Condition *from page C1*

But it's Parks examination of the plight of Everyman that clearly resounds with righteousness, and forms the basis of his stature as a photographer with a conscience.

In contrast to the pack mentality of today's paparazzi, Parks always took his time in getting to know his subjects.

"I spent days with them before I even took out my camera," he said. "That way they knew they could trust me."

In the broadest sense, Parks' work documents the spiritual migration of African Americans, from the shadows of segregation to the bold promise of Civil Rights, to the neglect of being resigned to live in the "other" America, an impoverished land devoid of opportunity.

"I shoot people, not politics," said Parks.

But looking at a photo of a black mother and child standing beneath a "Coloreds Only" sign in the mid 1950s, the political implication can't be overlooked.

"Photojournalism becomes a fine art with Gordon Parks," said Baranski, who considers Parks as one of the most influential photographers of the century along with Walker Evans and Paul Strand.

"He transcends photography."

American Gothic

Through Parks' lens, the American cultural fabric is held under a microscope, revealing a quilt torn by racial intolerance and economic injustice.

Yet remarkably, Parks' work doesn't slips into political sloganeering, even when his subjects are fervently political, such as Malcolm X, or the symbols of segregation.

Front and center in nearly all his work is an implied story. A photo of a pair of worn ankle-high boots reveals the life of their owner as much as the wizened-face pipe-smoking fisherman reveals the daily travails of casting a net off the shore of New England.

For Parks, the human heart appears as a fist, an open hand or the callow face of a trembling child. Pain and innocence. Toil and natural beauty. A delicate balance that some contend defines the human condition.

One of Parks' most memorable images, "American Gothic" (1942), depicts a forlorn black woman standing in front of the American flag. Two separate cultures that existed in America are laid bare.

"I focused on the individual, who was a victim of all that America could offer her, which was a broom and mop," said Parks. "Deep down (the photograph) was political, but that wasn't the reason for doing it."

Popular appeal

Largely due to intense media attention and the popular response to Parks' work, the DIA might extend museum hours during the exhibit.

After last year's "Splendors of Egypt," last fall's "Angels from the Vatican," and a possible van Gogh exhibit in 2000, the DIA could be on an unprecedented attendance roll.

Meanwhile, the projected attendance for "Half Past Autumn" continues to increase.

The Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., which organized the exhibit continues to add stops along the national tour. Obviously, Parks' social realism has struck a chord with the public.

"There's really no need to attach 'genius' to my work," said Parks. "It's just what I did to survive."

Obviously, survival is an art for the youngest of 15 children, who didn't graduate from high school but has four honorary doctorates and the National Medal for the Arts.

"I figured I've been put on this planet and I shouldn't take up time."

On the contrary, Gordon Parks has done more than his share to make time stand still.

Composer *from page C1*

Hailstork, an African-American, took to Africa in 1996.

"The second movement has a sad tinge to it and that tied in with what I saw when I was in Ghana," he said.

He explained in notes about his symphony: "There I visited the forts along the coast of Ghana and saw the dungeons where the slaves were held before being shipped overseas. I put my reaction to that sad scene in movement two of this symphony. In movement four, I sought to reflect the determination of a people who had arrived in America as slaves but struggled with courage and faith against numerous odds."

But Hailstork's primary concerns are musical rather than symbolic, though he often draws from African-American spirituals and folk music. He describes his music as lyrical.

"I'm a lyrical composer. It's also tonal, propulsive, brightly colored, classically architectured. Neo-Romantic is the right word," he said.

Critics have noted his love for unusual time signatures and offbeat rhythms.

"That's the propulsive part. I use asymmetrical meter a lot, frequent time changes, polymeters. I use whatever's appropriate at the time. Sometimes I use ethnically flavored material and sometimes not," he said.

His influences are not confined to his own ethnic heritage. He lists French composition and what he calls "Eastern European pragmatists." He said Bartok and the modern Russian composers have influenced his work.

He sees this diversity as the only direction serious music can take.

"The future of music is world music," he said.

The Internet and the wide distribution of music from all cultures is creating a whole new spectrum of sound from Africa, Asia and South America.

Though it's often difficult for a modern composer to get his music played, Hailstork's symphony commission is part of the DSO's "Classical Roots" series which celebrates classical music by African-American composers.

"For all American composers, it's hard," Hailstork said. "You have this long-established repertoire and people like to hear what they know and are comfortable with," he said.

"I don't know if it's improving. It's hit or miss. What has changed is that most symphony programming is niche programming. The Boston Symphony has a whole series appealing to commuters and another for Saturday morning shoppers."

Still, when speaking to school groups, Hailstork offers encouragement. He tells them to learn their craft, understand music and open their ears to new sounds and new ideas.

"Learn your craft and be honest with yourself. Find your own voice rather than dazzle us with technique," he said.

The composer, who teaches music at Norfolk State University in Norfolk, Va., is working on a municipal fanfare and on a choral work for the Greenwich, Conn., Chorale for Christmas 2000 which incorporate musical settings for William Blake's "Songs of Innocence."

Collecting *from page C1*

'Just get into it because you love it, Even serious collectors do it because they enjoy it. But get advice. It usually goes hand in hand with purchasing a work that will turn into an investment.'

Jim Nawara
Beverly Hills artist

demonstrate different types of printmaking techniques. It's a good way to teach students the variety of methods available to them. A political cartoon by Draper Hill, an Alexander Calder poster and a whimsical photograph by Katherine Thompson are among the other media represented in the show.

One of the works Semivan traded for is by Jim Nawara, a Beverly Hills artist. To help pay rent on an 1,100-square-foot studio at Broadway and John R in Detroit in the mid 1970s, Semivan printed other artists' work. Occasionally, he received works such as Nawara's as partial payment.

"I encourage students to start trading now," said Semivan. "It's not going to cost them an arm and a leg and even if they don't continue in the art field it will start a lifelong interest in collecting art."

Nawara and wife Lucille are both artists so most of their home is filled with their work. Although Nawara rarely buys art, as an artist he has an insider's view. A drawing and painting professor at Wayne State University, Nawara recommends that people should find out everything they can about art by visiting reputable galleries and attending artists' talks and lectures before that first acquisition.

"Do some leg work," said Nawara, a recent award winner in the Canton Project Arts Exhibition. "Especially when starting out, people are really nervous and intimidated by galleries. Don't go into a gallery and pretend it's a church. Ask questions. The more you know about it the better the decision you make."

If you're just beginning to collect, Nawara suggests looking at art by emerging artists to keep costs down. Nonprofit galleries such as the Detroit Artists Market and Detroit Focus Gallery are two spaces to check out, also student exhibitions at various institutions of learning such as Wayne State University, Center for Creative Studies and Cranbrook Academy of Art.

"Just get into it because you love it," said Nawara. "Even serious collectors do it because they enjoy it. But get advice. It usually goes hand in hand with purchasing a work that will turn into an investment."

Semivan agrees, galleries can provide an education in art. In addition to galleries and student shows, auctions and antique shows are sources for collectors. If you're looking for an appraisal, contact the auction houses and museums such as the Detroit Institute of Arts.

"You can learn a lot from commercial galleries like Arnold Klein, which is a recognized authority on prints," said Semivan. "Do your homework and then have fun."

For those worried that the increasing popularity of computer art could send values of original paintings, sculptures and prints plummeting Semivan said, "the computer will never replace the artist's hand."

Just remember to buy what you love.

Conversation *from page C1*

It took about five months, working 40-plus hours a week to get the site up and working, he said.

The result is a fill-in-the-blank program that moves at breakneck speed through texts that many students were probably assigned to read, but ended up sifting through the Cliff Notes. (Does "Moby Dick" ring a bell?)

While he has an impressive collection of classic hard-cover books, Williams admits that he hasn't read all of them, nor has he ever published anything.

It's enough to help other with their research work, he said.

Each day, Williams searches through a growing list of e-mails. He plans on adding those books in the public domain requested by visitors to his site.

Since the *Times*' article, he's had more than 100 e-mails with suggestions about how to improve the site and requests for books.

Some request have come from as far away as Sri Lanka and Japan.

Worldwide attention, William Williams has learned, can move quietly and swiftly.

The attention comes with the territory.

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