

Artist's nightmare vision of life

By the Art Critic

NO SAVONAROLA or John Knox, thundering from their respective pulpits, could have enunciated the sins of man in more detail and with more fanatical zeal than Harold Rubin has done without words in his drawings at Studio 101 (Rand Central, Jeppe Street).

Many of these subjects are so repulsive, even nauseating, that it is difficult to view them with a detached eye as works of art—though this some of them undoubtedly are.

The series of seven large drawings "The Burden of the Beast," is masterly. Dense black and dazzling white, purposeful draughtsmanship (and distortion) gate-crash the mind with a vision of unendurable pain, humiliation, viciousness and cruelty.

INSPIRED TOUCH

I still think his "Coalbearers," with that inspired touch of red roof-top and the inexplicable woman in suspension above, is one of his most powerful drawings.

There is another group (including "Hark! Hark! The dogs do bark") in which he achieves full-scale effects of luminosity and variety without any colour at all.

His "Raiders," in brilliant colour, lack the unity and harmony of these tonal drawings.

One picture both revolts and stings "with a whip of scorpions." It depicts the Crucifixion, with—in place of the crown of thorns—what appears to be a tawdry Christmas cap.

Somehow this exhibition evokes images of The Pilgrim's Progress as Rubin might illustrate it. With what gusto he would tackle Apollyon and Mr. and Mrs. Worldly-Wiseman and the man with the muck rake! But how would he deal with the "Shining Ones"?

