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Area Picasso works displayed [Review of Picasso Exhibit at the Milwaukee Art Center, Milwaukee]

Curtis Carter

Marquette University, curtis.carter@marquette.edu

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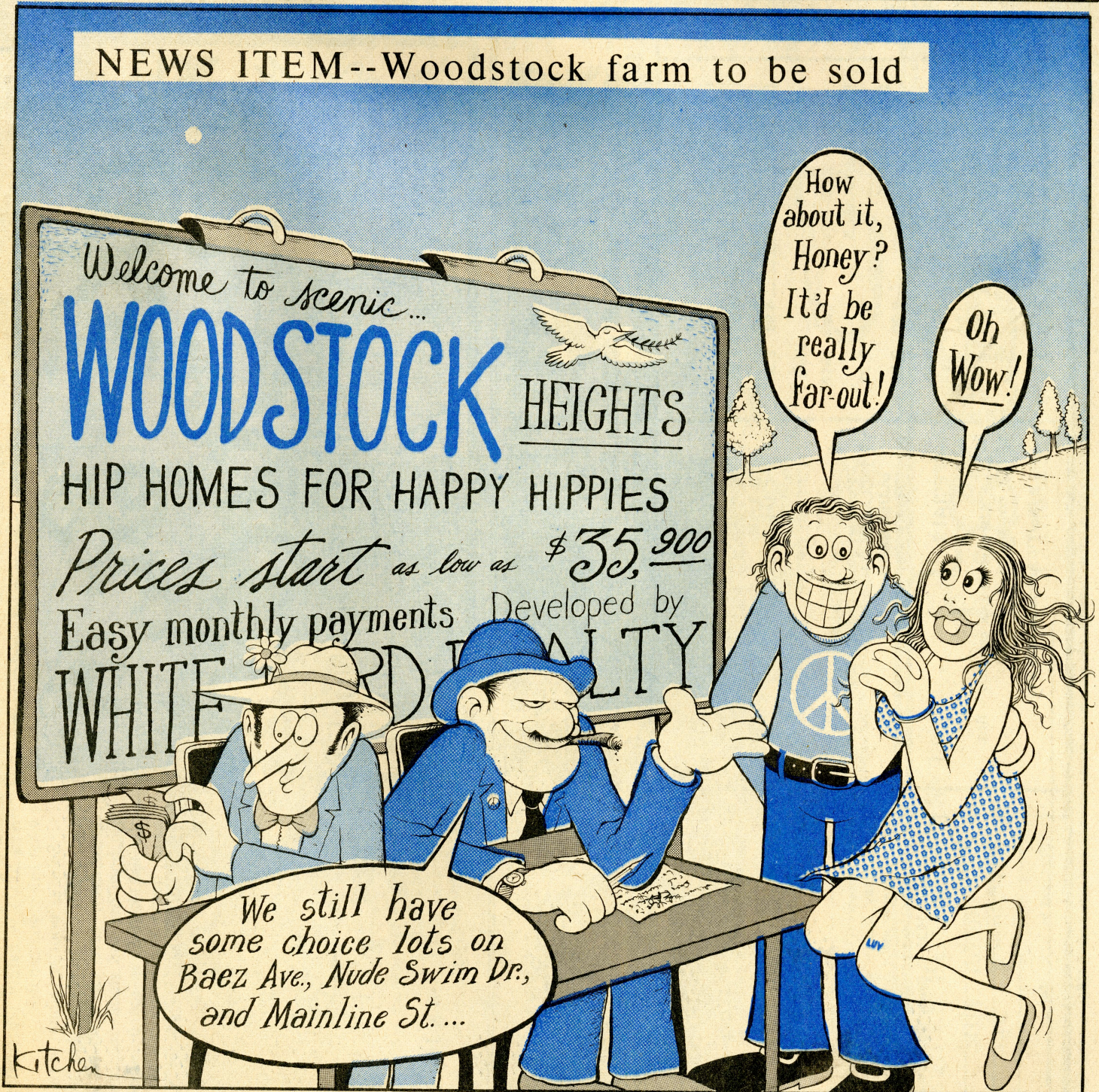
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Area Picasso works displayed

by Curtis L. Carter

It is a surprise to see that more than 170 original works of Picasso — enough to launch a substantial exhibit — could be found in Milwaukee art collections. Happily, the evidence is available for public inspection at the Milwaukee Art Center thru November 28.

Works representing paintings, sculpture, and ceramics — but mainly graphics — span 70 years of Picasso's creative output in works dated from 1905 to 1970.

Of the paintings, "The Cock of Liberation," done just after the liberation of Paris during World War II, is especially noteworthy. Standing as a celebration of victory, the painting speaks through vibrant color patterns which order its picture space.

Etchings from the Vollard suite are an important source of the graphics. They range widely in subject matter, often dealing with primordial myths

featuring such recurring symbols as the minotaur, bull, and horse.

Dancing is another recurring theme in the graphics of this exhibit. "Dance of The Fauns," "Bacchanal," "Dancers With Owl," and "The Flutist" extend the eye into sympathetic kinesthetic vibrations as the strong linear patterns transmit bodily movement in space.

Social criticism dominates in "Dreams And Lies of Franco," revealing yet another aspect of Picasso's graphics. Done in 1937, "Dreams and Lies" is a series of cartoon-like frames which unveil Picasso's deep feelings against the military dominant in Spain at the time.

Picasso designs cut across media lines into ceramics. Plates, pitchers, and jugs continue to display the creative spirit best known for its output in visual art forms. Such pieces as "The Angry Owl, 1953" turn ceramic materials toward sculpturesque forms.

If the exhibit does not provide a comprehensive sampling of Picasso's works, it is nonetheless an appropriate tribute to honor the artist's 90th birthday.

Albrecht Durer

Accompanying the Picasso exhibit is a small but exquisite assemblage of 48 etchings and woodcut from the graphics of Albrecht Durer (1471-1528), in honor of the German artists' 500th anniversary. Represented are such works as Durer's "Knight, Death, and Evil," "Melancholia I," "St. Jerome in His Study," "Annunciation," and "The Beast With Two Horns Like a Lamb."