

Sander's photography expresses a people

By PATRICIA BEACH SMITH

Frequently one wonders at an artist's impetus. In the case of German master photographer August Sander there is no wondering.

Sander spent his lifetime (1876 to 1964) photographing his fellow countrymen and women, as well as the countryside around them.

It is obvious that Sander's main interest was to visually document the world and people who surrounded him, but his work goes far beyond documentation and the images he produced have value which transcends mere recording.

He is considered to be the German photographer extraordinaire, and certainly now is thought of as one of the greats of all history.

During his lifetime he made 90,000 glass plate negatives incor-

porating his work into portfolios of 75 prints each. He made 12 complete portfolios of each subject.

The enormity of his work is overwhelming if one thinks in mere numbers, but even more important are the insights into the German people which he was able to capture for posterity.

It is not even necessary to think of these people as a particular ethnic group, but rather as unique individuals whose place in the world was dignified by Sander's having chosen them as subjects.

He gives glimpses of people which capture their whole selves and not just their professions. He did portraits of tradesmen, farmers, dignitaries, performers and the aristocracy.

They are images of real people working or playing in true-to-life situations. Everyday people are given incredible dignity, because the dignity was inherent, not because he created it in his own image to glorify theirs.

Sometimes his subjects' professions or activities are evident, sometimes, especially when the prints are seen out of the context of the complete portfolio, they are not evident at all and the subjects stand as viable studies of individuals.

The current exhibit at the K31 Gallery in Birmingham, shows individual prints from his various portfolios. Even without the whole, they are fantastic representations of his work.

Palette and Brush to hear artist

At a luncheon meeting of the Palette and Brush Club of Detroit on Tuesday, Jan. 27, Sophie Fordon of Oak Park, will speak about her experience as a working artist in Japan for six months last year.

To illustrate her talk, she will exhibit a portfolio of her Japanese drawing Mrs. Fordon, who teaches life drawing at the Birmingham Bloomfield Art Association, has in the past also established studios in Mexico, Israel and Spain.

Last year she showed her Japanese drawings in a large exhibition at the Scarab Club in Detroit.

Chairman of the luncheon meeting is Dorothy Clark of Farmington Hills. The meeting will be held at the Greenfield Methodist Church in Detroit.

Lynn Guymon weds Robert B. Talbert

Lynn Robert Guymon of Birmingham and Robert B. Talbert of Southfield were married Nov. 20 at the home of the bride's mother.

Parents of the couple are Mrs. Roscoe L. Guymon of Birmingham and the late Mr. Guymon and Mrs. Robert B. Talbert Sr. of Spartanburg, S.C. and the late Mr. Talbert.

The couple took a wedding trip to Florida.

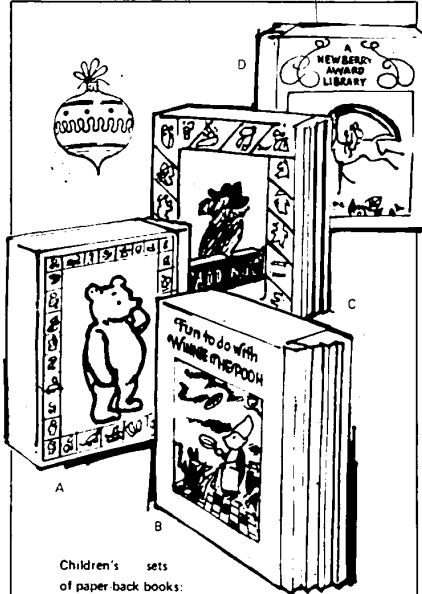
Particularly appealing are a tortured photo of two blind children at a home for blind persons. There is also a marvelous portrait of a bricklayer's mate which is lit so delicately by the natural sunlight Sander favored as his light source.

One of the most interesting works is of a peasant in Westwald, a town where Sander had one of his studios. It is an incredible portrait of a man seemingly lost in his own space and time.

A candy seller, with chains of candy draped across his shoulders, is another wonderful image, as is Sander's famous Pastry Cook.

One of the most arresting aspects of this man's work is the intensity which he was able to record in the faces of his subjects. He was able to grasp a person's mood, characteristics, physical and social, in one millisecond of time.

The exhibit of these rare prints will continue through Jan. 10 at 560 North Woodward.



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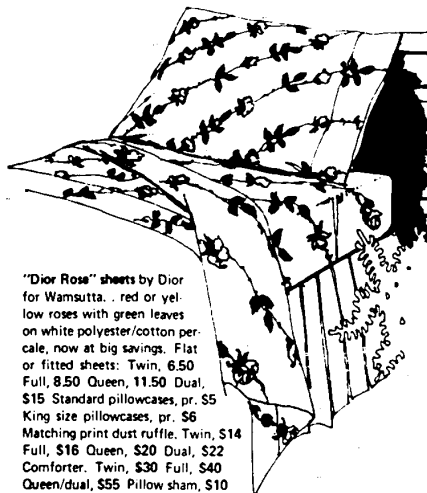
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