

MARCELO GRASSMANN

twenty etchings

November 17 - 25, 1973



An exhibit at the Woodmere Art Gallery, Philadelphia,
on the occasion of the
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jointly organized by Temple University and Saint Joseph's College.

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MARCELO GRASSMANN was born in São Simão, São Paulo, in 1925. Since 1943, he has devoted himself to woodcuts, a medium in which he is self-taught. He has also done metal engraving and lithography, and has been active as a teacher. In 1950, he was awarded a Gold Medal and, in 1951, a Silver Medal by the National Fine Arts Salon. At the First National Modern Art Salon, he won a Travel Prize, which allowed him to work for a while at the "Albertina", in Vienna. He participated several times in the Venice Biennial, at which he was awarded the Prize for Engraving, in 1958. Six times he participated in the São Paulo Biennial, at which he was awarded the Best Brazilian Artist Prize, for Engraving (1955), and for Drawing (1959). In 1961, he was honored with a retrospective exhibit of his engravings at that same Biennial. In 1957, he was awarded the Grand Gold Medal by the São Paulo State Government. In subsequent years, he participated in the Paris and Tokyo Biennials. He has participated in group shows of contemporary Brazilian artists in Argentina, Chile, United States, Italy, Austria, Peru, Mexico and England. He has also had one-man shows both in Brazil and in several of the countries just mentioned. His first U.S.-show took place at the Pan-American Union, in Washington, D.C., in 1960.

The great renown the artist has enjoyed in recent years, both at home and abroad, rests primarily on his etchings, a medium of which he has absolute mastery. In them, he also makes use of drypoint which enhances his sense of line, so fundamental an element in the make-up of his etchings, and so marked by the same assurance one perceives in calligraphy. The interplay of the subtle monochromatic hues of the etching and the delicacy of the drypoint endows Grassmann's works with a mysterious light, a feeling of intense drama, and an aura of a bold dream. These qualities have made his work into a touchstone for a renewal and the rise to prestige of modern Brazilian engraving. His art displays a close affinity, both in spirit and content, with the work of the great masters of fantastic art of the 17th century, and with that of Bosch and of the German Expressionists. His world is peopled by knights and ladies, by crustaceans and mammals, and by anthropomorphic monsters. It is a world which has the imprint of the macabre, as well as of the austerity and grace of the visual tradition of the Middle Ages, which are but an accouterment under which lie hidden man's anxiety and aspirations.

JOSE NEISTEIN
Executive Director
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