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ings emerge as sculptural existences whether the conception be dramatic or lyric.

The external anatomy of the human figure which has been the special province of sculptors in the past has inherent limitations of expression which sculptors have willingly accepted. Although a mass audience will develop only slowly for the newer conceptions of this medium in the twentieth century, I have faith in the soundness guiding the contemporary approach to sculpture. It has a new vantage point, a new perspective of the same world of man. This is true whether the sculpture comes up with a lyric purity of forms telling man's story of a serene peace or whether it comes up with a dramatic surge of power. I believe people will come to understand the fresher adventures in this art as well as continue to appreciate the significant works of the human figure such as in the Archaic Greek, the Romanesque, and the African. These two broad approaches to sculpture are not in conflict, but genuinely compatible views of the world. I dare to believe that the newer sculptural realms offer a more varied field for achievement, for the sculptor is beginning to catch up with the painter who has always enjoyed a wider scope of imagery and expression.

THE FUNCTION OF THE DEALER

By Edith G. Halpert

WHAT is the function of the dealer? In a mercantile sense, a dealer is someone in trade who exchanges merchandise at a profit to himself. If alert, he studies the market, buys cheap and sells high, with no sentimental consideration for the sources or public involved, and no consciousness of social responsibilities. This pattern is consistent in all businesses, except art.

Is art a business? If you are speaking of the art department of Gimble's, it is. If you deal in old masters or highly publicized Europeans, it is. If you traffic in fakes, or follow the trends of public awareness, or speculate stock market-wise, art is a business. But if you are a dealer in contemporary American art, I wonder. We do not buy cheap and sell high. We do not buy at all, and find it extremely hard to sell. We have the name but not the gain. And what a name! Thomas Craven called us racketeers. For years we were accused of exploiting the artists, fleecing the buyer, confusing the public. Only in recent years have the artists and public learned to make distinctions, to separate the good from the bad. For in art, unlike the mercantile field, there is no fixed pattern.

Stieglitz believed in a few artists, devoting his long life to this personal philosophy and paying the costs. Sam Kootz followed the European policy of paying each artist a set income in return for a specified number of pictures. In addition, he expended great energy in successfully promoting his artists. But that gallery closed this summer (1948).¹

This practice of working on a contract basis with the artist is an accepted one in Paris. During the '20's, 65,000 artists from all parts of the world were working in Paris. Of these, possibly thirty or more received annual stipends of from \$600 to \$800 per year for a given number of pictures, in varying sizes and dictated subjects. The few big names were in much higher brackets, and there were those who even made their own terms with the dealer. This system of contracts appears ideal in principle and is good for the dealer, but on a large scale is neither advantageous financially nor helpful to an artist's integrity. Outright purchases are equally unbeneficial, except to the dealer. Under this arrangement, the artist creates a body of self-competitive goods. When the dealer stops buying, the artist's income practically ceases because the dealer must make good his investment through distributing first the stock he has paid for.

The method prevalent in the established galleries of American art is the consignment-on-commission arrangement. In such galleries the name "dealer" is a misnomer. We are consignees, agents, entrepreneurs. "Entrepreneur" is defined as "one who organizes an enterprise and assumes the risk." What risk? In dollars and cents it comprises investment in rent, salaries, telephone, light, advertising, promotion, catalogue printing, postage, etc. The entrepreneur risks his investment on his personal taste or opinion in the wild hope that his choice will be justified in time. He is vain enough to feel that he picks only winners, that his horse will pay off royally in the future. We still believe we pick winners, even though they do not pay off royally. So we humbly take in washing—some of us French art, some advertising commissions, some folk art—moneymakers to pay the overhead for the living American artist.

In spite of all this, some of us are starry-eyed individuals who go on fervently believing in American art, artists and public, determined that art can and must be a business.

Speaking for myself, when I add an artist to the gallery roster, I assume a moral obligation for his general well being. In my 23 years of experience, I find that it takes an average of five years for a newly discovered artist to pay

¹ The Kootz Gallery reopened September, 1949. (Ed.)

his way in the gallery. During the first five years, capital, patience and confidence are necessary. There is no steady reliable market, even after success. There are whimsies in fashion, changes in taste, evolving economic conditions. There are strong competitive markets—French art, Mexican, and very soon, Italian. The artist must take all these factors into consideration and believe that the gallery's interests are the same as his own. He must possess as complete confidence in the dealer's integrity as the dealer has in him.

If we agree that the entrepreneur-artist relationship is in fact a partnership, what outside forces do we have to contend with? One is the basic fact that today art is outside the current of American life. A painting is not only considered a rare luxury, but is a rarely desired luxury. No one can say that a radio, phonograph or washing machine are necessities. But the over-accent on material things and the false values engendered through modern advertising establish a crying need for all these objects, and they are bought way outside of budgets.

For a recent exhibition, the Downtown Gallery made a survey and estimated that in this country there are 8,060,000 homes that can afford original works of art, from a drawing to a comprehensive collection. Five and a half million earn \$3,000 to \$5,000 annually. They can afford to buy a drawing each year for \$25 to \$100. Almost 2,000,000 earn between \$5,000 and \$10,000. They can buy watercolors, oils, etc. up to \$500. There are 655,000 with incomes above \$10,000. They can support a large number of artists. I doubt, however, that there are more than 2,000 in this vast, rich and hep nation who are repeaters—who even in a small sense, collect art.

This may sound very hopeless, but the past two decades have brought enormous advances. In contrast to the days of Sam Halpert (the early days of John Sloan, Max Weber, John Marin, and others) with only five galleries serving creative American art, we have today 70 galleries in New York alone, presenting the work of living American artists, and almost half of them make it their specialty.

There are galleries in Boston, Philadelphia, Washington, St. Louis, Cleveland, Chicago, Los Angeles and elsewhere. According to Emily Genauer, in her book *The Best in Art*, there were 700 one-man shows in this city last season. One hundred museums held exhibitions of American art. In 1946 attendance in American museums reached a record of 50,000,000. In addition, universities have established permanent galleries; industry has entered the market with intelligent purchases, prizes, advertising commissions and rentals. Magazines use artists for their illustrations and pay reproduction rights.

And what is most important is the fact that the young generation has

developed a heightened awareness and purchases art. I see a coming integration of art in American living. I also see that progress is slow, and requires both push and patience. I believe in aggressiveness. Artists must face existing facts and pick their enemies intelligently.

The facts are that in the USA, nine billion dollars are spent annually on liquor; three billion on education; that school teachers are among the lowest salaried workers; that none of the cultural pursuits pay off in currency. The facts are that those employed in the art world are all in the low income brackets—except Budworth's packers who belong to a labor union. Why pick on the dealer, on the critic, on the museum director? At its worst the museum does assist the artist in becoming better known and appreciated. At its worst we have an important museum director's remark: "The problem is confused by the latter day assumption that the public should take what the artist paints and like it, instead of proceeding on the older theory that the artist should seek what the public wants, and paint that well."

FORM AND CONTENT

By Jack Levine

AS an artist I am in a situation right now where certain "significant" modern forms do not signify very much to me. They should, I suppose, and maybe they will at some future time, but I do not particularly have that drive at present. For a reason.

Much has been said today about the development of forms in modern painting. When you look at a Cézanne like the "Card Players," it's a wonderful painting of card players. His self-portraits have an objectivity in their approach to his own features which remind one of nothing less than the great self-portraits of Rembrandt. Can it be that in analysing Cézanne we have tossed away the fruit and nourished ourselves on the husks?

I think Picasso would be known if only for the magnificent readings he has given us of a wounded horse or a bull. Even though a work based entirely on form may seem to acquire a content of its own, I like to approach art as an integrated thing, pretty much a matter of form *and* content. I think that in the long run either becomes repetitious and meaningless without the other.

There are certain social pressures, certain political stresses which wring some response from me. I was in the army a long time and I came out with a long pent-up bitterness about army caste. This bitterness had to come out in