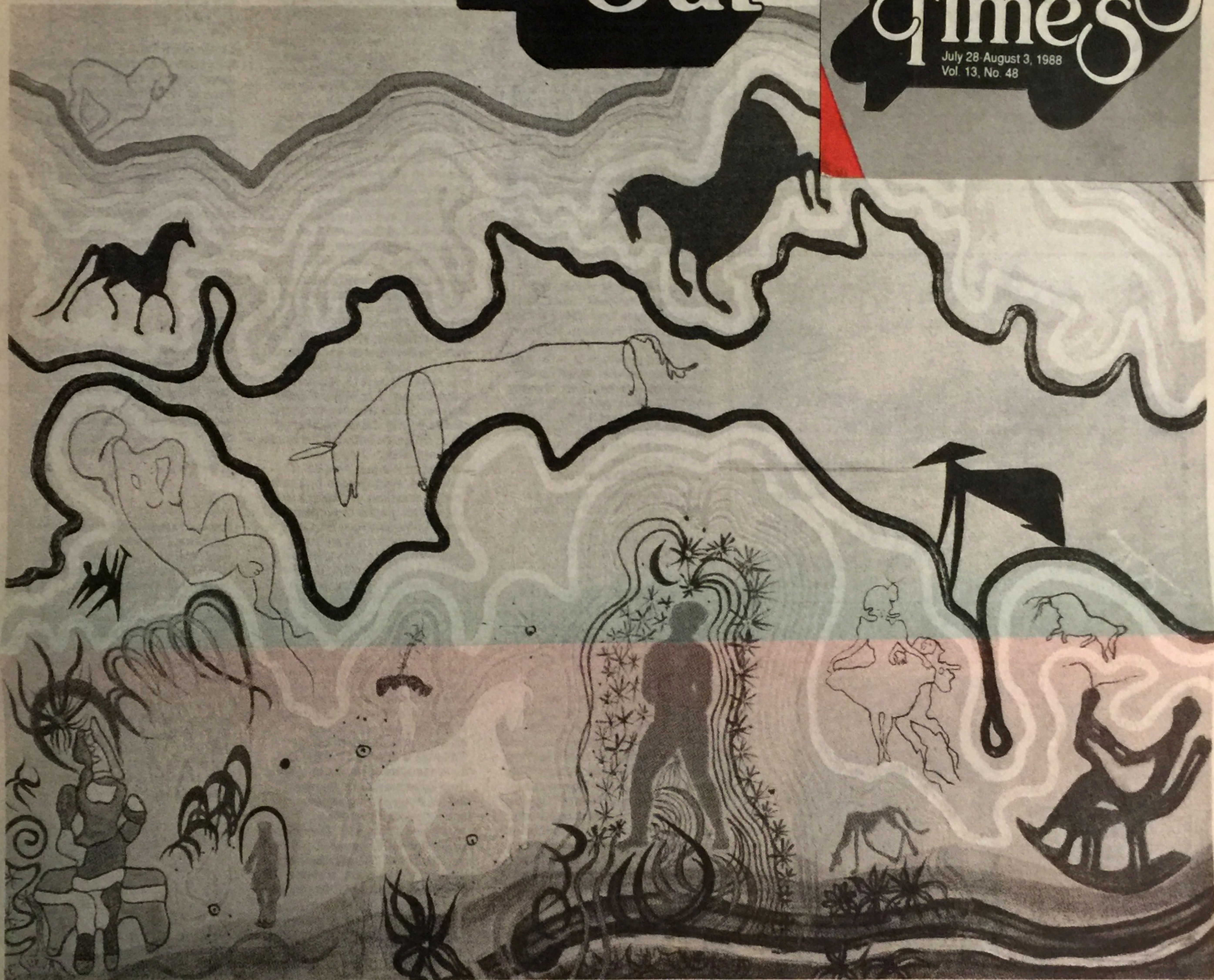


times Out

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"Cub Calder's Sunflower" is one of several paintings by Maurice LeGrand LeSueur Sullins on display at the Illinois State Museum beginning July 31. See Art.

Times Out lists, free of charge, news of arts, entertainment, and public affairs events in the Springfield area. Only written announcements will be accepted and should include: type of event (with brief description), date, time, location, sponsoring organization, contact person, telephone number, and admission charge if applicable. All events must be open to the public; listings are subject to editorial and space considera-

tions. The deadline for calendar entries is the Friday preceding publication. Send to *Times Out calendar*, P.O. Box 3524, Springfield, IL 62708. Unless otherwise noted, events are in Springfield and times are pm. Dates, times, and locations are subject to last minute changes, so we suggest calling the host of an event to verify details.

ings 1970-1986 exhibition opens 7/31 and show thru 9/11, Art Gallery. Features 60 out of more than 1,200 paintings created by 78-year-old painter, Maurice LeGrand LeSueur Sullins of Joliet. All are exuberant, carefully composed, richly colored, and highly original, reflecting a unique vision

of contemporary life. Opening reception 7/30, 6:30-8:30, 2nd floor. Museum free; open 8:30am-5 Mon-Sat, noon-5 Sun.

Lincoln Library—Springfield Stained Glass Club exhibits works by members thru Aug, 3rd flr, Arts and Recreation area, main library. Also featured, Photography by Donna Call. West branch has Care Bears by Barb Defoe thru Aug. W Washington. 753-4925.

544-2094.

Springfield Art Association—Works by Maria Martinez and Family on display thru 8/14, 700 N 4th. 523-2631 for times.

The Bookstore—Works by Springfield artist Gina Manola featured during July. Open Sat and Sun 12-7. 307 W Allen. 744-0227.

Lincoln Library—6th Annual T-shirt exhibit on 3rd flr of main library thru July. At west branch, Pirates

art

Openings

Illinois State Museum—Maurice LeGrand Le Sueur Sullins: Paint-

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				28	29	30
31	1	2	3	4	5	6

Continuing

Prairie House—Thru July, Currier & Ives original political cartoons dated 1860-1865. 11am-5:30 Mon-Fri, Sat 11am-5. 221 S 6th.

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begin by ignoring Maurice the airplane waxer and to look at his paintings instead.

They are an immediate pleasure, for both the eye and mind. Pure, brilliant colors and a sinuous impasto in the paintings of the first few years soon leads to paintings filled with witty references and plays on the motifs and styles of famous twentieth century modernists. The thick purples, blues, and yellows of "Palm Tree Frond" from 1970 give way by 1975 to the thin washes of pale blue and the geometric lines of "Drifting Picasso Nude Cloud." Like many painters, Sullins enjoys pursuing a theme through a series. Among the most delightful paintings in the exhibit are those from the "Miss Chicago" series in which the dominant motif is one or more large circles created by dots of pure color within which are inscribed multicolored geometric patterns. Inscribed in smaller circles or shapes we find the outline figure of Miss Chicago herself. Besides his long sinuous lines, this use of dots of pure color, each pulled toward the viewer in a peak, is a Sullins trademark. The overall style is generally what people call "abstract," although always with a recognizable content and reference. One of the great satisfactions of the exhibit is that its sixty canvases allow the viewer to follow Sullins' technical experiments as well as to identify the characteristic devices which he employs over and over.

If Sullins never received formal training, he is not by any means artistically illiterate. On the contrary, his is an art full of allusions, quotations, and send-ups of

famous artists he has read about and admired. Picasso, Calder, Matisse, and Chagall are most evident in the paintings on exhibit here. But they are not imitated, they are only referred to as in "Matisse's Heavenly Blue Nude," a lovely abstraction in varied tones of blue with red, yellow, and violet accents and two small outlines of nudes reminiscent of Matisse. "Elegant Moment in Paris" is a room of Matisse-like colorations and abstraction but with a kind of cubist table and guitar in the center. These referential paintings remain, nevertheless, firmly in Sullins' own style and the use of allusory motifs is almost always playful. If there is any modernist movement that could claim Sullins, it would be surrealism, at least the more colorful and abstract version represented by Miro.

Having looked at the paintings, however, one is inevitably drawn back to Maurice. One cannot help wondering at the resources of talent, wit, imagination, and sheer determination which kept this man going for sixteen years and twelve hundred paintings. He stopped precipitously when his wife died in 1986 and has not painted since. Nor has he sold any paintings except for a few when he needed money for supplies. He is that rare "genuine article," a true naive artist who painted out of an inner need and not for reputation or profit. Although many of his paintings contain French motifs and titles, Mr. Sullins has never been to France. No doubt the French themes reflect pride in his family heritage; the LeSueur in his name comes from his grandmother, the

LeGrand from his mother.

Among the few people who knew of his work and watched it over the years is his friend, Timothy O'Keefe, a billboard painter who has now become Maurice's agent. Maurice LeGrand LeSueur Sullins has decided to put his paintings up for sale to provide an inheritance for his children.

The Illinois State Museum is to be commended for creating this exhibit before Sullins' collection begins to be dispersed. The exhibit is well displayed and documented with a free guide.

Available for purchase is an excellent color catalogue which contains an essay on "Outsider Art: Modernism's Parallel Aesthetic" by Michael Bonesteel, as well as exhibit curator Lynda K. Martin's description of how the exhibit was put together and her very helpful essay "Maurice Sullins: Inside an Outsider." □

PAINTING / Larry Shiner

An outsider's outstanding art

Maurice LeGrand LeSueur Sullins: Paintings 1970-1986

Illinois State Museum
July 31 thru September 11, 1988

Anyone who enjoys painting will want to see this exhibit for its colorfully varied and immediately accessible forms.

Moreover, the sixty canvases in the show (selected from some 1,200) represent a coherent body of work produced over a single sixteen-year period in the life of an unusual man. Maurice Sullins didn't begin painting until 1970, when he was sixty-years-old, and he painted at a table in his living room after a full day of work at the Joliet airport, where he waxed and detailed planes. But it would be patronizing to focus on these unique circumstances instead of on the astonishing collection of work he has created over the past eighteen years. The best way to honor the artist in Sullins is to