'Made of Iron' exhibit highlights vibrant gallery displays

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The recent Houston cultural scene, abnormally active and, typically, designated by the local Cultural Establishment as a "boom," has included a really prodigious amount of activity in the graphic and plastic arts.

Besides the highly commendable Chillida exhibition at the Museum of Fine Arts, there are a number of smaller but still really worthwhile shows around.

Foremost among these is the "Made of Iron" exhibit at the University of St. Thomas. It is the most recent example of that school's continuing policy of arranging interesting and diversified shows for a fairly apathetic public. Most Houstonians are only vaguely aware of St. Thomas' existence, yet its Fine Arts department is outstanding and highly active.

Art And Artifact
"Made of Iron" traces the uses of iron through history in an exhibition of artifacts and art objects. Among these are medieval plates or armor, helmets, and knives.

It also presents a number of modern sculptures in iron by noted artists, and even includes a mobile in iron by Alexander Calder. Fernand Leger and Eduardo Chillida are among the represented artists.

The Contemporary Arts Museum is presently showing "Art in America," a travelling survey of recent American art. If this exhibit seems less impressive than others around, it is probably because recent American art relies heavily on pop motifs and techniques that are not easy to appreciate. It still is worth a look.

Bank Exhibits
The most surprising exhibits in town are at five banks; each has borrowed from the collection of the Fine Arts Museum in observance of Houston's Festival of the Arts.

Scultures and drawing of David Hayes are at Bank of the Southwest, 910 Travis. Three stabiles and a mobile of Alexander Calder are on exhibit at First City National Bank, 1001 Main.

And eight examples of Jean Tinguely's motion art are moving continuously in the lobby of Great Southern Life Insurance Company, 3121 Buffalo Speedway.

Periphery
Jean Robert Ipoustegui and Marisol (Escoban) are represented as well, at Southern National Bank, 921 Main, and at Capital National Bank, 1300 Main, respectively.

These are generally well done, and all but the Tinguelyes can be seen in a short visit downtown. While you're there, go inside Neiman-Marcus; there's a fairly extensive and varied exhibition of paintings, including Picasas—some of them even have price tags. That alone makes the visit worth your time.

And if you still crave more, try some of the private galleries around. Most notable among these are the Kiko and David Galleries; the former is at present exhibiting an interesting artist named Soshana, and the latter is usually a good bet any time.