

# The artist as a commentator

By Corinne Abatt  
staff writer

It gets harder and harder, said gallery owner Sheldon Ross, to gather together a show of the works of an artist such as Max Beckmann. The works are scarce, hard to find, most grabbed up and safely stashed in private or public collections. But, Ross, who said his love affair with Beckmann's work is long standing, did it one more time and the exhibit of the artist's woodcuts, drypoints and lithographs continues through October. It may be the last time for such a revelation in this area, or for a long time.

Beckmann was born in Leipzig, Ger-

many in 1884 and started out with an impressionistic style. It changed as German artists such as George Grosz used art as a more direct and biting force; it was a way of communicating what they saw around them and what they thought about it.

With a few strokes of the pen, Beckman could convey not only his impressions of a particular scene, but what they people were like, their socio-economic level and what was going on in their minds. The half-dozen or so pieces in the exhibit in which he draws a crowd of people are particularly engaging, the next best thing to being there to watch the action freeze-frame for a split second. It is

also clear from the exhibit and documentation of his life that he liked the atmosphere of the circus and circus people. There are several works in this show that relate to circus life.

Beckmann spent most of the time he lived in Germany in Frankfurt. He moved to Amsterdam in the mid 20s, and came to the United States in 1947 where he taught for a while at the Brooklyn Museum School. His work is in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art of New York.

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



As in his other works, Max Beckmann's "Das Theaterloyer" conveys his impressions of the scene and its people. The pen-and-ink drawing leaves little room for mistake about his thoughts on their socio-economic level and what, if anything, was going on in their minds.

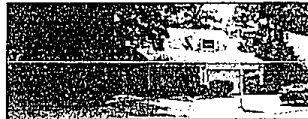
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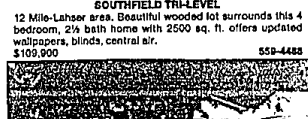
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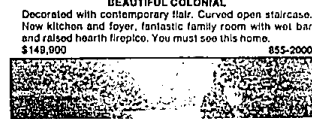
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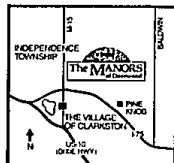
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