

Masters at Work

by Snapper S. Plöen

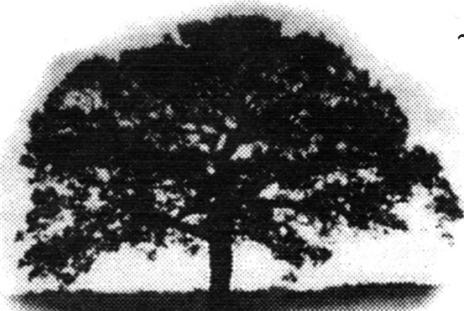


"Classical Beauty" (John William Godward)

Who would've believed that when Picasso painted his "Young Girl On A Sofa" in 1949, that the piece would end up on display in Sioux City, Iowa? The artistic surprises don't stop there, as the Sioux City Art Center hosts a premier exhibition of massive proportions featuring works by everyone from Gauguin to Chagall currently on display until Sunday, May 14. The presentation has been dubbed *Modern Masters: From Corot to Kandinsky*, and provides an opportunity for the Siouxland area to witness firsthand the genius of several European artists whose works have withstood the test of time.

The exhibit has been curated by Roxana Velasquez Martinez Del Campo, the director of the Museo Nacional De San Carlos Museum in Mexico City, and Joseph S. Czestochowski, of the International Arts Comprehensive Museum Service in Memphis, Tenn. The generous agreement to show the multiple works of art in a market such as Sioux City is one that Art Center director Ronald Bernier hopes will be noticed by the public. "The Joslyn in Omaha would normally get something like this, so we are very fortunate to be selected," he says. The good luck did not come without a price. The Art Center had short notice to organize the event but managed to prepare in a mere three weeks. Bernier says, "We didn't have a lot of time, but I think we managed quite well." The success of the exhibit has already been proven with an opening night reception attendance of over 400 people, and Bernier hopes to extend the visiting pieces, possibly until June. He emphasizes the cross-cultural appeal of the works when he explains, "This exhibition is one of the finest exhibitions available on tour in the U.S." He expects it to draw interest "from the general public, as well as from art historians, art students and art enthusiasts from outside the region."

The collection itself is a cannon of high-powered names and distinguished styles. Adolphe Bouguereau's 1893 oil-on-canvas, "Innocence," is a lush illustration of a Madonna with the Holy Lamb and Child that signifies the purity and realism of Christian art echoing the symbolism and drama of the Renaissance centuries earlier. March Chagall is represented by "Solitude," a gouache-on-paper piece. The



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