

Exceptional exhibit mounted

The Richmond Art Gallery has mounted an exceptional exhibit featuring four talented printmakers, including Jerry Coffman, Jens Dierks, Lisa A. MacLean and Michael Bjorson. Within the space, the gallery also has on exhibit the work of sculptor Judson Beaumont.

Each print is highly subjective and emotionally charged with images that are laden with mythological and magical properties. Some carry suggestive erotica. But all are concerned with the nature of images and icons which hold power over us and unconsciously control our perceptions of reality.

In the ensuing battle, each printmaker releases a strong and vibrant statement bringing out the dark, mysterious forces that overwhelm us and control our sexual lives and activities.

The purging of the tyrannical spiritual forces are the specific concern of Jens Dierks and Michael Bjorson. Dierks' Steffried battles the dragon but this monster overwhelms the man. Dierks creates a dark tonal pattern where small areas of bright color are swallowed into the mysterious and cavernous envi-

ronment. Falling into the abyss of nothingness continues in his other prints and with each fall he suggests a loss for humanity.

Michael Bjorson projects historical landscapes that still possess the power of rulers/kings but by the addition of new images he juxtaposes a figure that calls into question the right to rule of the old image. He is a careful designer using strong and pungent intensities of color to enliven the scene.

Within each landscape/dreamscape he confronts the viewer with a hovering head of a ruler. Especially significant are Papal Vision and Desert Fool.

Lisa A. MacLean presents the allegorical figures of angels possessing the female in states of erotic bliss or entrapment. In the ensuing sexual struggle, the mysterious forces of life battle to emerge wholesome. Her bold use of complementary colors, reds and greens and purples and yellows, emphasize the intensity of this personal and psychological encounter. Winged Victory and Adam's Rib are excellent examples of her craftsmanship and design.

Jerry Coffman employs woodcuts exhibiting a nude female torso colored red or pink or half and half as a framework to compare various male and female nudes of the past and present. These cutouts, in black and white, are placed carefully around the woodcuts.

The contrasts of form and content are weakened by the choice of images that they are so well known they cannot emerge feelings, erotic or otherwise. The hoped-for clash of beauties between the myth and its meaning does not occur.

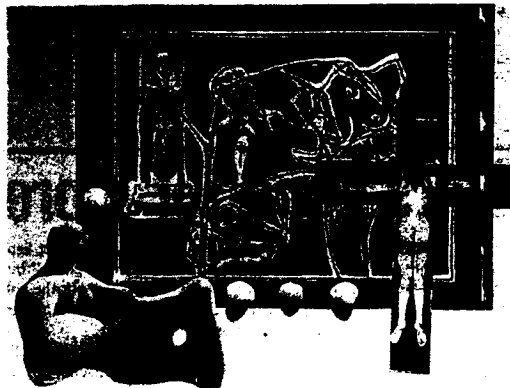
The five sculpture models of Judson Beaumont are table height and repeat variations on earthwork designs for site art. While he believes that "a sculpture should invite the viewer to sit on it, walk around it, or to touch it", his work repels one for

its anti-humanist formalism. They are totalitarian in form and design akin to Soleri's Arcosanti models but more foreboding.

This exhibit is one of the best gallery shows seen in Richmond. These artists are fully aware that the Romantic and Classical ideals of art are no longer vital to the modern world.

New images and new ideologies are necessary to enter our world. The old magical and sacred images of the past are shopworn and lack the intensity of life they once possessed and preserved.

These artists are in the forefront in attempting to see the dilemma of art in our age and are promoting carefully wrought designs to overturn the past and its authority.



On display at the Richmond Art Gallery is woodcut/mixed media collage by Jerry Coffman entitled Martyrdom and Crucifixion—1986