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Exhibit Mixes Old and New

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COURIER-EXPRESS STAFF REPORTER

"Annuals and Perennials II," the current exhibition at the Burchfield Center, is not a show where you might spend hours with some lovely flowers. You'll find no velvety tulips, no mighty mums, no stately lilies, no dahlias, no irises, not even a single rose.

The blooms in this exhibit have names like Marsh, D'Arcangelo, Rothenberg, Cuthbert, Hamouda, Miller, Potenza and, of course, Burchfield. These blooms are works of art, some just planted this year in the fertile soil of the Burchfield's permanent collection, others cropping up once again after a brief period out of the sun.

Fittingly, works by Charles Burchfield, the center's namesake, fill the main gallery with works collected in past years, including the early watercolors given recently by Buffalo artist Tony Sisti, and seven new studies for a painting in the Whitney Collec-

tion in New York City called "Golden Dream" acquired this year.

In these pencil drawing, Burchfield has made jottings of the individual elements of the painting. He looks closely at each motif — a cloud and its particular outline, the turnings of tree branches, the odd shape of swallow-tailed butterflies — in order to fathom their essential character. In the case of the butterflies, these small creatures eventually will become a giant breed in the painting, filling the single tree with their magical presence.

Other landscape paintings by Western New Yorkers acquired this year by the center sacrifice most of Burchfield's fantasy so that some specific reality of contemporary life can come through. Virginia Cuthbert, for instance, in her "Picnic Several Summer's Ago," paints solid, chunky landscape forms populated by solid, chunky people. The artist successfully stops a quiet early evening moment on a lawn after a game of croquet when all is hushed by a pinkish

light and each character seems to be about to fall into private thoughts.

Buffalonian Allen D'Arcangelo, who earned international fame as a Pop artist in the early days of that movement, has a large poster for the National Collection of Fine Arts in Washington, D.C., on view. This recent Burchfield addition to the collection contains D'Arcangelo's favorite cut-out white cumulus cloud, yellow-striped road barriers, a kind of D'Arcangelo trademark, and his famous triangle with dotted line which stands for a highway racing toward the horizon. Only a small tree, silhouetted but detailed, hints at the specifics of the real world.

While D'Arcangelo shows the highway as seen from behind the windshield of a speeding car, Reginald Marsh, an artist who did some of his best work in the '30s, takes us right into the city streets and focuses on some of the characters that walk them.

In a watercolor drawing new to the
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Burchfield collection, Marsh depicts a blousy young women dressed in the finery of the day, a loose, wind-catching dress and coat, high heels with ankle straps. She stands next to the ironwork railing of a New York City building, her hair waving freely out into space, while what might be an architectural gargoyle — maybe some sort of sinister guardian for Marsh — watches from behind.

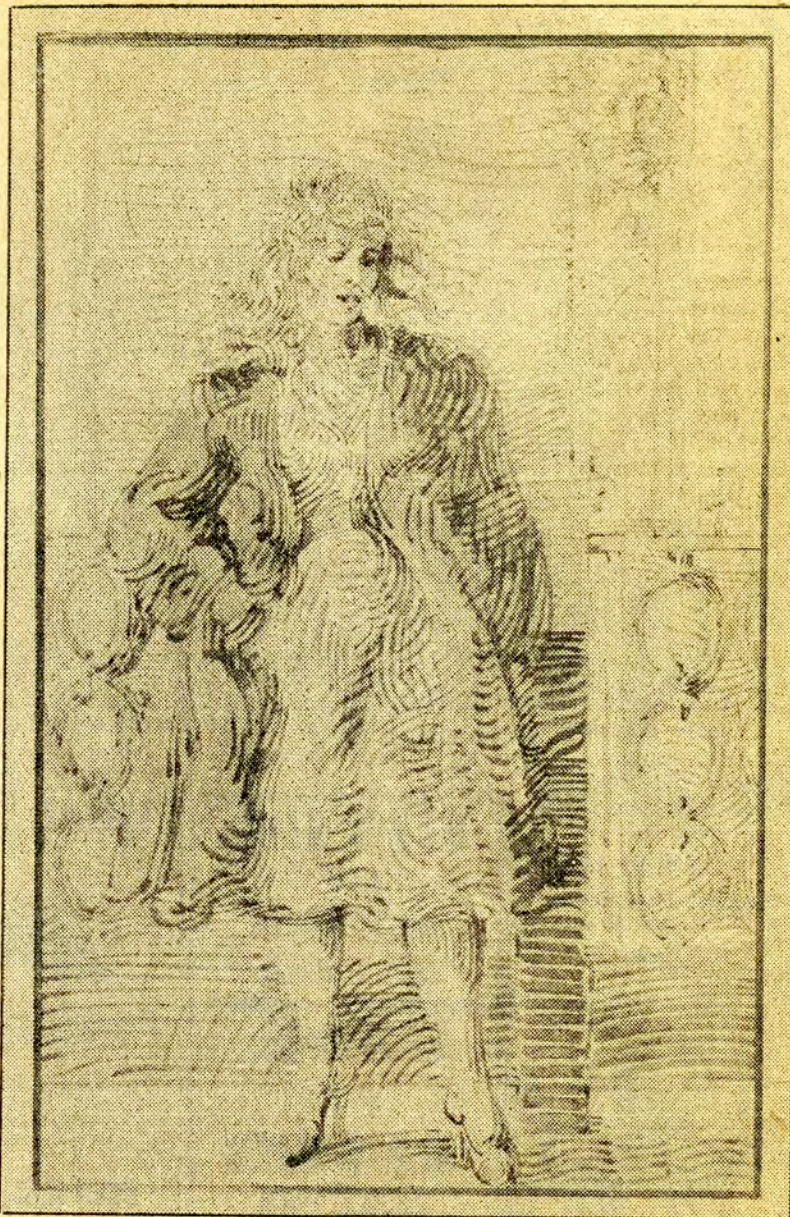
Marsh had a way with his brush that allowed his strokes to follow every swell of a body and yet retain a independent bounciness of their own. His joyful handling saved many a potentially tawdry lady like the present one from any charge of decadence.

Other notable new arrivals are Susan Rothenberg's three woodcuts, which revel in a semi-primitive mysteriousness, complete with images of enlarged hanging bones and hidden faces and figures beside hints of dark forests.

Sally Potenza, a talented artist who died in 1976 at the age of 41, did large abstractions with all-over brushwork. The Burchfield's acquisition is gray and covered with fluid loops that swing along like relaxed handwriting at times, or at other times, threaten to become emblems for some particularly lively layer of vegetation.

Ed Miller, a Buffalonian now teaching at Rochester Institute of Technology, gives his two geometric drawings of sloped planes and textured triangles a sense of place, as though they might be openings in a wall or windows allowing only a piecemeal look at the sky.

After Miller's blunt use of shape and field, the hemp and latex rubber piece by Amy Hamouda called "Hook and Eye" looks to be drifting in the surreal space between everyday life and dreams. Her sculpture appears



Reginald Marsh's ink and watercolor drawing is a distinctive addition to the Burchfield Center's collection of earlier 20th Century art.

as though it might have some unexplained function, but its kinship with the organic world — an object with feelings — finally dominates.

All of these works and a wide selection of others, both contemporary

and historical, will remain at the Burchfield Center through Sept. 20. The Center, located on the campus of Buffalo State College, is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 1 to 5 p.m. on Sundays.