

Rosenquist's 'Star Thief' installed at museum

The enigmatic and colorful Star Thief, a monumental painting by noted American Pop artist James Rosenquist, was installed at the Detroit Institute of Arts this week.

The painting, 46 feet long by 17 feet high, was Rosenquist's "diary" of his feelings and thoughts during the 1960 election period. Star Thief will remain on the north wall of the museum's Prentiss Court for three years on long-term loan from Burton K. Winter of Chicago, Ill.

"At the start of his career Rosenquist painted billboards in Minneapolis and New York," said Jan van der Marck, DIA curator of Twentieth Century Art. "The sensations of instability and dislocation he must have felt, painting huge inflated im-

ages that extended beyond his immediate vision and the reach of his arm, have carried over. . . . In Star Thief he shifts the scale of the objects in their relation to each other — the bacon looms larger than the women's head. The telephone cables diminish the size of the background grid. We are down the rabbit hole with Alice, in a world out of proportion."

Van der Marck's enthusiasm for Star Thief goes back to 1981. As director of the Miami Center for the Fine Arts and a member of Dade County Art in Public Places Committee, he advocated purchase of Star Thief for installation in a yet-to-be-built Eastern Airlines concourse at Miami International Airport.

Eastern chairman Frank Borman opposed the selection. Pierce artistic and political debates erupted. The airport project was tabled and the painting was shown in 1983 at the Center for the Fine Arts.

In 1985, Star Thief surfaced in a touring retrospective exhibition, which also included Rosenquist's 10 by 86 foot anti-war statement, P-111 (1965). (P-111 sold for a Rosenquist record of \$2.09 million at the Sotheby's auction last year.)

Rosenquist is generally considered to belong to the "hard core" of Pop art, a distinction he shares with Claes Oldenburg, Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein.

Great collectors of that era — Jd-

seph Hirschhorn, Mary Sisler, Robert Scull and Giuseppe Panza di Biumo — bought his work between 1961 and 1963. He was included in the landmark American 1963 exhibition. Philip Johnson commissioned him to paint a mural for the 1964 World's Fair in New York.

The National Gallery of Canada featured Rosenquist's work in a 1988 retrospective; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, did the same in 1972.

Rosenquist now lives in Aripaka, Florida, and keeps a studio in New York City.

The Detroit installation of Star Thief was another kind of monumental performance. The painting consists of 33 panels which must be bolt-

ed together. An elaborate system of cable, block and tackle was required to hoist the 1200-odd-pound work of art, after the panels were lifted together in rows like the pattern a

bricklayer uses in putting up a wall. Star Thief is suspended approximately 13 1/4 feet from the skylight and 19 feet from the floor of the DIA's three-story Prentiss Court.

Series hosts 2 concerts

Double bass player, James Van Demark will join the Los Angeles Piano Quartet to perform Schubert's "Trot" Quintet at 8 p.m. Saturday, March 7 at Orchestra Hall. Van Demark's contribution to the double bass repertoire is similar to that of Jean-Pierre Rampal's to the flute repertoire 30 years ago.

The program is part of the Cham-

ber Music Society of Detroit series.

The series will continue with the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra at 8 p.m. Friday, March 13. Founder-conductor, Karl Munchinger will lead the ensemble in compositions by Valdi, Respighi, Grieg and Mozart.

For information on these concerts, call the Orchestra Hall box office, 833-3700.

Contemporary Ensemble hosts 3 composers

The Detroit Contemporary Chamber Ensemble, under Barret Katellis, music director, will give a concert devoted to works of three prize-winning contemporary composers at 3 p.m. March 8 in the Guild Hall of Christ Church Cranbrook, Bloomfield Hills.

The composers — Leslie Bassett, Michael Torke, and Glenn Buhr — will be at the performance and will discuss their work with the audience. On the program will be Bassett's Concerto Da Camera, for ensemble and virtuoso trumpet, with soloist John Daniel; Torke's "Ceremony of Innocence"; and Buhr's "Kammermusik," both scored for chamber ensemble. "Kammermusik" was commissioned by the Detroit Contemporary Chamber Ensemble.



Michael Torke

Bassett (b. 1923) is the Albert A. Stanley Distinguished Professor of Music at the University of Michigan. He has received many awards and honors for his music, including the Pulitzer Prize (1969), Prix de Rome, National Institute of Arts & Letters, National Endowment for the Arts, Koussevitzky Foundation, UNESCO, Guggenheim, Naumburg, and Fulbright Awards.

Torke (b. 1961) graduated in composition and piano from the Eastman School of Music in 1984. His instructors include Martin Bresick, Christopher Rowse, Jacob Druckman, and Joseph Schwaninger.

In September of 1986, Torke began a one-year residency at the American Academy in Rome, having been awarded the Rome Prize Fellowship. Other awards include prizes from ASCAP, BMI, and the American Academy & Institute of Arts and Letters, as well as Yaddo and MacDowell Colony Fellowships.

Recently he received a commission for a chamber work from the Koussevitzky Music Foundation in the Library of Congress.

Buhr (b. 1954), a Canadian composer, is currently assistant professor and Director of Music Composition at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario.

Buhr has been awarded a number of prizes for his compositions, including the American Harp Society Composition Prize, the Pro Loco Corciano (Italy) Prize, the CBC National Radio Prize for Chamber Music, the PRO Canada Prize for Orchestral Music, and the John Halick Prize for Composition, among others.

He has received commissions from the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, CBC Arts National, the Armin String Trio and the Detroit Contemporary Chamber Ensemble.

A reception for the composers will be held in the Guild Hall immediately following the concert. Tickets are \$7 for adults; \$4 for students and seniors, and may be purchased at the door.

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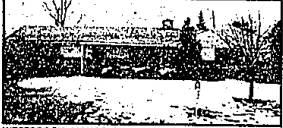
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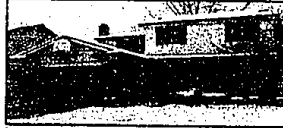
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