

# *The* ART *of* TODAY

---

S U C C E S S O R   T O   S T U D I O   N E W S

---



SUPINE by Alexander Brook

"Charm without sentimentality"

*Courtesy of the Downtown Gallery*

---

DECEMBER 1934 • VOLUME SIX • NUMBER ONE • PRICE 15c



---

## CREATIVE CRITICISM

*" . . . Every false work extolled is a door through which hypocrites of art creep in."*

**A**N artist is an artist, because he is a sensitive creature. But, regardless of how delicately constituted he may be, he cannot escape from life because it is his business to create work that can hold its place in the world at large. For this reason he must expect adverse criticism as well as praise, from the ignorant and the intelligent alike. The real artist never objects to comment on his work and he welcomes criticism, providing the critic is honest and sincere, and that he understands what the artist is striving to express. On the other hand, when derogatory criticisms which show that the would-be critic is merely trying to show how clever he is, are made, they naturally arouse antagonism.

It is irritating, to say the least, to read articles and reviews by critics who seek to gain a place in the sun by annihilating young talent with devastating flippancies, while at the same time they mawkishly pat on the back those artists who, from a wordly point of view, have arrived.

Without question it takes more courage to appreciate than to criticize. The stupid, the superficial and the tricky can criticize, but to really appreciate a work of art requires sensitiveness, imagination and intelligence.

The academic critic approaches art with a mind already made up, because he does not indulge in creative thinking. All works of art are one and the same to him;—nothing is new. He applies his standardized rules to what he sees before him. What he sees is not the picture or the piece of sculpture but the idea he has imposed over it.

Although a mechanized, formalized approach is bad it does not follow that there are no values by which to judge a work of art. Some people say that one should not think of art as good or bad—one should only enjoy it. This attitude pre-supposes natural taste and appreciation. It also disregards all standards and principles. There are, however, certain standards that have been created by the greatest abilities and intellects of all time. Each work of art created bears a direct relation to the greatest that has been produced. It is true that it is possible to derive a certain amount of pleasure from a mediocre work, but the character of the emotions stirred is quite different from that of those which spring into life when one is brought into contact with a highly organized work of genius.

Creative criticism, then, deals with relationships: the various relationships existing within the work of each individual artist, its relationship as a whole to his environment, and the relationship between the work and its appreciator.

The critic has the responsibility of making the artist realize his own latent possibilities, and of making the art-lover realize the marvelous relationships existing within the work of art itself.

N. P-D.





**GIRL IN BLACK**  
by Joseph Stella  
"Decorative motive  
dominates"

*This magazine is dedicated to*

## **Dr. JOHN DEWEY**

*In grateful recognition of his service to art. The following quotations from his recently-published book, "Art as Experience" cannot but tempt artists and art-lovers who have not yet read it to give themselves that delightful experience without further delay.*

**ENVIRONMENT:** "An environment that is changed physically and spiritually demands new forms of expression."

**TRADITION:** "The trouble with the academic imitator is not that he depends upon traditions, but that the latter have not entered into his mind; into the structure of his own ways of seeing and making. They remain upon the surface as tricks of technique or as extraneous suggestions and conventions as the proper thing to do."

**POPULARITY:** "Indifference to response of the immediate audience is a necessary trait of all artists that have something new to say. But they are animated by a deep conviction that since they can only say what they have to say, the trouble is not with their work but with those who, having eyes, see not, and having ears, hear not. Communicability has nothing to do with popularity."

**EXPERIMENTATION:** "The artist is compelled to be an experimenter because he has to express an intensely individualized experience through means and materials that belong to the common and public world. This problem cannot be solved once for all. It is met in every new work undertaken. Otherwise an artist repeats himself and becomes esthetically dead. Only because the artist operates experimentally does he open new fields of experience and disclose new aspects and qualities in familiar scenes and objects."

**RESISTANCE:** "Without internal tension there would be a fluid rush to a straightaway mark; there would be nothing that could be called development and fulfillment. The existence of resistance defines the place of intelligence in the production of an object of fine art."

**TECHNIQUE:** "Technique is neither identical with form nor yet wholly independent of it. It is, properly, the skill with which the elements constituting form are managed. Otherwise it is show-off or a virtuosity separated from expression."



**BRUSH STROKES:** "A painter must consciously undergo the effect of his every brush stroke or he will not be aware of what he is doing and where his work is going. Moreover, he has to see each particular connection of doing and undergoing in relation to the whole that he desires to produce. To apprehend such relations is to think, and is one of most exacting modes of thought."

**RHYTHM:** "There is rhythm in nature before poetry, painting, architecture and music exist. Were it not so, Rhythm as an essential property of form would be merely superimposed upon material, not an operation through which material effects its own culmination in experience."

**CRAFTSMANSHIP:** "Craftsmanship to be artistic in the final sense must be 'loving'; it must care deeply for the subject matter upon which skill is exercised."

**DISCOVERY:** "The painter and poet like the scientific inquirer know the delights of discovery. Those who carry on their work as a demonstration of a preconceived thesis may have the joys of egotistic success, but not that of fulfillment of an experience for its own sake. In the latter they learn by their work, as they proceed, to see and feel what has not been part of their original plan and purpose."

**NEW EXPRESSION:** "... great original artists take a tradition into themselves. They have not shunned but digested

it. Then the very conflict set up between it and what is new in themselves and in their environment creates the tension that demands a new mode of expression. . . . The great innovators in modern painting were more assiduous students of the pictures of the past than were the imitators who set the contemporary fashion."

**OBJECTS:** "The aesthetic expels the physical, and the heightening of qualities common to flesh with flowers ejects the erotic. The conception that objects have fixed and unalterable values is precisely the prejudice from which art emancipates us. The intrinsic qualities of things come out with startling vigor and freshness just because conventional associations are removed."

**AESTHETIC EMOTION:** "Some subtle affinity with the current of his, the artist's, own experience as a live creature causes lines and colors to arrange themselves in one pattern and rhythm rather than in another. The passionateness that marks observation goes with the development of the new form—it is the distinctly aesthetic emotion that has been spoken of. With emotion, there may be craftsmanship, but not art; it may be present and be intense, but if it is directly manifested the result is also not art."

*Permission to quote the foregoing paragraphs has been kindly granted by the Milton Balch Publishing Company.*

**BLACK ICE**  
by Alexander Brook  
Collection of Mr.  
Edward S. Greenbaum  
"Essential form stressed"





## Creating "SOUTH OF SCRANTON"

*Edward Yaghjian having visited the Carnegie Exhibition quotes Peter Blume on how he painted this picture.*

"SOUTH of Scranton" which took first money in this annual show at Pittsburgh was seen in New York last year at the Municipal Show in Radio City. Blume's surrealist painting, according to himself, is a sort of travel record of an auto trip which he took several years ago cruising the industrial area of Eastern Pennsylvania. "South of Scranton" is obviously not a picture of any particular geographical stop along the route, but rather a vision that grew out of the many impressions I gathered of the things and places I saw—things I glimpsed of as I drove along, or even things I imagined I saw. The conception of the picture itself can roughly be described as the telescoping of all my experience and impressions of the trip within the confines of a single canvas. As I welded them together into a picture they lost all their logical connection. I moved Scranton into Charleston and Bethlehem into Scranton almost as people do in a dream. The problem of organization so as to make the relationship of one thing to another authentic, to arrange the wildly diverse elements I represented to exist harmoniously, was an extremely painstaking procedure. Whether or not I succeeded in doing so is hard for me to say, but that was my purpose." As a surrealist painting it is handsome and we felt that he got his impressions across very well, all except the jumping men of which we couldn't quite get the meaning.



MOONLIT LANDSCAPE by Henry Mattson  
Courtesy of the Frank K. M. Rehn Gallery

## STELLA RETURNS

JOSEPH STELLA has resided abroad for the last five years. He spent the most of his time in Rome and in Paris. In Paris, he held four One-Man shows which were reviewed very favorably by the press. B. J. Kospoth, a Paris critic, wrote in one of the French papers: "Joseph Stella is a painter with a paradoxical passion for such apparently irreconcilable things as skyscrapers, steel bridges, birds, fruits, African jungles and Italian landscapes, which he combines in compositions of singular decorative beauty. That is as much as to say that he is an artist of rare and original genius, who dreams his own dreams and has the power of expressing them in his own way."

Last year he exhibited in the large International Religious Exhibition in Rome. In this exhibition he was given the special honor of having a large wall set aside for the showing of his own work, and the leading critic, Biancale, wrote with enthusiasm about his figure compositions and said he considered Stella's work the most interesting paintings in the exhibition.

Starting early in January, Joseph Stella will hold an exhibition of his lately painted figure work at the Valentine Gallery.





THEY PAY TO BE SEEN by Reginald Marsh  
 Courtesy of the Frank K. M. Rehn Gallery  
 "Keen satiric observation"

## GERTRUDE STEIN SPEAKS

"When I look at landscapes or people or flowers they do not look to me like pictures, no, not at all," she said. "On the other hand pictures for me do not have to look like flowers or people or landscapes or houses or anything else. They can, they often do, but they do not have to . . . Once an oil painting is painted, painted on a flat surface, painted by anybody who likes or is hired or is interested to paint it, or who has or has not been taught to paint it, I can always look at it and it always holds my attention. The painting may be good, it may be bad, medium or very bad or very good but always I like to look at it.

"We all live within our selves. Therefore, we need something to look at. Why does such a representation give me pleasure and I like to look at it? Ah yes. Well, this I do not know and I do not know whether I will ever know this. The fact is that it has achieved an existence in and for itself and it has its own life and I like to look at it. The question is how much vitality has it when it is made?"

## WE HONOR

ALFRED STIEGLITZ: For having retained his naive, unspoiled attitude toward life, and for being one of the first men to foster creative art in this country.

(Mr. Stieglitz is also very largely responsible for the development of photography during the last ten years. It is however a debateable question as to whether or not photography is a creative art.)

FORBES WATSON: For the great help and stimulation he has given to artists everywhere through his courageous articles and editorials in his late magazine, "The Arts".

MRS. HARRY PAYNE WHITNEY: For the assistance, spiritual as well as financial, which she has generously given to artists of talent and ability.

ALBERT C. BARNES: For assembling one of the most significant collections of modern art; for writing some of the best books on art ever published and for his profound interest in the advancement of art education.



THE PATRONESS by Peggy Bacon  
 "Character vitally seen and delineated"



# THOMAS CRAVEN

## Prophet, Surgeon or Undertaker

by Nathaniel Pousette-Dart

*Silhouetted against our contemporary American scene stands the savage figure of Thomas Craven. His legs are wide-spread standing on the top boards of the coffin he has hewn out for the leaders of Modern Art. His face in the early morning light seems very determined, but before his eyes floats a shadow of doubt, as rumblings and knockings inside the box disturb his contemplations. To himself he says, "Surely the damned carcasses are dead! Didn't I grab each one of the bastards, fling them down on the slab and cut out all their vital organs? Oh, I remember now, I took pity on that old cripple, Renoir. I just gave him a few jabs. Maybe he is the son-of-a-gun that is causing all the trouble."*

WITHOUT question Thomas Craven is a brilliant writer. His stature has the proportions of greatness; his vision is clear, (except in one eye); his sense of values is good albeit limited; and he is an appreciator of fundamental sincerity and honesty. Gusto, force, vitality appeal to him; that is why he is inspired when he writes about Van Gogh, although he hates the flatness of his style. Vagueness and indirectness stimulate his spleen, and cause him to go into tantrums against those artists who try to externalize dreams, or build architectural organizations out of forms far removed from nature.

It is a splendid thing to have such a bull bursting into our china shops. Despite his swash-buckling, his scandal-mongering, and his suggestive anecdotes, his able penetrating judgments and stimulating enthusiasm are like a breath of fresh air.

Reading his book induces the same sort of excitement one feels while following a football game or a prize fight. Everything is moving, vital, with a smell of blood in the air. Anything may happen. He uses every device at his command to drive home his main thesis: that art must spring from life and experience. It is interesting to note how two men striving for virtually the same end, can approach it from opposite poles. Dr. Dewey in his book, "Art as Experience", writes like a god, in calm isolation. Craven, on the other hand, with the facility and human appeal of a sports writer, telegraphs his message with gun-rattling broadsides. Being fully prepared for battle, through prejudice and conviction, he brings up his heavy artillery from the outset and keeps it in action every minute. When he fails to attack his weaknesses show up.

He seems to lack the kind of sensitiveness upon which fine aesthetic judgments are based. He says, "One would

know an Epstein anywhere, though it be labeled Conrad, Lady Gregory, the Duke of Marlborough, or Christ." The quality of being easily recognized has no especial value in itself. It is usually the cheap, tricky artists or the stylized ones whose work always look the same. Sargent's blatant technique underwent no significant changes during his lifetime, but Rembrandt, striving for profundity ran the gamut of technical devices whereby to express himself. Epstein appears to have two styles, either one of which he takes off or puts on as a garment. When he works in clay he is essentially an illustrator. Yes, he achieves a certain kind of life, but his bronzes are dead as our pathetic Civil War monuments. When he models a child's head he does it in exactly the same recognizable manner and spirit that he does the head of a decrepit old man. It is difficult not to feel that his smooth, stylized manner is borrowed from Gaudier-Brzka, or the Egyptians, or the Assyrians, or the Caledonians. Its intellectually manufactured or absorbed oddities seem consciously fashioned to startle the timid Britisher and produce reams of excellent publicity on the continent and elsewhere.

Again, when Craven waxes enthusiastic about a questionably great sculptor like George Grey Barnard, one starts to wonder about his own sensibility. The "Two Natures", (which Craven thinks is a masterpiece), is at its best a clever piece of carved marble in imitation of two gladiators fashioned by a matter-of-fact Roman sculptor. Certainly, there is nothing especially original here either in the conception or in the photographically rendered execution. How does this work fit in with Craven's theory that all art must spring from environment? Perhaps Barnard sojourns continually in Valhalla or on Olympus. Certainly Barnard's head of Lincoln is no very wonderful work of art with its egg-shell form and its Daniel Chester French weakly-imitative style of surface modeling.

Toward the latter part of his book Craven forgets about his diatribes against abstract art when he eulogizes the work of the philosopher-architect, Frank Lloyd Wright. Wright is the high priest of Functionalism and one of the most ardent believers in abstract form. Picasso and Wright have much in common. I hesitate to think that Craven praises the one because he is a friend, and hates the other because he sleeps with French prostitutes in Montmartre (very much as Craven tells us that he himself once did). I think it is because Craven is extremely confused and prejudiced about abstract work. He accepts it in one art but is blind to it in another.



Whether or not a given work of art is abstract or realistic is of no importance. The important thing is whether it is creative, whether it has inner life that springs from a profound knowledge of art and nature, whether it has significant aesthetic relationships. Some abstract pictures have more real life and vitality than some of the best realistic ones. Picasso very seldom draws a line that hasn't life and vitality back of it. I am not interested in Picasso's life. I want to judge his art as art. Even if Picasso had never done anything significant himself, he has opened and widened the field of creation tremendously. Some critics pick on Picasso because he is an experimenter, because he doesn't persist in developing one idea to its logical conclusion. Haven't we enough artists with one-track minds? Why try and pour all artists into the same mold?

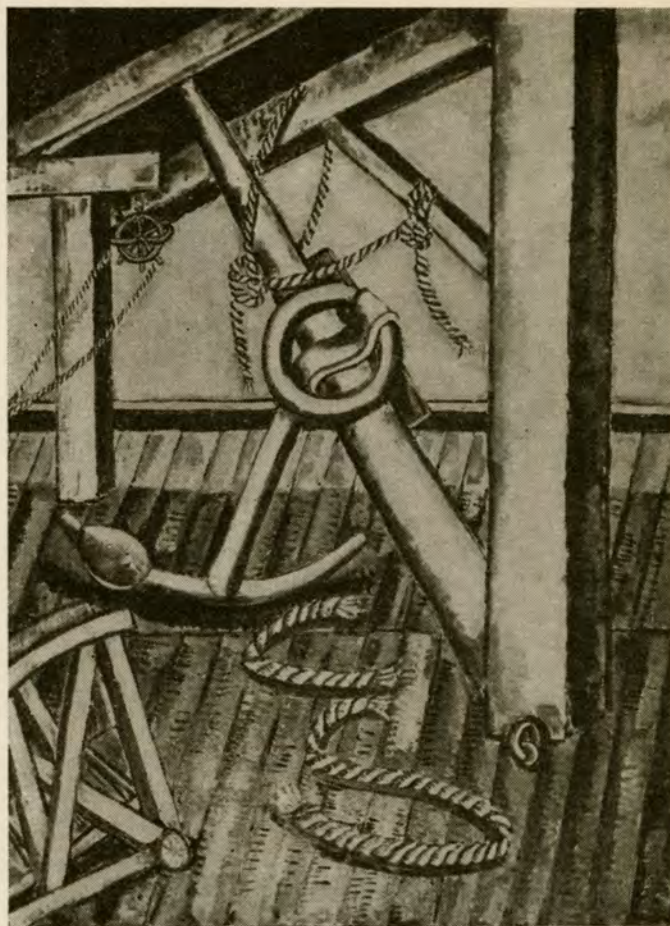
Illustrating contemporary life means nothing at all unless it is done with aesthetic significance. Craven gives the impression that because Thomas Benton paints American negroes, elevators, locomotives, dance halls, Indians and telephone poles he is a great American artist. Benton is a significant artist not because of his subject matter but because of his creative power and his alive intelligence.

It is true that the work of Matisse is not particularly profound, but it is absurd for Craven to think that he can eliminate him as a first-rate artist because he doesn't paint like Rubens, or because he doesn't paint hod-carriers, instead of models posed in Persian costumes. Subject matter alone cannot make a thing modern; it is the spirit with which it is done.

When Craven with his ruthless sponge wipes James McNeil Whistler off the map I find myself weeping only crocodile tears. Whistler was essentially a decorator like Gauguin; neither one of these artists had any real conception of form. It is however unfair to bracket Gauguin with Whistler because whatever the former artist's faults were, he did not lack a certain kind of vitality that is absent from the work of Whistler.

It is surprising to find Craven advising John Sloan to paint attractive nudes. He says, "An ugly wench, full-clad, is bad enough: stripped, she is intolerable". Is it necessary for art to be attractive like the illustrations on the covers of one of our national magazines? Did Rembrandt, Goya, or Peter Breughel hesitate to paint subjects just because they were not pretty or attractive?

Craven takes the American artists to task for being poor designers. Then, presumably he holds Thomas Benton up as an admirable example, and John Marin as a terrible one. Benton is a very able artist but many of his organizations are marred by a process of intellectual invention. Benton's recent work, however, shows that he is acquiring a more emotional concept of organization. Craven's blind spot and his prejudices operate when he makes a slighting remark about John Marin's compositional ability. He says, "John Marin is the arch offender against law and order". To me, a failure to see that John Marin is a master of organization argues a lack of aesthetic sensibility. Merely because Marin does not construct form in a solid way like Titian, Rubens or Benton, he thinks he is weak in composition. The flatness and looseness of Marin's work aggravates him apparently. He seems not to realize that Marin has succeeded in simplifying and organizing Maine landscapes in a manner similar to that employed by Chinese painters. Jean Charlot says, "The Chinese and Japanese understood better than we do the fact



WHARF CONSTRUCTION by I. Rice Pereira  
Courtesy of the Whitney Museum of American Art  
"Resolving nature into abstract forms"

that physical exertion is incompatible with the highest forms of meditation, and their greatest masterpieces, devoid of color, of jugglery, and of patience, were created in five minutes with a broken reed, or a feather, or the fingers smeared with ink".

When Craven, in a slighting way, dismisses the work of Charles Burchfield as theatrical he shows either a surprising ignorance of the best work done by this artist or an absence of aesthetic feeling. Burchfield has done more to bring about a realization that the American scene has great artistic possibilities than any other contemporary American artist. Thomas Benton's first experiments in the direction of contemporary goings-on may easily have been inspired by Burchfield's paintings of deserted Main Streets, dirty shanties and railroad yards and tracks. Of course Benton's development from the time when he derived much of his material from early American prints to the time when he began to take an alive interest in the contemporary American scene was a natural one. In a similar way Edward Hopper who has a vision somewhat like Winslow Homer's found his direction and bent when he saw the work of Burchfield.



Thomas Craven is always reiterating that art must spring from a direct and vital contact with environment and still we find him enthusing over the work of men like Albert Ryder and Thomas Blake. Both of these men were romanticists and visionaries. Environment meant very little to them; they lived in their dreams. Ryder was more English than American and Blake communed with the Italian gods. This only goes to prove that local subject matter may or may not be important.

Craven's ravings against surrealists as a group shows a closed mind. I cannot but feel that much of the finest art work created has something in it of the texture of dreams. Blake's imaginative illustrations, Ryder's mystic seascapes, Goya's etchings, Redon's lithographs and El Greco's paintings all have a quality of unreality like that of the mysteries that we experience in dream states.

In art, it is the emotional creative spirit, the power and the profundity that count. It's the way the artist adapts himself not only to the things within his own environment but to "the traditional styles and methods". And finally it is the welding of all the aesthetic elements into harmonious inter-relationships.

To sum up—Craven has a splendid courage, a delightful honesty and directness and his outlook is big and far reaching. His imagination is creative, his fund of information large. His occasional faulty judgments, in my opinion, are due to these two things: his violent prejudices and an occasional queer blindness or lack of aesthetic sensitiveness.

His prejudice against abstract quality in art is untenable, because all creative art is more or less abstract. I agree with Craven when he quotes Cezanne to the effect that "a paint-

ing may be a perfect architectural unit and yet be dead and academic", but when he points out that Picasso's work is dead and academic it doesn't make sense. Picasso's work is as filled with inner life and vitality as is abstract negro sculpture.

In this short and sketchy article it is possible to speak of only a few of the cockeyed ideas, and the amazingly penetrating perceptions and truths that make Craven's book in some ways approach that epoch-making book, "Art as Experience". Craven's book has vitality, imagination and raciness. Dr. John Dewey's has power, balance and profundity.

As a prophet Thomas Craven is unreliable; as a surgeon he shows remarkable dexterity, but as an undertaker he is too ambitious.

*It is again early morning. There is a delightful expectancy in the air, while over all hangs a golden light dazzling our eyes. In the middle distance we begin to distinguish what looks like a grave over which stands a tombstone. As we come nearer we see that on the tombstone is chiseled some lettering.*

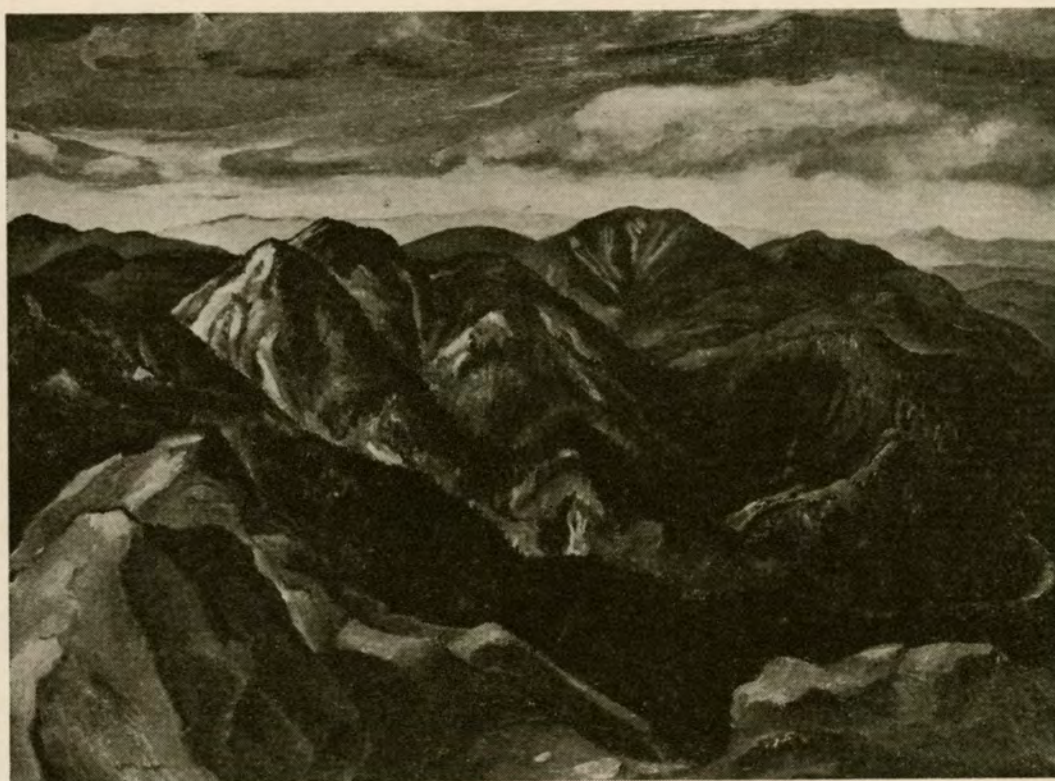
*Can the name be "Modern Art"? No! Can it be Thomas Craven? We hope not!*

*From the left strides a happy youth climbing the hillside with vigor. Who may that be? Oh, of course! It is "Modern Art"!*

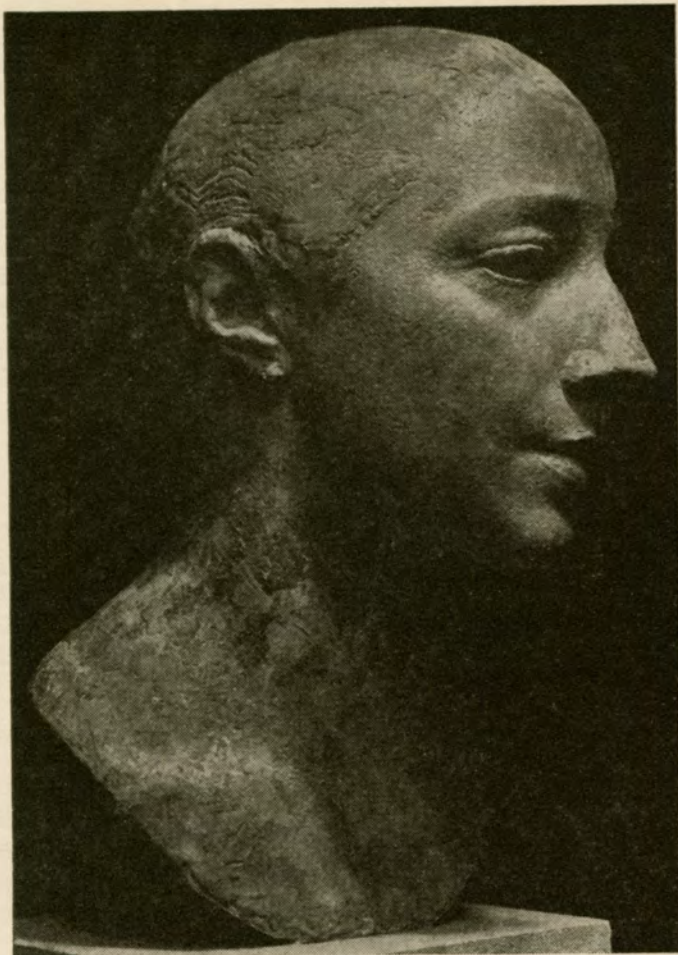
THE GOTHICS, ADIRONDACKS by Lewis C. Daniel

Courtesy of  
Leonard Clayton Gallery

"Weight and power imaginatively expressed"







HEAD by Despiau  
 Courtesy of the Brummer Gallery  
 "Essence of living form"

## MAGAZINES

*The American Magazine of Art* has taken on a new lease of life and is wielding a significant influence now that it is featuring honest art. Mr. F. A. Whiting, Jr., the editor, and his associates, are to be highly complimented on the intelligent work they are doing. Each new issue of the magazine bears witness to the fact that they are seeking to live up to high standards and principles.

*The Art Digest* is doing a splendid job of reporting the art news from all sections of the country from a frank and apparently unbiased viewpoint.

It is gratifying to note that *Prints* is forging ahead in a policy of showing more things all the time that have real merit instead of reproducing prints that have no aesthetic significance. Mere cleverness, tricks of technique or craftsmanship can no longer gain an artist a position in the sun.

The reproductions of Lewis Daniel's work in the last number were refreshing, although they showed specific stages wherein he was seeking to find himself.

ARBOR DAY by Grant Wood  
 Courtesy of the Whitney Museum of  
 American Art  
 "Life seen as decoration"





## Articles for Subsequent Issues

An article by William Zorach on American sculpture will appear in an early number of this magazine.

Alexander Brook is going to tell us what he thinks about critics. This should be very interesting. George Ault has likewise expressed a desire to write on the same subject.

Thomas Donnelly is preparing an article dealing with the artist in relation to the present economic situation. John Stuart Curry is writing an article on the work of a talented and rising artist.

Adolph Glassgold of the Whitney Museum staff will write on a subject to be announced later.

Articles by other prominent artists and critics will appear in each issue of this magazine.

In future issues of this magazine we are planning to feature the work of talented, but not necessarily well-known, artists.



NUDE by Mary E. Hutchinson  
Courtesy of Midtown Galleries  
"A problem in design"

## TO A MODERN ARTIST

This beauty is new, like  
the first spoken word:  
Like music, suddenly open,  
suddenly heard!  
Color has moved me, and line,  
but never before  
Form, till your brush revealed  
its hidden core!

\* \* \*

Now has the three-dimensional  
world become  
Filled with a mightier rhythm  
than the drum  
Sends pulsing through the  
wooded heart of darkness!  
I see, as one awakened  
from a trance  
Form, and its visual  
reverberations,  
In all the depth of their  
significance!

*Flora Louise Pousette-Dart*

## LECTURES

*The Whitney Museum* is sponsoring a series of lectures by prominent men in the field of art. The speakers mentioned in their announcement are:

Philip N. Youtz, director of the Brooklyn Museum; Daniel Catton Rich, associate curator of painting at the Art Institute of Chicago; Edward Alden Jewell, art critic of the *New York Times*; A. Everett Austin, Jr., director of the Wadsworth Atheneum; William Murrell, author of a "History of American Graphic Humor", and C. Adolph Glassgold of the Whitney Museum staff.

*Museum of Modern Art*, radio broadcasts "Art in America" over Station WJZ:

Dec. 15: "Contemporary American World in Painting", Dec. 22: "The Modern Room", Dec. 29: "The Modern House", Jan. 5: "The Modern City", Jan. 12: "Photography in the United States", Jan. 19: "The Motion Picture", Jan. 26: "Review". These programs are a regular Saturday evening feature over WJZ at 8 p. m. They are given in dialog form by Mr. Noa and Mr. Secrest.



# WHAT'S ON THE HORIZON

*A page devoted to the work of*

## CONTEMPORARY ARTS

AN ORGANIZATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF ARTISTS IN ALL FIELDS, INCORPORATED IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK, 1931

41 WEST 54TH STREET :: :: NEW YORK CITY

TELEPHONE COLUMBUS 5-9899

EMILY A. FRANCIS  
President and Exec. Director

BURTON EMMETT  
MRS. R. MORLEY KENNERLEY  
Vice-Presidents

MRS. REGINALD BELKNAP  
Secretary

BEATRICE BARNETT  
Treasurer

EDMUND GALE JEWETT  
Chairman Board of Trustees

MRS. CHARLES E. SALTZMAN  
Chairman Membership Committee

EUGENIE C. GREENLEY  
E. DONN CORNELL  
Chairmen Promotion Committee

CARESSE CROSBY  
Chairman Literary  
Advisory Committee



AUTUMN BOUQUET  
by Jon Corbino

*Selection of Eugene Speicher for presentation at the Reception of the December Painting-of-the-Month Club held at the Roosevelt Hotel December 5th, 1934.*

CONTEMPORARY Arts, a vital, active association, was incorporated as a non-profit-making membership corporation in 1931, to introduce in New York the mature creative artist and to sponsor him throughout the United States. Recognition is the goal of all artists, and the purpose of Contemporary Arts is to gain the attention of the public for the artist in any field who truly merits it;—to say to the public; "Here is a man whose work is able and interesting; consider it!" Free from prejudices and playing no favorites, every three weeks the officers and trustees sponsor some new-comer in a first one-man exhibition and give constantly recurring exhibitions of the work of men previously sponsored. The association also arranges to send group exhibitions of these people to other centers throughout the country. One such "alumni" group will be exhibited in Montclair, N. J. through December.

Contemporary Arts Painting-of-the-Month Club is one of its most novel and interesting activities. Every month fifteen or twenty painters are invited to submit work to a jury. This jury chooses one canvas which is displayed in a prominent hotel where a Reception and Musicales is arranged. Memberships for that month at \$1.00 each are sold to anyone interested. These memberships include admission to the Reception. The whole evening comes to an exciting climax when the guest of honor,—some notable person in one of the Arts—draws one of the numbered membership stubs from the bowl in which they have all been placed and announces who will own the painting. That happy person takes home an excellent painting; the painter gets the dollars next day; and—all the other people go home, having had a good dollar's worth,—with a newly-incited *desire to own*. It is hoped that branches of this Painting of the Month Club will be formed throughout the country and a good crop of buyers and collectors be raised.

The first Painting-of-the-Month Club Reception of the season was held at the Hotel Roosevelt. An excellent program of Elizabethan Madrigals was given for the first time in New York by a quartet of mixed voices conducted by W. Ifor Jones. Martha Graham, as Guest of Honor, presented M. A. Tricca's "Sheepfold, Central Park" to Miss Madeleine Rivers, 419 East 232nd Street. The jury for December, Eugene Speicher, has selected Jon Corbino's "Autumn Bouquet" and the Reception will again be held at the Hotel Roosevelt at 9 p. m. on Wednesday, December 5th. The guest of honor will be Salvador Dali and the program will be announced in the daily papers.

Rehearsing the gallery events of the immediate past, the first one-man exhibition in New York of Earl Cavis Kerkam, of which Contemporary Arts is justly proud, was followed by that of George Lohr of Washington, another fine painter to its credit. Norman Raeben (pastel landscapes), one of a guest series, has also received excellent reviews. On November 26 a group exhibition entitled "T'was the Night Before Christmas" opened in the Main Gallery, and at the same time began the first instalment of the "Christmas Budget" "Exhibition".

Ten water-colors and drawings. All these group exhibitions are open to exhibitors other than those sponsored originally by Contemporary Arts.



Recognizing the fact that many people are unable to get to galleries which are only open during business hours, Contemporary Arts holds receptions at 41 West 54th Street every Monday evening from 8.30 to midnight, thus bringing many people in closer touch with the artist and his work. The gallery is also open on Sunday afternoons from 2.30 to 5.30 p. m. to this same end,—and for the benefit of the suburban business person to whom even these privileges are useless, fine group exhibitions are regularly arranged in the Dubonnet Restaurant at 5 East 45th Street, where five hundred people are served daily.

Recent Guests of Honor at the Monday evening receptions have been Irving Stone, author of the best-seller "Lust for Life" (on the life of Van Gogh),—Boris Brasol, author of "The Mighty Three" (Gogol, Poushkin, Dostoevsky),—Nathaniel Pousette-Dart, editor of "The Art of Today", and Daniel Whitehead Hicky, a Georgia poet, author of "Bright Harbor" and "Thirteen Georgia Sonnets". The schedule for future Mondays is,—December 3rd, Professor W. Ifor Jones and "The Tudor Singers" (from Rutgers University), Dec. 10th, Pendleton Hogan, author of "The Dark Comes Early" and "The Bishop of Havanna" (flying down from Washington for the occasion), December 17, Marian Sims, author of "Morning Star" (from Georgia and No, Carolina). December 31st, opening preview of Martha Simpson's "Members' Invitation" exhibition, (introduced in May 1933).

Contemporary Arts wishes its exhibitors, members, and friends a happy Christmas and a New Year of growth and prosperity.

EMILY A. FRANCIS,  
*President.*



GETTING THE COCKS EXCITED by Pop Hart  
*Courtesy of the Downtown Gallery*  
"Spirited and effective Composition"

## How To Write About An Artist

"Lust for Life" reviewed by CLAYTON SPICER

FEW biographies are built and styled to the rhythm and color of the expressed genius of their subjects. Einstein's personality could not be caught by a relative time and space association. A scientist discovering the insect cause of some obscure tropical disease could not be described in terms of the insect or the fever it produces. But how otherwise should the life of an artist be set down except in a manner closely related to the technique he used in expressing himself?

In writing about Vincent Van Gogh the simplest, most obvious and best approach would be to keep an eye on his staccato and vigorously tortured style and match words with it. This Irving Stone has done in his book "Lust for Life" published by Longsman, Green and Company. Had he used the same method when he introduced Cezanne, Rousseau, Toulouse-Lautrec, Gauguin their speeches would have carried conviction instead of being stilted and empty as they are. In other respects Stone's book is as fresh as paint newly squeezed from the tube.

Inevitably Meier-Graefe is referred to by reviewers. Meier-Graefe's "Vincent Van Gogh" is like a copy of a Van Gogh by Velasquez while Stone's book is like a copy done by a student whose individuality is not yet developed to the point where he cannot successfully transcribe his master's style.

## Harry Wickey Wins Etching Prize

ALL those artists who have been fortunate enough to have studied with Mr. Wickey will be delighted at his having received the first prize in etching at the exhibition of the Society of American Etchers. We quote the following paragraph from the New York Herald Tribune:

"Harry Wickey, of Cornwell Landing, N. Y., won the distinction of having the best print in the exhibition with his dramatic etching, 'Storm Sweeping the Hudson'. This received the Mrs. Henry F. Noyes prize of \$50.00."



# The ART of TODAY

Published by RUSSEL CROFOOT

30 West 15th Street

New York City

NATHANIEL POUSETTE-DART, *Editor*

CLAYTON SPICER, *Managing Editor*

SINGLE COPIES 15c.

SUBSCRIPTION \$1.50 FOR 10 ISSUES

Vol. 6

DECEMBER, 1934

No. 1

## WHERE TO SEE THE ART OF TODAY

A. C. A., 52 West 8th St.—*Group exhibition.*

AN AMERICAN PLACE, 509 Madison Ave.—*Dec.: Oils and water colors by John Marin.*

FRANS BUFFA & SONS, 58 West 57th St.—*Dec.: Paintings by Henry Golden Dearth.*

CONTEMPORARY ARTS, 41 West 54th St.—*Dec.: Christmas Budget exhibition.*

DELPHIC STUDIOS, 724 5th Ave.—*Dec. 3-16: "Farm Life" by Fred Nagler.*

DOWNTOWN GALLERY, 113 West 13th St.—*American Print Makers.*

GRAND CENTRAL ART GALLERIES, 15 Vanderbilt Ave. —  
*Dec. 10-22: Exhibition of Salart Club.*

MARIE HARRIMAN GALLERY, 63 E. 57th St. — *Dec. 7-29:*  
*Paintings by Sir Francis Rose.*

MACBETH GALLERIES, 15 East 57th St.—*Dec. 4-31: Lithographs*  
*by Stow Wengenroth.*

PIERRE MATISSE, 51 East 57th St.—*Dec. 5-22: Paintings by Arbit-*  
*Blatas.*

MILCH GALLERIES, 108 West 57th St.—*Dec.: Paintings by Edward*  
*Bruce.*

NEW SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH, 66 West 12th St.—*To*  
*Jan. 15: Art Instructor's Exhibition.*

FRANK K. M. REHN GALLERY, 683 5th Ave.—*Dec. 10-29:*  
*Paintings by George Biddle and Henry Varnum Poor.*

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, 10 West 8th St.—  
*To Jan. 6: Second Biennial Exhibition.*

### SUNDAY MORNING CLASS

Life Drawing, Painting, Portrait, Composition  
The Aim is to Hasten Students' Progress  
Class meets 10 A. M. to 2 P. M. in completely  
equipped large, light studio. Carefully selected  
model. Tuition: One month, \$10, three  
months, \$25. Your inspection invited. For  
appointment telephone COLUMBUS 5-2077.

FRANK VINCENT DuMOND

200 West 57th St. (cor. 7th Ave.) N. Y.



THE TENT WINDOW by Edy Legrand  
Courtesy of Marie Sterner Gallery  
"Imagination hampered by cleverness"

We Sell

**BLOCKX COLORS**

SCHNEIDER & CO.

123 WEST 68th STREET

TRafalgar 7-8553

**SAM FLAX**

Artists' Materials

38 East 28th Street

New York City

Phone: ASHland 4-2963

MEdallion 3-9048

**A. SELTZER**

Artist and Architects Supplies

1162 6th Avenue

New York

We Deliver

"Permanent Pigments"

Buy Them at

**LEE'S ART SHOP**

209 West 57th Street

Circle 7-0679

New York City

NEXT TO THE ART STUDENTS LEAGUE

"Pre-tested Oil Colors"

Also a full line of Art Materials

Kaspar Tintoretto Oil Colors  
and other Popular Makes.

Mail orders will have our prompt attention

Christmas Group Exhibition

**A.C.A. GALLERY**

52 West 8th Street

NEW YORK, N. Y.



**JOSEPH MAYER CO.**  
*Artists' Materials*  
25 East 14th Street, New York City  
Telephone:  
ALgonquin 4-9871 - 9872

**BOCOUR**  
Hand Ground Artists' Colors  
2 West 15th St. New York  
Finest Pigments—Ground in the Purest Oils  
No Filler or Extender Used.  
GRamercy 7-7552  
Leonard Bogdanoff Irwin Lefcourt

**Grand Central Artists' Materials**  
Incorporated  
55 Vanderbilt Ave., New York  
Near 45th St., One Block E. of Madison Ave.  
*Most Completely Stocked Store in the  
Grand Central District*  
PICTURE FRAMING MURray Hill 2-6320

**JOSEPH TORCH**  
*Wholesale ARTIST MATERIALS Retail*  
145 W. 14th St. New York City  
Bet. 6th and 7th Aves.  
*Orders Shipped Anywhere*

**KONZAL**  
213 WEST 14th ST.  
TELEPHONE: CHELSEA 3-7538  
**FRAMES**

**SCHNEIDER & CO., Inc.**  
*Artists' Materials*  
123 West 68th Street  
Phone TRafalgar 7-8553 New York City

**PICTURE FRAMES in RAW WOOD**  
*Our Specialty*  
Reasonable - Good - Quick Service  
**BRAXTON ART CO.**  
353 EAST 58th STREET  
Near First Avenue Plaza 3-2676

*Gray's Photographer*

**PHOTOGRAPHY of the  
FINE ARTS**

*Prints for Reproduction*  
39 West 67th Street  
Colonial Studio Building  
NEW YORK CITY

Phone: TRafalgar 7-9393



## PRINTS

Edited by WILLIAM SALISBURY

The only magazine of its kind in America.  
Now in its fifth year, and growing steadily in  
circulation and prestige.

Its contributors have included Malcolm C. Sala-  
man, Frank Weitenkampf, John Taylor Arms,  
and many other notables of the art world. Its  
subscribers are the best-known print collectors  
in this country, and many in foreign countries.

Its Advisory Board consists of Henry McBride,  
Elizabeth Luther Cary, Harry T. Peters, Doro-  
thy Grafly, B. F. Morrow and Aline Kistler.

75 Cents A Copy—\$3 A Year.

600 Carnegie Hall New York City

*Sample Copy 50 Cents*

## You Will Want Every Number

*Subscribe to*

**The ART of TODAY**  
30 WEST 15th STREET  
NEW YORK CITY  
Tompkins Square 6-5230

Please enter my subscription to  
**The ART of TODAY**

☐ I enclose \$1.50 for 10 issues.

☐ I enclose \$2.00 for 14 issues.

Name .....

City .....

Street .....

State .....

NO RECEIPT SENT UNLESS REQUESTED



***“We want it quickly and  
we want it done well!”***

Industry is again quickening. There is a decided upswing along a far-flung front of merchandising.

Printing is playing an important part in bringing things back to normal prosperity.

We are especially equipped to do things both quickly and well and because of our long experience in the printing

field we are fitted to give valuable help in handling all kinds of printing problems.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CATALOGS, FOLDERS

COLOR PRINTING

HOUSE ORGANS

MAGAZINE PRINTING

*Call on us also to take care of your  
designing problems.*

**IRONS SNELL PRINTING COMPANY, Inc.**

***Printers***

***Designers***

**30-32 WEST FIFTEENTH STREET**

**NEW YORK CITY**

**TELEPHONE TOMPKINS SQUARE 6-5230-31**

**MAN WITH DONKEY**

*Courtesy of the College Art Association*

This picture by a Mexican child was one of the Exhibition of Children's Painting at Rockefeller Center. The exhibition is to be circulated throughout the United States.

