



Corinne Abatt editor/644-1100

Thursday, February 2, 1984 O&E

(F)E



Carl F. and Anna M. Barnes Jr. recently presented the etching at right, "Interior View of the Basilica of St. Peter's, Rome" 1748 by Giovanni Battista Piranesi to Oakland University. The center etching by Luigi Rossini is "View of the Pyramid of Calus Castue, Rome" 1822. At left is "Roman Candelebrum" 1778 also by Giovanni Piranesi.

DAVID FRANK/staff photographer

Building a collection

By Corinne Abatt
staff writer

THE COLLECTION of selected prints, "From Line to Tone," on display at Meadow Brook Gallery through Feb. 11, educates as well as provides enjoyment.

These 64 examples of printmaking from a 15th century woodcut to a 20th century lithograph by Will Barnett, are on loan from Carl F. and Anna M. Barnes Jr. He's professor of art history and archeology and director of the Center for the Arts at Oakland University. She's a member of the English faculty at the university.

Barnes told a class visiting the exhibit, "We bought our first print less than three years ago."

Since then, he said, they have been interested in 17th, 18th, and 19th century works which served as illustrations to document geographical sites and buildings. Later they became interested in people and activities.

"These (kinds of works)," he told the class, "are still available, still collectable and still affordable. Some are not substantially more expensive than posters."

THE ACCOMPANYING catalog, with excellent prints of many of the works in the show, follows the chronology of the exhibition and contains biographical information on each artist along with explanations of the printmaking processes and subject matter.

Much of the catalog material was taken from a more comprehensive work prepared by eight of Barnes' students. Their original, unabridged work is presently available in limited edition form, but may be printed, bound and distributed more widely at a later date.

This well-organized, easy to follow exhibit begins with early pages of text which soon changed emphasis from printing to illustration.

From here the progression is woodcuts, etchings, black and white and color lithography. Etching didn't give way to lithography, the two existed together, so the exhibition doesn't cut off one and start the other.

Printmaking can also be documented by subject matter. Early in their collecting, the Barneses were interested in the etchings of sites and monuments which served them much as post cards and photographs do today, pictures a traveler could bring home to show where he had been.

GIOVANNI Battista Piranesi, Barnes told the students, did extremely well in this type of art. Etchings of monuments and classical sites, dominated 18th century subject matter.

Those who made the "grand tour" usually went back home with Piranesi etchings, bought for about \$12 at the time. Other artists, including Piranesi's son, Francesco, followed suit.

Interest in portraits was at its



"Tour du Gros Horloge" in Evreux, France is a lithograph, done in 1824 by Richard Parkes Bonington.

height in the 18th century as people wanted to know what the famous looked like, so portraiture became a form of reportage.

The rise of imperialism generated an interest in far-away places such as Alexandria, Egypt and Balbek, Syria, the latter still one of the trouble spots of today's world.

As literacy spread, social commentary became more important, specifically newspaper lithographs.

"Honore Daumier," said Barnes, "was the most famous. He published 4,000 lithographs in newspapers."

The great American artist Winslow Homer made his living as an illustrator from 1870 to 1885, and many of his works, like those of Daumier, were concerned with the human condition.

One of Homer's in the exhibit, "Morning Bell," is a poignant example. It shows a line of young girls and boys going off to work in the factory carrying their lunch pails, yet they look like they ought to be going off to school.

Highlighting the section on color lithography is "Pavillon de Flore, Tuleries," by Thomas Shetter Boys, a chromolithograph, 1839, "the first successful color print ever made."

Up to 40 stones (each with a different color) were used to make fine prints and color registration (placement) had to be exact each time.

Barnes said, as he and his wife talked informally after his presentation, "We've learned a lot and we want to share."

He said he would like to exhibit their collection at the gallery several years from now with a whole new body of work.

Gallery hours are 1-5 p.m. Tuesday-Friday, 2-6:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday and evenings through the first admission when there is a Meadow Brook Theatre performance. The gallery is on the Oakland University campus, Rochester.



Albrecht Dürer's "Circumcision of Christ," from "The Life of The Virgin," is a woodcut which dates from 1505. Below is a lithograph by Honore Daumier, "An Evening at the Guard Room," 1848.



China unveils a new image

By Corinne Abatt
staff writer

Birmingham Bookstore will open a series of cultural enrichment programs with Dr. S. Bernard Thomas as the guest at the Community House at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 9.

Thomas, member of the Oakland University history department, will give a slide lecture entitled "Images of China Today."

He will bring a number of viewpoints to his topic. In 1947-48 he was a graduate student in Peiking. Thomas has returned many times, most recently in 1980 and 1982 as leader of China tours for Oakland University credit. Next June, he will lead his third such tour.

Thomas has published many books and articles on China, the most recent of which is "Life and the Chinese Revolution."

Thomas said, "Our view of China reflects where we are as much as where they are."

"We seem to be in a period of some negativism now. There was almost a euphoric reaction after Nixon opened the doors."

He said that after the Vietnam War, there was a disillusionment with anti-Communist policies and this made us more receptive to China. Americans saw and admired some of the values of what appeared to be an egalitarian society devoted to the betterment of mankind, Thomas said.

TODAY, he said, our viewpoint has changed. It is much darker.

"The new (Chinese) leadership is critical of the leadership of the previous decade. They themselves will talk about the backward steps that resulted."

He said that now in their egalitarian values we see a "creeping capitalism."

"Their aims and goals are easier for us to understand — they are interested in our technology, our scientific advances, and would like to participate in investment opportunities," he said.

The recent news about the crackdown on crime in Shanghai makes us aware that they, too, are having problems with crime and probably share some of our other problems, he said.

This means we no longer judge China on a set of standards very different from our own, Thomas said. The myth has disappeared; both sides have become realists, he said.

"As I remember the China of 1947-



Dr. S. Bernard Thomas

48, we are dealing with a China that has moved very far forward," Thomas said. "They have placed a kind of floor under their society in terms of providing the necessities of life. . . . China is a country able to pay its own way. China has over a billion population. You have to understand that China has huge problems and it can't operate in the same free-wheeling way that we do."

"An independent, strong, friendly China would greatly increase the opportunities for American trade and business investment in China. Therefore, it's important for us to know something about China."

Thomas said he has always been able to make contact with the Chinese people, talk to students and visit his many friends of long standing without any problems.

"These days, the Chinese are eager to make contact with Americans," Thomas said. "For one thing, most Chinese are studying English and they want to try it out."

The lecture is open to the public. For information, call Birmingham Bookstore, 642-4401.

Vishniac photos tell poignant story

By Ira Lax
special writer

The Pierce Street Gallery is now showing Roman Vishniac's 1930s photographs of the pre-Holocaust Jewish gettos of Eastern Europe.

Although we have seen countless images of the results of Nazi atrocities, only here can we glimpse, with the cloudy anger of survivors, the spark of life before it was extinguished.

From approximately 16,000 pictures Vishniac took over a six-year period, about 2,000 survived nine arrests and repeated confiscations of his cameras and film.

Only through the exquisite novels and short stories of Isaac Bashevis Singer have we experienced the interior lives Vishniac has captured with such paths.

THE CLOSENESS of the ghetto world seen through veils of snow and rain, sellers of food and dry goods, young children with liquid eyes and black garbed Hasidim gather at the table of God's Word to uphold their end of an ancient covenant.

I found myself having quiet conversations with these images, wondering how faith and their certain dark knowledge served them in the time that remained. What did the miracle of Hanukkah mean in 1938 for the Jews of Kazimierz, Cracow?

Despite the absence of any trace of the sun's warmth, life and death dance on the faces of young Talmud students, wrapped in blankets to cheat the cold, in the gait of the rabbi and the town fool of Munkatch and in the atmosphere of spirited study and devotion among the pupils of Rabbi Baruch Rabbinowitz of Mukacheve.

review

moment of Vishniac's accomplishment is perceived.

Elaine Yaker, a co-owner of the gallery, attributed this rare exhibition of photographs outside of London, Amsterdam and New York to a fruitful meeting she had with Vishniac in his New York apartment a year and a half ago.

NOW IN his 87th year, Vishniac continues to devote his time to lecturing and the search for meaning with the camera. Speaking eight languages, with several advanced degrees in zoology, medicine, and Oriental art, and his own life being a story of near escapes from the Bolsheviks to Berlin in 1920, it is no wonder he is a living legend among his peers and becoming so with the general public.

The significance of his work has been recognized by such luminaries as Edward Steichen, Cornell Capa, and Philippe Halsman.

From 1-4 p.m., Sunday, Pierce Street Gallery will host a special voluntary fund-raiser to benefit the Holocaust Memorial Center of the Jewish Community Center of Greater Detroit. There will be an informal lecture and a voice recording of Roman Vishniac talking about his photographs. Everyone is welcome. For more information, call 648-6950.

The exhibit continues through Friday, Feb. 17. Hours are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Wednesday through Friday, 217 Pierce Street, Birmingham.

"These are still available, still collectable and still affordable. Some are not substantially more expensive than posters."

— Carl F. Barnes Jr.