

Exhibition from page D1

places seen in an unusual light. Known for his photos of people viewing art inside museums, Thomas Struth has ventured to capture cityscapes. His large-scale photos offer a eye-level view of the passing world of the streets of China; the intercourse of street life, architecture and people in the blurred instant of recorded time.

Another of Struth's photos demonstrates the grand dimensions in which photography can aspire to reflect the narrative power of an epic painting.

In a visual survey of a complex interior landscape, Struth frames an expanded view of an artist sitting amid an ornate century-old chapel in Italy surrounded by Renaissance era paintings.

The many details in Struth's work provide an intricate subtext to discover the identity of

his subjects. Perhaps a case of "evidence" of the manifold stimuli which the eye only takes in with a glimpse.

Likewise, the sensitive "environment portraits" of Eiko Mannikko, and Margaret Morton's unwitting images from New York City's subterranean dwellings present the type of depth and compassion whereby the subject is seen as transcending their limited living conditions.

Mannikko's anthropological photographs capture the idiosyncratic details of the lives of people in the far reaches of his homeland, Finland.

In stark contrast to the self-conscious "pose for the camera" attitude of Americans, Mannikko's subjects have a matter-of-fact ease. He's managed to enter their worlds without altering their psychic landscape.

Meanwhile, Morton's "Tunnel Series," depicting the homes of those living in a railroad tunnel under New York's Upper West Side, creates a sociological portrait of the forgotten, who've found a way to carry on.

In contrast, the seedy images of Merry Alpern and Stephen Barker offer shifting glimpses of another type of alternative world.

Over several months, Alpern posed her camera across an alley from a bathroom window of a New York City men's club. In a series entitled, "Dirty Windows," she captures the hazy world of drug deals and prostitution. The images, however, aren't quite explicit. Literally framed by the window panes, the hazy images capture gestures and an implied mood of debauchery. Less subtle but more difficult

to discern is Barker's shadowy series, "Nightswimming." The soft gray and black mists of gay sex clubs set a deviant mood to assist the viewer's entrants into a strange, unconventional world.

Rounding out the exhibit is Sugimoto's photos of old-time movie palaces and drive-ins. With an extremely slow shutter speed, Sugimoto used the light generated by the actual playing of a movie to capture the white glow on the screen. The innovative idea, however, is more interesting than the actual image.

Collectively, the works in "Evidence" proves that fine art photography doesn't need to manipulate images, nor rely on dark room techniques.

Of course, "Evidence" also proves there's more to photography than just pointing a camera. It takes a pretty steady aim.

Naked from page D1

about child abuse and victimization.

"Where can we talk about issues relevant to being human?" said Scheffman. "In art. That's where we can explore and discuss what it means to be human."

He can't be accused of not practicing what he preaches.

Scheffman's new painting, "Y," appears on the postcard announcing the exhibit at Lemberg Gallery. A naked woman, with her back facing the viewer, holds up a cloth to hide a naked male.

"People seem to feel more comfortable with female nudity than male nudity," said Darlene Carroll, director of the Lemberg Gallery. "They're also more comfortable watching violence. Robert's work challenges them to look beyond their prejudices."

■ 'People seem to feel more comfortable with female nudity than male nudity.'

Darlene Carroll
Director, Lemberg Gallery

In one painting, Scheffman turns the double standard on its head: a naked man hides the "objectionable areas" of a female's anatomy.

Another painting, a self-portrait, is steeped in irony. In that painting, Scheffman has painted himself painting a nude while tape covers his mouth.

If anything, Scheffman has proven that in deed and thought, there's no repressing the irrepressible.

Conversations from page D1

Thomas said there's really no secret to the trade.

It comes down to offering a quality product, delivering excellent personal service and providing a pleasant shopping experience.

There was a time, he recalled, when playing music in the stores was a novel idea to enhance the time spent shopping.

And he's so certain about the promise of regular art exhibits

inside and outside of stores that he becomes uncharacteristically somber at the notion of sharing the idea.

"I rather that other plazas and malls not know about what we're doing. Why tell them?"

Fortunately, the secret is out. With an arctic wind and customers heading his way, Thomas has his boots shined, his spiel prepared, and his fingers crossed.

■ 'I rather that other plazas and malls not know about what we're doing. Why tell them?'

Don Thomas

President, Bloomfield Plaza Merchants Association

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