kelly Fearing displays three jarring deviations from his long career of surreal figures in landscape spaces or even his abstract *Colorplaces* of recent years. It is as if some contemporary forces are pushing him to an experimentation which is not thoroughly understood.

Strangely, though Fearing has dropped the surreal image, something similar is appearing with great conviction in the serigraphs of a new faculty member, Timothy High. In a difficult medium, High's skill in manipulation of color, space and

form is impressive. His prints are on display upstairs.

It is not just the teaching assistants who are relegated to the upstairs, but some of the top pieces in the show are there. Particularly fine are Bill Wiman's photo-realist oil paintings.

Also of interest upstairs is the very effective commercial design work by George Lenox and Ed Triggs, paintings by Otis Jones, Janis Provisor, more Carol Rabel, lithographs by Kenneth Hale, and photographs by David Newman and Katherine Fardue.

WHAT TURNED OUT to be the 10-day logo and publicity device of the whole show was Richard Brown's *Zipper*. Brown constructed a huge canvas and steel awning which resembled a zipper, and suspended it over the patio area at the Communication Building. On New Year's Day, the weight of ice on the steel "teeth" caused sagging, and shearing by the teeth of connecting cables. With its center down on the ground, Brown explained that this made it a "real environmental piece. Like life itself, it's changing. Now the piece is truly complete."

Avery exhibit uneven quality

By MARY MCINTYRE

Special to The American-Statesman

With the renewed emphasis on art representing the human figure, the exhibit of paintings by Milton Avery at the Michener Gallery is timely. Using reality, yet with a peculiar independence, his landscape and figure paintings state one solution to the fusion of abstraction and realism.

His long career spanned many art movements from the 1920s until his

death in 1965. He was an early friend of two painters who became major figures in the Abstract Expressionist movement, Mark Rothko and Adolf Gottlieb. They acknowledged his influence.

In turn, Milton Avery utilized the flat aspect of 20th Century art and the forces of abstraction, while maintaining a slow development in style and color based on actual scenes and particular people.

This exhibit, installed downstairs in the Harry Ransom Center, University of

Texas campus, 21st and Guadalupe, is composed of oil paintings and watercolors drawn primarily from the Avery family collections, and dating from the 1930s to the 1960s. With the exception of the two paintings of clowns, the exhibit is consistent in the Avery style. However, it is uneven in quality with weak points especially in some of the landscapes of the 1950s and 1960s.

To be noted are his figure paintings.

(See EXHIBIT, Page 17)

EXHIBIT

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March in Brown, Mother and Child and Maternity. Here Avery has picked up on a lesson from Matisse: the human form abstracted into an expressive shape, and locked into a composition where all shapes are important. He also has been freed by the Fauves to use arbitrary color: the red face of the baby and the white-faced mother in *Mother and Child*, and in others, yellow, lavender or green faces.

In these there is no shading. Seldom are features indicated and all incidental aspects of the sitters are removed. There is some texture within areas, and Avery's unique subtle color relationships work well.

Two figure paintings of the 1960s are outstanding. *Lone Bather* has an expressive hunch to the shoulder, an off-center balance with the seascape, and beautiful pale peach and plum colors combined with grays. *Figures by the Sea* has well composed figures and total shapes, but the use of the white of the canvas ground in streaks at the top area does not hold to the picture plane with the other surfaces.

MILTON AVERY'S manner of working was to make many sketches from people and scenes, and develop watercolors from these in which abstract elements were accentuated. Landscapes in particular were made during summers at seashores in wat-

ercolor form, then developed and refined into major compositions in oil paint during the winters in his studio.

Knowing his close relationship with some of the major painters working in abstract forms, one can see stylistic affinities with paintings upstairs in the Michener Gallery from the concurrent exhibit entitled, *American Painterly Abstraction*. The most obvious is William Bazziotes' *Mariner*, 1960-61, with its strict horizontal separating sea and sky, the scumbled paint, simplified forms and soft colors. But there are similarities in other paintings here, including Gottlieb's characteristic image.

MANY OF AVERY'S landscapes present an interesting high vantage points and extremely subtle color. Three are tightly composed and also evoke mood: *"Green Seascape," "Grey Rocks, Black Sea"* and *"Sand Dunes and Yellow Sky."* However, others have large areas where the paint quality does not adequately support the drawing of shapes as defining space. Also, the shapes themselves tend to have a casual and uninteresting form.

One wonders not so much about Avery's reputation and position in the history of American painting as about the total quality of this particular assemblage of his paintings.

Sunday, February 6, 1977

2 photography exhibits present time contrasts

By MARY MCINTYRE

Special to The American-Statesman

Two exhibits of photographs in the traditional balliwicks of the graphic arts present in one an historical survey and in the other a contemporary aesthetic experience.

Pioneer Photographers of Brazil is the title for 150 prints dating from 1840 to 1920, upstairs in the Michener Gallery, Harry Ransom Building, 21st and Guadalupe. Representing the 1840 date are two daguerrotypes produced only a year after Louis Daguerre's process had been made public in Paris. These are tiny, barely discernible views of Rio de Janeiro.

THREE PORTRAITS in oil over photographic emulsion and dating in the 1860s demonstrate two points: the early competition of photography and painting, and oil paint as a way of making permanent the possibly facing image of the photograph.

The interaction of early photography and the graphic arts is also represented by lithographs of Brazilian scenes made in France in the late 1850s from the photographs of Victor Frond. His photographs were intended to be reproduced through lithography as this was a considerably less expensive process than making large editions from the original negatives.

Active from the mid 1860s to 1923 Marc Ferrez was the most outstanding of the second generation of Brazilian photographers. He was born in Brazil, educated in France, and returned to France for equipment after his Brazilian studio burned in 1873.

The range of Ferrez' photographs include portraits of the royal family, some *cartes de visites* of street vendors for the tourist trade, and documentary photographs of the dedication of a railroad tunnel, the deserted shipping vessels during the yellow fever epidemic, and Siamese twins with their physician.

HOWEVER, THE GREATER quantity of his

production was in views of the countryside and plantation life. It was through this area of subject matter combined with technical experimentation that Ferrez produced prints of high artistic quality and considerable variety.

His pioneering photographs of the Brazilian landscape correspond in time with the work of a number of Americans recording the natural phenomena of the West. Though Ferrez printed from large negatives, they were not so large as the 20-by-24-inch glass plates carried by William Henry Jackson on a trip to the Rocky Mountains in 1875.

Marc Ferrez' arresting studies are beautifully composed with an exquisite tonal range. Notable are one of the prints of Flechas Beach (c. 1870), the *Slaves on a Coffee Plantation*, interiors with Countess d'Eu (1880s), and the street scene of people in front of a theater advertising a Tom Mix movie, circa 1918.

PRINTS BY THE OTHER photographers don't rank so highly, but there are some interesting anomalies. One such is *The Thirty Valerios* (c. 1890) by Valerio Viera, showing his own body in 26 different positions — giving a concert on several instruments, being in the audience 14 times — plus his head in three framed portraits and on a marble bust.

In a different gallery setting contemporary color prints by Jim Bones present high technical expertise, and design from a 1977 contest.

The Southwest Center for Photography, upstairs at 17th and Lavaca, is showing Bones' prints made from original transparencies, but printed through three separate filters, known as a dye transfer process.

His preferred composition involved all-over texture: images of leaves and grasses, bubbles and leaves imprisoned in ice, bark and shell fungi. Seldom is there a horizontal line; the camera is usually directed at a very slight angle; tonal textures. Through this kind of composition Bones creates with realism a decided relationship to much contemporary abstract painting.

His clarity of image and precision in the complex printing requiring precise registration are admirable. The one complaint is that in a few prints the colors have an artificial quality not fitting the image.

Sunday, February 13, 1977

Hearts theme for gallery

By MARY MCINTYRE

Special to The AmericanStatesman

Doors opened in three noninstitutional galleries this week to new displays of contemporary art in an assortment of mediums.

The light-hearted exhibit of crafts on the theme of "Hearts" by regional artisans at Kerbey Lane Gallery brings imagination and skill to the ubiquitous Valentine's Day symbol.

Beautiful as table sculpture are the burnished and evocative ceramic hearts by Paulina van Bavel Kearney. These come placed on handwoven pouches of mohair and wool colored with natural dyes of cochineal, madder, indigo and agarita. This new collaboration of two of Austin's top craftsmen, Kearney with weaver Ann Matlock, is fortuitous. Each imbues her craft with an elegance and feeling beyond the simply functional.

ALSO OF REFINEMENT and humor are the porcelain hearts with pearlized glazes by Dallas artist Charlotte Seawalt.

Stylized drawings of couples gesturing toward each other by Amado Pena are valentines of a sort, especially the one of a child serving tea to her

grandmother. Note Pena's colored silkscreen adaptation of an etching by Guadalupe Posada.

Using the chemicals from blueprint preparation, Barbara Hewitt has come up with some interesting designs on garments. The fabric is coated with light-sensitive chemicals; then leaves and grasses or lace is placed on top and the whole exposed to sunlight. This produces the negative effect of a white design on soft blue.

THE PAINTINGS and stuffed creatures by Nancy Lou Owen at Pecan Square Gallery unite a craft with the traditional definition of art. Fantasy on the knight-princess-dragon stories permeate the imagery and coloring of Owen's work. Colors in the acrylic paintings on canvas are pastel, forms are flat and dependent on line or a firm edge for definition.

The combination of canvas stuffed in a heart shape and attached to a stretched rectangular canvas with images painted on both surfaces is consistent with her fairytale concept. *Hearts and Flowers* has a scene of a girl in a field covered with flowers under a blooming tree, all painted on the stuffed heart, with a green and silver field edged in pink on the canvas behind.

Robert Fainter's fantasies in the same gallery are headily whimsical and present an intense and welcome contrast. In his colored drawings and acrylic paintings he uses a middle-aged man, clothed, and juxtaposed against a grid or other geometric forms. Rhinoceri, an elephant, birds enter some of the images. The large animals symbolize man's passions; the birds his yearning for freedom.

Fainter graphically projects contemporary man's dilemmas and tensions.

In *Hatted Bobolink* the bird flies easily. The man wears the hat with a sad, clownlike white face, and a gesture of spread fingers implies his effort at flight.

Family Ties shows a man with several large neckties flying about his neck and with his hands held in a prayerlike position. This is placed against a black background with barely discernible black bars. Ties bind and their is acceptance, perhaps imprisonment.

Fainter's draftsmanship is deft, and his placement of the few elements used is well done. His figures are shaded and realistic. The sharp outline of his figures provides the "cut-out" element which unites them to the flat backgrounds.

Geometric compositions with linear perspective is the basis for a display of serigraphs by Brian Halsey at Gallery Ravel.

Made from cut film stencils, the images give the effect of floating blocks having just come out of similarly proportioned holes. His variations on the same theme are impressive as is the glowing sense of light.

Weddington bill allots more funds to local arts

By MARY MCINTYRE

Special to The American-Statesman

URGENT: Call Rep. Chris Semos, 475-2095, early Monday morning if you support Rep. Sarah Weddington's proposal for city funding for the arts.

It will be read Monday in the Committee on Business and Industry, which Semos chairs. There are two conflicting bills to be considered by the same committee.

Weddington's House Bill 331 proposes an optional increase in the hotel occupancy tax from the current 3 per cent to 4 per cent, the additional 1 per cent to be used "only for the encouragement, promotion, improvement, and application of the arts in the city in which the collections are made. The arts include music (instrumental and vocal), dance, drama, folk art, creative writing, architecture, design and allied fields, painting, sculpture, photography, graphic and craft arts, motion pictures, television, radio, tape and sound recording, and the arts related to the presentation, perform-

ance, execution, and exhibition of these major art forms."

The estimated additional local revenue generated by this tax would amount to \$193,190 in Austin in 1978, \$439,702 in San Antonio, and \$1,163,504 in Houston.

The current "bed tax" of 3 per cent prohibits use for the arts, and is used in Austin this year as follows: 5/6ths for convention buildings and maintenance (City Auditorium and Coliseum), and the remaining 1/6th for the promotion of tourism and conventions through the Chamber of Commerce, plus an additional \$50,000 for tourism joint ventured through the Mexican-American Chamber of Commerce.

The only Texas state funds used for the arts is the \$327,046 allocated to the Texas Commission on the Arts and Humanities. This represents a funding of 2.5 cents per capita, and puts Texas 51 among the states and territories in money spent

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WEDDINGTON

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on the arts.

Weddington's goal is to put special recognition on the need of a thriving art community to which people travel for cultural events, and provide funding for the arts within that community.

In conflict is Lance Lator's H.B. 298, which keeps the hotel occupancy tax at 3 percent, but adds that some of it may be used for the arts as defined in Weddington's bill.

But the Chamber of Commerce and the City of Austin are already using the whole 3 per cent for tourist facilities. Thus Lator's bill pits the arts against maintenance of the City Auditorium and the Chamber of Commerce promotion activities.

Semos' legislation, H.B. 794, al-

lows the increase of the hotel occupancy tax to 4 per cent, but ties that 1 per cent increase "for the purpose of advertising and conducting solicitation programs to acquaint potential users with public meeting and convention facilities and for promotion of tourism and advertising of the city and its vicinity."

There is no provision for the arts in Semos' bill.

Arts are an integral part of tourism. Check the registration at museums, the purchasers of tickets for the opera season in San Antonio, for the ballet in Houston, and cultural events in other cities.

Weddington's proposal is optional for the cities, but it makes possible a considerable increase in funds for

the arts. In Austin the anticipated amount is well above the total allocated by the City Council to the arts from its current budget.

If Weddington's bill makes it out of the committee Monday, call Tuesday for the bill's status, 475-3026, and date of the House vote. Then write each member of the committee, Chris Semos, Tony Polumbo, Ken Vaughn, Charles Fennell, Tony Garcia, Ernestine Glossbrenner, Danny Hill, Douglas McLeod, Pete Patterson, Paul Ragsdale and Irma Rangel.

18th, 19th century French art displayed

By MARY McINTYRE

Special to The American Statesman

Rarely among the varied exhibitions provided through museums in Austin is there the opportunity to view French art of the 18th and 19th centuries.

Portrait drawings and figure studies by Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres (1780-1867), with an accompanying group of French 18th century drawings and prints are upstairs at the Huntington Gallery, The University of Texas Art Building. They were brought here in conjunction with courses being taught by the eminent Ingres scholar, Dr. Agnes Mongan.

Exquisite in detail and expressive rendering, the small-scaled graphite drawings represent the artistic development of Ingres from the earliest, drawn at age 26, to a late study done when in his 60s.

One grouping of the drawings are of completed portrait commissions not done as studies for paintings — for which the sitter posed two hours in one morning and two in the afternoon. These begin with the portrait of a friend and fellow artist, M. Naudet, in 1806. With a sharply pointed pencil Ingres captures the man's rugged character through the informal crossed-leg pose, curling unruly hair, arched brows and smile.

A magnifying glass is useful in assessing the fineness of the cross-hatching employed by Ingres to model facial features. He used no smudging.

In later drawings, Ingres employed a softer pencil, and was able to achieve expression with less meticulous rendering.

His portrait drawing style was to detail and shade the heads, and treat the garments in a more abbreviated

form, with linear symbols for pattern.

Ingres' work projects the appearance of reality, yet utilizes exaggeration, and alteration for compositional purposes from his artistic heritage of neo-classicism. The portrait of Mille Vernet, in particular, has an elongated neck, dropped shoulders, and repetition of an underlying oval shape in the head, eyes, sleeves, and spatially in the curved arms crossed at the waist.

These drawings were executed on the finest handmade "wove" paper, composed of shredded rags interlaced and dried between felt pads, providing a smooth surface similar to parchment.

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His studies for paintings, hung as another group, show varied conceptual emphasis: compositional placement of several figures, study of alternative hand positions in a portrait, detail of an elaborate column, position studies of male torsos on horseback.

The 18th century drawings and prints demonstrate the variety of materials used and the various purposes of such images of the Rococo period. They include works by Antoine Watteau, Francois Boucher and many lesser known artists.

There is a drawing of arabesque tendrils

for an architectural embellishment, studies for silverware and garden sculpture, detailed illustrations for books, landscapes and portraits.

One garden scene was executed in opaque watercolor (gouache) by Louis Belanger as a "Design for a Monument to Voltaire in Beaumarchais' Garden." The monument, which was never built, was a huge globe of the world surmounted by a winged torchbearer. It is depicted in the customary exaggerated Rococo scale, in an idyllic garden and lake setting, complete with tiny ladies,

gentlemen and servants.

A red chalk drawing of an Italian Villa is a "counterproof," a mirror image produced by running the original through a printing press while overlaid with another sheet of paper.

The curator of the exhibition, Dr. Agnes Mongan, is director emerita of Harvard's Fogg Art Museum. She commented that she didn't know of a single Ingres or Watteau drawing in Texas. "I think this great state ought to get one. They are still available on the market," she said.

'Homage to the Bag' stimulating exhibit

By MARY McINTYRE

Special to The American-Statesman

The liveliest current craft display is "Homage to the Bag" at Laguna Gloria Art Museum, which presents a titillating selection of utilitarian bags from exotic and past cultures, plus the wildly imaginative versions created by contemporary American craftsmen.

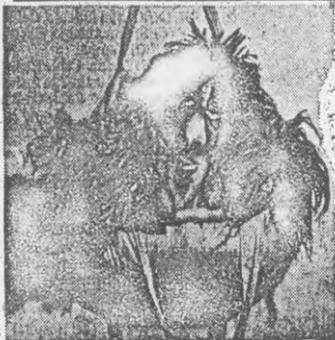
The packaging and installation of the exhibition, with peripheral materials such as a slide show and large-scale photo reproductions of assorted people with their bags, is part of the bombardment of the senses experienced in many museum displays across the country. This is relatively new here. Although Laguna has done some stimulating installations recently, they haven't previously hung a complete ceiling with bags, simul-

taneously utilizing floor and wall space.

The exhibition began in New York at the Museum of Contemporary Crafts, probably as a "theme" show for craftsmen. But before it went on tour, four major museums and four commercial companies — producers or marketers of bags or their materials — and two major arts councils had participated and augmented the historic portion.

Laguna's display begins with two rooms of late 19th and early 20th century bags from France, Alaska, China, India, Panama, Mexico, New Guinea and Colombia among other countries and cultures. Speculation on the function of the various bags and mystic properties of the designs,

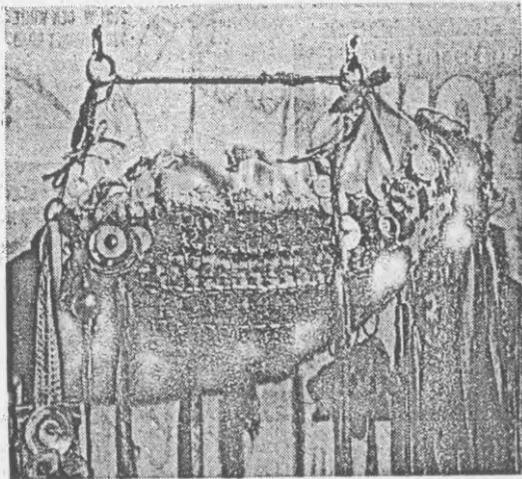
(See BAG, Page 21)



Staff Photo by Larry Murphy

SATCHEL OF GRIS-GRIS

By Lesley Jean Goldberg



Staff Photo by Larry Murphy

BICENTENNIAL BAG (1975)

By Mario Rivoli

BAG

(Continued from Page 19)

which must have existed in certain cultures, is not enhanced by the labels, for which we fault the researcher and curator credited in the catalog.

A local connoisseur of Chinese art offered an interpretation of the symbols embroidered in the long silk purse from China. The peonies, butterflies, and bats symbolize happiness. Symbols on the ribbons around the purse mean longevity and serenity. The endless knot design stands for fidelity. Taken together, the qualities symbolized suggest that the purse was a bridal gift.

The visual dynamics of the contemporary section of bags far overshadows the historic. The explosion of imagination and craft ability, the dynamic freedom of mid-20th century American culture is evident.

Though a few modern bags borrow from the historic styles, such as feathers dangling from the bottom related to an Indian bag, and some woven

designs, this section of the exhibition carries the bag concept far beyond utility. The term sculpture could be applied to several that project into or enclose space: some forming body parts in heavy leather, stuffed fabric bags with heads or in satin resembling sandwiches, a grouping of paper bags on the floor containing pre-Columbian weights of the ends of strings attached to the ceiling, a lithograph of a landscape printed inside a torn bag and set on a pedestal. The sequential aspect of much recent painting and sculpture is also employed in several pieces.

This is a show for everyone. The experience of bags is universal: we were born from within them. An immediate and effortless affinity with this exhibition is provided by our having utilized bags in daily life. Other aspects of enjoyment such as knowledge of past and primitive cultures, and delight in contemporary visual play then take over to whatever degree the viewer is interested.

Exhibit shows quality of Frary's

By MARY McINTYRE
Special to The American-Statesman

Watercolor is Michael Frary's lifelong favored medium; and the current exhibition at Pecan Square Gallery provides examples of his cumulative years of proficiency and excellence. Exhibiting with his father is Mark Frary, who has achieved style in darkly handsome raku pots.

Michael Frary's development of watercolor technique stems from his training in California both as a college student and member of the California Watercolor Society in the 1940s. It also suits his character, providing him with an easily transportable, rapid method of expressing an immediate visual reaction to the world.

Even in 1950, as a student on the GI Bill in the Academie de la Grande Chaumiere in Paris, Frary would frequently sign into the oil painting class and disappear to paint watercolors out of doors. Through the years he has carried watercolor equipment on trips, where he documents and translates with rapidity his reactions.

The watercolors in the exhibition are highly skilled in a way that is only possible through years of constant practice. They are varied in the method of applying paint and in the dynamics of composition — as well as subject — yet retain the recognizable Frary use of strong pattern.

Currently professor of art at the University of Texas, Frary was not

always permitted to teach watercolor. For a period beginning in the 1950s, when Abstract Expressionism was dominant, watercolor was downgraded as being associated with representational work, and being limited in size due to the paper vehicle and glass framing.

Frary, the artist, was also affected by this attitude. Though he never abandoned watercolor, a large block of his work in the late 1950s into the 1960s represents experimentation with other media: tapestry designs, mosaic murals and acrylic paintings involving elements predominantly abstract.

At the current exhibition are two tapestry designs and a small section of his abstract work in both dense

watercolors

acrylics and in watercolor. More simplified than the representational watercolors, these paintings present an interesting comparison of the function of the artist's mind when inventing forms versus the subtle and complex response to the direct experience of nature in the watercolors.

In both types a similar stylistic character prevails: a basic underlying structure involving accentuation of horizontals and verticals, and pattern in the form of repeated but varied markings or images.

THE WATERCOLORS are grouped into those done for the book, "Impression of the Big Thicket" in 1972, those done at Port Aransas in the mid 1970s and several painted for the forthcoming book on the Panhandle. These book commissions are an ideal challenge for Frary's skill and interests. He has spent a year on each, traveling to locations seeking typical as well as unusual sites, and perfecting the image back in his home studio.

His vocabulary of composition includes several paintings which give the effect of a dense screen either of foliage and tree trunks, or boat masts. There are others defining deep space, with a straight horizon line, and the effect of sunlight as a unifying element. Some have centered mesas of a monumental proportion, and one places the spectator within a cave looking out.

He prefers transparent watercolor, employing the paper for his whites, but also works with opaque colors and white paint.

THE WORLD has rewarded Michael Frary's skill and power of visual communication with over 100 one man shows, 60 awards, and works in the collections of 40 museums and public buildings.

Mark Frary's pots have an expressive quality due to the large scale and irregular finish of a spontaneously applied appearance.

The raku method accounts for some of this character. As the pots are withdrawn from intense heat in the kiln, they are put into organic matter which imparts color in its chemical reaction with the clay and heat. These pots have handsome irregularities, encrustations, contrast of dull surfaces with sheen.

The "chicken" pot in particular conveys humor, but also a symbolic and sculptural character, while remaining in the tradition of expressionism.

Photography exhibit striking

By MARY McINTYRE

Special to The American Statesman

"Photography's latest preoccupation is trying to find itself in ordinary pictures." William Wilson, *Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 7, 1976.

To some extent, ordinary subject and straight photographic methods are what characterize Austin photography in the works of most of the seven photographers exhibiting at Bradford's Upstairs Gallery. Yet they differ.

All but one of the photographers are working in black and white, presenting moderately sized prints matted in white, unframed and covered with glass. These six have had a student or faculty relationship to the University of Texas Department of Journalism.

The maverick in this exhibition is Henry Holley who has worked on lighting and production in movies, and is a wildlife photographer. His color prints of tigers, foxes and a baboon resemble advertisements for color and film quality. In comparison to the simple presentation of the others, his photographs are on canvas textured paper, large in scale, and are framed in gold and velvet — the old imitation of painting idea.

But more engaging and witty are the animal photographs by Ava Bonar. The puppy in a sweater being pulled by a string and surrounded by arms and legs is a delightful commentary on the relationship of animals and humans, and is also well composed. The chicken being ejected from a mailbox by a rancher, is another of her series on the theme. As she has managed to compose without superfluous imagery; her focus is on the elements which say something.

Group scenes with emphasis on spectatorship characterizes Bill Record's populated prints. His people react to unseen events which are implied by their glances, gestures and apparel.

Two of the photographers are using 4-inch-by-5-inch view cameras for scenes without people. The works of both Frank Armstrong and Frank Tilley impart a timeless repose, a still, penetrating image that captures more than the eye would see, within an exquisitely composed format.

Frank Armstrong's landscapes project his pleasure in what the camera is capable of registering: the subtle tonal range and precision of definition. His two closeup prints, some of rocks in sand, and one of a simple faucet and drinking jar against a white wooden wall reflect fine art concerns.

Frank Tilley has done photodocumentary work for the Witte Museum in San Antonio on the old Lone Star Brewery. His nearly contact-sized

prints are all of architecture. He favors a frontal approach to documentation of the structure or interior space, utilizing natural lighting to delineate architectural elements or make subtle modulations on the walls.

Texas country folk scenes, art nude arrangements, a portrait, and closeups of the detritus of civilization in the form of old tires and a worn wooden gate are Casey Ennis' entries.

The most gripping photographs for their action on the spectator on several levels are the series on transvestites by Harry Boyd. In projecting the universal through the particular, the solitary figure of the beautifully feminine head, made-up, and with wig on the slender bare male torso is remarkable. It speaks to the pretensions and fantasies inherent in all of us, and to the reality which we know.

Antwerp exhibit a look at past

Great, lesser masters in Michener display

By MARY McINTYRE

Reality, fantasy, religion and pomp provide themes for a glimpse into European history of the 16th to 17th centuries in *Antwerp Drawings and Prints*, circulated by the Smithsonian Institution and on view upstairs at the Michener Galleries.

At the time these images were produced, Antwerp was one of the five greatest cities in Europe. Situated on the seacoast as part of the Netherlands, her boom came as a trading center, dealing in spices, textiles and banking. As many as 2,500 ships anchored at a time, with 500 of these sailing in a day.

FROM A POPULATION of 100,000, the number of artists registered with the artists' Guild of Saint Lucas was over 1 per cent. A few were great. If there is any doubt about the power of images by a great master, the few in this exhibition by Rubens, van Dyke and Jordaens convey qualities the others just don't have, for all their skill.

The pictures by both the great and lesser masters give us a sense of the times. Many are crowded with people, conveying the quality of peasant life through games, dancing, eating, quarreling, and harassment by soldiers. There are also portraits, Bible illustrations, allegories and numerous landscapes.

PRINTMAKING WAS an industry in itself, in demand for book illustration, maps, city views and as wall adornment of less expense than paintings. The great German artist, Albrecht Durer, had as his principal objective during a visit to Antwerp in 1520 the marketing of his prints. So, it is not surprising to find in this collection engraved copies of two of Durer's prints, acknowledged by a master printer and dated in the year he executed them, not the year Durer first produced them.

This kind of copying was an accepted practice, and the exhibition has many adaptations after original paintings or prints by renowned artists such as Hieronymus Bosch, Peter Bruegel the Elder, and Peter Paul Rubens. An engraver specialized in incising the design on copper and infrequently originated his own design, thus limiting himself to the highly skilled role of reproduction.

WHERE ENGRAVING required mastery of mechanical skills, etching with acid allowed more spontaneity and was used by painters on occasion. Some of the images appealing most to today's viewer are etchings: two portraits by van Dyke, the study of St. Catherine of Alexandria by Rubens, and dog studies by Joannes Fyt.

WHILE THESE images have qualities which transcend the centuries, so many of the other prints are of interest because of their stylistic peculiarities representing the age: Northern Gothic angularity, mannerist forms, and bizarre imagery derived from Hieronymus Bosch.

As opposed to the prints, the drawings had different functions. They were a by-product of painting, usually produced by painters as a means of studying or composing the subject. The most expressive of these is "Adam and Eve being expelled from Paradise" by Anthony van Dyke.

Others were done as designs for tapestries — as were the two ink, gouache and chalk studies by Jacob Jordaens — or as detailed renderings to be executed in stained glass.

LANDSCAPES predominate in the late 16th and early 17th centuries. These were done in an Italianate manner, and give a wealth of information about the Flemish countryside, houses and methods of transporting people and goods.

It's not an exciting show, or a first rate show, but it holds interest for the quality of graphic art done in a long-gone time and a place about one-third the size of Austin.

Sunday, April 3, 1977

Laguna Gloria exhibit a different concept of art

By MARY McINTYRE
Special to The American-Statesman

Down with art
Down with
bourgeois intellectualism
Art is dead
— Dada slogans, Berlin, 1919

Dada's nihilistic spirit infuses its grandchildren's current exhibition at Laguna Gloria Art Museum.

Black, white, minimal and verbal, the works of four artists — three of them with international exhibition records — shake up the ordinary assumptions about what is art.

Ed Ruscha and Joe Goode are based in Los Angeles, and have exhibited together before. They are showing works on paper made by dusting and rubbing in dark gray charcoal, pastel, or gunpow-

der around stencils, and then removing the stencils.

Ruscha's stencils were all capital block letters composing short phrases that were positioned in the center of the paper (usually). The white against black letters remaining have the character of adolescent word games, like speaking out the first phrase that comes to mind. In the exhibition are: *She's no slouch, gimme that gate pass, a heavy shower of screws, it's curtains.*

Ruscha called them "Just my personal wanderings. I don't owe the world a work of art . . . It is an expedient method of seeing what was in my mind to begin with."

A few of these letters on paper have a residue on pictorial quality carried over from his training and practice as a visual artist. *Those of us who have double parked* has a shaded, streaked background resembling light rays in a religious painting. It may appear as a message from God, when actually it is a nonsensical statement.

In this regard he is making a minor philosophi-

cal statement about the loss of conventional values.

Though also black and white and using stencils, Joe Goode's work is nonverbal, and definitely pictorial. He has used a device from a previous series of cloud paintings, which were done in layers, with the top layer torn and pierced revealing the under layer.

Here he has used the torn and pierced papers as stencils, held with masking tape tabs to another paper, and then dusted with pastel which is rubbed in. With the stencil removed, what remains is a negative image of what was there.

His works have an elegance which Austin painter Yee Jan Bao described as, "Commercial and clean, the L.A. look." They have the done-in-the-mid-1970s-abstract-art-a-pearance in the central image, minimal elements, floating and the very slightly funky tears and tape marks. This he combines with evidence of his formal art training in the variation of elements from one work to another in the series.

On the way upstairs at Laguna, Robert McCurdy displays black and white photographs which fit in well with the anti-art character of the other exhibitions. He conforms, generally, to the snapshot esthetic in the apparently random character of his subject choice, and compositions, and the blurred image and washed-out tones.

However, his typed statement on the wall includes a poetic description of his relationship to an old man. This, taken with the group of photographs of dead animals on the highway, indicates a pathos in his makeup which is subversive to his otherwise casual attitude toward subject and technique.

By far the most difficult artist to deal with, and the one presenting a profound statement against conventional art concepts is Lawrence Weiner.

Few will enter the environment he has arranged in the room upstairs without a reaction varying from puzzlement, to outrage, to the impression of visiting a sanctuary of an alien culture.

The room is square, white walled, windowless, with one doorway, one bench in the center, dimly lit with spotlights illuminating the message composed of black plastic letters on the walls. There is an 11-track tape running, which intones in gentle male voices in both Spanish and English, accompanied by guitar music: "My house is your house, my house, your house, their house. The artist may construct the work, the work may be fabricated. The work need not be built. Each being equal and consistent with the intent of the artist, the decision as to condition rests with the received upon the occasion of receivership."

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The wall message reads: "Rested Upon Quite Heavily Within a Probability of Collapse. (i.e. a corner stone)." This is also intoned in the tape, followed by, "A reasonable assumption would be . . ." (parts unintelligible).

Weiner is a trained philosopher and linguist, has worked as an artist making paintings, and earth sculpture, but is more interested in ideas than the material forms they take. He said this statement at Laguna Gloria is about architecture, and that anybody can understand it if they just take an interest in it.

This stuff is art: because it is conceived by man, stated to be art, set apart as art, and displayed in

the places reserved for art. The things in this exhibition also have no other function.

It violates basic anticipations about seeing art in a museum setting, because it violates basic conventional values. As such, it is anti-art. It is part of a strong movement in the 20th century made apparent in the visual art world by the group of artists who conceived Dada in 1916.

Nihilism is substantiated by philosophers and writers going back to Pascal in the 17th century, Dostoyevsky, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Sartre, Hemingway, Marcuse, Sontag and many others. It presents a movement in the art scene that is currently of great magnitude.

Photography, cartoon exhibits

By MARY McINTYRE

Special to The American-Statesman

Whether our sympathies are more easily affected by the "reality" of the camera, or by the drawings of political cartoonists may be gauged by reactions to two exhibitions at the Michener Galleries, 21st and Guadalupe, University of Texas campus.

Upstairs are documentary photographs by the Farm Securities Administration 1935-1942, and downstairs has 200 years of American cartoons and caricatures. Both shows are made up of reproductions of sorts (reprints from the original negatives or photoduplicated drawings), that are now enlarged for our viewing benefit in a contemporary gallery space.

FOR FULL comprehension, most of the images require words, whether in title cards on the wall as with the photographs, or labels on the figures and balloons containing phrases issuing from mouths in the cartoons. The total message doesn't just stand on its pictorial base. It needs names, a descriptive line, a little story. Maybe this is always the case with propaganda.

The photographs were made during the Depression to document American life and culture. They are a selection from the 270,000 made by a few photographers working for the FSA, and include prints by major photo artists Walker Evans, Dorothy Lange, and Russell Lee.

The documentary photograph seeks to arouse an attitude in the viewer while conveying information. In doing so it uses traditional art devices of emphasis and composition. It has also been termed propaganda, with justification, as these photographs were disseminated to newspapers and periodicals for the purpose of persuading Americans that the poor needed federal programs of assistance.

IN SOME of the images anxiety and the message of poverty are conveyed without the accompanying words. These often tend to be by Dorothy Lange and Russell Lee. However, when taken out of the context of the verbal statement beside them many others could be interpreted differently than the intent.

The photograph by Dorothy Lange of a farmer playing with two children and a dog, could be taken as simply a farmer relaxing with his family, rather than: "Destitute Family Camped along the American River. The Family Includes Five Children, Ranging in Age from Two to Seventeen Years. The Father is Penniless. The Children are Hungry. The Father says that the Works Progress Administration Refuses to Give Him Work until He Returns to Tuolumne County, California. He Refuses to Return Because . . ."

With the verbiage, the message in the picture moves us. We see the real family to whom this has happened.

JUST ORDINARY people of varying economic levels were also selected as subjects from the files of the FSA in the Library of Congress. They are seen playing, eating, waiting in dressed-up finery.

One such by Russell Lee is a masterwork in declaring the kind of people and the quality of their lives. Called "FSA Clients at Home" 1939, it depicts a standing radio of art deco style centered between a fat woman

(See next page)

Lesson in propaganda

man wearing a hairnet and seated in an upholstered rocking chair, and her skinny husband in his chair. Above the altar-like radio is a fake tapestry — or painting on velvet — of 18th century bewigged aristocrats enjoying music.

"The Image of America in Caricature and Cartoon" downstairs consists entirely of drawn images projecting political attitudes. Words are usually important to the message and are often included within the drawing itself.

A TOWERING, gaunt figure in worn clothes labeled "unemployed" looks down at the bureaucrats one-tenth his size in a moving drawing by William Gropper (1930), illustrating the immense number of people out of work.

Daniel Fitzpatrick's cartoon of shanties labeled "Hooverville," (1935) with a seated elephant in the center and the title "You Know the Way Back Do You, Herbert?" is a clear message of Hoover's responsibility and failure to meet the basic social needs and the political effects.

In the cartoons there is no ambiguity in attitude. The artists obviously manipulate the elements of exaggeration, composition, simplicity, drama, and strive toward a quick impact.

BOTH THE PHOTOGRAPHS with labels and the drawings are moving, but which is more convincing?

The photograph, because the film blindly records everything that is within range of the camera; therefore, we think the image presents truth.

Also, there is more information — less simplification — and the viewer believes he is free to make his own judgment.

We are conditioned to regard such a mechanical process as being real and artless, when actually the purposes and attitudes developed in documentary photographs for the FSA and those in the political cartoons differ only in subject and degree of propaganda.

Artists try cooperative gallery

By MARY McINTYRE

Special to The American Statesman
Austin's newest art place is a cooperative gallery at 607 Trinity, which provides local artists the possibility of participating in a kind of utopian experiment.

Trinity House Gallery is the brainchild of Vicki Teague-Cooper and Barbara Sturgill who set the general outline of membership and exhibitions scheduling, and provided the organizing initiative.

The original 30 artist members were selected from applicants on the stated basis of "high standards" in "contemporary and experimental work."

Their exhibition inaugurated the gallery with art that is predominantly abstract, frontal and textured, with concepts both humorous and serious. There are a few figurative pieces, some drawings and prints, some sculptural pottery, stained glass panels, and a conceived-on-the-spot column decorated with billowing newsprint paper, neon tubes, stuffed chicken, and other assorted funk.

A minimal monthly fee is charged to members to cover rent and publicity, and the small commission on sales goes back into the gallery oper-

ation. There is no stipulation of exclusivity of contract, and several of the initial members are represented also in other galleries in town.

Gallery hours are noon to 6 p.m. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, and noon to midnight Saturday.

With little preconceived pattern of operation, the group seeks to define itself while in the process of maintaining the gallery, and welcomes input from the larger Austin community.

• • •
The exhibition at the Michener Galleries entitled, "Connections: the Work of Charles and Ray Eames," has been a disappointment.

Anticipated as a major exhibition, it should have been a tribute to the Eames' designing accomplishment of the fine molded plywood chairs, splints and litter in the 1940s, the padded lounge chair in 1956, the movie, "Day of the Dead" about a Mexican celebration, and imaginative toys.

What resulted is a nearly incomprehensible jumble of these elements amid Eames office display projects. As such, it comes off as an example of poor design.

The molded plywood chairs are displayed, but adjacent are many jumpy colored photographs of these chairs and closeups of parts; and in another area on Wednesday and Sunday are films showing again the chairs and closeups of parts. The repetitive bombardment of the senses is enough to prevent observation.

The other quasi-scientific and historical photographic and verbal displays are like big glossy coffee table books cut apart and put on vertical panels, but conveying less information.

Sunday, April 24, 1977

Women's exhibit source of pride, surprise

"When I came in here, I felt an incredible sense of pride that I was a woman, and that women had achieved these fantastically beautiful paintings, despite the logistics of the society they were living in."

Janis Provisor, painter and assistant professor, University of Texas Department of Art.

By MARY MCINTYRE

Every person responding to the superlative exhibition, "Women Artists: 1550-1950," at the Michener Gallery has been stirred by the double surprise of the quality of the work and the extensive ignorance by art history (and therefore the public) of these women and their achievements.

In the statement of what the curators hoped for — "an exhilarating sense of expanded perspective for contemporary women artists" — the last word might just as well have been deleted, as women in

general are finding in this visible evidence of brilliant accomplishment a pride of sisterhood and a questioning of their own career aims.

The myths are falling. Though many women painters represented here from the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries were recognized and acclaimed by their contemporaries, there is still much written evidence of a distinctive put-down by male writers on the grounds that women weren't equipped by nature to paint historical subjects, or that a serious painting career was not suitable for women. One wrote, "The Lord did not endow them properly with the faculty of judgement."

The important catalog was written by the organizers of the exhibition, scholars Anne Southerland Harris and Linda Nochlin. They accepted the leadership for this five year labor as a response to the challenge for equal time and gallery space on the part of women.

Without being a female chauvinist declaration, the Harris and Nochlin book describes and documents the social conditions which grossly restricted women in the opportunity to be trained properly to the extent required of male painters. This would include several years of apprenticeship, a liberal arts education, firsthand knowledge of art of the past by travel to major cities (Rome, especially), and the important study of the nude.

"No proper lady could admit to firsthand knowledge of the appearance of the naked male body," Harris writes concerning the Renaissance. Although by the 18th century, the number of documented women artists had increased from 10 in the Renaissance to 300, and some were admitted to the Academies, no woman could attend life drawing classes.

The effective way to break, at least to a degree, the barriers for adequate training was for a talented girl to have an artist for a father. Most women artists before the 19th century were the daughters of artists. Those who married often married artists as well.

As an impressive experience of the history of painting, the exhibition stands on its own without regard to its theme.

Though many large paintings could not be borrowed for the exhibition, and some which were shown in Los Angeles — where the exhibition opened — were not loaned for further travel, a major painting by Artemisia Gentileschi is here, measuring nearly 100 inches in height.

The finest of her works now in Austin is the precocious painting of "Susanna and the Elders," done when she was 17, in Rome, only a year after

after she began her career. The composition is masterful, and Susanna recoils in a psychologically believable way, her body not becoming primarily an excuse for showing off the female nude.

Portraiture was a more acceptable subject for a woman painter's career, and fine examples abound, from miniatures to a large-scale full-length portrait of a man in armor.

A number of women painters of

several nationalities concentrated on still life during the 17th and 18th centuries. Although held in lower esteem, this subject didn't present women the problems of training for multifigured compositions.

This landmark exhibition and catalog were sponsored by the Ford Foundation and the Alcoa Foundation. Considering its revelations and the high character of much of the work, art history will be expanded. First of two parts on "Women Artists: 1550-1950"

Women artists did not just copy movements

By MARY McINTYRE

Women artists kept pace with the forces of historical development, matching movements known through the work of men, their lives frequently intertwined with those of their male counterparts as intellectual companions, wives, students, and lovers.

But were they originators? A casual glance at the 19th and 20th century portions of "Women Artists: 1550-1950" reveals familiar names and images: the celebrated Mary Cassatt, the pathos of Kathe Kollwitz, Georgia O'Keefe's early abstract studies.

These women achieved distinctive styles, substantially contributing to the larger movements of Impressionism, Expressionism. But how to label O'Keefe? As one of the "pioneers of American modernism," states the "History of Modern Art."

In the 19th century some of the women artists were as sentimental as many of the men. Eleanor Siddal, the inspiration, model, mistress, and later wife of the celebrated Pre-Raphaelite Dante Gabriel Rossetti, has here a small gouache and pastel just as illustrative and typical of the movement as his.

Rosa Bonheur was without sentimentality. With authorization by the police to wear men's clothes in 1852, she sketched animals in slaughter houses and horse fairs. Bonheur perfected a luminous and richly textured surface in her outdoor scenes of horses and workmen.

With the numbers of women artists increasing and societal strictures relaxed, the Academies began female membership, and study in life drawing classes.

The Impressionists welcomed both Mary Cassatt and Berthe Morisot into

their group. Not pioneers as was Monet, they yet established styles, with the broken brushwork and light coloring of the group, which involved individual attitudes and facilities. Cassatt's solidly structured yet casually posed mothers and children contrast with the lush brushwork and lighter touch of Morisot's painting.

In limiting her medium to drawings and prints, and her subjects to the laboring poor Kathe Kollwitz became a major Expressionist. She conveyed the universality of suffering through the simple medium of charcoal with an unequaled poignancy.

The last section of the exhibition could surely have been better selected, eliminating the sickly sentimental and unimportant surrealists, and providing better examples of some others who merit inclusion.

But the point this portion makes is that

within its cut-off birth date of 1910, the women were stylistically current whether working in the new Cubism in 1913, as were four Russian artists, or intertwined with a husband's esthetics as were Sonia Delaunay, Sophie Taeuber-Arp, and Tanguy's wife, Kay Sage.

However, the greater achievement resides in independent development within a forceful style: Georgia O'Keefe, the shocking Alice Neel, and the neo-Baroque yet modern Isabel Bishop. These women and some others before them were originators, not of movements, but of concepts which enlarge our vision of life.

This is the second of a two-part review on "Women Artists: 1550-1950" that is on display at the Michener Gallery on the University of Texas campus. It is the first international exhibition of work created by women artists from the Renaissance to the mid-20th century. The exhibit will be at the Michener Gallery through June 12.

Sunday, May 8, 1977

Texas Fine Arts exhibit dominated by realists

By MARY McINTYRE

Special to The American-Statesman

Fully a year and a half ago, critics heralded the return to realism in the New York scene, and now, lo and behold, it dominates the 66th Annual Exhibition of the Texas Fine Arts Association at Laguna Gloria.

It's as if the closet realists during the Abstraction Dominates were playing the old college fad of cramming bodies into small spaces, and have now been released with a vengeance. Not only is abstraction outnumbered by a full 95 to 31, and several of those 31 have landscape orientation, but of the real-life imagery nearly half are landscapes.

SUBDIVIDING the landscapes goes like this: barns, old houses and wharfs (the inherently picturesque) 11; surreal overtones 8; aerial views 5; funky landscape 2 (but there were also funky still life images); and the great remainder were basically land or city images either incorporating abstraction to a degree or making a stance against it.

The establishment of photography as a valid art form and its being honored in the sanctuaries of the traditional fine arts is credited with much of the new realism in painting; but so is the nostalgic aspect, and return to roots, of the Bicentennial.

Photography becomes a challenge. The painted realistic image is valid, the artists seem to say.

AT LEAST THE total forces that pushed painting into abstraction are weakening nationally, and are evident as such in this regional, yet nationally representative show.

Predominately an easel painting exhibition, the competition drew 1,500 entries by slide jurying first in all media including photography, sculpture, prints and crafts from all over the United States. Sifting the volume down to 138 that were culled for direct viewing, plus the 200 regional entries brought in by hand was the job of James Dean, director of the NASA Art Program.

Dean called this a "truly national show," yet he

selected 60 pieces from Texans, and 27 of these were from Austin. It either pays to be able to have your work seen directly, or Dean has a subconscious bias for Texas art, or he really finds it the best.

NEARLY ONE THIRD of the award winners are from Texas, including three from the UT faculty. Applause should be given for the continued participation of top local artists who contribute substantially to the quality of the whole show. In fact, John Guerin's landscape should have had the major prize.

Even with Dean's paring down to 124, the exhibition becomes too crammed in the space of the small museum. What could have been culled are the poor figure works exhibited upstairs, and the weaker examples of other genre.

Realism may be rampant in the TFAA show, but the vitality of abstraction in Austin is far from dead. Across town at the UT Art Students' Exhibition there is an imaginative exploration of new forms of abstraction plus some strong realist work.

Not modified by the sense of taste and salability of the established artist out in the world on a competitive basis, the vigor of the students' work is undeniable and stimulating.

Chicano art reaching new dimensions

By MARY McINTYRE

Special to The American-Statesman

Like Tex-Mex cuisine, Chicano art in Austin has its own flavor, and May is the month in which to savor it.

Generally accepted that Mexicans are innate artists, such inheritance through the Chicanos is no exception. For years, of the three elementary schools granted an art teacher, one was in the Chicano community; and the children's products were received with delight at the annual Wellesley Junior Art Show at Laguna Gloria Art Museum.

Now, with racial, political, and historical awareness comes an art being defined on its own terms, and requiring exhibition where it communicates best: in the Chicano community of East Austin.

The Cinco de Mayo celebration stimulated the Festival Estudiantil Chicano de Arte y Literatura with the visual art and writing by Chicano children displayed at Juarez-Lincoln University. Selections were made from 6,000 entries.

General American themes such as Snoopy and rock music groups were there; but images done with more intensity feel into the pre-Hispanic category, or revolutionary heroes of Mexico, or more potently "Chicano Power": Cesar Chavez, and his symbol. One of the most interesting concerned the theme of boat races on Town Lake, with the boats and riders being fold-out paste-ons, and titled "Challenging City Hall."

A city council meeting aired on the radio brought out the name of Raoul Valdez, a mural artist, who has a project requesting Housing and Community Development funds for four murals in East Austin. The themes would be determined by the community where the mural will go, such as the Santa Rita Housing project, and would be executed in part by the people who live there, in con-

junction with the League of United Chicano Artists (LUCHA).

Valdez already has murals in the stairwell of Juarez Lincoln University, at Metz recreation center, and one on portable panels, which normally resides at the Brown Beret community center, El Centro Chicano.

The most well-known of the Austin Chicano artists is Amado Pena, a member of the Austin Arts Commission, LUCHA, and chairman of the art department of Anderson High School.

It may be success that now moves his work into West Austin, where he currently has a one man show at Kerbey Lane Gallery, though he has exhibited with the street groups and festivals in the Chicano community.

Charmingly derived from folk images, yet recreated as Pena's own, his ink and watercolor scenes appear to be of happy or poignant family

events. Yet on closer look, phrases such as "Viva la Raza" and the Raza Unida symbol appear.

At the UT Student Union Art Gallery, the first week in May, was an exhibit of his serigraphs of 1973 and 1974. As Pena described them, they were "more hard core political, with obvious messages." But also, they were of a different style, portraits of revolutionary heroes with phrases

embedded in the image, like propaganda posters. One showed a head of lettuce bleeding, before the word *huelga*.

His current work is more complex, with depth, a vocabulary of amusing forms, and projecting contentment and happiness. "These are still political," Pena says, "Art is political because it is influencing people to do things."

Projects to unite city artists

Women and Their Work, Arts Symposium set for fall

By MARY McINTYRE

Special to The American-Statesman

Artists unite! The way to power is through organization.

The message and purpose of two citywide symposia being planned is essentially just that. The objective of both is to define and formulate the political strength of the arts in Austin.

BUT WITH THAT statement the similarity

ends, and the differences between the two projects align themselves: in scheduling, expansion beyond the panel discussion portion into performances and exhibitions, and to which sex the concept is applicable.

Women and Their Work is the down to earth title of a festival and six panel discussions for women who are involved in art in Austin and surrounding counties. It's a grassroots effort at exploring aspects of the Women's Movement, with one anticipated outcome in the organization of a support group for women's art work.

Scheduled for Oct. 15 through Dec. 2, the festival has secured Antonia Brico to conduct the Austin Symphony, and a performance by pianist Alicia de la Rocha at the University of Texas. There will be juried visual art exhibitions by regional women at Laguna Gloria Art Museum, Kerbey Lane Gallery and the Southwest Center for Photography. Yet to be determined are poetry readings, dance and drama performances.

TOPICS of the symposia are on the subjects of art businesses run by women, cultural and ethnic roots, the creative process for women artists and female role models in history. Anyone interested in the latter should rush to see the "Women Artists 1550-1950" at the Michener Galleries before it travels to the East coast in mid-June.

Some panelists sought or already secured are outspoken feminists; others are significant workers in their respective art fields: Marcia Tucker, Adrienne Rich, Dorothy Maynor, Judy Chicago and Lucy Lippard.

The primary focus for the festival

as a whole must be quality in art — not race or feminist bias.

WITHOUT THIS, and a broad outreach toward productive women in the art scene who may not be active feminists, the festival won't be either representative or effective.

Information regarding the festival and entry prospectus is being handled by Laguna Gloria Art Museum, 458-B191.

The Arts Symposium in Austin — which has as a goal affecting the populace and city government — was proposed by Richard Orton through the Austin Arts Commission.

ARTS ARE A major business in Austin, yet the volume of people involved in it on a day to day basis is untabulated. How to gather information on art persons and make their combined power and needs known is the problem.

The Arts Commission is applying to the National Endowment for the Arts for a special grant designed specifically "to stimulate and encourage many community interests to come together and explore the ways in which the arts can become an integral part of community life."

The request is for a "facilitator" to come Sept. 7-9 who would assist in establishing the process of organizing the art community. The further objective will be a full symposium representing all the arts in Austin in early spring.

Orton himself has sent letters to persons in the music community and set up a meeting for discussion of their needs and organizational potential. The visual arts portion is being handled by Barbara Sturgill, 459-7536, and Vicky Cooper, 459-0219.

Sunday, June 5, 1977

Laguna Gloria, Westwood preparing expansion plan

By MARY McINTYRE
Special to The American-Statesman

The possibility of Austin's small city art museum expanding into a ready-made facility next door was the imaginative proposal made two years ago by members of the Board of Westwood Country Club to the Laguna Gloria Art Museum (LGAM) Board.

So many things are good about it — for both Westwood, which has become a tennis club not needing the elephantine clubhouse, and Laguna which could use the structure immediately with minor changes — that a probability stage has begun.

THE PROPOSAL involves the clubhouse and 2.8 acres of land, leaving the tennis courts intact. Designed as a public space, not a residence, the structure could at last provide a meeting place for the entire 400 members of the Women's Art Guild, and multiply Laguna's exhibition area five and a half times.

The leadership role of LGAM in the community has expanded enormously under the stimulus of Director Lawrence Miller, his staff, and the art school and programs director, Judith Sims.

Their response to the varied needs of young arts organizations is to provide expertise in grant applications — where and how to apply.

The two symposia mentioned in this column last week are both benefiting by the supporting outreach of the city museum into more than just visual arts. Like a good parent, Laguna gets such fledgling groups started, and then pulls back, when the organization can go on its own.

IT IS NOT surprising that the biggest item in the budget is personnel, and that the exhibition portion is very small. Though personnel take up over 60 per cent of the budgets of all museums in the U.S., the disproportionately small exhibitions budget here has to do with the tiny display space: 1,350 square feet, counting the cramped hallway where photography is shown.

Under Miller, the exhibition program has focused on mainstream American art and 20th century art, as the financial limitations have made these areas most accessible. The 19th century landscape exhibition in 1976 required an inordinate amount of insurance and cost in handling. But it helped LGAM achieve credibility within the museum community, and establish acceptability.

(See LAGUNA, Page 43)

LAGUNA — (Continued)

conditions for further loans.

As a Central Texas museum in the capital city, Miller believes Laguna can come to the forefront with the new facilities in a project of documenting Texas art.

HIS GOAL for the last three years has been to create the energy within the museum management, personnel and trustees, to move into a first rate larger facility.

The Westwood building could provide immediately 7,500 square feet for exhibitions, 10,000 for support services (offices, meeting rooms, storage and handling), 4,000 for mechanical, and the 5,500 balance for the art school and eventual auditorium. Facilities rental for

community groups would provide some earned income.

But it will take community response.

Letters were sent by Ann Butler and Joy Scott to the 300 dormant stockholders of the original Westwood Country Club, requesting donations of the stock to the nonprofit art museum. Such donation provides a \$400 tax deductible contribution at the current market value. So far, over 40 shares have been donated. With the Westwood Racquet Club membership closed and a waiting list, there is little current market for the stock.

CITY FUNDING increase will be the biggest need as an ongoing sup-

port. Austin ranks low in museum funding (either directly or through services) in comparison to the population-museum funding ratio of budgets of other Texas cities. The current Austin funding for Laguna is

17.5 per cent of the budget. Corpus Christi supports its glamorous new Art Museum of South Texas to 19 per cent of its operating budget, with San Antonio contributing to the Witte over 40 per cent.

Sunday, June 12, 1977

Michener's Clarence

Works displayed cover variety

By MARY McINTYRE

Special to The American Statesman

Ever wonder about the artists of fine talent and good ideas who devote their lives to their work and aren't validated by inclusion in history books?

One such is being honored with a traveling retrospective currently at the Michener Gallery (upstairs). Clarence Carter's paintings, drawings, prints, and a few relief constructions span 50 years, from student work to last year, revealing influences, vascillations, yet strength.

Actually, his art is acknowledged in several books, plus the Museum of Modern Art collection in New York, with the most significant book being "Dada, Surrealism, and their Heritage" by William Rubin.

This latter is revealing. His painting is reproduced on the last page of the text with no explanatory verbiage, but implying that Carter is an inheritor of Surrealism; and indeed, the exhibition presents that.

A cursory glance at this exhibition reveals realism, abstraction, surrealism, and a seeming wandering into and out of these categories, the whole beginning and ending with figure paintings which imply mystery.

From early influence of the Precisionists, Carter's work of the 1930 decade is of buildings, factories, and railroads, distilled into carefully edged designs. However, his few portraits of this time push realism into an implication of something more.

In the next decade the "something more" becomes obviously symbolic. The railroad track in "Jane Reed and Dora Hunt" converges into the implied infinity of the night sky, as the backs of the women seem impelled by fate to follow. The white veiled figure of "War Bride" faces the progressive convergence of steel rollers toward her machine spouse to be.

In these it is amazing how effective his use of the backs of clothed and head-covered women

Carter exhibit powerful

of categories over 50 years

is, a theme he returned to in 1976, after periods of digression.

His first abstract ovoid design appears in 1945, not to surface again until the 1960s. But from the 1960s on, the artist pursues the symbolism of the egg shape: as a bald human head, as eyes, as a transparent symbol of man's soul, with a digression into cardboard egg containers glued to a board, and a huge painting of an egg-producing creature.

The most abstract of his major work is the series of Mandalas involving concentric rings in progressively light to dark tones emanating from a circle, and overlapped with transparent ovoids, the whole suspended in a dark field above a horizontal base.

This compelling expansion of a birth symbol

from a point offers a mystery beyond clever optical device.

The ovoid remains in the works of the 1970s but floats above subterranean tombs within open colonades, and with endless space beyond. The images evoke memories of early Renaissance painting in their use of architecture, simple central perspective, and also in the theological implications of suspension between life and death.

Clarence Carter achieved power in his work through his skill as a draftsman and colorist, and through the evolution of archetypal symbols without using specifically religious imagery.

Not a mean accomplishment for a lifetime.

Sunday, June 19, 1977

Humor and philosophy core of 2 exhibitions

By MARY McINTYRE

Special to The American Statesman

For entertainment in this hot month, two exhibitions provide a tickle for the humor vein and a tingle for the feelings, plus a bit of philosophy.

Charming, funny and poignant are the soft sculptures (dolls, in a way) of Dallas artist Junanne Zaner, at Kerbey Lane Gallery. Her theme that human beings deserve to be loved regardless of age or physical imperfection is a winner, but so is the imaginative form she puts it in.

All her stuffed creations are basically of white muslin with faces drawn in the details of aging. They bear appropriate titles and do marvelously funny things. "Mother Had a Hard Time Letting Me Go" has a worn mother's face, and two similar offspring in her eight gripping and dangling hands.

Another fine one is the mother in high heeled slippers in what is otherwise a total and whitely innocuous nudity, with a baby coming out of her zippered stomach.

Too sophisticated to be only children's playthings, Zaner's dolls show all; but the purity of the soft white fabric, and the humor keep it decent.

Shoes, shirts, printed window curtains with ball fringe like large colored reprints from the Sears

catalog blare in harsh colors from the paintings of Bobby McPherson at Trinity House Gallery.

But the title of one set of shoes is "Florsheim Altarpiece," and it is in a traditionally religious — triptyc — form. Then, "Jesus" with hypnotic eyes, and "Virgin and Child of the Roses" jars the spectator from a too casual reading of these paintings resembling photographs.

Yet hardly Photorealism, McPherson's commercial and plasticized imagery is selected for a message relating philosophical concerns to ordinary attitudes about objects.

Humorous they are in the sense of double-take, like the "C.A.F.E. Curtains," which have an apparently casual red print of UFO's on white curtains, opening on a window view of a sky without flying objects. McPherson's personal comment was, "Instead of looking for outside external salvation in day to day life, all people need to do is meditate and see themselves."

The artist has a strong and consistent attitude throughout these paintings representing the work of several past years. It's nice to read meaning in an art form which in the past has been purported to be meaningless. Borrowing from photographs, or catalog prints, yet not pretending to be a mindless reproducing machine, McPherson reveals philosophy through the mundane.

Gilpin photographs widely appealing

By MARY McINTYRE

Special to The American-Statesman

Something with an appeal for everyone who has nostalgia for old times, the romance of the vanishing Indian, the big American West or exotic Mayan ruins is on the walls at Laguna Gloria Art Museum.

These are photographs by Laura Gilpin spanning a productive career of 63 years and still going.

A legend of sorts, Gilpin's career parallels American photographic history, from early grainy soft-focus "fine art" photographs favored by the Photo-Successionists to documentary work in both depth of field and depth of subject.

With a good eye, fine cameras and hard work she made her living through her art. She did portraits throughout her life, and took on salaried projects such as staff photographer for Central City Opera House in the '30s, and chief photographer for the Boeing Airplane Company during World War II.

One of her most arresting photographs is of "A B-29 Bomber Leaving the Factory." It has a wonderful contrast of textures and shapes; the hulks of the big bird coming into the night, with a puddled wet floor refracting the brilliantly lighted interior, and great depth of field.

But of the greatest interest locally are images of

the Navaho — their families, work and environment.

Gilpin discovered the Navaho in 1930 when her old Buick got stalled in the Arizona wastelands and Indians appeared from the apparent emptiness.

Her good friend, Elizabeth Forster, worked as a nurse on the reservation from 1931 until the Depression, and Gilpin began her documentary project during these years. Abandoning it for a period, she returned in 1950 with the realization that many of the traditional ways of the Indians were succumbing to modern culture.

The culmination of her efforts has been the text illustrated with her photographs, "The Enduring Navaho."

Other photographic books are to her credit, dealing with the American West and the Mayan temples in Yucatan. She conveys some of the romance of the Rio Grande and the Navaho sacred mountains by aerial views with great space and finely controlled tones.

The installation has a very helpful chronological section in the loggia gallery with short descriptions of the photographic process of platinum coated papers — which is still her specialty — and the Autochrome color process which Gilpin employed as early as 1910.

Laura Gilpin was and is a professional. She is also a prime example for a women's movement (or simply human capability): At 86 she can look back on a career created out of a new artistic medium, by which she made a livelihood, and went on to achieve renown.

A remarkable achievement with pleasurable results for us to see.

Organization to help artists help themselves

By MARY McINTYRE
"The name of the game is politics," according to Lawrence Miller, director of Laguna Gloria Art Museum, and he should know. "Museums and galleries help, but individual artists have to help themselves," he said.

The opportunity for mutual help is through the Austin Contemporary Visual Arts Association, getting organized as a nonprofit corporation, and holding an open meeting Wednesday, July 13, on the Laguna Gloria Museum grounds at 7:30 p.m.

Who does it encompass? Painters, graphic artists, sculptors, photographers, ceramicists, weavers, jewelers, stained glass workers, video and film producers, ad-

ministrators, gallery managers and full time students.

The stated purpose of this fledgling organization is "To enrich the community by increasing its awareness of and participation in contemporary visual arts."

But its scope is aimed at: a job bank for artists, alternative exhibition spaces, visual arts newsletter, a directory, workshops, forums, outdoor events, slide and videotape libraries, cooperation between the University of Texas Department of Art, the UT art museums and the nonacademic professional art community, information of grant opportunities and legal information on artists' rights.

In other words: Power for the individual artists.

Shahn exhibit a portrayal of injustice

By MARY McINTYRE
Special to The American Statesman

Blood red letters read across the front of a head-shrouded prisoner with fists chained: "This is Nazi Brutality." And, the legend of Nazi obliteration of the city of Lidice in 1942 is coldly printed below as if on the yellow tickertape of the telegraph machine.

Characteristic of the work of Ben Shahn, that poster exemplifies his use of art to project a message about man's injustice.

A MAJOR retrospective exhibition of paintings, prints and photographs by Ben Shahn has been assembled by the eminent Shahn scholar, Kenneth Prescott, chairman of the Department of Art of the University of Texas, and is on display in the Art Building, Huntington Gallery, through Aug. 11. Made possible by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, it is scheduled for exhibition at six participating institutions.

Shahn's style was forged during the Depression, a period when artists shared the plight of America's eight million jobless. He benefited from government projects, murals in public buildings, and as photographer for the Farm Securities Administration.

In the exhibition are works from Shahn's student period — Cubist-styled harlequin designs, a couple of nude drawings, some fairly academic sketches.

BUT IT WAS two notorious trials which ignited his critical and visual imagination and gave shape as well as content to his visual powers.

Never mind that the Dreyfus case had ended in 1906, or the Sacco and Vanzetti execution was in 1927, Shahn in 1930-32 rapidly found his life theme through the charged inspiration that injustice in the accounts of these trials gave him.

Shahn was Lithuanian and immigrated to New York as a child with his parents. He early learned lettering while an apprentice to a lithographer, and was able to earn a living through his calligraphic skills and developing art in the commercial areas of advertisements, posters, illustrations.

ONE WONDERS at the profound effect being an immigrant, and maturing as an artist during the hard times of the 1930s had in forging his aggressive, content-laden style.

Or why his images are more biting than his contemporaries, seen in an exhibition upstairs in the same gallery, entitled "Between the Wars: American Paintings and Graphics."

The concurrence of this display with the Shahn works provides the historical ambience, the realism in the social attitude of the period, shared by many artists.

IN LATER WORKS by Shahn, when gentle humor is conveyed — not just sarcastic puns — or religious statements are made in Hebrew, does imply contentment, and a greater ease in life.

But he was still outraged in 1960-61 to do a series on the Atomic bomb fallout effect on the crew of a Japanese fishing vessel, "The Lucky Dragon."

His style changed somewhat, too. In the late 1950s he matured into a freely calligraphic line with rough edges overlaid on painted areas, in contrast to the more conventional shading of forms. The accentuation of hands and heads as enlarged sources of expressive emotion remained. Words incorporated into the image were a constant Shahn characteristic, whether in posters or paintings.

Since they are tied to political issues, some of his works appear dated. Yet, Shahn sought and achieved a transcendence of the particulars to a universal message of man's injustice to man.

Successful artists have more than talent

By MARY McINTYRE

Special to The American-Statesman

Paint your heart out. Be a van Gogh whose soul will be visible on the museum walls. (That was long after he was dead, remember; he wasn't recognized in his lifetime.) But don't expect much besides local support unless you can manage to make other factors work for you.

It isn't the talent — hundreds of thousands of people have artistic talent — and it isn't just hard work and proficiency that causes some artists to become renowned on the national scene.

What is it? A recent trip to New York City and visits in several artists' loft-studio-dwelling places gave insights into why some artists there are "making it" into the magazines, the big name galleries, the important exhibitions.

Lowell Nesbitt's place was the most spectacular. By any standards a three story, 18,000 square foot former police stable converted by a reported one million dollars to a dwelling studio is an extravaganza.

We were greeted by two of his assistants on the ground floor and ushered into his skylighted living room. His huge paintings of flower heads covered the walls, plants abounded, and there, in the center, instead of the ubiquitous living room rug was a swimming pool.

Lowell leaned over the third floor balcony,

straight up from the pool, and greeted us, saying he would see us when we got up there.

So, we saw the windowless cave room, with deep magenta walls hung with Nesbitt's huge paintings of stalactites and stalagmites. Dim lights hung three feet off the floor from long cords. There was a raised platform covered with an oriental rug and pillows — for orgies, perhaps?

The assistant explained that this space was created by a woman sculptor whom Nesbitt sponsored for an exhibit of her work in his home, and that he had decided to retain the space afterward.

Well, there was plenty more. His bedroom contained a sauna in the middle of the carpeted floor; here walls were hung with his huge paintings of his bathrobes.

There was another orgy room with a larger platform, more pillows. There were sitting areas, and a guest bedroom. Between floors were ramps, instead of stairs, for the previous horse tenants.

Finally, on the third floor, was the studio, and Lowell painting away on four canvases at one time with an assistant stretching pre-primed linen canvas.

Ten of the paintings in progress were hanging on the wall with others on easels or leaning against racks of more paintings. The 10 on the wall were identical in size, but of varied flower heads, all with black back-

grounds and already framed in gold-edged wooden strip framing.

The framing, he explained, was so that he could correct any framing problems during the course of completing the pictures, and because "I am in such a hurry to see what the paintings look like finished."

At a later visit to the Andrew Crispo Gallery, his dealer, we found a large, thick catalog of Nesbitt's paintings over several years, written by Nesbitt himself.

The apparent message for aspiring artists from the Lowell Nesbitt experience? Exert abundant energy, but utilize assistants to increase your productivity. Pick a dramatic, timely style, work big, act with authority, be open and receptive, not reclusive. Market your things with a quality of "finish," including framing, and a personal retrospective catalog (your own "museum-without-walls"). Play up the decorative aspect for maximum effect. Use only photographs as sources — they don't wilt or wiggle and you can paint in air-conditioned comfort.

Alex Katz's place was next in order of interest. He lives and works in a very large loft on the second floor in a former warehouse district. It is all painted white, with one huge studio area which includes huge closets for his huge paintings. He said his loft costs \$500 a month to heat.

Katz is also a nice guy. He paints stylized

versions of people doing pleasant activities, all on a very large scale.

He freely talked about his method of developing a painting: he begins with sketches from the people in pencil, makes small realistic paintings on metal of the people, cuts them out, moves them around to get the best composition, develops the stylization, goes back to the people for sketches catching an authentic character, places a large sheet of paper over his 10-foot tall canvas and draws the composition on that.

Then, he "punches" the composition through the paper onto the canvas with a gadget originally used by fresco painters. The actual painting on canvas in oils goes quickly as all the problems have been solved. He thus avoids a mutilated surface through overworking, and produces a smooth, even film, part of his "look."

Katz's dealer is the biggest name of them all, Marlborough, and his paintings sell for \$14,000 to \$18,000 each. There are no visible assistants, but Katz has been onto the same style for about 20 years.

Both Katz and Nesbitt crop the image well, for a dramatic effect. Their production is consistent. They don't have any more talent than a lot of people here, but they have met the right look for the right time in the biggest market place of the world.

(Next week: Women painters in New York.)

Women artists need, benefit from unity of the movement

By MARY McINTYBE

Special to The American Statesman

How to be successful as a woman artist in New York?

That's a hot question. Read:

Lee Krasner: Any woman artist who says there is no discrimination against women in the art world should have her face slapped.

NANCY GROSSMAN: Female artists are taken less seriously than male artists.

Alice Neel: All insults, all attacks on, all downgrading and exploitation of women should be fought by all women. To permit a psychiatrist to say you suffer from "penis envy" is like singing "Old Black Joe" to a Black Panther.

Helen Frankenthaler: They (women) should just go on being people and proceed from there to make paintings, and the question of sex will take care of itself.

ALL THAT IS from a 1975 book, "Art Talk" by Cindy Nemser, but summer 1977 finds a lot of the women artists with stronger attitudes than before and organized to do something about it.

Miriam Schapiro is a nationally recognized artist with a prominent gallery to her credit, Emmerich. She is also a leader in the feminist art movement, having founded, along with Judy Chicago, Womanhouse in Los Angeles in 1972 and remaining active ever since.

Schapiro was in Austin on a panel discussion by women artists at the University of Texas this spring. She bristles with attitudes about motivating women, women giving constructive support to each other, and utilizing feminine imagery in art.

HER WAY TO success beyond the talent-hard, work-proficiency level lies in uniting against discrimination and stimulating each other to reach a greater potential.

What she said in Austin, "You've got to get out of here, and see what is going on in New York and Los Angeles. There's no 'scene' here," precipitated our New York jaunt in the first place.

She lined up visits to studios of women artists, beginning with hers.

Her second floor loft-dwelling in a warehouse district has a separate entrance for the studio, where we walked upstairs into a large white-painted space.

A STUDENT assistant from Bryn Mawr, where Schapiro teaches, was ruling off a grid on paper for collage studies. Finished studies were on the wall. A month of such preparatory small-scaled experiments will precede the final decisions on her new large painting-collage to be in the shape of a fan.

Parts of a 10-paneled portable mural on canvas based on the design of a kimono were in her living room, along with a doll house of symbolic rooms — created for Womanhouse in L.A. — and small paintings by someone else, her husband, also a professional painter.

On to Ida Appleton's less prosperous-looking loft, where for entry we had to pass a Process Server, a German shepherd dog we were warned about, and go up a clanky freight elevator operated by the only tenant not the target of the Process Server.

APPLETON MAKES small shadow puppet scenes from parchment, cut out and dipped in acrylic medium for stiffening. One major theme in a series was on the life of Einstein, whom she found to be a sexist.

Discussion after viewing her works stemmed around being a woman artist in Austin and New York, being a mother, and whether the women's movement had improved the scene so that the current crop of maturing daughters don't have as much difficulty establishing themselves as career people. Consensus: they don't.

Schapiro, Appleton, Joan Snyder, Lucy Lippard, Joyce Kozloff, Mary Miss and Joan Semmel are

are members of a "collective," a politically active organization of women artists and critics.

With others they produce "Heresies, A Feminist Publication on Art and Politics." Their first issue had an article on Marxism and feminism (pro), and a fascinating analysis with a conclusion against the union of Marxism and feminism by the prominent art critic Lippard.

CONTACT WITH Snyder's loft on the Italian side of Canal Street, had to be made through a pay phone on the Chinese side. She has two large studios, racks of paintings, a small bedroom, and the essential amenities, period.

Her male assistant had made a good soup for lunch, she said.

Snyder works abstractly, both utilizing a grid and applying paint and fabric loosely in other areas. Some visual relationship to the feminist movement was in the nature of words scribbled into the paintings, and the use of roughly applied dress fabrics.

SNYDER'S WORKS are carried by Saulway Gallery in Cincinnati and New York; she does college teaching, lecturing and exhibiting nationally in relation to the women's movement.

There are rare women artists who have become enormously successful without the women's movement, and who ignore it, Helen Frankenthaler most notably. But for the majority, the message seems to be: the sisterhood helps, and we need it.

Local art promotion as varied as the subjects

Region offers mass market fairs to specialty galleries

MARY McINTYRE

Special to The American-Statesman

How is art sold?

That depends on your preferences for art. There is no simple answer, but some recent developments on the regional scene may be provocative.

Big money makers have been weekend art fairs held by promoters in rented spaces, such as civic auditoriums or motels. These are stocked with paintings on canvas purchased through an order house, and priced by size.

What sells this mass-produced illusion of "art" is what sells toothpaste: advertising.

"Estimates of \$8,000 to \$30,000 have been spent on a combination of daily newspaper ads, TV commercials, and some radio spots — all to promote a single weekend sale!" states *Decor* magazine in their June article, "Combatting Those Motel Art Sales."

Another irresistible factor is making the product appear to be a bargain, by stating that everything is priced under \$25, or by naming the show *Starving Artist* or *Underfed Artists* as if the rock bottom price is set.

So, that repels you?

Next up the line are weekend shows, also put on by promoters in similar rented spaces, but these are a cut better. These promoters rent 10 by 10 foot spaces for \$45 to craftspeople whom they screen, to keep out the importers and merchandise they think is too deceptive or tasteless.

The one we went to recently was in the cement floored Municipal Auditorium basement with the grid covered ceiling, but with air-conditioned comfort.

There were more plant booths than anything else. There was the usual kitsch stuff from the dime store but it was glued together in a different way, some of it really funny.

This kind of show charges \$1 admission, with a ticket on a drawing for a color TV thrown in. The promoters advertise, but in a limited way, and draw only 2,500 people to 4,500 people as opposed to 10,000 people at a museum exhibition. It is a value given to this kind of work by your friends.

There are three galleries dealing in fine prints by internationally known artists, as well as excellent local artists. In these, works may be purchased which have the authoritative backing of the art history makers: the museums, the best critics, and collectors with a knowledgeable background of 20th century movements.

The oldest is Garner and Smith Gallery, which no longer advertises or has openings, but supplements their special nucleus of clients with framing, and a large stock of art books. Gallerie Ravel

to multiples of that in the heyday of the big promoter shows.

But you like to buy your weekend art in a natural setting and fun environment? And want to know that your gate admission goes back into art?

There is no place better than the Laguna Gloria Fiesta. It is the big momma of the benefit art fairs, and dates back to 1951.

By now, the Women's Art Guild has become so proficient that they have made Fiesta a model for cultural art fairs all over the country.

Forty thousand people went through the gates this year, even though the admission had doubled. There were over 200 booths rented at \$125 each to artists selected by a jury of their professional peers, from 500 applicants.

Fiesta has a genuine "fair" atmosphere, and a deliberate balance between the numbers of booths of paintings, sculpture, pottery, jewelry, etc.

What about art with a more apparent guarantee of quality?

There is a planned exhibition on a weekend in late October by the Austin Society of Fine Artists at the Executive Complex, for the expressed purpose of providing "tasteful and exclusive art" sold by the artists without a gallery's commission.

Then there are the galleries.

For traditional Western and Texas scenes the Country Store has masterful promotional techniques both at the shop, and by sending a van out on weekends to prestigious locations in smaller towns.

There are other Western and American Indian theme galleries. After all, we are in the center of the frontier country nostalgia. Wagner Gallery strives for a contemporary look in painting styles while retaining the saleable Southwestern theme.

Nostalgia for old peaceful times and the illusion of an acceptable level of "culture" is one element that sells the European impressionist style carried by Rue de Lamar Gallery, and others. There is a whole hierarchy of pricing works by such art-

is the newest, does have openings, and appears to have a clientele beyond Austin. The Grey Mouse has a combination of fine prints, offset prints, and paintings. Enterprising artist-owner Robert Sargent produces prints and seeks national markets.

If there is one lesson that may be useful from the promoters, and the few long established galleries, it is that success depends on the degree of advertising, and going beyond the gallery doors on the part of the seller.

Finding ways to engage the buyer's fantasies, as with any other commodity, is the way art is sold. Otherwise, find something else compatible to bring in the income.

Aerial space subject of Patrick show

By MARY McINTYRE

Special to The American-Statesman

People dream of floating in space. But Gerald Patrick transposes such sensations onto paper through the image of forms moving in space.

Fascinated since a child with aerial space, Patrick has produced sophisticated prints, drawings and sculpture dealing with kinetic effects. These compose a highly effective first one-man show at Gallerie Ravel through August.

Few exhibitions by young local artists reveal such a fine degree of craft in all aspects, including his personal installation.

The prints are variations on the theme of flying wedges. Some flutter, in multiple white outline on deep blue, or in colorless embossed triads. The series entitled "Banded Flyers" are wedges in rainbow-hued splendor suspended above a horizon line.

In the drawings, the titles reassert the image, such as "Skywinder" and "Shadow Scanner." Here, wedges of a more complex shape appear wrapped in folds and bound with cord, floating above space as defined by the simple device of diagonal lines joining horizontals.

Space is employed differently in his sculpture, and involves the spectator as a participant in moving the sculpture in space. Most of his wooden pieces are jointed, put together without glue, and intended to be handled, taken apart and reassembled.

Like games, like puzzles, many of these works come encased in their own boxes. Their multiple parts fit into complex indentations in the bottom and lid, which is then covered with flocking.

They are presented like precious instruments or ritual objects embedded in velvet-lined receptacles.

Strangest are the pieces resembling weapons, with black humor puns for titles: "Snuff Box" and "Concealed Evidence." Patrick described "Double or Nothing" as a gambling term, but said the sculpture thus titled was dealing with a suicidal, potentially deadly situation. It is a beautifully executed blue-black, double-bladed instrument of unknown function.

As the movie "Star Wars" has made abundantly clear, man takes pleasure from viewing threat and violence, and is exhilarated by aspects of space. So had Gerald Patrick synthesized spatial exploration, beauty and potential violence in his sculpture of high craft.

Local artist sees competition as way to success

By MARY MCINTYRE

Special to The American-Statesman

Probably the most consistent art competition entrant and winner in Austin is Malcolm Bucknall. He makes hundreds of dollars a year in prize money, and is sought by private galleries and invitational shows as a result.

Bucknall believes in art contests as being the true art world today.

"BIG CITY ART is dead, effete. Rather than the way to 'make it' being a show in New York, it is through competitions. This is a ladder that can be climbed.

"It brings together the museums, national art figures, artists, and public in a creative way. Competitions do show what is going on nationally," he stated.

Of course, it's a gamble. You have to be prepared for the trauma of the rejection slip since the average acceptance is on a ratio of one out of 10.

SO PROFESSIONAL at this form of art career-making is Bucknall that he charts the exhibitions he has entered since 1963 as to what work he submitted, whether accepted or rejected, and who the juror was.

He says he submits to jurors, meaning that he knows their taste, and doesn't enter contests with jurors hostile to his kind of work.

"People from the Whitney Museum reject my work, but Edward B. Henning, curator of Contemporary Art at the Cleveland Museum always gives me a prize," he acknowledged.

EVEN WITH THIS selective participation he has a 50-50 acceptance to rejection ratio, which puts him in to six or seven exhibitions a year, with prizes in some.

Because of jurors with museum connections and critics of national repute, his work gets invited into other theme shows. And a few of the thousands of people who go through the big exhibitions contact Bucknall in Austin to purchase paintings.

He sees the art competition network as a manifestation of the current interest in regional art. It is a way of getting to the roots of the country for a valid expression outside of the decadent big city marketing system.

What kind of art is accepted? Judging from three major Austin artists who have participated in top shows, it's from totally abstract to photorealistic to fantasy.

JANIS JOVISOR, on the University of Texas Department of Art faculty, was awarded a one-person show at the New Orleans Museum of

Art on the basis of her painting in the Biennial there. Her work is abstract, with thick acrylic paint, and applied shapes embedded.

Bill Wiman is a photorealist painter of sorts who participated in 30 competitions over a period of nine years in the 1960s. All the invitational exhibitions and gallery shows he has had since were spin-offs from his success with the competitions, even the upcoming New York gallery exhibit.

Bucknall's own work is based on an early Renaissance style of portraiture, but may have a bizarre head of an animal topping an Elizabethan garb beside an expressionless lady.

HOW TO BEGIN? Bucknall sees the locally produced Texas Fine Arts Association competitions as being a good place. There are regional "Citation" shows with little monetary award, but the possibility of the same work being exhibited from Region I against other Texas regions at a bigger show.

The major national competition locally is the TFAA Annual with award money and purchase money.

Though seeing the TFAA exhibitions as a rung on the ladder, Malcolm Bucknall no longer participates because the jurors chosen are not in the forefront of the art scene.

OTHER SHOWS ARE listed in a few publications, none of which are complete: *American Artist*, *Ocular*, *Artweek*, and "Who's Who in American Art." Most of these are available at the main public library and the UT art library.

It is necessary to look through the listings, and to read carefully the prospectus. There are many competitions where the sponsoring institution makes a profit by collecting more in entry fees than they dispense in prizes or in putting on the show.

Other variables are the entry fee, kinds of art acceptable, whether judging is by slides only, work only, or optional. The best of the regional shows do not charge an entry fee and do provide extensive insurance coverage.

A FASCINATING BIT of history — in 1906, when the New Orleans Art Museum exhibition was international it included works by Mary Cassatt, Winslow Homer, and Claude Monet. Even today, top artists participating in the Mid-Year Annual at the Butler Institute are Alex Katz, Philip Pearlstein, Alfred Leslie, and Deborah Remington.

Maybe this is the way to success.

Art exhibits contrast feuding trends

By MARY McINTYRE

Special to The American-Statesman

Like a borrowed portion of the New York scene, two exhibitions focus on warring trends of contemporary art: abstraction versus figuration. And, nicely, they are displayed in adjacent spaces upstairs at the Michener Gallery, University of Texas campus.

Linear pure color abstraction in one area contrasts with moody paintings of fragmented figures in the next.

RAY PARKER and Balcomb Greene have been painters of national scope for decades as important, excellent artists.

For Austin viewers, these shows are like walking into two separate top New York private galleries, and seeing what each dealer champions. In fact, both are organized and sent by such galleries; for viewing across the country by major purchasers, perhaps?

Parker has been a consistent abstractionist with an inescapable bias for the color, shape and spacing of late Matisse designs.

Here, he displays only recent works: 12 small paintings with flat color backgrounds, and a large number of colored drawings.

PLAYFUL ARCS, straight lines, and squiggles are squeezed directly from the tube onto white paper or color-coated canvas. The varied hues and the raised character of the paint give a brilliance that combines well with Parker's euphoric arabesque design.

It's as if he were playing the drawing game for children, called "Talking a walk with a line," that is, seeing how many satisfactory variations he can make with colored lines, and some patches, all on the same sized paper. He comes out a winner with 63.

A midwesterner born and educated, Parker moved to New York where he has taught at Hunter College since 1955. His work is not new to Austin, with one painting in the permanent Michener Collection, and two works in a 1972 exhibition entitled, "Color Forum."

HE STATES A preference for objectivity

in approaching a painting, seeking an analysis of the formal elements of the work while rejecting personal associations. None of the attitude that his shapes look like clouds, blimps or boomerangs for Parker!

So, as contrast, the paintings of Balcomb Greene invite "reading in." Well, not his very early ones which are dated in the '30s or early '40s. Those are geometrical abstractions. Greene was even chairman of the American Abstract Artists during his non-figurative period.

But beginning in 1947 the human figure makes a presence, obscured and fractured to a degree, but there; dominant when perceived.

WHAT PRICE this stylistic change took of his psyche may be guessed at by the two earliest figurative paintings entitled "The Cry" and "Anguish." In these, the paint application seems tentative in some ways, and overworked in others. They don't have the sense of a practiced style of Green's paintings of the 1970s, or of the 1964 "Place Pigalle" in the permanent Michener Collection.

Working in glistening, fatted oil paint of muted color, Greene dissolves the sunlit side of a face into white, which integrates with forms of a place in the background.

His sojourns in France since 1931 have impressed his style with more than just locations for imagery. He has transmuted analytical Cubism into a personal matter of impasto paint application and a vehicle of expression.

IT IS A pleasure to speculate on the philosophical implications of his eerie apertures — forms obviously there yet melting into the background. Is he making a declaration about the insubstantiality of matter? The ephemeral nature of existence? Or simply saying that white sunlight dissolves form, as does shadow?

Not many people react comfortably to the mind-soothing totally nonobject paintings of Ray Parker, as well as those of Balcomb Greene which engage the emotions. Though at wide variance, both reflect important contemporary modes of painting and thinking.

Sunday, August 28, 1977

70s art comes to town

By MARY McINTYRE

Special to the American Statesman

With revived energies for fall commitments comes the stimulus of the most exciting painting exhibition since "Women Artists."

The UT Director of Museums, Don Goodall, has assembled for us alone what is current in the East, West, Chicago and Texas. Titled, "New in the Seventies," the 52 paintings in the UT Art Museum by as many artists show an almost even balance between abstract pieces and imagery derived from reality — flowers, signs, people, toys, cars, rooms.

THE ABSTRACT WORK ranges from precisely edged flat bands to post-Pollock all-over texture. There is a refinement of what went before, and

movement in new directions, particularly in the work of Ron Davis and William T. Wiley.

In the imagery portion are excellent examples of California funk, that which puns the values represented by the garish knick-knacks of a Stuckey. There is traditional painting by Willard Midgette, updated by its life-sized figures in a doorway the same size as the canvas, and new versions of painting reflecting the honesty of a camera image by avoiding traditional romantic American subject matter and style.

THERE IS HARDLY any work that looks easy to do. Bring a magnifying glass for the hair-raising revelation of detail in some of the photorealist pieces. But even the thrown and spattered paint of Sam Gilliam reflects enormous control in its layers upon layers, from the saturated canvas to the thick encrustations on the surface.

There must have been a series of decisions and numerous paintings that preceded Robert Tie-man's elegantly arranged silver T and flowed paint on black.

And the seven by thirteen foot canvas by Ann McCoy is tinted entirely by the points of colored pencils, and depicts an underwater scene of great subtlety.

THIS IS WHAT QUALITY is about. It's the ideas reflecting current culture, and the disciplined embodiment of those ideas in a form that provides depth of satisfaction in contemplation.

The top painting in the abstract vein is Ron Davis' *Square Wave Duet*. Not only does it have a visual impact that carries the length of the gallery, plus a texturally varied execution, but it picks up on the newest movement: abstract illusionism.

Here Davis imposes the traditional perspective device of drawing orthogonal lines of boxes to vanishing points on a spattered and saturated un-primed canvas. The boxes have thick paint; the orthogonal lines of construction remain; color relationships are intriguing. There is depth, yet it is abstract and honest — no fooling the eye.

BUT SOME OF THE FOOL the eye paintings are also some of the best. In the first area of entry are superlative brush and airbrush images looking tactile and real, shadows and all. The *Dutch Still Life* by Audrey Flack is an updated version of the opulent florals with tiny insects of the Netherlands tradition. But this one is obviously of plastic flowers and bugs, done with an airbrush, and framed under plexiglass which adds to the plasticity.

There are weak pieces included. Joe Goode's sliced canvas is boring and looks casually executed; and a couple of the shaped canvases don't make convincing use of the shape, or lose tension because of it.

Experiencing this superlative exhibition is a fine way to lose the summer doldrums and revitalize for fall.

Grimes County photos view a time and a place

By MARY McINTYRE

Special to the American-Statesman

Any latent curiosity about what Grimes County, Texas, looks like, or what the people do there may be satiated by viewing the 306 photographs by Frederick Baldwin and Wendy Watriss on the walls upstairs at the Huntington Gallery, UT Art Building.

There are small towns, the county seat, and rural lands. There are celebrations, weddings, June-teenhs, a baptism in a river, a funeral, and dancing at home on Saturday night. There is work on the cotton farms, a pig slaughter, and proprietors proudly standing in front of their stores.

Multiple photographs of each event are grouped together in sets either giving a sequence or different viewpoints to catch the larger environment. Like characters in a drama, the bride appears veiled, later unveiled, then greeting people, and toasting.

So, the whole exhibition reads like a long rambling story of the communion of people related by a place, and a history.

It's a nice story today, and makes an interesting comparison to the slide presentation of their forebears.

In the slide show the people are lean, starrng, and erect, dressed in their best. No doubt the novelty of the camera then, and the slower shutter speed had a lot to do with the quality of their poses. But, today, those people's descendants are plump, casual in pose and frequently in attire, and with a general appearance of well-being which cuts through classes and ethnic groups.

Today's camera and film quality also reveal more detail than anyone participating would re-

member. What is truth? A presentation that gives a romantic hazy focus on the relationship of the people? Or, as we see here one that gives information on the shoes, the freckles, the wall veneer and scales the participants down within their imperfect world?

As documentary photography the images have an "honest" quality about them. They are not pushed to make a moral statement about poverty or complacency that so much previous photography did which went under the category of documentary.

This attitude was purposeful on the part of Baldwin and Watriss who spent a year and a half in Grimes County getting to know the people. In many images the photographers allowed the subjects to determine how they would be presented.

As a result, there are a lot of frontal images, like snapshots for a glorified scrapbook. But these are balanced by views of the photographers' choosing, in order to be representative of the total place and activities.

Art qualities are there in fine tones, balanced compositions and variety, but none could be called "arty."

Oral and written histories of the county complete the all-encompassing recording done by the photojournalist team.

Baldwin and Watriss have done extensive professional work internationally, and selected four counties in Texas for the still prevalent evidence of differing geographical and cultural frontiers. Next will be Gillespie, Hildalgo, and Presidio, providing variety in the kind of terrain and historical background of the inhabitants.



A RIVER BAPTISM IN NAVASOTA, GRIMES COUNTY

New Laguna exhibit raises questions

By MARY McINTYRE

Special to The American-Statesman

Exactly the sort of permanent collection a small city art museum should have starts off an interesting season at Laguna Gloria Art Museum.

Would that it were ours, instead of borrowed from the Fort Worth Art Museum. At least, Jay Belloli, director of the FWAM, was generous enough to loan us this mini-history of American art since 1900.

Well-displayed in Laguna's originally domestic rooms, the older pieces are grouped together upstairs; and the big paintings of recent years visually pop from the walls in the largest room, with those in between hung in the loggia gallery and former dining room.

It's comfortable to view the home-scaled landscape of Thomas Moran done in 1908, and enter the glorious cliffs and misty water effusions of Yellow Stone. His romantic exaggeration of light and height expressed the feelings Americans had about their vast and beautiful land.

In contrast, the Edward Hopper etching, "Night Shadows," done in the 1920s, conveys the proud lonely mood of the individual in the urban environment.

Clever, amusing and typical of Alexander Calder is the line drawing on his circus theme. Not only does Fort Worth possess this Calder — and Austin has none in a public collection — but Calder's whole original wire circus plus 50 years of mobiles and paintings is coming to that metropolitan area in mid-September, at the Dallas Museum of Fine Arts.

An overwhelming painting by Frank Stella in the main room virtually encompasses the viewer with color. It is always a surprise to discover how much of Stella's brilliant canvasses are covered in grays, because it is the brighter hues and the design one remembers.

In this same room, the softly edged rectangles of the fine Rothko painting hover in red space; and the jagged shapes of a great Clifford Still lock into a struggle with each

other for dominance.

Many other familiar names are represented in the loan exhibit at Laguna. Except for a few among those works dated with the last decade, they are by artists who formed the history of American painting. The museum will provide a docent to verbalize the history aspect while you look, with a request in advance.

To explore the fantasy of possessing such a collection at Laguna Gloria is to look at the situation in Austin, and wonder at the possibility.

Would there be competition with collections at the University of Texas?

Through the gift of James A. Michener to the university, Austin has a large permanent collection of 20th century American art, but even that lacks all the artists mentioned about but one.

Besides, Laguna draws a different audience, one which enjoys a place to park and participation through membership and activities.

What about a bigger building and city funding?

The Fort Worth Art Museum began as Laguna did, as an art association. After 50 years of exhibiting in the public library, the city built a large museum which is owned, maintained and guarded by Fort Worth, while the art association evolved to an enlightened manager of the facility with a contributing membership of 1,100.

Some structure with much more space, and not designed as a family dwelling, is badly needed for Laguna, despite the well-planned installations of small paintings for small rooms.

The Benjamin J. Tiller trust given to the Fort Worth Art Museum in the late 1960s made a great many acquisitions possible. What significant museum has not had a major donor? Is Austin lacking in such possible beneficence?

For the time being, enjoy what's borrowed from our more fortunate friends in North Texas.

Experience separates artists

Local exhibitors display aptitude, but tender years tell

By MARY MCINTYRE

Special to The American-Statesman

To be fair, there should be categories in art shows similar to the ones in horse shows.

The Green Hunter class with a limit of two years experience in shows ought to be transferred to some of the current local art scene in the galleries and at St. Edwards University.

In a big city there is so much more stimulating work to comment on that a reviewer kindly passes the ones that are done by artists with two-year-old egos.

But the major artists here exhibit in those big cities, and what's left is a scene with artists recently out of school, still in school, or intermittent workers with fantasies of what a show any place and a comment in the newspaper is going to do for them.

Their work and ideas are tender and cry out for treatment in kind.

There was the Saturday night phone call by someone whose show opened recently, but this person's gallery director hadn't put a listing in the next day's paper. The artist must have been at the newspaper office getting the first edition. That's wearing your ego on your sleeve.

There are some positive things that can be said about the recent crop of shows, and comments intended to help rather than crush.

The group exhibit at Trinity House Gallery has a lot of verve. Verve means, "1. Marked aptitude, talent; 2. Vivacity of imagination," according to Webster.

Among the exhibitors, Vicki Teague-Cooper has an interesting theme in her doll series and a splashy way of putting it together with paint; Jerry Goins's drawing shows a sophisticated skill and style, and Karen Wright makes a pun on Western art by applying tooled leather to cross bars of a canvas support.

There are a lot of good ideas among the group, and they obviously stimulate each other toward experimentation which is healthy. But they could benefit by embodying the idea in a form that makes the message less cryptic and engages the viewer's mind and feelings for longer than the first reaction and a reading of the gag line title.

Another group whose association

has brought value to their work is that of the Texas Society of Sculptors, exhibiting at Bev Hayden's House. Though conservative in both imagery and style, their work is of good quality and considerably improved from when the organization formed a few years ago.

At Bradford's Upstairs Gallery, Mary Helen MacFarlane and Zilla Witherspoon are showing black and white works on paper. Witherspoon has a breezy and amusing way with line. MacFarlane has the most developed two dimensional style currently on view, with fantastic creatures formed out of heavily worked litho crayon.

Exhibiting at Kerbey Lane Gallery, Donna Morrow works in fibers, frequently with hoops entwined. The designs are abstract and varied. One feels an increased sensitivity to the way differing fibers go together and how they hang will come with experience.

Religious ideas dominate the drawings, paintings and collages of Charles Gray at St. Edward's University. He writes in his brochure that he is "largely self-taught," and it shows, despite his borrowing of imagery from art history. Here ambition outreaches the artist's comprehension of color and the expressive potential of composition.

If there were stronger competition among artists exhibiting in Austin, the quality of work as a whole would improve.

Keep the verve up, but work harder, artists.

A-S. - Wed. Sept. 28, 1977
Competition out of place

Not only is it presumptuous of Ms. McIntyre (Show World, Sept. 18) to play psychoanalyst to the Austin artists, but also her remarks about egos and artists suggest to me that she is also greatly lacking in a knowledge of art history, or at best, the lives of artists in the recent past. If Ms. McIntyre desires the competition of a horse race, perhaps she should cover those events. To my mind there is no competition in art — only in the business of selling art. Creativity is a personal struggle. Austin is on the verge of having a community of artists, and Ms. McIntyre's critiques serve only to delay the formation of this community.

KEITH FERRIS
 Member, Trinity House Gallery
 Austin

Navajo artist mixes styles, backgrounds

By MARY McINTYRE

Special to The American-Statesman

What's happened to American Indian Art could be the title of the life story of R.C. Gorman. He looks like an Indian and wears Navajo jewelry, but he is a fine artist in the modernist European tradition with infusions from contemporary Mexican art.

From Taos for his exhibition at Santa Fe East in the Driskill Hotel, the entourage included his manager, a favorite model, two framers and his cousin. As a successful businessman-artist, Gorman has his own gallery, the Navajo Gallery in Taos, and works in prints with five graphic press businesses located variously in Santa Fe, Albuquerque and San Francisco.

IT WASN'T ALWAYS so. He was born in 1932 in an Indian hogan, the son of a respected Navajo artist. During his youth he was indoctrinated with stories of his ancestral heritage told by his great-grandmother. But Gorman also remembers his own drawings of cars, Mickey Mouse and nude women.

He was encouraged to experiment and draw "things that felt good (to me) and natural" by an art teacher at high school. While in the Navy for a few years his experience broadened.

Study involved Guam Territorial College in the Mariana Islands, Northern Arizona University, and the college of Mexico at Mexico City where he was exposed to the works of Orozco, Rivera, Siqueiros and Tamayo.

Navajo artist R.C. Gorman infuses modernist European styles into his paintings, which he says are based on "masks lifted from Navajo mythology." His works are on display at Santa Fe East in the Driskill Hotel.



AFTER MEXICO CAME San Francisco and Los Angeles, where the incipient professional artist worked as a model.

His present day success includes numerous exhibitions, and the prestige of having works in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Museum of the American Indian in New York, among many others.

Gorman is most well known for his drawings, paintings and lithographs of Indian women wrapped in blankets. He has a fluid line combined with elegant proportions, little or no detail in the garments, but accentuation of the head, hands and feet.

LIVE MODELS ARE an important stimulus for producing vitality in his art. Gorman draws for an hour in the morning. "The model sets the pace, however she throws herself. The model is part stage-acting and I try to capture what she does."

There is nothing like this in traditional Indian art with its emphasis on symbolic and geometric figures for religious purposes. Gorman's drawing style represents an innate love of organic forms, in the tradition of Matisse, and to a degree of Rivera.

However, his paintings are more directly based on "masks lifted from Navajo mythology," as he said. Here his enjoyment of sensuous forms is projected through the color and paint quality, while retaining some of the geometrical character of the Navajo religious symbols.

THESE PAINTINGS are sophisticated and display knowledge of abstract-expressionism, color-field painting and play with the illusion of space.

Even his model, Yossi Ramos, is cosmopolitan. She is an Aztec born in Mexico City. Her father was a prize fighter, and she spent part of her father in New York City where she studied at Parson's School of Design.

What's happened to American Indian art is a matter of degree. Though the Navajo have kept together as a people more than any other Indian nation, they too are subject to the cultural changes brought about by time and are being immersed within a more powerful society.

THOUGH SOME INDIAN artists attempt to retain more characteristics of their ancestors' symbolic work, others open themselves up to new possibilities.

R.C. Gorman manages to keep a foot in both worlds with eminent success.

Robert Indiana exhibit visually exciting

Artist is master of visual, verbal games

If not genius, it takes a finely honed mind to arrive at a simple idea which is both irreducible and evokes a universal response.

Several such ideas in the form of paintings and sculpture comprise Robert Indiana's first major retrospective in 10 years at the Michener Gallery of the University of Texas.

It is a coup that this exhibition was organized by Texans and begins here on a five-stop tour of museums in Virginia, Indiana and New York.

Robert Tobin, the international culture prince of San Antonio, was

the guest curator, though Dr. Donald Goodall was the catalyst following up on his commitment to James A. Michener to organize exhibitions around features in the permanent Michener Collection.

Robert Indiana invented the "Love" image in 1964, which evoked such a response that it has been used on commissioned postage stamps and monumental sculpture, in addition to the uncopyrighted rip-offs found on cocktail napkins, note paper and coffee mugs.

But love isn't the only word elevated to an icon status by the artist's

embodiment of letters with symbols in his brilliant paintings. A theologian as well as the common man can both respond to "The American Dream," which has the words "eat, hug, err, die" arranged with stars and circles in the shape of a crucifixion.

For the artist the circle does have a religious context, and "love" is spiritual, but "eat" derives originally from his mother's restaurants — "eateris" back in Indiana and was the last word she spoke before she died.

The numeral 5 refers to the five sections of the cruciform, the 5 on a fire engine near his studio in New York, and the painting by Charles Demuth in 1928, "I Saw the Figure 5 in Gold," to which Indiana pays homage.

These reductive poem-paintings composed only of words, numerals, symbols, and color make up the majority of images in the exhibition; but a few marvelously amusing paintings also use human figures.

A pair of these are the portraits of his mother and father each standing beside an elegant old Model T with a 1927 license plate. Flat and cool as the execution is, the mother is yet bare-breasted and wearing a red cloak, and the father is all gray and without pants and shoes beneath his overcoat. Robert Indiana considers that his father was a dull, bland person; his mother flamboyant, and



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fancies that this is the way they were shortly after his conception in the back seat of the Model T.

There is also a poignant Pop Art version of Marilyn Monroe emblazoned in the center of a roulette wheel design in pastel shades containing the letters of both her real and stage names.

Then there are the drawings and paper cutout designs for the Gertrude Stein/Virgil Thompson opera, "The Mother of Us All," produced in Santa Fe. Indiana found this opera an exciting challenge on the level of his interest in Stein's reductive use of words, her motto, "Life is Strife," and one heroine being titled "Indiana Elliot."

The brilliance and scale of this very large exhibition creates excitement for the viewer, and the verbal and visual puns sustain interest, even when all of the multilayered meanings are not apparent. Robert Indiana is a great master at highly refined verbal games based on his own life fused with mankind as a whole, and embodied in visual forms with impact.



Courtesy of University of Nebraska at Lincoln

Robert Indiana's 'A Divorced Man Has Never Been (The President)' is part of the exhibit that opens its four-state tour at the University of Texas Michener Gallery. This 60-inch-by-48-inch oil on canvas is representative of the verbal and visual puns that are predominant in Indiana's works. Story, Page 4.

Rodin artistry on display at UT

Detail of human figures inspiring

Ninety years ago Auguste Rodin produced small bronze studies for the "Burghers of Calais," a theatrical sculpture demonstrating civic loyalty. Today, these are on display upstairs at the Huntington Gallery, in the University of Texas Art Building.

Out of style as Rodin's public sculpture may be, both as a universal humanistic statement, and in the form of six writing male figures cast in bronze, it yet has the power to move us to empathy, almost to tears.

Part of the tears are for those missing elements in our culture that enabled a genius to arise who could convey through the human body dignity, grief, pride, mutual dependency and mutual belief.

Not that Rodin didn't have his problems 90 years ago, being unconventional in his concepts, yet accepting a commission from the city powers of Calais for a public relations kind of piece, something to evoke civic pride and duty.

The part of Calais history they wanted illustrated was an heroic event that took place in the 14th century. After King Edward III of England had besieged their city for a year, he agreed to free the populace if six prominent citizens would surrender to him to be put to death. Eustache de St. Pierre, the richest man of Calais, was the first to volunteer; then followed five others. They stripped to their shirts and breeches, and put rope halters around their necks as had been stipulated, and took the keys of the city in their hands.

Weeping in anguish, the populace of Calais followed them to the city gates. However, at the camp of Edward III, the Queen of England interceded on their behalf and saved their lives.

What Rodin chose as his theme was the most emotionally complex point of the story: after the men had committed themselves and before they had reached the gates and the king. The anguish of self-sacrifice and conflicting emotions of grief and pride are registered in Rodin's studies, on view here.

The marvel is Rodin's so thorough and subtle knowledge of musculature, tension and relaxation, revealing through the whole body the emotion intended. Also satisfying, are his elements of exaggeration: enlarged hands and feet, sunken eyes, and ears — almost gouged yet restrained by a conviction regarding physical reality.

Willem de Kooning in recent sculpture seen here last year used these elements of Rodin's constrained expressionism, but liberated them to create the monsters that we know man capable of being in our time.

As preparation, Rodin modeled nude bodies, separate heads and hands, then draped bodies, continuing on to the whole group in small scale. Even this was revised before his firm decision about the arrangement of the final sculpture. Of the second group maquette, the committee on the Calais monument commented that the figures' depressed attitude shocked religious feelings. They wished for a more conventional style, more like what monumental sculpture was before. They objected to the silhouette of the whole, as leaving much to be desired in terms of elegance.

Strange that the late 19th century should object to Rodin's figures in terms of lacking elegance. For to our eyes, accustomed to the disproportions of our ordinary people caught through millions of



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photographs, and a kind of artistic cult of the vulgar, all of Rodin's figures have an elegance of proportion which contributes to the ideal aspects of the heroic.

All but two of the sculptures here belong to the corporate collections of the Cantor, Fitzgerald Group, Ltd., of which B. Gerald Cantor is chairman. Cantor has acted on his belief in the importance of art in corporate collections being on public display.

We applaud both corporate collecting of art and rejoice in the fortuitous policy of Cantor's Business Committee for the Arts resulting in Austin receiving the loan of these sculptures. They are nothing short of inspiring.

Photographer provides contrast in NYC museum

Austinite Garry Winogrand shares Museum of Modern Art with artist Cezanne

Right now, Austin photographer Garry Winogrand is exhibiting in the West area of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, concurrently with the great exhibition of late watercolor and oil paintings by Cezanne in the East wing.

Unquestionably, the Cezanne exhibit is superb and rare; but it is also crowded with spectators three deep, and fortunately coming to the Houston Museum of Fine Arts Jan. 25 through March 19.

The black and white Winogrand photographs have everything that Cezanne lacked.

Their focus on the particular in people and freezing of the revealing moment are a wonderful contrast to the high art feast laid out by the great father of early 20th century art. Seeing the Cezannes first, and the Winogrand's after is like licking frozen sherbert in a cone after a supreme and formal French dinner with vintage wines.

Most of the images in Winogrand's show are set in New York, yet he personally seems ubiquitous, frequently visible on The Drag, in downtown Austin, and at local events with cameras slung around his neck, observing with the intensity of a hungry animal.

The particular interaction of people is what is fascinating within a total setting in his work. Vanities and pretensions are revealed, also annoyance, sexual energy and the massing of people for com-

newer art, Bill Wiman's paintings carried a bit of Austin and Texas into the Hansen Gallery as a kind of preview for his forthcoming larger show there.

The East Coast critics' pronouncement that the avant garde is dead, that the public will now embrace anything with a benign curiosity does seem to prevail with the boredom accompanying visits to exhibits of peeled tree branches now glued with hair, panty hose and feathers, or a casual arrangement on the floor of objects the size and shape of tea caddies but made of net, wire mesh, fabric and ribbons. Much of this is less interesting than similar work here.

But there is an enormous choice of types of work as well as quality in any given time in New York. There is a fine Jasper Johns retrospective at the Whitney Museum, presenting him as a son of Ce-



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mon interests. Along with the character of journalist photography his images have composition and cultivated tones.

Our favorite comment by Winogrand, at a point when he knew this exhibition was planned for the Museum of Modern Art, the ultimate in art validation, went like this: "Nobody is interested in whether you work. Nobody is encouraging you. There's nobody waiting to see your next roll of film. You have to have your own desperation."

That statement could have applied to Cezanne during his lifetime. It's marvelous that this great formalist painter is now having an unprecedented popularity, though the crowd made it virtually impossible to contemplate the subtle tensions of abstraction and reality as they should be. His color and composition sang from across the room, in the few precious glimpses without bodies intervening.

In other art areas of New York there were surprises and jolts not unrelated to hometown Austin.

In the big loft district called Soho, where artists live and large gallery spaces present some of the

zanne in painterly touch; the Charles Burchfield exhibit at the Kennedy Gallery made his 1920s wallpaper designs look like 1970s art on a smaller scale.

A legend personified was the experience of meeting Isabel Bishop, whose painting of women in everyday life have been consistently a part of American art since the 1930s. At 75, she commutes by subway for an hour to her studio, seven days a week. But she still expresses anxiety about her paintings, hard to believe for a person of her eminence.

Lastly, there was the pleasure of seeing *New York Times* former critic John Canaday, a University of Texas graduate who was a guest teacher here last spring. His pronouncement on the state of art? The loose abstraction of Jasper Johns is passe. What will prevail is realism in a new way.

Pictorialism exhibit refreshing change

From a time and place where Fine Art Principles were widely believed comes an engaging exhibit of photographs resembling paintings. Though the original intent was serious, the images are humorous today, but they are also technically fascinating.

Over 200 photographs by both professionals and amateurs done around the first four decades of this century in California are exhibited in an area upstairs in the Michener Gallery on the University of Texas campus, 21st and Guadalupe.

ENTITLED "California Pictorialism," the exhibit by the 17 photographers manifests an amazingly unified style: fuzzy focus, a dim and narrow tonal range and a preference for romantic interpretation of subject matter.

Pretentiously attempting to express universal attitudes are the images of unsalacious nudes posed on rocks against a moody sky by Anne Brigman. Her titles reveal the intent: "The Wondrous Globe" (a young boy, nude, crouching on a rock looking at a translucent ball which might actually be a balloon), and "The Source" (a crouching nude female holding a tiled vase on her shoulder from which water pours). Her images so much follow what some painters were doing in the 19th century that the ideas seem to be stolen from them.

Deliberately imitating Renaissance and Baroque paintings are the portraits by William Mortensen, virtually unbelievable as photographs.

MANIPULATION of both the subject and the printing process was not only accepted practice for this whole group of photographers, but Morten-



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sen taught it to 3,000 students in his own school. Through a series of articles in *Camera Craft* he argued with Ansel Adams that the print Adams considered finished was only the raw material for the true artist.

One of the processes he used was called Bromoil, which involved applying thinned greasy inks over a bleached silver print with a brush. The line between painting and photography becomes thin to the point of cracking with Mortensen's techniques, though presumably if the basic image made through the camera and film is retained, it is a photograph.

Other devices used were abrasion of the print with a razor blade to lighten tones, texture screens put between the negative and the paper while printing, and toning the print with a dye bath or coffee.

THE RULES of aesthetics that this group chose to follow were stated in "Photography as a Fine Art" as early as 1901 by Charles H. Caffin. The expression of beauty was the aim, done by following the laws of composition combined with technical training. It is evident throughout that the soft atmospheric effects of the painters James McNeil Whistler, and George Inness had a strong influence on these pictorialists with cameras.

In some ways the manipulation of

subject and print by the photographer is refreshing to our time and place with its emphasis on straight photography.

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For a select comparison with recent Austin area photography the Aperture Gallery in Tri-Towers has a juried exhibit of photographs as part of the current festival, Women and Their Work.

THOUGH MOST of the images have sharp focuses and wide tonal range, they were all obviously selected for composition.

But they represent more than that. There is a good though modest range of photographic styles from the up-

dated nostalgia by Martha Berryman, the manipulated process by Valerie Keller, and some excellent group activity shots by Linda Kerr and Phyllis Frede.

What the camera is able to record in detail combined with the photographer's attitude toward the human condition is remarkably effective in several images of people-in-settings. Nancy Keeler's girl in a hotel room is one, as is Frede's girl and boy embracing in the barred doorway of a closed clothing store. Emotion to the point of frenzy is the subject well-conveyed by C. J. Simmons in her series on a revivalist meeting. It's a good show.

Derived from his people

Pena imagery effective

A healthy element in regional art is manifest in Amado Pena's paintings and drawings: they are inventive and they draw upon his roots.

Pena is one of the few Chicano artists to achieve a stylistic maturity that utilizes a sophisticated training yet is not seduced into an imitation of general mainstream American art on the one hand, or the nostalgic Indian business on the other.

HIS EXHIBIT at Wagner Gallery gives an abundant display of proficiency with line drawing, watercolor and serigraphy. Derived from Mexican folk art as is his color, pattern, and much of the subject matter, his work also displays a commercial designer's sense of impact. Black areas combined with black line set the design; then brilliant color is worked as a filler, or as an alternative background.

One can't miss the influence of Pop art of the 1960s in Pena's stylized cloud and sunset patterns reminiscent of Peter Max, or his lollipop-headed flowers. But with Pena's imagery, it works, enhancing the fanciful combinations of life today with elements representing Indian culture.

Some of his most charming images utilize members of his family. In one, a man wearing Indian turquoise jewelry lies on the floor playing with two children, while his attractive young wife in modern dress sits in a chair beside a table on which is a coffee mug, ash tray, and ceramic figurine. Through the window is a bicycle, and a yellow-headed oscillating sprinkler.

PENA'S WORK hasn't always reflected domestic happiness and peace with the world. Nor has it always had a "folk art" appearance.

He grew up in Laredo, and attended Texas A & I University in Kingsville, where he received bachelor and master degrees in art. For a time he worked in large, flat areas of brilliant color in a semi-abstract arrangement.

In more recent years his art has reflected the political Chicano movement. During the early '70s he produced a number of poster-like serigraphs in which the forms relate to the great 19th century Mexican poster-illustrator Jose Guadalupe Posada. They are dynamic expressions of the standard Chicano political imagery: Mexican revolutionaries, the lettuce workers strike, police brutality.

SOME OF Pena's posters were in the Chicano art exhibition at the Contemporary Art Museum in Houston this summer. He also exhibited in the "Raices Antiguas-Visiones Nuevas" at the National Collection of Fine Arts, a division of the Smithsonian Institution, in July.

Now an Austin resident, Pena is an influential art instructor at L.C. Anderson High School, and is a consultant on Chicano art to other Texas school districts.

His work habits are impressive, occupying after-teaching hours from 8 p.m. until 3 a.m. several nights a week. Finding art production in isolation depressing, he works in the midst of his lively young family and visiting friends.

AMADO PENA'S imagery and personal concerns derive from his people, whether his immediate family or the larger political community. These, in turn correspond with national sympathy for minority affairs. Fortunately, he is an effective artist as well.



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Exciting murals depict life in ancient China

Unearthed from tombs of two exciting periods of Chinese art are murals illustrating the daily life of the people. Paintings of farming, food preparation, juggling, polo games and court attire make vivid the ancient Han and T'ang dynasties, dating from about 200 B.C. to 800 A.D.

The images are from 10 tombs, discovered 25 years ago in the North Central area of China. They have been faithfully copied by artisans on large papers, and sent to the University of Texas, Michener Gallery, by the People's Republic of China and the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

SOME OF THE officials from the Liaison Office of the People's Republic of China traveled to be with the exhibition at its opening, and approved every detail in its presentation to the public. They acknowledged pride in archaeological excavations for following "Chairman Mao's policy of making the past serve the present," and considered the loan of the exhibition a continuation of policy to "work for relations between the Chinese people and American people."

The Han dynasty was co-existent with four centuries of the Roman Empire, though there was little contact except through the overland silk trade. The Han ruled most of the present territory of China and extended its rule over foreign peoples far beyond the natural Chinese boundaries.

Following a period of disruption, the T'ang dynasty in the 7th century was able to re-establish the prestige of China at home and abroad at the level of Han times.

THE HAN TOMBS were built for important regional officials. The murals were created for the enjoyment of the occupant's soul, and were illustrative of his activities, key achievements and his functionaries. Not religious in character, they yet reflected ancestor worship.

The oldest images are the most lively, from the Han period; yet they look the most modern like

the shorthand depiction of figures in comics. From one tomb are drawings on individual bricks which carry the parallel with present day comics further in showing sequential actions from within one rectangle to another. In others, there are words painted into the scene, such as the Chinese character for stove, beside a drawing of a stove.

The humor and looseness in the way Han murals were painted is shocking when one expects a time as ancient as the Roman Empire to have produced a solemn art. Some of the verve has to do with all lines being done with a brush, used quickly in a thick to thin dash.

SINCE THE CHINESE write with a brush, such skill is learned in childhood. It is doubted if these copies could have been adequately done by a person without long training in brushwork calligraphy.

The tradition of copying paintings is old and respected in China. Artists are willing to steep themselves in a past culture in order to reproduce both the spirit and visual form of a prior art, much as do performers of classical music or Shakespearean plays in our time.

Drips and textures of deterioration have been depicted as thoroughly as the drawings themselves. More fragile than true fresco painting, most of these were done in mineral colors and ink on a dry plaster or whitewash coating over a brick wall.

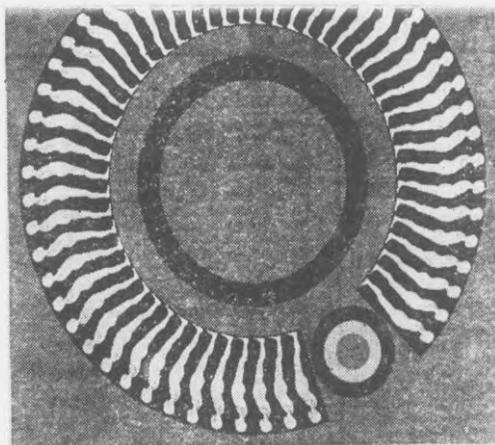
THE FOUR T'ANG tombs represented here were of princes and a princess, and show court attire, ceremonial processions, falconry and polo games. The images are larger than the Han, more detailed and more formally beautiful.

One unfortunate prince was put to death at the age of 19 for criticizing his grandmother, Empress Wu. His final resting place has elaborate murals depicting a large procession of horses, carriages and men carrying banners and feathered fans, near exotic pavilions built on towers.

The Crown Prince's soul was accompanied by female palace attendants, some of whom wore men's costumes. Court dress and cosmetic fashions changed with a rapidity comparable to ours.

WE RELATE TO the humanistic qualities present in these murals and find pleasure in the fluidity and beauty of their execution.

Public tours on Sunday at 2 p. m. will be conducted by docents.



Ernest Trova's Falling Man Variant



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Trova's Falling Man a social comment

In a cold exercise of the intellect, Ernest Trova produced a singular sign for modern man: an armless, sexless, featureless humanoid, entitled "Falling Man."

Varying in size from six inches to seven feet, this image is cast in molds of regimented uniformity and is finished to a machinelike gloss in brass or chrome plate. As sculpture it can grow the fins and wings of a plane or the handle of a gun, all providing a comment on contemporary urban humanity.

ON VIEW AT the University of Texas Art Building's Huntington Gallery is a Trova retrospective, which, though limited, reveals indecisive artistic beginnings and the break-through to his major idea. If it doesn't convince us of his artistic pre-eminence, it does establish Trova as having one brilliant thought and a commercial designer's skill in presentation and marketing.

For along with the small and large sculpture pieces are many silk-screened designs utilizing the Falling Man shape in colors and patterns keyed to a quick and high impact. As good office art the idea and the execution blend perfectly. Impersonal company man repeated in circles and squares, and reproduced by impersonal reproducing machines.

As philosophical contemplation for one aspect of man-in-art in the world today, Trova has hit the mark. Falling Man epitomized the condition of the hero in a technological culture, as well as expressing a per-

izing effects of bureaucracies and science on everyone.

THERE IS only one large scaled piece in this exhibit, and it has a life sized chrome-plated humanoid strapped to a mechanically revolving hospital bed that works. It didn't require much imagination to place a cast figure on the bed and put a common hand vibrator on his chest linked by plastic tubes to his navel, but it nevertheless has an effect on the viewer, revolting but real.

This Trova exhibit has flaws. He has done other big show pieces that would have increased the visual dynamics of this total display, which is sparse. Fine though his main conception is, his works have little carrying power. The sets of three unprimed canvases with one figure only in each, have no intrinsic power, either in the drawing or in the quality of the paint application.

Trova was a department store display designer at the time he created the Falling Man Image in 1961; and he was thrust from obscurity in St. Louis to national prominence. Prior to that he painted in the style of de Kooning, Gorky and Tomlin to gauge from what is displayed here of that period.

HE LEARNED from these imitative paintings, but even they lack the passion of their precursors and become exercises in abstract expressionism.

But whatever Trova's limitations, his one principal conception, that of Falling Man, manifests a chilling

Bass drawings, etchings full of fascinating imagery

With the richness of resonance into dreamlike fantasies combining present and past worlds the etchings and drawings of Tony Bass at Garner and Smith Gallery have some of the most fascinating best contemporary imagery on view in town.

Playing upon Renaissance costuming and the mounted horse are his card series, a group of six prints with titles such as "Queen of Spades" and "Jack of Diamonds." In these, faces are detailed, and the partial outline of a horse is drawn, but enigmatic shadows blur the bodies. Placed in front of a rectangle implying both barrier and space, the forms of horse and rider struggle for conscious definition, leaving the completion of the



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image and its meaning to the viewer.

Sonorous earth colors enhance Bass's technical, superb and varied vocabulary of techniques.

His "Knight, Death, and the Devil" is a modern variant of the 1513 engraving by Albrecht Durer and bears an interesting comparison in the ex-

pression of man's relationship to threatening forces about him.

In Durer's image, man, his horse and dog are the heroic embodiment of good surviving evil. In Bass's etching the convoluted forms and fading into space of the horse and rider tell us that unknown forces — the subconscious — control man as much as he controls them.

MOTION, dramatically and frighteningly expressed, is depicted in "Chair Ride." In a solitary armchair, situated in an empty room, a man sits, while streaks and a ghost image of his previous position indicate a violent and sudden act. A motionless bull is prodded in the entry, conveying the ambiguity: what is vision and what is reality?

Bass lives in Austin and exhibits largely in the Southwest. His works merit a much broader reputation than he has yet acquired.

In another room at Garner and Smith is a concurrent exhibit of colored etchings by Graciela Rado-Boulanger, a Bolivian now living in Paris.

HER WORKS ARE charming variants on the theme of children at play. They combine pattern and stylized shapes against a textured background. The aesthetic archaisms of a higher order than her theme might suggest, partially through technical excellence, but also through the restraint of a taste that hasn't left her open to the cliché of superbug eyes and frozen smiles.

An innovative show combining stained glass work done by 15 Austin craftspersons with colored photography also by Austin artists is on view at Aperture Gallery in Tri-Towers on W. 24th Street.

THE SPACE with two-storied

glass walls lends itself beautifully to the stained glass display, which in itself is remarkable for the quality of work and the variety of designs. Much is there from Art Deco and Art Nouveau styles to images dealing with symbolic content and illusion of landscape.

It's a rare opportunity to see the artistic achievement of local stained glass workers altogether. Further, it substantiates the reputation of Austin as a place where artists choose to live and produce work of a high quality.

In conjunction with the glass display are colored prints by eight photographers who individually have used a range of processes from Etch-a-brome to Ektachrome in commercial processing by the Meisel lab in Dallas.

ENJOYMENT of the color possibilities inherent in the different processes would be enhanced by information and labels. For instance, Kelly Puckett's colors have a brilliance and his forms a crisp quality through use of the Chromchrome process, while David Montgomery's are more softly fused due to direct printing through Kodachrome negatives.

The imagery among the group is surprisingly similar. It is strongly influenced by the graphic ideas prevalent in much contemporary painting, but with a photographer's focus. Most are of parts of buildings or objects, and emphasize frontality, simplicity, and obvious composition. They are elegant, but cold, like Mondrian choosing through a camera lens.

With some relief, the corny images of palm trees and a sunset by Chip Anderson and the ludicrous bare-breasted female standing in water by Tom Holt provide humor.



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ACVAA organizes artists

Meeting points out variety of local work

Difficult as it seemed to get such stalwart individualists as visual artists to organize, it has been accomplished through the Austin Contemporary Visual Arts Association, more commonly known as ACVAA, pronounced ak'vuh.

The new board was introduced at the December meeting and the hundred or so artists who turned up at Scholtz's were treated to a slide show of work by whom-ever among them wished to bring three slides and introduce him or her artistself.

The slide show exemplified the variety of work being done in Austin and revealed names known and unknown in connection with their respective styles. It was surprising and impressive, especially in a couple of the sculpture slide sets.

Such an exchange of visual and verbal

data through a loose, all-encompassing organization has been lacking here until ACVAA's recent founding by an imaginative temporary board. It will provide a real stimulus for the art community through the exchange of ideas in their meetings and an alternate monthly news-sheet.

People in the gallery business are as welcome as the artists. In fact, the permanent board has two non-artist gallery owners on it who represent widely differing art preferences: Dana Ravel and Jerry Wagner from galleries bearing their respective names. Other board members represent utilitarian crafts, fine art styled crafts, realist painting, abstract painting, and sculpture — a good cross section of interests.

Like going to Jerusalem to be listed in the census, artists need to turn in their names and addresses for an Austin directory sponsored by ACVAA of its membership, due Jan 1. Such directory will be placed in museums and galleries throughout the state, as well as sent to the artists. Membership fees for the non-profit organization are \$5 student, \$10 professional, \$25 supporting, \$50 patron. Mail to P.O. Box 5990, Austin 78763.

In addition to the directory a registry of slides of local art and individual data sheets is called for, and will be kept on file

by Laguna Gloria Art Museum. For information on proper format of such, write for the recent ACVAA newsheet, or call the president Nancy Moeller, 452-6161. No specific deadline on this.

The newsheet contains information on competitions, gallery and museum shows, and pertinent issues before the Austin Arts Commission. If ever artists seek a chance to act as a political voice in relationship to city government for change in their interests, ACVAA will be prodding the vehicle to do it.

Another area where concerted action by such a group might facilitate change for the better is through pressure on the aging Texas Fine Arts Association. The unfortunately dismal TFAA State Citation Show currently at Laguna Gloria illustrates the decline of interest in that organization on the part of the better artists all over the state.

But the structure of TFAA exists, and does a good thing in the open-to-anyone Annual Exhibition, and in their traveling exhibits, which take current art to small towns. Also, TFAA has three slots for shows at Laguna a year, plus prize and purchase money. Joining Laguna Gloria is an automatic TFAA membership and puts you in direct touch with those shows and monetary awards.

So, why fight alone, when you can join?