

# ARTnews

FEBRUARY 2002

ARTnews  
**100**  
YEARS  
FOUNDED IN 1902

## Getting the Big Picture

*Photojournalism: From the Front Page  
To Gallery Walls*



Irving Penn's Modern Venus  
Who Is the Real Artemisia Gentileschi?

The World's Most Important Art

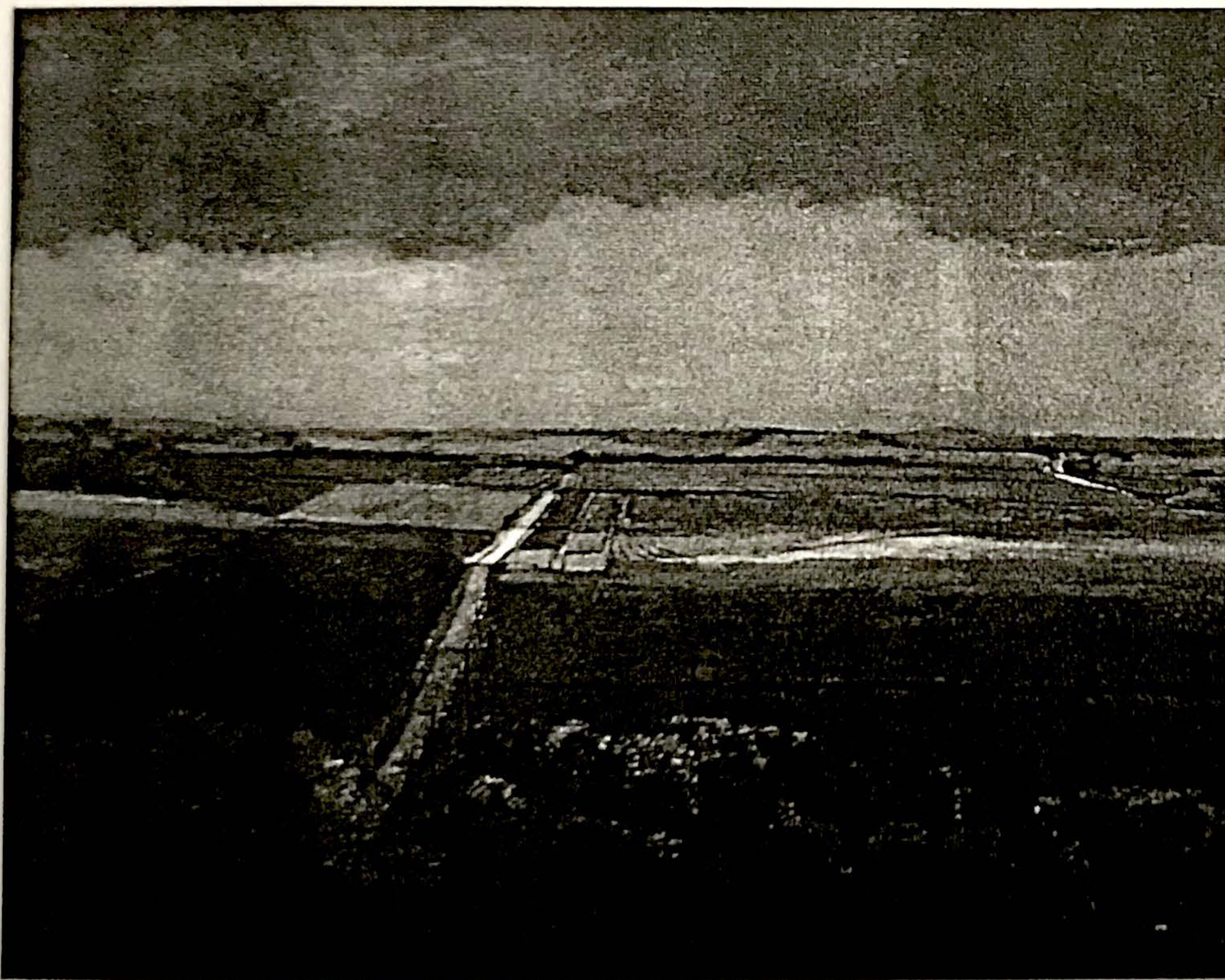
\$6 USA \$8 CANADA  
02  
73361 64607 1



# Double Exposure

*The Twin Cities draw attention with major museum expansions and shows that celebrate regional talents and explore international trends*

BY MARY ABBE



TOP Richard Flood, chief curator of the Walker Art Center. ABOVE *From the Esker*, 2000, an oil pastel on paper by Tom Maakestad, who shows at Groveland Gallery.

**M**innesotans take idyllic landscapes as a birthright, expecting to awaken to high, pale blue skies and drive to work past undulating cornfields or by one of the state's 10,000 lakes—all dotted with sailboats.

"It is incredibly inspiring to see what I see when I'm out working," says landscape painter Tom Maakestad. But Maakestad has noticed that many of his favorite rural vistas are filling up with tract houses, minimalls, and McMansions. For a recent show at Minneapolis's Groveland Gallery, he found himself editing out intrusive bits of urban sprawl from his paintings and altering colors to convey his concern about an "endangered landscape," he says. "I want to capture the beauty, but I have a gnawing feeling that it's disappearing."

According to the 2000 census, the Minneapolis and St. Paul area was the fastest-growing cold-weather region in the country, with nearly 3 million people, representing a 17 percent increase since 1950. Eighty-five percent of the growth occurred in the once-rural fringes of the metropolitan area, whose radius now stretches 75 miles from the urban core.

Thriving at the center of the wide-reaching Midwestern region is the Twin Cities' cultural scene. Museum and gallery visitorship is strong, with total attendance at the largest venues—the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, the Walker Art Center, and the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden—topping 1.5 million people annually.

Thousands more turn out at galleries and popular nonprofit spaces.

One of the liveliest northeast Minneapolis galleries is Flatland, a former flower shop where owner Robyne Robinson promotes eclectic local work, including glass by Ta-coumba Aiken and Skott Mangai, pre-Columbian-themed paintings by Luis Fitch, and surrealistic ceramic sculpture by Edith Garcia. Poetry readings, wine tastings, and even an occasional wedding in the gallery have helped attract "a good cross section of fairly sophisticated urban and suburban collectors," says Robinson. Her fame as a local television news anchor has helped, too, along with an under-\$1,000 price strategy. "I want this gallery to be a community resource, not a museum that people are afraid to come into," she says.

As if mirroring the region's sprawling population, the art scene is dispersed through two cities and many neighborhoods. A

decade ago, more than 25 galleries were concentrated in four blocks in Minneapolis's warehouse art district. Now, most have moved to different neighborhoods, closed, or morphed into other art-related businesses. Remaining are Flanders Contemporary Art, which features internationally established artists and area talents, and Kellie Rae Theiss, which favors the regional surrealism of such artists as Steven Swanson, who shows paintings and monotypes there this month.

Groveland Gallery, located since 1973 in a restored mansion near the Walker Art Center on the city's west side, specializes in landscapes and abstractions by top regional artists, including Maakestad, Mike Lynch, Carl Oltvedt, and watercolorist William Murray. Groveland also spotlights new talent in a carriage-house annex, where moody landscapes by Darin D. Anderson are currently on view.

Former Minneapolis lawyer Martin Weinstein opened his namesake gallery five years ago in a onetime grocery near his south Minneapolis home. His 40 exhibitions have ranged from



COURTESY WALKER ART CENTER

COURTESY GROVELAND GALLERY





COURTESY FLANDERS CONTEMPORARY ART

Michael Dixon Nauer's photographs, including *821 Marquette Avenue South*, 2001, are featured this month at Flanders Contemporary Art.

installations by Luis Gonzalez Palma and David Byrne to color photos by Robert Polidori and sculpture by Anthony Kulig. This month, the gallery showcases new paintings and amber-colored glass sculptures by Illinois-based artist Nicolas Africano.

Several neighborhoods stage events to entice visitors to come see their art offerings. The St. Paul Art Crawl, in that city's Lowertown warehouse district, attracts about 14,000 visitors to 170 artist's studios two weekends a year, in April and October. Art-a-Whirl, sponsored by the Northeast Minneapolis Arts Association, draws more than 10,000 people for three days in May.

"Sometimes you have to look to self-empowerment to make it happen," says neon artist Robert Johnson, a cofounder with four other artists of the Art Collective, a two-year-old gallery in northeast Minneapolis. The collective specializes in handcrafted home furnishings, and this month objects in its "Light" show range from conceptual neon works to handblown glass sconces.

Young artists are often showcased in Minneapolis at Franklin Art Works, an avant-garde gallery in a former porn theater, and No Name Exhibitions, an artist-run summer venue in an old factory on the Mississippi River. In St. Paul, the nonprofit Midway Initiative Gallery mixes locals with East and West Coast artists.

"All of these nonprofits are offering emerging artists experienced curatorial eyes, attention from critics and peers, which in many cases leads to shows outside the Midwest," says Tim Peterson, director of Franklin Art Works, who came to the Minneapolis post from the Lannan Foundation in Los Angeles, where he was a program officer and assistant curator. "We let artists take risks and attain new heights in their careers. Every artist we've worked with has had some opportunity offered to them as a result of their show here." Twin Cities video artist Shannon Kennedy, for example, parlayed a work commissioned by Franklin into shows in New York, San Francisco, and London.

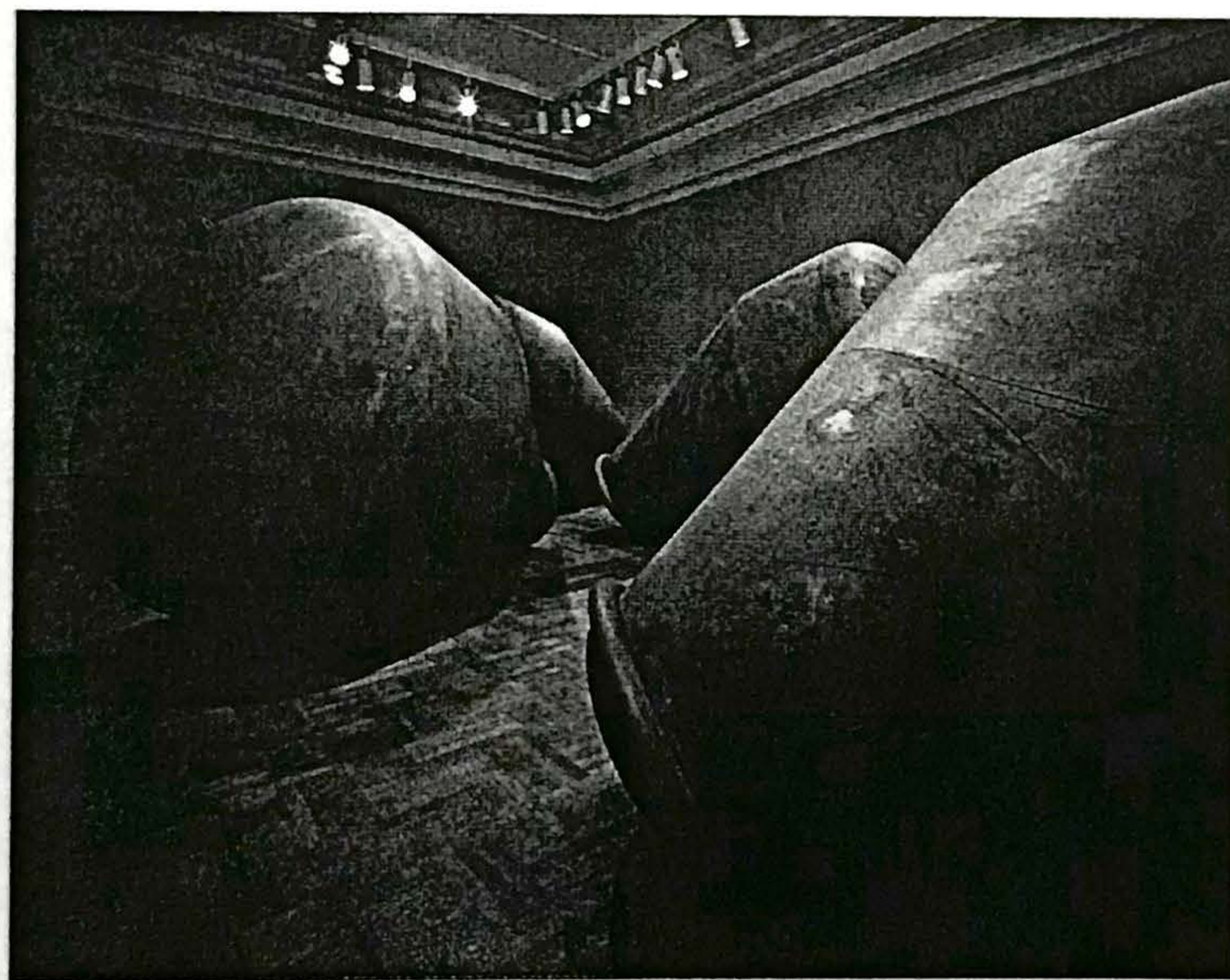
Major area institutions are thriving, with architectural projects

Walker's role as a civic magnet. New spaces will include a performance studio, expanded permanent-collection galleries, and a top-floor restaurant overlooking the city.

"One of the things we want to make very clear in the new facility is that we have groups of artists we have been collecting in depth for 30 years now, including performing artists like Merce Cunningham, Meredith Monk, and Bill T. Jones," says chief curator Richard Flood. "We will double our exhibition space for the collection in the new building and plan to mix in much more film and performing arts."

The Walker's addition is not without controversy. Twin Cities architectural preservationists objected to the center's plan to tear down the adjacent Guthrie Theater building—which is owned by the Walker—and replace it with underground parking and a

four-acre sculpture garden. (The Guthrie expects to vacate the building in 2004 and has hired French architect Jean Nouvel to design a new facility on the Mississippi River.) Walker officials had requested a demolition permit long before a state historic-preservation report was finished, prompting architect and veteran preservationist Robert Roscoe to attack the center for being a quick-buck developer that should be "ashamed of itself." Walker officials counter that the 1963 theater building, designed by Ralph Rapson, has no viable future tenants and would be too expensive for the Walker to maintain. In the meantime, the Minneapolis city council



COURTESY FREDERICK R. WEISMAN ART MUSEUM

Malcolm Cochran's installation *Steel Tanks*, 2000, is on view in the Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum's "New Visions of the American Heartland" exhibition.

granted a demolition permit this past November, overriding the city's Heritage Preservation Commission.

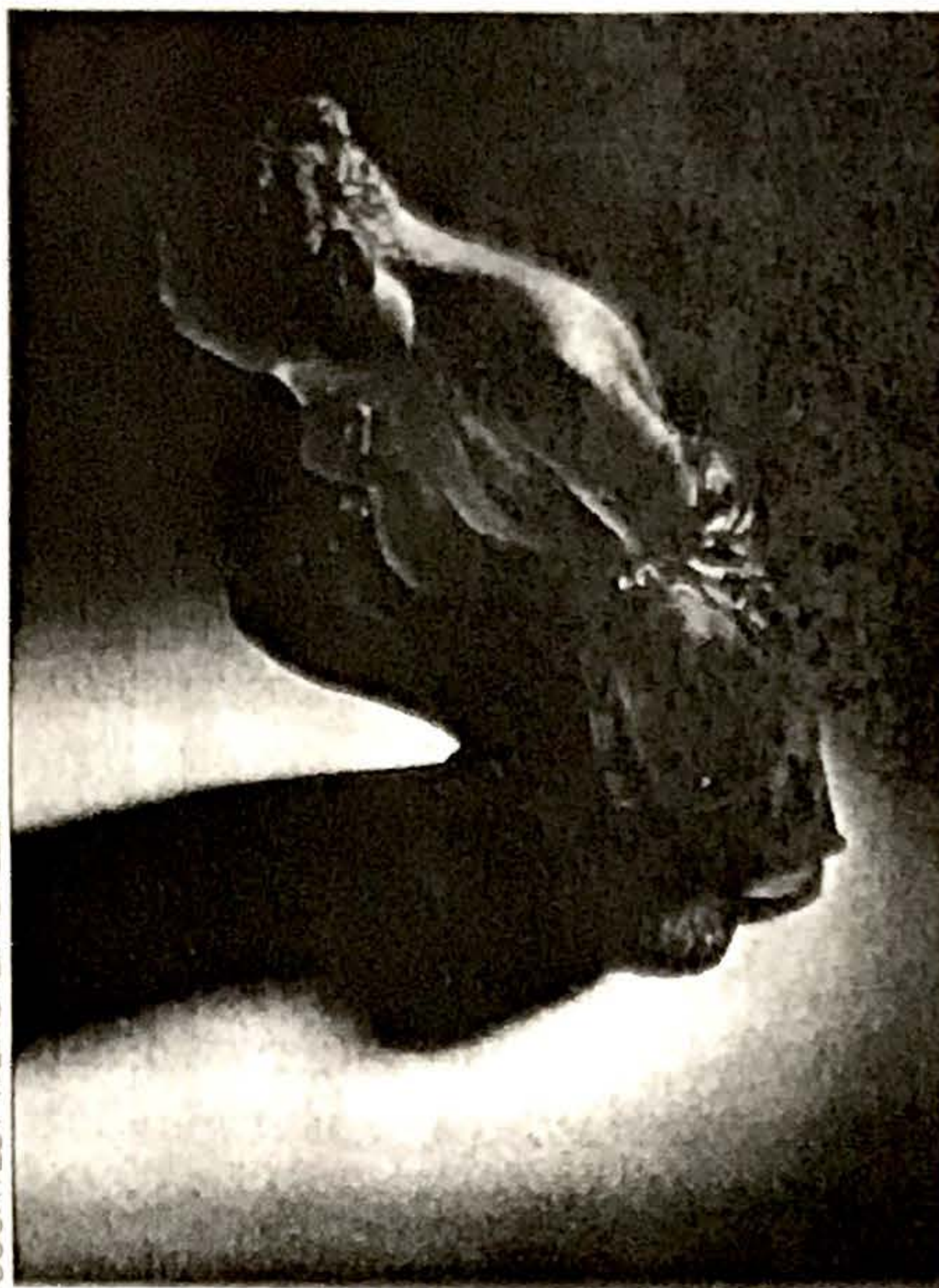
Officials at the University of Minnesota's Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum have launched talks with its original architect, Frank O. Gehry, about expanding his 1993 cubistic, stainless steel-clad building. Preliminary plans call for adding a café and more galleries "within the next few years," says director Lyndel King. Its current show, "New Visions of the American Heartland," includes Midwestern scenes from the collection, with paintings by Thomas Hart Benton and Grant Wood, among oth-



ers, and commissioned pieces by contemporary artists Malcolm Cochran, Maya Lin, Mary Lucier, and Kerry James Marshall.

The Minneapolis Institute of Arts recently hired architect Michael Graves to begin work on a renovation and expansion plan of undetermined scale. In 1998 the museum finished a ten-year, \$30 million remodeling. That expansion quadrupled the amount of art on view, from 1,100 objects to about 4,000, out of a 90,000-piece collection. It added a new suite of galleries for Chinese, Japanese, and Korean art—including an authentic Ming dynasty reception hall and an 18th-century Chinese scholar's study, which were gifts from Minneapolis collectors Bruce and Ruth Dayton. An institute trustee for 60 years, Bruce Dayton gave the museum more than \$10 million in Chinese art in the 1990s alone.

The institute has also been aggressively collecting and showing contemporary ceramics, glass, turned-wood objects, and textiles. It recently acquired, in collaboration with the University of Minnesota, the complete archives of the Jack



COURTESY WEINSTEIN GALLERY

*Woman Eating Fruit*, 1996, by Nicolas Africano, is at the Weinstein Gallery.

Lenor Larsen textile firm. The new holdings expand on a collection of nearly 500 modernist decorative and industrial objects from the 1890s to 1940s that Northwest Bank gave the museum in the 1990s.

"I like the word 'amplification' rather than 'shift' in focus, because we have been collecting this material for a long time but we have accelerated now," says Christopher Monkhouse, the Institute's curator of decorative arts, sculpture, and architecture.

Building institutional collections and ample facilities are among the ways the Twin Cities continue to foster their growing cultural identity. As Flatland director Robinson observes, many Minnesotans may be financially prudent and "have

very conservative Midwestern values," but they support the arts however they can because "people want Minneapolis and St. Paul to be cosmopolitan centers." ■

*Mary Abbe, the Minneapolis correspondent for ARTnews, writes about art for the Minneapolis Star Tribune.*

## What's Up and Coming

### GALLERIES

#### Art Collective

"Light," through March 9

#### Thomas Barry Fine Arts

"Wish You Were Here: Destinations of Desire," through February 2

#### Circa

James Holmberg and Harold Hollingsworth, February 1 through March 8

#### Flanders

##### Contemporary Art

"11th Annual Warehouse Show"; "Objects d'arte: Picasso and Dale Chihuly"; "Orogeny: New Photos by Michael Dixon Nauer," through February 23

#### Flatland

Derek Hess and Jody Lacanne, through February 7; Tara Costello, February 9 through March 7

#### Groveland

William Murray and Darin D. Anderson, February 1 through March 8

#### Shelley Holzemer

Gallery artists, through March 9

#### Icebox

William Scott, through February 23

#### Kellie Rae Theiss

Steven Swanson, through March 30

#### Weinstein

Nicolas Africano, through February

### ALTERNATIVE SPACES

#### Franklin Art Works

Anne George, February 16 through April 13

#### Highpoint Center for Printmaking

Members show, through February

#### Intermedia Arts

"Involved," through February 4

#### Midway Initiative Art Gallery, St. Paul

#### "Yasser Aggour, photos,"

through February 9; "David Kramer and Michelle Hines: New Video," February 22 through March 23

#### Northern Clay Center

"Three Jerome Artists," through February 16

#### pARTS Photographic Arts

"911 Artists' Response," through March 10

#### Soo Visual Arts Center

"Abjectify," February 4 through March 24

### MUSEUMS AND ARTS CENTERS

#### Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum

"New Visions of the American Heartland: Malcolm Cochran, Kerry James Marshall, Maya Lin, and Mary Lucier," through March 24; "Time Take," through April 14

#### Minneapolis Institute of Arts

"Jack Lenor Larsen: The

#### Company and the Cloth,"

through March 10; "The Photographs of Danny Lyon," through April 7; "Recent Acquisitions," through April 21; Evans/Rinklin/Holmberg," through February 10; "A Japanese Legacy: Four Generations of Yoshida Family Artists," February 2 through April 14

#### Minnesota Museum of American Art, St. Paul

"Small Bronzes by Harriet Whitney Frishmuth," through February 10

#### Walker Art Center

"Nari Ward: Rites-of-way," through October; "The Essential Donald Judd," through March 31; "American Tableaux," through June 16; "Vital Forms: American Art and Design in the Atomic Age, 1940-1960," February 17 through May 12; "Walk Around Time," February 17 (closing date indefinite); "Alan Berliner: The Language of Names," February 17 through August 18