



Max Beckmann did many self-portraits that somewhat detail his feelings about himself. The one, at right, "Der Ausruf" (Circus Beckmann), done in 1921, is one of the most intriguing.

Beckmann portrayed a decadent society

By Bonita Bornstein
special writer

To his students, Max Beckmann offered this advice: "Nature is a wonderful chaos, and it is our task and our duty to order this chaos . . . and to complete it."

The distinctive artistic visions of Beckmann, the prominent German Expressionist, were brought to the Sheldon Ross Gallery in an exhibition of woodcuts, drypoints and lithographs on view through Oct. 27.

Although Beckmann is regularly represented at Sheldon Ross Gallery, this exhibition dovetails with the recent Berlin and Munich retrospectives as well as the current retrospective at the St. Louis Art Museum. These large exhibitions mark the 100th anniversary of Beckmann's birth.

Beckmann, along with George Grosz and Otto Dix, was influenced by the political situation created by World War I. They created an artistic movement (New Objectivity) in which there was a heightened sense of human failure and keen awareness of social ills.

Beckmann used the war as a springboard to look at reality within a great spatial void.

In unrelenting insistence, Beckmann fills the void and brings a visual dimension to hate, love, anguish, grief, lethargy and melancholy. As such, his message transcends time and concerns human suffering in general.

"Die Gachnenden," 1918, is somewhat Picasso-like in its packed distortion of gaping mouths. In addition to the horrific vision of war, Beckmann's overt crude behavior of his subjects (a man picking his nose) communicates human decadence — man at his lowest ebb.

"Das Karussell," 1921, is another piece of densely packed space. Within the circular movement of the carousel, the grinning, bored faces of the riders whirl past in a mockery of childish and innocent glee. They ride on pigs and oxen while masks decorate the structure — a true carnival of horror and decadence.

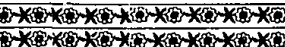
Although the two-mentioned pieces depict a bizarre landscape, Beckmann, throughout his career, drew upon self-portraiture as a form of self-realization.

review

tion. The gallery has two early rare prints, 1911 and 1914, as well as the oft-reproduced "Der Ausruf" (Circus Beckmann), 1921, drypoint in which Beckmann looks aside with large slanted eyes and twisted mouth.

According to Ross, Beckmann always enjoyed critical recognition. But it was the large unprecedented sum for a self-portrait recently auctioned by Christies that once more brought the attention of the art world to the genius of Beckmann.

The Sheldon Ross Gallery at 250 Martin, Birmingham, is open 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.



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Builders beat the heat

Continued from Page 1

ty if appropriate measures aren't taken to control airflow.

"You have to be careful, make sure the home has adequate ventilation," he explained, "especially if the house utilizes gas power."

Levine has taken the necessary steps to insure appropriate ventilation, said Oliver, with the installation of an "air-to-air heat exchanger," which removes old air and its moisture content from the home and replaces it with fresh air.

This machine not only provides air circulation in the home, but also preserves and transfers about 80 percent of the heat in the old air to the new air.

In addition to the air to heat exchanger, Levine also uses all electric heat, so there is no problem with gas fumes in the home.

The result of the exchanger and electric heat is a climate controlled home.

"There is very little air infiltration, and you don't get the drafts you might in a normal house," Oliver explained. "The superinsulated home is just generally more comfortable."

Another attraction of the homes is the price of the construction — superinsulation adds only 5 to 7 percent to the total cost of building the house.

"On an average sized house, superinsulation would only cost about \$3,000 extra," Levine said.

"At that price, it's worth the extra money, because you get back a return on your investment in only a few years," he added.

Oliver agreed, saying the superinsulated house could be very economically attractive if the added costs were kept low enough.

IN ADDITION to staying within affordable range of homes with normal insulation, the superinsulated homes also look like the rest of the homes on the block, said Levine.

"These are not odd looking houses," he ex-

plained. "They can be built to a variety of specifications."

Although it's really not economically feasible to remodel old homes using this new method, Levine believes the tribes of the superinsulated home will make it the "standard house of the future."

"In building the home this way in the first place, the buyer is saving right from the start," he said.

"Quality and energy efficiency are built right into the house, you don't have to back-track and add something on later."

Oliver agreed that this method could be very popular in the future, especially if costs are kept down and the public is made more aware about the existence of superinsulation.

In an attempt to educate the public, Levine, one of only three builders in the state currently building the new energy homes, participated in the recent Homearama, where the principles of the house were demonstrated. He has already had over 300 inquiries about the project.

He also reported that Detroit Edison and Owens Corning are endorsing the project, keeping track of energy consumption and conservation within the new home.

It is only a matter of time, he believes, before these "state of the art" homes are built everywhere.

"You get a maximum benefit, with a substantial payback," he said. "There's no reason not to have the benefit of reduced energy bills."

The house is scheduled to be completed within the next two months, but the builder

suggests visiting while it is still under construction to see the superinsulation process.

Anyone interested in seeing the new home can attend scheduled open-houses on Saturdays and Sundays between noon and 5 p.m., or call Levine for a private appointment.

The new home is at 701 Fairway Trails Drive, in Fairway Trails subdivision. Call Levine at 855-2548 for more information, or to schedule viewing appointments.

Musician wins

Susan Kohler, West Bloomfield High and Interlochen Arts Academy honors graduate, recently won the \$105 prize in the Macca-bees Mutual and WQBS-FM "Quest for Excellence" competition.

The 21-year-old clarinetist performed Weber's Concertino for Clarinet and Piano at Smiley's Concert Gallery in Detroit.

This continuing competition is broadcast live on WQBS-FM 105 from Detroit. This young artist competition is open to the public free of charge. Anyone wanting to attend the programs of have more information on the project may call, 833-6105.

Kohler is presently attending Northwestern University School of Music. Her former teachers include Paul Schaller of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Carmine Campione, Richard Waller of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and Robert Marcellus of the Cleveland Orchestra.

Presently she is studying with Clark Brody, former principal clarinetist with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

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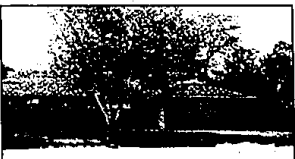
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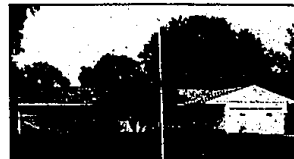
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