



Richard Avedon (France)

Henry Gilpin. . .

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of the varieties of women in the world, but by its emphasis on glamor and fashion it admits the exploitive charges of the feminists.

In too many sections of the exhibition the diversity of Woman is not shown in the photographs, but in the captions printed at the back of the catalogue. The singer Mahalia Jackson is shown next to a French night-club performer in the section "Her Voice". The photographs, however, are visually the same as those of other sec-

In the unfortunate tradition of too many photojournalists, Pawek was unable to resist adding words in the end, and his explanatory words define his point of view towards women as often as they confuse it. He says that the art of photography does not distinguish between beauty and ugliness, but the sections of beauty—"Homage to Beauty", "Figurines of Fashion," "Mermaids"—outnumber those dedicated to ugliness.

Too often his descriptive phrase has no relationship to the photographs presented. The panel labeled "The Natural Ones" has four photographs, a close-up of a French woman, a small Indonesian girl, a Portuguese woman working in a field, and a woman from Haute-Volta standing beside a river. The images don't conflict with each other, but the ambiguous descriptive phrase limits their possible interrelationships.

Again, in the opening photograph of "A Child is Born", the importance of two old women in a window is defined by the phrase rather than the photograph. Pawek does not allow the viewer to bring his own experience, his own interpretation into the viewing process. He recognizes the visual nature of the photographs, but can't resist adding words, and his audience makes no objection.

It is discouraging to find that in an age when we are being bombarded by images from all sides, so few people are concerned with the quality of those images. But perhaps it is asking too much for a society to be aware of the quality of one of its communications media, when it is only now becoming aware of the quality of basics like air and water.

The exhibition draws people who would not normally go to an art museum; the images the general public sees come from television, newspapers, magazines, and billboards, not fine photographic prints. The fuzzy, muddy images of Woman are like those found on television and in newspapers. If this is all people know, they cannot be expected to object when an "art exhibition" looks like a combination of the women's page and "Wild Kingdom". This is what Woman is: a giant magazine, a combined issue of Vogue, Life, and National Geographic; a Warholian visual assault crated up and shipped to art museums all around the world.

Pawek's first exhibition did extremely well, showing to 3.5 million people in 36 countries. Judging from the response in Eugene, Woman will be as successful. Last Sunday over 500 people visited the museum, more than three times the normal Sunday attendance. Since the exhibit has so little to offer as artistic experience, its popularity must lie in its content alone.

An informal, unscientific poll at the museum entrance revealed that most people liked the show, and liked it because it showed so many different kinds of women, so many different activities. The recent awareness of the emergence of women's rights undoubtedly accounts for some of its popularity, but those expecting a feminist statement will be disappointed.

In fairness, it must be pointed out that the exhibition was assembled four years ago, and the view in Germany in 1968 cannot be expected to totally satisfy the demands of the United States today. The exhibition is descriptive



Victor Reznikov (USSR)



John Schneider (Viet Nam)