

GENERAL HOSPITAL CELEBRATES ITS FIRST 20 YEARS

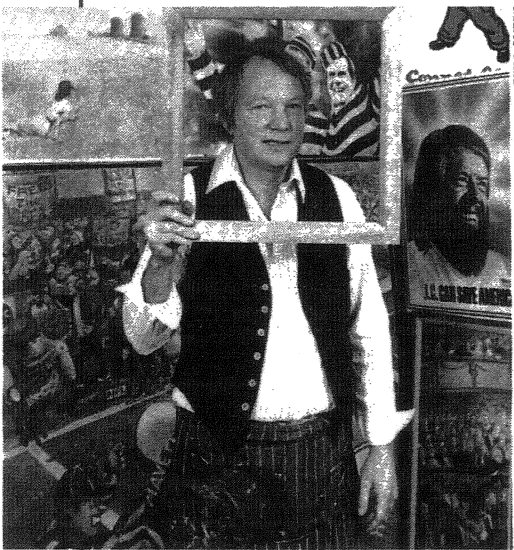
US

WPS-34190

The Thorn Birds' lusty lovebirds: Brawny Bryan Brown's sizzling romance with thorny Rachel Ward wasn't in the script

APRIL 11, 1983/\$1.00

FRONT RUNNERS



Black humor colors this painter's future bright

After New York artist Bob Cenedella immortalized his favorite bar on canvas, old drinking pals snubbed him. "Why did you paint

me without pants?" one waitress demanded. "I know that's me," another woman huffed, eyeing a grotesque green face.

"That's the way I see people." Cenedella laughs. "But when you're attacking your hang-out, you better be right."

Cenedella, 42, has always known he's been right—even when he was expelled from Manhattan's Music and Art High School for spoofing atom bomb drills. He was also on target when he plastered politicians' faces on dart boards. Fame came from his pointed criticism—putting Nixon and Agnew in prison garb and taking the reclining young woman from Andrew Wyeth's *Christina's World* and putting Three Mile Island in the background.

Posters like these made Cenedella successful while his more serious work was ignored. "For almost 15 years, I had no encouragement about my painting

—none, zero," Cenedella says. "Abstract art was in. At least I didn't sell my work cheap."

The artist doesn't worry now that realism and his reputation are hot. His one-man show at Manhattan's Sutton Gallery will attract collectors ready to pay \$2,000 to \$18,000 for a Cenedella painting. His nightmarish, chaotic crowds recall the work of his mentor, George Grosz, and other satirists.

Yet Cenedella's black humor has recently lightened up. "I'm not taking life so seriously. I like people to laugh at my work," says the artist, who recently tackled Monday night football, the New York subways and his pet peeve, Mayor Ed Koch.

"My work is about comment," Cenedella says. "If I weren't a painter, I'd be a politician." There is one politician the painter brushes off: Ronald Reagan. "He's too easy a shot. I wouldn't waste my paint on him!"—J.P.