

# Idea's drawings demand viewers' participation

By DAN ACOSTA

"So much black. This Idea fellow must be depressed, maybe constant turmoil or ennui."

This might be heard at the Pontiac Art Center's current show: "Sheldon Idea/10 years of Selected Drawings." Almost all his works begin with a charcoal-based board which he scratches and erases to produce light. The black is not a solid black — it contains subtle variations of color, mood and expression.

"Dawn," one of these variations, at first appears boring black with a horizontal suggesting a landscape. As all of Idea's work, "Dawn" demands time to be examined and a vulnerability to be touched. Delicate shades of red and morning sun can be seen at the edges. Light permeates from a place just be-

yond our reach. Quiet moments and contemplation create a dawn. There is a serenity, too often found only on those desolate wilderness vacations.

A new dawn, hope, found in black? Idea feels the color has too long been maligned.

"I realized all the things I had come to naturally were tenets of Oriental philosophy. The color of black is not the color of death. It is the color of germination, of things growing, the color of rest, the color of contemplation, the color of peace," Idea said.

YEARS OF TRAVELING and experiencing influenced Idea's formation of these ideas. After graduating from the Cranbrook Academy of Art, he was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship for painting. He traveled in India for a

year, painting and absorbing its rich cultural heritage.

"I walked into the cave-temples of Ajanta. There are Hindu and Buddhist shrines there. They were done hundreds of years ago. So, you walk through all these doorways and portals and you're in the dark; you're coming from bright sunlight.

"After being in there awhile, you realize you're looking at a hole. You realize the hole is a belly button of a 30-foot statue of Buddha. You look around the room and you see 15 Buddhas all carved out of rock, all beautifully, meticulously carved. You find yourself in a chamber. Well, I turned to my wife

and said I think something just happened.

"And what happened, and it took me several years to put it all together because I'm not into Oriental philosophy. I'm not into Zen. I came out and wanted to portray the idea of the dark being something very contemplative, of the dark being something that is growing, of the dark being something that is feared. I want people to discover themselves in this arena. I want to place them into my work the same way I experienced it."

THIS DESIRE to place the art patron within his work explains the

monumentality of the drawings. The blackness and the precisely initiated light immerse the viewer. "Nora's Light" well accomplishes this.

"Nora's Light" is a psychological study of the Ibsen character. It is intensely personal, almost a violation. We are funneled into the inner space of Nora. She is exposed before us.

With very limited color and a judicious use of light, Idea creates moods, feelings and introspections. His Portia series allows light to leak out around a doorway. There is an illusion of depth and mystery. These drawings can be seen again and again or perhaps felt again and again, as the viewer each

day brings a new wardrobe of thoughts and feelings to these orchestrated Rorschachs.

These drawings must be allowed to work their magic. Idea said they demand participation.

Take some time looking at the work. Stop in your busy life of running around and for 30 seconds give the work a look. If you do, your head will have to stretch a little bit. And after all isn't that what art's all about?"

Idea's works will be at the Pontiac Art Center till March 23. For more information, call 333-7849. The center is open from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Mondays-Saturdays, 47 Williams, Pontiac.

## Russian pianist makes local debut

Area concert goers will have their first opportunity to hear Russian pianist Bella Davidovich when she appears on the American Artist Series, 3 p.m. Sunday, at Kingswood Auditorium.

Winner of the 1949 Chopin Prize in Warsaw and soloist with the Leningrad Philharmonic for 27 consecutive seasons, Ms. Davidovich (pronounced Dav-ee-DOH-itch) is renowned as one of the great living exponents of Chopin. She emigrated to the United States in October 1978.

Since her arrival here she has received a phenomenal response from orchestral and concert sponsors. Her American debut in Carnegie Hall last October marked the beginning of a major career, which includes six appearances in New York (including a return engagement in Carnegie Hall to perform the Beethoven Concerto No. 1), during the 1979/80 season.

Additionally, this season, Ms. Davidovich will appear as guest soloist with the San Francisco Symphony, Houston Symphony, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Montreal Symphony, and the

Florida Philharmonic, as well as in recital with the nation's most prestigious series in Chicago, San Francisco, Miami and New York for a total of more than 28 concerts.

SHE HAS SIGNED an exclusive recording contract with Philips and has already made three recordings of the works of Beethoven, Chopin and Schumann for Philips. While in Europe in the spring of 1979, Ms. Davidovich gave her recital debuts in Amsterdam, Munich and Antwerp; she performed in Göteborg, Sweden, where she has been invited to return in 1980 and 1981.

This season she will return to Europe for engagements in Paris, West Germany and at the Helsinki Festival.

The remaining concerts comprising the 10th anniversary of the American Artist Series include: 3 p.m. Sunday, April 13, The County Concert Royal; and 7 p.m. Sunday, May 18, New World Quartet.

Single ticket price is \$7.00. For more information call 647-2230 or write Ticket Chairman: AAS, 31960 Mountaintop, Franklin 48023.

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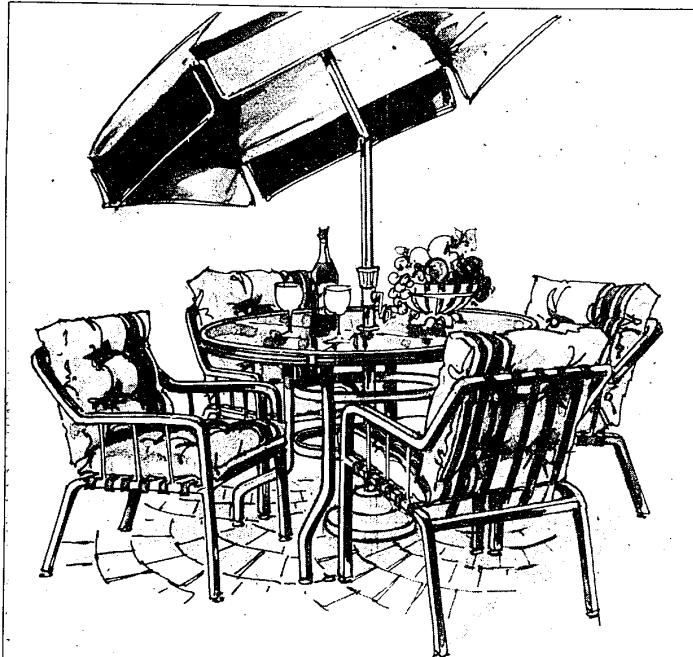
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