HIGH STANDARD ART SHOW IN STURT PARK

By May Harding

Broken Hill artists showed about 200 pictures, many of which were of a standard comparable with works currently shown in capital cities, in Sturt Park for the second open air exhibition arranged by the Willyama Art Society on Sunday.

Kevin "Pro" Hart, modern of the moderns, was also a friend of his own that may well place him among the big names in Australian art, showed a number of large paintings of quality. Outstanding were his "Crucifixion" and "Woman with Two Children" and a mining study, "Woman with Banana", "The Dræver" (painted), "The Bikini", "The Shearer" and "The Dræver" he expresses his subjects in entirely different but satisfactory ways. Besides his local fame as artist and cartoonist Hart consistently exhibited (and been highly commended in Australia-wide exhibitions during the year.

Venture

John Gregory has ventured into large abstracts in his well presented display. "Ned Kelly", consisting mostly of geometric shapes in cool colors on a warm ground and "Drum Kits" — yellow forms on rich stained glass effect ground, were successful. He included landscapes, still lifes and watercolors at which he is competent. Two "experiments" in gouache, chalk and colored inks were "Nothing but the Sun" and "Mina". These semi-abstracts, "Rocks at Sunrise" and "Foggy Night, Round Hill" are reminiscent of the paintings of graphic art seen at the Adelaide Festival of Arts.

Having put Broken Hill on the map with his shows in Melbourne and Sydney and representation in the National Gallery of New South Wales, Sam Byrne continues to paint Silver City panoramas, mining, churches and the outback in his delightful manner.

His 32 paintings included an "RCA" and "Broken Hill" with Maungo, Mootocoro and Umerumberka with particularly interesting rock textures — worthy "Grandpa Moses of the Munga".

Susan White, a talented and serious young artist studying in Sydney, has many admirers for her talents. The strongly painted portrait of Mr. H. L. C. Cotton was outstanding and the still life of kitchen utensils called for praise. Two local landscapes showed well observed rocks, earth and vegetation and exquisitely painted still lives — Stuart and Swainson spray-in-watercolors completed a fine exhibit. Alan Cumpston, a member of the group showed pictures of Mary Kathleen and Pinnacles that give promise.

Architectural influence is strong in F. C. Pratt's watercolors and drawings. He showed pictures of Argent street, the Royal Flying Doctor Base" and "View from the Old Broken Hill and District Hospital". The view of Argent street from the post office was hung in his Sydney's Royal Show. One of the most enthusiastic workers for the exhibition was Mr. Pratt's sister, Mrs. L. England who recently arrived from England. She lent three interesting canvases acquired in the States from artists who boarded the ship and put on an art show in the lounge. The charming picture of an old lady is from Sorrento and the scene with Mt. Vesuvius and the brilliant sunset at sea are from Naples.

Eileen Lennox, in a number of small studies, shows her interest in the bush and flowers. "Outback Road with Sturt Peas" appears and in "Pansies" the velvety texture of the flowers is captured. "The Jacaranda Tree" was inspired by the flowers of those lovely trees lately, Humanistic interest emerged from the exhibit of works by Hark and Spruilling as the expressions in "Woman With Quinces", "Child With Flowers", the nude with violin and the head of Ruth in "Nude With Peaches" seemed to set their message over Landscapes, abstrats and drawings were included. Hugh Schuiz showed work of promise, particularly the drawing and aboriginal studies. He could develop along these lines.

Symbolic

Richard Eaton, a newcomer among local painters, showed pictures of Stanwell Park, the Blue Mountains and a symbol of (and logical) Australian flood. Mr. Eaton is working at Bega and will have some interesting work for future exhibitions.

Young artist Diane Campbell showed four pictures of which "Road to Hill Mine" and "Old Tree, Pinnacles" were best. Myra Wood contributed a picture of a grass tree in warm earth color. Wonderful was the day for the unusual went to "Jim Webb for his study of the Old Daydream Smelter, oil-paint, 1965. "The Crook of Banister" showed two head studies in colored inks and Margaret Fauser lent her prize-winning drawing "Willyama" that contributed a bright section.

Photographers who showed their artistry with the camera were John Ralston and "Bunny" Bindley. Ralston succeeded with his character and mood studies. Bindley's portraits, industrial studies and Dead Tree were professional.

The show was successful in many ways. Exhibitors have shown development since the earlier show. After a week when Broken Hill turned on everything from stilling heat, howling dust storms, sales, soaking rain, thunderstorms and fog, artists "took a chance" when rain was still a possibility. From eight a.m. on Sunday hanging and hanging was rife in the park. Afterwards camp stoves and thermos flasks let a picnic atmosphere as artists took up their stands for the day to explain their wares.

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Willing to brush off such comments as "I could do better myself" and "What is it anyway?" Chance of a lifetime for the artist! Abstract art is always a conversation piece. We strongly suspect that one exhibit was an old and friendly friend and ended for a new title. "Four Ways" was the barrier of the day, the bargain of the day, the four pictures for the price of one. A wit suggested a fifth way in which it could be hung.

Trees were gnawing their teeth for an entirely different than Desiderius Orban, judge of the Wollongong Art Competition. They did not have a single study of a creek gum tree to sell to Joe Gibble.

Pursuit of several paintings by art lovers cheered the exhibitors, successful ones being John Gregory, Sam Byrne, "Corn" Vandenberg, Eileen Lennox, and Fred Pratt.