

Artschool, Ackland show new collections

By RUTH LITTLE-STOKES

If you promised yourself a few side trips off the beaten path of your habitual leisure activities this summer, here's your chance. The University's Ackland Art Museum and the Chapel Hill area's Artschool Gallery have just opened their summer exhibits.

At the Ackland until August 5 is "Recent Acquisitions" (hours: Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday 2 to 6 p.m., closed Monday).

At the Artschool—still located at 150 E. Main Street, Carrboro, but soon to move to new, permanent quarters in Carr Mill Mall—is the International Postal Art Exhibit, also scheduled to hang throughout the summer. (Hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday).

The Ackland show provides reassuring proof that this small museum, which has the largest acquisition budget of any university museum in the country, is building a permanent collection of broad general appeal.

The approximately 50 works in the show—predominantly drawings, prints and paintings—were acquired during the past two years by the museum's first director, Joseph C. Sloane; the new director, Evan H.

Turner; assistant director Innis Shoemaker; and former curator John Wisdom. Sloane assembled a solid collection representing the history of Western art and Turner is continuing this direction.

An electric tension pervades the exhibit space, the result of close juxtaposition of works of such widely differing sensibilities as the Italian Renaissance, Victorian France and America of the late 1970s, to name only three of the worlds present in this exhibit.

Fans of contemporary art will be pleased with the large group of works by current hot shots Edward Ruscha, Robert Morris, Jim Dine, Chuck Close, Morris Graves, Robert Rauschenberg and others. Graves' tempera painting *Winter Bouquet* (1977) is one of the most beautiful works in the exhibit. This gentle still-life of a flower in a glass, almost lost in a soft gray ground, has the serene beauty which we associate with the fruit bowls and flower vases of the Dutch masters.

For more conceptual taste, behold two visual puns: Ruscha's 1973 lithograph entitled *Vanish*, in which the word "vanish" appears to be written on a sheet of glass in water which is evaporating; or Close's 1978 portrait of a man, executed on graph paper filled in with fingerprints in imitation of a grainy halftoned photograph, entitled *Robert / Fingerprint*.

One of the few pieces of sculpture in the show, the *Man with Snake*, a carved walnut figure made in the first half of the 20th century by Edgar McKillop (1878-1950), a folk artist from Balfour, North Carolina, marks the beginning of a small collection of distinguished pieces of North Carolina folk art which the Ackland hopes to build.



Wood sculpture by N.C. artist
... currently on display at Ackland

McKillop is considered to be the finest native wood carver in the state, and this little statue, about 24 inches tall, and the walnut owl by McKillop also in the exhibit were purchased with the consultation of the Folklore curriculum at the University.

The little man, encircled by a huge snake, has succeeded in wresting its head away and is holding it with both hands and a strained grimace on his face. Perhaps this image originated in the snake-handling religious cults of the Southern Appalachians. If you believe the ability to handle a snake without being bitten is proof of being in the Lord's good graces, then the little man has passed the test.

Perhaps the biggest surprise in the show is the oil painting, *View of Isle St. Louis during the Night of the Omnibus Depot Fire*, painted in 1893 by none other than Henri Rousseau. Often called the "father of modern art," he is best known for his dream-like jungle scenes.

In this new Ackland painting, a pair of gendarmes are having an intimate conversation on a bridge, with the Paris skyline silhouetted against a blazing sky in the background. Rousseau's charmingly naive tendency to standardize forms is especially noticeable in the skyline, where the chimney pots stand out from the rooftops like the gun battlements of a fort.

Overall the Ackland exhibit whets the appetite for construction of the proposed new art building, which will free more space in the present structure to exhibit the growing permanent collection.

The Postal Art Exhibit at the Artschool has enticed art from throughout the country but especially from California, evidently a center of postcard and stamp experiments. As a focus of madcap art-play, postal art goes back at least to the Dadaists, those zany nihilists whose rallying cry was "Dada is dead, long live Dada."

The best works are about the cult of the post card, the commemorative stamp, and serialization. A rubber stamp labels one of the post card series in the exhibit with the message "Stamp out Dada," and another series is stamped "Posthaste."

The Doo-Da Postage Works of New York is exhibiting sheets of handprinted stamps. An English artist, Sharon Parker, exhibits lovely envelopes never intended for mailing, made of thick handmade paper in delicate pastel tints, with string suggesting stamp cancellation marks.

Local artist K. Irwin has a wonderful quilted and batiked "envelope." Daniel Barber's "Measuring Stick—arm length," is a set of six postcards, each containing a drawing of a segment of a tree branch, mailed separately and assembled in the gallery. The letterhead of one of the contributors, Steven Durland of Amhurst, Massachusetts, labels him a "Mail Chauvinist."

Unfortunately not all of the contributors followed the theme of the exhibit. Some of the works have nothing to do with mailing except that's how they got to the Artschool, and the impact of this witty show is diluted because of them.

METROLEASE EXPANDS!

Now you'll find us where you won't find any other furniture rental showroom... near UNC-CH!! Convenient to Chapel Hill and Carrboro!!

Come help us celebrate the opening of our newest furniture rental showroom, across from the Carr Mill Shopping Center! Register for a deluxe modular stereo system to be given away on September 15th.



METROLEASE
FURNITURE RENTALS

HOURS

9:00 - 6:00 Mon - Fri
9:00 - 5:00 Saturday

116 E. Main St., Carrboro

Phone 929-7188

VW "BUG" OWNERS



We give VW owners up to \$1,000* and a free custom paint job just for having a good time.

You've probably seen BEETLEBOARDS featured on "60-Minutes" or the ABC-TV and NBC-TV National News — We're the people who have transformed over 9,000 VW "Bugs" like yours into custom painted supergraphically decalated BEETLEBOARDS!

Now here's your opportunity to become a member of the world's most unique international car club and receive over \$1,000 in cash and merchandise values!

If you have a VW "Bug" or Super Beetle, no matter what year or mileage, and minimum state auto insurance, call the BEETLEBOARDS 24-hour toll free number for more information!

*Cash and Merchandise.

Call now—There are limited BEETLEBOARD openings in your area.

Beetleboards

Call toll free 24 hours, 7 days a week
(800) 528-6050 Ext. 3060