

JCC paying homage to young students

By ANITA F. MORGANSTERN, Special to The Chronicle

Curating an art exhibition isn't all glamour. It involves funding, logistics and a great deal of research.

For an exhibition scheduled for May 1988, the research began early in 1986. The exhibition, "Homage to the Teachers," will be the inaugural event in the gallery of the new Jewish Community Center of Pittsburgh and will honor Samuel Rosenberg and Armando del Cimmuto, announces Ellie Turk Barmen, chairman of the New Building Art and Design Committee.

Rosenberg is well-known to residents of the Tri-State area. Considered the "Dean

(Editor's Note: Anita Morganstern is known in Pittsburgh as a curator, artist, writer, teacher and founder/director of the Court House Gallery Forum. She is a guest curator at the JCC, was a founder of Pittsburgh Plan for Art, and in 1985 curated "75 Years of Pittsburgh Art" at the CMU art gallery.)

of Pittsburgh Art," he was represented in every Associated Artists of Pittsburgh annual exhibition from 1922 to 1972, the year of his death, and won every honor offered by the AAP. He showed at the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney, the Corcoran and is represented in more than 15 important collections throughout the United States. Rosenberg was also a dedicated teacher with classes at Chatham College, Carnegie-Mellon University and the YM&WHA.

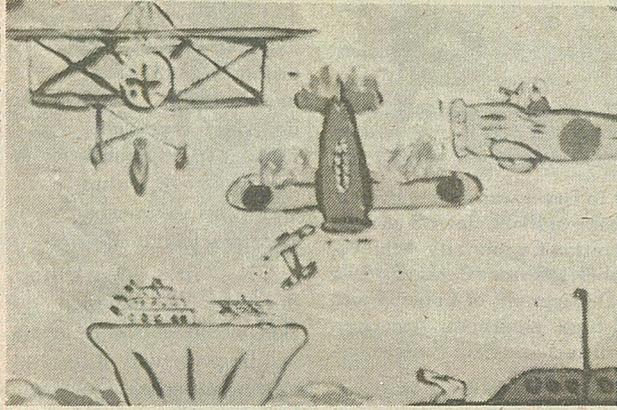
Less familiar locally is Armando del Cimmuto, who taught at the Irene Kaufmann Settlement from 1929, the year of his graduation from Carnegie Tech (now CMU), until 1946 when he left Pittsburgh. From 1948 until 1972 he was professor and chairman of the art department at Winthrop College in North Carolina. In the

Carolinas, del Cimmuto is well-known as a painter, sculptor and award-winning designer of ecclesiastic art, as well as an educator.

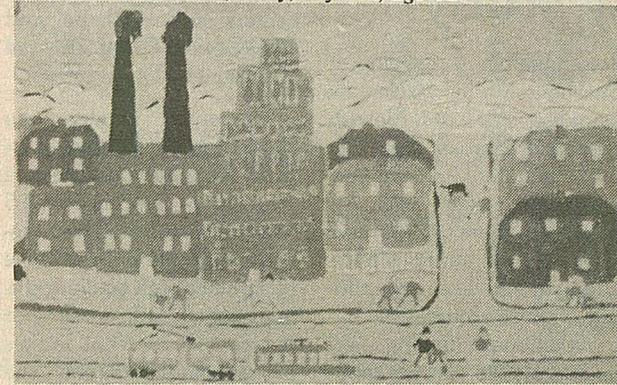
In addition to the display of works by both master teachers, "Homage to the Teachers" will include testimonial works by their proteges. But whoever heard of an exhibition where the labels identify the artists only by their first names?

We want to know the names of the talented students whose works were saved for over 50 years by del Cimmuto. If you were a budding IKS student/artist during the period from 1929 to 1946, or if you have information leading to their identification, join the research team. Last names and locations are needed for the following:

Claire, who painted House of Flowers in 1936 at age 8; Esther, who painted The Wedding around 1937 at age 9; Bill, who painted City



SEARCHING for young artists who were taught at the Irene Kaufmann Settlement is curator Anita Morganstern. Paintings include, above, "Air Battle" by Paul or Saul, age 10, and, below, "City," by Bill, age 12.



in 1936 at 12; Jerome, who painted The Operation in 1940 at 11; Alex, who painted The Junkman in 1936 at 12; Harry, who painted The Lighthouse in 1939 at 11; Sally, who painted Skating around 1936 - 1939 at 10; John who painted The Flood in 1936 at 13; Phyllis, who painted Kennywood in 1938 at 6; Zelda, who painted Volleyball in 1936 at 11; Paul or Saul, who painted Air Battle in 1940 at 10; Betty, who painted Wash Day in 1939, age 10; Nathan, who painted Passover in 1936, age 11; Ruth, who painted Music Class in 1938, age 11.

Del Cimmuto feels, that after treasuring some 50 paintings by youngsters

whom he taught at the IKS so long ago, "the time has come for these paintings to be returned to Pittsburgh and to be claimed by their creators."

We would also like to locate Esper Essau, Philip Lippi, Norman Hoffman, Jerome Supkoff, William Smith, Peter Adamich, Mary Zadorozy, Peter Adamick, Max Bazerman, Elsie Spector, Dora Malakoff, Frank Rubin, Max Scherb, Lucy Raven, Gino Lazzery, James Popovich, Louis Husser and Peggy Carr, who commuted from McKeesport to the IKS for art instruction.

Del Cimmuto's young students were given exposure at the Bessemer Building

Gallery, at the Elliott Co., and in the Hewlett Gallery at Carnegie Tech (CMU). He considered the exhibitions "A proclamation on the endless possibilities in the child's world. "But," he cautioned, "their attitude was not playful. The children saw sense in what they produced."

Dorothy Kantner, art critic of the Pittsburgh Sun Telegraph, recognized them as "...amazingly simple and direct...primitive art that one can admire unreservedly, for it is simple and unaffected...art of the mind and emotions, combined with the inherent honesty of childhood."

We also need to identify six students who as adults interpreted classical music on the walls of Anna Perlow's music studio at the Settlement. The building has been demolished, but we have photos of the murals. Del Cimmuto describes the murals as "A form of fundamental expression that shows true, basic emotions in a very direct way."

Frédéric Franck, internationally known artist and author/illustrator of several books on Zen Buddhism, studied with del Cimmuto at the IKS while a medical resident at Magee Women's and Children's Hospitals from 1941 to 1945. He recalls, "Del Cimmuto was sensitive to his students' needs. In a gentle way he managed to give honest criticism that was encouraging and helpful."

To help locate students of the IKS art classes, contact Anita Morganstern, guest curator, through the Jewish Community Center office, 5738 Forbes St., Pittsburgh, PA 15217 or call the Center office at 521-8010.

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Mexicans rediscover Judaism

In Latin America, there are millions of people who are descended from the Marranos. Many of these people have been practicing Jewish rituals unknowingly.

Some lit candles on Friday nights without saying prayers and some raised pigs only for profit and not for the family. In looking up these customs, they found that they were Jewish descendants. They called themselves "Spiritual Jews."

When they asked Rabbi Samuel S. Lerer to officiate a wedding, he accepted. He then became involved with these people, and they even named their synagogue after him calling it "Temple Beth Shmuel."

These people are devoted to Judaism and are well educated on the teaching of Torah. They even use olive oil to fuel their eternal light.

Each family of the congregation donates a supply of oil each week and is then given the key to the synagogue for that week as if to say "you are the trustees of this synagogue this week."

Rabbi Lerer is the only rabbi in Mexico City who accepts these people as Jews and converts non-Jews who want to become Jews-by-Choice. Due to his work,

about 60-70 people become Jews annually. He holds weekly classes of instruction for them.

These new Jewish communities are located in Veracruz, Venta Prieta and Jalapa in the state of Veracruz. On their own, they formed study groups.

Lerer received a Torah as a gift from a rabbi in New York; and he brought it to the people of Temple Beth Shmuel, in Veracruz.

Lerer has written two books to help these people with their services and customs. He has transliterated Hebrew, English and Spanish and gives instruction through pictures on customs, dances and songs.

Funds are badly needed due to Mexico's economic crisis. Also, they need Bibles, Torahs and other religious articles. Donations and/or lecture invitations should be sent to: Congregation Beth Shmuel, c/o Rabbi Samuel Lerer, Beth Israel Community Center, Boulevard de los Virreyes 1140,

Lomas Virreyes, 11000 Mexico, D.F.

Media Monitor

SUNDAY, JULY 5, 7:30 A.M., WTAE-TV, CHANNEL 4, Israel's Six Day War, 1967, remembered and described by an Israeli who participated in the battle, on "Shalom Pittsburgh."

Esther Michalshvilli and Yossi Apromshvilli talk about Tirat HaCarmel, their home town in Israel, its Pittsburgh UJF connection, and their work with campers at the James & Rachel Levinson Day Camp. Bonnie Cohen interviews.

SUNDAY, JULY 5, 10:30 P.M., KDKA, Gerry Ostrow, chairman of the UJF Task Force on Unemployment and Economic Stress, and Linda Ehrenreich, director of the Career Development Center, join hostess Sharon Stern to talk about the Career Development Center and the broad range of services it offers on "Mosaic."