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# SHOW WORLD

Sunday, January 1, 1978

## COMPLETE TV LISTINGS

ALL  
AGES  
IS  
ENTERTAINMENT

### art

By MARY MCINTYRE

As with the climate, the Austin art scene was washed over with movements and shows blowing in from elsewhere, while yet assimilating some of the foreign with the indigenous.

The women's movement arrived through a University of Texas-sponsored exhibition "Women Artists 1550-1950," and also with a locally produced festival of the arts, "Women and Their Work."

In the latter, there were exhibits of work by regional artists, and panel discussion programs that brought women of accomplishment in many facets of art nationally into contact with the local scene. It was marred by the spontaneously loud exuberance on the part of lesbians. This was received as intimidation at times, and cut down attendance at later events.

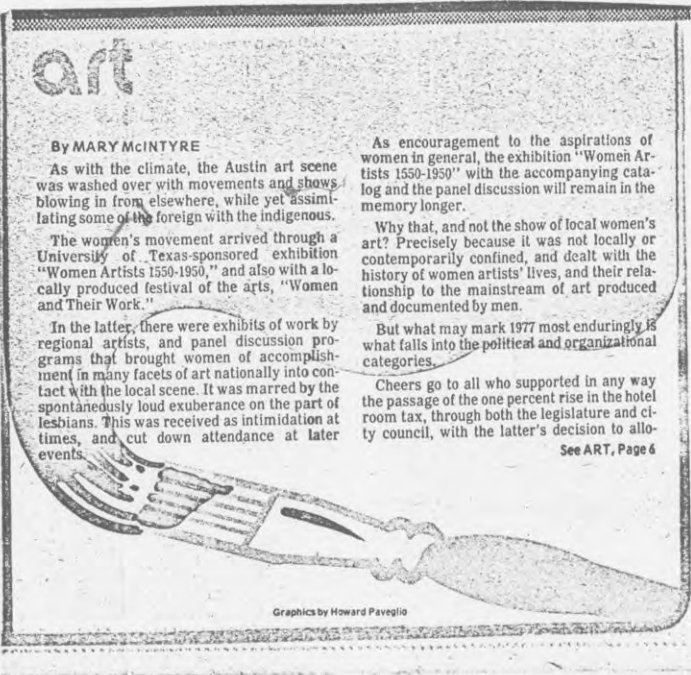
As encouragement to the aspirations of women in general, the exhibition "Women Artists 1550-1950" with the accompanying catalog and the panel discussion will remain in the memory longer.

Why that, and not the show of local women's art? Precisely because it was not locally or contemporarily confined, and dealt with the history of women artists' lives, and their relationship to the mainstream of art produced and documented by men.

But what may mark 1977 most enduringly is what falls into the political and organizational categories.

Cheers go to all who supported in any way the passage of the one percent rise in the hotel room tax, through both the legislature and city council, with the latter's decision to allow

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Graphics by Howard Pavaglio

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cate one-half of the money generated by that to the arts. And, following up was the Austin Arts Commission holding open meetings to listen to the public on how we think it should be used.

Local art organizations were created to promote their members' mutual interests. The most potentially helpful is the Austin Contemporary Visual Arts Association, which attempts to be the umbrella over more-particularized groups by becoming an information source for all people function-

ing in the visual arts.

On educating the public, Lawrence Miller, director of Laguna Gloria Art Museum, keyed a series of exhibitions to the evolution of contemporary art. One was an American 20th century mini-art selection borrowed from the Fort Worth Art Museum. More controversial was the exhibit of words on the walls by two nationally known artists back in April.

It all seems to be leading up to the January opening of the Carl Andre sculpture ex-

hibit at Laguna, which is to be both a retrospective and new work. Andre has pared the definition of sculpture to its core, thus opening up non-traditional possibilities.

Photography in the gallery and museum areas has had good reception this year all over, though it certainly has not become commercially viable in Austin in this exhibition form. We have been exposed to some excellent exhibits at the University of Texas, which were keyed to photographic styles in history, and to some work by Austin pho-

tographers in galleries and at Laguna Gloria.

In terms of pushing experimentation in art and having a good time at it, the cooperative group which founded Trinity House Gallery this year has done that. They seek to form a Texas image in innovative art.

Impossible as it is to make a summary that includes all of what was significant in art, these are what leap to the mind at year's end.

Sunday, January 8, 1978



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## Exhibit shows evolution of Southwestern motif

Here at last is an extensive survey of paintings of the American West by the older generations, the founders of the Santa Fe and Taos artistic colonies and the American modernists who were fascinated by what the West evoked.

They read as heroic adventure. The emphasis is on man: both the physically active white man claiming a land and taming animals, and the noble savage depicted with respect for his strange rituals and as a fair match for the white man.

Upstairs at the Michener Gallery through Feb. 6 is this large exhibit of paintings from the Anschutz Collection.

It provides excellent examples from the formative decades of what is still the preferred theme of Southwestern art, Indians and the adventurous white man.

All but Fritz Scholder and one other of the artists represented were born in the 19th century. Most came to the West after the United States government surveys had been documented by illustrators in the 1850s and '60s, and after the first thrust of photographers recorded the vast scenery and the brutality of territorial seizure beginning in the 1860s.

id, moody, forbidding mass locking in a small community. The anonymous entourage of the flagellant Indians in the foreground symbolizes man's restricted efforts at redemption against fate.

Not only Blumenschein, but others, reached the transcendence they were after.

Georgia O'Keeffe, with inspired transfusion of reality into symbol, creates a metaphor for the spiritual condition of man in her view of an adobe church.

But there are others less successful. Nicholas Pechin comes off as a slick practitioner of European Impressionist slap-dash avoiding definition of anything significant to Indian culture and producing a still life of onions and a green glass pitched

So, they were not lacking images upon which to draw ideas.

But, in contrast to the more factual recording of the survey illustrators and the photograph, these painters conceived of their calling as an ennobling one.

Humans loom large in relation to the land. No painting projects the kind of overwhelming scale of cliffs to man as seen in early photographs of the Arizona Canyon de Chelly. None shows the desolation of the survivors from a massacre by Sioux of a mission in 1862 or the discovery by a lieutenant and frontiersman of a fully scalped hunter, photographed in 1869.

What the painters did was bring their European training and outlook to bear on the newest Promised Land, and transform it to their preferred measure.

This application of European concepts to the American West created an intended transcendence of the photograph. Western painting was to be a conveyor of ideas, stories more than facts.

Ernest Blumenschein created a most superb version of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains as a sol-

keyed to a quick titillation of the senses.

Many of the paintings on exhibit utilize Cezanne's painting style in patch-like grouping of strokes, and sometimes even his poses of figures and characteristic colors. The Cezannesque works vie in numbers with those done in Impressionist small broken strokes and light-hued color.

Someone in the future will organize an exhibit combining early photographs of the West with paintings. It will reveal to us the varying kinds of truth possible (or preferred) in each medium, and unite these divergent modes into a comprehensive history of visual thought about the American West.

Until then, the search for our past reality is done through such fine exhibits as this in painting, compared to photographs reproduced in books.

# Andre's sculpture utilizes viewer

Fully 10 months ago the controversial Minimalist sculptor, Carl Andre, visited Austin to view and discuss the exhibition potentials of Laguna Gloria Art Museum for both a retrospective of his work and a new assemblage on the grounds.

He was entertained at a dinner at The Headliners, which was elegant in every conventional respect but for Andre's uniform of impeccably clean coveralls and his flowing beard.

D. J. Sibley entertained the New Yorker with an account of his cultivation of the jojoba plant on his West Texas ranch. The jojoba plant, in case you don't know, produces a bean that contains a potential substitute for sperm whale oil in fluid drive mechan-

isms such as automatic transmissions.

And then D. J. felt comfortable about pinpointing the basis of Carl Andre's life work.

"What is art, Mr. Andre?" he queried.

"First, it is an activity by a human being, a man, woman or child," Andre replied.

"And second, Mr. Andre?" Sibley requested.

"Second, it takes a form. With sculpture it involves mass. With painting it involves the electromagnetic spectrum."

Indisputable. But D. J. persisted, "And third, Mr. Andre?"

"Ah, that is much more difficult," Andre replied. Although that was nearly the end of

that conversation, what is involved in "third" has been elucidated during Andre's week in Austin this January. It has to do with the value of the work to man: it's historical origins and whether it related to its time.

The artist declared that value in the future is impossible to determine because it is beyond our lifespan. The socially useful function of art is in giving pleasure, and throwing off symbols about society that society can't fully account for, because we can't ever understand society fully.

Carl Andre has been an artist since youth, and always an abstract artist. He is one of the few people in the world who has cut through all the inviting options of life to sim-



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plify his own to coveralls (he worked on a railroad in the '60s) and art work that is within a basic definition of sculpture, but is innovative to an extraordinary degree.

He has confounded the critics as well as the public with the simplicity of his conceptions. He takes pre-formed materials such as cement blocks, bricks, cut timbers, and flat metal squares and places them in arrangements that are stacked or laid without mortar. They can be handled by one man, and disassembled, packaged and sent on the next plane, or removed as "art" and returned to the world of building materials from which they came.

He courteously acknowledges that a lot of

people aren't going to like his work, because "if one's matrix is entirely representational then they won't accept my work at all."

Since he usually deals with selected numbers of units, and with geometrical shapes, it sounds dehumanizing.

But contrary to how a written description reads, the experience of confronting the actual work grouped as it is in the small rooms of Laguna Gloria Art Museum is as a stimulating invitation to be a participant. The spectator enters, and becomes transformed into a finisher of the works as he unavoidably moves on top of their spaces, contributing as he walks to their patina of age and time.

Outside on the grounds, Andre placed his new work, entitled "Cuts Terrane" ("terrane" being a geological spelling of terrain). It is composed of 992 concrete blocks of solid aggregate.

With his usual courtesy for the environment, he had selected a slightly depressed area of clipped grass land that is bordered naturally by a variety of trees on three sides and the entering drive on the fourth. The blocks were initially arranged in a solid rectangle. He then removed 30 blocks from each corner, varying in numbers of rows, and positioning the removed blocks on top of the remaining layer in four conformations, each equivalent to the rectangular corner vacated.

"Cuts Terrane" functions as an inviting courtyard, though as sculpture it is a didactic piece, relating to additive and subtractive processes in sculpture, and the traditional positive-negative relationships.

The importance of the Carl Andre exhibition for Laguna Gloria Art Museum is in establishing our mu-

seum as a fully professional institution with security, climate control, and proper handling and display of works equal to the standards for loan requirements of major museums.

As recently as this past fall, Laguna's reputation for being a quaint house on lovely grounds but with everything wrong in their professional practices still haunted a request from the curator, Gene Binder, to the Museum of Modern Art in New York to borrow the photographs of Garry Winogrand's exhibit, "Public Relations."

"Surely, you have to be kidding," the MOMA person said. But LGAM got it, for 1979, after submitting documentation of proper insurance and security.

It also puts Laguna on the national map in the culture world. There had been no Carl Andre retrospective since 1970 at the Guggenheim Museum in New York. Though this one

is small, dictated entirely by the limited space in the museum, it will travel to seven other institutions throughout 1978 and 1979, including such prestigious places as the Chicago Art Institute. These institutions pay Laguna a loan fee of \$3,500, which defrays the expense of handling and initiating the exhibition.

Also, for the record, Andre assumed all his own expenses in flying here, and residing in a hotel. He purchased cement blocks used in "Cuts Terrane," so that there would be no confusion on the rights of ownership. It will be on loan to Laguna for six months.

After all was done, Lawrence Miller, the LGAM director, questioned Carl Andre on why he agreed to the exhibition of old and new work at a small and scarcely known museum.

"You asked," was the reply.



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## UT art faculty exhibit stimulating

A most pleasurable experience it is to view the University of Texas Art Faculty Exhibition this year. A great variety of ideas are inherent in the works of over 50 artist/teachers from the studio and art education sectors of the department; and the works themselves appear better crafted and more handsomely presented than previously.

Accompanying the display is an excellent catalog with biographical data, a photograph of each artist and an example of his work. The catalog should be a collector's item for anyone interested in Austin art and in the influences such a powerful institution as the Department of Art has in this region and well beyond. It's a bargain, too, at \$3.

Joyous and stimulating as one finds this show, it is impossible to determine a major theme, or a singular way of describing the imagery. The viewer's eye leaps from the three erect panels of Richard Jordan, whose "depth" is no illusion but an inch deep gouging of a thickly encrusted surface.

Placed in this same area are the brilliantly colored fantasy paintings of Kelley Fearing with a spewing whale in one combined with people dancing in ecstasy on a beach, the

— Chaos is also staged in Robert Lever's painted wooden cut-out figures of war games, arranged on a painted table. The figures have khaki-clad bodies of men, but heads consist of lower jaws containing teeth, and nozzles above that emitting streams of smoke and fire.

Lever's other paintings in gouache on paper suggest comic strips in the way figures are drawn, both individually and in multiple variations on the same sheet. They have a narrative form containing actions that are sequential, and ideas that are funny and rather horrible at the same time, and not totally comprehensi-

smooth cool paint surface of Bill Wiman's photorealist image, the group of sculptures by Charles Umlauf, which include a new development on the theme of "Christ Teaching the Children" and an exuberant abstraction in pink Turkish marble. Somehow, Kay Miller's black and white abstract painting manages to assert itself through the sculpture group.

So, there is not one theme but many, among which are fantasy, realism, decorative order, and religious ideas conveyed through Christian forms or through invented forms with religious connotations. Among these last are the cylindrical ceramic sculptures of Don Herron, which contain a kind of totem image in the top. This year he uses clouds, crafted as if they are sacred objects, "mantra" images to incite dreams.

An interesting variant of forms with religious connotation are the transformed objects arranged into sculpture by Thana Lauhakaikul. A new member of the faculty, Lauhakaikul was born in Thailand, educated in Bangkok and Massachusetts. The ritual quality of his strange arrangements is effected through rhythmic repetition of sharpened rods, resembling darts, and through

ble. His statement seems to be that human beings behave with hostility towards each other, being both ridiculous and without reason.

Bradley Peterson, a new instructor on the faculty, also does a kind of comic-image art, with decorated borders. His paintings pull images from external experience, but through unconscious association, they are placed in a bizarre and decorative arrangement. One seems to tell a story about bees, hands, a giraffe's head, female legs, logs and a shadow game, but invites the viewer to project onto it his own interpretation.

Of the several photographers in the exhibit, Robert Salomon has some superlative color prints, with gorgeous reflections in a chrome soup ladle in one. His work should be impressive since he has done advertising photography for accounts including Pearl Beer, Neiman-Marcus and Sakowitz.

Some of the other beautiful objects are the exquisite collages of both Vincent Mariani and Kenneth Fiske, and Mariani's "Light Wands," and Paul Hatgil's glistening pyramids as wall designs; and there's more. It's a fine show.

placement of various parts in a formal way, as if to produce magical results.

"Chaos Staged" is the title of a lithograph by Kenneth Hale, and might be a theme that carries through the work of a few artists. "Staged" implies control or the planned perimeters of an idea within which impulse (chaos) is free to operate. To a degree this is also evident in Everett Spruce's new work, with horizontal banding a controlling basis over which brushstrokes dance, still conveying his lifelong devotion to landscape.

## Bank-museum action exemplary

Imagine expanding the space of the city's art museum by 200 percent. And moving it to a more accessible location; and providing the top security not possible in a structure designed as a house.

It has happened to Laguna Gloria Art Museum through the coalition of First Federal Savings of Austin at Tenth and Brazos with Laguna's current professional management.

The initiating factors were the imagination of a native Austin resident with long-standing interests in art, in conjunction with an executive newcomer who had ideas about community involvement for his business.

Ada McElhenney, an artist, and trustee of Laguna Gloria, entered the recently completed downtown glass structure of First Federal in early 1976 for purposes of securing a home improvement loan. Spencer Blain, the president, came to meet and extend personal courtesy to the client.

With creative instinct, McElhenney commented on the spacious area near the main doors, that she had a longstanding involvement with art in Austin, and might be able to help Blain come up with some plan for the space.

Blain was receptive, and replied that the area was originally planned for community use, and that art was one of the things he wanted to do.

Six months later, a productive interchange of proposals was begun between Spencer Blain, and Laguna Gloria represented by John Kingsbery, chairman of the board, and Lawrence Miller, the director.

What was shared from the beginning was the basis that there should be professional handling of the space, instead of the haphazard quality of exhibits or the casual installations and care of the objects that are the usual problems of bank exhibitions.

First Federal's generosity through the museum to the community has been unequalled in a business-art combination in Austin. The space is contracted to Laguna Gloria Art Museum almost as a tenant with 24 hour access.

What the savings institution is providing is amazing: an expensive separation of the 2,300 square foot space from the banking activities, security, maintenance and cleaning, underground parking for staff and visitors, publicity through nor-

mal advertising channels, and an ongoing contribution for management. This last included the construction of sturdy display walls.

In return LGAM provides a trained staff person situated there as coordinator, exhibitions and installations of museum quality, and an already heady schedule of educational programs, gallery talks, and performances in both day and evening hours.

The area was inaugurated in mid-January with an exhibition of Texas Landscapes by Frank Reaugh on loan from the University of Texas, Humanities Research Center. The initial group given an informative tour by a LGAM docent was the First Federal staff itself.

Reaugh was as important as an artistic pioneer in this state as he was an artist. He established himself as an independent character, a teacher, and promoter of art, while producing a large body of work on the subject of the Texas land and cattle.

Anna Miller of Austin remembers as a child studying with Frank Reaugh in Dallas during the few years before his death in 1945. She recognizes his art now as being Impressionist in style, but believes



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Reaugh would have vehemently denied this modernist influence during his life.

A future exhibition made possible by this space will be the prestigious Sid Richardson Collection of Western Art.

As Blain said, "So many people think of Laguna Gloria as one weekend a year. . . Fiesta. But it lives all year round. There is something at Laguna most of the time that can challenge a person's mind."



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## Phillip Sage views subjects like a tourist

At first glance Phillip Sage's etchings of New Orleans and Plains, Ga., at Gallerie Ravel seem to be conventional romantic views done strictly for the tourist market.

He has a steamboat in the middle of one image, musicians at Preservation Hall in another, and a whole series on the "Carter Country," including Billy and his buddies in the back room of Billy's gas station.

But there's more to Phillip Sage's work than that. They are well done, for one thing, in a difficult and tedious medium.

Then, too, his motivation to etch the image he chooses is a lot more complex than simply trying to hit the market immediately.

Sage was in Austin for the opening, and spoke freely about working as a commercial artist in New York before his move to New Orleans in 1971, and his use of the

photographed image as a basis for his style.

After receiving a degree in business administration in New Hampshire, he went to New York where he studied art at Cooper Union at night while working in commercial art for Continental Can and Lederle Laboratory and in photography for *Look* magazine.

"I came away angry about commercial art. I told my boss that I was quitting because I was tired of selling products I don't believe in," Sage said.

He moved to New Orleans with the idea that he would paint or etch whatever he liked, which involved a basic preference for realistic images and the picturesque.

However, the artist and the businessman within him concurred that there should be a way to make a living doing his own work, and was willing to think of what he enjoyed doing that would sell. He com-

mented, "I resented the idea that you have to do something else to make a living."

Sage has his own etching press, his own darkroom, and until recently had a public relations person promoting his work. He makes sketches, but also takes numerous photographs of whatever interests him for information on "What the eye doesn't take away or the memory retain."

But, more involved with photographs than simply details, Sage uses the distortion created by a wide-angle lens to effect a push backward into space.

For "Billy's Back Room" he used many photographs: of each character separately, the cluttered background separately, and some shots combined. He selectively moves and eliminates items while determining his composition, but keeps much detail for enrichment.

Except for the updated view of the world as seen through a camera lens, Sage is working in a venerable American tradition of etchings as done for illustration. Though there is no text with him, the pictures have a style and convey information that is similar to 19th and early 20th century artwork for journals.

For such, he has the right attitude, that of a tourist in his own land.



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## Splendid exhibit reveals ancient Persia to viewer

As King Tutankhamon spoke to the present through art, so too, are the ancient Persians through the fragments of their lives, here, saying we ate, drank, adorned ourselves, and conquered.

Guardsmen from the king's magnificent palace at Persepolis lead the visitor on a trip into the past at the Michener Gallery. There, the energized forms of animals tell of the nomadic life, the horse, as transport, the lion as foe, and the curve-horned goat the source of food and cloth.

Persia in its heyday before Christ was a flash in history for 200 years. A brilliant empire was formed under the charismatic leadership of Achaemenian kings who conquered and ruled a vast area only a third smaller than the United States, and composed of exotic tribes and sub-nations.

Enemies of Greece, the great Persian leaders from Cyrus down clashed with the Greek city-states, forcing their armed unity and thus their power.

Eventually, the Greeks under Alexander defeated the Persians, as they traveled over mountains to the ceremonial capital, Persepolis, where they avenged the sack of Athens by the Persian king Xerxes a century before.

Alexander called them "barbarians," and the historian of the ancient world, Herodotus, thought the golden decorations of their garments pretentious display.

But their objects are beautiful to us. The snarling lion heads in thin gold with rhythmic whorls for manes that were sewn on borders of dress for personal embellishment are exquisitely rendered.

And the stiff animal-headed necklace called a "torque" evokes prestige through its glistening beauty, just as it did when given by the king as a sign of honor in Persian times.

Exotic vessels for liquids are there. Shallow silver libation bowls decorated with stylized plant forms were held by one hand with the thumb over the rim. Filled with wine, the bowl was tilted to empty on the ground, as a sacrifice.

But for drinking at lavish Persian banquets there is a silver and gold "rhyton" in the design of a horse's head. Made with no handle or stable base, the "rhyton" was dipped into an open wine container to fill, and then held as wine spouted from a hole into the drinker's mouth.

Glass was rare and expensive, and as luxurious as gold. Several beautiful examples are here, and two of the most fascinating look as modern as 40 years ago. Tubes for holding eye-liner look like Art Deco designs in chevron patterns of light and dark stripes.

The emperors knew to use art to aggrandize power, and brought the best craftsmen from conquered nations into the palace workshops. One poignant fragment has a graffiti drawing by a Greek of a fellow countryman, scratched into the shoe of a statue of the great monarch, Darius I.

Then, in turn, Persian customs were spread. As Egypt came under their rule for 122 years, it is no surprise to find statues from Egypt, made in the Egyptian style, but wearing the Persian tunic with sleeves, the "torque," and with the Persian gesture of clasp hands.

Local customs were accepted in the subject nations to a great degree. In relief sculptures depicting the bringing of tribute to the Persian king at Persepolis during the New Year's ceremony, the Medes and the Parthians can be identified by their hair and garment styles.

Vitality in the sculpture of animals exceeds that of humans in this ancient art. Magnificent animals in bronze were used as decoration for furni-

Relief of Persian guardsman from Persepolis, ca 486-464 B.C.

ture, or in stone as the crowns of columns. They convey a fusion of forms simplified and repeated for the effect of power, and the observation of naturalistic fact.

Set apart by the curator as "The Essence of Persian Art," animal sculptures are the masterpieces of the ancient Persian style.

This splendid exhibition is to the credit of Denise Schmandt-Besserat, assistant professor in the Department of Art of the University of Texas. She has selected and achieved the loan of treasures from some of the greatest museums of ancient art in the world.

It is beautifully installed, and clearly explained through Schmandt-Besserat's labels on each item, and her catalog.

As we lack direct contact with articles of ancient cultures in permanent collections in Austin, this exhibition is all the more significant.

It achieves one of the greatest functions of art: to convey the vitality and ideas of a people.



Loren Mozley's 'Big Pecans,' done in oil in 1951

## UT pays tribute to one of its own

Occasionally we have in our midst someone advanced in age who unites the past with the future by the evident acts of his life and by his memories.

The evidence of Loren Mozley is his retrospective exhibition of paintings spanning 40 years, and his historic effect on the thousands of artists who have sprung from the matrix of the University of Texas Department of Art, which he developed in large part.

A fine painter, a fine mind, intense discipline within himself and required of others, yet humor ... these characterize Mozley.

He grew up in New Mexico at a time when writers and artists were formulating the mystique of the American West, when their response was honest.

There weren't art schools within universities; and it was a conscious act of determination to leave the University of New Mexico in 1926 in order to become an artist, and learn directly from living among artists.

He knew great painters who came to discover the West and what it symbolized about the American character. John Marin was one, Georgia O'Keeffe, John Sloan, Andrew Dasburg were others.



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Part of his training came from living and painting in Paris in 1930 and '31 where he met the art people and frequented the museums, even copying a Cezanne in the Louvre for a friend.

His art was formulated through ideas of the late '20s and early '30s. He worked from nature but impressed upon it the patterns of his mind, what he calls, "my liking for order" and "the general habits of a generation or a period."

Order, indeed, Mozley simultaneously imposes upon and derives from nature a structure so visible that it unites all his work in an admirable consistency. Verticals and horizontals stabilize the scene while diagonals make connecting passages, and brushstrokes of a particular width embellish the surface.

Landscapes predominate. These are of Spain, Texas, Mexico, and New Mexico, and contain a variety of scenes each richly complex, yet

clear in their structure. It is as if the disorder of natural forms is needed to challenge him from a too rigid imposition of his will.

There are still lifes, carefully planned from objects he collected.

One of the richest in color, and most revealing of the artist's mind at work is titled, "The Artists's Cupboard." Mozley had a large box constructed with moveable horizontal and vertical divisions. Into the central rectangle he placed a skull wearing laurel leaves atop an old book. In other stalls he put shells, butterflies and dried twigs. Then he painted.

The catalog has a photograph of this original set-up, next to a reproduction of the painting. The set-up is a work of art in itself, but Mozley's finished picture is art pushed once more, a further revision to fulfill a man's conception.

This painting was done in Texas, long after Mozley came with his friend, Ward Lockwood, at the invitation of Bill Doty to set up an art department at UT in 1938.

Lockwood and Mozley challenged each other with the question, "How the hell do you make an art school?" They began with a materials list and

freshmen only. They put their jobs on the line for getting nude models, and endured the resulting flack.

To relieve the relative insularity of the students, they made themselves known to the community, serving on juries and on the board of the Texas Fine Arts Association, and began hiring artists for the faculty from outside the state.

For viewing art they brought in exhibitions that were hung in the regent's room. When there was an objection over the amount of foot traffic on the regents' carpet, Lockwood suggested, "Maybe we could put the carpet on the wall and walk on the paintings."

Mozley was chairman of the department in two different periods, and stubbornly held to certain basic standards and courses for the students, life drawing being one of them.

At this point in his history and ours, it's hard to say which is the more engaging, the man or his art. They are both of a piece, of unfolding excellence.

"Loren Mozley: A Retrospective," will be on view at the Huntington Gallery in the UT Art Building through March 28.

# Laguna exhibits puzzling

They're in orbit, those three people with exhibitions at Laguna Gloria Art Museum. Their minds go round and round.

Not much of what they work with is public stuff — only the photographs of the moon. Some of it can be understood if you relate to geometric puzzles; and some of it is very privately weird.

"AUDIENCES of the Moon" is the nifty title of the moon show (we thought maybe it was going to be a performance by one of those exotic cult groups Austin spawns). But it's photographs taken by machines in the moon time before men, and by machines and men on the moon and hanging in space around it.

Richard Maurer bounced a moon globe in his hands as he told a group one morning about how he figured that there were a lot of photographs of the moon hardly anybody had seen.

He followed his hunches and ended up looking at 32,000 of them. Ten thousand just happened to be in the office of a local geologist, William F. Muehlberger. Muehlberger possesses the fancy title of Principal Investigator for Apollo 16 and 17 Field Geology.

MAURER TOLD us about how the moon is the color of cement, that it is really a rock hanging in the sky, that it photographs truest in black and white because it actually appears gray.

He also tossed around the idea about what were these photographs doing in an art museum. He didn't quite answer that one.

Since people can't agree on what art is, and photographs have been



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certified as art lately, it doesn't much matter if those scientific photographs are shown in Laguna Gloria Art Museum, hung like art.

Nobody knew whether the crater they were looking at was two inches wide or two hundred miles. Nobody knew that the moon lander in one was 16 feet tall and the hump behind it was seven thousand feet tall and looked like a hump instead of a mountain because there is no atmosphere on the moon and no telephone poles to mark distance.

IT DIDN'T seem to matter. The band was playing and the wine was flowing and people danced the Schottish and the tango.

That was upstairs.

Downstairs are some triangular and some square designs in two rooms by Haynes Ownsby. They are exquisitely, carefully done. Some have nice colors. Some are black and white.

Ownsby was there that first morning, too, to talk to the group. He explained about how he made a very complex grid inside the triangles, and then started erasing parts, about how some of the designs related to Buckminster Fuller's octet truss, about how his main concerns are luminosity and space.

WE COULD see some of that while he talked, and they looked like really high class puzzle games.

The last exhibitor to talk, Al

Buscaglia, has these strange small projections from the wall. They are in one room with a few earlier paintings.

Not too early, though. He used to do portraits and landscapes before he got onto this one big idea and destroyed that early stuff that didn't relate.

This big idea he called "imponderables." In his development he kept bumping into "imponderables."

THERE HAS never been anything like it. They are wood carved in an abstract but irregular form, and painted with wavy lines. They are fastened to rectangular gray shapes made out of wood covered with canvas.

Buscaglia has some neat way of fastening them to the wall so they look like they float. Also, he likes the lights set so their shadows make multiple images in graduation shades.

Someone thought the recent ones looked like something unmentionable that comes from a human body, on a shingle. Very finely and exquisitely crafted, though, and hung like art.

## 'Ghostly' exhibit fascinating

As in the delirium of childhood illness when the bedpost assumed the specter of a monster, and anxieties became separate personages, the photographs of Clarence John Laughlin show ghosts inhabiting decayed Southern mansions and ruined churches.

At St. Edwards' University in the Moody Hall Atrium are Laughlin's hypnotic images, large format photographs with all the impact of traditional art photography and more.

They fit into a deeply rooted concept of the South as a place where ghosts inhabit ruined dwellings, crying for an era truncated by the Civil War.

Though we can discern that they are ladies draped in limp gowns with faces frozen as expressionless manikins or with mirrors for faces, they nonetheless reach our inner fascination with apparitions.

As photographs they stand full of traditional art qualities. The composition is strong and dramatic and tense, and they are manipulated by the photographer in the processing.

This is the antithesis of both the snap-

shot aesthetic so prominent in photography today, and the kind of photograph currently exhibited at Laguna Gloria Art Museum in "The Audiences of the Moon."

The moon photographs were taken for scientific purposes — to convey as much information as possible, which is also one basic function of photography. They reach the general spectator with a fair amount of fascination just because they are of the moon; and the moon is as ingrained as ghosts in both our private and shared mythologies.

However, as images hung on walls without adjacent information, they scarcely communicate. Our experience is earthbound with atmosphere, signposts, lakes instead of meteor holes.

Laughlin's photographs, on the contrary, convey decadence, and powerful mystery even without the titles, though his titles do add to the strength of the photographer's intent.

The Philadelphia Museum of Art had a major exhibition of Laughlin's photographs in 1973. This exhibit seems to be



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a spin-off from that and is being circulated nationally. It was first shown at the International Center of Photography, New York.

Many of the photographs in the exhibit are simply of architectural details that interested Laughlin. However, they are of such aesthetic power that they, too, seem charged with mystery.

What causes that communication is in part due to the still effective use of traditional art factors.

Eventually the public mind may learn enough about the moon for its coldly beautiful photographs to communicate without verbiage, but not yet.

## Giacometti exhibit a different view

Before the current of out-front realism, artists whose sensibilities were tied up with depicting human beings had to transform, brutalize, do anything but show man the way we see him.

So, Alberto Giacometti's emaciated bronze sculptures of men and women were "message" pieces: that man has suffered and endured. And Giacometti made a substantial career on this idea through his art, until his death in 1966.

Now a circulating exhibit of his drawing, small sculptures, and photographs of some large sculptures is on view upstairs in the Michener Gallery, UT campus.

It gives us a somewhat different measure of the artist through the predominance of drawings that are the most personal and spontaneous expressions.

It shows his dependence on cubism in early years. The 1922 pencil analysis of "Caroline" is not far removed from what Cezanne started, and Braque pushed farther.

In it are casually cubistic divisions of face, dress, light patterns, but there is a wholeness, and it is definitely a particular person.

Later, in the 1940s, the scribbled line of Giacometti becomes developed as a stylistic device. It is a nervous, repetitious line, as if



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formed by the command of a highly strung nervous system within the artist. The faces and bodies become generalized to an archaic stiffness.

He uses this line to depict people, rooms and landscapes, and it becomes his mature drawing style.

In some drawings struggle and hard thought appear to be Giacometti's approach to his subject. But frequently a lyrical quality, a dancing, looping pencil line, make some of the drawings a joyous celebration of the ability to draw masterfully. See the 1951 "Head," in crayon, and the late 1960s images for the loosely flowing ease of a mature style.

Giacometti was known primarily as a sculptor who worked in clay cast into bronze. The few small sculptures here, in combination with the large photographs of large sculptors trace a similar development from cubistic origins to his three-dimensional equivalent of the scribbled line.

The five foot tall bronze "Leg" is encrusted with small blobs applied

The photographs are bigger than anything else there, and they isolate the image of the sculpture against a contrasting and uninterrupted background. The photo of "The Place at 4 A.M." has greater impact than an original sculpture, "Three Figures Outdoors," though they are otherwise related in scale and period.

The exhibition comes in largest part from the private collection of Dr. Milton D. Ratner, and is organized and circulated by the American Federation of Arts for a two-year tour of the United States.

The introductory panel says more about Dr. Ratner, the collector, than about Giacometti, which in itself is a comment on power versus art.

to a skinny elongated leg shape. It's part of Giacometti's whole idea, that 20th century man is battered physically and emotionally, yet survives, possessing some upright qualities, something enabling.

The huge photograph of "Chariot" conveys this even better. It is of a female figure in the encrusted style standing frontally on the bar connecting two wheels of a chariot.

"Chariot" has a primordial character, something that connects the Greek origins of our culture with our own battered endurance.

Strange it is that we should be seeing photographs in place of real pieces, and find the photographs more powerful than the sculpture in the exhibit.

Sunday, April 2, 1978

## Latin American exhibit reflects strange reality



art

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In Latin American art there is a predominant spirit that is both humanistic and fantastically strange.

It fascinates for its emotive qualities, so different from our rationally practical world. It speaks to mute beliefs and myths, hidden in the subconscious.

GALERIE RAVEL has a fine exhibit of graphic art by several Latin American artists who have strong affiliations with Mexico. New art is hung in the company of pieces owned by Austin collectors, making an affirmation of the response such art evokes.

There is a room half full of lithographs by Rufino Tamayo, which continue his distillation of the human form into a pictograph of primitive consciousness, dominating an abstract textural void.

In one of Leonora Carrington's hallucinatory lithographs, birds with human faces hover above a castle made into a man that rides a creature part ox, part horse.

THOUGH CARRINGTON was English and had associations with the European Surrealists, her visions find compatible ambience in Mexico where she lives and works.

In Francisco Zuniga's drawings and prints, common Indian women are made into earth mothers. Their fecund buttocks and full breasts are exposed or scarcely hidden by simple garments. Zuniga draws with the power of the sculptor that he is, shading and highlighting forms into a satisfying three dimensionality.

In one, a naked woman squats to give birth, while an aged woman, symbolizing death, waits at the open door.

MOST OF THE artists occupied with ideas of the spirit use a vague and undefined space. This keeps the image non-specific, heightening the sensed unreality.

Austin American-Statesman

C2

Sunday, April 9, 1978

Jim Fain, Publisher

Ray Mariotti, Editor

### Use rational English

Regarding the article "Latin American exhibit reflects strange reality" by Mary McIntyre in the April 2 *show world* (describing an exhibit at Galerie Ravel): It might be hoped that the verbiage of your writeperson in the art column is intended as parody, but I fear that it is addressed seriously to those in Austin who most deserve it. Nevertheless, I suspect that many of my brethren from the unhallowed multitude would prefer rational English.

I recognize the possibility that the *American Statesman* reflects accurately the culture of this community, and if so, perhaps we should modify the local folk motto to proclaim, "Longnecks, longhorns, and a daily ration of cow---. Nowhere else but Austin."

D. MARTIN  
3613A Summit Bend

But Pedro Friedeberg, a former architecture student, defines space by drawing four sides of a box that recedes toward the center. The spectator's eye tries to enter but the floor, ceiling and walls are insubstantial, dizzily covered with words, statistics, calendars and games. Then, to increase the complexity, Mickey Mouse characters, airplanes and a dog are projected into the central space totally without regard to realistic scale.

Friedberg's game is disorientation of the freely associated subconscious. His rooms are laden with so much meaning that in totality they mean nothing.

MEXICAN GRAPHIC workshops have had a general escalation of excellence, one of which, Kyron press, was established by Andrew Vlady who worked previously with Gemini and Styria in the United States.

A new embossing technique, "mixografia," has been used to great advantage by the Taller de Grafica de Mexico on several of the prints in the exhibition, notably those by Francisco Toledo, and Fernando de Szyszlo. There is also a "mixografia" in the group of Tamayo prints, executed at Galeria Circulo in Barcelona, Spain.

For "mixografia" a wax slab is sculpted by the artist, then fixed by electroplating. The wax is melted and the electroplate reinforced. The process allows the artist to work with a positive image rather than a reverse plate, and increases greatly the textural range.

Fernando de Szyszlo, a Peruvian on the international scene, has developed through "mixografia" prints, which have the full texture of his paintings. His imagery contains elements from Aztec culture, worked as symbolic abstractions. There are feathered forms and altars, in brooding rich colors.

Latin American visual thought is its own special nation of the mind.

Austin American-Statesman

A8

Saturday, April 22, 1978

Jim Fain, Publisher

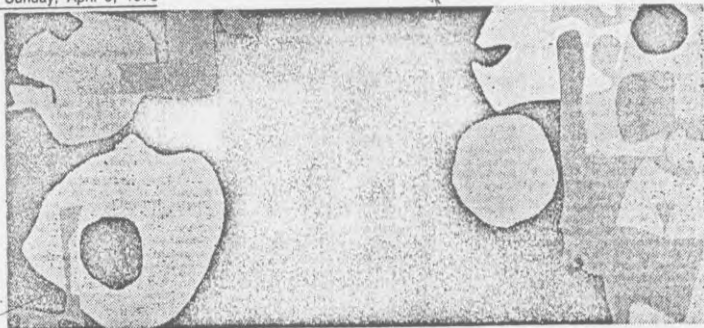
Ray Mariotti, Editor

### Critic should study art

If Mary McIntyre's well-considered and well-written April 2 *show world* art exhibit article was not understandable to D. Martin (letter, April 9), I suggest that he study the subject so that in the future he will be able to understand her perceptive observations. When one realizes that Mary McIntyre is one of the very few who care enough about Austin to be willing to give her time so generously to critique the art exhibitions in Austin, we should be truly grateful to her.

PEGGY FRARY  
3409 Spanish Oak Drive

'Big Cobalt Violet',  
painted by Patrick  
Heron in May 1972.



## English painter stresses color

Patrick Heron, a notable English painter, was also a significant art critic, responsible for defining modern art for the British public in the late '40s and early '50s.

The major exhibition of his brilliantly colored canvases is displayed at the Michener Gallery, UT campus, and stands as his visual declaration of what perception and art are all about.

Painting, to Heron, is about color and should be purely abstract, totally separated from the references of symbols, story telling, or realism. And it should be both created by and responded to through intuition.

Another premise: color applied in shapes on a flat surface always sets up the illusion of depth.

His paintings are a primer on color perception, and for the E.W. Doty Lectures at UT, he has based on color a series of talks, which are both a defense of his works and a statement of principles for abstract color painters.



art

Mary McIntyre

Patrick Heron arrived at these concepts through a lengthy process, which began with a reaction against the literary dominance of culture in England.

He had a devoted interest in French art, notably Matisse, Braque, and Picasso, and even now declares the great Matisse "Red Studio" to be the most important single influence on his own painting, beginning in 1943.

A portrait of T.S. Eliot, and another of the art critic, Herbert Read, were painted by Heron in 1950 in the manner of Braque to prove that such a style could be applied to portraiture.

Then in 1957, he began a series of  
See Painter, Page 39

## painter — From Page

totally abstract works, softly-edged stripes, and the next year softly-edged squares that related to a large area in a single color.

His development of a style which would provide both consistency and great variety for over twelve years happened in the mid 1960s, when the artist was in his mid-40s.

A large collection of these mature paintings are on display here accompanied by gouache and silk screened works on paper.

His imagery is characterized by brilliant hues, used unmixed from the tube, defining areas which interlock like parts of jigsaw puzzles. However, they do not have the monotony of jigsaw puzzles, but vary from that allusion by containing very large areas, some circles and some nearly straight edges.

Heron draws his composition in a matter of seconds, but may spend five months contemplating and finishing the paintings through the process of solving the color relationships.

The paint used is oil-based and is applied with a small Chinese brush. Each area is covered in one lengthy work period to avoid a discontinuous surface.

The colors combine with the crisp, but wobbly edges and the evident brushstrokes do exactly what Heron wants: they set up depth illusions. His edges meet and interlock in such a way that the game of determining which shape comes forward and which goes back can vary all the way around one edge.

Though not well known outside of art circles in the United States, Patrick Heron has been an innovator in the development of abstract color painting and the theories surrounding it, and highly important in contemporary English art.

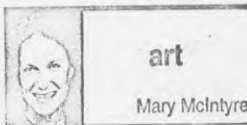
April 16, 1978

## Arts council waiting to hear from public

Arts organizations proliferate as Austin increases in size and arts awareness, and finds group voices stronger than that of separated individuals.

Austin being in the center of a cultural boom, the trick is for the organizational structures to keep ahead of the pressures. One way to do it is to define the capabilities and limits of the older organization, and then produce an offspring with a different set of concerns.

The Austin Arts Commission is hardly old — 2½ years — and barely has defined itself as being both appointed by the city council and responsive to the city council in the interests of arts individuals and groups requesting funds and attention. In a wise move recently, the Arts Commission has proposed to the city council that none of its members be tied into direct representation of any par-



ticular arts organization, such as the Symphony or Laguna Gloria Art Museum, but become, instead, a general board responsible to the interests of all the citizens. Thus it would be more of a model of the at-large system of the city council, rather than the ward system.

So, the arts organizations, both big and small, and representatives of individual artists need a separate structure through which they can vocal-

ize, conflict, and adjust.

The Austin Arts Council is the answer. Not a resurrection of the old one that dissolved itself after the Arts Commission was set up, the new arts council will structure itself after hearing from all interested groups and individuals. It may wish to come up with a name that is not so similar to the Austin Arts Commission.

A steering committee under the guidance of Richard Orton has met, and its proposals are available through JoLynn Hofmann at the Parks and Recreation Department. The public meeting to air recommendations is May 11 at the Zilker Garden Center at 7:30 p.m.

There are 62 counties in Texas actively involved in arts councils or

seeking one. They are all different. Our closest and most active such neighbors are in Temple and San Antonio. The Arts Council of San Antonio now has an earned budget of \$37,000 and a total public and private funds revenue of \$390,000. It provides information on scheduling, funding possibilities, works with city departments and sponsors programs.

One spin-off needed in the proposed Austin Arts Council is a jury for art purchased or donated for public spaces. Somewhere along the way an element of qualifying taste must enter and supersede the haphazard acceptance of things given to the city, and take the burden of dealing with it off the backs of PARD and the Arts Commission, which must maintain its commitment more broadly.

## Exhibit's mixture indiscriminate

### Padded wall paintings uphold viewer interest

While both the glazed clay pots and the padded wall paintings have an immediate appeal, in a duo show at Kerbey Lane Gallery, one art form opens up doors to associations and sustains an interest level that the other doesn't.

The big wall work by Maxine McClendon is in four panels, made of canvas, stained with paint, padded and stitched. It reverberates to a memory of subtle Oriental paintings on screens, of clouds, and land seen from airplanes that surprises in the mottled variations of earth colors bleeding from one field to another.

It speaks of contemporary frankness in making the process evident, by leaving the stitches and threads dangling as part of the composition. It is satisfying in the blending of the chosen form with the image.

McClendon also has circular paintings padded and stitched, and these have variety within the same vision, of abstractions of aerial views. And, there is one small rectangle that reminds of city build-



ings, irregularities within the rigid grids of window walls; though it is only made of thin washes and stitchery on canvas.

The pots by Evelyn Anderson are a counterpoint to the wall works, and tie the duo show more specifically into the crafts orientation of the gallery. They are spheres made of slabs of clay, placed in molds until stiffened, then joined before completely dry.

In several parallels to McClendon's paintings, the pots have earth and sky colors; natural fissures in the clay process remain as part of the design; and a scratched effect at the juncture of the slabs resembles stitchery.

They are beautiful. But they don't

evoke memories of any distinction and miss the mark as sculpture — which the artist states them to be.

They are a refined part of a movement toward more expressive uses of clay and glazes, which began under the dynamic influence of Peter Voukos of the West coast in the early 1960s.

However, even Voukos discriminates between sculpture and pots with his own work, produces both, and understands the difference.—M.M.

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Rebecca Munro's batiks and fiber sculpture are on exhibit at Shop of Nice Things through May 4. Munro's batik compositions are based on abstracted landscapes and figures. "The Great Senofo Man" is a broad-chested, flattened form. Other similar designs are like X-rays—rimmed

strong white lines and with circular shapes within. Strong primary colors are used against a black background. The landscapes are more luminous, with freely applied dyes bleeding into one another. Mountain shapes are sliced vertically to reveal their interiors. In "Growing V," a round form is rooting below the surface of the earth.

Munro's small fiber sculptures are crocheted from heavy handspun yarns, and incorporate metal plates and raffia. "Crown I," a basket-like shape made of gray goat hair yarn, has brass plates encircling the top, with a shiny black raffia below. The more exuberant "Fiber Sculpture" has a silver mouth with deep red yarn at the opening and a rakish skirt of natural tan raffia.—ANN MATLOCK

Sunday, April 30, 1978



art

Mary McIntyre

## Bury's sculpture like Mexican jumping beans

Standing in the middle of Pol Bury's slow motion sculptures is like being in a room with a lot of giant Mexican jumping beans on tables and walls.

As any Texan knows, Mexican jumping beans rarely move when you are looking at them, wobble unexpectedly when they do, and make a small crackling noise in the process.

Such also describes internationally famous Belgian artist Pol Bury's sculptures, upstairs at the Michener Gallery, UT campus.

The earliest here is a 1953 painted canvas board piece which has to be pushed slightly to move, and the most recent is a fountain made of suspended tubes which move constantly, largely by the pull of gravity on water from one tube to another, working against counterweights.

Others are of highly polished metal balls laid on top of metal bases. They move because magnets attached to motors of 10-minute cycles are hidden in the bases, and set up the attraction and repulsion of magnetic fields through the base to the balls.

Every sculpture has moveable parts, though some are so slow that the memory of where they were in the beginning is lost, like watching grass grow.

What is wonderful about it is that the movement is as unpredictable as Mexican jumping beans; yet this was planned by the artist and is a combination of engineering and art.

Bury plays with and against gravity, as he pre-

viously permits a big steel disk sitting on the point of a triangle to move sideways virtually to the falling point, and then sedately move back.

Once the fascination with the mechanics of the works lessens for the viewer, plant and human associations take over. In some, metal tongues or tendrils wag beckoningly toward each other, and in several wooden sculptures, thick round pegs move in and out of holes in an unavoidably human reference.

This is a major exhibition that travels the western hemisphere in a two-pronged manner, with a separate display of only prints placed at a private gallery, in Austin's case, Galerie Ravel.

Bury's prints as similar to stop-time multiple image photography, which also relate to motion. Both the etchings and wood prints are made by inking a few circles, rectangles and triangles with transparent colors, printing, then moving them with slightly, inking again, and printing on the same papers.

On the wood prints, motion and stillness are simultaneously effected by inking a large piece of wood so that the "static" grain pattern runs top to bottom, superimposed on the "falling" circles.

Some of these prints are also placed in the sculpture area at the Michener Gallery, along with drawings that can cause dizziness, there providing a total glance into the range of the artist's engineering mind and his slow motion art.

S-l-o-w-m-o-t-i-o-n art.



art

Mary McIntyre

## Frery conveys mood, attitude of Panhandle

What Michael Frery has done with the Panhandle region of Texas is to produce an authentic Western art of our time.

Upstairs at the Michener Gallery on the University of Texas campus is an exhibition of his watercolors in which petrochemical plants and irrigation sprinklers as well as the cowboy are painted with Frery's exceptional skill and honesty.

**UNDETERRED** BY the nostalgic misty-looking conventions of some Western art today, or the modernistic pretenses of others, Frery applied his direct responses to the region and came up with images that convey the mood of the land, the sky, and the urban centers.

He didn't blanch at the huge flat treeless land above the Cap Rock, but shows it with five-sixths sky, an absolutely flat horizon, scrub growth and the elements making storms, cloudy sunsets and sunrises.

Frery has a sense of both drama and pattern that enables him to clarify the essentials of a scene. He uses those elements that the human mind finds important, and eliminates extraneous details that a photograph would include.

The "Carbon Black Plant, Borger" is painted twice, once at night, but both with complexity that emphasizes a satisfying rhythm.

**THE NIGHT VIEW** puts it into the Borger town setting and is a remarkable study in dark tones with white pinheads of lights on the structures relating to the stars above. It's as if the universe and industry are in peaceful union for a time.

A cut-stone building at Mobeetie is shown straight on. Entitled, "Law and Order," it was a combined jail and courthouse in the 1880s. It becomes interesting as a picture because of its function and the simplicity and strength of its architecture.

Cows crowded into a feedlot make a picturesque contrast in mass with the grain and feed apparatus in the background.

**NOR DOES FRERY** neglect the lonely sense of the region's vast space. There are several paint-

ings in which a sole mounted cowboy or a few cattle are the only creatures in a flat land under a temperamental sky.

Boring is the usual response of the traveler through Texas' northern region, but these images show us the factors that structure the lives of the inhabitants and satisfy their souls.

The paintings were commissioned for a book, "Impressions of the Texas Panhandle" by The Joe and Betty Moore Texas Art Series, and published by the Texas A&M University Press.

**FRERY ALSO WROTE** the essay for the book, which shows both a knowledge of the history of the area, and travels undertaken in order to find the mood and the images to convey visual truth as he knows it.

Notwithstanding the rivalry with the publishing house, Frery is a professor of art at the University of Texas, where he has taught since 1952.

His exhibition record is extensive and of national significance, particularly in the watercolor medium.

**A DYING MEDIUM** applied to one of the dullest areas in the United States?

Hardly, with Michael Frery's skill and unflinching attitude working on it.



art

Mary McIntyre

## TFAA exhibit has good, bad points

The big art competition of the year here is the Texas Fine Arts Association Annual, currently bursting the wall spaces at Laguna Gloria Art Museum.

With not a single old barn painting in the place, the imagery is yet romantic — nostalgic in styles and imaginary in content.

Who can be faulted for falling in love with Monet's glorious late paintings of his ponds and gardens? Not Sylvia Glass who picks tiny fragments of a garden and scatters them on paper, then alters these images of plants in the medium of airbrushed watercolor. The Monet relationship is there, also in the sensation of light and pale colors glowing from her surface.

Even stinking cows in a feedlot crowd can be made beautiful by skillfully applying a post-impressionist attitude about light, color and elimination of the horizon line.

Brad Braune does this in "Cows," a pattern in pinkish brown and gray watercolor of spotted cows, all packed in, backlit, and slanted in the same direction.

Millions of years are compressed

into one image of modest size. "Expulsion" by Robert Steiner is a marvelously dense lithograph with a mixture of prehistoric animals, primitive men and contemporary nudes.

His action is set in a multistoried jungle. There are aborigines with spears on the top decks, devils with wings and pitchforks and gigantic reptilian animals on others. The contemporaries on the ground are trying to get out of the picture by running toward the viewer.

Despite the title's reference to Adam and Eve's banishment from the Garden of Eden, this scene does not involve sin or guilt. Instead, it suggests man is ruled by unthinking animal forces and territorial preservation.

It is a rare work today that will sustain as much study as this "Expulsion" will, before seeing all parts of it, and wondering at its meanings.

In the rest of the exhibit there are several conventional paintings of solitary figures in interiors, two of which got major awards. Mark Smith's "Portrait with a Mirror" looks like good art student's work in a traditional style and attitude. As

an example of painting that is still current in America, it should be in the show, but a purchase prize that puts it into the TFAA Permanent Collection?

Abstractions in the show are either chic and tastefully controlled, or they are downright terrible. Most of the latter are in the upstairs room, and contain mushy paint and blah forms that justify the general public's idea about abstraction, "my kid could do better."

Anyway, the show should have been cut down by at least 15 pieces in order to fit the museum spaces. It's no joy to cope with viewing in the crowded situation of stairway, hall and upstairs room.

Some good things are in that room, though, among which is much of the sculpture. Two "pop" art images are amusing: the ceramic triple decker hamburger bursting out of a gold-trimmed pick-up truck, and the "Dressed Up Dummy, II" with a landscape painted onto her plasticized gown.

So it goes. Another year, a different juror, some changes for the better, some of the same old problems still going strong.



Robert Woods' "Red Skirt II" at Laguna Gloria



art

Mary McIntyre

## Experimentation and tradition mark exhibits

A healthy clash of traditional art forms and experimentation marks a couple of non-institutional gallery shows this month.

At Kerbey Lane Gallery "Wood" is the theme. Certainly a traditional material, it is here used both functionally for a butcher table, buttons, and spoons, and in a sinuous fantasy form of a large "creature" that turns out to be a cabinet.

Stephen Hoover's cabinet in reddish-gold mahogany is over five feet tall, and abstractly resembles the form of a standing figure. The doors of its three compartments are freely rounded rectangles with darker wood laminated to the center of each. Gently curving surfaces form the simpler sides.

Hoover also shows two sculptural boxes, which open to reveal small rectangular cubicals within the one designed to rest on a table is his most unified piece. It is carved in undulating curves inspired by the natural grain of the wood.

John Cooper's well-crafted butcher block table with its rounded edges and sturdy, lathe turned legs is a good example of functional design.

Especially pleasing to the touch are the spoons and butter knives by Nancy Lou Webster. Free form in design, these objects are sanded and polished to show the flowing grain of the cedar wood. Although modest and small, they are aesthetically pleasing. They grow out of a love and respect for the wood, combined with an innate, seemingly effortless sense of abstract form.

Several other craftspersons exhibit their wood works with the company of a stained glass design. These vary from fanciful figures and machines with moveable parts to wall plaques evoking the Hispanic carvings of northern New Mexico.

The Trinity House Gallery cooperative declares a devotion to experimental work, and for that reason gives Austin's otherwise very ordinary non-institutional art scene a desired lift.

Or should I say "shock"? For what's on now are plasticized men and women's undergarments, among some good paintings.

The paintings are by Vicki Teague-Cooper, and deal with illusions of space. Glossy pink areas mark the flat surface; but infinite depth is seen in

the centers through the painting of a star-studded sky. Increasing the spatial play is the illusion of cords suspended in front of the surface and casting shadows.

Collaged photographs of birds and people's heads, plus real toy airplanes make bizarre entries into the painting, and are a personal fantasy not easily interpreted.

Teague-Cooper's imagery suggests a space and time warp related to science fiction movies. Though the message is inscrutable, it is in a visually dashing and spatially intriguing form.

Deborah Vanko did the plasticized underdrawers. They shock because some of them were put over forms to set, with hoops in the tops, and are now exhibited upside down, stiffly volumetric. Some are stuck on the walls like wet laundry.

When the short shock value wears off, there isn't anything more to think about them, except the variety of lifestyles they represent. So, what's different from a department store?

Vanko also has two sort-of-pop-art paintings that somehow look like old stuff, and an arrangement of plasticized candy Easter eggs and rabbits in colored grass.

If the objective is a message through kitsch (objects of bad taste) about Easter and people's undercover lives, it will take more figuring out than that.

The other exhibitor at Trinity House has hangings of limp plasticized wire screening and threads. The artist seems to be possessed by a notion that good art is mainly experimentation, and that crazier experimentation means crazier, i.e., better art; though what is needed is better resolution of form.



Staff Photo by Kai Brooking

Stephen Hoover's sculpted cabinet



Richard Thompson's stylized cowboy reflects modern image.

## Thompson redefines the cowboy look

Cowboy art again, but with a big difference. Richard Thompson from New Mexico has updated ideas about what the cowboy "look" means today.

He paints the cowboy in a form that appears doll-like and neutered, with a glossy finish. Yet it is also strangely true.

His watercolors and oil paintings—constructions are on exhibit in the Laguna Gloria space at First Federal Savings through June 29.



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Thompson was here for the opening events, and commented, "There is a residue of Southwestern myths in the cowboy, and people continue to live in that myth. Even Europeans

see Americans in terms of the cowboy."

While recognizing the significance of that 19th century myth today, Thompson doesn't paint nostalgically in the style of Remington. Instead, he creates a new form for an old idea.

His cowboys don't ride horses, they walk. They smoke cigars. They wear stylishly dented hats with curled brims, tinted sunglasses, bandannas or stiff collars, straight polyester pants or chaps with a wavy back edge, and high-heeled boots with platform soles.

All this describes a Los Angeles used car salesman or a Western businessman, still trying to live out the Marlboro ad myth of glamour and power over territory.

So, he is big on the scene, just as Thompson's cowboy is. The land, buildings, signs, cactus are smaller than his self-image of importance.

But strange is his slow-paced mobility, and his high heels with what they suggest in the way of restricted, "feminine" walking.

Thompson is saying that as man loses actual power, he gets duded up to resemble his myth of power.

In style as well as idea, Thompson is on to something worth looking at. He has managed to simplify his cowboy to a primitive image, a kind of sign for man, rather than a representation.

Egyptian artists also stylized the human figure, and made it have very shallow volume. Like

Egyptian art, Thompson uses the frontal eye on a head in profile; he adds a frontal mouth with teeth, which could be used to emit the noise of power.

It is from such stylization that his title "Geometric Cowboy" derives. The edges are straight, or in curves that are closer to geometric arcs than real body forms.

At the bottom of the oil paintings are shallow wooden shelves from which word signs and telephone poles rise. These cause a resemblance to a mini stage set, increasing the idea of artificiality.

The telephone poles either form one painting, or a sequence of images put together. The sequential format resembles comic strips, and enhances the sense of movement; the cowboy is in a walking position; he walks from telephone pole to telephone pole, past signs and mesas.

His watercolor drawings are more densely packed with cacti, and scribbles suggesting pollution of the atmosphere. They are the one indication of the abstract-expressionist element he had in earlier periods of painting.

Thompson is a regional artist who is thoroughly aware of historical and contemporary art, but who has made his choice to look into the area where he lives for the signs of man living by myths. He has come up with an original image.

It is hardly endearing, but neither is the idea of the Los Angeles used car salesman trying to live out the Marlboro myth, yet it's true.

# Exhibit reveals how photography imitates art

With the camera, anybody can discover Monet in the pavement.

Oleg Vorobyoff amply demonstrates in his photography exhibition that not only has he found that great Impressionist painter's colors and composition in oil slicks on asphalt, but that photography will imitate art.

In the most remote section of the upstairs Michener Gallery are his 50 photographs titled "San Francisco, Another View." They are some of the best color photography seen in Austin yet.

But forget San Francisco, Vorobyoff's images aren't the ordinary, tourist views. Instead, they are a serious painter's nightmare.

For, with a click of his shutter and whatever time it takes to process and print his film, Vorobyoff has recreated a gamut of modern art styles. Besides the Monets there are the conventions of recent drip and smudge painting, torn paper collage, graffiti painting, Pop art, geometric art, and some souly views on mannequins to boot.

I am not saying that a luminous print of pastel colored oil blobs is as satisfying as a late Monet painting of water lilies in his pond. It isn't. It



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doesn't have the bigger than life scale, the actual thick paint, the signs of an artist's lifetime of aesthetic sensibilities, or his innovations.

Vorobyoff, whether he knows it or not, is imitating. But it is marvelous imitation, beautifully done. Or is it better called a "translation" of modern painting forms into the language of 1977 photography?

Whichever, these small images of standard size, neatly matted in white, reward the viewer who is willing to adjust to the scale and forget his conceptions of the photograph as only a mechanical recorder.

The most effective in content have to do with people in commonplace advertising posters. Here Vorobyoff focuses in on the people, eliminating the

poster's edge. On first glance, the people seem real, in the way that we take for granted that the photograph is recording the real thing.

Then, there is wonder at the artificialities of the poster-like color, the evidence of creases in paper, and in one, the image of a big Kodak film carton.

That last one says a lot about the place of photography in the American dream. It shows a party of healthy smiling youths, an attractive smiling girl in a swim suit, a smiling pool guard plainly labeled "Life Guard" on his T-shirt, and boats and beach in the distance. The guard is holding the big cartoon of film, offering it for the permanent capture of all that abundant vitality and pleasure.

The message is that the photograph is the guard

of life. Buy film, to preserve the joyous vital moments of the American dream fulfilled.

Oleg Vorobyoff is an electrical engineer in San Francisco. In 1977, he took a year off from work to devote to photography. His visual education has been through visiting museums and galleries.

Unusually perceptive, and technically competent, he has produced images of a quality worth displaying in a major gallery.

His creations show the photograph to be a productive challenge to art on many levels, which is simply an addition to the argument which has been continuous since the camera's invention in the early 1840s.

June 18, 1978

## Jessen art shows a serious hobby

Similar to the artistic pursuits of Winston Churchill and Dwight Eisenhower, has been the lifelong practice of watercolor painting by the prominent Austin architect, Harold E. (Bubi) Jessen.

This avocation was more than the conventional hobby. Undertaken with both seriousness and pleasure, Jessen's paintings show a development in expressive content.

Appropriately, they are displayed in one of the major buildings of his and his firm's designs, the Michener Gallery of the Harry Ransom Center on the University of Texas campus.

They signify the broad cultural interest of both Bubi and his partner and brother, the late Wolf Jessen. Born in Austin and educated at the University of Texas in part, both men established careers in architecture, and through this made significant contributions to Austin and the University of Texas.

They also sought to expand the uses of their intellects and sensibilities through pursuits in leisure time that were not solely self-serving pleasures: Wolf through his secondary career as first flutist in the Austin Symphony, and Bubi with his painting and art design work.

Though continuously an architect since his 1931 graduation from a master's degree program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Bubi planned both a mural commemorating the Battle of Goliad for the mission being restored by the WPA, and the floor design of the Ro-



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tunda of the State Capitol, in the mid-1930s.

The mural was executed by Jessen in collaboration with Edna Collins, an Austin artist, and the rotunda design was executed in terrazzo by Italian artisans brought here for that purpose.

In this exhibition are watercolors which show a combined interest in structure and the expression of emotion. For the former, the "Bridge at Ronda" shows an architect's observation of light and shade defining arches and embellishments of a Spanish baroque character.

Then, "Fire at the Cedar Brakes (Lake Travis)" is a fine projection of mood in response to a witnessed event. The upper part, representing smoke-filled sky, is worked with applications of wet colors into other wet areas, allowing the bleeding of colors into each other. The hills were first painted with pale warm hues, leaving some white of the underlying paper. Streaks of red-orange were then tipped into the still damp surface and signify irregularly creeping fire.

As this section dried, blacks were applied with crisp edges, suggesting burnt flat areas, and blackened lines implying branches. These darks set

off with brilliance the contrasting white of the paper and the colors of fire and smoke.

Another little gem is the "Jamaican Garden." This Fauve-like abstraction its bits of colors over painted areas is yet evocative of shrubbery and blossoms of a garden.

Interspersed with the senior Jessen's paintings are those of his son, Kindred Jessen. These are highly moody interpretations of land and

sea without the tension of response to an actual sense.

"Sea Storm" by Kindred is dominated by a wet-into-wet dark form resembling a Rorschach test. Tiny silhouettes of boats are set into the vignettes formed by this central curving element. In others, the subject, though titled, is an abstract play with the possibilities of the medium of watercolor within the general perception of land or sea.

## Surrealists jelled Baziotes' own style

Like a frontispiece, the painting "White Bird" faces the entrance to the UT Art Building's Huntington Gallery, and introduces the visitor to selections from the life work of William Baziotes.

"White Bird" is characteristic of this important American artist's mature style, and embodies in paint his surrealist ideas with sensitivity of form and color.

It contains the atmosphere of twilight in pulsating nuances of subtle color. A blue-green rectangular area at the bottom is crossed by slightly wavy horizontal lines. From this a white form with wings-like projections rises as if preparing for flight, while above is a floating cluster of coiling white lines.



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Not a specific winged being, the white bird-like form and the tendrils above, imply the movement of the spirit. In ancient tales both "white" and "bird" have symbolized the spirit of man or god, and have been identified by psychological studies as an image from man's unconscious being.

It is from the intuitive, dream-like portion of the mind that William Baziotes and other artists and poets of

the 1930s sought their imagery. They wanted to express a truth beyond surface reality.

In Baziotes case, this meant a search into his Greek ancestral background, studies of primitive myths, and the experimental use of doodling directly on a tinted canvas to arouse unconscious forms.

The doodling was called "automatism" by the Surrealistic artists, and is still in use as a teaching device to increase inventiveness in students. The problem becomes, how to refine doodles into a fine art?

That was a slow process for Baziotes. He had a traditional art training at the National Academy of Design in New York, then worked as a WPA Art Teacher, and in the WPA Easel (artist) Project.

But the greatest catalyst for his artistic growth was meeting European Surrealists who came to New York in the early 1940s, and whose ideas became the seedbed for a group of American painters.

In this exhibition there are sketches that show that Baziotes, in his early years, was influenced by several of Picasso's styles. One can see how he groped from an art based on the human figure to a kind of forced abstraction where heavy black lines mark the surface into colored facets, much like a stained glass window.

Finally, in about 1947, Baziotes was able to fuse his ideas into an image with a refinement of color and space that were to remain his style,

his unique accomplishment. By this time he was 35 years old — even a youthful maturity for a painter in the modern age.

To see the transposition of an early sketch for a painting to its refined conclusion, compare the side by side watercolor of "Red Wall" and the oil on canvas of "Dawn." The primary snake-like shape in each is similar, but in "Dawn" it is of much great subtlety in width variation and relationship to the enclosed background space.

One of the finest paintings exhibited belongs to the Michener Collection of the University of Texas. "Mariner" painted in 1960-61, evokes a floating sensation of forms in liquid space. Here Baziotes' command of shapes and nuance of color is at its most elegant.

Probably the primary reason for this exhibition being in Austin is due to the original commitment to James A. Michener to complement his collection of 20th century American art with exhibitions that enlarge upon it.

The exhibit opened on the West Coast at the Newport Harbor Art Museum, where it was hailed in both East and West coast publications as being important in placing this artist in relationship to American art as a whole.

Viewing the Baziotes exhibition is one of those quiet pleasures evoking memory and desire. It has slipped in upon a city unprepared for its importance. It would be an art "event" in New York.

# Kimbell Museum shows excellent design

What should a museum building be like today? One answer is a recent Texas structure that is beautiful contemporary architecture as well as a prime example of a building serving its function: the Kimbell Museum in Fort Worth.

An exhibition in the Laguna Gloria space at First Federal Savings features the museum through Louis Kahn's sketches for it, with models of early and late plans, plus slides of its construction.

What is interesting about the exhibit is less what is actually there — plans, for the non-architect are difficult to comprehend — than the fact that the exhibit is in Austin at

all, and what that says about standards and goals in architecture today.

Louis Kahn, the architect, completed the building in 1972, after a planning and construction period of six years. Kahn was scarcely known by the general public, but today, after years of articles in magazines and newspapers, his late design work is recognized as setting a new international standard.

In the Kimbell Museum he borrowed the long, simple, "barrel" vault and the central axis from Roman public buildings and Romanesque churches, with the open spaces of functional, modern design. Such combina-

tion is an innovation, and so is his use of indirect natural light in a museum, coming through long slits in the vaults.

Nor did Kahn ignore Texas architecture of the past 50 years in his use of materials: cement, travertine facing, oak floors, or in the landscaping with a grove of yaupon trees at the entrance and ponds of flowing water. He also incorporated glass-enclosed interior patios, containing plants.

He added something even more traditional, the porch. There are three vaulted porches on the west, whose main function is to provide shade to the visitor on his lengthy walk to the entrance.



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As this design suggests, Kahn had a sensitivity to light and shade, and to spaces that relate to human needs more than machines.

The plain box building in any combination of glass, steel and concrete that dominates the skyline of Austin represents the dying

phase of the International Skyline, when the making of buildings meant making "machines" for living and working.

The most humanistic aspect of this cigarette box construction is its reflection of the older buildings around it, if it is sheathed in a reflective surface, but that's hardly a regard for shade or a sheltered approach for people.

Technology made the style of the Kimbell possible, and Kahn used it to its fullest. The vaults are each 100 feet long, made into "beams" by post-tensioned cables in their concrete and wood construction — meaning, they don't have to have supports such as thick walls and the buttresses of those old Romanesque churches. They are even coated with lead on the exterior, made from melting 16,000 car batteries.

While the vaults reflect an element in traditional public architecture, the Kimbell is no copy of older styles. It doesn't have elaborate embellishments, or pretensions of looking like a monu-

ment to Mussolini, a neo-Roman emperor.

It has, instead, something better: a pleasant rhythmic form, the effect of the changes of daylight on the interior, a scale that is grand but not overwhelming. In short, it is a truly fine place in which to look at art.

Kahn's sketches in this exhibition show the architect's mind at work. Smudged lines are walls; squares with diagonals across them are roofless patios; lightly drawn loops indicate freely open interior space. He used a shorthand for mass and space as he reworked an idea over years.

These drawings, and a group of sketches made on travels since Kahn's youth, have been circulating in the nation, with the latter currently in New York City at the Drawing Center. However, the travel sketches may be seen in slides at the exhibit in Austin. They affirm the development of a great architect's vision, his view of the world as light and shadow, rhythmic architectural mass and space, on a human scale.



Carving of University of Texas President W.J. Battle

## Carvings reflect approach to life

Peter Mansbendel's wood carvings on display at Laguna Gloria Art Museum make up a winning package of an exhibition. First, because Mansbendel worked in Austin for 24 years and made his craft about the city from barrooms to expensive homes. And second, because the character of his art is what Texan Americans like.

Not the least of this particular exhibition is its excellent installation at Laguna Gloria, a place where the artist carved the siege of the Alamo into a beam installed above the fireplace for Clara Driscoll, the original owner. This has been opened for viewing, as have arches between the loggia and dining room.

Mansbendel was born in Switzerland in 1883, and was apprenticed to a woodcarver at age 10. He studied in art schools in Switzerland, then Paris, before immigrating to America.

Clotilde Shipe of Austin met him at a tea in his studio in New York. He followed her home to marry in 1911; and after a four year stay in New York the couple settled here in 1915.

He visited architectural firms in major Texas cities, and had considerable success with commissions, as this exhibition demonstrates. In addition to the removable objects on displays from 14 Texas cities there are large photographs of



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mantels and doors still on site.

The charm of his work lies in his animation of architectural details. Garlands bloom on the facing around fireplaces. Heads appear at the ends of beams. Posts for stair rails are topped with animals.

He had humor, carving on commission caricature heads of Dewey Bradford and



Coat of arms for Spanish explorer Cabeza de Vaca

Shriner friends, and the crazy composite bird-animal that is still the patron saint of the University of Texas School of Law.

Other carvings are of important people and places. The missions of San Antonio decorate five sides of a tobacco box. There are plaques carved in low relief of University of Texas presidents, Stephen F. Austin and Sam Houston.

The Sam Houston portrait was Mansbendel's last work and is the most expressive of both the artist's style and the historical character of Houston himself.

The face is in a frontal position and projects further than the hands. It is in a section of wood where the curves of the grain accentuate the volume of the face. Stern eyes return the viewer's stare. Flowing hair, a casually formed bow tie, and rough gouges in the garments and background give a vivacious quality to the stiff pose. The whole is rubbed with white paint to accentuate the artist's process and the nature of wood.

The character of Sam Houston and Mansbendel merge in this portrait: upright, worn with experience yet rugged, flamboyant, knowledgeable but direct by choice.

There is no one Mansbendel trademark as he was able to work in several styles. His designs derive from the Renaissance, Spanish Colonial, pre-Columbian, and folk humor.

However, I see in his art an overriding approach to life: direct, proud, tough, humorous, loving of people and vegetation, sophisticated awareness of past styles, yet with a naive conception of forms.

His is the kind of work Americans love who have an affinity for the moral restraint of our country's, or Texas', founders. It's not deeply undercut, gilded, twisted, or so skillful that the wood looks like soft flesh. It doesn't repel as being excessive.

It looks right for a time and place.

## Evans photographs show beauty in the ordinary

One of the most revered photographers, a giant in an overview of 20th century photography, is Walker Evans.

Some measure of his perceptive eye and technical interests is gained through a current exhibit upstairs at the UT Art Building's Huntington Gallery.

**THE EXHIBIT IS** of black and white and a few color photographs taken by Evans while employed by *Fortune* magazine from 1945-1965. Many were unpublished, many are recent prints from his negatives; and as a whole they represent the preferences of the person who put the show together, Lesley Baier of the Wellesley College Museum.

Hodge-podge though it is, the images impress with their clarity and the revelation of beauty in the ordinary stuff of life. There are gorgeous images of cheap common tools, every nuance of texture revealed, isolated like sacred objects against a plain background.

There is a Pabst Ribbon sign photographed as a work of monumental sculpture, looming huge against the horizon. The steel truss-work that supports the sign has in itself some of the elegance of the Eiffel Tower. Is Evans observing that this is America's form of monument? One of them, at least.

**THE IMAGES ARE** all related to the habitats of people, but not many have people in them. Some street scenes with strollers have the appearance of pre-meditated lurking on Evans' part, camera hidden, waiting at a selected spot for the right kind of people to walk into the right position.

There is one photograph that is an amazing revelation of the lives of two people. "Slovak Coal Miner's Home," from a set of photographs taken for a portfolio entitled "People and Places in Trouble," tells the economic circumstances, the religion, the relationship to technology, and the most important event in the lives of an elderly couple.



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In this one image a man and woman sit in armchairs before a flower-patterned wall. Between them is a standing radio. The radio becomes an altar, because on top of it is a doily, vases of plastic flowers on either side of a framed picture which has a silver star medal attached to a photograph of a young soldier. Above is a crucifix, a photograph of a soldier's cemetery, two oval paintings of the Madonna and Christ pointing to their glowing hearts. As big and important as the Madonna and Christ paintings is an electric meter and switch box with cords leading out to the radio and to a lamp.

**IN A NUTSHELL:** the electricity provides power for the radio that has become an altar on which is the image of sacrifice (the son) and above which are the images of the gods, both male and female. Acceptance is in the faces of the old couple. Flowers and flower patterns are for hope and beauty and renewal of life.

Many images in this show suggest the subject matter of much recent photography and photo-realist painting: reflections in street windows, signs, details of automobiles, the glorification of the tool, and faded paint on peeling walls.

**ONE WONDERS** at the range of his images, and the which-came-first game. Was Walker Evans the generator of ideas in photography, as Picasso was in painting, with followers spinning off on segments of his work?

Whichever the historians decide, his images are powerful.

# Mason exhibit deals in fundamentals

There is an installation of sculpture taking up a huge amount of space that consists of 4,000 firebricks borrowed from the Elgin Butler Brick Company and laid on the floor in five configurations that vaguely resemble pinwheels. This is at the University of Texas Art Building, lower floor of the Huntington Gallery.

Everything about the arrangement is at a tilt to the rectangular dimensions of the room, and each of the five pinwheels is askew from the rest, so that the whole thing suggests motion.

The artist, John Mason, was here and determined the design, and

helped place the bricks. This exhibit is part of a sequence of six similar displays, called the Hudson River Series, which began at the Hudson River Museum, all using firebricks, but placed in different configurations.

Two giggly 10-year-old girls in the otherwise empty gallery responded to the question of what did they think of the sculpture with, "They are weird. They are interesting and weird."

That is probably the best possible response on the part of anyone unfamiliar with recent art that deals with the fundamentals of art making, stripped of absolutely all frills.

Because a primer it is, or another lesson in the primer Carl Andre showed us last January at Laguna Gloria Art Museum. If Andre's lesson was the first chapter, Mason's is the second. Andre, too, laid bricks on the ground, but his were in straight arrangements, not tilted like Mason's.

Unfortunately, elementary lessons are usually tedious. Since Andre's lesson had a lot of different sculptures in it showing several versions of a basic idea, and Andre stayed around long enough to communicate with a lot of different kinds



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of people, his lesson became exciting.

And we learned about the basics of sculpture, that it doesn't have to be hand crafted, that its components can simply be arranged rather than carved or poured or glued together, that it can take up space in a new

way like being laid on the floor, and that it doesn't have to be dramatic or tell a story.

Okay, then the question is not why an exhibition of bricks laid on the floor is here in Austin, but why two of similar kind within seven months?

This is one thing that the committee of museum directors appointed by Dr. Lorene Rogers to recommend guidelines for the future direction of the UT Art Museums needs to consider.

The exhibition program of Laguna Gloria Art Museum draws a considerable number of students from the University of Texas. Also, a sizeable portion of the general public frequent the university art exhibitions. They are both supported by tax dollars.

What's needed is a definition of objectives by both LGAM and the UT Art Museums, with open communication between the two, and full cooperation.

• • •  
The work of Susan Kristofferson, on exhibit at Kerbey Lane Gallery through Sept. 9, explores a variety of surface design techniques. Included in the show are block printed and silk screened fabrics, as well as two kimonos and several smaller garments. One of the kimonos is composed of strips of cotton velveteen with rippling bands of color. The other was dyed after stitching and gathering, causing a delicate tracery of blue, green and rust.

Four wall pieces explore the idea of overlapping bars of color. In her two "Laminated Crosspieces," Kristofferson combined strips of fabric dyed in rosey violets and cool greens. She then cut them at a diagonal and rearranged them as woven or vertical bands. "Crosspieces II" uses pale color bars of machine embroidery or a white background. In "Crosspieces III" small tubes of cotton duck dyed in rose tones, tan and green are stuffed and stitched together in a free flowing design.

ANN MATLOCK

# Kahlo's paintings a revealing autobiography

The paintings of Frida Kahlo are direct self-revelations through portraits of herself and the use of easily read symbols. They present a character of enormous strength, a person who suffered and was able to objectify her emotions into a fine art form.

A major exhibition of her work is upstairs at the Michener Gallery, University of Texas campus, in midstream of a nationwide tour which originated at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago.

I see it as having great appeal to special categories of people in Austin. The Chicanos come first, as Kahlo was Mexican of mixed Indian, Catholic, and European origin; and she created an art form that fused these sources.

Second would be women, as the frankness of her imagery relates specially to women's bodies and their experiences, in childbirth and in relationship to men.

Third would be people in both physical and psychic pain. Frida Kahlo was crushed in a bus and truck collision at age 15, endured many operations, and subsequently died from effects of the accident 29 years afterwards. She began painting in bed at 16, while lying on her back. A mirror was fixed to the underside of the wooden canopy of her four-poster and a special easel was designed to straddle the bed.

There was recovery, and marriage to the already great Diego Rivera, the Mexican muralist twice her age. Together they had



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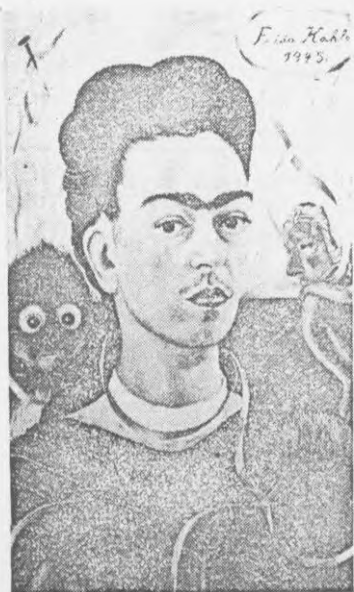
an intense life, painting, traveling — meeting Picasso and Duchamp in Paris, Nelson Rockefeller in New York — and creating in Mexico City a mecca for artists and intellectuals.

In this exhibition are early works which draw from the simple, naive forms of Spanish art transplanted and recreated by native Mexicans. They are strong, but the

power came later, in the mid-1930s when her images became more specifically symbolic.

One of these is "My Nurse and I." It is small, painted in oil on tin in the manner of retablos, the religious paintings that were used to evoke healing. The imagery is of Frida with a child's body and her own adult face. She is sucking the breast of an Indian with a fearsome Teotihuacan stone mask, but one who has Frida's hair and her connected brows. The ducts of the breast are revealed as white and related to the veins of plants in the background.

Kahlo is making an autobiography, declaring her Indian heritage and her Indian wet nurse. But she has also devised a meta-



Self-Portrait with Small Monkey, 1945

phor for the artist as creator (the nurse-god-Frida) and the subject (the child-Frida) simultaneously. So that it is about art creating, as well as life.

"Roots" is another symbolic painting. In it a mature Frida in bright Mexican dress reclines on a pillow in an arid land. Her chest is opened as a window to the earth behind, but out of it grow vines and leaves extending red veins toward the cracked earth.

It stands for the cycle of life and death, the threat of death as seen in dark scissions in the earth, and the life of the body growing out to both replenish and feed upon the ground.

Several self portraits which focus upon her head and shoulders are beautiful in color and resolution form. In them she stares hauntingly toward the viewer; some have monkeys and cats on her shoulders and patterns of leaves behind. The inner person is partially revealed in an expression of strong will, but also deciphered by the associations the creatures and earth forms suggest.

One of the most compelling of these portraits is in the University of Texas collections, as is a drawing of "Diego and Frida."

The catalog is worth purchasing, as the author relates Kahlo's life to her works and gives excellent interpretations of symbols in her paintings.

There is also a film on Wednesdays at noon in the gallery, through Sept. 13, in which her memory is evoked through images of her house and recollections of friends. One of them describes her as "a bomb disguised as a butterfly."

Beyond the strong interest her work will arouse in people with experiences that relate directly to hers, Frida Kahlo's paintings will speak to anyone who has tried to externalize his feelings. Which is anyone?

## Gimblett paintings reveal vibrancy and simplicity

The 80-inch square painting is a universe, a symbol, the basis of a mature artist's aesthetic. It and what is within it are the elements of a language, so distilled that one vertical bar five inches wide and 66 inches high is all.

All, that is, but for the brilliant color, the markings of the brush dragging oil paint in the upward and downward movement of a script. The rest is due to the cultural notions of the viewer, and to his optional powers.

MAXWELL GIMBLETT'S seven similar paintings on canvas and six small works on paper are in the Laguna Gloria space at First Federal Savings. They are luminous and vibrant and simple.

His paintings are not Op Art, involved in only the effects of color and placement on the retina; they are more. But, it is due to the subtle nature of binary vision, of the different wave lengths of basic colors focusing on the retina at different spots, of the tiring of rods and cones from exposure to contrasting hues that make his magic work.

In the magic of a bar painted Cadmium Red Light in a square of Ceruleum Blue which has been applied in the gesture of a script there is a set of ambivalences. The red bar floats; it is embedded. The red bar moves sidewise; it is still. The edge of the bar is dark on one side and light on the other; it is the reverse.

THE BLUE, TOO. It is satin; it is velvet; it is paint. It is infinitely deep; it is a shallow surface. It is square; it has a circular aura.

And the cultural notions set in. In psychological orientation the bar is an "I," an upright human, suspended in the components of the universe. It is a stimulus for contemplation.

Cultural notions also prevent reception of the image. If a painted 80-inch square containing one vertical geometric form does not fit the viewer's



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mental pattern of what should be in a painting, then it will be rejected before perceived.

On first glance the viewer will become angry that something is presented as art that he/she is not accustomed to. The viewer's requirements may be that a painting on canvas have details that are obviously related to people and functional objects, or land.

THEN THERE IS the problem of abstract thought as well as an abstract image. Some people don't think abstractly. Some people do.

In Max Gimblett's paintings it is amazing that so much can come from so little. Yet, it is not only waiting to be perceived, most of it is the artist's intent.

This man has been a full-time painter for 14 years. He is from New Zealand, and annually returns there to exhibit, and occasionally teach. He was a potter in Canada, before becoming a painter. He lived and exhibited in Austin in 1970-72, and has continued as a painter in New York since then.

He welcomes associations by viewers in response to his paintings. "Painting is really only here to be tripped on. I encourage it totally. My major interests are such that we could all agree, we were seeing the same thing (a red bar in a blue area). As soon as we describe it, we are all different. Everybody projects all points of view and hints about themselves and their culture," he said.

# Art contrasts

Large contemporary sculpture is scarce in cities of moderate size, but an exhibition of "Drawings for Outdoor Sculpture 1946-1977" at Laguna Gloria Art Museum at least gives us the two dimensional proposals for such and two monumental works on the grounds there provide a direct experience with fully three-D creations.

As the visitor approaches the museum entrance the two sculptures on the grass thrust upward in challenge to the fountain and palm trees of what was Mrs. Sevier's garden. Incongruous they are with that setting, but they are not permanently left here and they do represent the present-day form of contemporary sculpture for public places. Gauging by the drawings inside the museum by sculptors of far more eminence, these two works are even conservative.

They were both done as part of an imaginative project to bring large sculpture to Austin through having the artist come and construct something. There are going to be seven in all, with the sculptor's expenses paid by a grant from the Texas Commission on the Arts and Humanities and the National Endowment for the Arts. The sculptors possess the works, and will remove them in 1980.

The first one was erected by Jim Huntington. It is approximately eight feet tall, is composed of a slab of granite which is smooth on the outside and rough on the inner portion. This is joined to a piece of stainless steel that is bent at a near right angle. It is set on a concrete square.

A skinny person can walk into it; and therefore it has associations of vertical cubicles such as a telephone booth. It reflects the light of different times of day in a rather pleasant way. Huntington is a New York sculptor, and his work looks like something done by a big city person for a concrete and stone city. He commented when here that he didn't consider the environment.

Mac Whitney's huge rusted steel sculpture is also vertical, even blocking the view of the museum building — which may be a desirable distraction from that particular view. But Whitney is a Texan, from a hog farm, and his piece here has all the exuberance of a gutsy powerful man given a free hand with steel slabs. It resembles a cross

# with scenery



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between a big farm or road construction vehicle with a tall cabin, and a fortress with a flag on the rampart.

What is conservative by present day standards of sculpture in both of these is that they have traditional considerations of contrast and rhythm and accent. Furthermore, they are objects, although huge ones.

Inside the museum the "Drawings for Outdoor Sculpture 1946-1977" has a large number of diagrams that mostly represent the imaginative capacity of the sculptors' minds.

As an example, Dewain Valentine has a drawing with instructions for a spiral of powdered milk colored with vegetable dyes to be released in the Gulf of Saint Tropez by a slowly circulating speed-boat. There is a map, and specifications of the quantities and sequence of the powders to be released, as it is to be the colors of the spectrum.

Valentine's project is the ultimate in courtesy to the environment, in that the materials of the art work will all be faded by the sun and absorbed by the sea in short order. This is, of course, in contrast to the huge steel objects which are dominating Mrs. Sevier's garden.

I am in favor of charge, of art that uses new forms and materials in keeping with technological and cultural alterations. But most important is the expansion of the human spirit. This is the artist's fundamental role in society.

Austin American-Statesman

Sunday, September 24, 1978



Mac Whitney's 'Laredo' looms in Laguna Gloria yard.

# In New York, it's spelled ART

The psychic leap from the limited and gentle art scene of Austin to the greatest art center in the world, and return, is an experience that blasts the mind.

In New York art is ART, more than is possible to see in six days even with total immersion in that subject, plus the following categories of people all thinking art: Austinites and other Texans, friends making the scene, celebrities.

In grand art there was a total ancient Egyptian temple, the Temple of Dendur, rescued from a lake formed by the Aswan Dam, and rebuilt block by block in a gigantic new room in the Metropolitan Museum. That was seen at a private opening with a borrowed member's card.

In new art there was the opening of a show called "Outside New York" at The New Museum housed in the New School for Social Research on Fifth Avenue. Of the six artists whose work was given a premiere showing in New York, James Hill and Dan Rizzio live in Texas, Tom Hatch was educated at UT Austin, and Janis Provisor taught here.

There were 1,200 people assembled that one night to see the paintings and constructions of those six artists, unseen before in New York.

One of the humorous comments circulating during the opening was that the Texans come in a bunch whenever one of their ilk exhibits, and pile out of a van like clowns at a circus. They were there all right, people who had shown at A Clean Well Lighted Place in Austin in the late Sixties, and who had gone for better, or lessor, places.

Another crowded exhibit that involved the images of an Austinite who is already a celebrity was the retrospective of Russell Lee's photographs at the Witkin Gallery. It was not an opening crowd, just the ordinary workday bunch. But so as not to exaggerate, the Witkin Gallery is also a resource place for a lot of established photographers' work, and books. Business looked good.

Russell Lee lives in Austin, and taught at the University of Texas from 1965 to 1973. He is one of the grand old men of American photographic history, having documented the Depression for the Farm Securities Administration, done aerial photography for the Army during W.W. II, and photographed Texas since 1947.

There was time to have lunch with Diana Larmore Sperberg who was a fellow student in art criticism under John Canaday at the University of Texas in 1977. She is still a rising art critic getting training for a time as an editor on a perfume industry trade journal. Diana has worked for the Whitney Museum of American Art, and was able to get me into see an exhibit being installed there of small objects collected, transformed, or made by Claes Oldenburg.

It was fascinating, his "Mouse Museum," as he terms it, transforms kitsch objects into art by virtue of their having been selected and possibly modified by an artist of celebrated sensibility. It was a way of reading Oldenburg's mental functioning, the associations that can be made between these little objects and his sculpture projects.



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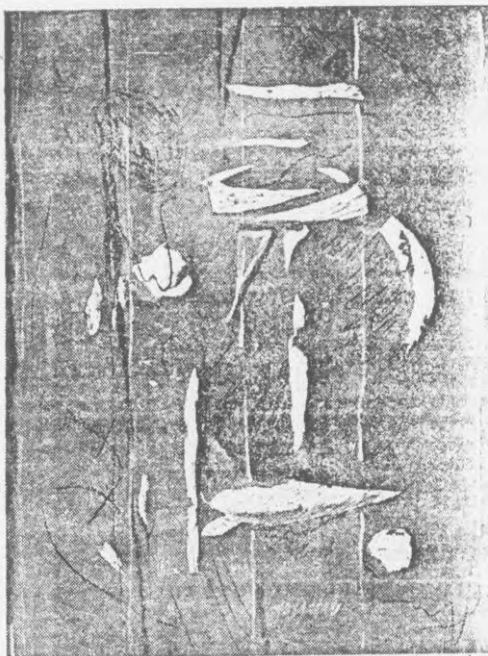
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There was a lot of good art in the galleries. In a group show at the Louis K. Meisel Gallery it was possible to see why the one painting by James Havard in his "abstract illusionist" style was superior in effect to paintings in the same category by two other artists.

And a few of the photorealistic images at Meisel were magnificent pieces of painting in a classic sense. It's just that the compositions resemble photographs more than Renaissance idealism.

Celebrities? Well, there was dinner with John and Katherine Canaday honoring Louise Nevelson on her 79th birthday at Lombardi's around the corner from Nevelson's studio. It was unbelievable. The most acclaimed woman sculptor of all time was talking about her youth, despair to the point of considering suicide, getting where she did by hard work, and how tall she is and how much she likes fancy clothes.

When I shook her hand at midnight, and thanked her for the evening of magnificent memories she had granted me, she replied, "Well, dear, just stay with the greatest."



"Traveling Thru" is the most recent painting in the exhibit.

## Sturgill's works reflect contradiction

Contradictory terms, static and lyrical, apply to Barbara Sturgill's large abstract collage paintings on canvas at St. Edward's University Moody Hall Atrium Gallery.

In the three years this series covers there is continuity and development. A somber gray surface in the earlier works holds in restraints underlying rich colors visible only in gaps or in markings scratched through. Since the underpaint is applied with abandon and in brilliant colors, and the gray surface is only somewhat more controlled, form is effected by stabilizing devices.

Form is made through horizontal or vertical lines, and through pieces of torn and shaped paper that have been saturated in the paint while it was still wet on the canvas. Central positioning of the applied shapes dominates, giving the image the character of an icon. Aply titled, several paintings in this series are named "Meditation." As meditation is a traditional response to an icon.

In the more recent paintings bright color replaces the overall gray, and the markings are freer, having the character of application by a full gesture of the arm. The papers collaged to the surface are more varied in shape and include some with a chicken wire imprint taken from a game box.

The freest of all is "Traveling Thru," which is also the most recent. It has a sunny yellow surface



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with the structural horizontals and a rectangular line near the edge; but on top of that is a wonderful play of spirals, rhythmic short slashes, egg-shaped papers and the chicken wire pattern. The title is also appropriate here, as the whole suggests the play of a kid dancing across a sunny field.

I see Sturgill's paintings as a pure expression of mental processes that are essentially abstract. That is, emotional abandon on the one hand, and control on the other. What has happened in the development of her work in the three years this show encompasses is that the emotional character appears hidden to a greater degree in the earlier ones, and is released to activate the surface on the later. Also, the change to strong colors signifies this.

Sturgill describes her painting as "a physical/philosophical journey . . . Each painting is a risk, an exciting adventure with no arbitrary end." No arbitrary end for each, yes, but the continuity of her work indicates a primary choice of forms and methods of working that are the mark of a mature aesthetic.

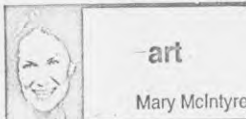
## 3 diverse exhibits a surprising blend

In the three ring circus of exhibitions all under the one roof of the Huntington Gallery of UT's Art Building there is a crazy mixture of images that have more in common than their titles might suggest.

Downstairs is "Sculpture by Jean Arp," and in the back section of the same floor is "Jean Dubuffet: Materiologies and Texturologies." Upstairs is "Mithila Folk Painting," recent paintings on paper from a village in Northern India.

Jean Arp and Jean Dubuffet are both Frenchmen, and both from a period of modern art when there was an inclination to abstract the image of man. Arp did it one way, and Dubuffet another; and then the folk artists in India have been doing it in an entirely different way for roughly 3,000 years.

Arp's polished green sculpture is a reduction of man, animal, and plant forms to a set of three dimensional amoeba-like shapes which are elegant and appeal as irreducible symbols. His ideas derived from Alsatian folklore and from a playful application of Surrealism. Though his humanoids have no sensory means such as features, or extremities, or skin, they do say that our essence is beautiful and monumentally significant.



In this display most of Arp's gleaming creatures are piled together in a mass and thereby resemble jewelry in a store vying for attention. The contours of Arp's work are so important and the form so distilled, that to put them in a bunch is to destroy aesthetic perception.

This same space in which the biomorphs create a forest is shared by the works on paper of Jean Dubuffet. These are images of textures which Dubuffet invented while dinging around with crumbs, twigs, threads and chemicals on a lithograph plate. Some are done by creating spatter on the plate, or spatter in paint on canvas. This experimentation was done in the 1950s, when doing such was innovation.

However, there are also some of Dubuffet's more characteristic images, which consist of childlike drawings of people stuck helplessly in the quicksand of texture. These seem to say that modern man is ineffective in the world, and nearly mindless as

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Jean Arp's 'Torso Sheaf,' a 1959 work in bronze, is at the UT Huntington Galleries.

well as goddess. And a few of his grotesque heads or torsos isolated against plain paper, but filled with texture within their outline say that man is not much more than a garbage can of matter.

So, from gloom in Dubuffet's corner and the beautiful but numb essence of man in Arp's images, one turns with happiness to the Indian folk painting. Here there is, bright color, playful pattern, an abstraction of human images, but done to show the activities of Hindu deities. There is vitality and conviction, impossible to ignore even though the viewer may know nothing of Tantric mythology.

In the abundance of inventive forms much of it is playful and denotes the pleasures of people together. The paintings are worth reading about on an obscure little card in a middle corner of the exhibit, or in the catalog.



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## Sculpture reflects Texas in varying themes

"Texas Sculpture" is an exhibition that frees the spirit, because sculpture created by Texans from the fully contemporary wavelengths of ideas that this show represents has rarely been seen here.

What's being done has a range of themes from "down home Texas," funk, ritual, international style abstract, feminist, to traditional bronze portraiture and gift shop Western. It's all on display at the Laguna Gloria space in First Federal Savings.

**THERE IS TEXAN** Art in the down home Texas stuff, which projects this state's character either by its subject, such as bluebonnets and the Alamo, or by the gutsy, tough way the materials are used, or a combination of both.

Usually it's both, as in David McElroy's three part wall piece called, "Home is Where the Heart is; Parts for an Ideal Priory." McElroy has made art of images from a wooden facility that hasn't gone out of use in Texas or been altogether supplanted by molded plastic. His rough cut boards are rhythmically joined by wavy edges and held together with strips hammered with a silver border of galvanized nails. There are hearts carved into the round window of the door, and in a shutter.

Also with a humorous folk art look is "Catfish" by David Bates. It is made of small pieces of plywood, layered, painted, and projecting at varying depths from the wall. It depicts the head and arms of a black man holding a catfish. As with McElroy's, this sculpture has a sophistication beyond the homey character of the image.

**JOHN HUKES'S** stuffed chicken on a pedestal within a neon arch, called "Rhode Island Red" bridges down home Texas and funk. Becky Williams also makes funk art, something strange and wonderful out of ordinary objects, in her four pairs of "Shoes for Getting Away." These are highly imaginative shoes made of bright plastic, chrome, brass and leather. Most have toes of painted plastic that look like bare feet, and all have evidence of motion in spring bases, wheels, wings or jet spurts.

The most dramatic piece in the show is Thana

Lauhakaikal's "Blue Ink," which sets up the visual conditions of ritual, and also reverberates deeply into the subconscious to fundamental male-female and life-death principles.

It is a totally white arrangement on the floor in the shape of a pointed egg, and is composed of shallow plastic dishes containing darts at 45 degree angles. At the position of greatest width in the egg shape there are two large, fluid-shaped horizontal rods resting on poles that are set through the centers of small tables. Eleven long darts rest on the horizontal rods and angle at 45 degrees to the floor. All darts and table legs are sharply pointed and rest on poured thickened plaster blobs where meeting the floor.

**THE DISHES ARE** receptacles, and thereby female as is the pointed egg shape. The darts and poles are male, and evoke potential mutilation, especially in their termination in blobs of frozen fluidity. This complex and highly refined sculpture was conceived from the ritual forms that lie in the subconscious and deserves the first prize it received.

In contrast is the large rusted steel tripod by David Deming that received second prize. Allusions are not apparent. Instead, it is a beautifully composed set of tensions made by the thrust and counterthrust of rectangular boxes that have been sensitively refined. Each long edge is sculpted to a life-like irregularity relating to the entasis (muscular swelling) of Greek columns.

Feminist concerns are seen in Claudia Reese's ceramic square framing borders with scissors cutting fabric on top. Within are bits of threads, actual fabric and a thimble encased in resin.

**FOUR OUTDOOR** sculptures which are a part of this competitive exhibition are on the grounds of Laguna Gloria Art Museum. Three of these are award winners.

Credit needs to be given to the director and curator of LGAM for their continued dedication to getting contemporary sculpture on public view in Central Texas.

End Mary Myart Malott Collection