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Arts in Society

Search for Identity and Purpose

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Arts in Society

ARTS IN SOCIETY is dedicated to the augmenting of the arts in society and to the advancement of education in the arts. These publications are to be of interest, therefore, both to professionals and the lay public. ARTS IN SOCIETY exists to discuss, interpret, and illustrate the various functions of the arts in contemporary civilization. Its purpose is to present the insights of experience, research and theory in support of educational and organizational efforts to enhance the position of the arts in America. In general, four areas are dealt with: the teaching and learning of the arts; aesthetics and philosophy; social analysis; and significant examples of creative expression in a media which may be served by the printing process.

The editors will welcome articles on any subjects which fall within the areas of interest of this journal. Readers both in the United States and abroad are invited to submit manuscripts for consideration for publication. Articles may be written in the contributor's native language. An honorarium will be paid for papers accepted for publication.

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Contents

Man—Certainly

by Edward Kamarck

Man — certainly. We are perfectly in agreement — one day Man will appear. There is still needed a little patience, a little perseverence, he cannot be more than 10,000 years away in the future. At the moment there are only a few traces, a few presentiments, a few dreams. At this instant, the being who exists is only a pioneer of Man himself.

The Russian poet, Sacha Tsipotchkine

The major problem facing art today is its seeming triviality in the face of the events around us. Art is curiously detached from the central concerns of the society, and as an activity seems almost an impertinent irrelevancy in the growing chaos and crisis around us. While this estrangement of art from life is centuries old in its antecedents, the galvanic social change of the past century has deepened the cleavage to where the continued survival of art as a vital activity has been put in jeopardy. Like man himself art is now urgently pressed to transcend past and present norms.

The search for the identity and purpose of art amid the social and political revolution of our age is what this journal is all about. Our hope is that in cumulative impact we will usefully suggest the dimensions and tenor of the challenge — the one facing all artists, art leaders, and educators who wish to assert a cogent social function for art in this perilous time.

Unlike what the title might suggest, this issue does not pretend to present comprehensive guidelines for a broad new program of cultural enrichment. Our purpose is considerably less ambitious. It is rather to denote some of the main currents of thought and creative aspiration which impel the search for a new orientation of art and which may well furnish the basis of a new rationale.

The time is not yet ripe for large answers — indeed, it may never be. The immediate task is to learn to pose the right questions. We believe that this issue of *Arts in Society* may be helpful in that effort, if only in suggesting the scope and complexity of the necessary dialectic.

Stefan Morawski's lead piece, "Three Functions of Art" is vastly insightful for our purposes. Morawski, Poland's outstanding aesthetician and philosopher of art, displays a breadth of view with respect to the nexus of art and society, and one informed with humanitarian concern. Like Marcuse his aesthetic vision is not delimited by the Cold War.

Weller Embler's "Flight" casts light on the tie between the changing arts of our century and those changing concepts of perception and reality, which have come from science, technology, and philosophy.

Lawrence Friedman's "Art versus Violence" reminds us that art and psychoanalysis are natural allies. Norman Brown has succinctly made the point in his book, *Life Against Death:*

. . . anyone who loves art knows that psychoanalysis has no monopoly on the power to heal. What the times call for is an end to the war between psychoanalysis and art — a war kept alive by the sterile "debunking" approach of psychoanalysis to art — and the beginning of cooperation between the two in the work of therapy and in the task of making the unconscious conscious. A little more Eros and less strife.

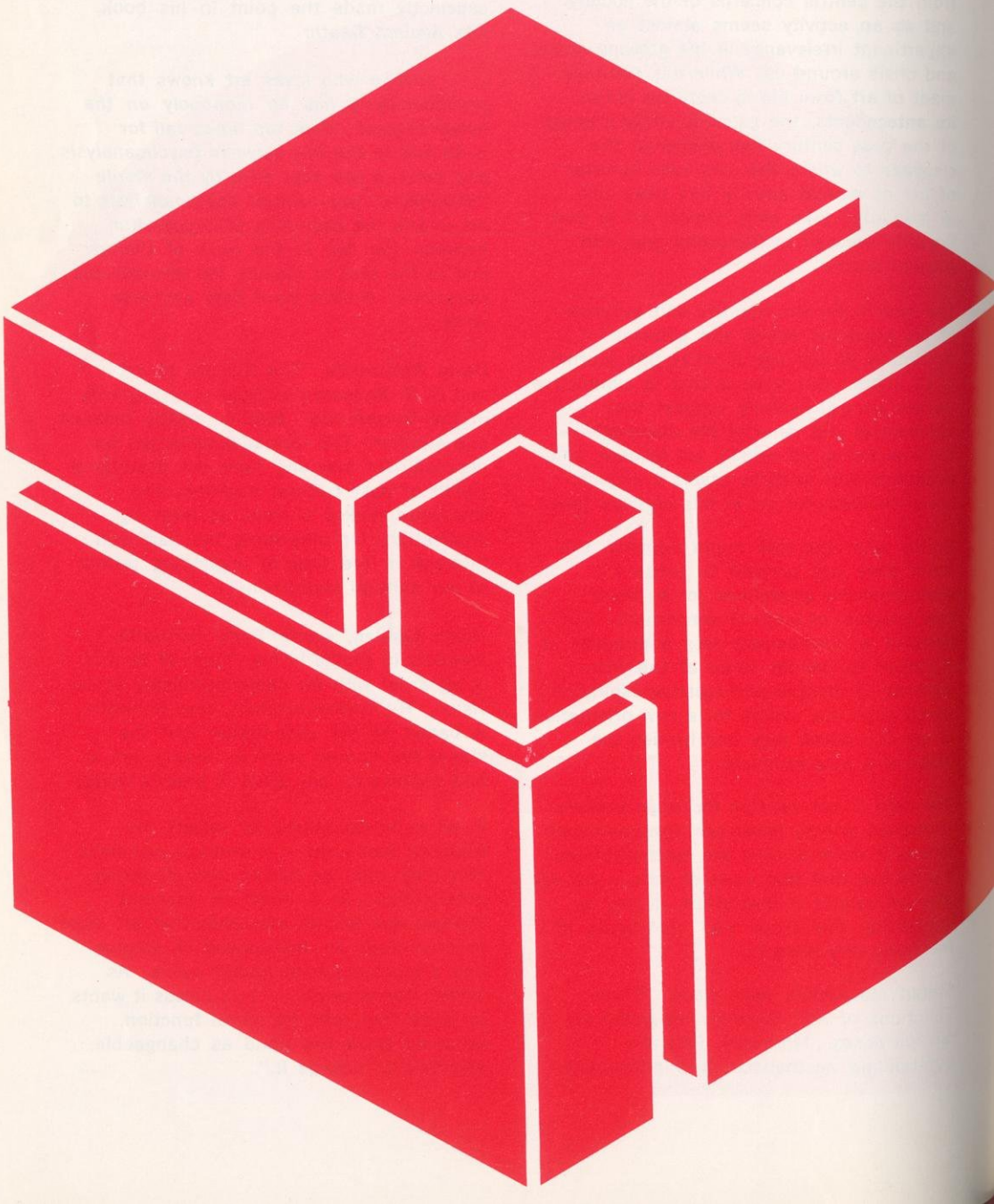
David Ahlstrom's "The Suicide of Art" and G. S. Rousseau's "Quality or E-Quality in the Universities" tend to neatly balance one another. The former polemicizes the necessity for breaking from the dead-hand clutch of past cultural tradition, and the latter makes a case, at least by implication, for preserving the hard-won heritage in the face of impending reform of our cultural institutions.

Jacob Landau, whom Barry Schwartz presents in profile in his "Tiger of Wrath," is an artist with an uncompromising social vision. His communication, says Schwartz, is based on the assumption that the stakes are human survival. Surely, not a bad premise for any artist in today's world.

If art is to be valued by society, in whatever new roles, it is perhaps axiomatic that they must be tied to new life-giving possibilities. In a world of constant change, one further presumes that art must become both an instrument of change and a touchstone for human value. As Ernest Fischer wrote: " . . . unless it wants to break faith with its social function, art must show the world as changeable. And help to change it."

Three Functions of Art

by Stefan Morawski



Introduction

A book-length treatment could easily be dedicated to the functional aspect of art. Suppose that we considered the terminal value of art, and the fundamental aesthetic problem, to be this one of function. Obviously then we would have to consider all other aspects to be derivative from it. If, however, the means-ends relationship leads finally to another value, the function of art must be among the major concerns. For neither artistic structure nor art's genesis can be adequately discussed without a thorough treatment of the question of function. Nonetheless, because any detailed discussion of the uses of art must take a conscientious student into the treacherous quicksands and reaches of the vast realm of anthropology, one has to make decisions. A choice must be effected as to one's preliminary and predominant approach. Such a choice is increasingly seen as necessary, the more we are aware of the undelimited integration of art and life. Nor can we hope to impose order on this state of affairs through clearly isolating artistic from non-artistic functions. For as we shall see, only the stalwart of aestheticism could steel himself to reject peremptorily any non-aesthetic use of art. Yet another obstacle to suitably focusing-in the topic of our essay consists of the numerous competitive standpoints for framing art's function. And each perspective makes important claims. The social claim promises no less than the psychological. The educator has a case every bit as legitimate as the philosopher; etc.

I must assure my readers that I know the Deweyan conception, and what is more I think very highly of it. The uses of art should undoubtedly be considered in light of the aesthetic experience of both the creator and the audience. Likewise the basic element in art evaluation should be the process of intensifying and clarifying our everyday experience. Nonetheless, to frame one's approach directly on this premise appears to stress psychology at the questionable cost of sidestepping artistic structure. Yet I am not at all hostile to the Deweyan viewpoint, and, indeed, when I take up the question of the end of alienation (i.e. disalienation) I shall come to a similar conclusion. But my topographic charts lead me by another way.

My philosophy of art is operative from the outset — in defining the three functions of art which I shall deal with in the essay. One might think it the simplest course to assume that one function embraces all of art; the *informative* one. Certainly no art can act upon its appreciators without informing them, at least, that the arrangement of the words, sounds, colors, etc., is thus and thus. All the arts, the applied and the fine, the representational and the non-objective, the esoteric and the diverting, as well as other artistic categories I've passed over, must all initially, as the prerequisite of functioning, be communicative. In this sense the fundamental artistic function is semiological. Artworks are signs and the distinctions to be made among the signs define their functional variations. I do not know of any argument convincing enough to dislodge the semiological approach. But its universal scope does not assure, to my mind, a further fruitfulness. I especially question how well it illuminates the problem of the *artistic* sign. On this matter of conveying messages semiology is very helpful in explaining what art has in common with other realms of culture; but it runs into trouble on the core matters of aesthetic concern. A moment ago, I declared my non-acceptance of aestheticism. I must now add my disagreement with any doctrine seeking to erase totally the demarcations of art and non-art.

The aesthetic experience — and here we refer once more to Dewey, expanding on some of his conclusions and slightly modifying others — preserves our familiarity with the world but is at the same time imprinted with strangeness. Although it does not obliterate our psychic habits it works against their ingrainment. It is contemplative and yet opposed to inertia, to that mode of unapprehending rote response which deadens us to the rhythm of life, to persons and things as they authentically are. The aesthetic response would be impossible if it were not linked to our entrenched schema of familiar perceptions. However its effect is to freshen,

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*Written in 1963, this essay was reviewed and lightly corrected recently by Dr. Morawski. The introduction was written especially for this first appearance of the essay in English.

Lee Baxandall, translator

to vivify our encounters with the world. In a word, the aesthetic experience is one of tension, it is *concordia discors*. Why? Because art creates transgressions against our life attitudes; because its means cause us to react in a particular way to that which science and philosophy, praxiology and engineering, argue or make manifest by their own specific means.

Accordingly, I am going to distinguish three principal functions of art. One is fundamentally aesthetic, and the remaining two perhaps by rights being termed para-aesthetic. Such ranking is due to the fact that the peculiar idiom of art is alone in evoking the intensity and extent of audience response. Two further functions which are not taken up in the following essay, cannot be ignored. We might describe these as *framing* functions. They are pivoted at the frontiers of art and non-art where they present two farthest extensions. One is related to all art that verges on science or philosophy. Surrealism's place is here, i.e. Breton's renowned remark that art provides the window into the world. The other framing function pertains to arts which organize our ordinary, practical space and time, the paradigm here being architecture or industrial design. The framing functions, indisputably, are very much in the foreground of recent artistic trends. Striking examples are evident in op and pop art, and in the strategies to foresake the fixed artistic structure in favor of the playful character of creative, or responsive, processes. Nor am I biassed against the happening and its progeny. This trend should be explored, not just because it is thriving now, but because it represents an important tendency in contemporary art and civilization dating at least from the time of Dada. Nevertheless, the predominant activity of art has remained **between** the framing functions. I find it of significance that this distribution has remained roughly the same up to today; although it is also clear that with the passage of time, art's basic traits and the responses they evoke have altered, and their context has shifted.

No doubt others will want to propose some other choice of fundamental functions. I wish to state in advance my willing tolerance. I want only to emphasize my earlier reservation: that no debate on this issue makes sense if it does not draw upon the total resources for aesthetic thought, that is to say, if it does not relate to philosophical bases of art criticism.

Three Functions of Art

For me the three chief functions of art have their counterparts or illustrations in three of humankind's myths — in the mythos, that is to say, centering on Orpheus, on Prometheus and on Philoktetes.

The first, in a sensuous embodiment, expresses the restorative, the organically living power of music and poetry. Orpheus makes whole man's feeling, imbuing him with an inner balance and likewise a harmony with the surrounding world.

The second mythos confronts us with the anguished, and yet quickening, arousal of a dormant conscience. Prometheus takes up and typifies the struggle for the destiny of mankind, and although the venture does fare tragically, Prometheus persists in striving against the world and against himself — torn asunder then, yet ever seeking to better his lot in the world.

And, last, the third mythos makes quite palpable the recognition that life is only supportable in the presence of art, and, moreover, that art can play a significant social role. In art's absence man is bereft of fulfillment and stripped of skills and devices necessary for his victories.

This we can discern as the truth of the tale of a Greek seer, Philoktetes, who has received from Heracles a bow which unerringly finds its target, a bow which will guarantee victory to the Greeks at Troy. On the voyage to Troy, however, Philoktetes is bitten by a serpent. As the stench of his wound proves unbearable to his companions he is put ashore on the isle of Lemnos. Ten years Philoktetes lives on the island in complete isolation. The battle for Troy lasts as long, without a clear-cut result. At last the Greeks are put in mind of the invincible bow. After Odysseus, who represents practical reason (here, coarse political calculation), has given his consent to the journey, they resolve to hasten to Lemnos. Odysseus stipulates that they bring only the bow; there is no need for Philoktetes. Neoptolemus, the young son of Achilles, nonetheless convinces his fellow seafarers that Philoktetes should be retrieved and brought aboard. The wound then is healed, Philoktetes vanquishes Paris, and thanks

to his bow the Greeks carry the fray.

Orpheus, Prometheus, and Philoktetes. Not only can the three themes stand as emblematic of functions of art. Each of the three reminds us of constructive effects of art. But if, on the other hand, we turn the emblems upside down, or inside out, we shall be put in mind of the negative results which can ensue in the sphere of art.

Thus to invert the Orpheus theme is to settle down in complacency with the aesthetically false. It is to confirm one in a debased or undeveloped aesthetic taste. All jerrybuilts which are advanced as genuine art, if accepted as such, must prove damaging. Ignorance of what is artistically good and base has contributed to aesthetic illiteracy to the present day. One need only mention the history of the reception of so-called modern art. The contemporary artist is ill understood by many, because his modes of expression are quite simply too difficult — the public having been made comfortable with some stereotypes, which, once extrapolated from art, are repetitiously advanced as the universally-valid models toward which all art should aspire. Gewgaws come into this category. So too does the slavishly academic art which influences the reception accorded to avant-garde art. Impressionism, reworking the taste of its time, faced for a while the real threat of a lockout. Cubism, Fauvism, and Surrealism were fought back by the eternally vigilant "academicians," and also by Impressionism's newly-spawned slavish epigones. Hence, advocates of supplanted artistic modes have two means of confounding the Orpheus theme. They profusely beget epigonal works which are widely proclaimed to be of very high standing; and they also stubbornly refuse, generally with every sort of barbed taunt, recognition to works which embody the new values. However, to describe this negative influence is not to say that the older artistic trends exert no other influence. Their finest works will remain salubrious in the best meaning of the word. Everywhere and always, the meretricious compromises the quality of life.

The inversion of the Prometheus theme, logically enough, leads to the dulling of conscience. This can occur when reality is looked on as supposedly free of conflicts and contradictions. The extreme case is the idyll. Such inversions appear not only in capitalist conditions, where in some literary works the illusion was and is supposed to be nourished that this social order functions splendidly and incarnates the humanist values. In socialist circumstances too the ideal of a conflictless society, coupled with the proposition that what should not be therefore cannot be, led to a misappropriation of this function of art.

Yet another possibility of the misappropriation of this theme is what we can call the gamut of amoralism. In other words, works which encourage a brutalism that lunges to seize its goal at however high a price. Examples: the crime novels and the comics of capitalist countries and the United States especially.

A different alternative: the inverted Prometheus theme may supererogate, that is, find its energies displaced to, the Orpheus theme. What this indicates is that socio-historical conditions are so hostile to the ordinary functioning of the arts that artists resolve their problems only by resorting to inappropriate aesthetic values. In the time of Gautier and of Baudelaire, the defense of Beauty in its purity was still feasible as a mode of expressing protest against the capitalist social order. It was somehow complementary to the way Balzac and Flaubert, from another side, unmasked the rhetoric about the free development of personality. At the time there were few gifted thinkers who had discerned, as had Marx and Engels, the operative laws of the new social system and had located perspectives (including e.g. those for artists) in effect necessitated by social relations. But the Paris Commune made plain that the religion of beauty "in and of itself" was bankrupt with its devotion to eternal values outside of society. The new social confrontation meant that such an attitude had to entail flight from artistic responsibility.

It may well happen that the artist is not able to discern the main historical contradictions of his time — but he cannot afford to ignore those of which he may be conscious, if he is to draw as fully as he can upon the functions of his art. From this perspective, Plekhanov was able to justify Pushkin but not Merezhkovsky; he sought to explicate the complex position of the 1850s aesthetes but he did not exonerate the Parnassians.

Rimbaud, Mallarmé, Wilde and their followers, yielding exclusively to the Orphic theme, were in disaccord with the conscience of their age. Inasmuch as even the best artists at this juncture (e.g. Debussy, Leonid Andreyev, Gordon Craig) preferred the elemental aesthetic values — conveying, to be sure, a symbolic indictment — over the ethical-social values, as their way to rebel against the capitalist reality, we should sum up the contradiction of Orphic and Promethean themes in such cases as follows. Inversion leads to displacement of the Promethean theme into the Orphic, and accordingly the role of the former dwindles to a vanishing point.

This difficulty should attract our thoughtful concern; perhaps, now more than ever. The threat of total war, the toppling of the gods, the aggressions in the name of absolutes — in a word, all the phenomena that have perplexed the artistic community — encourage a further flight to ivory towers. But it is true that we can also see, particularly in the socialist countries, a steadily greater participation in the life of society and a heightened response by artists to these problems of the present. In the capitalist lands and the USA especially, the artists sense their isolation ever more starkly.

A noteworthy instance of a resort to the Orphic attitude is the theory and the practice of the so-called *nouveau roman*. Not at all depicting how life might go on were man to perceive his genuine chances, it provides rather a registering of fortuitous structures which add up to a meaningless whole. The aleatoric movement in music is analogous; in the plastic arts, action painting. Although here, too, is entailed a protest of art against the modern phenomenon of reification, nevertheless the Promethean dimension has been reduced almost to naught. What is projected is tragic consciousness of a devaluated existence.

The inversion of the Promethean theme may be compounded by actual aesthetic deformation. Just so, the Orpheus theme may suffer impoverishment of the qualities that make art artistic, where it is perverted into a self-congratulatory aestheticism. One case of deformation of the Promethean theme is moralism — the full subordination of art to criteria of giving youth the right experiences. Tolstoy was a proponent of this tendency in *What is Art?* (1898), in which he questioned the value of Shakespeare's and Beethoven's works as well as his own earlier writings, in the name of a true Christianity. Moralism overlooks the fact that art is sustained by its own peculiar values — much as aestheticism tries to get away from the fact that art does comprise manifold categories of value. Hence the well-publicized quarrel in 1878 between the moralist Ruskin and Whistler the aesthete was entirely insubstantial since each was one-sided in his viewpoint.

Another sub-order of the Promethean theme's deformation is didacticism. Art quickens the conscience with truth; but it does not communicate this truth in the form of a treatise or a lecture. When we meet such interpolations in literature, as in *The Emancipated* by Boleslaw Prus or in Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, we accord them an extra-aesthetic function, considering them appendages of the novel's genuine weave. We react similarly to the allegorical epigraphs on the paintings of the Middle Ages or the Baroque Age. Didacticism here appears in the form of a commentary on the content of the picture. It can also happen that the artist projects a teaching viewpoint within the artwork — as for example when he judges a situation positive or negative, or he scorns or argues on behalf of a character. In children's fables the chief figure is frequently decked out in the noble traits so as to reinforce certain ethical precepts. In a letter of 1885 to Minna Kautsky, Engels argued against handling art in this way. But one could find many instances of it. Just to go back in literary history — among the writings of George Sand as she sought to pass along the influence of Fourier. Or Polish authors influenced by Swietochowski, that major ideological exponent of the early phase of Positivism.

As for the Philoktetes theme: its inversion can present us with the Narcissian attitude; which we know to be separately represented in Greek mythology.

Now, it might be argued that Freud and his school asserted the necessary existence

Mlle Pogany (1931)
by Constantine Brancusi
Courtesy: The Philadelphia Museum of Art, The Louise and Walter Arensberg Collection; photograph by A. J. Wyatt.

of artistic narcissism. However, they did not insist that the artist must be condemned to a flight from reality. They state no more than this: The artist becomes absorbed within himself. The *cathexis* (or concentration of emotional energy) is transforming. His entire psychic structure having become his libido-object, there may occur in this context a shift of attention from the Other to the Ego, from the original inspiration of the work to a focus upon form, which is objectivized expression communicating determinate symbols to an audience.

The inversion of the Philoktetes theme may lead also to nihilism, the conception that the world is on the way to catastrophe and there is no worthwhile act for a man to undertake. This point of view was widespread among the turn of the century decadents. Hence it may readily be seen that under some historical conditions, inversion of the Philoktetes theme entails its displacement into an Orphic theme. On the other hand the inversion of the Promethean theme can take on a Philokteteian aspect.

Admittedly some persons committed to the struggle for a new society, to proletarian revolution, will not be satisfied with mere criticism of the old system, no matter how incisive. They call for a wholly activist artistic attitude and look on the works of Kafka, Camus, Faulkner or T. S. Eliot as taking virtually an escapist position. A complex problem. The above-mentioned authors, and numerous others (e.g. Ionesco), do carry out one of art's basic functions. They convey to the sensitive and attentive reader that the old world is anti-humanistic. To ask more than this of them would be to force a view of reality on them which is not theirs. But suppose one presented arguments based on historical facts so self-evident in their implications that they should in no wise prove elusive to men as intelligent and subtle as are artists? This too would largely be pointless. For reality is manysided, its contradictions closely impinging on one another, and, moreover, the artist is not always optimally oriented. Such considerations will affect him as his origins and education, his tastes, current ideological controversies, the type of Communist he meets and the circumstances of the encounters, etc. Finally, the work of such artists does in fact constitute a call to do battle. The ways in which it does so are many, they range from Kafka, and Camus, to Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, to the extreme measure of commitment lately reached by Sartre. Hence the inversion of the Philoktetes theme will result, most pertinently, in one's withdrawal from any criticism of reality. Meanwhile, an artist's refraining from an activist attitude should be regarded as escapism only in a time of dramatically heightened struggle. Just such situations have often occurred for Polish literature owing to the nation's history. For those who know our poetry in the 1840s, the polemics between G. Ehrenberg and E. Wasilewski probe deeply into this question of escapism. French literature saw comparable times between the revolutions of 1830 and 1848, during which period nearly all poets and writers were socially and politically engaged — even those like Baudelaire who would go over later to *l'art pour l'art*. Those who disregarded the life of their time and an historiosophical perspective met disapproval.

But like the other themes the Philoktetes theme is subject not only to inversion but also to deformation which grossly falsifies its significance. One deformation is the 'agitprop' — agitation-and-propaganda — idea of the function of art. It treats art not as a specially constituted sphere of psychic values, but as a means (affording a sensory-concrete form) to an end. An ideological persuader. Perhaps the reader is familiar with the polemical remarks by Heine — he was at that time a partisan of socialism — against the proletarian poets, particularly Weerth. One must admit he was not unfair in chiding them if we look closely at the tendentious verse of that time, which was laden with a propaganda that can put art to death. Time and again from Freiligrath to the present the poetry siding with the cause of the proletariat has skirted or fallen into this deformation. Not many years ago an 'agitprop' function of art was officially sanctioned as equivalent to art's great civilizing function — with predictably disastrous results. For art does not tidily dovetail with immediate priorities, which can shift from one year to the next, from

The Prophet
by Emil Nolde
Courtesy: National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Rosenwald Collection.

month to month, even week to week. Art has always sought to avoid this kind of urgency. When it has acquiesced to pressure, its results have been nil or quickly moribund. The great Baroque artist, Bernini, created monumental sculptures assigned to his workshop by the Church. But he instilled these works with enduring values, precisely because he overstepped the official Jesuit ideology and art theory. When J.-L. David responded to the needs of the French Revolution, and when Dickens later satisfied the pressing requirements of liberal bourgeois journalism, they too did not reduce their interests and level their aesthetic taste to those of the institutional employer. One may hear it said that Mayakovsky and Brecht prove that an artistically excellent propaganda art is possible. Yet neither one produced propaganda *tout court*. Employing personal and inimitable idioms, they each produced images of individually-experienced problems of a modern man — a man for whom the proletarian revolution and socialism provide the center of life, the ABC to which all else relates. They wrote a poetry at once affirmative and difficult. It summons to battle, to the struggle of today; and nonetheless the Promethean element is present.

The interrelationships of the different strands of art have been analyzed in the Marxist literature in a great number of ways, and from very different points of view. Needless to say, the major problems of art are unsolvable without reference to the question of *artistic alienation*, which was raised by Marx himself.

In his description of alienation Marx was indebted to Hegel and Feuerbach, but he diagnosed the phenomenon differently. In the 1844 *Manuscripts* he showed that the economic foundation of the capitalist social order is the main cause of alienation. Alienation for Marx had three aspects: the alienation of the product, the alienation of the production process, and the alienation of the human species-essence. Its effects are indelible not only on the human condition of the oppressed, but also of the oppressor. The results are perpetrated in many spheres of alienation, e.g. ideological and political (by whom and how is power wielded?). The artist is also profoundly affected in his domain. Marx pointed out how money — the chief nexus of alienation — in capitalist times becomes the measure of value in artistic production, the work being severed from the artist to become a commodity. Moreover the artistic activity is submitted to scrutiny if not final control; he who can pay art's price will wield an economic, political, and ideological power to elicit and encourage certain subjects and treatments.

Given the facts of alienation a great many artists will perform a negative function. We grant that the best works in any epoch have combatted conformity of every kind. Thus they combat alienation, too. But this does not mean — in Marx's view — that the artist can actually attain to expressing the full human individuality.

In spite of his enthusiasm for the 19th Century novel and particularly for Balzac, Marx returned again and again to Shakespeare and the ancient paradigms. As had also Hegel, Marx saw in the art of antiquity a humankind still harmoniously linked to nature, not yet so alienated that the social bonds are dissolved. In his remarks on the emergence (genesis) of the aesthetic sense Marx wrote especially of the reconciliation of history and culture with nature — in other words, the harnassing of nature to realize a common social product in such a way as also to realize humankind's natural dispositions. Such a man, superseding and achieving himself in his labor, is *homo aestheticus*. Art mobilizes all his psychic powers, liberates his uncharted possibilities, and adapts him to the environment in the dynamic process organized on the creating of objects.

The whole late history of culture entails the removal of art from life, the crystallization of a type of artistic creativity which has turned away from production *sensu stricto*, the reification of the so-called aesthetic attitude (which is said to be incommensurable with all other attitudes, particularly the utilitarian). Art declines to the standing of a department of human interest. The way it happens is conjunctural: Economically, artworks take on commodity traits; politically, there is a censorship; and ideologically, art becomes more subjective and mystified. The sum of this is alienation, the loss of any chance for art to achieve a general and harmonizing effect. It stands, then, a tongue-tied testification of the society. The best of

this art will probably elevate just one function, accent and make it something absolute. Hence the ideal of the beautiful, or of the artist's awareness of his responsibility.

Marx indicates that a liberation from this dysfunctionality is only to be had through the socialist revolution. Friedrich Schiller had dreamt, in "Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man," that the world would be rescued from need and suffering by aesthetic man. Hegel opted to settle down in the alienated world, for the otherness of that world is separate from the world of spirit. Hölderlin and Keats wanted to escape to the long gone world of Greece, since the future held out a stark and ineluctable fate to art. Marx then, with his probing of contemporary society, was to turn the Schiller conception inside out. Precisely it was political man who was required for the rescue and realization of aesthetic mankind.

Meanwhile one could see that the alienation processes, if deleterious to artistic creation, have secured for art its relative autonomy. They could not have been avoided; and, although one might beat them back, as art has always done, through the interplay art has prepared itself for the superseding of alienation. Indeed the artist has always been attuned to nature; he has continually drawn fresh sustenance from it, in his fight against the decadence of civilization and culture, which is at the same time his fight for an authentic humanity. The unambiguous dependency of an artist on only one class has been rare. His product has had a general social significance (this we read also in Marx) and it on the whole militates against a narrow outlook limited by official ideology. A mutiny is afoot within both the Orphic and the Philokteteian phenomena. Admittedly the battle done against alienation by the two is not equally divided. Amid these two appears the Promethean insurgence, providing, in general, the highpoint of the resistance of art to alienation.

All the same, alienation cannot be completely superseded except with communism, in the Marxian view.

Polemicizing against Stirner in their *German Ideology*, Marx and Engels anticipated an epoch where there would be no geniuses and no philistines. All men would be artists to some degree. No longer restricted to a single field, they stress, the artist of the future will simultaneously be painter, poet, singer, etc. And we read (in *Capital*) that work when not compulsory comes to be free play of the psychic faculties and that the development of every talent will figure as a basic element of the communist system. In this way is the man of the future the aesthetic man, in Marx's prediction. All of production becomes an art; and every art is made intimate with productivity. The disalienated man? He will have the capacity to give artistic expression to all phenomena and to all his needs; he will in this way — and while augmenting the store of material and psychic resources — not only reach an ethical goal of individual development; he will as well — a stage his transposition from the natural world into civilization and culture potentially prepared him for — fulfill his species-being, his nature. His enduring nature, then, is aesthetic.

Marx's prediction of the future undoubtedly has utopian underpinnings. The notion of natural concomitants has a basis in Rousseau. It was not, however, the uncivilized man or savage who lent him the most significant model. It was rather Greek man. In this a direct line started by Winckelmann leads through Hegel to Marx.

What of the notion of a genius-less society when all men shall have become artists? This is not just an aberration in a genius's thought; more to the point, it expresses an empirically-founded, acute perception of the intolerable antinomy between art and society — along with a genial hunch as to the undoing of the antinomy.

We are able to understand, then, why Marxist aesthetics ascribes an important role precisely to art in transformations of society; and why the notion, fostered by Hegel, that art is useless and withering away, is unacceptable to Marxists.

The processes both of alienation and of disalienation incorporate all three of the themes.

Contemporary art and art theory bear convincing testimony as to Marx's aesthetic viewpoint as a key attitude for the entirety

of modern aesthetics. Alienation indeed has become a fashionable term today. Owing to the influence of psychoanalysts and psycho-sociologists, the idea is applied to every kind of frustration. It seems worthwhile then to define the conception more exactly. Moreover, when we speak of alienation today we refer to phenomena which in the time of Marx did not yet exist.

We understand, by alienation, certain processes and their results which occur in a concrete historical situation through the conjunction of economic, socio-political, and ideological factors, and which men feel to be independent forces to which they may submit, or else oppose themselves, but which they lack the objective and subjective resources to control. The processes of alienation and the results accordingly curb the freedom of man; they limit the satisfaction of his basic needs both material and spiritual. Artistic-aesthetic alienation, which is an enclave of an encompassing alienation, is effected whether art has succumbed to myths and mystifications not of its own election, or it combats these, or finally the aesthetic values of the social model are so negligible as to become prized in an exclusive way — resulting in the mythos of the artist closed inside his ivory tower and superior to events, the mythos of the eternal "outsider."

Alienation thus understood does not depart from the methodological guidelines of Marx. It is also applicable to our socio-historical conditions.

Henri Lefebvre in his *Introduction á la modernité* (Paris, 1962) draws our attention to the new modes of *Entfremdung* which affect art and which Marx had no grounds for discussing. These are: scientific and technical alienation, e.g. the discoveries of nuclear physics and the dangers issuing therefrom. And the political and ideological alienation which has widely troubled the early stages of socialist power. The literary reflection of the former alienation mode is presented in the fate of Möbius, a major character in Dürrenmatt's *The Physicists*. The latter mode is represented, say, in Kazimierz Brandys' *The Mother of Kings* of 1956. These recent phenomena can occur, obviously, only due to an ongoing unresolved antinomy between the artist and society. And as to the aleatoric aspect of modern creative production, Lefebvre links it to these pervasive disaccords of our epoch. For the coming period he does not exclude that a socio-political and philosophical resolution might be synthesized. One need not assent to all of Lefebvre's judgments, which tend to be rather rash, to agree with him about the futility of analyzing the function of today's art if one has failed to see the contemporary modes of its alienation.

One must also agree when Lefebvre notes that the Dionysian strain prevails in the cultural model of the 20th Century. The Apollonian vision of a Marx is a good deal more strenuous of attainment; artists may indeed find it unattainable.

We should add that Lefebvre is stimulated not by the visionary but rather by the realistic force of thought in Marx. It is precisely Marx who shows the concrete antagonisms of art and society. One of these is the unprecedented difficulty faced by the artist (whether committed or uncommitted) in his attempt to resolve conflicting aesthetic and socio-political claims, in other words, the seeming distinction between the so-called universally-human content of art and an ideological outlook embedded therein. Marx locates in such phenomena a *dialectical unity*.

Even where the concept of alienation and disalienation does not appear as such in their works, the analyses of the American scholars (among aestheticians, especially T. Munro and M. Rader) lead around at the last to this problem. Herbert Read addresses himself directly to it — as in *The Third Realm of Education* (Cambridge, Mass., 1960), where he resumes his earlier view that a true education is impossible severed from art; i.e., education must not merely be discursive, as it is where only a drilling in facts and moral axioms occurs. Read sees a hope for overcoming the antinomy between pleasure and work only in the Marxian alienation theory. Even so, he cannot believe that a society might be organized today in such a way that the work is felt to be pleasurable. Read argues that specialization as its impact grows from year to year leads irresistibly to ever greater alienation, which he calls a technological alienation. He saw firsthand and was sympathetic to experiments in aesthetic education through work in the Chinese People's Republic — but nonetheless Read came to accept

Schiller's thesis, that self-integration is to be achieved only outside of work, in the "play and leisure time" of man. I cannot altogether agree. First — because automation as it ceaselessly advances opens up ever new possibilities, and can evoke a positive attitude toward work, i.e. toward work in high degree creative. Second — Marx never claimed that the humanity of the future would be an aesthetic humanity due exclusively to the character of the work process. Third — in a way Read's vision although stated just yesterday is more a conjecture of imagination than that of Marx a century ago; for it leans upon the Kantian and Schillerian idea of three separable aspects of the world. However we are not nearly as interested here in differences as we are in noting that in discussing the various artistic functions Read, too, accords a most prominent role to the concept of alienation.

This question was linked to the problem of time by another author, H. Meyerhoff. Man has grown acutely sensitized to time: the constant need to fragment one's day, the excess of obligations one has, leads to a loss of the sense of selfhood. The problem of "alienation through time" recurs in 20th Century literature from Proust and Virginia Woolf to the so-called anti-novel of Robbe-Grillet and Butor.

Literature and art indeed evidence the fact that the concept of alienation figures as a key to the current reality. The life work of Bertolt Brecht is one sustained unmasking of the capitalist modes of alienation. Dürrenmatt has pursued his

Women and Dog
by Marisol (Escobar), Gift of the Friends of the Whitney Museum of American Art. Wood, plaster, liquitex and Miscellaneous items. 1964. 72 x 82 x 16. Collection Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

example. Diverse aspects of the same single phenomenon are illumined by Kafka and Musil — the alienation of the uninformed and helpless individual in the power of the state; Thomas Mann in *Doctor Faustus* — the alienation of modern art; Max Frisch in *Homo Faber* — the technical-rational alienation which stems from the highly organized nature of life. The alienation processes in socialism have yet to receive a portrayal as effective as in these works. The documents that are inspired by an anti-Soviet attitude can not meet the literary standards of an authentic look at reality. The entirety of the truth will only be laid bare and reconstituted in a literary work by Soviet writers who have thoroughly lived the modes of this alienation.

It can not be my aim here to discuss the alienation problem fully, for I do not have the space. On the other hand, the problem could not be passed over. The functioning of both modern and earlier art is focused by the concept as by an optical lens. Our Marxist intepretation has discerned a threefold artistic functioning. We can also specify the interconnections and the hierarchy of the particular themes — or strands — under the conditions of alienation.

We can ascertain that in comparison with the other themes the Orphic strand plays initially a lesser role. The Philoktetes theme asserts precedence, where the historical processes of alienation are pitted in conflict with those of anti-alienation. Disalienation processes, on the other hand, restore the Orphic strand to its appropriate operation. And it is in the aftermath of the socialist revolution, and of securing the socialist state, that an aesthetic education *sensu stricto* will acquire increasing importance, helping to prepare the aesthetic humankind of the future.

We are witness to artistic processes which to some degree would seem to confirm the Marxian hypotheses about the future of art, and its integration with life. Applied art has come to occupy a central place in the arts of the 20th Century; indeed it now appears to have prefigured the style of the epoch. By organizing the space of the locales in which we live, work, shop, and take walks, art enters directly into life. A taskforce of men specifically concerned with *l'art implique* — to borrow a term from E. Souriau — are employed in the machine-dependent industry of today, bringing it closer to the handcraft industry of yesteryear. They lend the personal touch to items which always had been treated as technical, impersonal products. We may glimpse in this a disalienating development. It is, however, limited and only fragmentary. For one thing, although an enlargement of the field for aesthetic perception is gained, the (Marxian) question of homo faber as homo ludens is wholly begged — with no likelihood of its being dealt with in this mode. Second, the "do-it-yourself" (in French, *bricolage*) tendency does not necessarily imply that a competence in work technology can be turned into artistic activity. Third, the authentic liberation of a human being can only be said to be attained, where his entire psychic energy is activated in expression of the most completely **human** sense of his existence — and his principal aspirations (the Promethean theme) are thus fully embodied.* All of these qualifications, however, do not diminish the significance of "the aestheticization of everyday life."

Somewhat similarly, one can see a limited disalienation in the continuous life spectacles organized by television — i.e., a lessening of the demarcations between the life model and the art model. Or, say, in improvisatory jazz. The mode of experience to be had by a listener at a jazz concert is such as to induce one to reconsider the effect of art. There is the story of King Saul who sent his retinue to Nayoth to clap David into custody. But the prophets at Nayoth (the Nabi) frustrated the aims of these emissaries, by thrice beguiling them: with song, dance, and mime. I attended a performance of the Dizzy Gillespie Band in San Francisco; and as I sat among the rhythmically swaying, enraptured throng of listeners, in a near-dark hall lit by a few dull-red

*i.e., to be the actor of history and not its slave, to "finish with all kinds of tyranny and authoritarianism, to live in a society which is free of hunger, poverty, violence, and repression."

Street Scene
by George Grosz
Courtesy: The Philadelphia Museum of Art; photograph by A. J. Wyatt.

electric candles in the corners, it struck me that I was participating in a modern ceremony. The rhythm and the never-to-be-duplicated expression of the jazz ensemble induce a state in the listener such as to tear down the boundaries separating the ego from its environment, if full attention is diverted to one's body. This effect is reminiscent *a rebours* of the syncretic birth of poetry, song, and dance in collaborative labor — described by Karl Bücher in the eighth chapter of his book *Arbeit und Rhythmus* (1896). In two ways the concert affected me: as a structure of sounds (the Orphic dimension) and as a sensory-rhythmical climate the pervasiveness of which was intensified by the milieu. I quite early yielded myself to the performance and experienced a pleasing aesthetic emotion such as I had never previously known in this way. The Philoktetes theme was illustrated here in a special mode: I, and the other members of the audience, submitted to the identical aesthetic spell. This distinctive, unique experience became merged with life-experience, and I was ready at a single word from Dizzy Gillespie and his group to respond with practical acts. I was virtually a jam session participant myself, prepared to take initiative or to be propelled along willy-nilly. Without question we likewise observe a fusion of the Orphic and Philoktetes strands in communal celebrations and in demonstrations. There may be Orphic presentations included (music, dance, plastic arts) but just let the participant or spectator get caught up, and he will develop a practical-ceremonial attitude. If the situation or times move into a dramatic sequence, the Promethean strand often emerges as well. Again, we should stress that this mode of disalienation — much like applied art, or, more specifically, industrial art — affords a somewhat increased freedom to the aesthetic sense, indeed extending its domination over the technical world. But as certainly, it does not in itself solve the major human problems. Moreover there is the danger that such freedom will prove illusory and fleeting if the problems coped with by the Promethean outlook in art remain essentially unchanged.

How practicable then is the Marxian vision of an aesthetic humankind? Of course, at the last history alone will deliver its verdict. The prediction is based on the idea of a humankind delivered from misery and necessity. Marxism, and the theories closest to it, again and again refer to this vision. Accordingly Christopher Caudwell wrote, in *Illusion and Reality* (1938): "Art is a mode of freedom . . . . Communist poetry will be complete, because it will be man conscious of his own necessity as well as that of outer reality . . . . Art is one of the conditions of man's realization of himself, and in its turn is one of the realities of man." Ernst Fischer's *The Necessity of Art* (1959) holds that in future, art will enlarge its function of developing the personality, in contribution to the process whereby the individual develops identity with nature and with his fellow man. Art, says Ernst Fischer, is to become a genial faculty of the society as a whole.

The passages just cited do have a note of the prophetic to them, as their authors certainly were aware. If one adopts a scientific view of social development, it is feasible, in line with Comte's rule — *savoir pour prévoir* — to set down a few predictions. Yet no genius has ever forecast the concrete processes of the historical development to come. From certain indications it does appear — as we said — that elements of the Marxian vision are starting to be realized. In countries of very different ideological stamp, similar trends can be observed — whether they may be the conscious aim of politicians, or if not, then present, for all that, in the art and theories of art.

But not without raising many grounds for scepticism. As we said in discussing Herbert Read, the question seems to be whether the individual's entire psychic potential can be brought all together to accomplishment. The epoch of an ever-burgeoning specialization appears not to favor realization of the ideal of the aesthetic man in this respect. Those who support the idea (H. Read is among them) will reply that even if the production process does not conduce toward this goal, the expansion of leisure time yet enables, increasingly, the emergence of aesthetic sensibility and an emotional life. A return to Hegel — to his thesis about the termination of art, and its replacement with philosophy — is made nowadays by some thinkers. These theoreticians draw a smidgeon of evidence from the intellectualizing tendencies of the arts, for example the anti-novel, anti-film, anti-

painting. But alongside the highly intellectualized work, so nearly related to the essay and manifesto, the 20th Century can lay claim to direct and spontaneous creations, which theorists have overlooked who wish to prognosticate the end of art.

There remains the possibility that rather than becoming identified with life, art will (unavoidably) retain its independence in a century of increasing specialization. Or again — even if disalienation does prove practicable, in other words, the aesthetic values can be realized in a particular social model and production comes to be identical with artistic creativity — even so not every artistic creation can possess a productive character. And precisely beyond this juncture where art and production do not coincide, the situation will become exceptional, in brief, a situation of alienation; for the evolution of art does not lead to the overcoming of all internal and external antinomies. These cannot but remain; although they will present themselves in a changed context and one unknown to us.

Accordingly as one confronts such questions, one reaches conclusions about the role of the different themes. If art is to be shucked off, then the Orpheus theme is anachronistic and major changes are required in the other strands. But if art is to be amalgamated to everyday life, then the Orpheus strand will eventually absorb and supersede the other two themes. Should art retain its independence, then all the themes will persist; however, replacing the tensions of today among these themes, newer tensions and conflicts will emerge.

Supposing that we reject the updated Hegelian theory of the end of art, we must then choose the more plausible of the two remaining possibilities. It is not the business of a scholar, whose job it is to analyze the facts available to him, and to generalize cautiously from them, to make predictions about the far future. He can only ask the questions, the answers are not for him to provide.

Flight: A Study of Time and Philosophy and the Arts in the Twentieth Century

by Weller Embler

And all this hurries, toward the end, so fast,
whirling futilely, evermore the same.

from "The Merry-Go-Round,"
Rainer Maria Rilke

Despite William Butler Yeats' prophecy, "After us the Savage God," some religious groups in the 1890's were convinced that the world would come to an abrupt end at the turn of the twentieth century. This was probably wishful thinking, for though the nineteenth was notable for the "progress" it had made in implementing Victorian ideals, it had also progressed so considerably, some thought, in wickedness that surely the Wrath of God would show itself at the appropriate moment. What better time for the holocaust than the end of the most godless century to date.

But the ways of Heaven are mysterious and do not necessarily conform to human wishes. In any case, the world did not come to an end at midnight on the 31st of December, 1899, either with a bang or a whimper. It simply flowed into and became the twentieth, with some fanfare but little noticeable change. Yet subtly and unobtrusively, preparations had been in the making during the last half of the nineteenth century for a world that was to become quite different culturally and intellectually from the Victorian. The world does not stop; it changes. At least that is what the philosophers at the turn of the century observed, and they offered to the western world a philosophy of change and perpetual evolution for such comfort as it might contain and such use as might be made of it.

At the end of the nineteenth century there emerged a new metaphysics, called variously pluralism, process philosophy, the philosophy of becoming. Though expressed differently at the hands of different philosophers — Henri Bergson, William James, John Dewey, Alfred North Whitehead — the philosophy of process "installed change at the very heart of things" and gave sanction to the new cultural ideals of motion and change.

For a long time, the western world has put its faith in that way of **knowing** we call the rational. Rational knowledge is achieved through analysis and classification, and its aim is explanation. This way of knowing, this customary work of the intellect, is indispensable in everyday affairs, for once we have fitted a fact into a class, we can apply to it all the general laws that are known to apply to that class. Indeed, so successful is this method of investigation, we tend to suppose that it is the only way to dependable knowledge. For the French philosopher Henri Bergson (1859-1941), however, this emphasis on the logic of analysis and classification has obscured the philosophical way of knowing, which does not move around an object, he says, but enters into it.

If one brings to reality the logic of arrangements, schemes, numbers, series, classes, and relations based on likenesses and differences, then reality will consist of arrangements, schemes, numbers, series, classes and relationships; but if one brings to reality a different logic, the logic, for instance, of ceaseless change, then reality becomes a creative process, a succession of states known through intuition.

The philosophy of "Becoming," as Bergson called it, is based on the intuition of the fluency of existence. Consciousness does not stop, and start, but rather, like Heraclitus' stream, it flows. No two states of being are ever the same, do not repeat themselves exactly; consequently, in terms of time, consciousness is always in a continuous present that looks to a future.

It is customary, however, for us to think of change as being accomplished in units of space and time. In order to examine change, we stop time; therefore, says Bergson, analysis always operates on the immobile; but it is self-evident that except as we conceptualize the experience of a moment and offer it thus historically to a referee for evaluation, we cannot arrest the movement of life itself. "Consciousness," says Bergson, "cannot go through the same state twice. The circumstances may still be the same, but they will act no longer on the same person, since they find him at a new moment of his history."

No two moments are identical. Our existence is, rather, a succession of states. Rest is never more than apparent. Reality is a remembered past and a continuous present, or, in other words, a perpetual becoming. Hence, "inner, absolute knowledge of the duration of the self by the self is possible." Moreover, the intuition of our personal duration, our

never-ending but ever-changing conversation with reality is the unity that binds successive states of consciousness together, as a "thread holds together the pearls of a necklace."

Consider the conception of number. There are two ways of knowing multiplicity. When we enumerate objects observable in space, we add the sensation we have of one unit to the sensation we have of another, and so on. Eventually, however, we come to the idea of an abstract number, a symbol used in conventional reckoning. The number 50, for instance, is not 50 of anything until we imagine 50 indivisible units in space and count them. The extraordinary insight comes when we realize that we cannot count the moments in *the continuous flow of our own consciousness*. A moment of time cannot be added to another to give two moments, except as we imagine them as linear points in space. If instead of reckoning states of consciousness numerically we see one in the other, "each permeating the other," we shall experience a continuous multiplicity with no resemblance to number. This will be the sensation of duration, the intuition of consciousness as a perpetual state of becoming. The present is, then, in a continuous process of becoming the future; the psychic life is a continuous flow, a forward movement, an ongoing creative course. "For a conscious being," said Bergson, "to exist is to change, to change is to mature, to mature is to go on creating oneself endlessly."

To the artists and writers of the first quarter of the twentieth century, the philosophy of Becoming was most attractive. The "rational" way of knowing had failed in notable instances, not least in its inability to inspire insights of the creative imagination. But by means of the philosophy of Becoming, artists were liberated from static methods of analysis and the old restrictions of discursive logic.

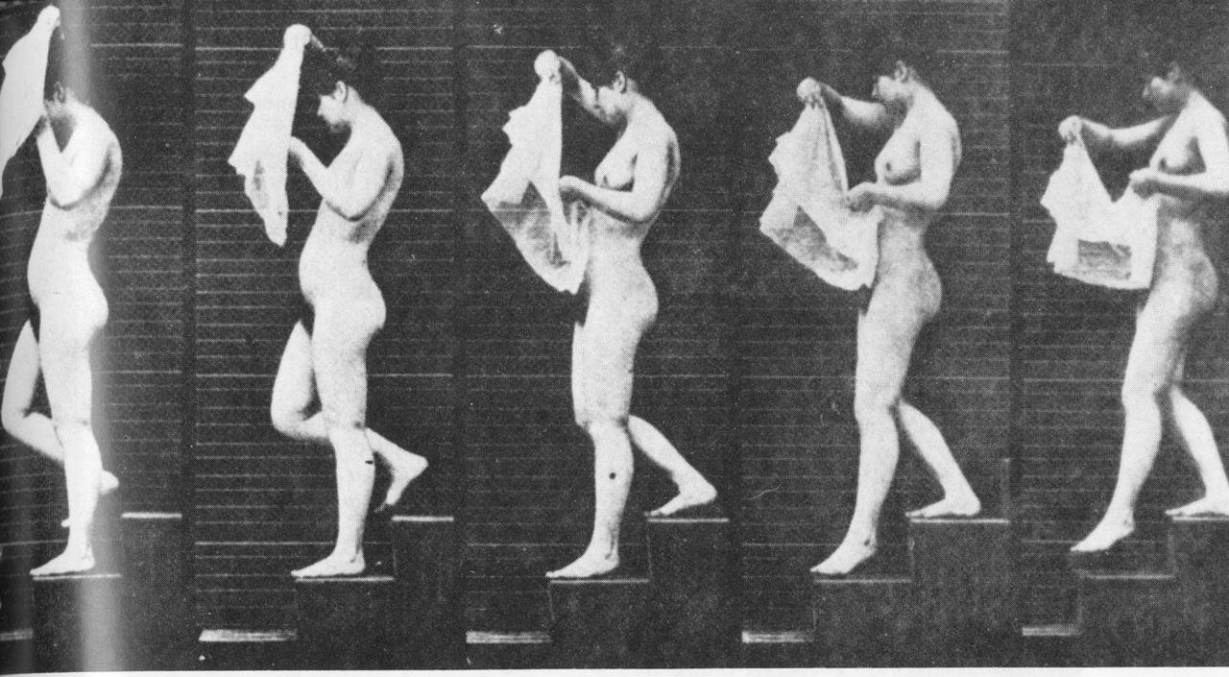
We may be reasonably sure that the English photographer, Eadweard Muybridge (1830-1904), had not read the early essays of Henri Bergson; but it is quite possible that Bergson had seen the famous Muybridge photographs of animals in motion, either in the plates issued by the University of Pennsylvania in 1887 or in the abridgments of the original work published by Muybridge in two volumes, *Animals in Motion*, 1899, and *The Human Figure in Motion*, 1901.

Instinct with the sense of motion, Eadweard Muybridge was one of the first inventors to experiment with pictures of motion. Born in England in 1830, Muybridge came to America in the 1850's. Within a decade he had established himself in California as a photographer and there, in 1872, he met Leland Stanford, one of the builders of the Central Pacific Railroad, who bred horses on his ranch in Palo Alto. Stanford commissioned Muybridge to photograph thoroughbred race horses in motion, so that their gait could be studied and analyzed. The results at first were of little use, but by 1877 Muybridge had so perfected his technique that he was able with a battery of cameras to photograph horses in motion. Stanford was so much impressed that he asked Muybridge to photograph the human figure in motion. The results were equally amazing.

For some half dozen years following the experiments with Stanford's animals and the human figure, Muybridge lectured widely in America and Europe on the principles of animal locomotion. During his lectures he used a device for projecting pictures on a screen. This was the familiar lantern, but Muybridge had added a refinement that served to give the viewer the illusion of motion. He called his machine a "zoopraxiscope," and it appears to have been a forerunner of the motion-picture projector.

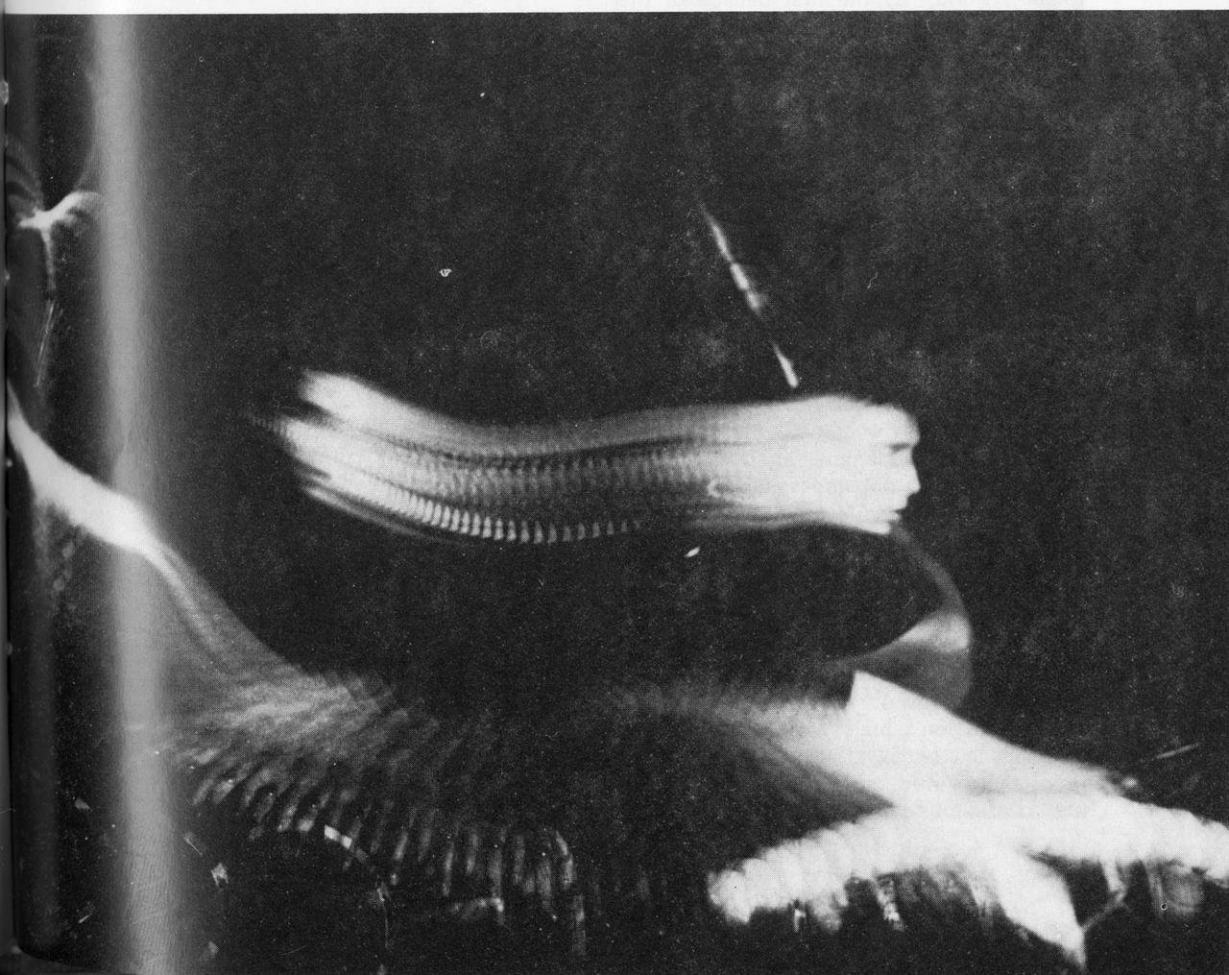
In 1881, Muybridge visited Paris. Jean Meissonier, the French artist, gathered together a group of painters and sculptors to meet the photographer and see his work. They were much impressed by what they saw and said the lecture was "magnificent entertainment."

Muybridge made no claim to have photographed the phenomenon of motion itself. In the Preface to his edition of *Animals in Motion* (1899), he says that each of the photographs he made of Stanford's horses in 1872 illustrated a different phase of the trotting action. "Selecting a number of these," he "endeavored to arrange the consecutive phases of a complete stride." This, however, "in consequence of the irregularity of their intervals," he "was unable satisfactorily to accomplish."



Woman Walking Downstairs
from *The Human Figure in Motion*
by Eadweard Muybridge
Courtesy: Dover Publications.

Swirls and Eddies of a Tennis Stroke
by Harold E. Edgerton
From the Photography Collection of
the Museum of Modern Art.



Henri Bergson would have agreed with him. That is to say, in 1903, a year before Muybridge died at Kingston-on-Thames, Bergson published his *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, in which he wrote, "to exist is to change," or to move, which amounts to the same thing; but it is impossible to capture reality with a battery of cameras. "Even with an infinite number of possible stoppages, we shall never make movement." Each snapshot, with all the skill in the world, stops movement and produces only a "motionless view of the moving reality." The real and undivided motion of a body may be known only in mobility, not in immobility. Though the artist may capture the wave at its crest and thus create a picture of striking beauty, it is not possible to reproduce the surge of the ocean, for to do so would be to become the ocean itself. The present is always becoming the future and cannot be immobilized, which is tantamount to saying that to exist is to move.

It was in the latter part of the nineteenth century that the obsession with motion first came into the cultural life of the western world. By the first decade of the twentieth century, the dynamics of time, change, and movement were well established in all branches of thought — in biology, historiography, political economy, relativity theory, industrial efficiency, in science and technology, in methods of transportation and communication, in the cosmic-process theories of astrophysics, and, not surprisingly, in literature and the arts.

Though a philosopher may be, as we say, an "original" thinker, it is more than likely that he too was influenced by someone or something — by earlier philosophers, by the civilization into which he was born, by the cultural life of his time, by his native language and literature, and so on. It is not impossible that in *An Introduction to Metaphysics* (1903) and in *Creative Evolution* (1907) Bergson was giving sanction to what had already become a cultural necessity, **change** — the ideal of change which is so very much a part of machine culture, insatiable of what it calls "progress" or "advancement," or "new and improved." The fact, in any case, is that Bergson's philosophy of Becoming coincides historically with the work of the Italian Futurists, the early Cubists, the "continuous present" of Gertrude Stein, the "stream-of-consciousness" technique in fiction, the ideal of "creative evolution" in the plays of George Bernard Shaw, the preoccupation with the mystery of time in the novels of Marcel Proust, with modern polyphony, in which the fugal pattern is not one of going forth and returning, but of evolving only, and with the ascendancy of the motion picture to the principal art form of the twentieth century.

We may well begin our study of this cultural ideal of change and movement with the famous painting of Marcel Duchamp entitled *Nude Descending a Staircase*. (Duchamp painted several nudes descending a staircase.) The *Nude* we are speaking of is the one that attracted a good deal of attention at the Armory Show in New York in 1913. One critic described it as an "explosion in a shingle factory."

Duchamp's *Nude* has often been labeled Cubist, which it is; it is also Futurist. Between Cubism and Futurism there was a similarity of aim and technique, but with Duchamp the inspiration came from the new and fascinating cinematic vision of linear movement, achieved graphically through Cubistic restructuring of natural forms into geometric lines but with emphasis on the kinetic rather than the simultaneous, intending movement forward rather than around. The *Nude* offers a visual sensation like that experienced from cinematography. She moves as a film moves, in a series of frames fusing, not, it should be remembered, to give the illusion of movement, as a motion picture does, but to serve as a model or, to use Duchamp's own word, "blueprint," a graphic abstract of movement within the area of the canvas. She does not pose, we do not recognize her, and, except for a certain grace, she has no personality; but she moves, and to the modern sensibility, it is the aesthetic eye that she entertains rather more than the erotic imagination.

By way of comparison, study Ingres' *Grande Odalisque* (1814). We may respond to the *Grande Odalisque* with the feeling that it is an astonishingly beautiful painting; but all the same, it is the work

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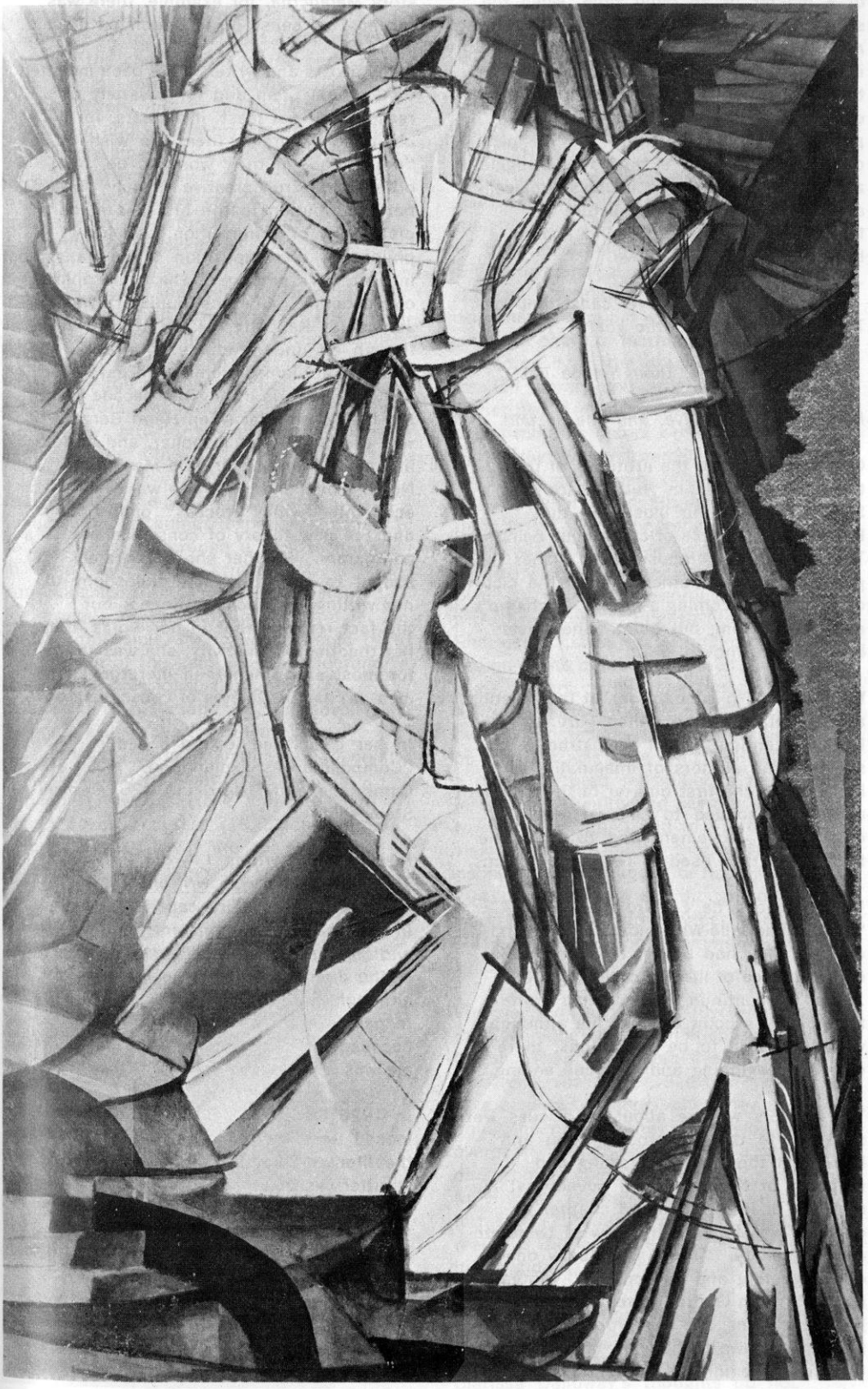
Nude Descending a Staircase (1912)
by Marcel Duchamp
Courtesy: The Philadelphia Museum of Art, The Louise and Walter Arensberg Collection.



of a master of an older time, when the stillness of the pose was preferred over restless movement. The *Grande Odalisque* is pure form, frozen form. We recall, too, that John Keats chose the silent form of a Grecian urn with which to express permanence and tranquility and the picture on it (of Dionysian ecstasies of struggle and "mad pursuit") to express, ironically, a graceful immobility, a picture of figures that do not move and endure because they do not move.

Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal — yet,
do not grieve;
She cannot fade, though thou hast
not thy bliss,
Forever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

Quite different are the attitudes of the twentieth century. In *Nude Descending a Staircase*, Duchamp illustrated the Bergsonian principle of continuous being. The *Nude* is a composition of planes penetrating one another to form the picture of a present becoming a future. Duchamp's nude is anything but quiet. She exists **because** she moves.

We shall return later to look at the painting and sculpture of the Italian Futurists. In the meantime, it will be instructive to see how the authors of imaginative literature of the first quarter of the twentieth century responded to cultural ideals of change and movement and to study the techniques they used to realize their aims.

In her novel, *The Edwardians* (1930), Virginia Sackville-West notes in the first chapter what had by her time become a commonplace of literary criticism: "Life, . . . as we continue to consider it from the novelist's point of view, life although varied, is seen to be continuous; there is only one beginning and only one ending."

The authors we are about to discuss were sensitive to the life around them and knew that the artificial starting and stopping of the traditional novel, that is, of a life or lives recounted chapter by chapter, was false to the flow of twentieth-century reality. "There is actually only one beginning and one ending." As early as 1905 when Gertrude Stein was writing her *Three Lives*, she was groping, she later said, toward the idea of continuity. In spite of beginnings and endings in the story *Melanctha*, for example, there was forming the sense of a "prolonged present."

Many artists and writers have been indebted to Gertrude Stein and for a variety of reasons but not least, it appears, for her ability to inspire in them the wish to be "unfamiliar" in their work, to be, in other words, truly creative. Mainly, however, her contribution to the arts lies in her philosophy of composition; and her philosophy of composition is the translation into creative writing of the philosophy of Becoming. Onetime pupil of William James (at Radcliffe, in the 1890's when, though an undergraduate, she was admitted to James' seminar in psychology), at home in Paris during the decade before the first World War when Henri Bergson was the reigning philosopher, and, in later life, close friend of Mr. and Mrs. Alfred North Whitehead, Gertrude was well-acquainted with "process" philosophy and the new theory of consciousness as a continuum. Whether she deliberately sought to apply the new philosophy to her writing may be questioned; but the fact remains that in her works and her theories of creativity, she was the foremost experimenter in literature of the idea of changing states of consciousness.

In her celebrated lecture called "Composition as Explanation," given at Cambridge and Oxford in 1926, Gertrude Stein said:

In beginning writing I wrote a book called Three Lives *this was written in 1905. I wrote a negro story called* Melanctha. *In that there was a constant recurring and beginning there was a marked direction in the direction of being in the present although naturally I had been accustomed to past present and future, and why because the composition forming around me was a prolonged present.*

In 1926 Gertrude Stein's writings were looked upon by the conservative party of the literary Establishment as the "stutterings of a lunatic." Today, however, a sympathetic reader will find her lecture readily accessible. The following, for example, though once considered gibberish now has its significant place in the history of modern literary and aesthetic theory:

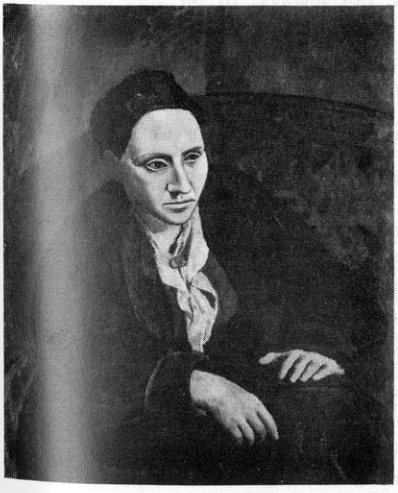
Everything is the same except composition and as the composition is different and

always going to be different everything is not the same. So then I as a contemporary creating the composition in the beginning was groping toward a continuous present, a using everything a beginning again and again and then everything being alike then everything very simply everything was naturally simply different and so I as a contemporary was creating everything naturally being naturally simply different, everything being alike.

Gertrude Stein's theory of the "prolonged present" was first articulated in her *The Making of Americans* (written during 1906-1908, published in 1925). She was a pioneer of the new imagination, and her creative work was wholly consistent with the literary, artistic, and philosophical thought of her time.

In literature, the idea that change is fundamental to human experience came to be expressed through a new technique in fiction known as "stream of-consciousness." To record **all** the impressions of the hero of a novel is clearly impossible, for to do so would be to live the life of the hero. But by recording selected impressions, thoughts, and sensations of his characters, the novelist can create (as does the cinema) the illusion that what is happening is happening **while we read,** is continuous, and is happening always in the present. Both James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1925) and Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* are not of the same order of magnitude, yet they bear comparison in the context of our present study.

Gertrude Stein
by Pablo Picasso
Courtesy: Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Virginia Woolf and James Joyce were born in the same year, 1882, Woolf in London, Joyce in Dublin, and died the same year, 1941. No two lives could have been more unlike. Virginia Woolf was the daughter of a highly-respected Victorian man-of-letters, Sir Leslie Stephen, editor of the monumental *Dictionary of National Biography,* and of Julia Duckworth Stephen, a woman of considerable beauty and charm. Virginia was brought up in an atmosphere of learning and culture and moved easily in the urbane society of London literary and artistic circles. Her father was a dedicated agnostic who placed social morality before organized religion; her mother devoted herself with sense and sensibility to the care of a sometimes difficult family; and Virginia, early of a mind to be an author, ranged freely among the books in her father's vast library, studied Greek at home, and made it her business to become thoroughly familiar with the history of English literature. She learned style, for example, by writing essays in the manner of the Elizabethan prose writers. When she herself became a literary artist, though often disconsolate over the confusions and complexities of life, she was able with the help of a richly nurtured sensibility to reveal the interior life of cultivated persons susceptible to distress of mind and to point to the visions of the beautiful that sustain these people in their struggle for happiness. In 1941, depressed at the thought of another world war and tortured by her fear of mental illness, Virginia Woolf committed suicide by drowning.

Virginia Woolf and James Joyce perfected the technique of stream-of-consciousness in fiction. Their characters live always in the Now. The reader, like the eye and ear of a camera, observes what they are doing, hears what they are saying, and overhears their thoughts. Only a philosophy of Becoming could have made it possible for a writer to use his imagination in terms of a continuous present. The true reality is the inner life as it is experienced in duration.

However, to entirely forego the Victorian fondness for the static was not in Virginia Woolf's temperament. In *Mrs. Dalloway,* Clarissa Dalloway's thoughts do not

interpenetrate and flow toward the future; instead, the author has taken them apart, so as to polish them and make of each a literary jewel. Then, having smoothed and rounded and made each choice, she restrings them on the chain of continuity. Virginia Woolf's characters are like her friends, sensitive, introspective, literary. Her sensibility would not have allowed her to play the amanuensis to all their thoughts and feelings. She could scarcely have been expected to display the robust candor of James Joyce. The interior monologues of her characters are reveries — delicate, emotional, inquiring, like the meditations of a woman in a Corot painting. The flow of thought among the characters in Virginia Woolf's novels takes place in the Now more by virtue of an interplay between memory and anticipation than by the urgent, random drive into the future that is the stream-of-consciousness in *Ulysses*. Nevertheless, both Virginia Woolf and James Joyce had absorbed the new philosophy of duration and used it at the right moment and in the right way to describe their worlds. The difference between them lies in the magnitude of their works — Joyce's epic, Woolf's the exquisite miniature.

James Joyce was born in Dublin the son of John Stanislaus Joyce, a civil servant noted for conviviality, a fine singing voice, and a mocking sense of humor. Joyce's mother was a devout Catholic who grieved that the son she had guided and encouraged in the Faith was apostate from it. At school, Joyce was an able scholar, and he graduated from the Jesuit University College in Dublin with the bachelor's degree in 1902, a first-rate Latinist, proficient in several modern languages, and a thorough student of both classical and modern literature.

Free-wheeling through Dublin in his student years, Joyce saw the life of the city at first hand in all its aspects, the raw violence of the brothels, the church sermons on hell-fire and damnation, the passionate nationalism of the Irish revolutionaries, the provincial cultural level and meanness of much of white-collar, middle-class life. Self exiled from his homeland at an early age, he was determined to be an author and to draw upon his own experiences in Dublin in an effort to create "the uncreated conscience" of his race.

Though severely critical of Catholicism and its priests, Joyce was so deeply immersed in Catholic doctrine that in one way or another it is intrinsic, as is Ireland itself, to everything he wrote.

In 1941, almost totally blind, in poor health, practically destitute, and anxious over the fall of France, Joyce died in Zurich shortly after he had suffered a major operation for duodenal ulcer.

Like many great writers, Joyce was single-minded and, in the best sense, self-centered. He intended to write a book that would survive the centuries; and he did. He put into Ulysses all that he was and all that he knew. He was Irish, Catholic, a literary artist, and he had a twentieth-century mind.

The categories of greater and lesser when used to measure the worth of a literary work are often artificial, vain, and certainly relative; but for our purposes it may be instructive and not inappropriate to spend a moment on the criteria for judging a "great" novel.

First, in the western world, at least, a great novel must have bulk, must actually weigh heavily on the scales, should be, say, 700 pages in length. Size may be a cultural bias of our civilization; but in any case, almost every major lasting work of literary art, from Homer to Joyce, is big.

Second, the subject-matter must be universally important and of epic dimensions. If we may judge by the works that have become "classics," war, rulers, and religion have been main themes, not always, to be sure, but most often. It was Joyce's genius to choose as his subject-matter the Age of the People, the democratic people of Dublin in the twentieth century, as vast and meaningful as any subject matter ever was.

Third, for a novel to be "great" it should have a vein of meaning that pulses through all the superficial happenings. In this respect, also, *Ulysses* belongs among masterpieces. Central to all Joyce's writings is the theme of Epiphany, mainly the Epiphany of the Christian faith, the sudden and fleeting but vastly enriching vision of the divine. Though the epiphanies of the New Testament are revelations of Christ's divinity through His birth, baptism, and miracles, in *Ulysses* the

revelation of the divine occurs in ordinary everyday circumstances and events, as befits the Age of the People. It is not to our purpose here to make elaborate analysis of Joyce's epiphanies. We may say, though, that they are stunning flashes of insight, moments of transcendent spiritual illumination.

Fourth, for a work of imaginative literature to be lasting, it should have "Style," that is, a manner of expression that is at once personal and for its time universal, just as, for instance, Bernini's "style" in his *St. Teresa in Ecstasy* is at once Bernini and Baroque. And just as we admire Shakespeare for having chosen the new iambic pentameter verse as the most appropriate way of telling stories about kings and queens, so we must admire Joyce for having the artistry to select the psychological stream-of-consciousness technique for the telling of his stories about modern, democratic, common man. Extraordinary, too, is Joyce's linguistic virtuosity. It is said that Joyce had command of several modern languages and that the vocabulary in *Ulysses* is nearly 25,000 different words. Verbal wealth is not all that is required to write a great novel. The way words are used is what counts, not their number. The story of a day in the lives of Leopold Bloom, Molly Bloom, and Stephen Dedalus evolves into a psychologically rich and complex novel by virtue of a linguistic skill that offers several levels of meaning in a single word.
Finally, there is something taking place in *Ulysses*, not unrelated to the flow of consciousness of the characters, that is obscured by our consuming interest in the movement of Bloom about Dublin and the motion of his thoughts ever forward into the next hour and the next. The hidden truth and extraordinary irony is that though there is motion and continuity of thought, neither the characters nor the novel goes anywhere. (This is true also of Clarissa Dalloway, of Duchamp's nude, of Gertrude Stein's continuous present, and as we shall see, of Balla's automobile.) Absorbed in the rise and fall of their thoughts, Leopold, Molly, and Stephen enter and exit in and out of the recesses of the soul's life. For them there is no destination. We recall in this connection that the "endless" cycle of going and returning is characteristic of Joyce's works, explicitly presented in *Finnegans Wake*, where the first words of the book form the sentence begun by the final words of the book. In Homer, Ulysses also goes forth and returns, but there is motive and intention and destination in his journeying, that is, development rather than cyclical repetition. Of course, in the context of universal experience as seen from some lofty Olympian height, life may consist of no more than the cycle of going and returning, of never **arriving** anywhere. Joyce has perfectly described the experience of living in the twentieth century.

It is appropriate now to return to the painting and sculpture supported by the philosophy of Becoming. The Italian Futurists read Bergson and were pleased with what they read (though of some of them Bergson might well have asked, What is this that is said and done in my name). The sculptor Umberto Boccioni's "Preface" to the exhibition catalog for his 1913 show in Paris might almost have been written by Bergson himself. *"Form in movement* (related movement) *and movement of the form* (absolute movement)" says Boccioni,
can alone render in the duration of time that instant of plastic life as it was materialized . . . without stopping it in the midst of its movement . . .

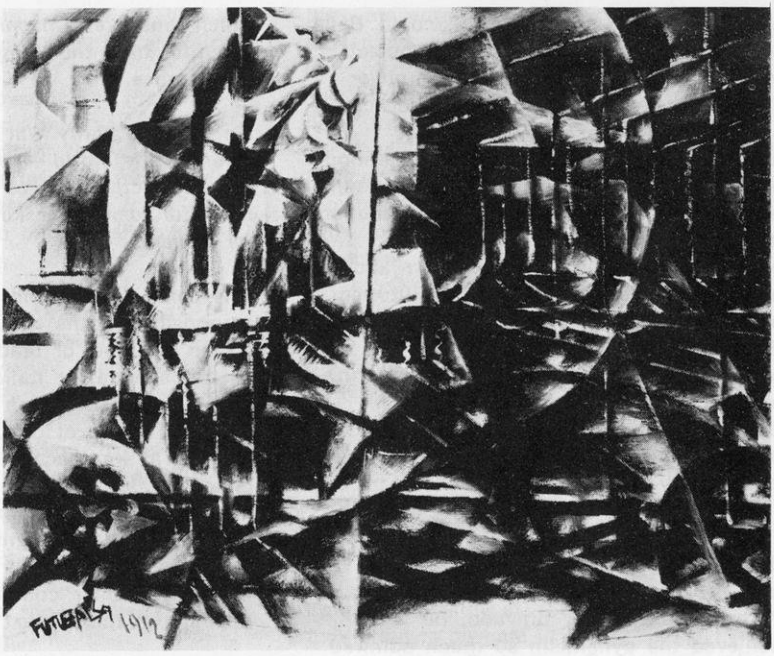
All these convictions impel me to search in sculpture not pure form, but pure plastic rhythm . . . the construction of the action of bodies. . . . *This is why a body in movement is not for me a body studied when immobile and afterwards modeled as though it were in motion. . . .*

In order to present a body in movement, . . . I force myself to determine the unique form that expresses its continuity in space.

As its name suggests, the Futurist aesthetic abolished traditional static subjects (the statue and the monument) in favor of "unique forms of continuity in space." One of the best known of Boccioni's works is *Bottle Evolving in Space*. It does not so much define and set limits to space as to create space, and it illustrates very well Boccioni's new plastic ideas. The *Bottle Evolving in Space* has its own inner life and extends into space as though the space itself were being continuously modeled and changed by the subject.

Fascinated by the power, speed, and rhythm of machines, the Italian Futurist

316 **Bottle Evolving in Space**
by Umberto Boccioni
Courtesy: Museum of Modern Art.



Speeding Automobile (1912) by Giacomo Balla.
Courtesy: Museum of Modern Art.

Dynamic Hieroglyphic of the Bal Tabarin
by Gino Severini
Courtesy: Museum of Modern Art.

painters, Gino Severini and Giacomo Balla, sought to create the impression of objects in motion. Balla's *Speeding Automobile* (1912) is a composition of geometrical shapes that evoke a feeling of fast horizontal movement and in their repetition, each slightly altered, suggest a comparison with the repetition of frames of a motion picture. While Cubism consisted of objects that appear to be seen from above and on all sides simultaneously, Futurism is a sequence of forms in linear movement. Balla could also be entertaining. His witty *Leash in Motion* (1912) is a picture of a small dog being taken for a walk. Both dog and leash appear to be in motion forward and the visual experience is distinctly kinetic.

Though at times critical of Futurist doctrine, Gino Severini was one of the most successful of the Milanese group. Without pretense or bravado, he achieved the dynamism so much admired by his fellow artists, and his paintings are graphic illustrations of the Futurist sensibility. His *Dynamic Hieroglyphic of the Bal Tabarin* (1912) and his *Armored Train* (1915) are arresting examples of Futurist techniques mastered — the repetition and subtle interpenetration of Cubist shapes, the use of chevron designs to give the impression of swift and violent movement, the naturalistic representation of objects, and the use of words as integrated elements of a picture.

Of special interest is that aspect of Futurism which reflects its historical and cultural setting. For the orthodox Futurists nature is no longer supreme. Man is supreme, man and his machines, especially his war machines. Filippo Tommaso Marinetti was the leading spokesman for the Futurists. A wealthy, well-educated poet from Milan (home of the Futurist movement), he published the first *Manifesto of Futurism* in 1909 in the Paris newspaper *Figaro*. The *Manifesto* celebrates violence and utters the Futuristic determination to destroy museums and libraries and to deliver Italy from "its plague of professors, archaeologists, tourist guides and antique dealers." The Futurists, he said, "sing the love of danger, energy and boldness."

We declare that the world's splendor has been enriched by a new beauty: the beauty of speed. . . . A roaring motor-car, which runs like a machine gun, is more beautiful than the Winged Victory of Samothrace. . . .

We wish to glorify War — the only health giver of the world — militarism, patriotism, the destructive arm of the Anarchist, the beautiful ideas that kill, the contempt for women.

One can scarcely hold Henri Bergson responsible for the chauvinism of the Italian Futurists or read his metaphysics as propaganda for Italian nationalism; but by an easy association of ideas, the powerful forces of destruction released into a world at war became related to the philosophy of motion and change. Machines in motion, human figures in action, abstract designs suggesting swift movement, the subjects of Futurist painters, were given their contemporary social meaning in the context of World War I.

The Futurists' expressed belief in the "healthiness" of war was no academic ideal. War is a stimulation for art, they said. Severini enthusiastically espoused the cause of Italian intervention on the side of the Allies; Boccioni enlisted in the artillery; Marinetti was wounded and decorated. Writing from the war front in 1915, Boccioni was alternately depressed and elated. When he was elated he could say: "We have been shelling for four days to open the road . . . it is marvelous. 149 shells going over like express trains. It is beautiful and terrible."

Later, Marinetti, who had allied himself with Mussolini, could say: "War has a beauty of its own because it assures the supremacy of mechanized man over his machines. Because it completes the beauty of a flowery meadow with its machine-guns, 'passionate orchids.' " The violent movement on Futurist canvases became real in the war that started in 1914 and, for Italy, ended in Fascism.

Marinetti's *Manifesto* was to exert continued influence in Italy, and his ideals were to persevere even until the 1930's when Vittorio Mussolini described one of his aerial attacks in Ethiopia in this fashion.

I still remember the effect I produced on a small group of Galla tribesmen massed around a man in black clothes. I dropped an aerial torpedo right in the

center, and the group opened up like a flowering rose. It was most entertaining.

For the most part, however, the first fine frenzy of the Futurists had spent itself by 1920. Before the end of the war, the nucleus of original Futurists around Milan had largely disintegrated. Only Balla and Marinetti were to remain faithful to the early manifestoes.

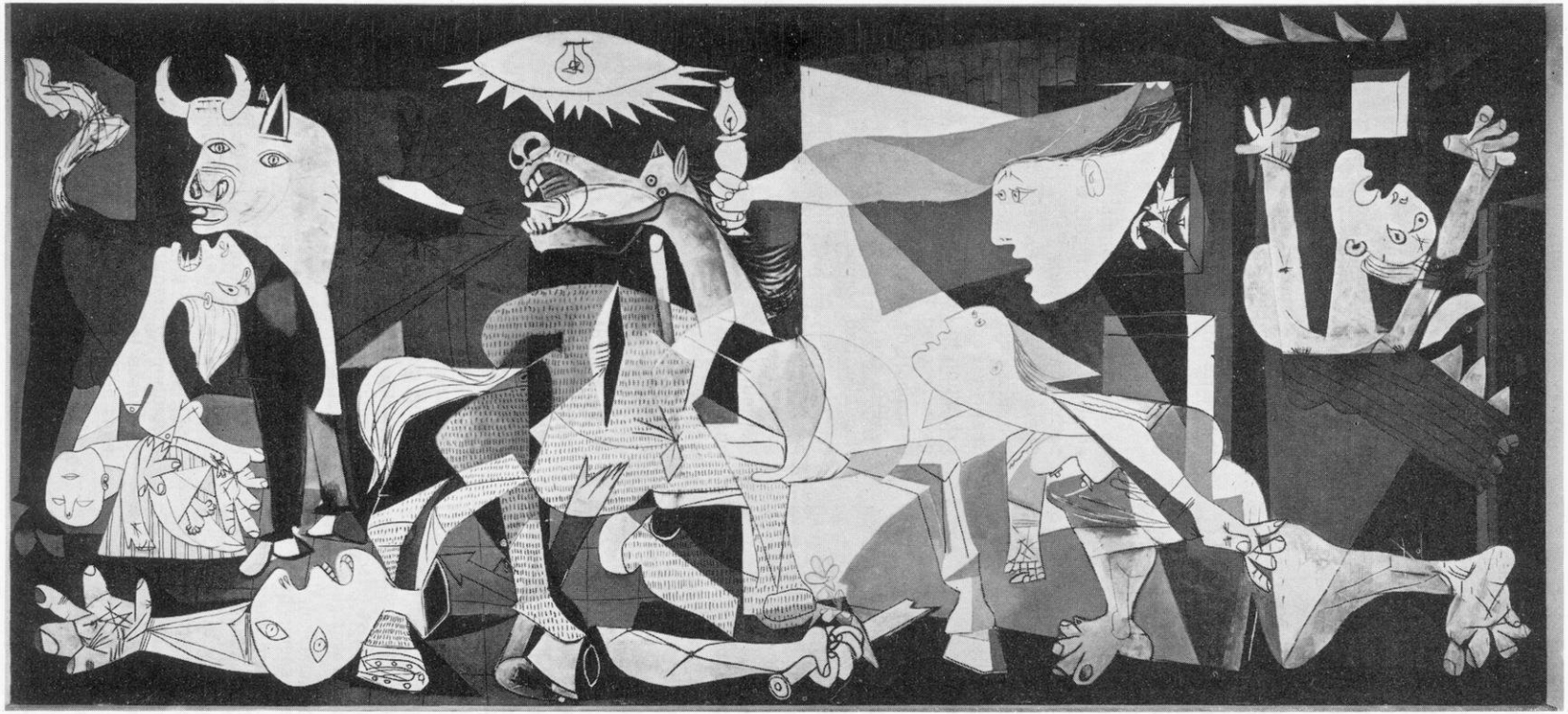
While it flourished, Futurism had a considerable influence throughout a Europe that was preparing itself for vast changes. Though in Paris Futurism was looked upon as "provincial" Cubism, in Russia it was an inspiration to the revolutionary poet Mayakovsky and the painter Malevich; and there can be little doubt but that its early essential doctrine of emotional intensity expressed in violent movement had a significant effect on the cinema aesthetics of the Russian film director, Sergei Eisenstein.

As a study in explosive movement, for example, no scene in film history is more powerful than the "Odessa steps" in Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin* (1925), where the troops of the Czar march mechanically and relentlessly down the steps toward the quayside in the port of Odessa, systematically shooting volley after volley into the multitude of people gathered to cheer the mutinous sailors of the battleship *Potemkin.* One of the memorable images of *Potemkin* is that of a baby-carriage, loosened from the grip of a dead mother, bumping down the steps to the accompaniment of the rhythmic march of the soldiers. (So successful was Eisenstein's film that Goebbels called upon Nazi motion-picture producers to make a film that would "give me a National-Socialist *Potemkin.*" It is not without interest to us here that scenes of violent movement are the most effective psychological propaganda in war time.)

The instinct for movement seems basic in human and animal nature, and examples of it are exciting to watch, especially fast movement. But this is not all we can finally say about the twentieth-century's early infatuation with motion and speed and change. For instance, one of the most arresting aspects of the ideal of motion today is the lack of destination implied in representations of it. Instead of motion toward a destination, and instead of pure movement meant to charm the eye, movement in the twentieth century is movement **away** from something. Many art and literary works are records of **flight,** flight from the unbearable present, people and machines "like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing." The Baroque fugue was a flight, too; but the themes in a Bach composition sally forth like angels on a holiday excursion, always confident of returning home. Once started on a modern flight, there is no home to return to. Modern flight is often only up and down, as on the ferris wheel, or around and around, as on the carousel, or straight as an arrow bound for nowhere.

As a concluding example of the modern emotion of violent flight, we cannot do better than to study Pablo Picasso's *Guernica* (1937). Picasso had been commissioned to paint a mural for the Spanish Pavilion at the International Exhibition to be held in Paris in 1937. When news reached Paris that German aircraft, in support of General Franco's rebellion against the government of the Spanish Republic, had bombed the defenseless Basque town of Guernica, Picasso, passionately loyal to the Republican government, had at hand the subject for his mural, and he started immediately on what was to become the most inspired work of protest of the twentieth century. The immense canvas, in funeral black, white, and gray, was completed in a relatively short time and occupied one whole wall of the Spanish Pavilion, where many thousands of people saw it and were stunned by its technique and its fury. (The mural is housed in the Museum of Modern Art in New York City.)

The *Guernica* is a synthesis of methods of the modern schools — Futurism, Cubism, Symbolism, Expressionism, etc. — techniques chosen by the artist as though they were the only ones that could be used in the twentieth century to make a lasting statement of outrage. The aristocratic battlefield surrenders of the old masters (for example, Velasquez' elegant *Surrender at Breda),* the grandiloquent historical paintings of Benjamin West, the revolutionary frenzy of Delacroix are expressed in the graphic language of other ages and circumstances and cannot speak for our time. Though barbarism and the gross inhumanity of man are nothing new in the world, the modern context (of the



Guernica
by Pablo Picasso
On extended loan to The Museum of
Modern Art, New York, from the artist.

masses in an age of destructive machines) is a setting so wanton of power, so prodigal of death, so monstrously uncivilized in the midst of "civilization," only a style consistent with brutal, indifferent, fragmenting force can tell the twentieth-century story. The purpose of the *Guernica* as Picasso painted it is propagandistic; and the vision to those who view the mural is one all compact of fury and flight.

In his book, *Space, Time and Architecture,* Siegfried Giedion, with inspired perception, draws attention to the striking similarity between the speed photograph of a tennis player (1939) by Harold Edgerton and images of the *Guernica.* In Edgerton's stroboscopic photographs, motion can be "fixed and analyzed," says Giedion, "in arrested fractions of 1/100,000 of a second." Though Picasso's *Guernica* was painted two years before Edgerton photographed his tennis player, the elongated head of the woman with the lamp in the *Guernica* has a shape similar to that of the head of the tennis player — a head that moves through a space that is the space we recognize when we are in fast motion, where objects are distorted and fragmented. The broken bodies of the *Guernica* exist in the broken space of a broken world.

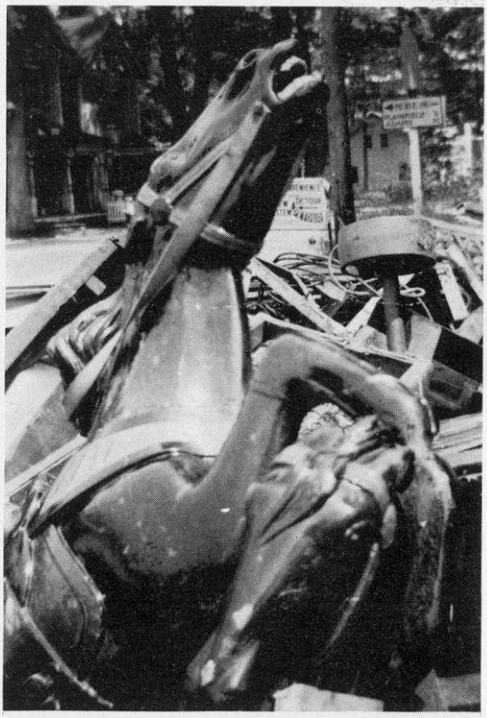
But stay! Paradoxically, as one looks at the painting attentively, there is no motion in the *Guernica.* Slowly there steals upon the viewer the sensation of complete rest, as though there **had been** movement but that suddenly, in the midst of flight, the scene froze, just as if a motion picture had stopped at this frame and would never move on to the next. Perhaps the power of the *Guernica* is in its picture of violence arrested, an enduring record of terror and destruction in the twentieth century.

From the cultural point of view, it seems now that the theories of the process philosophers were more in the nature of prophecy than detached observation. They sensed the inclination toward emphasis on the category of time, yet they were not so far ahead of their era as to foresee that "the restless is right" would become the guiding principle in virtually every branch of human experience. That "all is flux" in nature may not necessarily be the last word on the subject, but the experience of each of us confirms indubitably that in the social context of the twentieth century, ideals of movement and change have dominated thought and may be said to have assisted in the achievement in science and society of incredible velocities and total revolution.

EPILOGUE 1971

Some years ago a strange accident occurred in the Berkshire hills in Massachusetts. In the early hours of a July morning, a driver led his trailer truck over the winding hill roads in the neighborhood of Cummington. As the truck started down the mile-long hill leading into the village, its brakes failed, and after a wild flight, both trailer and cab overturned at the foot of the hill, throwing the cargo, a merry-go-round and a ferris wheel, violently against the doors of the village mortuary that stood obscurely and quietly at the cross-roads. The mortuary door and threshhold were badly damaged by the impact of the flying horses plunging against them. It may be noted also that the road the truck traveled was being used as a detour around construction. At the foot of the hill a sign faced the driver and read: "End of Detour. Thank You for Your Cooperation."

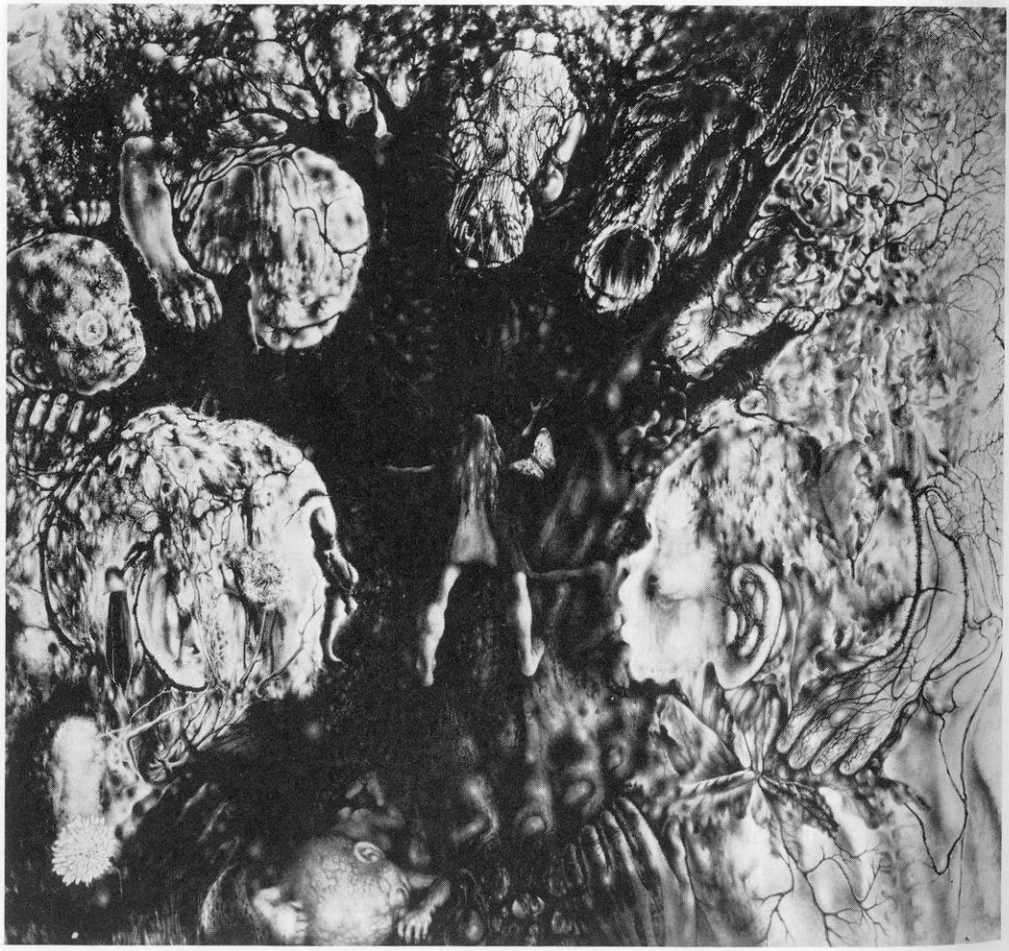
Merry-go-round Horses in an Accident
Photographer: Wallace Thurston.



It is not so extraordinary, of course, that a trailer truck should be hauling a carousel and a ferris wheel up and down the Berkshire hills. Nor is the accident that happened unexampled. (Fortunately, the driver of the truck was uninjured.) But what is strange, at least to the philosophic eye, is that the accident should have happened where it did and as it did. Recall that the flight of the truck was down a hill at the foot of which and at right angles to the hill-road runs a village street, while straight ahead is a dead end marked by a very small green-shuttered white building, the village morgue. The driver had perforce to guide his truck as best he could around the corner or crash head on into the mortuary. And guide the truck he did, almost but not quite out of danger, for in taking the turn, the truck skidded sharply to the left and careened over, its enormous bulk sliding on its side for several feet before lying quite still. The freight, the merry-go-round and the ferris wheel, was thrown in all directions, but most astonishing of all, the horses, beasts of motion and enchantment, had flown in a straight line to the very door of the mortuary.

Is it to the very doors of the mortuary that we fly, is it to that other world where all is still and immobile that we strain? Flight is our deepest desire, and is the destination death, or do we hope to out-distance death by being always on the move, faster and faster, farther and farther? Or should we say that the accent is on leave-taking, on flying away from the world around us that we have come to fear and perhaps to despise, or are we in flight from each other. The crowning irony is that we should believe in struggle and force and be obsessed by movement and time when what we seem to be seeking is the moment of rest and response.

Hide-and-Seek by Pavel Tchelitchew. Courtesy: Museum of Modern Art, New York.



Mine Disaster (1942)
by Berta Margoulies
28½" long, bronze.
Collection Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

Art versus Violence

by Lawrence Friedman

Although fantasies of world destruction have existed throughout civilization, this is the first time in the history of man that, thanks to his ever-expanding intellect, the possibility of total destruction has become a reality. Our insistent demand for more and more physical scientists has been rewarded with the creation of greater and greater destructive capabilities. Now, if ever, the call must go out to reverse the attraction of doom, to rally around those potentialities in man which can counteract his drift toward annihilation.

There are many who believe that it is already too late. I disagree, and because I disagree, I am vitally interested in culture, in the arts, which represent the most beneficent aspects of culture; and in artists, who are close to the Unconscious, who communicate with it in all its fervor, beauty, contradictions and irrationality. The survival of man will depend on his ability to channel his aggressive energy into constructive activities. If his instinctive drives toward hate and violence are to be neutralized, the role of art and culture in bringing this about cannot be overemphasized.

Freud, in "Thoughts on War and Death" (written in 1915, during the turbulence of the First World War) said: "It is inevitable . . . that we should seek in the world of fiction, of general literature, and of the theater . . . compensation for the impoverishment of life . . . There alone, we enjoy the condition which makes it possible for us to reconcile ourselves with death — namely, that behind all the vicissitudes of life, we preserve our existence intact . . . In the realm of fiction, we discover that plurality of lives for which we crave. We die in the person of a given hero, yet we survive him and are ready to die again with the next hero, just as safely."

Literature, music, the theater, the visual arts, give us pleasure, provide insight into human problems, deepen our understanding of ourselves and others, lift us above the level of our daily trials and tribulations. **They are the most effective neutralizers of violence.**

To understand this is more urgent today than ever before, when the constantly widening distance between man's accelerating intellectual progress on the one hand is confronted with his unchanging emotions and needs on the other, so that as a result, he is threatened with annihilation by his own scientific creations.

There are two important requirements for satisfactory human development and functioning: contact with others, and constructive activity. Our scientific advances work against both these needs. Every new technical achievement tends to further isolate people from one another and to force them into passivity.

The dichotomy of science versus the humanities is a major problem in education today. There is increasing recognition that rather than being viewed as separate choices, they should be brought together. The danger of this dichotomy was recognized in a public lecture series entitled "The Human Agenda," given at the University of California at Los Angeles. The lectures pointed up glaring misconceptions about human psychology, even among students of the behavioral sciences — misconceptions as potentially dangerous as the atom bomb.

Some of the discussants, for example, expressed the hope that it would not be long before computers could be used to set people free from the limitations that make them unable to appreciate beauty. How would this be brought about? A man could get himself hooked up to a computer that had been programmed to teach painting in the style of Cezanne; or to a machine that could teach him to write music like Mozart. It should be possible to learn any skill or any art by this means, it was maintained: the computer or "extraorganismic intelligence" would mean freedom, not enslavement; it would liberate man from his own limitations.

It is frightening to contemplate this, not because it could happen, but because man craves for this to happen. Whether his craving is for this kind of computer, or for drugs like LSD, which are also supposed to "liberate man from his own limitations," it is an expression of man's increasing withdrawal from human relations and from activity. It is a sign of his increasing need for passive experience. The theoretical justification for this phenomenon is the prevalent misconception that work, the expenditure of effort, have only utilitarian functions and are not basic human necessities.

Erroneously, this ignores the existence of human differences, human potentials,

human needs, human emotions. It dismisses the reality that human creativity, even for the most gifted, is nurtured and brought to fruition only by means of difficult, exhausting, yet gratifying **work.** This misguided theory is a regressive fantasy invoking intra-uterine life where, so to speak, we would be plugged into the body of the mother again, for all our needs. Instead of liberating man, it would make him totally dependent on machines or on drugs: the only thing it would liberate him from are his own human qualities.

Before discussing the connection between creativity and violence, I would like to touch upon some of the questions which have been raised by creative artists about the possible connection between neurosis, neurotic conflicts and creativity; about emotional illness and the creative process.

In order to avoid misunderstandings, it is necessary to state that psychoanalysis learned a great deal about and is able to contribute to the understanding of artistic activity, of the creative process. It might explain the style, the specific form and meaning of an artistic creation. It might elucidate the need, the pressure driving the artist for creative **activity,** or the conflicts which interfere with it but psychoanalysis does not claim to know, to explain **artistic ability, creative talent.**

In my presentation I will try to show that the creative process represents the solution of unconscious conflicts and that it inevitably entails hard labor, pain, and suffering. **But it is not a neurotic process.**

Anxiety, pain, depression, suffering are part and parcel of daily life even for those whom we call normal, healthy, well functioning or what not. A certain amount of all of that is necessary for all activities. They contribute to effort, promote and maintain the need for creative activity, but they are not the source of it.

Life is full of realistic miseries, and there are millions who suffer with severe emotional illnesses yet few of them ever created anything. Neurosis is always a waste; it uses up energy; it hinders the creative activity instead of promoting it. Truly creative people are creative **in spite** of their neurosis and not on account of it.

No creative person ever came to consult me because his illness promoted his artistic creativity but only because it interfered with it — the painter because he could not paint and the writer because he could not write.

Briefly, one more subject, discussed frequently among analysts and artists: Will analysis interfere with creative ability? My answer is, no! Analysis might influence the style of a writer, his interest in certain subjects, but not his creative ability, if he has any. On the contrary, by removing the blocks which interfere, by freeing energy tied up and wasted by the neurotic process, it can only enhance it. Of course, it might interfere with the **illusion** of having creative ability.

The connection between art and violence requires the discussion and clarification of the following:

1. The aggressive drive
2. Man's envy of woman's ability to create life
3. The psychoanalytic concept of sublimation

THE AGGRESSIVE DRIVE

The concept of aggression is widely misconstrued, not only by the general public but by many experts in the field of human relations as well. Most people associate the word exclusively with violence and destructiveness, which is very misleading, although the reason for this misconception is clear enough. For many years it was believed that we were all born quite blank emotionally, "just little bundles from heaven." Displays of anger, destructiveness, violence were interpreted as reactions to reality frustrations — to interference with the satisfaction of needs such as hunger, sexual pleasure, or any other needs.

This is what we were told by the church, the law, by sociologists, psychiatrists, by all those who had anything to do with the understanding and influencing of human behavior. Even today, there are students of the behavioral sciences who believe that anger is a reaction to frustration only; that violence is the result of unfavorable social conditions. This is a naive assumption, ignoring everything we have learned about the Unconscious and contradicted by even the most superficial observation of social phenomena.

Today, most psychoanalysts believe that aggression is a drive inherent in the nature of man. We may conceive of aggression as energy, a powerful force which we need for all our activities and which can be used for either constructive or destructive purposes. Freud once compared it to a river flowing peacefully along, its great energy potential hidden, unrealized, until it is blocked in its course or swollen by torrential rains, when it overflows its boundaries and becomes a raging, violent force, destroying everything in its path.

The question is what do we use aggressive energy for — pleasure or pain — life or death? We require aggressive energy to move our muscles, to walk, to eat, to compete in sports, to make love, to work. Or we can use it to torture, kill, destroy. It takes the same energy to kiss or to bite, to caress or to scratch, to take a step or to kick someone.

To repeat: The aggressive drive can be modified, channeled into constructive purposes or it can be directed into increased violence. It can also be blocked, interfered with in many ways, resulting in destructive behavior toward others and toward the self. Civilization is the sum total of all the efforts of man to assure security and safety for the individual. It includes efforts to harness and master the forces of nature for the benefit of man and to protect individuals from the violent actions of others. Civilization interferes with man's instinctual drives; therefore, man is in conflict with civilization.

Man is not easy to civilize. Consider the expressions of his violence in this century alone: Two World Wars with millions killed; inestimable treasures of art — the cultural achievements of centuries — destroyed. Millions of men, women, and children tortured, starved, burned, slaughtered — subjected to unimaginable cruelties in the name of irrational ideologies about race superiority, religion, nationality. **Man's uncontrolled violence toward man — unknown in any other group of the animal world** — his pleasure in destruction produces the book burning, the systematic destruction of cultural achievements, the concentration camps, the gas chambers; as well as the present-day slaughter on the highways, the ever-growing number of major crimes in even the most "civilized" nations.

From the time the first primitive man tore his adversary to pieces with his teeth and his bare hands, mankind's scourge — his need to kill, his passion for violence — have not changed. Moral codes, ethical concepts, the teachings of religion, punitive law, revenge and retribution have not changed it. **We tortured and killed the Prince of Peace, tortured and killed His followers, and His followers in turn have never stopped torturing and killing in His name.**

MAN'S PLEASURE IN VIOLENCE

People are surprised, even resentful, at the statement that man takes pleasure in violence. Isn't it remarkable to what extent we can ignore what we do not want to see? Anyone watching a child torture a fly, a cat, a frog, cannot question his enjoyment. What about the injuries they inflict on each other — or their pleasure in watching violence on television?

As for adults — what about their enjoyment of hunting and fishing; their fascination with prizefighters, wrestling, violent competitive sports — bullfights, cockfights? What about the Roman gladiators and the premiums they set on new and unusual ways of killing? Can we forget the Christians being torn to pieces by hungry lions, to the ecstatic roar of thousands of onlookers, great and humble, young and old, men and women? Can we forget the tortures of the Inquisition, or the even more fiendish tortures and brutalities of the Nazis? And how about the witch-hunts and lynchings in our own country — to say nothing about the current reports of the torturing of civilians and prisoners in Vietnam?

I might be accused of seeing everything in terms of destructiveness alone. I hope to correct this impression later on, but first it is necessary to point up that the danger of annihilation does not spring from our love of art, culture, civilization, constructive work, but from violence.

Freud, in his "Thoughts on War and Death" (1915) said: "Nature, by making use of these twin opposites" (love and hate) "contrives to keep love ever vigilant and fresh . . . It might be said that we owe the fairest flowers of our love-life to the reaction against the hostile impulse which we divine in our breasts."

Or consider the words of Quentin in Arthur Miller's *After the Fall:* "And the wish to kill is never killed. But with some gift of courage, one may look into its face when it appears, and with a stroke of love — as to an idiot in the house — forgive it, again and again . . . forever?"

MAN'S ENVY OF WOMAN

The history of civilization, primitive, ancient and modern, is full of man's expressions of his hostility and envy of women, and his severe ambivalence toward them. They have been mistrusted, persecuted, treated as second-rate human beings in practically every culture. They have been discriminated against in every religion. Idealization of the Virgin Mother on the one hand and centuries of denunciation by the church as the source of all evil on the other. The witch hunting, taboos and ceremonies of primitive societies expressing ambivalence toward women fill volumes. What about its expression in the artificial mother-culture of our own time? The highly idealized "sainted mother" who is reviled and ridiculed the moment she stops being a mother and becomes a mother-in-law.

We talk a great deal about penis envy, and there is no question that it exists. We also know how universal is masculine bias, demonstrated in man's depreciation of women and over-valuation of his own sex. Expressions like, "Congratulations, it's a boy!" — or, "Too bad, it's a girl. Better luck next time!" are as old as history. What is only beginning to be recognized is that behind man's ambivalence toward women is his envy of her ability to create life. There are good reasons also to support the premise that man's greater ability for artistic and scientific creation is based on this envy and competitiveness.

Man's greater creativity could be a form of compensation such as we see in nature. Blind people, for instance, develop a greater sense of touch and sound.

Our daily language dealing with creativity is revealing. A man is "pregnant with" or "gives birth to an idea" — has an "abortive thought" or a "brain-child." Very common, too, are such expressions as "This is my baby, my creation. I thought of it first!" — and the fight over priority can be fierce. I know a writer who published his first book the week his first child was born and, subsequently, another book every time his wife gave birth. And the feelings of emptiness, even depression, after completing a major work are very familiar to creative men and are similar to the feelings of women after childbirth.

The pity of it is that women accept and identify with this masculine bias, and even outdo men in their own depreciation. They themselves denigrate their role as mothers, label outstanding women in business or the professions as masculine, and equate lesser intelligence and passivity as femininity.

Man's knowledge that he cannot create but can only destroy life — life created by women — has undoubtedly affected the entire course of civilization. It is reasonable to speculate whether it may not be the driving force behind his incessant urge to make wars throughout history. Today, as the "father of the hydrogen bomb" he is in a position to threaten with destruction all life created by women.

SUBLIMATION

Sublimation is a psychic process to modify forbidden drives, whether aggressive or libidinal, into socially acceptable outlets and express them in a manner so acceptable that they elicit praise, recognition, and reward. It is the process by which civilization progresses. It may find expression in the choice of a profession and in all manner of artistic activities and creations. People often wonder why so many doctors are interested in music, either as instrumentalists or as patrons and connoisseurs. I have referred earlier to the fact that the energy of destructive drives can be utilized for constructive actions, or can be neutralized by culture. Both medicine as a profession and music as an art can be understood in these terms.

There are all kinds of variations in both professions, depending on the individual's unconscious needs. Obviously, a surgeon who cuts into a body is sublimating his aggressive drive differently from an internist who prescribes medicine; a psychiatrist giving shock treatment differently from a psychoanalyst. The same is true for musicians. One may be a composer, a performing artist, a conductor

or a singer. There are considerable individual variations between those who choose to play the piccolo or the tuba, the violin or the bass fiddle.

Sublimation of destructive, violent needs are inevitably combined with sublimation of pregenital libidinal drives, such as forbidden oral and anal pleasures. Both oral violence and anal smearing can be expressed by a painter or a writer. Again, there are considerable differences and variations in the sublimating process of a painter or a writer; between a poet, a playwright, or a gossip columnist. Whether the outcome of the artistic endeavor will be a beautiful painting, a poem, a play, a great novel, or just smearing on a canvas or a sheet of paper will depend on the individual's ability to sublimate — whether the sublimation of the aggressive or libidinal drive is more in the foreground — and, of course, on his talent.

Many operas furnish good examples of the sublimation of orality and violence. The stories they tell are all about torture, murder, death — accompanied by the most stirring vocal and orchestral music. They offer the listener the height of aesthetic pleasure while at the same time enabling him to witness the death of a hero, or a beautiful young maiden, or the incantation of a fearful curse.

Or walk the streets of Florence, go through the Louvre, look at the magnificent paintings and sculptures in any museum, read the volumes of literary creations in our libraries and what do you find? Not only everything that is beautiful in nature and in life but also an infinite variety of expressions of torture, violence, murder — whose aim, however, is not to promote violence but to give aesthetic pleasure. Consider Dante's *Divine Comedy:* Every form of suffering and human ugliness is described in vivid detail. Nevertheless, it is inspiring, beautiful poetry which combines pleasure with deep insight into human aspirations, fears, and fate. So, in this way, the artist combines his talent with the energy of his unconscious violent needs and fantasies, his envy of women's ability to create life, and creates something which is no longer destructive and does not inflict pain but gives pleasure which inspires praise and recognition rather than disapproval or punishment.

The concept of sublimation includes not only acceptable expression of a forbidden drive, but also something we call aesthetic pleasure. A seldom quoted statement of Freud is that a civilization without the concept of aesthetic beauty can not call itself a civilization.

Scientific creations also use aggressive energy. They are supposed to benefit mankind yet seem to result, almost inevitably, in doing the opposite, in being used or misused for destructive ends. Artistic and scientific creations often seem to conflict with each other: Leonardo da Vinci, for example, lost his interest in painting when he became preoccupied with physical science. He lost his ability to sublimate his violent fantasies in artistic creations and designed the most advanced weapons of war. It is in the same vein that technical inventions like those of instant mass communication more often destroy art than promote it.

Among all the technical gadgets we invented, television is the worst offender in its exploitation of man's pleasure in violence. "But this is what the people want," I hear from writers and producers. "You psychoanalysts are the ones," they tell me, "who say that violence is inherent in the nature of man." Yes, it is. But the function of art, of education, of civilization, of culture, is to modify it, neutralize it, use it productively — not to cultivate brutality or exploit man's pleasure in it.

Sublimation requires a certain ego state or level of ego maturation. Small children can not sublimate their instinctual drives, but seek direct expression for them. And, highly developed sublimations can break down when some internal or external traumatic situation forces an ego regression. In the regressive process the need for direct expression for the sublimated instinctual drives once again becomes predominant. But now the reactivated desire for direct expression provokes severe anxiety or guilt and all expression has to be repressed, resulting in partial or total inability to create — the painter can't paint, the writer can't write, even the sight of a canvas or a sheet of paper provokes anxiety, or you might sit at your desk for hours, days, or months without a thought, without an idea.

MICHELANGELO — THE SISTINE CHAPEL — AND THE PIETÀ"

And now let me give you my favorite example to illustrate my theories about how the artist, utilizing his unconscious envy of woman's ability to create life, his sublimation of violence, and his talent, creates art.

It was on my visits to the Vatican, to the Sistine Chapel and St. Peter's Cathedral, while admiring the masterpieces of Michelangelo, that I gained corroboration for my ideas. There, covering the ceiling, the walls, every corner of the beautiful Sistine Chapel, Michelangelo depicted man's fate, from creation to damnation. And it was there that I found myself asking again the questions which had puzzled me since childhood — and which all children ask if they are not afraid — questions about the story of Genesis (written, of course, by men).

Genesis tells us that God created the Universe — and, as His crowning achievement, created man in His own image. But man was lonely, so God helped him to create the first woman — out of his own body. There, in the center of the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, is the magnificent figure of God, all-powerful and male, creating the moon, the earth, the oceans, forests, the billions of living creatures and finally, with a touch of finger, that beautiful young Adam conceived by Michelangelo. And all this in six days! Yet the story is not complete until God helps the first man to perform the miracle of all miracles, usurping the one function of woman man is unable to perform — to create life.

I asked myself then why man has never paused to analyze why he created this beautiful fantasy in the first place. The answer can only be that it springs from his eternal awe, envy and megalomaniac denial of his feeling of worthlessness in the face of woman's life-giving function. It must give comfort to his shaky and injured self esteem, feed and reinforce his masculine bias.

If there is any validity to this reasoning, then what happened following the creation of the first woman was a logical sequence. In no time at all she was depicted as the cause of man's downfall, of his being driven forever from paradise; described as pleasure giving, necessary, yet as the source of all evil. Consider this passage from the "Malleus Maleficarum" (the "Witches Hammer") written by two religious writers of the 16th Century: "What else is woman but a desirable calamity, a delectable detriment, a foe to friendship, a domestic danger, an evil of nature, painted with fair colors."

In a niche in St. Peter's Cathedral stands Michelangelo's "Pietà" — for me one of the most beautiful of all artistic creations. The figure of the forever young, forever beautiful, idealized, asexual Virgin Mother, holding the lifeless body of the murdered Christ in her lap, answers many questions about the relationship between mother and son, men and women, about violence in man and about his artistic creativity.

Both the Madonna and the body of Jesus are ageless, and either one of them could be exchanged with those of the "Madonna and Child" created by Michelangelo a few years earlier. If Jesus had been killed right after he was born, if the Madonna were holding the limp body of the newborn babe in her arms, it wouldn't make any difference; the meaning would be the same.

Pietà means sorrow, pity. But pity for whom? Is it for Christ? Possibly. Sorrow? Undoubtedly. But the expression on the Madonna's face, the gesture of her left hand are not expressions of sorrow or pity alone: they seem to wonder and to ask, "Why? What is the reason for this senseless destruction?" Perhaps the pity, the sorrow are not just a mother's sorrow for her murdered son but also her pity for him and for all men who cannot create life but can only destroy it.

Michelangelo carved into the ribbon crossing the breast of the Madonna: "Michelangelo of Firenze made this." It is a strange place for an artist to carve his name and various explanations have been given. Let me give you mine. In my opinion, this was not only the perfect way to express a man's desire to identify with the asexual mother and to create life just as she can, but also the unconscious expression of his hostility toward her creation, depicting the murdered son in her arms.

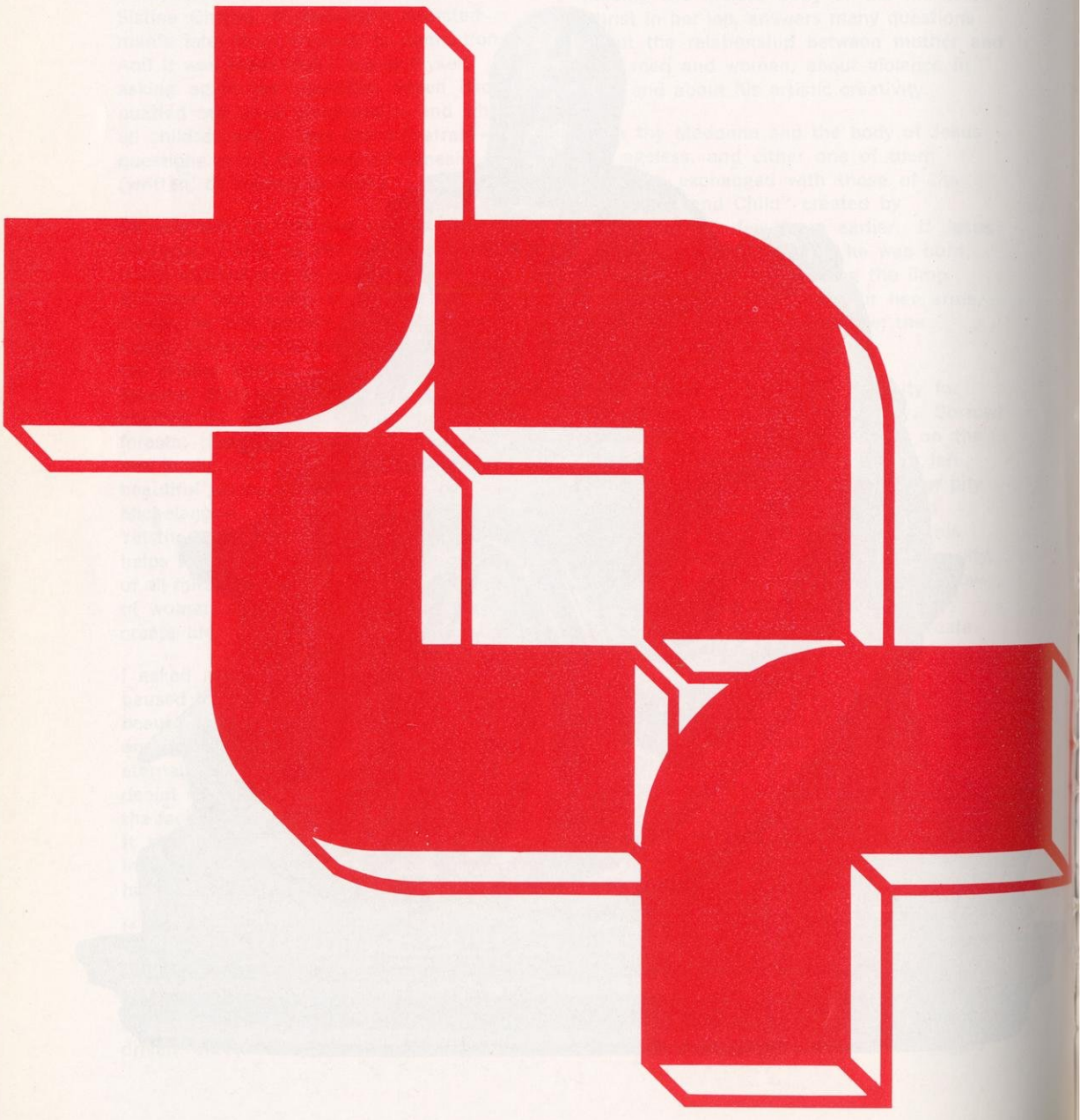
Michelangelo, the great creative artist, depicted every aspect of man's struggle

with his inability to create life. In the paintings covering the Sistine Chapel is expressed the universal fantasy that not woman, but man, is the Creator. In the Pietà, Michelangelo's own unconscious fantasy of creation is expressed by bringing to life this magnificent piece of stone. That is, almost to life, not quite. With all its warmth of motion, its eternal beauty, its indelible impact, it is still not life, still just a piece of cold, lifeless marble, as cold as the lifeless body of the murdered Christ.

Pietà
by Michelangelo

The Suicide of Art

by David Ahlstrom



Why is it that artists do such strange things? Why do they smash pianos, burn violins? Why is it that artists talk of destroying art, of burning the museums, of lynching college professors? Are these ideas just silly things that are said without complete seriousness? Are they said to make good reading later on? Are they the rantings of "characters," of colorful "artist types?" Hardly! They are the most serious, solemn (ludicrous, comical) early warnings of the men who **live,** those who **live with their own lives** the contradictions in our selves and in our society (not that we do not live the same contradictions but, while the rest of us tend to ignore, repress, forget them, the artists always remain at least partly conscious of them, and hence explicitly seek to change themselves, **us,** our-their society, in an attempt to resolve them). These artists warn us that what we see is not what they see, that quite likely we are blind; that what we seem to feel is not what they feel, that we are actually, in all likelihood, unfeeling. We ignore them at our own peril.

Everyone seems to be able to agree that art is some kind of communication. What does wholly destructive art communicate? Well, it seems to me that communication between the members of groups of people, whether these be collections of artists concerned with their art and their society, or citizens concerned with political matters or specific supposed rights may communicate with their established institutions, their leaders, their contemporaries in just four ways: They can make verbal or written statements, hopefully bringing about dialogue and perhaps change. Failing this, and given a bit of wit, they may resort to public satire on an artistic or on another level. Failing here they may attempt a peaceful, non-violent demonstration. With still no results, the remaining step is violence.

Perhaps it may be generally agreed that the placing of political matters and matters of war and peace alongside artistic matters, as I have done here, is not an idle or capricious gesture. One matter is as deadly earnest as the other. For, as I have intimated, artists know things that other members of the society seem not to understand. If they are ignored, as has almost universally been the case, the results can and will be wholly unnecessary anguish if not utter catastrophe.

We live in a society of institutions, each one set up to fight the last war all over again; to subsidize art that only had relevance to our great-grandfathers; to govern cities of blacks under all-white systems that were set up decades, even centuries ago when the city was all white; to bring "American know-how" to the newest technologies and emerging countries, meaning: to exploit them for profit when such exploitation can mean physical ruin and/or moral, physical degradation for literally millions; to prepare young people for a life which will never exist for them; to engage the world's finest scientific minds in the construction of hideous death machinery that is obsolete before finished. How can artists or any other thinking people cope with such monumental blindness in high places? Where does communication start? The "avant-garde," a convenient catch-phrase to blanket a colorful group of young *enfant-terribles.* Perhaps once this would do. **But no more!**

We live in times which are much too dangerous for any such simple-minded, patronizing, amiable tolerance of those who are concerned with the future and are in a position to make concrete contributions toward a reasonably sane one. For these artists are not "ahead" of everyone else. They are exactly **with** their own stage of civilization, or, better, evolution. They are not creating art that is "ahead of its time" (that is an absurd notion), they create today's art, and it makes profound statements about today with clear implications about tomorrow. We are in the midst of the second industrial revolution, a new age of electricity, automation and constant change. Change is, and will continue to be, rapid, that is to say, violent, and necessarily breeds even more violence when institutions either cannot keep up or refuse to recognize the changes. And it comes to this: either the institutions keep up (in this context, heed the artists) or we all perish slowly or quickly.

But let's get down to business and try to determine, at least, for now, on the surface, what all this destructive art is about. Several rather simple and perhaps obvious comments can be made immediately. One may say that destroying a violin by fire or smashing it on a table represents a positive statement which may or may not be clear from the foregoing. First it is, to me at least, a very

beautiful comment, with what would have to be described as an ultra-miniaturized subtleness, on the destructive, aggressive and schizophrenic nature of our ways, a sort of capsulated atomic bomb. Secondly, perhaps a little less crude and quite subtle in its own way, it suggests that the violin virtuoso is quite definitely out of a job, and that the institutions might then take note of a certain change in this situation along with, perhaps, the veritable host of implications contained in and radiating from this fact. But of course the real point of the matter is a purely musical one: this is one way to play the violin. Of course, the artist always seems to wish to speak to his colleagues; in this case he shows them all yet another way to play the fiddle, a very much appreciated point. The less subtle, less musical, points are there for the rest of us.

Subtle? Artistic? I think as subtle and as artistic as any music ever composed. How else might the artist communicate these insights? By writing a book? Could the artist drop a bomb? Climb a pole? Write an article on "New Ways to Play the Violin" and submit it to the music journals?

But **all** these interpretations and commentaries are first of all only barely touching the surface of the matter, and, secondly, are much too crass, too devoid of the genuine subtlety required in an analysis of any aspect of our exquisitely sophisticated civilization. Let us **really** look into the matter, calmly, dispassionately and intellectually!

Ortega y Gasset pinpointed the problem some twenty years ago. What is it, he asked at that time, that makes artists turn against and savagely attack **all** past art? "Hatred of art," he said, "is unlikely to develop as an isolated phenomenon; it goes hand in hand with hatred of science, hatred of state, hatred in sum, of civilization as a whole."[1]

Aha! There it is! Hatred of civilization as a whole. It's this that the artist tries to tell us about. And not hatred (necessarily, or especially) of his (my) **own** civilization, or that of Russia, etc., etc., but of civilization in general and Western civilization in particular. Hatred of civilization itself, the whole civilized business! But what is this civilized state but the very way that all of us civilized beings understand, interpret, and interact (collectively) with the world we live in? Civilization is what we have made it. It is the embodiment of the ways we think, of our very consciousness itself, our way of knowing and what we know. Hatred of art is hatred of civilization is hatred of self.

Listen! Listen!

Listen to the artist, to three (or four) artists who have seen further than most civilized men have been able to see, artists who have seen even into the promised land. To be sure they paid the price for their vision, they were too early and too few. But their time is come; too late for them, but scarcely for the rest of us. Look! Look at our civilization as the artist sees it, be it in London, Campfer, Paris, New York or Dallas, Texas.

> "I wander thro' each charter'd street,
> Near where the charter'd Thames
> does flow,
> And mark in every face I meet
> Marks of weakness, marks of woe.
>
> In every cry of every Man,
> In every Infant's cry of fear,
> In every voice, in every ban,
> The mind-forg'd manacles I hear."[2]

The mind-forg'd manacles = the Spectre = the ratio of things = Urizen (your reason) = man's highly reasoned way of seing everything for use and profit in a utilitarian, mechanical, de-humanized world separated seemingly irrevocably, irretrievably from a world of joy and richness, of profound feeling, of a welling union with the world of others. All separated, alienated "spirits" or ghostly goblins. That is what we are; that is what we have become.

And Vaslav Nijinsky saw exactly the same way that Blake saw. His own term for the mind forg'd manacles, the ratio of things was, simply "thinking." We "think" too much; we have lost touch (as he, Nijinsky, or any other artist has not) with the world before "thinking," the

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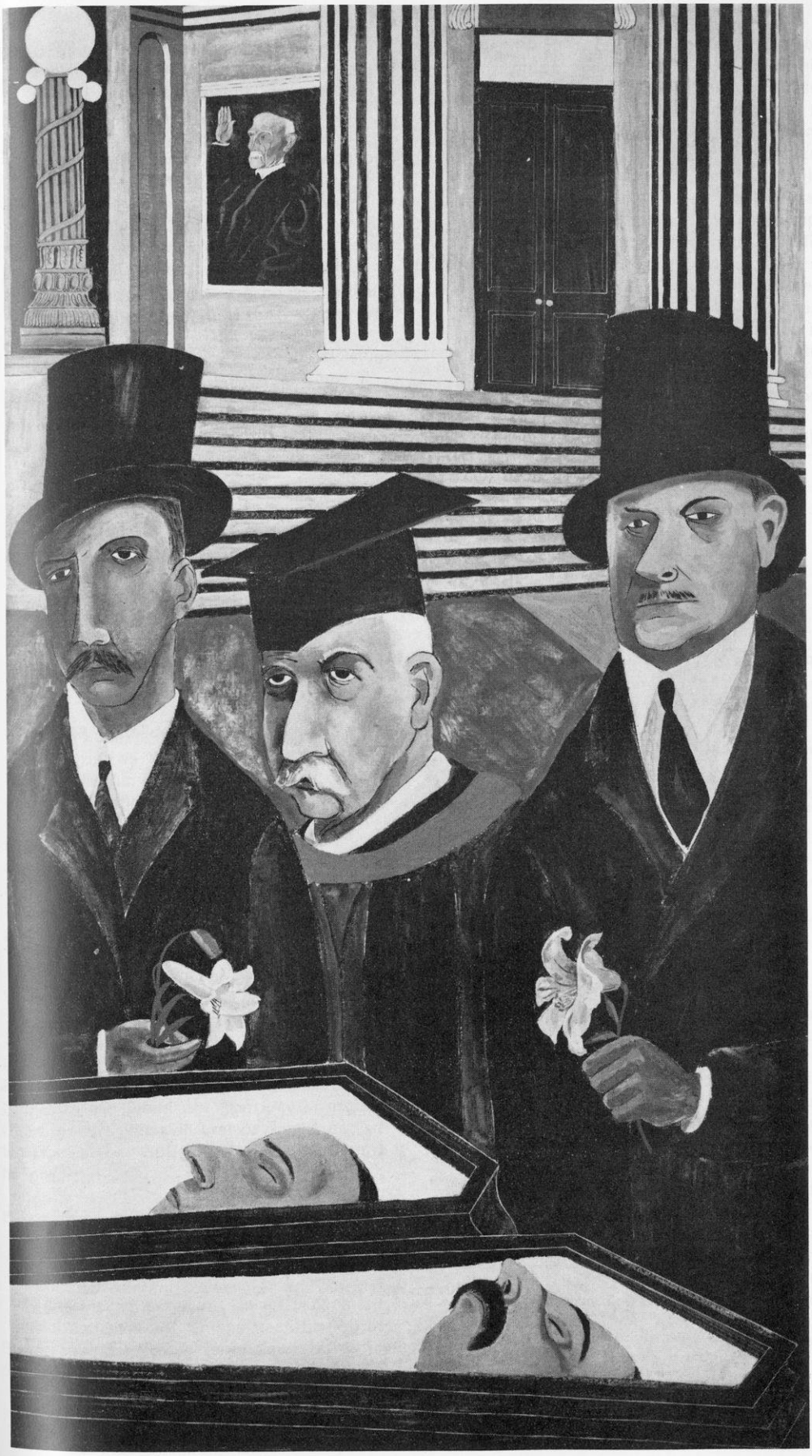
The Passion of Sacco and Vanzetti
by Ben Shahn
Gift of Edith and Milton Lowenthal in Memory of Juliana Force. From the Series of 23 paintings. Tempera on canvas. 1931-32. 84½x48. Collection Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.



world of truth, of the child in us all. Being "in touch" with the humanity within, with reality, poetically, religiously, aesthetically at one with mankind, with its basic oneness and goodness and richness; being thus fully in touch with one's unconscious, Nijinsky names, again very simply and beautifully: "feeling." Nijinsky **feels** great compassion for mankind caught ineluctably with the slimmest hope of salvation, in the mind-forg'd manacles of his very own manufacture. Mankind thinks too much, Nijinsky tells us, he feels too little. Of course, and most touchingly, his own wife is part of the mankind doomed to a living death, though not yet, as we shall see, his little daughter, Kyra.

Nijinsky:

> "My wife thinks a lot but feels little, and (she) started to weep, so that my throat swelled with tears and I wept, covering my face with my hands. I was not ashamed but felt sad and was afraid for my wife. Wishing her good, I did not know what to do. The whole life of my wife and of all mankind is death."[8]

The joys of the world of feeling, the joys of eternity, the joys only the child knows, and the saint, are filtered out, trapped in our nets of reason, our institutions, our own traps, says Blake.

Blake:

> "These were the Churches, Hospitals, Castles, Palaces,
> Like nets & gins & traps to catch the joys of Eternity,
> And all the rest a desert;
> Till, like a dream, Eternity was obliterated & erased."[4]

Death for both these artists is never the death that the Christian knows but the death of a humanity that refuses to realize its own humanity, a humanity trapped in its own meshes of thought and the ensuing laws and institutions, the ensuing flight from death which paradoxically is always a flight from life. But the spectre, whether he be the Devil of mechanical, alienated man or Urizen himself, **need not exist** says Blake. Both he and Nijinsky know that death is of this world and it is of the man who refuses life and actually **pursues** death relentlessly. Yet it's not his fault, or, at least, **it need not be:**

Nijinsky:

> "Passing the hotel, I felt tears, understanding that the whole life in places like this is like death. Mankind makes merry and God mourns. It is not the fault of mankind."[5]

And now will Nijinsky's incredibly pure, shimmeringly, indelibly straight-arrowed child-hearted attack on (with) one psycho-analytic truth (see Norman O Brown) strike us as naive any more? A shudder or perhaps a whimper can be our only thinking response to naiveté that we now know to be so devastatingly true:

Nijinsky:

> "I want to have millions in order to make the Stock Exchange tremble. I want to ruin the Stock Exchange. I am life and life is love of people for one another. The Stock Exchange is death."[6]

And the knots tighten:

Blake:

> "Then the thunders of Urizen
> bellow'd aloud
> From his woven darkness above."[7]
>
> "So twisted the cords, & so knotted
> The meshes, . . .
> . . . a web, dark & cold
> "the dark net of infection; . . .
>
> "Till the shrunken eyes, clouded over,
> Discerned not the woven hipocrisy; . . . "[8]

Antonin Artaud
(on Van Gogh)
"The Man Suicided by Society"
(translated by
Mary Beach
+ Lawrence Ferlinghetti)

M. Artaud: "It isn't man but the world has become abnormal."[9]
meaning that the matter has gotten beyond man's control **unless** he (man) can change himself, become more human, transform (resurrect) his body. Only then can a sick society be made well — by a transformed mankind. But,

Artaud:

> "Things are bad because the sick conscience now has a vital interest in **not** getting over its sickness.
>
> So a sick society invented psychiatry to defend itself against the investigations of certain visionaries whose faculties of divination disturbed it."[10]

AND SOCIETY SUICIDED VAN GOGH

Question:

If every single person in the United States of America — except for President Nixon — got up every single morning and smashed a violin in the breakfast nook, how long would it be before the good president would be removed from office?

What is the psycho-pathology of the average? Is there something better?

Where do **you** fit in?

The man who "thinks" without "feeling" is schizophrenic. Such a consciousness belongs to one who has succeeded in splitting off thought from affect. But we **all** suffer this way; as Erich Fromm and some others have pointed out, we share our sickness with millions of others. Yet we look on ourselves as normal "and at those who have not lost the link between heart and mind as 'crazy'. In all low-grade forms of psychosis," Fromm tells us, "the definition of sickness depends on the question as to whether the pathology is shared or not."[11]

Caught in the jaws of the spectre, our situation is, as it now stands, hopeless. Yet most of us, even those who at least recognize in some measure the hopelessness, simply try to ignore it by adjusting to the majority. As Fromm puts it: "As long as everybody else whistles, (we) whistle too, and instead of feeling (our) hopelessness, (we) seem to participate in a kind of pop concert."[12]

YET IT NEED NOT BE

As Blake taught, there is no reason that man should limit himself as he does, he is free to wake up if only he will, in Nijinsky's terms again, feel rather than think, or rather, feel first and think second. He **can** change and the results will not be predictable.

Blake:

"Each man is in his spectre's power
Until the arrival of that hour
When his humanity awakes
And casts his spectre into the lake . . ."[13]

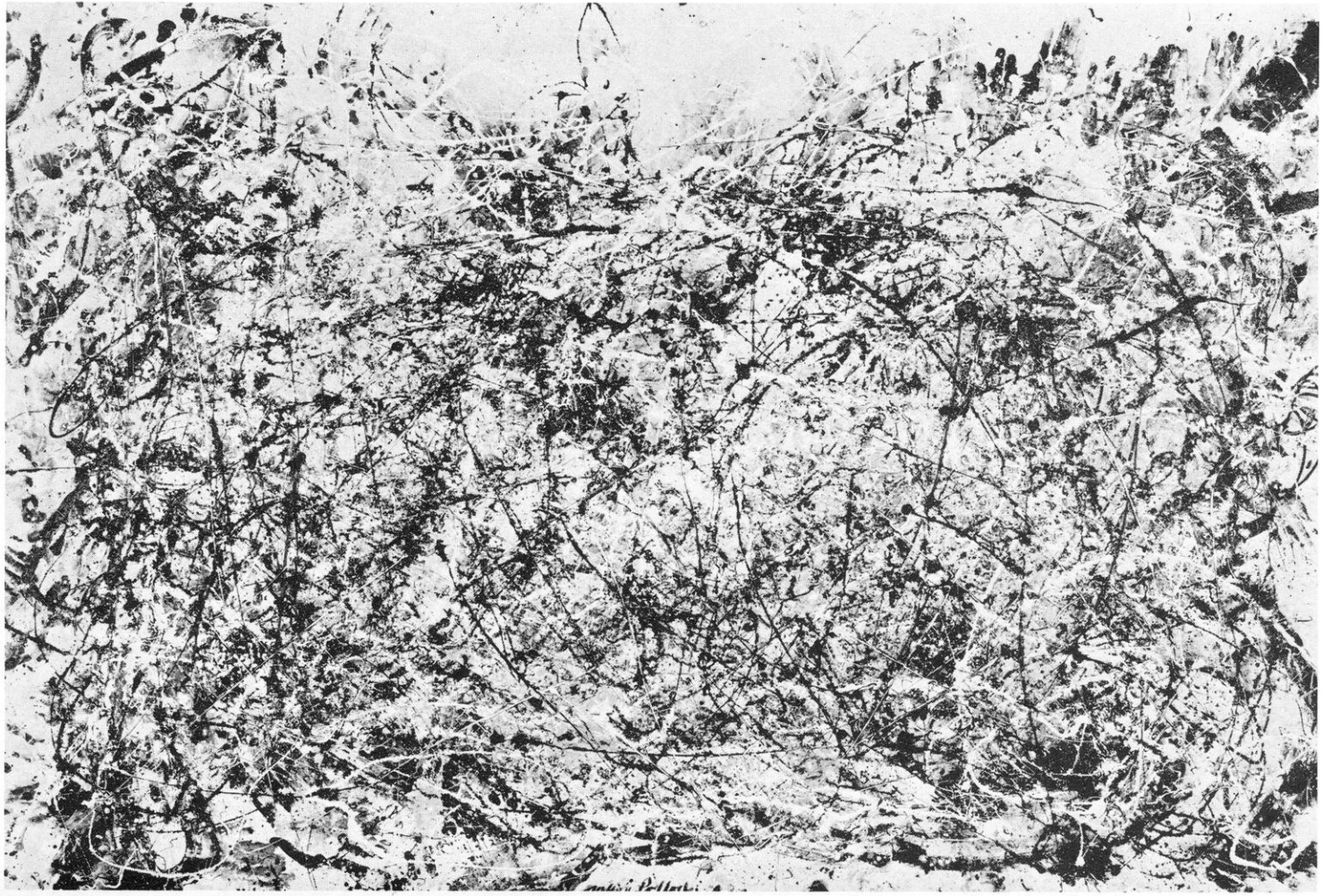
Blake, Nijinsky and Artaud believed passionately that mankind could awake, that he could change his vision from that of the "Marks of weakness, marks of woe" to the vision of the artist, to a humanity capable not merely of thinking but of feeling, a humanity of artists, of seers, of children who are also fully mature, of a Great Humanity Divine. But no one dreamt that such a radical change of man could be anything less than cataclysmic.

Artaud:

"So the question here is revolution,
and everyone is crying out for a necessary
revolution, but I don't know if enough
people have understood that this revolution
would not be real as long as it was
not physically and materially complete,
as long as it would not turn and face man,
face the body of man himself
and decide once and for all to demand
that **he change.**"[14]

Can we change? We must (the question only is how). We will. We already are changing to a significant extent. A beginning has been made. Men have begun to see the unbearable, inhuman burden of the machinery, the systems that they have built and unwittingly, stupidly come to idolize. The systems can be overcome, are easily overcome, on the artistic level, through chance and other techniques. And the negation of man-made systems, in art as anywhere, does **not** result in vacuous inanity but in a renewed ability to see something like what Van Gogh and Nijinsky, Artaud and Blake could see: a world that is beautiful and joyous in and of itself. Man has already learned, at least on the artistic level, how to cast his spectre into the lake and to see the world aright.

Blake could pin-point the problem. He knew that the kernel of Western man's looming alienation from himself and his humanity was in his blinkered, woven, twisted, reasoning, narrowing, strangling form of consciousness. But he could only attempt to chart the area with a mythology of alienation. Van Gogh could see both ways: now as all sleepers see *(The Potato Eaters)* or again as the visionary, the poet, the prophet, the child *(Cypresses by Moonlight)*. But he died with words of a Potato Eater: "Misery will never End."[15] Nijinsky and Artaud were suicided by society so quickly and thoroughly that they really only could begin to articulate, verbally, the horrendous problem of mankind, the real problem



Number I.
by Jackson Pollock
Courtesy: Museum of Modern Art.

The Starry Night
by Vincent Van Gogh
Courtesy: Museum of Modern Art.

set the artist. They never had the opportunity to meet and try to solve this problem on the artistic level.

Only in mid-twentieth century has the artist learned, on the artistic level, to break the systems that bind him, to cast off the mind-forg'd manacles. In the works of artists like LaMonte Young, John Cage, Terry Riley, George Brecht, Robert Rauschenberg, Robert Ashley, the happening people, the inter-medias, the Judson performers, some of the Rock-Light show people, Willis Ward, Jackson Pollock, James Fulkerson, Merce Cunningham, Ornette Coleman, the late John Coltrane, the jazz-light-show experimental church services of Glide Memorial Methodist Church in San Francisco, Erik Hawkins, Lucia Dlugoszewski and others the systems of Western art (the mirror of Western consciousness, the embodiment of Western Civilization) have been, however briefly, cast into the lake, smashed, revealing an incredibly rich and fascinating, perfectly, purely, wonderingly marvelous field of possibility. And the possibility is of **more life,** of a changed, transformed, renewed Western man, **a new man** who can face the East, as himself, as a whole man. It is only a matter of bringing, somehow, this art into our lives, of being transformed **permanently** by it.

On the artistic level Western man has awakened. Everything is before him. Everything is to be done. He is free!

Destruction. Yes destruction. But this destruction that artists like Blake through Nijinsky and Artaud knew somehow had to take place, the destruction which the American avant-garde has come to visit on us is a merciful destruction which is no destruction at all but a liberation.

Man need **not** live out his life in the prisons that he himself has made. He need **not** worship as idols the work of his own hands, the very civilization and technocracy — even his great art, his God — that he himself constructed in the image of his own consciousness and which now threatens either to strangle him or obliterate him. Things **are,** as Emerson said, in the saddle and ride mankind, **but it need not be.**

The artists ask man to change, indeed they demand it. They ask him to transform himself, to grow up, to wake up, **wachet auf!** in order that he himself then may transform his own institutions, the civilization that **he** made, in the image of a now inadequate consciousness, that he may make it over into another image, in the image of another consciousness, another and more adequate vision of himself, his powers, his love, his humanity.

We must change. We must wake up. And we can change. We can wake up. We **can** cast our spectre into the lake. We **can** learn to feel, to know, to **see,** and to love. We have sold ourselves short; we are capable of so much!

The nets, the meshes, the webs, dark and cold, webs and meshes that lead ineluctably to deadly cold steel and the infernal acids of hate and napalm are of our own making. The society (the form of consciousness) that suicided Van Gogh and is intent on suiciding itself — after Vietnam — all these are of our own making.

The nets, the meshes, the webs are imbedded in our arts even as they make up our consciousness. It is to the destruction of this false consciousness that the destruction of art can and must help lead. What remains after this destruction is all humanity, all the humanity that in the West, has been, for so many of us, lost — if only the merciful destruction of civilization through art (or any other means) can wake us to this humanity within us and uniting us, before the actual and virtual destruction can take place.

Van Gogh was suicided by society. So, really, was Nijinsky. So was Artaud. They had awakened. (Blake survived pretty much as a bitter recluse.) These were the awakened ones amongst the sleeping millions. **They had to be eliminated.**

But to be an awakened one, it is not necessary also to be a great artist. All that is needed is the ability to feel, in addition to the ability to think, **and to put this first.** All that is needed is the ability to live in the real world of human warmth and aliveness instead of the symbolic, conceptual world of words and paper currency and I.B.M. cards. And, since Blake, the awakened ones have been growing in great numbers in our society, in Europe and in America, all, it seems, very young. Their number is already so great that society simply cannot suicide them all, though parts of society will try. That same

society faces with an incredibly stupid hostility literally billions in Asia and Africa and more millions at home who, because they derive from older cultures or because they are among the awakened ones, see things **(feel** things), in many ways, just as Nijinsky and Artaud, Van Gogh and Blake saw them.

The consciousness that built Western civilization is obsolete and a threat to the world. It must be changed, remolded, "dis-alienated." If this entails, among other things, the destruction of the art we have known, then the artist must destroy in order to affirm.

It is only the second function of art to pass on the transcript of the past, to inculcate, to reinforce the consciousness that we inherit (though our institutions, criminally I think, confine themselves almost exclusively to this second function). The first function of art is to enlarge that consciousness, to transform it, to prepare it to deal with the realities of the world with which it **now** interacts and which it will be called on to contemplate and interact with in the future. The latter necessarily entails that the former be overcome.

To those who can believe that they can change the world without first changing themselves there is nothing to be said.

Every day we choose between living under the spectre and seeing the world aright. Perhaps we are forever doomed to wobble between the two, as poor Van Gogh.

But we must decide which of the two is to rule us. At each moment we must **and do** decide between Van Gogh's last words, "Misery will never end," and Nijinsky's response to the very great child-knowledge of his little girl, Kyra (children, only knowing eternity, never wobble):

Nijinsky:

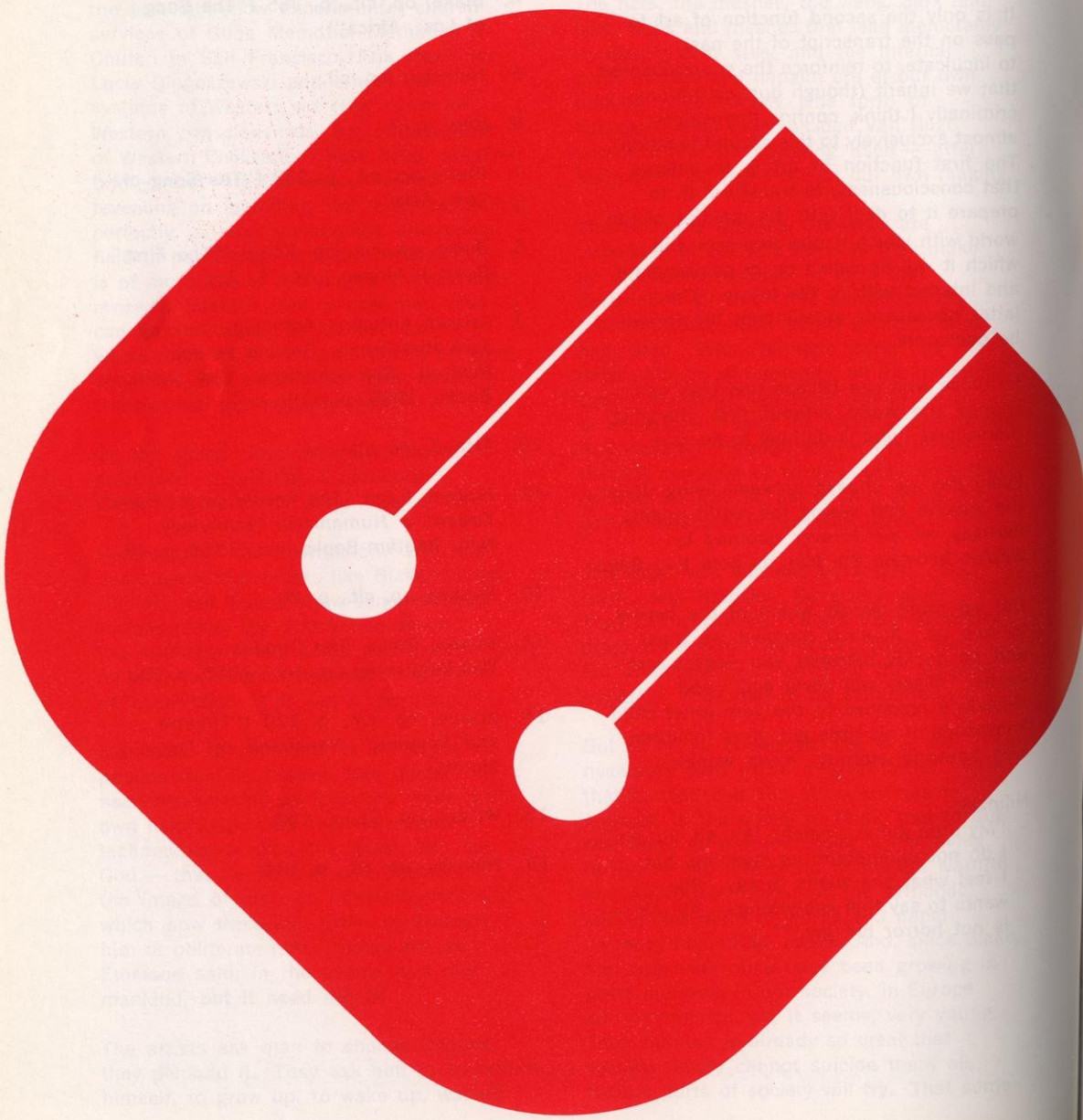
> "My little girl is singing: 'Ah, ah, ah, ah!' I do not understand its meaning, but I feel what she wants to say. She wants to say that everything — Ah! Ah! — is not horror but joy."[16]

1. Jose Ortega y Gasset. *The Dehumanization of Art.* Garden City, N.Y. Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1956, p. 142.
2. Blake, William. *The Portable Blake.* Ed. by Alfred Kazin, N.Y. The Viking Press, p. 112 ("London").
3. Nijinsky, Vaslav. *The Diary of Vaslav Nijinsky.* Ed. by Romda Nijinsky. Berkeley. University of California Press, 1936, p. 38.
4. Blake, *op. cit.*, p. 365 ("The Song of Los: Africa").
5. Nijinsky, *loc. cit.*
6. *Ibid.* p. 7.
7. Blake, *op. cit.*, p. 368 ("The Song of Los: Asia").
8. Blake, *op. cit.*, pp. 345-6 ("The First Book of Urizen," IX: 1, 2.).
9. Artaud, Antonin. *Anthology.* Ed. by Jack Hirschman. Second Edition Revised. San Francisco. City Lights Books, 1965, p. 135.
10. Artaud, *loc. cit.*
11. Fromm, Erich. *The Revolution of Hope: Toward a Humanized Technology.* N.Y. Bantam Books, Inc., 1968, p. 47.
12. Fromm, *op. cit.*, p. 20.
13. Wilson, Colin. *The Outsider.* N.Y. Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1956, p. 238.
14. Artaud, *op. cit.*, p. 170 ("Theatre and Science," translated by Daniel Moore.)
15. Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 106.
16. Nijinsky, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

Quality or E-Quality in the Universities:

Some Meditations on the Leavis–Lord Annan Controversy

by G.S. Rousseau



It is ironic that a spectator, an outsider, has made the most perceptive comment yet on the recent F. R. Leavis — Lord Nöel Annan controversy which raged last spring in the *Times Literary Supplement of London:*

The controversy involving Leavis, Snow, Huxley and others has been a war too much of words and too little of concrete issues.

That is David Craig writing in "Letters to the Editor" column of the *TLS*, 5 May 1970.

"A war too much of words" accurately epitomizes the latest phase of the "two cultures" controversy and tells us the only certain thing we can know about it. Some corollaries emerge, that the conflict, for example, like the Hundred Years' War, is long and that this phase will not mark its demise; that put in historical perspective and viewed on balance it is part of a continuing gladiatorial battle between "Ancients and Moderns," now at least four centuries old, humanists calling themselves Ancients, scientists Moderns; finally, that Dr. Leavis, retired and formerly a don of English literature at the University of Cambridge, must now be coronated the most eloquent spokesman for the humanists, the only "Ancient" who has taken on, singlehanded, Snow, Huxley, and, at the moment, Lord Annan, ex-Provost of King's College, Cambridge, and now Provost of University College, London, and a member of the Prime Minister's planning committee on higher education. Craig's "concrete issues," by contrast, have fared poorly. Swells of heated rhetoric and bitter personal invective have drowned the great issues in an ocean of animosity, with allies rallying to the aid of friends and silent observers no longer able to keep their cool.

Mr. Geoffrey Grigson, an English journalist whose columns frequently appear in the *Listener, Spectator,* and *New Statesman,* is a really glittering specimen. He would, I suppose, call himself a "modern humanist," but he has not a genuine humanist's learning, has never written on literature versus science, has not distinguished himself in five long decades as a torchbearer for either camp. But now he blatantly demands to know (*TLS*, 4 April):

how on earth such a bad writer [as Dr. Leavis] has emerged from his proper habitat of lecture-room or class-room or local debating society. I reflect that Mr. Leavis must be right. We are in a bad way. We must be, when we accept such teaching, in a revealing style; and such priggery.

Words: silly, sardonic, trivial; illustrative of their author's quality of mind. Leavis and Annan are not so mindless, and although their recent attacks on one another are dyspeptic, they also reveal deep differences on meaningful and concrete levels — differences ultimately paradoxical and irresolute, and that raise some of the deepest questions of our times. If we dismiss as irrelevant to the larger issues the effrontery and ebullience of these men and extract the most rudimentary assumptions from their pages of verbiage, we cannot help but conclude that these experienced gladiators are addressing themselves to some of the greatest problems of our age, Viewed thus, they will be seen as similar and kindred types. Their souls do meet, and where they disagree will be viewed by the next century as a region composed not of foreign territories but of one vast purgatory hovering in uncertainty, indirection, and expectation. I shall have more to say about this.

The chronology of last spring's phase of the controversy ultimately adds little to our complete understanding — it cannot explain away, naturally, the large differences already mentioned — but it may set a perspective from which concrete assumptions can be extracted and evaluated. Two years ago, 1969, Dr. Leavis delivered a lecture at the University of Bristol entitled "Literarism' Versus 'Scientism': The Misconception and the Menace." The lecture was ostensibly about the kinds of poetry computers may eventually write, but (of course) it was also a summing up of Leavis' ideas, an *Apologia Pro Vita Sua:* Its author has made a career out of professional disputation and controversialists are forever getting into confessional moods. Lord Annan was mentioned in mere passing, twice seriatim, and three or four times in an admittedly disparaging manner but surely no auditor could have construed the lecture as outright excoriation of a man or specific group:

. . . the university . . . is being propaganded militantly by Mr. Fowler, Minister of State overseeing higher education, Mr. Harold Wilson (insofar as he has attention

to spare), Mr. Christopher Price, M.P., Lord Annan, ex-Provost of King's College, Cambridge, and actual Provost of University College, London, and the authoritative planners who, confident of general support from the electorate, plan to double the number of university students by 1980 (and at comparatively little cost) . . .

The only place where standards can be maintained is the university properly conceived — the university as Lord Robbins, Lord Annan, Mr. Fowler, and Mr. Harold Wilson are committed to destroying it (and let me add at once that I see no grounds for counting on anything positively better from Mr. Heath's party or Mr. Jeremy Thorpe's).

Leavis' disparaging remarks are less worthy of quotation ("words . . . not concrete issues"), but even his seriatim references illustrate the philosophical foundations of the concrete and political underlying issues. Lord Annan, rising to the challenge, replied to Leavis in a *TLS* leader (30 April) entitled "The University and the Intellect: The Miasma and the Menace," echoing the title of Leavis' Bristol lecture. From Annan's opening remark it is clear he had responded personally:

Controversy is usually a dispiriting pastime, and controversy with Dr. Leavis is degrading. Degrading because you find his personal animosity puts such a strain on your temper and humour that to your horror you find yourself on the point of replying in his own tone of voice.

Such melodrama is hardly less culpable than Leavis' intolerable primping and pomposity, but whereas Leavis is by profession a consummate wordsmith, the detractions of his enemies notwithstanding, Lord Annan, an administrator and politician, ought to know better than to engage in a verbal joust with "England's pride," and in so doing to confuse words and issues, rhetoric and policy, the personal and the public. Leavis' arrow, nevertheless, hit its target. Annan was stung and his reply was no less "degrading" than Leavis' slaughter of the progress of the multiuniversity in the last decade:

No one can doubt the strength of Dr. Leavis' conviction that he is one of the few guardians of "life," "creativity" and "health." But can one accept such a claim from a man who declares that he is open to conviction yet habitually uses the language of intimidation to all who differ from his views; who alludes to evidence and doesn't give it; who speaks of the need for life and health in order to fortify a quasi-religious position but seems to be eaten up by rancour and hatred of life?

Finally, Annan's *coup de grace:*

It is not Dr. Leavis' picture of life so much as the miasma through which it appears, that menaces the spirit of the university. If there were a menace to the universities it would come not from me, but from those who in the name of creativity would impose such a straight-jacket upon the play of free minds that creativity would indeed be strangled.

Leavis, not vulnerable to strangling, replied, Annan counter-replied, each calling the other a menace and threat; others launched further attacks and even those mentioned in passing — Fowler, Price, Raymond Williams, Lord Robbins — somehow eked out the time to defend themselves. Everyone involved has since been spewing forth.

To view the "concrete issues," however, requires a less vexed approach, one that is steady and calm, and that has neither ax to grind nor profit to gain and that is willing to achieve compromise; that restores meaning, not rhetoric, to the issues; and foremost, that is neither bitter, cynical or histrionic, as both men have now shown themselves. Without equanimity nothing will be gained: this episode of the "two cultures" controversy will then be recorded by future historians as approaching a nadir, as violent, ill-mannered, and hostile, and, consequently, as one of its least constructive moments.

1. **Quality in Higher Education**

For four decades Mr. Leavis has been lecturing to the western world that there is only **one** culture: single, indivisible, unique. "Two cultures" is a myth, an unreality propagated by renegades of the last hundred years, a force of circumstance especially aggravated during the 1960's by Lord Snow's misunderstanding of Leavis' 1962 Richmond Lecture. Like all myths, Leavis recognizes, it has a persuasive, even enticing semblance of truth, but then his monumental confidence returns:

Photograph by Michael Feldman

there is culture and non-culture, true and false culture, civilized and uncivilized culture — but **one** culture only. A rough blueprint of it could be etched:

Homer
Plato
Virgil
Dante
Shakespeare
Milton
Newton
Jane Austen
Keats
Wordsworth
Darwin
Matthew Arnold
George Eliot
Henry James
D. H. Lawrence
Yeats
T. S. Eliot

Non-culture's blueprint is different:

Dickens
Phenomenology
Kierkegaard
Dostoevsky
Freud
Photography
Engineering
Aesthetics of Science
Sensitivity in Human Relations
The Social Interactions of Tasmanians
Existentialism
Computer Poetry
Electric Music
Margaret Mead
Claude Lévi-Strauss
Marshall McLuhan

Hundreds of statements and relationships can be made about both blueprints, yet despite all criticism Leavis' puritanism is unshakable, monolithic: the university is the only place left in which true culture can be studied; that culture is the basis of civilization and no man who has not studied it (Homer, Shakespeare, D. H. Lawrence, etc.) can call himself properly educated.

Such immutable belief is hardly arbitrary or the result of personal idiosyncrasy to a degree of totalitarianism, and moralistically literal to the extent of a religious, puritanical obsession, to be sure; but one must concede dispassionately that Leavis' "culture" represents a meditated definition, the labor of years of vast reading and writing and that it has been formulated by an admittedly prodigious intellect whose only peers in literary criticism in this century are T. S. Eliot and Edmund Wilson. Moreover, that Leavis, the Coleridge of his age, has demonstrated integrity throughout decades by an unflinching tenacity to his blueprint. Carlyle's definition of men of principle as those who believe and cling to their belief, applies unconditionally to Dr. Leavis, and that is more than one can say for his political opponents.

Leavis' definition of "culture-civilization-the university" underplays science and technology but cannot be called anti-scientific. Like his spiritual ancestors (especially Matthew Arnold, D. H. Lawrence), he endorses "scientism," his term, yet he maintains that science alone is not enough. Nor are anti-literature, anti-history, anti-art, etc. Genuine greatness is a prerequisite for admission to Leavis' culture schema, and his vision in distinguishing significance and insignificance is so seemingly clear, that one wonders from what sources he derives this secret knowledge. George Eliot's celebrated passage (she, incidentally, qualifies for true culture) comes to mind:

If we had a keen vision and feeling of all ordinary human life, it would be like hearing the grass grow and the squirrel's heart beat, and we should die of that roar which lies on the other side of silence. As it is, the quickest of us walk about well wadded with stupidity.

(*Middlemarch*, chapter XX)

E-Quality

Lord Annan's vantage is altogether different. The university shall somehow salvage the lower dregs of society and transform them into a respectable segment. As an academic administrator and public official, he endorses expansion of higher education, especially the universities, by insisting that modern society requires a pluralism of universities, and he doesn't worry about the loss of quality or sacrifices of excellence; he is rather fed up with the puritanical idea of a university as a citadel of intellectual contemplation and favors a much broader concept in which the university serves the needs of the community as a quasi industrial-political-technological center. He cannot understand

Leavis' definition, nor does he view from his angle of vision the university only as a creative center of culture transmitting the indisputably great artifacts of previous generations, Leavis' concept. Nor does he fathom Leavis' values and system of morality — his own are far more relaxed and skeptical, partaking in an attendant optimism and toleration for many modes of living and creativity.

Dr. Leavis adheres to a belief which I reject. He believes that there is one *set of values and* one *set of ends which all men of good will who desire to live "creatively" would agree upon and define in the* same *terms. I don't. I believe in the morality of pluralism and compassion. Those who talk of "life" should acknowledge that there are human beings of infinite complexity and variety who cannot be measured by a single yardstick. (Underlining mine.)*

"Life" is hardly Leavis' subject; art, science, and technology within the university are; and by no stretch of the imagination can they be called "life," the all-encompassing and all-engulfing. It is, rather, Leavis' single "set of values" and Lord Annan's "many values" which are in conflict. That is the heart of the disagreement. Leavis adheres to one set of values because in art and science there *is* only one yardstick, and as Dr. Johnson (who, if he were here at this hour would staunchly champion Dr. Leavis) long ago observed, time is the greatest measure of that yardstick. Time has shown that Shakespeare, Milton, and Keats, for example, are classics of our English language and that the poetry of Phineas Fletcher, Thomas Duffet, and John Hamilton Reynolds are not; and that the scientific writings of Bacon, Locke, and Newton are still read, while the less significant works of their contemporaries are not. Yet, every time an assessor of this controversy latches on to a point that seems crucial, he eventually yields to its apparent dispensability, for Leavis all the while speaks of the absolutes of human achievement — art and science — while Annan perpetually treats the totality of humanity, not merely art, and given his vantage, his thought is sensible. Humanity itself is so various, exists in so many grades, like the creatures on Alexander Pope's "Great Chain of being" in An **Essay on Man,** that it is folly to apply a single set of values to all her creatures. Thus the paradox of quality and equality in the university: naturally, many other paradoxes exist when two men as experienced and witty as Leavis and Annan debate the direction British universities should take. It all depends on one's perspective, on whether one is more concerned with the preservation of great civilization (Homer, Dante, Racine, Darwin) or with improvement of generations of young people regardless of their absolute attainments.

Meditation

One need not be Cassandra to prophesy that Leavis has lost and will continue to lose — not the man himself, for his life and work as a teacher and writer are already a distinguished monument of British culture, but the principles he embodies and his style. He is too solemn, too serious, too dictatorial. His own colleagues disparage him, as for example, Professor J. H. Plumb, the Cambridge historian who in his latest book, *The Death of the Past,* has dealt him the most merciless deathblow. "Another refugee in a never-never land of the past is F. R. Leavis, whose picture of nineteenth-century England is as totally unrealistic as it must be emotionally satisfying." Despite Leavis, the world long ago committed itself to mass education, from kindergarten to the Ph.D., and a historical fact will not now reverse itself. The British debate is, therefore, long overdue. It is dated and only interesting to educational theorists and pedagogues; it will have no opportunity to influence national policy, for Britain decided to invest in mass education approximately when we did (although her standards are still higher), and the Labor and Conservative government both endorse it. Technical colleges and arts colleges (the equivalent of our junior colleges) have swarmed over England and their number increases every year. College degrees, moreover, are now economic necessities and both nations make it impossible to obtain white-collar jobs without them. As time elapses and the competition for professional jobs becomes keener, employers will demand more "higher education," more courses, more degrees. These facts are the backdrop of the present drama; they are economic and national realities; and yet we must not lose sight of the basic rift in the Leavis-Annan controversy, a single set of values by which the university should govern itself and direct its future labors.

No American who viewed the profound disturbance on campuses last year can possibly argue, whatever his leanings, that the university is any longer "the last place in which the creative center of civilization can be expertly studied," as Dr. Leavis believes. Those who, like myself, are university professors and who were compelled last spring to live in a daily nightmarish academic purgatory know how much quality education we sacrificed to the principle of equality. As universities become increasingly political (and every indication points in this direction), we the professors, the instructors of the young, shall find ourselves continuously compromising quality, and this will occur so imperceptibly that many of us will not be aware of the gradual deterioration of the qualitative instruction which we ourselves have known. The record of the past, the joys and sufferings of ancient civilizations, will be expunged for all except a handful of scholars, will be toppled by an obsessive concern for the "relevant" — and what is "relevance" if not the perpetually obsolete? Eternal truths, qualities of humanity that persist through all ages embraced in great art, which should be worshipped by educated men who are fortunate enough to have read the record of mankind, will be eclipsed by shallower half-truths: urgent, enticing, and relevant, to be sure, but without the weighty wisdom of the ages.

Is this not precisely Leavis' position? Has logic not compelled me to adopt his criteria, use his paradigms, if quality of any sort is to be retained in university education? Is his admonition not a wise word to university policy makers of the future? Yes and no; yes because Leavis is in my estimate the sanest if shrillest voice speaking on quality in higher education today; no because his obsessive puritanism prevents him from viewing radical changes that have already — I repeat, **already** — taken place in the western world: social, political, and economic changes of vast proportions that have created a revolution in human thought and social interaction. From Leavis' vantage any such changes are merely temporal and (like all changes) cannot blot out eternal human truths; but one must believe, I would argue, that eternal human truths **exist** if one is to search for them. Precisely these truths are now being questioned especially by the young, and deemed mythical by many others; to my knowledge western society has no precedent for such dubiety because culture has never been so secularized as it is right now. Every generation questions its forbears; every age rebels, sometimes monolithically, against former ages; every century believes that traditional hierarchies are being toppled more strenuously than before. "Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold" as W. B. Yeats commented in *The Second Coming.*

We may be, therefore, at that moment in history in which the most fundamental laws of human behavior, social interaction, and cultural values are being questioned to a degree previously unknown. If this is true — our leading sociologists and psychologists insist it is — and if a constantly advancing technology is simultaneously effecting vast changes in our daily lives by reordering through push-button mechanisms our expectations of the "quick and the easy," then it is unreasonable to expect the university, even if it wished, to retain its traditional mould. The likelihood is that by 1980 universities will undergo some form of surgery, possibly castration, despite Leavis and Annan, for whatever their differences, these men, contemporaries, both bred at Oxbridge (the English abbreviation for Oxford and Cambridge) by tutors whose values were similar if not identical, are products of a literary generation that spent most of its time reading books and whose only main difference regarded the degree of toleration for the new technology — Leavis tolerating it less, Annan more. These books were primarily written by Christians of varying persuasions whose morality was also Christian, and even the pagan Classics (Homer, Plato, Aristotle, Virgil) on one side and the secularized Moderns (Marx, D. H. Lawrence, Freud, Santayana) on the other, were viewed through its eyes. Such Christian morality, which at its best could offer devoteés a powerful *Weltanschauung,* is now being overthrown by a new morality, predicated not upon respect for tradition, authority, and eternal verities but on grounds of immediacy, relevancy, and the power of individuals to have complete freedom of choice in shaping their destinies, however imprudent their choices. That is a very different morality from the one espoused

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Dirty Fascist
Photograph by Dennis Connor

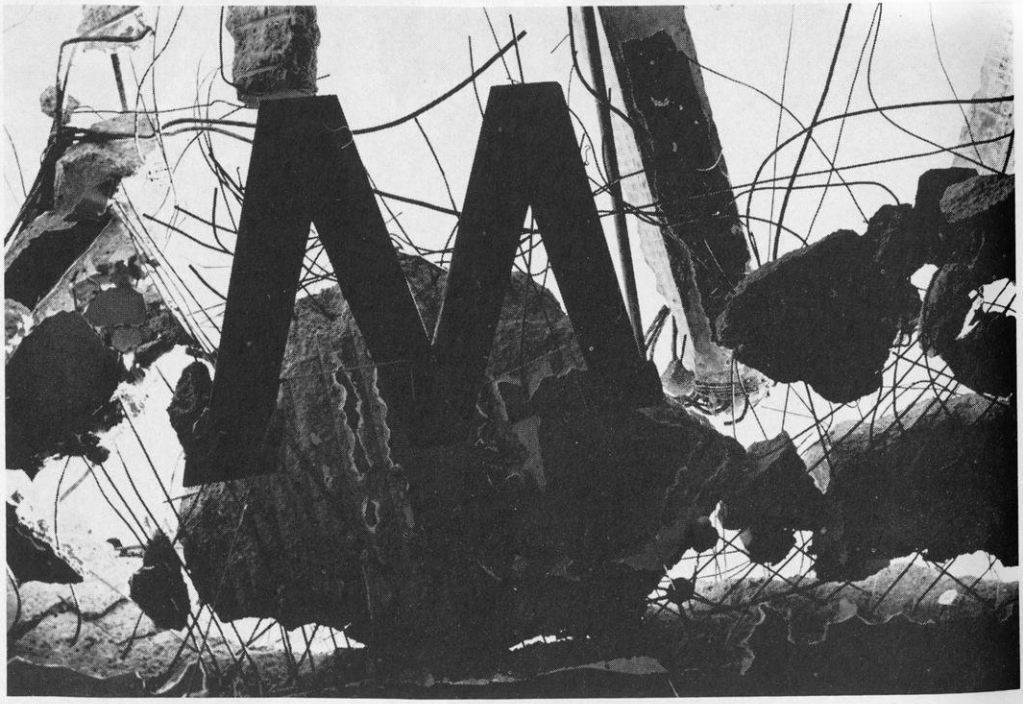
at Oxbridge during the twenties and thirties when Leavis and Annan were in their formative years.

The main question confronting a student of contemporary affairs is how far advanced the new morality is. For no one observing at first hand the current academic scene ought to overlook the infringements of this new ethic or to be blinded by the vestiges of an older world — Leavis' and Annan's world — which continues to struggle for survival. Surely, we are still in the process of commingling the two, at least in America and Britain, but the new morality is gaining ground more quickly, and we appear to be nearer the end, rather than at the beginning of, a vast historical transformation. That, of course, Dr. Leavis will not grant, and I cannot force him. As a dispassionate and impartial outsider, it is my duty to note that Leavis' religious intensity has for the last decade been solidified by a deep sense of the unfeasibility of his position regarding the universities, a position that is intellectually impeccable but morally despotic, puritanical, and perhaps most significant, intractable in view of the present structure of American and British society. The Plantagenets, alas, are gone forever, Dr. Leavis!

What then is the solution? If one exists, it is probably pragmatic, especially since neither Leavis nor Annan will yield an inch, and since the universities will adopt the values of the new morality anyway. Although it may appear simple-minded, my modest proposal is that an attempt be made to retain Leavis' "quality" in higher education for as long as possible knowing fully well, as educators do, that the attempt is ultimately doomed. For it is to the common good of mankind to preserve civilization all the more strenuously when that civilization is threatened by revolutionary forces, and it is now perhaps more certain than previously that the needs of the egalitarian masses will eventually triumph in the groves of academe as they are triumphing in the rest of our society.

Such pragmatism is surely unoriginal and uninspired and can only appear to be the aftermath of Leavis' religiosity and Annan's pugnacity, and yet I cannot claim to have any satisfactory solution nor to be able to reconcile their polar values. I can speak subjectively and state my own preferences, but that is not my prerogative nor should it be my role in a piece of this sort. I have made a personal choice; I wish to stress that I have chosen

Photograph by Michael Feldman



Leavis' solution, that my sense of the university and its quality is closer to his than to Lord Annan's; but I cannot say it is the "only" choice, or that it will work for others, or even that it is the best choice. If I had to legislate for the masses, as does Lord Annan, my personal choice might remain but my public one might be different. Luckily, I am not in that difficult position. Yet I cannot mute the public voices speaking within me, voices crying out with urgency, begging that Secretaries and Ministers of education maintain quality on grounds that whatever little exists in today's large multiuniversities, so accurately described by Leavis and Annan as "monstrous industrial plants," will, notwithstanding this effort anyway, eventually succumb to the populace's demands for equality — for all persons regardless of class, background, or academic preparation to have an opportunity to go to universities.

That time is not far away and when it eventuates, not partially but actually, the world will pass into a new age in which human responsibility, Christian morality, and the eternal veracities, worshipped for so many centuries in the cathedrals and universities of Europe and America, are superseded by new truths. We must not be narrow about this brave new world. It may be better than ours. Its morality may be deeper and more genuine and may strike us as crude only by virtue of novelty. Its computers may be capable of genius and creativity. Its truths may embrace new realms of human awareness and potential. It may be, in fact, another stage in the evolution of our species, already millions of years old.

But conversely, it may be disastrous, barbaric, intolerable. It may be the beginning of the end, an irredeemable menace and threat. I like to think this uncertainty is precisely what Santayana was implying when he commented in 1928 to Daniel Cory, his intimate friend and literary executor, on the coming of the new world:

When people despise that which exists, in language, vocabulary, or morals, and set up the sufficiency of their unchastened impulses, they are barbarians. But, as I said in my letter the other day, that may be the beginning of a fresh civilization.

London, Spring 1970

Tiger of Wrath: Jacob Landau

by Barry Schwartz

The tigers of wrath are wiser than the horses of instruction.
——Blake

The 1960's, called by John Updike "that slum of a decade," is finally over, leaving in its aftermath an enormous skepticism. Underlying our preoccupation with politics, with moral questions and with war is a gnawing suspicion that human survival is no longer a certainty. And what is it that threatens survival itself? The eclipse of democracy? Ecological disaster? War? Racial conflict? Nuclear holocaust? Population explosion? Our apprehensions have begun to center on the ultimate calamity, the source of our discontent from which all problems derive — man himself. Our fears of extinction, perhaps our wish for it, are based on what we have seen men do to men.

As we enter the 1970's we know that the stakes are high; that old problems and new ones have yet to be answered — and that the absence of answers places everything in jeopardy. It is with these awarenesses this writer ponders the work of Jacob Landau.

Jacob Landau is an artist with an uncompromising vision. He is among those few artists alive in America who have consistently been able to tell the truth, while commenting on the truth, while maintaining artistic integrity. As able and as prolific as the best of our horses of instruction, Landau has distinguished himself as our most important tiger of wrath.

At the very beginning of his long career, Jacob Landau possessed a remarkable artistic talent. As William Rose Benet describes the case in 1934, writing in the Saturday Review of Literature: ". . .A youngster, Jacob Landau, in the tenth annual competition for awards given by the national high school weekly, *Scholastic,* electrified the jury on black ink drawings, who couldn't believe his illustrations . . . were original. This being proved beyond a doubt they marveled at the fact that the work was unquestionably superior to that of many professional illustrators."

What was this youngster to do? Possessing an extraordinary skill at illustration, which caused him to be called genius at an age when many artists had not yet committed themselves on paper or canvas, Landau decided to become an "artist." He wrote of those early days: ". . . . with all the romanticism of which only youth is capable, I hastened to condemn the very gods at whose feet I had worshipped. I wanted no part of illustration, and on moving to New York in 1939, I found an appropriate garret in the form of an unheated loft where great masterpieces were to be born. In time, however, reality asserted itself, and I went back into the field via the bullpen of a studio, with the realization that while most illustration is not yet art, neither is most painting which is produced for the market place . . . ." What Landau came to learn at an early age, what many contemporary artists seem to have forgotten, is that a work of art, be it painting, print, illustration or happening does not only reflect the environment in all its aspects, but also interprets or judges it. The individual interpretation of the world is what leads to the desire for communication. It may well be that because he possessed an unusual artistic prowess at the beginning of his career, Landau could safely consider how his abilities should be used in the many years ahead. Our good fortune is that at a very early stage Landau's communication became based on the assumption that the stakes are human survival.

Like Blake before him, Landau is concerned with specific conflicts as an individual, yet the work itself derives from a vision which asks men to see what it is they do to one another and asks that they **be** differently. It is for this reason that Landau is called a humanist — for his cause is man. While partisan as a thinker, his art strives in a most evocative way to ignite within men the human response from which all other positions emanate.

All this is well and good, and I suppose that an artist with this intention deserves meritorious praise, but I think Landau deserves more. Because his art demands from us what we have been unable to give, he has received less. Not only is this artist deeply concerned with the singularly most important issue of our time, but as well, his art is of exceptional quality. By this I mean to refer to that craft and precision which denies gimmicks, which escapes fads, which can never be considered a product, and which is properly placed within a tradition that will outlive us all. In payment for the devotion to skill and for the seriousness of his content Landau

has received many awards and much esteem but has been given short shrift of critical attention.

The greatness of his work is explained by this equation only: major intention, superior craft, and the creation of work which is a confident synthesis of both. This synthesis is accomplished by careful coordination of purpose and technique. The depth of the work is achieved by the unique fusion of multiple and acceptable tensions. The purpose of Landau's art is a communication which rests on the prominent role of the image. In opposition to the present tendency to make the field exclusive or overwhelming in comparison to the image, Landau emphasizes the image, often to the exclusion of the field. The image, then, is not perceived as an imposition on the total visual experience, but an ikon of immense importance to the meaning of the work. To be realized effectively the intended image must appear entirely natural and without contrivance, and here the remarkable draftsmanship of the artist secures the powerful effect of the work. Through his art Landau displays an unflinching and harmonious relationship between the figure, or masses of figures, and the content.

Here the reader may be misled into thinking that Landau's work is the result of careful planning, and that the final execution follows from drawings, sketches and plans for the work. Nothing could be further from the truth. Although the visual experience is of an entirely different kind, Landau works more like an abstract expressionist than an architect. Before his work is begun there is almost no premeditation. Working out of an obsession with images and forms Landau commits himself directly on the block, the paper, or the canvas. His confrontation, and that is the correct word, with the media is an act of passion, not design, which makes his work all the more interesting.

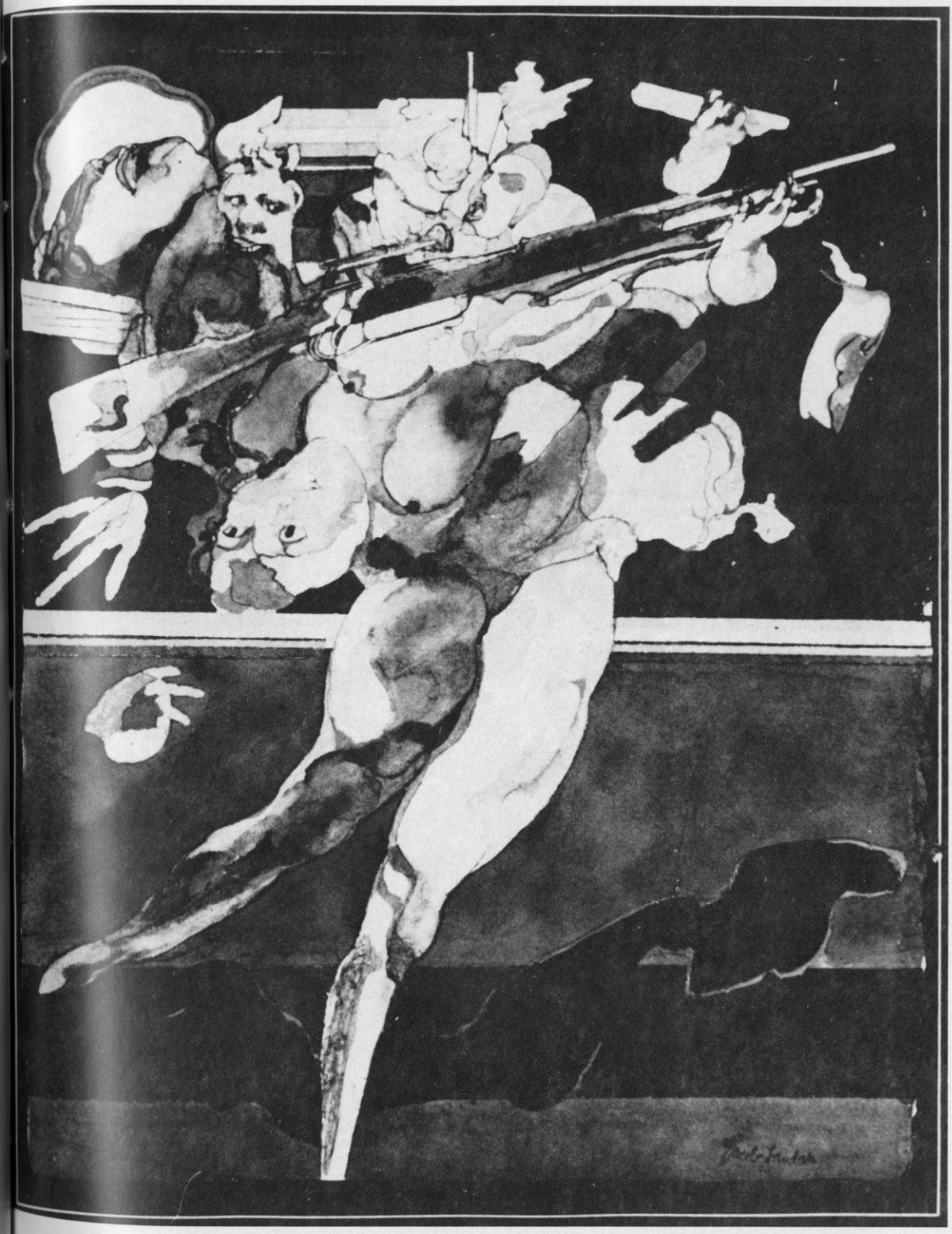
For this reason an understanding of the significance of gesture is the key to discerning the individual style found throughout his work. As in the work of Goya and Daumier we see the use of a limited iconography where the images are simplified and communicate primarily by their interactions and through the total gestural impact of all images as the viewer perceives them. Landau's use of black and white, his figures and his skillful line all participate in the central gesture which is the total felt experience, which may be exploding or radiating, compressed or serial. Landau's expressionism transcends illustration by his ability to incorporate contradictory elements into one acceptable visual experience. The eye is sent on a journey which begins with what we see and later finds itself in the domain of feeling.

Landau has combined the sense of constructional order found in classical art with the intentions of German expressionism. Logic and Passion. Structure and Emotion. Definition and Fantasy. Order and the Irrational. Blake's marriage of Heaven and Hell. And because these opposites are synthesized into one entity, as they are also found within the human being, his work wants a response, at a time when it is in bad taste to ask significant questions of the viewer. We have decided that tragedy, which is certainly the genre of Landau's art, is not an acceptable form of entertainment — and it is entertainment our hallowed selves relentlessly demand.

We have in Landau's work, tension without ambivalence, opposites without confusion. The image of beauty, which is our possibility, and the fact of our pain, which is our condition, are brought together without discord. We see mankind subjected to the impact of mankind, while the artist offers the hope that man may once again, someday, be the measure of all things. Landau's precise and fluid draftmanship, his generalized archetypal images, his keen sense of organization, his understanding of the emotional responses induced by anatomy in stress, his powerful collaboration of craft and passion account for why his work successfully embodies antagonisms that have wrecked many a well intentioned work of art.

Landau's work is like a Coney Island fun house populated by masses posed by history. In each booth is a major exhibition of man's possibilities ridiculed and often tortured by man's acts. The paintings and prints clamor and issue searing laughs inside the booths as we witness again what noble image has been defiled; not by the artist, but by men. The swirling masses of men struggle to climb off the paper, but remain pinned to their positions by some weighty gravity. Like Mother Courage, their most profound communi-

Exploded Figure,
Watercolor
Collection Dr. and Mrs. Ernest L. Park, Jr.



cation comes as a scream that cannot be heard. This is the fun house of broken promises, of denied aspirations, of possibilities chained in realities. It is not a nice place to visit but opinion polls notwithstanding, we happen to live there.

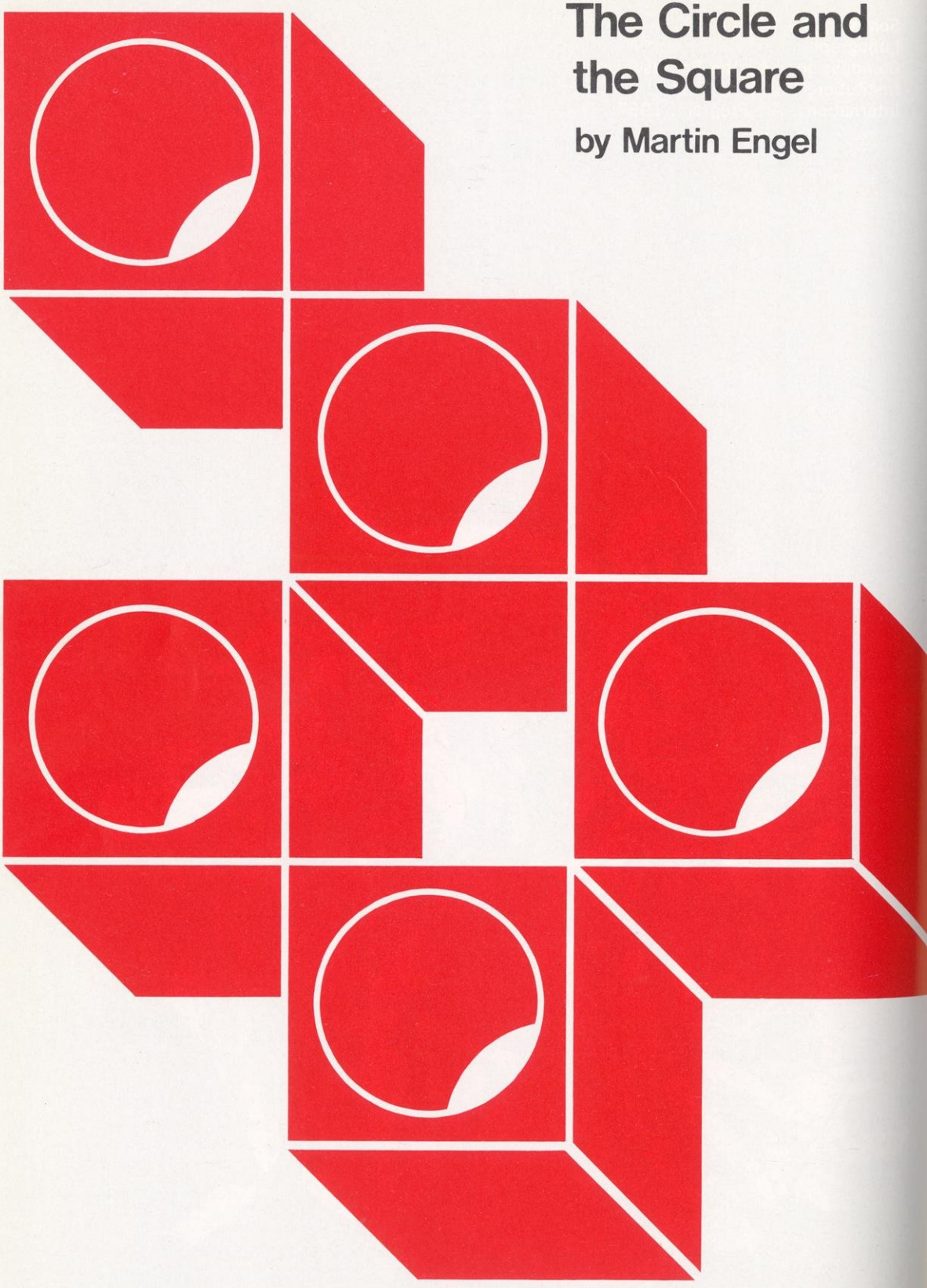
As we enter the 1970's the stakes are survival. While our young people urge us to bold acts and a new consciousness so that we may behave in ways that will prevent our doom, our leaders assure us that this is, if not the best of all possible worlds, at least the best of all present ones. And there is Jacob Landau who shows us what we have allowed, while reawakening the imperative of human choice. His works ask us to halt the pain we inflict on each other and begin to tolerate and synthesize the many diverse elements of existence. He calls us out of our silence, if we let him, and asks us to be angered at what we have become. His work serves us as we strive to find within ourselves that wrath, which, like his own, makes a better time possible.

Meanwhile Back in the Ghetto . . . Watercolor
Collection Trenton Jewish Community Center, Trenton, N. J.

Songs in the Night
Lithograph
Commissioned by the Smithsonian Institution, Prints for Peace International Art Program, 1967

The Circle and the Square

by Martin Engel



The new Whitney Museum of Art at 75th Street and Madison Avenue in New York City opened in the fall of 1966. Further uptown at 89th Street and Fifth Avenue stands the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum of Art which opened seven years earlier. Both buildings are extremely dramatic and distinct from the typical New York high-rise glass cage.
The Whitney was designed by Marcel Breuer, one of the leading exponents of the International Style of architecture and an early Bauhaus affiliate of Walter Gropius. The Guggenheim was designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, the late leader of the highly individualistic and romantic American architectural style which Wright himself contrasted to the more formalistic and industrial European movement. Thus, by a striking and fortunate coincidence, midtown Manhattan becomes the setting for two singular and possibly highly symbolic structures. Both are art museums. Both are critically acclaimed as significant works of art. Both are mature expressions by two leaders of the two major artistic and architectural movements of the twentieth century. The dichotomy between the two aesthetic positions is clear. Whether the two museums are indeed representative of the two schools of artistic expression (not that they were intended to be) is another matter.

If we may construe two broad and elusive terms in their most widely understood sense, then we must call Wright the romanticist and Breuer the classicist. "Romantic" and "classic" evoke the distinction between the subjective and objective, between a view of the world in emotional and spiritual terms — a world of Nature — and a world view conceived in logical, rational and analytical terms — a world of Industrialization. For Wright a building is a microcosm of a transcendent and harmonious universe. It is also a kind of self-portrait. It is its own *raison d'être* because it is the organic interrelationship which is central to Wright. The oft-quoted Wrightian phrase "form and function are one" actually has little reference to the purposes, functions or utility for which the structure was intended. His sense of function is spiritual and thus quite unlike that of the Gropius school. Breuer on the other hand admits that his museum represents "an attempt to form the building itself as sculpture." However — and here his Bauhaus heritage emerges — he goes on to say: " . . . it is a sculpture with rather serious functional requirements." He continues by discussing the interior spaces in terms of their flexibility and utility for the purpose of exhibition of art. He describes his design in terms of problem solving, the problem being the construction of a museum to display art. Breuer's understanding of the term "function" marks the dichotomy between himself and Wright. For example, Breuer approached the problem of lighting as a central problem of a functional museum. He had a "full sized mock-up" constructed in which the lighting solution was "tested and verified."

The philosophic distinction between Wright and Breuer is frequently stated by both architects. Wright's preoccupation with growth, Nature, the organic, the individual and romantic sense of rhythm, integration and élan vital is apparent:

It is in the nature of any organic building to grow from its site, come out of the ground into the light — the ground itself held always as a component basic part of the building itself.[1]

. . . a building can only be functional when integral with the environment and so formed in the nature of materials according to purpose and method as to be a living entity true each in all to all.[2]

Modern organic architecture now favors the reflex, the natural easy attitude, the occult symmetry of grace and rhythm by involving the ground, affirming the ease, grace and naturalness of natural life. Modern architecture, let us now say organic architecture, is a natural architecture; the architecture of nature, for nature.[3]

Breuer's principles, on the other hand, set architecture against Nature. Architecture's function is to establish the spatial and structural requirements of rational Man:

A building is a man-made work, a crystallic, constructed thing. It should not imitate nature — it should be in contrast to nature. A building has straight, geometric lines. Even where it follows free lines, it should be always clear that they are built — that they did not just grow. I can see no reason why buildings should imitate nature, organic or grown forms.[4]

The art of architectural composition lies in assembling simple elemental forms to arrive at basic solutions . . . the components encompassing [space] will be crystallic, man-made forms that differ from other natural forms, though they are part of the same composition . . . .[5]

When stone is used in a wall, the aim is not to evoke some notion of rock, but to build a clear-cut slab . . . It should be clear that this is a wall built by a mason, executing drawings with dimensions and a given geometry; it is not a grotto or part of a romantic anachronism.[6]

The philosophy of Bauhaus — and Marcel Breuer's education is Bauhaus — is based upon the integration of industrialization, technology and aesthetics. One consequence of this Bauhaus concept has been the "machine-look" as an integral part of all the arts. Wright, as early as 1901, in his famous Hull House lecture, anticipated the Bauhaus aesthetic and machine art, but gave it his romantic and individualistic bias: "There is no more important work before the architect now than to use this normal tool *[the machine]* of civilization to the best advantage . . ." In the same lecture he states his belief that industrial functionalism must be subordinate to individual creativity: "Genius must dominate the work of contrivance it has created . . . I believe that only when one individual forms the concept of the various projects and also determines the character of every detail in the sum total . . . will unity be secured which is the soul of the individual work of art."[7] Wright's credo is all the more striking in contrast to an italicized passage in which Gropius defines his Bauhaus concept: "The difference between industry and handicraft is due . . . to subdivision of labor in the one and undivided control by a single workman in the other."[8] At the beginning of this essay Gropius points out: " . . . the art of building is contingent upon the coordinated teamwork of a band of active collaborators whose co-operation symbolizes the co-operative organism of what we call society."[9] Wright's philosophy is diametrically opposed to that of Gropius and Breuer. He is the archetype of the Romantic artist with a dramatic and flamboyant personality who (as any Freudian would point out) sought public scorn and, in his later years, lavished his own scorn upon other architects and the public at large. His art, always somewhat autobiographical, expresses these attributes and the Guggenheim is no exception. It is a flagrant rejection of its urban environment and its erstwhile purpose. In many ways, it is even a rejection of Wright's most firmly espoused principles and architectural philosophy. In certain other ways, the Guggenheim is, of course, the very embodiment of the Wrightian ideal of Romantic flux and continuity. The Museum was designed in 1942, construction began in 1957, and it was completed and opened in 1959. Built of cast, reinforced concrete (a material both Breuer and Wright came to admire and utilize more and more), the main spiral cylinder of the exhibition gallery stands about six floors high, some 90 feet from street-level to its glass skylight dome.

Peter Blake points out that the helix of this museum is a culmination of Wright's pursuit of spatial continuity and plasticity. Several projects, especially the Pittsburgh parking garage project and the V.C. Morris store in San Francisco (1948), preceded the plans for the museum. Blake's point is that Wright finally got someone to commission a large scale helix, and it just happened to be a museum.

Like its predecessors in Wright's long list of public buildings, this museum is a sculpturally conceived multicellular complex of many rooms, wings, and courts. It is therefore not unlike Taliesin East, Taliesin West, the Coonley house, the Darwin Martin house, and other large domestic spatial aggregates in Wright's history. The main focus, however, is centered upon the one great single chamber. This cylinder springs from one corner of a low rectangular block which also contains, like a subordinate variation, a second glass-enclosed cylinder. Because of the public nature of this design and the emphasis upon one great chamber, we must place the Guggenheim in the tradition of the Larkin Building, Unity Temple, the Johnson Wax Building, and The Imperial Hotel. In the Guggenheim's subsidiary cylinder Wright located the cafeteria, auditorium, lecture hall, and many smaller utility rooms. The great chamber is almost totally separate, consisting of one continuous spiraling floor increasing in diameter so that it is larger at the top than at the bottom. Critics have often pointed to the tree form as Wright's model for such swelling shapes.

It would appear that the principal motivation for the form of the Guggenheim is the concrete expression of a basic aesthetic principle: unity and continuity. To achieve this, Wright forsakes triangle and T-square for protractor, compass, and French curve. His commitment to the curve and circle in this building is nearly absolute. Not only is the circle the single decorative motif found wherever ornament is called for — be it dome, wall, or floor — but any angles, straight lines, or corners are assiduously avoided. Yet this stress on the continuous curve has limitations which are realized, paradoxically, in a highly fragmented manner. The otherwise monotonous spiral of the interior ramp is broken by the intersection of a series of convex arcs which reverse the concave flow of the parapet at the point where the elevator, stair and utility core runs up through all the floors. The restriction of using only the curve results in partial circles, arcs, and a constant interruption of circular movement with countermovement. Ellipses, semi-circles, and arcs constitute the articulation of an interior which is not really continuous at all. The dynamic conflict of forces here is one of endless interpenetrating curves, each a part or fragment of a circle. The consequence is not diversity in unity, but discontinuity in continuity.

The Guggenheim makes use of a smooth painted concrete which, though poorly finished, does little to minimize the forbidding, impersonal and machine-like arrogance of the building. The finish of the concrete lacks the organic, rough, wooden-mold texture so characteristic of poured concrete. The Whitney Museum, on the other hand, exploits this kind of surface as one of its textures when that concrete is not sheathed in the granite veneer. The Guggenheim wall surfaces are betwixt and between, and inexplicable for the great spokesman of organic architecture. It is true, as Norris K. Smith points out,[12] that Wright's public "official" architecture is symmetrical, impersonal and un"natural" as compared to his private domestic buildings. But then the Guggenheim's walls are devoid of that expressiveness characteristic of the organic; which would be, in this case, an appropriate smooth and industrial finish called for by this huge display-machine with its science-fiction appearance. It is an equivocal architecture: the cantilevered masses are made to seem weightless, and space is carved and molded as if it were a solid. Significantly, the Whitney's series of "setforwards" also constitute an exterior expression of the several floors of the interior. In the Bauhaus argot of "positive, negative volumes," the progressive vertical expansion of positive volume on the exterior has its polar opposite of expansion of negative volume inside.

In the special issue of ARCHITECTURAL FORUM (January, 1948) on Frank Lloyd Wright, the aesthetic of the Guggenheim is expressed by Wright himself, not in the usual Wrightian language of continuity and unity, but rather in terms of paradox and ambiguity:

. . . the entire interior is so gently proportioned that the impression made upon one is of complete repose similar to that made by a still wave, never breaking, never offering resistance or finality to vision. It is this extraordinary quality of the complete repose known only in movement that characterizes this building . . .[13]

Wright was an avid collector of Japanese prints and doubtless familiar with the famous Hokusai print of the Wave. He must have been oblivious, both in the case of the Japanese ocean scene and his own building (if indeed his metaphor of the wave is appropriate), to the still wave which hangs eternally over the fisherman in the former case and the looming architectural mass over the museum goer in the latter. What anxiety; what tension! We wait to be inundated, washed away by awesome masses (if I may extend the metaphor) of water or architecture. Although the image of "repose in movement" is ambiguous, the endless massive circularity which intersects itself and creates the many countermovements of the interior of Wright's museum is devoid of repose and is instead laden with tension.

The sense of motion is surely there. As we look from one side of the hall across the central abyss to the other side, the vastness of the circumference compels us to see, not a single continuity of floors, but a series of independent balconies which tip in the opposite direction from the one where we stand. While our particular floor tilts down from right to left, the floors across (which are, of course, the same one continuously) tilt in

the opposite direction, down front left to right. The effect of these counter-tilting floors is one of contradictory motion. It gives us the experience of vertigo which is contingent upon the loss of a stable horizon and the presence of confusing motion.

The circular museum reminds us of a space-time continuum; of relative time and relative motion; of an Einsteinian world of four-dimensional coordinate systems in which the location, motion, and tempo of one spectator seems relative to the other museum-goers at varying speeds at once up and down the ramp. Thus the continuity of space in architecture is the symbol of the subjective experience of time, and the one flows into the other in a state of confusion.

There is a similarity between this building and a nuclear accelerator in which particles are hurled in circular fashion in ever faster paths, as in fact the great ramp compels the spectator ever downward in gently decreasing circles but ever increasing speed.

We are also reminded of Calder's mobiles; metal arms that turn in great and small circles, motion and countermotion, endless circles or brief reciprocating arcs, simultaneously undulating up and down while performing complex interlocking sweeps. In similar fashion, we may trace the circular motion of the spectators ascending and descending, moving in counter-directions along the great sweep of the ramp, back and forth in front of painting and in circles around the sculpture on the main floor and side gallery, compelled like the metal petals and wire arms of Calder's sculpture to be prisoners of these circles. The massive concrete balconies and parapets create the illusion of a turning motion like a huge centrifuge, while the tangential pattern of circles on the floor interlock like clock gears in which we have subtly become enmeshed.

The sense of imprisonment is reminiscent of Piranesi's Baroque prisons; those fantasies of endless massive architectural forms, arching in intersecting and interlocking space; a vast subterranean world where the surroundings curve into the distance in overwhelming and awesome confusion. The Guggenheim Museum, like Piranesi's prisons, is a "broken continuity" of sculptured space, an array of "continuous fragments;" of ramps, balconies and other flowing, intersecting, curving concrete forms:

The scale of the interior instantly attacks the spectator, dragging him through the low doorway to the center of the domed interior. The scale is giant, inhuman; not in sheer size, but in the massive way it twists and articulates the spiral over vertical piers.[14]

This is certainly not in accord with Wright's description of repose in movement. It entails another kind of ambiguity. In comparison with its neighbors in midtown Manhattan, the Guggenheim is diminutive. Yet Hess notes a vastness of scale, a monumentality achieved not in size, but by the way it dominates the spectator in its dynamic whirl, sucking him into its vortex like Poe's maelstrom.

The inside of the Guggenheim expresses not only the highly touted fluidity and continuity of space, but equally important, its articulation and commensurate fragmentation. For example, the Guggenheim's ambiency along the ramp is interrupted by the compartmentalization of the vertical piers which rise up through the floors and create a series of separations or partitions into gallery units inviting the frequent comparison with the multi-chambered nautilus. Thus, not only is the continuity of the ramp broken by the countercurves at the elevator, but by the piers which themselves rise continuously through the winding floor. Rather than provide some anchor of verticality in a vertigo-creating horizonless space, these piers are canted inward: " . . . to start with, the viewer stands on an incline; next, the wall slopes away from him at another angle . . . "[15] There is nothing above the ground floor to which we can orient ourselves in this ambiguous and theatrical environment. The world outside is totally shut out, light filtering indirectly through the remote bands of

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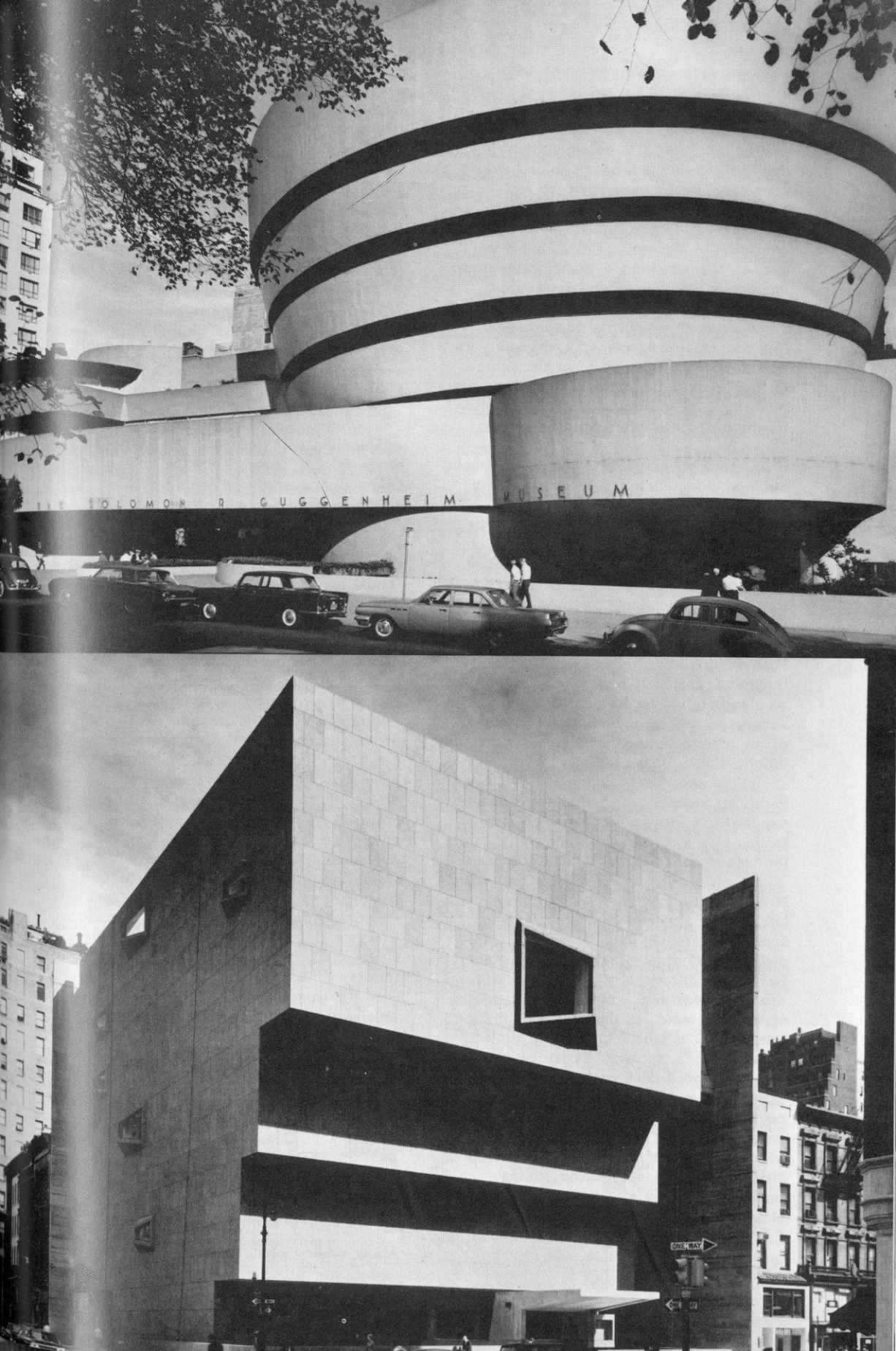
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum: Exterior view from South. Courtesy: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum.

Whitney Museum of American Art at Madison Avenue and 75th Street, New York. Architect, Marcel Breuer and Associates. Ezra Stoller.


THE SOLOMON R GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM
ONE WAY

windows which circle the drum and directly from the high reaches of the skylight.

The interior, like a spiral nebula, drives us to circle its space, past paintings which, due to their unique suspension on hidden steel rods, hover away from the wall, suspended in their orbit like abstract expressionist moons against the infinite neutrality of the wall. The building is less a museum than a planetarium or a microcosm of a fragmented universe, held together by the dynamics of centrifugal architecture in which the museum-goer, like the stars and planets, whirls in his appointed path up and down the ramp in sterile isolation, past subject-less paintings and sculpture, a vast aesthetic machine of continuities and fragments.

If all these comparisons by metaphor seem strained, the following explanations are offered: First of all, Wright himself was given to rich analogies and baroque poetic imagery. He thought in florid and ornamented terms. Like the Guggenheim, much of his architecture was subordinated to some abstract form, such as circles, helixes, hexagons or triangles; or nature's images like trees and caves. Furthermore, the Guggenheim is a vast theatrical-sculptural image. Its failure as a museum is far less significant than its success as the embodiment and symbol of an architectural philosophy. Breuer, like Wright, thinks of his architecture in sculptural terms. He called the Whitney " . . . an independent and self-reliant unit, exposed to history . . ." However, it is far les poetic, far less a stage-set, far less a concrete poem and symbol.

If Wright's Guggenheim is the romantic circle, then Breuer's Whitney is the classic square. In fact, a journalist has called the Whitney a "square Guggenheim." Breuer has throughout his career made the cantilever and projecting floor a key stylistic element, as has Wright. Breuer's 1928 Elberfeld Hospital project consisted of a series of floors which were staggered backward one over the other to give maximum sun exposure on the southern side. The northern side — and this is what interests us — has the inverted series of floors so familiar to the New Yorker who passes the Whitney on Madison Avenue. On the Elberfeld Hospital the "set-forward" of each floor was so pronounced — the building is an upward zigzag from a side elevation — that a large open steel framework on the overhanging side was necessary in the design. There are numerous later examples of projecting overhang which were actually built by Breuer. The Chamberlain College, in Wayland, Massachusetts, 1940, the Breuer House in New Canaan, Connecticut, 1947, and the Lecture Hall Building, New York University, University Heights Campus built between 1956 and 1961 all have at least one floor which is cantilevered beyond the lower level. There is a strong temptation to identify the "Square Guggenheim" with the round one if only on the basis of their mutual increasing dimensions as they climb upwards.

The Whitney was designed by Breuer in conjunction with Hamilton P. Smith. While Breuer never plays the role of the prima donna or the alienated and misunderstood genius, Wright acted the "loner" and had a lurid history of clashes with associates and colleagues. The disciples at his Taliesin fellowship lived in a feudal serfdom and he either ignored or denied the participation of many associates in his work. Breuer, on the other hand, has always understood the twentieth century team concept which was central to Bauhaus teaching. Breuer's artistic career is marked by many fruitful partnerships not the least of which were, at various times, with Gropius and Pier Luigi Nervi. Credit for the Whitney designs, however, is generally given to Breuer.

From its most prominent view, diagonally across the corner of 75th and Madison Avenue the Whitney juts upward and forward, an arrogant and aloof mass of crystalline grey granite. It is in violent isolation from its surroundings despite Breuer's claim that " . . . it should have a visual connection with the street." For this reason too it has much in common with the Guggenheim. Though not tall, the museum, with its three progressive overhanging floors, looms over the pedestrian with a sense of great mass, and there seem to be walls, walls everywhere, like a modern version of a romanesque fortress. The main block of the building is veneered in grey fire-treated granite, but the property limits are defined by two huge slabs of cast concrete which reinforce the isolation of the building from its neighbors.

Many other isolating (perhaps alienating

is a better term) devices have been introduced; the concrete walls; the scant fenestration; the moat/drawbridge entrance; and the diminishing size at the foot of the structure, which swells upward, all contribute to this mood of hostility.
For structures consciously set into the city, both the Whitney and the Guggenheim are strongly anti-urban. Even the plentiful glass-grid towers of Manhattan, anathema to the philosophies of both architects, involve themselves much more with their surroundings than do the museums.
These glass rectangles are much more in the spirit of Moholy-Nagy's light and space modulation. They interact with their fellow buildings, as the Whitney and Guggenheim do not. If the typical modular glass grid skyscraper is the inheritor of the Bauhaus and international style philosophy, then Breuer's museum is a marked departure from this tradition.
Similarly, the New York skyscraper is the inheritor of the architectural lessons developed by Sullivan in Chicago in the 1880's and Wright acknowledges his debt to Sullivan; yet here too the Guggenheim is unlike anything even remotely related to Sullivan's concepts of structure. The only link, and it is remote, is with the Sullivanesque, art nouveau decorative motifs with their emphasis upon curvilinear continuity.

Norris K. Smith carefully demonstrates the duality of Wright's architectural types and their respective significance. The domestic type is markedly distinguishable from the commercial and public. The domestic buildings are "Nature" oriented, asymmetric (at least most of them), freely organized spatially, and given to the ambient flow of indoors/outdoors. The public buildings, and the Guggenheim belongs to the latter category, are exclusive, symmetrical, formal, and tend to be anti-urban. The museum, just by being a round peg in a square real estate hole, establishes itself in this category.

Manhattan's grid street plan is echoed by the graph-paper architecture of glass towers. Wright, however, does not merely ignore this environment. He violently flings his cylinders in its teeth. Like the Whitney, the Guggenheim filters its visitors through a "rite-of-passage" entrance before they may enter the dazzling sculptural space of Wright or the more subtle and conventional space lined by the Whitney's rich interior textures.

Buildings, seeking to be understood, evoke analogies or comparisons. The Whitney is reminiscent of the medieval town house which advances over the street with every floor. As Breuer suggests, this is a necessary device for gaining exhibition space. Indeed, it shares this functional space-acquiring device with its medieval ancestors of the crowded thirteenth century towns. The Guggenheim's feudal counterpart is, of course, the gated turret of medieval walled town or castle. Such comparisons, with their associations and implications, are not so far-fetched if we view architectural history as a continuity of archetypal forms which recur in each age, wearing new disguises but retaining certain basic forms.
Especially Wright, with his penchant for expressive and richly symbolic architecture, must be understood in near-mythic and archetypal terms. We need cite at random only his Mayan influences, tree-rooted towers, *Prairie* houses, *Usonian* homes, *Broadacre* city, the praying-hands-roofs of his churches and synagogues, etc.

Breuer, the anti-romantic functionalist, lends himself less readily to mythic interpretation. His vividly symbolic museum is, therefore, something of a departure from his more typical functional and functionalistic commercial and public architecture. This is not to suggest that all of his architecture has been of the rectangular slab variety, for he has developed interesting and sometimes dramatic structural devices. The tree-like columns of St. John's Abbey (1960) are a case in point. Here, in Collegeville, Minnesota, the concrete bell banner is the sculptural focal point of the monastery, and a variety of cast concrete forms suggest the versatility of Breuer's capacity to create forms in space. However, such isolated plastic elements are not what we are referring to when we try to suggest the archetypal significance, the symbolic expressiveness of the Whitney museum, which thereby makes it an artistic companion to its up-town neighbor, the Guggenheim. The Whitney, referred to by critics as an upside down ziggurat, is too much an isolated sculptural block, too much at variance with its neighbors, too dramatic an architectural statement to be a part of the Bauhaus variety of functional style.

Though Breuer has said that art and architecture should complement one

another (as they do in his UNESCO building in Paris) rather than be one and the same thing, he has made the Whitney a vast piece of contemporary minimal sculpture. He has said that the Whitney should: " . . . transform the vitality of the street into the sincerity and profundity of art," The few windows, the broad expanses of wall, the vast blockiness, and the looming appearance of stacked boxes all reinforce the image, as compelling as the dolmen of Stonehenge, of a great ritualistic structure, dedicated to art but more importantly itself, a work of sculpture. In this sense, more significantly than any other, the Whitney relates to the Guggenheim, for both buildings are strongly self-assertive as masterpieces of art. The Guggenheim, being a public structure, does not use windows in the main building at all but, like the Whitney, carefully excludes the outside. In other words both the Guggenheim and the Whitney have rejected the world outside. Their focus is inward. If the glass of the basement level and first floor implies openness, the endless wall surfaces which dominate the viewer's eye clearly contradict their openness. The trapezoidal windows of the upper floors play no role except to affirm the romanesque massive walls by their sculptural shape and seemingly random size and placement.

A basic difference between the two buildings is the nature of spatial ambiency. The Guggenheim, its ramp gallery within a single vast swelling cylinder, is conceived to be lineal and kinesthetic. The direction for the visitor is set. The swirling descending path along the continuous floor imposes a kinesthetic spatial experience which is in conflict with the segmented visual one of intersecting arcs. The eye can entertain the entire building, the opposite gallery walls, the skylight, the main floor below. We see the whole, but we must traverse a spiral corridor within the whole. The Whitney offers a space that is more traditional, consisting of stacked, separate floors with only horizontal ambiency. It is complicated to see and move through, only on the first and lower levels, because the first floor does not continue to the glass outer wall but ends with a balcony overlooking the lower sculpture court. Here we see the two floors, bridges, balconies, interior and exterior levels, and this may be spatially the most interesting part of the entire structure.

Here too it is reminiscent of that Wrightian complexity apparent in many of his public or commercial buildings. The upper three exhibition floors are conventional rectangular boxes with the movable partitions within them. The path of motion — the ambient space — is open among the display panels and subject to change, unlike that of the Guggenheim. There are no isolating rooms. The floor is continuously open. But each floor is an independent container; outer walls are parallel or perpendicular, and ceiling and floors are parallel. Breuer's spaces are in a larger sense, square spaces. Both buildings reflect their author's love of hovering and cantilevered elements, but the Whitney makes much more limited use of such exciting design elements. Yet both buildings share what may be the two most significant architectural concepts in modern building. One is the continuity and flow of space: interior space, and space which penetrates the enclosing members of the structure, thus giving continuity of inside and outside. The other is the flow of stresses through the structure. The extensive use of cantilevering and reinforced concrete acting in directions other than compression characterize both buildings.

Peter Blake has suggested that Wright's persistent use of fussy ornamentation has tended over the years to date him and make him seem "square" compared with the International style "stripped" modernists. Blake develops the thesis that Wright innovated and thus influenced the Bauhaus thinkers by anticipating their philosophy, style and architectural devices by at least a decade, despite his apparent lack of modernism and his contempt for the "box" builders. Yet, because the Europeans did not incorporate the Wrightian "integral ornament" which was, after all, a Sullivanesque vestige, the Internationalists, Mies, Gropius, Corbusier, and Breuer, built an architecture against which Wright's buildings quickly dated and became unfashionable, especially after the twenties. After the Museum of Modern Art exhibition of 1932, where Wright's works stood in company with those of Corbusier, Mies, and Gropius, there seems to have been a reverse flow of influence because " . . . flat, undecorated surfaces and sweeping planes took the place of the filigree of the Imperial Hotel and the concrete block houses in California; and there were

even some buildings with large uninterrupted panes of glass. For a relatively brief moment Wright became almost an International Style architect himself."[4]

Although the building is placed on a corner lot, the Whitney is oriented strictly to its main facade on Madison Avenue. The side street wall has a ground level vehicle service entrance and the vast sweep of granite faced wall. That wall is interrupted six times by windows which are distributed here and there over it like the punch-holes on an IBM card. One great window, much larger than those on 75th Street, looks over Madison Avenue from the fourth floor, which is the furthest projection forward of the facade. This large eye, trapezoidal like the other six, is canted so that it looks up-town. The windows, all seven of them, turn toward the corner of the building. They are the exception — the grace notes — which soften the harsh frontality of the Madison Avenue side and the barrenness of the 75th Street side, and help to bring the two walls into an aesthetic relationship which is focussed on the edge.

The Whitney is singularly devoid of ornament in the sculptural sense except for those eye-catching windows, but it is nevertheless "decorated" by the architect's choice of textures, of which a good variety is more prominent inside. If circles are the persistent motif of the Guggenheim then rectangles are clearly the visual module of the Whitney. Occasionally the right angle is sacrificed for a more complex geometric design, but only for applied decorative purposes, the exceptions including the windows and the sculptural entrance cover.

While the inside of the Guggenheim is no less theatrical than its outside, the interior of the Whitney is more conventional, having four separate exhibit floors, not counting the main entrance floor. The floors are rough, split-slate and bluestone. The pattern of rectangles is like that of the granite veneer of the outside. The entrance portal past the glass is in rough concrete with the molding pattern showing. The counters and benches are bush-hammered concrete aggregate. The egg-crate grid ceilings, with their slots for lights and panelling, are graph-paper ceiling pattern reaffirming the rectangular motif. Most of the materials, both inside and out, are striking for their texture and tend to be rough or "natural" as compared with plastic laminates, smooth plaster, glass, and polished metals which lend an industrial quality. Though strongly rectilinear and modular in appearance, the Whitney's materials (as far as their finish and textures are concerned) are more appropriate to the philosophies of Wright — his natural use of materials and their self-expressiveness — than the industrial-technological world of Bauhaus.

The industrial character of the Bauhaus philosophy is best realized in the Whitney's multiplication of a rather inexpensive ceiling fixture on the main floor, which by virtue of its close repetition becomes the ceiling itself; a uniform pattern of reflectors throwing an even light. The entrance way especially suggests that cubistic, rectilinear interplay of planes and masses so popular among International Style architects, especially Mies, Corbusier in his earlier days, and Walter Gropius. The concrete massiveness and rough textured finish of the new "brutalism" is also apparent here. On the entrance floor our eyes meet the split-slate floor, the concrete walls with their wooden-form textures, the aggregate surface of the benches, counter, and walls which are strangely crude and non-urban. But in contrast, the complex rectangular structures of this floor, enframed and incised with discreetly selected horizontal and vertical grooves, combine with the technology of light which is the ceiling to form a physical realization of the rational and positivistic world of Bauhaus ideology. Indeed this juxtaposition of the two stylistic worlds — the natural and the industrial — is Breuer's contribution to contemporary architecture.

The Guggenheim has fixed walls and an exhibition space that is rigidly determined by the complex shape of the interior of the ramp galleries. The Whitney, on the other hand, utilizes a grid ceiling which permits flexible partitions to be installed and changed to suit each exhibit. This functionality makes Breuer's architecture really an engineering solution and the museum a machine for displaying art.

There are a number of interesting similarities between the Guggenheim and the Whitney. Like the Whitney, the Guggenheim is surrounded by a sunken

moat with a low wall separating the spectator-pedestrian from the looming massive building. Both buildings are introspective, with little fenestration for admitting space and light. Though the Guggenheim has its skylight and rings of narrow glass around the gallery-ramp walls, and the Whitney has its sculptural-decorative windows, both buildings are best represented as closed bulky masses of pronounced sculptural shape. The Whitney ignores the terrain. Its rectilinear form seems oblivious to its physical environment. Similarly, the Guggenheim is not organically fitted into its urban setting. It does not integrate with the surrounding archiecture, but like the Whitney ignores it.

Norris Smith, in his superb and scholarly study of Wright, discusses the ambiguity of Wright, but prefers to use the term "contrapletion." He explains how Wright uses the organic and natural, asymmetric forms in his domestic architecture but favors symmetrical, industrial conceptions for his public and commercial works. The Larkin Building, Unity Temple, and the Johnson Building are among the best known examples of Wright's monumental introspective symmetrical single-chambered containers. These buildings set themselves off from their environment, are closed up and have an interior focus. This non-organic, more academic and formalistic side of Wright is apparent most clearly in the great exhibition machine which is the Guggenheim. It brings Wright's architectural philosophy in jeopardy by its proximity to the Bauhaus vision of Breuer which is in turn modified toward Wrightian naturalism in the Whitney.

In 1925, the year Breuer developed the first bent continuous tube chair, he discussed the connections between the aesthetics and technology which constituted Bauhaus philosophy: "Mass production and standardization have already made me interested in polished metal, in shiny and impeccable lines in space, as new components for our interiors. I considered such polished and curved lines not only symbolic of our modern technology, but actually technology itself." The Whitney is devoid of such mechanistic reflections, despite the flexible partitions, the ceiling grids, the rectangular module, and the ceiling fixture pattern of the entrance floor. In one's overall impression of the Whitney museum, the industrial functional sense is barely perceptible. In fact, Breuer was the first, and remains one of the few members of the International style group to incorporate natural materials, such as field stone masonry, into his architecture. However, while Wright has been the spokesman for "natural" materials, it is important to stress Breuer's disclaimer toward any identification with Nature:

The same thing is true about the way we use natural materials in our houses, when wood is used in a building, it may not be "wood" in the old, traditional sense, but a new material altogether, especially if it is plywood. When stone is used in a wall, it is no longer some sort of rock formation, but a clear cut slab — made of stone for the reason that stone is a good and durable and texturally pleasant material.[18]

Unlike Wright's words, there are no romantic, transcendental overtones here. Therefore, and this is the interesting thing, the wood-grained concrete, blue stone and slate materials of the Whitney are more "natural" than any materials found in the Guggenheim. Both museums are built of cast concrete. Yet Wright's concrete, unlike Breuer's, does not bear the wooden plank and grain of the mold. The Guggenheim is smooth and painted. It is stylistic irony that we may run through the major projects of both architects, seeking out the characteristic building materials each one used in their public and commercial buildings, to note that Breuer makes much freer use of "natural" materials than Wright. In comparison to the Whitney, the Guggenheim is a piece of science-fiction; a movie-set for a futuristic film as conceived in the expressionistic 1930's for H. G. Wells. It is Wright, the romantic, who comes off with a building stamped with the look of a theatrical version of a computerized rocket age, while Breuer, the functionalist,

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Entrance and lobby of the new **Whitney Museum of American Art,** at Madison Avenue and 75th Street, New York, showing some of the 370 lights. Architect, Marcel Breuer and Associates, Ezra Stoller.

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum: Interior View of Ramp Galleries and Main Floor.
Courtesy: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum.

gives us a much more conservative and conventional structure with lingering reminiscent tones of the European, planar, cubistic, constructivistic, "stripped" style, but modified by that rich variety of textures.

Wright was the spokesman for individualism. His self-image was that of the misunderstood genius against a mobocracy of philistines. His architecture, according to the architect, was a direct expression of that individualism; not the client's, but his own. Breuer suffered no such romantic illusions:

It would be foolish, as well as physically impossible, to design each building of a city as a completely individual composition. It makes good sense to find similar solutions for similar problems; and there is certainly not a great deal of difference between the problems of one 1961 New York office and another 1961 office.[19]

Breuer puts it another way when he states: "The individuality inherent in similar problems is, roughly speaking, non-existent." How does this bear upon the design of the Whitney? More irony! Like its colleague, the Guggenheim, the Whitney is highly individualistic. It is unique (at least for New York, where the building code has institutionalized the set-back) by virtue of its overhanging floors and, among a forest of glass towers, its walls are vast blank planes pierced only by the seven asymmetric trapezoidal windows. To be sure, the interior floors, with their flexible partitions, are now conventional exhibition architecture. But surely among the tedious repetition of glass boxes — clichés of an International Style long since devoid of meaning — the Whitney is no less individualistic or unique than the Guggenheim.

We are confronted by two monumental works of art which, despite their shortcomings, similarities, and differences, are not unique or unsual expressions of the two architects who designed them. This does not mean, however, that we have two clear-cut textbook examples of two modern artistic traditions. Perhaps we should examine those two traditions again.

In *Architecture, Ambition and Americans,*[20] Wayne Andrews interprets the classic-romantic dichotomy in terms of the philosophy of Thorstein Veblen and William James. "You might say that a Veblenite would rather listen to the answers of the machine, a Jacobite to the question of man." Andrews goes on to develop the two architectural styles in a comparative column which is worth repeating here. It is essential to keep in mind that the Veblenites include Gropius, Mies, and Breuer while Wright belongs to the Jacobite side of the fence:

Veblenite Architects
- *Cool*
- *Impersonal*
- *Anti-individualistic*
- *Dogmatic*
- *Absolutist*
- *Worshippers of the Machine*
- *Spellbound by modern materials such as steel and glass*
- *Experts at factories, sanitoriums, and other impersonal buildings*
- *Willing to disregard the site*

Jacobite Architects
- *Warm*
- *Personal*
- *Individualistic*
- *Casual*
- *Pragmatic*
- *Willing to take the machine for granted*
- *Much more concerned with the texture of materials than with their modernity*
- *At their best in domestic work*
- *Haunted by the site*

Accepting the difficulty in making such a dichotomy and noting the many exceptions that such generalities invariably invite, Andrews provides us with a useful comparative scale against which we ought to set the two museums to see if they fit their respective distinctions. Applying the *cool-warm* distinction to the two buildings we find that the vast, off-white, futuristic chamber of Wright is the "cool" one. Breuer provides warmth, at least on the interior, with human scale and varieties of textures. In this category their positions seem to be reversed.

Next comes *Impersonal-Personal.* If we construe these terms to refer to the expression of the artist, we must contend that both are rather personal. If these terms refer to the experience of the spectator, then we must insist that both buildings are rather impersonal if not downright anti-personal. However, it may be impossible to find any "personal"

architecture today. Andrews continues by setting *anti-individualistic* against *Individualistic*. Here too the terms tend to be confusing unless we add them to the first two sets and see if the Whitney does belong to the Veblenite category by being anti-individualistic. Breuer has frequently said that individuality is often foolish if not impossible and argues further that similar solutions can be applied to similar problems. Nevertheless, in appearance, at least, the Whitney is not a typical museum solution. In fact, it is extremely individualistic, no less than the swirling Guggenheim. Veblen, according to Andrews' interpretation of him, would have been appalled at the wasteful extravagance and eccentricity of both buildings.

Dogmatic and casual are far more difficult distinctions to apply to buildings than to people. In the case of the architects themselves, we know Wright to have been the more dogmatic personality. As for the buildings, they both lack any casual or random quality. Yet, neither seems to be a clear-cut expression of the stylistic dogma they "ought" to represent.

As with the next set of terms, the Whitney is not in any sense an "absolutist" statement nor a "dogmatic" expression of International Style in the way the I.I.T. campus of Mies van der Rohe clearly is. Neither is the Guggenheim casual nor pragmatic. The Wrightian use of circles is too dogmatic, and Wright's indifference to the building's function is far from pragmatic.

If we use the word Machine in a broader and more poetic sense, we find that Breuer made use of machines but that Wright built one. As we earlier tried to suggest, the Guggenheim creates a mechanistic atmosphere far beyond anything the steel and glass architects ever dreamed of. Breuer, on the other hand makes frequent use of split stone, natural textures, colors, and the wooden mold pattern of concrete; indeed, the Op, Pop and minimal arts on exhibition within the Whitney are much more in the spirit of the Machine than the building itself. We have already demonstrated the reversal of roles each museum assumes in terms of the next category, where Wayne Andrews suggests that the Veblenite/ classicist Bauhaus architects favour "modern" materials such as steel and glass. Both are conspiciously absent in the two museums. The lack is notable in the case of Breuer, who ostensibly represents that side of the dichotomy. On the other hand, Wright's building is certainly not distinguished by his concern for the textures of materials. It is Wright who is concerned with the look of modernity in his museum and Breuer who is concerned with the textures of materials.

Norris Smith clearly distinguishes a split within Wright's prolific outpouring in which the public buildings, like the Larkin and Johnson buildings belong to one side of his ambivalent style; the formalistic, dogmatic, Puritan, absolutist, symmetrical and restrictive side. Here we must add the Guggenheim and fit it into the hard-edge Veblenite side of our dichotomy although surely that great economist would have taken one look and shouted "conspicuous consumption!" Though Wright's reputation rests upon his Jacobite domestic architecture, he has designed enough office buildings, churches, factories, skyscrapers (the mile-high *Illinois* is hardly Jacobite) and other public and utilitarian structures to seriously qualify his fame as a domestic architect. In fact, his early public projects, like Unity Temple and the Yahara boat club of 1902 precede and influenced the Veblenite Europeans. Wright's parallels to the Cubist movement have been argued elsewhere. In short, it is by no means clear that Wright fits into the Jacobite compartment. The Guggenheim's relationship to such a polar classification is also quite ambiguous.

Breuer, on the other hand, is no simple Veblenite. Gropius, yes. Mies, Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, and Richard Neutra (once Wright's student!), yes. The Dutch, like Oud and Dudok, yes. Their architecture is anonymous in appearance, grid and modular, and industrial in so many aspects. But Breuer's brutal, textured block, the Whitney, despite its rectangularity, has come a long way from the impersonal geometry associated with his mass housing solutions of the 1920's. The Whitney, too, seems to straddle the Andrews style-scale.

Wayne Andrews' final distinction is one of site. If Wright was "haunted" by the site of the Guggenheim, it was only as to how he could violate it most conspicuously. To be somewhat kinder, we could argue that it is Wright, the

so-called Jacobite, who was willing to disregard the site. His only constructed skyscraper stands in the flattest part of the Oklahoma landscape, towering above a town which hugs the ground. It is the exact opposite of the low Guggenheim which is surrounded by towering giants and confirms the appellation of "site disregarder."

If Breuer's recent plan for a skyscraper on top of the New York Central terminal is any clue, then we are safe in stating that this architect is a Veblenite willing to disregard the site at any cost! That building is not yet built, however, and the Whitney is a more subtle aesthetic problem. Breuer himself is ambivalent about the Whitney's relationship to its site.

The architect tried to contend with the corner lot, but he gave strong emphasis to the Madison Avenue facade and thus made his museum monofacial.
I suppose that this would be one way of disregarding the site. However, in *The Architect's Approach*, Breuer asks, "But what is its relationship to the New York landscape?" His answer is that, on the one hand "It should be an independent and self-reliant unit . . ." But Breuer also states that "Its forms and its material should have identity and weight in the neighborhood of 50-story skyscrapers, of mile-long bridges, in the midst of the dynamic jungle of our colorful city . . . it should have a visual connection to the street." Though surely not "haunted" in the sense that the Romantics were "haunted," or that Frank Lloyd Wright's *Fallingwater* is site-haunted, Breuer is fully cognizant of his site problem when he states: "To emphasize the completeness of the architectural form, the granite facades on both streets are separated from the neighboring fronts: an attempt to solve the inherent problem of a corner building . . . "

Robert Frost once said that he changed his poetic style every once in a while to give the critics some difficulty in making their confining interpretations: "I do it to mix the scent for them." Perhaps our two architects were equally uncooperative in designing structures which exemplify two stylistic traditions.

While the Guggenheim was under construction, Wright, in the same facetious spirit as Frost, contended that: "They're going to try and figure this one out for years to come."[21] Ten years later, we are, indeed.

NOTES

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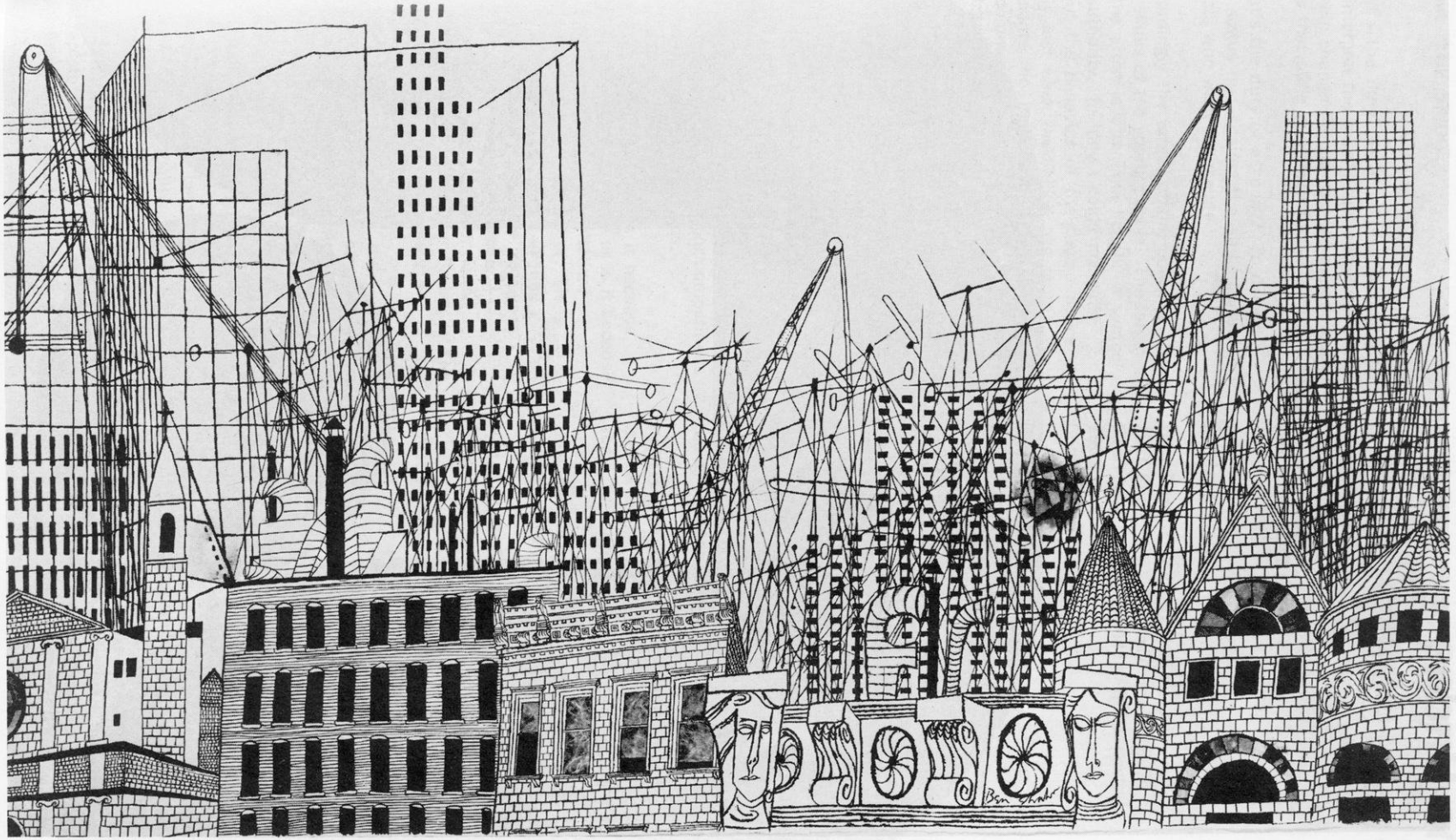


Farewell to New York — All that is Beautiful
by Ben Shahn. Courtesy: Kennedy Graphics,
a division of Kennedy Galleries, Inc., New York.

The Bridge

by Mario Fratti

About "THE BRIDGE"

What's the duty of the "artist" today? To interpret the society that surrounds him. to help change the clumsy and antiquated laws that stifle real freedom.

What's the duty of a "cop"? To defend the status quo against the students and artists who want a "change".

Accordingly the target of the police is often the skulls of the young people. The target of the artist is often the "cop": a symbol of authority. In Italy I could not write about the behavior of the Italian police (only last week they killed two more peasants; no Italian writer will ever dare to comment on that: in Italy cops, judges, and priests are sacred; even gangsters are sacred — in the American film "Scarface" the gangster was Italian; when the film was released in Italy they made Scarface Irish).

In the United States there is less censorship and as a consequence I was not harassed when "The Bridge" was staged in Detroit and Washington. You would think that this play would be banned in Italy. It is interesting to realize that it was not. It won first prize in three major competitions and has had nine productions.

How do you explain this? Is it because there is more freedom today or is it because the subject is foreign, non-Italian? Without a doubt it is the latter. (It is not a coincidence. My plays dealing with Italian subjects always received second or third prize. The others — the non-Italian plays — never failed to win first prize; such as: "The Bridge," "The Refrigerators", "The Seducers", and "The Roman Guest".)

Let's look at "The Bridge", now, which I'm happy to see published in *Arts in Society* — the perfect review for it.

In a superficial reading "The Bridge" may seem an attack on the American police. It is not. Joseph seems reactionary, fascistic. He is not. Later he will reveal a surprising human quality. He is the "victim," not the torturer.

This is another reason why there must be complete freedom for an artist. He might find human qualities even in a traditional enemy of "change." No doubt I could have found some human qualities even in an Italian Carabiniere.

Mario Fratti

THE BRIDGE

a One Act Play
by Mario Fratti

First Prize R. Ruggeri, 1967
First Prize "Città D'Alessandria", 1967
First Prize "Città di Milano-Rabdomanti", 1969

THE CHARACTERS:

PABLO: thirty-five years old; a Puerto Rican living in New York

JOSEPH: A Policeman assigned to rescue work

A LIEUTENANT: In the Police Force

THE PLACE: New York
THE TIME: Today

The top of Brooklyn Bridge, a place not too uncommon for suicides.

PABLO is standing in the middle of the double span. He is looking down apparently about to jump.

Down, at the foot of the bridge, we imagine a curious crowd.

PABLO, lost and bewildered, looks around. He is surrounded only by the blue sky.

PABLO (to someone who is evidently trying to reach him) It's no use. You're wasting your time, my friend . . . Don't! Or I will jump right away . . . There is no use . . . It's too late now. (backing up) I warn you . . . If you come close . . . Go away! Go back to them! (he points to the crowd down below) or do you want this "show" to get going?
(He backs up to the very edge, wavering.)
I'm warning you . . . Don't come near or I'll . . .

(JOSEPH, The policeman, appears at the opposite side of the span. He is out of breath and sweating. He sits down to catch his breath.) I'm not joking. I mean it!

JOSEPH I know.

PABLO One more move and . . .

JOSEPH I know.

PABLO What do you know?

JOSEPH That you're not joking.

PABLO Then why are you up here? (JOSEPH shrugs his shoulders.)

JOSEPH Let me catch my breath.

PABLO You have all the time you want.

JOSEPH I know.

PABLO If you don't move.

JOSEPH I know.

PABLO If you try to —

JOSEPH (interrupting) I know.

PABLO You know too much.

JOSEPH That's my job.

PABLO Then you know there's nothing you can do about me.

JOSEPH I know.

PABLO Then why are you up here?

JOSEPH It's my duty.

PABLO (with some surprise and curiosity) Just **duty?**

JOSEPH And the bonus. There's extra money for such trips.

PABLO If you save me.

JOSEPH That's not necessary. Just climbing up here is considered "special duty". And we get double pay.

PABLO (after a silence) How many have you seen up here?

JOSEPH Nine.

PABLO How many have you . . . saved?

JOSEPH Eight.

PABLO A good record. I'm sorry to spoil it. I've made up my mind.

JOSEPH I know.

PABLO Eight saved; two lost. It's still a good average. Eighty per cent.

JOSEPH Ninety per cent.

PABLO Why ninety?

JOSEPH Nine saved; one lost.

PABLO Why do you say "nine"?

JOSEPH I always tell the truth.

PABLO Do you think you can . . .? (He includes himself with a gesture)

JOSEPH Absolutely.

PABLO (incredulous) Are you including me?

JOSEPH Yes.

PABLO Are you serious?

JOSEPH I'm serious.

PABLO Do you really think . . . you'll save me?

JOSEPH As true as there's a God.

PABLO You must be an atheist. It's unusual, for a cop.

JOSEPH On the contrary, I'm very religious.

PABLO (incredulous) And you're sure that — "as true as there's a God," you'll save me?

JOSEPH Don't take the name of the Lord in vain. (He makes the sign of the Cross.)

PABLO You started.

JOSEPH I'm on the side of the Law.

PABLO I forget. You're permitted everything.

JOSEPH Not only because I'm a man of the Law but also because I'm not about to commit a mortal sin. I've just come from Church. (He wipes off his perspiration.)

PABLO (ironically) I apologize if this trip made you lose the holy perfume of the incense.

I'm so sorry you're perspiring because of me.

JOSEPH It doesn't matter. Thanks to you I get a day off tomorrow. There can be some advantage to a calamity.

PABLO Am I the "calamity?"

JOSEPH I'd say so.

PABLO What a way of consoling one's fellow brother! Did you talk to the others like this?

JOSEPH What others?

PABLO Those nine — (He does not utter the word "suicides" but so indicates with a gesture of "jumping".)

JOSEPH Yes.

PABLO (more and more intrigued) To all of them?

JOSEPH To all of them.

PABLO Even to the one . . . you didn't save?

JOSEPH That one too. A thick-skinned Jew.

PABLO I see. You're one of those who consider the Jews to be different . . . An inferior race, maybe.

JOSEPH Insensitive.

PABLO (reflecting) Insensitive . . . to what? (ironically) To what you said?

JOSEPH To that too.

PABLO Which is what you're telling me.

JOSEPH More or less.

PABLO Maybe he was **too** sensitive and preferred to — (He makes the gesture of jumping.)

JOSEPH Are you Jewish by any chance?

PABLO No, I'm a Catholic. Like you, I guess.

JOSEPH (with tolerance) There's always something in common, alas!

PABLO Alas?

JOSEPH You can't avoid it.

PABLO Is that bad?

JOSEPH In a street, in an office, in a prison — people always find that they have something in common. Same religion, political opinion, race . . .

PABLO Same sex.

JOSEPH You can't avoid it. The chances are fifty fifty.

PABLO (ironically) Yes we have two things in common. We are both Catholics and we are men.

JOSEPH The only two things we have in common.

PABLO The only ones I hope.

JOSEPH I hope so too.

PABLO (studying JOSEPH) Did you tell that Jew you're a Catholic?

JOSEPH Of course.

PABLO That's why he jumped.

JOSEPH (looking straight in his eyes) Who told you he jumped?

PABLO You said so yourself.

JOSEPH Me? You're wrong.

PABLO You said — "Eight were saved and one was lost."

JOSEPH That's what I said.

PABLO Well?

JOSEPH Well what?

PABLO If you saved eight of them but not the Jew, it means that the Jew jumped.

JOSEPH You misunderstood me.

PABLO Evidently. What did you mean?

JOSEPH I meant — eight saved from the miseries of this world. One — the Jew — asked for a ladder.

PABLO (surprised) So that's what you meant when you said that you'd save me.

JOSEPH As true as there's a God. (He crosses himself.)

PABLO (shaken; reflecting) You're right . . . I've made up my mind . . . But how can you be so sure?

JOSEPH It's instinct. And experience.

PABLO I always thought men like you could not be very smart.

JOSEPH Never underestimate Men of Law, remember that! We would never be trusted with keeping "order" if we weren't well schooled and prepared.

PABLO What did they teach you?

JOSEPH Everything.

PABLO Even how to read the minds of other people?

JOSEPH That's called "psychology" It's one of the most important subjects.

PABLO And with that psychology you never made a mistake?

JOSEPH With exception of the Jews. They're unpredictable.

PABLO All of them?

JOSEPH All of them.

PABLO Including the . . . possible suicides?

JOSEPH Also those. They pretend. They do it to attract attention. Then there's always a rich Jew who comes along and offers them a job at a hundred dollars a week, and they change their minds.

PABLO (unable to hide his envy) A hundred dollars a week . . .

JOSEPH You'd spend every penny of it on whisky.

PABLO How would **you** know?

JOSEPH I know your kind. All I have to do is look at your face.

PABLO What kind of face do you see?

JOSEPH You Puer- (He holds back.) You're all bums.

PABLO (sadly) You started to say — You Puerto Ricans.

JOSEPH I admit it. Did you study psychology, you too?

PABLO Is a Puerto Rican and a bum the same thing to you?

JOSEPH (looking straight in his eyes) The same thing.

PABLO Then why did you come to our country and take over?

JOSEPH Me?

PABLO Your people.

JOSEPH If it was up to me . . . (scornfully) I wouldn't touch you people with a ten-foot pole.

PABLO It's me who wouldn't let one of you touch me.

JOSEPH Don't worry about **that.** I won't touch you. (He "washes" his hands.)

PABLO Do all you cops feel that way?

JOSEPH A man in uniform can only speak for himself. I, personsonally, wouldn't touch you with a ten-foot pole. My friends on the Force . . . (he thinks for a few seconds) . . . feel the same way. But that's their business. They can speak for themselves, if they wish. I believe in freedom of choice. (a brief pause) How about you?

PABLO So do I. (pointing below) Is there any freer choice than this?

JOSEPH I mean, do you believe in Freedom, in our Democracy?

PABLO Why do you ask **me** that?

JOSEPH I don't trust your kind.

PABLO What kind are we?

JOSEPH Bums with many kids.

PABLO What do you know about me? What do you know about my family?

JOSEPH You're all alike. It's always the same story and complaint.

PABLO Did I complain?

JOSEPH That's because I didn't give you a chance to. Please don't tell me your story. I've heard it a thousand times.

PABLO Then you tell me.

JOSEPH You left your old parents starving in your little village —

PABLO I'm an orphan.

JOSEPH (ignoring) You came to New York full of hope. To make money. Instead, you began making children. The result — starvation for all. Big families always starve.

PABLO How many children make a "big family," according to you?

JOSEPH In your case? I saw four. But I'm sure you have more in some dump.

PABLO (with curiosity) Where did you see them?

JOSEPH Down there, with your miserable wife. My buddies are holding them back. They trust me. They know I can "save" you single-handed. (a silence)

PABLO (slowly) Why did you say . . . she's miserable?

JOSEPH Your wife? Not because you're about to die. That she will be widowed is not a misfortune. It might be a stroke of luck for her. I said she looks "miserable" because . . . (he takes his time) you must know how she looks early in the morning! She just got up. And hasn't washed her face!

PABLO (timidly) Did she say anything?

JOSEPH Oh I forgot; — And I know it's unfair not to report the last words to a dying man. — She told me to tell you that . . . (he is trying to remember) a certain man by the name of . . . Sanchez — I think I'm right — has a good job for you, with a very good pay. And . . . she also promised not to complain ever again. She's swearing it by one of your Madonnas. (a silence)

PABLO (sadly) They all lie . . . Always . . . (to JOSEPH) Would **you** believe them?

JOSEPH Believe what?

PABLO In a job with "very good" pay, in all the promises . . .

JOSEPH Sometimes they tell the truth. Sometimes they lie. It depends. There's freedom of opinion in this country.

PABLO (after a silence) What else did she say?

JOSEPH (trying to remember) — that if I persuade you to come down, I'd be welcomed into your family with gratitude and "love." (with contempt) Who needs it? (reflecting) Maybe she also meant . . . in bed. Who wants that disgrace?

PABLO (hurt) You're a swine!

JOSEPH (tense) Come over here and repeat that to my face. (a silence) Come on! (he rises to his feet, aggressively) If you have the guts to do it . . . (a silence; they stare at each other)

PABLO And what about my —? (He indicates the word "children" with a gesture of his hand.)

JOSEPH Your brats? They weren't crying. You're a strange breed. Not even a tear. (staring at him) You tell me. Why do you suppose they don't cry? (a silence; PABLO does not have the courage to reply)

JOSEPH Too exhausted maybe? (PABLO gestures in the negative.) Sometimes hunger makes you react like that. (PABLO gestures in the negative.) Or maybe you people beat them too often?

PABLO (weakly) No . . .

JOSEPH Maybe they're glad to be rid of you. A drunkard isn't a joyful sight to one's children.

PABLO (who has not heard the last words; deeply moved) Maria is twelve . . .

JOSEPH Who's Maria?

PABLO My daughter. (with a gesture he indicates her height) She's a real little lady. She promised me she wouldn't cry. She is not crying.

JOSEPH (surprised) Promised? (PABLO nods.) You spoke to her about —? (He makes the gesture of "jumping".)

PABLO To a wife it's hard to say such things. She laughs in your face, she doesn't believe you . . . A daughter has more respect . . . She understands . . .

JOSEPH What did you tell her?

PABLO That it's better for them . . .

JOSEPH What's better? Why?

PABLO When a father dies in this way, everybody becomes generous.

JOSEPH Who?

PABLO Everybody . . . And my family will receive a lot of help, and many gifts . . . They'll be able to go back to San Juan.

JOSEPH Bon Voyage! But did she really understand? Did she understand that you —? (He makes the sign of the Cross in the air, meaning "death")

PABLO She understood.

JOSEPH And she didn't cry?

PABLO When I first told her she cried. She held me tightly, with her hands clasping my shoulders. Then she began to understand and promised not to cry today . . . to encourage her little brothers.

JOSEPH (incredulous, with irony) "To encourage."

PABLO She has always obeyed me. She loves me.

JOSEPH And you reward her with —

PABLO (ignoring) She always keeps her promise . . . Always. My poor baby, not even a tear . . .

JOSEPH Yes. You are a strange breed.

PABLO Because we learn not to cry?

JOSEPH Because you know how to exploit even death.

PABLO What do you mean?

JOSEPH Your blind belief that "everybody will become generous and will give money."

PABLO It's true.

JOSEPH That's why I said — "You know how to exploit even death." But after all how can you be so sure that we aren't tired of giving you people charity? There's a limit to everything!

PABLO In the presence of death . . .

JOSEPH It's practically become a daily occurrence. A dead person on every street corner. No one is upset by it.

PABLO I'm certain that —

JOSEPH (ironically) "Certain!" You people are ridiculous! There's no such word as "certain" any more.

PABLO Two years ago a friend of mine attempted suicide and —

JOSEPH (interrupting) **Attempted.** That's different.

PABLO One of you convinced him to give up the idea. With a million promises.

JOSEPH Not me!

PABLO I believe that.

JOSEPH Thanks!

PABLO You speak your mind . . .

JOSEPH Always. I call a spade a spade. And a bum a bum.

PABLO You've already called me that.

JOSEPH "Repetita iuvant." (to PABLO who does not understand) They teach us even a little Latin at the Police Academy. To impress fools. "Repetita iuvant" means — "Explain the truth ten times, to thickheads. Maybe they'll understand." That friend of yours, for instance, maybe he was convinced because the Police officer repeated the same thing ten times. I have no patience.

PABLO The promises weren't kept, of course . . . No job, no apartment . . .

JOSEPH That's life . . .

PABLO You say that as if it were an insignificant event.

JOSEPH Is it perhaps a great international event?

PABLO It's a man's life.

JOSEPH (raising one finger) ONE man . . . Don't get carried away. ONE man.

PABLO Do you know what they did to him, when he came down?

JOSEPH Are you going to tell me they beat him up? With all those photographers around? I don't believe you.

PABLO They put him in an insane asylum.

JOSEPH A few weeks under observation calms the nerves. But what are you trying to prove with the story of your friend?

PABLO Six months ago he finally did it. From here. His case made headlines. His family returned to Puerto Rico with a lot of money.

JOSEPH It's the headlines that you want.

PABLO If it helps my family yes.

JOSEPH The usual excuse. (ironically) "For the family." It's the publicity that you guys want. All of you!

PABLO (with sincerity) No! Please believe me. And please tell them. Everyone. Repeat our conversation. Tell them I did it only for my family, that I put my hope in the good hearts of . . . anybody who can . . .

JOSEPH You Latin-Americans have a strange mentality. The only thing you want is charity.

PABLO Only when —

JOSEPH (interrupting) You people are real parasites.

PABLO It isn't me who created the world the way it is. If you're living, they promise you the moon but —

JOSEPH Not me!

PABLO — but they don't keep their promises. But if you die, everybody —

JOSEPH (interrupting) Not "everybody." Only some with sins on their conscience. Maybe it's a way of feeling absolved. That's their business. But you, why do you pick the easiest way out?

PABLO (bitterly) The "easiest?"

JOSEPH Who do you want strangers to support your children?

PABLO It's the only way they can be happy. Unfortunately only death brings pity. That friend of mine —

JOSEPH You already told me.

PABLO It's not my fault if that's the way the world is.

JOSEPH But **you're** responsible for the children. You brought them into the world. Stop drinking and take care of them.

PABLO I've never been drunk in my life.

JOSEPH I'm sure you have other vices.

PABLO Did you ever pay a hospital bill?

JOSEPH Here come the complaints! Get hospital insurance!

PABLO Do you know what it costs here in America?

JOSEPH My wife takes care of that.

PABLO It's half my salary! (after a reflection) You have a wife too . . .

JOSEPH Certainly. Why?

PABLO I think of you without a family . . . The way you talk . . . Cruel and hateful . . .

JOSEPH Me cruel! You, who order a twelve-year-old not to cry. Are **you** the model father?

PABLO Do you have children too?

JOSEPH Of course. A boy and a girl. Like any respectable family, only two. When the good Lord (He crosses himself.) summons my wife and me to Heaven, they will take our place. We don't reproduce like rabbits — we real Americans. Over-population leads to Communism. (a brief silence) Why did you have so many children if you knew you were going to finish up like this? (He points down.)

PABLO I didn't know then . . .

JOSEPH In bed people don't think of suicide, I know. You bums are all alike. Selfish. You're just in for physical satisfaction — as long as you find your wife attractive. But when she is reduced to that state (he points down), with four brats hanging on, you decide to commit suicide. Is this your way of insuring their future? Depending on the charity of strangers? You're a coward!
(a silence)

PABLO I've read a lot about suicide . . . Some claim that it's cowardice; others say it's an act of courage. What do you think?

JOSEPH (slowly) I have no desire to influence you, as you know. What you decide is **your** own damn business. I couldn't care less. But I do have an opinion on suicide.

PABLO What is it?

JOSEPH They go into it in our psychology course. We divided ourselves into two groups. Some insisted on calling it courage; others, extreme cowardice. I personally think that it does take courage that fraction of a second when you jump. On the other hand it's cowardice because it's an escape from life. But let me make this clear to you. I don't want to influence you in one direction or the other. One suicide more, one less . . .

PABLO (reproachfully) Why do you talk like that?

JOSEPH Like what?

PABLO With such contempt . . .

JOSEPH It's my point of view. Don't I have the right? This is a free country!

PABLO It's the way you say it.

JOSEPH It's the truth. I always tell the truth, that's me. When a bum does away with himself, there's more room for us. It makes our society more secure. In Indonesia for instance. They have executed nine hundred thousands bums in a few days. Nine hundred thousand Reds less. The world is a little cleaner and safer for that.

PABLO I'm no red!

JOSEPH Unemployed with a big family? Who are you kidding? You can only be a red.

PABLO The Church would excommunicate me.

JOSEPH You mean that's the only reason why you're not a Red? Because you're afraid of the Church? That's an interesting confession!

PABLO And because I believe in the family.

JOSEPH (Ironically, pointing down) I can see that!

PABLO And in freedom.

JOSEPH What kind of freedom?

PABLO (pointing vaguely around him) This . . .

JOSEPH The freedom to jump?

PABLO Democratic freedom . . . That's what I've always believed in. Man should be free to do what he wants.

JOSEPH And women?

PABLO Women too.

JOSEPH Are you leaving your wife and daughter the freedom to do what they want?

PABLO (waveringly) Yes . . .

JOSEPH Complete freedom?

PABLO (unsure) Yes . . .

JOSEPH Even if they take to walking the streets, I suppose?

PABLO (hurt) They will have money, lots of money and —

JOSEPH Are you really certain of it?

PABLO I read about it every day in the paper. There's always some good soul who starts a collection . . . even Oswald's family. They have lots of money now.

JOSEPH He killed a **President.** You're only killing a poor stupid nobody. Yourself. You want to make a bet? They won't collect more than five hundred dollars.

PABLO Sure if you tell them I'm a Red. Which **isn't** true. Please don't —

JOSEPH I won't. I'll only say that . . . you had a nervous breakdown.

PABLO . . . with debts and no job . . .

JOSEPH That's social protest. That wouldn't be wise. Anyway, do you want to bet?

PABLO I've made up my mind and I'm going to jump. Who will pay if I lose the bet?

JOSEPH You can sign an IOU. If your family gets over five hundred dollars, I'll add a hundred. If they get less, your wife will owe me a hundred.
(He takes a piece of paper and pen.) Here, sign here.

PABLO (uncertain) Are you so sure they'll . . . get less than five hundred dollars?

JOSEPH Positive. I can guarantee it. Yours is an ordinary case. There're ten a day like you. People have become callous to it.

PABLO If you lie and tell them I'm a Red —

JOSEPH (Interrupting) Keep politics out of it! Do you want to take me up on it?

PABLO Honestly — would you have the nerve to take their money if they received less than five hundred dollars?

JOSEPH (ironically) My friend you're beginning to have doubts, aren't you?

PABLO My name is Pablo. What's yours?

JOSEPH (bored) Joseph.

PABLO Tell me, Joseph . . . Tell me seriously. Would you have the nerve to take a hundred dollars from them if —?

JOSEPH I won't be the only one. They'll be at the mercy of everybody down there. Even your friends who loaned you money —

PABLO No friend of mine ever —

JOSEPH (interrupting) All right, enemies then. Like the grocer and the landlord. And don't forget the undertaker. Nowadays a decent funeral costs a thousand dollars.

PABLO (alarmed) A thousand dollars? Are you sure?

JOSEPH Positive. Even gravediggers have families to feed!

PABLO But that friend of mine, he didn't pay at all —

JOSEPH **He** didn't, I'm sure.

PABLO — his family didn't pay anything for the funeral. The City —

JOSEPH (interrupting) With the new Mayor the rules are different. Too many of you guys took advantage of free burials. (He studies him.) But what's bothering you? Are you worried about something?

PABLO Nothing. I'm sure you're just trying to frighten me and —

JOSEPH **Frighten** you? Who gives a damn about you? Whatever you've decided, you've well decided. And I after all don't think you should worry so much.

PABLO Why?

JOSEPH I'm sure you've considered everything . . . taken everything into account, thought about it.

PABLO About what?

JOSEPH Your daughter.

PABLO What do you mean?

JOSEPH She's just twelve and . . . already an attractive little figure . . .

PABLO So what?

JOSEPH She'll find some rich customers.

PABLO You're a louse! (JOSEPH instinctively draws his revolver.) Shoot! (PABLO stretches out his arms.) This way we'll get it over with sooner!

JOSEPH Nobody calls **me** a louse!

PABLO I call you that again. Louse! (He stretches out his arms again; offers himself as a target.)

JOSEPH (raises his revolver and aims at PABLO.)

PABLO Go ahead, shoot.

JOSEPH (after a reflection, lowering his revolver) You'd like that, wouldn't you? That way the guilt would be on **my** shoulders.

PABLO You deserve it.

JOSEPH And you wouldn't have to take that final step. You're a coward.

PABLO Because I haven't jumped yet?

JOSEPH And for everything else. I told you Maria would find rich customers because it always ends up that way. I've come across more than one like her.

PABLO What do you mean, "like her"?

JOSEPH In a French whorehouse for instance. Years ago. I took a very young girl — same eyes as your daughter. After we were through we talked for a while. She was the daughter of a Red executed by the Germans.

PABLO (angry) I'm **not** a Red. How can I make you understand?

JOSEPH That's the way all daughters of radicals wind up. In a whorehouse!

PABLO (furious) I'm **no** radical!

JOSEPH All right then. All daughters of bums. Is that better? In a whorehouse.

PABLO (upset) Not Maria . . . They'll go back to Puerto Rico and —

JOSEPH (interrupting) She will find customers there too. They'll

pay less but —

PABLO That's enough, you dirty . . .!

JOSEPH What are you getting so excited about? You're dead and buried. You won't see anything, you won't feel anything.

PABLO I've never met a bastard like you before!

JOSEPH **I'm** the bastard? Look who's talking!

PABLO Damn you! If I had — (He wrings his hands.)

JOSEPH You want my gun? Here! (He puts it down beside him.) Only with a gun would you have the guts to face anyone.

PABLO Put it in the middle of the bridge and then go back to your place.

JOSEPH I suffer from heights. That's why I sat down here. (He points to the gun beside him.) You're as good as dead anyway. So you can risk your useless life.

PABLO I'm more useful than you! More honest! I've worked all my life!

JOSEPH (ironical) That's great! And here's the result. Look at you!

PABLO I . . . I . . . (He can't find words.) I can't believe that you . . .

JOSEPH That I — what?

PABLO That you can talk like that. It's inhuman.

JOSEPH That's psychology. All I need is to look at your face. You, a typical bum. Your daughter, a typical —

PABLO (violent) Leave my daughter out of this!

JOSEPH (suddenly noticing that someone is climbing up) Take it easy, friend, take it easy! The Lieutenant is coming. (He buttons up his shirt and puts away his gun. The Police Lieutenant appears near JOSEPH.)

LIEUTENANT Well? Where do we stand?

JOSEPH We were talking about his children, his wife . . . (to PABLO) Right? (PABLO does not answer.) He's very attached to his family . . . Especially his daughter.

LIEUTENANT Should we bring her up here?

PABLO (promptly) No!

JOSEPH He's afraid that something might happen to her. He's coming down . . . (He instinctively gestures a "jump"; he corrects the gesture to indicate "descent".)

LIEUTENANT Are you sure?

JOSEPH I'm doing my best.

LIEUTENANT Please. If you fail again, I'll be demoted.

JOSEPH Leave it to me.

LIEUTENANT Is he difficult?

JOSEPH Yes and no . . . I'll achieve my purpose, don't worry.

LIEUTENANT **Our** purpose!

JOSEPH Of course!

LIEUTENANT (to PABLO) Hello, Young Man! (He waves and smiles.)

JOSEPH (to the Lieutenant) His name is Pablo.

LIEUTENANT Hello Pablo! How're you doing? (PABLO does not answer.) We have some cokes down below! Nice and cold! And your family, they're all upset! Come on, like a good sport. (PABLO ignores him. The LIEUTENANT whispers something to JOSEPH.)

JOSEPH (to the LIEUTENANT) You can depend on me.

LIEUTENANT Please . . . (He descends: disappears.)

JOSEPH (to PABLO) He's only worried about being demoted. Hypocrite!

PABLO Less hypocrite than you! You lied to him.

JOSEPH Me?

PABLO You made him believe that you were doing your best to . . .

JOSEPH To what?

PABLO To get me to come down.

JOSEPH It's useless with a headstrong fool like you.

PABLO Why did you lie to him?

JOSEPH I told him that we talked about your family. That's no lie, is it? And that you're partial to your eldest child. Isn't that right?

PABLO She isn't my first-born.

JOSEPH (surprised) You never told me that!

(reflecting) She seemed to be the tallest.

PABLO My first-born is a boy. He's fourteen now.

JOSEPH Your family keeps growing. You see? I was right. The only thing you people know how to do is to manufacture children. Where is he? I didn't see him down there with the rest of them.

PABLO I left him in Puerto Rico. With his grandfather.

JOSEPH You should have all remained there. Only ungrateful people and parasites leave their native country.

PABLO Your Government made me an American citizen.

JOSEPH Nobody asked for my advice.

PABLO You come to us with your chewing gum, your Coca Cola, you give us passports with your American eagle and then —

JOSEPH What else do you want? New York City?

PABLO The freedom you promise. The right to travel, to come to America.

JOSEPH But why do all of you come here? Take a trip in your own country. You must have some interesting sights there too!

PABLO If Rome conquers a neighbor, the neighbor goes to Rome. It's natural.

JOSEPH Conquests would stop if all the slaves descended on the Capital.

PABLO This is not the Capital.

JOSEPH It is. This city pays the highest salaries in the world.

PABLO For those who can get work.

JOSEPH Specialize at something and you'll find work.

PABLO How?

JOSEPH That's **your** problem.

PABLO You see? In this world nobody helps you.

JOSEPH I'm not your brother! Go to the Police Headquarters if you need help.

PABLO And there I'll find somebody like you. I'll be lucky if he doesn't beat me up.

JOSEPH Have you ever gone to **my** precinct?

PABLO No.

JOSEPH Try before criticizing.

PABLO If they're all like you —

JOSEPH We're different. On this side of the bridge: those who believe in Law and Order. On that side of the bridge: your kind, bums full of hostility. Your suicide is the only contribution to Society. Happy landing, amigo! (he points down; then he looks at his watch.) It's getting late. I have an appointment . . .

PABLO With the Ku Klux Klan, I bet!

JOSEPH Not exactly. I'm going to the K.A.W.

PABLO What's that?

JOSEPH "Keep America White."

You Latins — and the Blacks, and the Yellows, you're mongrelizing us. We must fight to survive. That's why no pure Aryan ever commits suicide.

PABLO You're a Nazi!

JOSEPH Do you know that's almost a compliment?

PABLO I bet you've got a picture of Hitler hanging on the wall.

JOSEPH No. He's in a drawer. It's a good picture and I didn't want to throw it away.

PABLO (incredulous) I can't believe it. Are you serious?

JOSEPH Of course I am. I've always admired Hitler. He believed in the superiority of the Aryan race. I am for the superiority of the Aryan race. He was for a New Order. I am a guardian of Order. And if I had something to say about it . . . it would be a New and Total Order, I assure you!

PABLO You're a Fascist!

JOSEPH That word is out. Commies like you have succeeded in making it sound like "poison".

PABLO I'm **not** a commie!

JOSEPH What else can a bum with five kids be?

PABLO I'll sue you.

JOSEPH Post-mortem?

PABLO I'm still alive.

JOSEPH For how long?

PABLO As long as I wish.

JOSEPH You heathen! You even dare to take the place of Our Lord! (ironically) "As long as I wish." As long as **Our Lord** wishes! (He looks up and crosses himself.)

PABLO I'm the judge of this day.

JOSEPH And you've decided. Have a nice trip!

PABLO I'll stay here as long as I want.

JOSEPH (looking at his watch) It's getting late.

PABLO I'll see to it that you don't keep your appointment. People like you should be forbidden from meeting.

JOSEPH Are you forgetting that this is a free country?

PABLO I'll keep you here as long as I like.

JOSEPH That's not fair. What I told you is confidential . . . Please . . . (he indicates he should "jump")

PABLO I'll stay as long as I like!

JOSEPH You see? People like you can't be trusted! I was being friendly!

PABLO Friendly? God help me!

JOSEPH You can't trust anybody in this world!

PABLO You're right.

JOSEPH Especially half-breeds . . . (He studies PABLO) You don't look like you'd have any Jewish blood . . . Probably there's some Negro in you . . . In Puerto Rico you're all half-Negro.

PABLO Nazi!

JOSEPH Why? Because I'm honest and tell you the truth? Let's stop pretending with each other. There's a superior race and inferior races. **We** have only two children. They're educated to lead. You boast about having five, six. There is no limit to how many. — Then you commit suicide. Those children are left to us. Ignorant and defenseless. "An inferior race".

PABLO People like you shouldn't exist.

JOSEPH Let's face it. We not only exist. We rule. And there is never a suicide among us.

(looking again at his watch) Please, amigo, it's getting late . . . (he looks below) and I'm beginning to feel dizzy . . .

PABLO — It would be very funny if it were you who lost your balance and . . . (points down)

JOSEPH — Funny? (He crosses his fingers.) You have a morbid sense of humor! I've got a wife and two children!

PABLO — Do you really think your family is "superior" to mine?

JOSEPH — Can you even doubt it? We have genetic, intellectual and moral superiority.

PABLO — (incredulous) You must be joking!

JOSEPH — I'm definitively not joking! Now please . . . (he points down) Bon voyage, amigo!

PABLO — You promised the Lieutenant to —

JOSEPH — "Promises." I'm fickle like a sailor. I was in the Navy. What about you?

PABLO — Infantry.

JOSEPH — That figures.

PABLO — Your Army was happy to get me.

JOSEPH — Who else would we send to the front line? You and the Negroes are ideal for that.

LIEUTENANT — (Offstage, his voice coming from below) Well, have you made up your mind? We're blocking traffic here!

JOSEPH — (shouting) He's coming right down! We're discussing our glorious Army! Our friend Pablo was in the Infantry.

LIEUTENANT — (Offstage, from below; rhetorical) Three cheers for the Infantry!

PABLO — You hypocrite!

JOSEPH — Whatever you want but make up your mind. Did you notice how subtle I was? I said — He's coming right down!" I didn't lie. You're going down either way.

PABLO — I've never met anyone like you. Never. You're inhuman.

JOSEPH — Me, inhuman? You must be joking. Look, I'll prove to you that I'm not only kind but a friend. If you get it over with quickly (he points below), I'll make a deal with you.

PABLO — What deal?

JOSEPH — First of all, I won't tell a soul you're a Red. That way your family —

PABLO — I'm **not** a Red! You bastard —

JOSEPH — (ignoring him): — your family will get sympathy and help. There'll be more money for that mess of your wife and for the five brats. And . . . there's something else . . . (he hesitates)

PABLO — What?

JOSEPH — You're so sensitive on this subject that I don't know how to put it . . . (he hesitates)

PABLO — Go on.

JOSEPH — We're friends now, right?

PABLO — God help me!

JOSEPH — You must admit you've gotten to know me a little —

PABLO — Yes I know you. I thought they took care of your kind for good.

JOSEPH — We? The Master Race, born to lead? You're wrong.

PABLO — No, I'm not wrong.

JOSEPH — Well, do you want to hear the second part of my deal, yes or no?

PABLO — Go on superman.

JOSEPH — Better superman than a Red bum and a suicide too! This is what I propose . . .

If you jump now and let me get to my meeting (he looks at his watch again) I promise you — my word of honor — that I'll take care of your daughter.

PABLO (tense) What do you mean by that?

JOSEPH She has a charming little figure and sad, sad eyes . . . Once she recovers from this shock (he indicates the jump), I'll protect her.

PABLO From whom?

JOSEPH From the world. You know how things are. Would you rather have her fall into the hands of some pimp? Isn't it better with somebody you know?

PABLO (with hatred) Are you telling me . . . ?

JOSEPH She'll have a better start with a respectable man like me.

PABLO You're a worm.

JOSEPH Let's be reasonable. Try to be calm and objective. Not a Latin father. Surely you must face the fact that the man who will screw her up good not only exists but is waiting for her.

PABLO Bastard!

JOSEPH (ignoring him) She'll be better off with someone like me. At least you know me and . . . maybe admire me . . . (PABLO spits.)

JOSEPH Did you see? It dissolved halfway down. You won't dissolve half way down. Would you prefer that?

PABLO (with determination) I'll denounce you! You're a disgrace to the police, to America, to the white race! You're the most sadistic bastard alive! I'll tell them what you really are! (he is now determined to have JOSEPH denounced; he has forgotten about his "suicide" and prepares to descend)

JOSEPH (worried) But I was being friendly . . . What I told you is very confidential . . .

PABLO As long as there are people like you around, no one is safe! It's true, only a coward gives up and escapes. We must defend ourselves with every weapon. And life — even my life — is a useful weapon. (He descends and disappears. JOSEPH is alone now. His face is relaxed and relieved. He has become "human" now. He takes out a small walkie-talkie.)

JOSEPH (into the walkie-talkie) It's all right. He's on his way down . . . He'll accuse me of everything and call me every name in the book. Promise him that we'll have a confrontation tomorrow morning . . . I'm too tired today . . .

(The LIEUTENANT reappears beside JOSEPH. He has the same type of walkie-talkie. Evidently, he has heard everything.)

LIEUTENANT You're great, Joe! You're the most valuable man I have! You save them all!

JOSEPH (with sadness and frustration) All?

LIEUTENANT (ignoring) Your performance was perfect. Precise and effective. You were in top form today. You'd have convinced a corpse.

JOSEPH Did you hear everything?

LIEUTENANT From beginning to end. (indicates his walkie-talkie)

JOSEPH Did I seem sincere?

LIEUTENANT Completely.

JOSEPH On every point?

LIEUTENANT On every point.

JOSEPH (Almost to himself) It no longer sounds like an "act" . . .

LIEUTENANT Not at all!

JOSEPH (bitterly) When one lies professionally, one learns to lie well.

LIEUTENANT By the way, what made you say nine hundred thousand Indonesians? I've heard that only three hundred thousand were killed.

JOSEPH I read it in a British newspaper. They always tell the truth.

LIEUTENANT (after a brief pause) It's a delicate subject. I don't think you should have —

JOSEPH (sarcastic) Any other complaints?

LIEUTENANT Oh no! The essential thing is to save a life. Saving nine lives out of ten is an impressive record. You're the only one in this city who can do it. I must admit your method is infallible.

JOSEPH No method is infallible.

LIEUTENANT Are you still thinking of that poor old Jew?

(JOSEPH nods)

JOSEPH I shouldn't have made him believe I was a Nazi. It was a tragic mistake. I can still see his eyes . . . There was terror in them . . . He saw a real Nazi in me.

LIEUTENANT He was very old and very tired. Too many months in that concentration camp. It was hopeless. Nobody could have saved him.

JOSEPH (bitterly) Maybe I'm too convincing. If you preach hatred, it gets into your blood.

LIEUTENANT But you save their lives! That's what counts!

JOSEPH Do you think I'm really becoming a Nazi?

LIEUTENANT Nonsense! It's ridiculous!

JOSEPH They believe me. They hate me.

LIEUTENANT You've learned your role well. That's all. And you've put your heart and soul into your work. That's why you've succeeded. You'll be getting another medal, your ninth . . . (he studies JOSEPH)

And there'll be a tenth too, I'm sure . . .

JOSEPH (slowly, almost to himself) I reminded him of his past — a terrifying past . . . He was frightened . . . (to the LIEUTENANT) Is it really the **past?** Behind us forever?

LIEUTENANT Forever.

JOSEPH Then why was he so terrified? Why did he kill himself?

LIEUTENANT Forget it, Joe. Don't poison your life with the memory of an old man who was doomed anyway. Think of the young people you've saved. Nine lives! Think of those nine families that are grateful to you!

And now let's go down . . .
(a silence; JOSEPH is far away in his own thoughts)

Aren't you coming down?

JOSEPH Just a few more minutes . . . The air is so pure up here . . .

LIEUTENANT As you wish. (He pats JOSEPH's knee with understanding.)

(The LIEUTENANT descends, disappears. JOSEPH remains alone. He closes his eyes and takes in the quiet and pure air of that height.)

slow B L A C K O U T

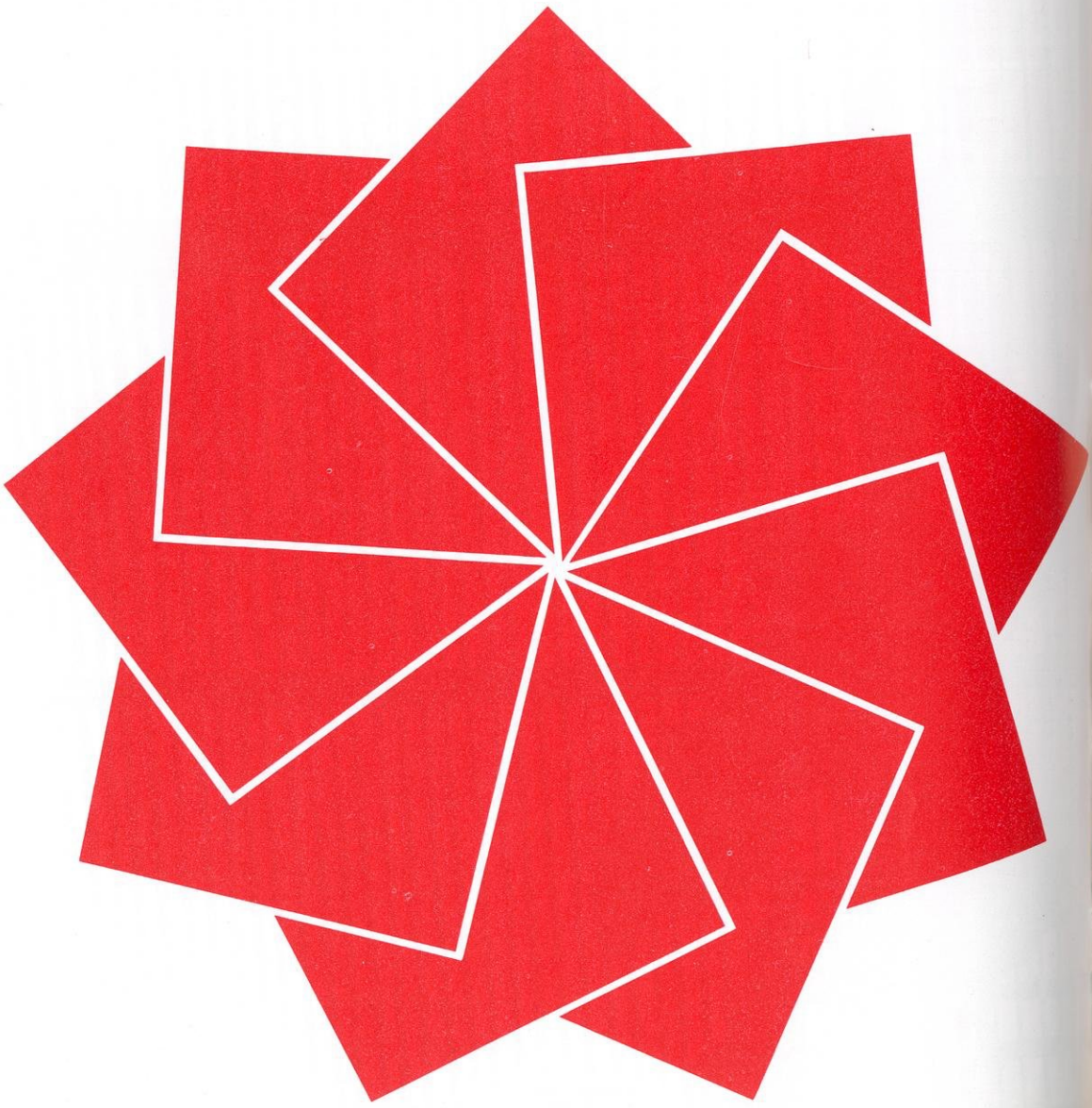
the end

Photograph by Michael Feldman

Book Reviews

The Aesthetics of Rock

by Gilbert Chase



R. Meltzer. *The Aesthetics of Rock*, New York: Something Else Press, 1970. $6.95.

Expect no systematic treatise but rather a cross-talk of opposites: logical/illogical, conceptual/visceral, philosophical/empirical, affirmative/negative (R. M. is the Master of the slanted line, which enables him to straddle every conceptual fence in his capricious/controlled path). Among writers on rock, R. Meltzer is unique. A major in philosophy at the Great Pot Emporium in Stony Brook (and later, more briefly, at Yale, he not only has read all the philosophers from A to B (Aristotle to Buber), but also proceeds on the rash assumption that his readers have read them too (can you spot "an Anaxagorean crystallization" or "a Heraclitean One?") Philosophy is his frame of reference, as attested by the index entries: Aristotle (14), Saint Augustine (1), Berdyaev (2), Bergson (1), J. Boehme (1), Buber (2), K. Burke (3), Descartes (1), Dewey (1), Feuerbach (1), Hegel (2), Heidegger (1), Hume (1), Wm. James (1), Kant (7), Kierkegaard (2), Leibnitz (1), Gabriel Marcel (1), Nietzsche (17), Plato (11), Pythagoras (2; *recte*, 3) Quine (1), Schopenhauer (5), Socrates (6), Teilhard de Chardin (3), Unamuno (4), Wittgenstein (1), Zeno (1). But this is not the whole story: omitted from the index are Anaxagoras (2), Democritus (2), Lucretius (1), Malebranche (1), Parmenides (2) — **and** Heraclitus (14)!

The numerical ratios are significant (e.g., the Aristotelian-Nietzschean antithesis), but not necessarily definitive. For example, the single reference to Wittgenstein seems to me crucial for the understanding of Meltzer's thought. He is writing about the Beatles' move to eliminate "semantic enslavement" in their songs, particularly through John Lennon's "shifting, juggling multiple ambiguities" (could be a model for R.M.). He then quotes a passage from Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations:* "Anything — and nothing — is right. — And this is the position you are in if you look for definitions corresponding to to our concepts in aesthetics or ethics."

"Anything — and nothing — is right," is the key to R.M.'s approach — if we take "right" to signify definitive, categorical, immutable, conclusive. An example will illustrate. He is discussing the relation of Dada to pop art with reference to Kurt Schwitters' Merz movement as "second generation Dada." Then in a footnote he has: "And Merz **equals** Dada but equals doesn't always equal equals (except always, sometimes, and never)." This semantic shifting and juggling may prove to be the biggest stumbling block for the reader of R. Meltzer. One soon gets accustomed to the merely antithetical pairings: "harmless/harmful," "awesome/trival," "clarity/confusion," etc. More formidable are occasional outcroppings of jargon like "non-entropic philosophic totality" (R. M. deprecates his own infrequent use of "Kantian aesthetic jargon"); and there are some mind-twisting labyrinthian conceptual involutions (e.g., ftn. 74, p. 61) that I forbear to quote for fear of putting off the reader. Reading this book is a fascinating/infuriating, stimulating/benumbing, enlightening/confusing experience — and one not to be missed. (How often do you come across a **unique** book by a **unique** writer?) I hate to say it, but R. Meltzer is a genius.

R. M. tells us that he began to plan this book with athletic striving for a "neatly articulate scholarly summation of a thing-system-order-setup-stuff seemingly otherwise by itself; now at the end I am a former scholar who doesn't give much of a crap for any of that stuff." The point is, he's **been** through all that stuff, and come out of it as **himself,** the Raunch Epistemologist of Rock 'n' Roll, the Master of Multiple Ambiguities (incidentally, the only book to which I might remotely compare this one is William Empson's *Seven Types of Ambiguity),* the radical explicator of the Unknown Tongue.

R. M. speaks of this "philosophical inquiry" as a "journey toward truth," but he never speaks of **the** truth as a pot of goodies to be picked up at the end of the road. Analyzing the Unknown Tongue is one way of approaching some of the many truths about rock:

> *Truth may be unutterable in the sense of far beyond communication or in the sense of too blatantly immediate to be formulated into communicational rudiments. The paradoxical use of this as the implicit mode of communication has been a definitive quality of music in general and, even more (as pop paradoxicality), of rock 'n' roll. Some place between the incapturably transitory and the imperceptibly infinite is the*

stage upon which something is acted out between the ungraspably holy and the forgettably profane. This is Cannibal and the Headhunters' "Land of a Thousand Dances"; this is the realm of the unknown tongue.

The concept of the unknown tongue was conceived (of all places!) in a *Time* magazine review of a Ray Charles concert: "Southern gospel experts have said that he speaks the unknown tongue." Trying to isolate this peculiar quality Meltzer and his friend Memphis Sam Pearlman decided that Ray Charles' introduction to "I Got a Woman," as recorded in Newport in 1958, "best fulfilled the standards of what an unknown tongue should be. He says:

He says: "Well sometimes, sometimes I get a little worried,/ But I just wanna tell you it's all right/ Be . . . cause I got a woman 'way over town . . ." The transition from the static body of the introduction to the pulsating kineticism of what follows is carried out by the particular syllabicatian of "Because" (the definitive primal unknown tongue). Hence the material cause of the unknown tongue consists of at least various musical-verbal maneuvers for transition. . . An unknown tongue is an element of transition which compels structurally and spiritually, (Heraclitean) forces or principles of opposition . . . Rock 'n' roll using the unknown tongue is music on all the ordered levels that music may attain . . . Schematized, the unknown tongue experience has precisely four components: 1) Change, abrupt movement, sudden transition structurally and experientially; 2) Musical awe; 3) Objectified awe, mere awe, "awe," awe at awe itself; 4) Taxonomic urgency (you know, you just gotta label it **tongue,** *as in* **"There's a tongue.")** *Classical music most assuredly possesses the unknown tongue . . . But only in rock 'n' roll is the unknown tongue the natural, logical outcome of development. And only in rock does the tongue define its own importance self-referentially (as by criteria 3 and 4) . . . "The hidden harmony is better than the obvious" proclaims Heraclitus. Modified, this is a basic criterion for evaluation of particular instances of the unknown tongue, which is both hidden and obvious; that is,* **merely** *hidden and obvious to a tongue-aware musical scrutiny, in fact obviously hidden (as well as exclusively obvious). The employment of an absurd taxonomic jargon insures that the unknown tongue experience be unhindered by the experience's taxonomic character.*

The last statement leads us back to Aristotle in a way that is characteristically Meltzerian. In one of various references to the *Poetics*, R. M. remarks that Aristotle uses "a jargon which, once familiar, actually molds (even too regularly, which might be judged negatively) the experience of movement and change in viewing actual instances of tragedy . . . Such a systematic *understanding of plot rigidifies audience* anticipation and leads to such (perhaps destructive) alterations of the art object, as into one which transforms discovery into merely discovery of a new taxonomic opacity; or one whose interest is now the particularization of such taxonomic opacity. . . . Aristotle gives you a hunk of quasi-decent explicit categories that make it so that you alter the way you see drama forever, like you see it as Aristotelian *sculpture drama, which is a groove but* it drags too."

R. M. rejects the current academic-critical approach whereby "rock has been infiltrated by scholarship as insipid internal newly articulate reference to high art." He has no illusions about the value/uselessness of musical analysis: "The whole analysis-of-music bit sort of calls for the use of a pack of words to tack onto a pack of sounds juxtaposed with another pack of words." For him, "Rock is the best-worst suited for being verbally dissected because it doesn't matter, and at the same time rock analysis can be validly insipid and harmless-harmful enough to be irrelevant to rock as music." Taking rock 'n' roll as his "original totality," R. M. commits himself to thinking **from** and **within** his subject, rather than **at** or **about** it. As he explains: "I have thus deemed it a necessity to describe rock 'n' roll by allowing my description to be itself a parallel artistic effort." Hence, the resulting work "will probably embody . . . as much incoherency, incongruity, and downright self-contradiction, as rock 'n' roll itself, and this is good." The justification for bearing down on rock with the selected thought of thirty-four philosophers is that, "Rock is the only possible future for philosophy and art."

Although admitting that "There are occasions in which rock presents itself as vulnerable to Aristotelian analysis," R. M. rejects the Aristotelian view of criticism as "rhetorical reduction of fine art to a remote final cause," or to an object "each part of which can be taxonomically labeled promptly." He points out that "no work on aesthetics, beginning with the *Poetics*, has ever done justice to the total work of art, **including those elements which are not artistic"** (emphasis added). And he adds: "Perhaps a consideration of adventitious causes would improve the situation." But this is not enough, for, "in opposition to Aristotle's implicit criterion of comparative relevance whereby adventitious causes would have to remain essentially irrelevant in order for the truly relevant causes to be prominent and retain their relevance, in rock the adventitious may be prominent, although still irrelevant."

In the aesthetics of the adventitious one accepts the relevancy/irrelevancy of the eternal/transitory, beauty/badness, sublimity/obscenity of rock as a unified field of expression/experience — "a sudden eruption of a facet of the human eclectic sentiment which can never be fully denied or forgotten." R. M. considers eclecticism to be the essential mode of rock 'n' roll: "In a world of such things as random values, metaphysical inconsistency, and the constant unavoidable interruption of pure aesthetic perception by random events from within and without, eclecticism is the only valid position (as far as the eclectic choice of the validity grid goes); and other stances may be measured by virtue of their distance from the eclectic." Hence, "Rock 'n' roll . . . turns toward the utter compression of popularly accepted, yet eclectically arranged, images."

In further elucidation of the Aesthetic of the Adventitious, we have the following:

One seeking to analyze rock must realize that the context for experiencing it must be left intact. He must take the lesson of environment and happening, art forms which in their expanded use of spatio-temporality **contain the contexts for experiencing themselves.** *All sorts of things are part of this context, as money, competition, survival, acceptance by adolescents, reaction by standard adults, peculiar reaction by the community of prior art. "In" and "out" are part of this broadened context of art in the world, both in its aesthetic and ethical toleration, not even in the camp sense of "in" and "out." The importance of keeping the context intact leads to "the very possibility of judging a work of rock with no other response than 'So what?' . . . "So what?' is thus a fine aesthetic judgment for two reasons, because it sums up a valid experience and leaves the work itself untarnished. . . . In fact, why not judge art by its sheer stubbornness, defiance of any and all objectification? . . . Certainly a self-important lucid surface is to be desired, but why not esteem those elements in art which baffle the critic, in other words generate a totality of art and art criticism with an internal chaos which serves as artistic self-nurture."*

This is precisely what R. Meltzer has done. With exemplary abnegation he has discarded the "self-important lucid surface" that is the trade-mark of academic criticism, accepting instead the challenge of chaos — internal/external — including a non-exclusive negative/positive vocabulary as a means of polarizing the aesthetic/empirical context/content of rock: incongruous, trivial, mediocre, banal, insipid, maudlin, abominable, trite, redundant, repulsive, ugly, innocuous, crass, incoherent, vulgar, tasteless, sour, boring. "When it is seen that such expressions have allowed for such a widening of form and content to be considered, only then can the 'in' terms (made out by their 'alienation' from rock's 'in') be brought near the rock context vocabulary: poignant, sincere, beautiful, etc."

Elsewhere R. M. remarks, "now it's time to be an athlete of the transcendental." Perhaps he should have said an acrobat. He swings high and low and performs triple semantic somersaults with perfect aplomb. To be a mere passive spectator-reader is to miss the excitement of Discovery and Understanding to which one is vigorously invited by R. M.'s athletic/aesthetic explorations. As he says somewhere, "Wubba wubba gggg, huh?" Which is by way of reinforcing this sage interrogative comment: "After all what does anything say about anything else, especially rock 'n' roll and rock 'n' roll analysis?" R. M. (quoting a poem by Rilke in support), accepts "the inadequacy of any language in dealing with things in themselves." Only by a confusion of tongues can one hope to approach (not grasp and pin down) the elusive/intrusive

essence of truth. Objectifying and counting ("one moonbeam, two moonbeams") brings us no nearer to the truth of celestial phenomena. Hence Rilke's poem (which R. M., with superb disdain for the reader's possible ignorance, quotes only in the original German, and of which I give here a literal translation of the first stanza):

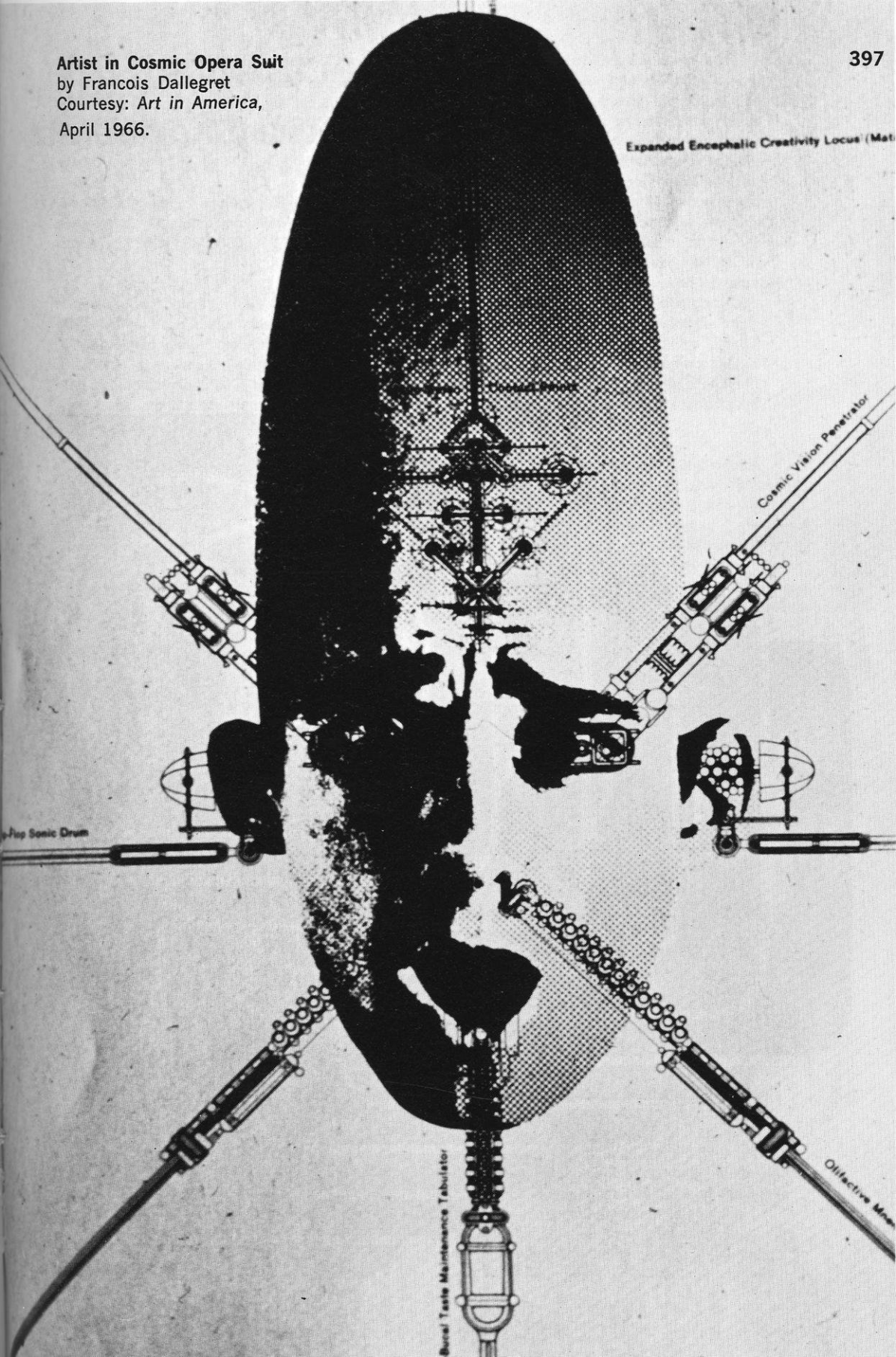
I am so frightened of men's words.
They say everything so distinctly:
and this means dog and that means house,
and here is beginning and there is end.

No one knows where the beginning was; but, "To Berdyaev, the creative act is the act which will bring about the end of the world." And R. Meltzer ends his book on an apocalyptic note: "The commerciality which rock 'n' roll wallows in has so affected the systems of meaning and meaningfulness that rock 'n' roll may be bringing about the

end of the world . . . .
end of the world . . . .
end of the world . . . .
end of the world . . . .
end of the world . . . .
end of the world . . . .
end of the world . . . .
end of the world . . . .
end of the world . . . .
end of the world . . . .

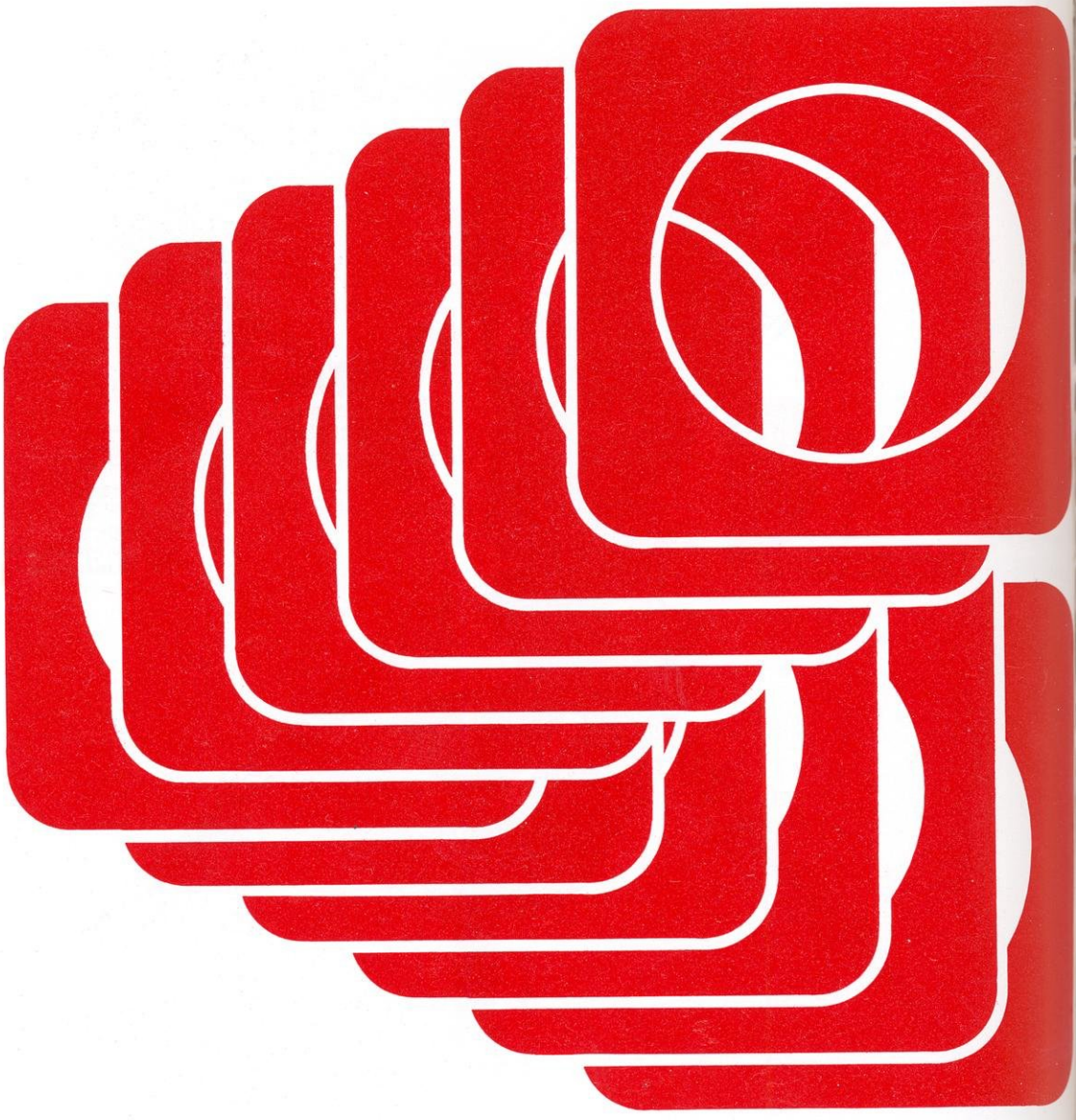
(N. B. "Rock 'n' roll is now in the midst of a cataclysmic acceleration, both in this mode of repetition and in the cognition of its nature.")

Artist in Cosmic Opera Suit
by Francois Dallegret
Courtesy: *Art in America*,
April 1966.



Precursors

by Richard Kostelanetz



Hans M. Wingler. *The Bauhaus*. Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1969. $49.50.

L. Moholy-Nagy. *Painting, Photography, Film*. Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1969. $10.00.

Sophie Lissitzky-Küppers. *El Lissitzky*. Greenwich, Connecticut: New York Graphic Society, 1968. $30.00.

The Bauhaus always had a good press in America — from responses to a 1931 exhibition in New York through Sigfried Giedion's supremely influential *Space, Time and Architecture* (1941) to the present; so that when its faculty fled the Nazi rise, many of the refugees found sponsors willing to re-establish their eminence in America. Indeed, it was here, as nowhere else (except perhaps Japan), that Bauhaus ideas had such spectacular success. There seems literally no end to print about their achievements, or even the curatorial mythicizing of their methods and potentates, as in the mammoth exhibition, sponsored by the Federal Republic of Germany, that toured through Toronto, Chicago and Pasadena in 1969.

The M.I.T. Press, which put Walter Gropius's disappointing book on *The New Architecture and the Bauhaus* (1935) into American paperback print a few years ago, has recently made a grand specialty of Bauhaus literature, issuing not only the first English translation of Moholy-Nagy's epochal *Painting, Photography, Film* (1925) and a new edition of Sibyl Moholy-Nagy's fine and moving biography of her husband, *Moholy-Nagy: Experiment in Totality* (1950), but also, as a magnum opus, an amended translation of the immense compendium, *The Bauhaus*, that Hans M. Wingler first compiled in the early sixties.

The Bauhaus is huge — 10" by 14", more than two inches thick and several pounds in weight; it cannot lie comfortable in one's lap, or be moved without great effort. Its contents include 620 pages of text, many illustrations in both black-white and color, a large bibliography, and even the names of all the students ever to matriculate in Germany (fewer in sum than 1250). This mountain of scholarship exhibits a prodigal thoroughness that we Americans snidely, if not enviously, call Germanic.

As the curator of the Bauhaus-Archiv in Darmstadt, Wingler has evidently seen everything to be seen, including private papers; and though most of the book excerpts materials previously printed, albeit in esoteric and forgotten sources, there are also some previously unpublished fresh personal letters and legal documents. Since several faculty members were also accomplished writers, there is an abundance of articulate texts. The illustrations are innumerable, and invaluable; and though the book is structurally a chronological collage, the style of its page layouts owes more to the spare geometric regularity of constructivism than dada or surrealism. I know of nothing of its kind that is quite so extravagant, or so definitive.

Wingler's preface modestly claims no pretenses greater than "documentation;" yet his skillful editing makes these bits and pieces weave a coherent and memorable story. The theme is the dogged determination of a few men (a faculty never numbering more than sixteen) to realize a set of related ideas, in spite of numerous obstacles — internal financial difficulties, economic instability in post-WW I Germany, the criticism of philistines, the frequent need of dispiritedly defensive rationalizations, the caprice of municipal sponsors, the growing opposition of the fascists, and so forth. Yet Walter Gropius, his colleagues and successors managed to carry these Bauhaus ideals from Weimar to Dessau and then briefly to Berlin, and finally largely to America — officially in Chicago's short-lived "New Bauhaus" and its successors, respectively the School of Design, and then the Institute of Design, but unofficially at Black Mountain College, Harvard, and elsewhere.

"Like the first German Republic, the Bauhaus had existed for fourteen years," Wingler elegantly notes. "Also like this Republic, it had been founded in Weimar and had met its ultimate fate in Berlin. But its ideas were impossible to obliterate." Absent in the original German edition but included here is a section concerned solely with the Chicago activity, largely because of its official imprimatur; but a further history, to be narrated elsewhere, could trace the dissemination of Bauhaus ideals — in both architecture and art-education across America. Those already familiar with the heroic story in Germany will find Wingler's book full of enriching

details; those still unfamiliar might well start with Gillian Naylor's recent *The Bauhaus* (Dutton — Studio Vista, 1968), which has the added advantage of pocket-size portability, before scaling *The Bauhaus*. (Needless to say perhaps, it supersedes all earlier books of documentation, such as *Bauhaus 1919-1928*, published in 1938 by the Museum of Modern Art and subsequently reissued in many languages and editions.

The primary reason for this current interest in the Bauhaus is, of course, the continuing relevance of those ideals. Nowadays, one frequently hears echoes of Gropius's favorite slogan — "art and technology — a new unity;" and particularly in the adaptation of technology to artistic uses, there are practical freedoms (though intellectual confusions) offered by the Bauhaus refusal to distinguish between fine and applied art. Secondly, not only should the arts be taught together, but art students should be exposed to all the arts; for literacy in only one art (or communications medium) signifies functional illiteracy before the diversity of contemporary information. Indicatively, though Gropius, himself already an architect of note, believed that "all the arts culminate in architecture," there was, in the original Weimar Bauhaus, no course officially in architecture. Nor was there one in easel painting, though the staff included Paul Klee, Wassily Kandinsky, Josef Albers and Johannes Itten. (Thus, Eberhard Roters' recent *Painters of the Bauhaus* [Praeger, 1968, $18.50] documents extra-curricular activity, so to speak.) These subjects were added in Dessau, however, as the orientation became less experimental and more practical; but the so-called foundation course remained a general introduction to material, from which the individual student could then ideally concentrate on the material (or art) of his choice. It follows, of course, that a student, no matter his original ambitions, should feel free to work in any and every art he chooses. The principle of an integrated polyartistic education was sustained, within budgetary limits, at Moholy-Nagy's Institute of Design; and the same ideal animates, one is gratified to notice, the new California Institute of the Arts in Los Angeles. (The implication is that schools devoted just to dance, or music, or visual arts, are outmoded.)

The pioneers of modernism changed art, but their immediate successors, this second generation born just before the turn of the century, tried to incorporate art into their mission of changing the world. This fact explains why another Bauhaus ideal held that art schools should be concerned not only with art but the outside world. Therefore, just as the uses of technology are incorporated into the curriculum, so an education in painting, say, is entwined with industrial design or even city planning. One assumption is that art schools have the opportunity to inculcate a kind of thinking not found in strictly professional institutes of city planning and architecture. Wingler's book documents the continuing attempt at the Bauhaus to design prototypes of both pieces of furniture and single-family houses for industrial mass-production, and the Institute of Design made camouflage during World War II, as well as developing programs for the rehabilitation of disabled veterans. The truth here — still very relevant — is that the best politics for artists lies in applying their developed sensibilities and competencies to the improvement of man's physical environment; for if artists don't, you know who else will. . . .

The story not told in Wingler's book is the subsequent debasement of Bauhaus aims. Its architecture and design were conceived as anti-stylistic reactions to the beaux-arts ornamentation, with its artificial or imposed prettiness; for the polemical ideal of the Bauhaus philosophy was solid and economical construction, rather than artistic excellence. The result of Bauhaus influence, however, has been new kinds of uneconomical formalism — in design, artificial stream-lining and, in architecture, the slick and pretty glass-walled boxes depressingly abundant on American urban landscapes. Similarly, the anti-academic educational program, emphasizing individual enthusiasm and choice, more than particular results, generated its own academic pieties of stylistic correctness (geometric abstractions in textiles, say, rather than representational patterns) which dominate American schools of design to this day. (In fact, when the Institute of Design itself was incorporated into the Illinois Institute of Technology, one of the first changes was the introduction of uniform testing and grades.) In both architecture and design-education, then, a limited interpretation of the Bauhaus achievement placed

an emphasis upon certain end-products, rather than the educative process which, particularly today, could well produce entirely different results. By the 1970's, in short, the statements collected in *The Bauhaus* are more generally attractive, and persuasive, than the practical results they subsequently influenced.

Gropius and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe had considerably better press in America than Moholy-Nagy, whose reputation suffered in part because he died prematurely, but largely because his work did not fit easily into the established categories of criticism and scholarship. Believing that artistic commitment was an adventurous process whose produce could take many forms, Moholy-Nagy made minor contributions to modern painting, sculpture and film, a minor-major contribution to photography (soon to be honored in a Beaumont Newhall monograph), and truly major innovations in arts yet to find their critics and historians — artistic machines (with his *Light-Display Machine* of 1930), environments (especially with his speculative *Mechanical Eccentric* of 1926), and book design.

Moholy-Nagy's first book, *Painting, Photography, Film*, which was originally published in 1925 (when he was thirty) and only just translated, demonstrates that Moholy-Nagy was also among the most brilliant analysts of modern art. The theme here is the media of art — the intrinsic integrity and extrinsic impact of each form, the differences between them, and the possibilities of each; and the passages on photography in particular are incomparably rich and imaginative.

Actively engaged in forging new directions, Moholy-Nagy also had the mysterious knack for thinking well into the future: on p. 41-3 is a vision of multiple film projection (a more mobile cinerama), on p. 60 is a photograph clearly resembling a famous Donald Judd sculpture done in 1965, on p. 25 he envisions the currently more feasible possibility of facsimile printing of art-reproductions on one's home console, and on p. 80 he generously reprints his colleagues Hirschfeld-Mack's work on pre-psychedelic light shows (that receive different, supplementary documentation in Wingler). *Painting, Photography, Film* is stunningly designed, naturally, so that the themes introduced in the pithy text are recapitulated in 74 pages of shrewdly selected, full-page illustrations; and the book closes with a vividly visualized outline for a film he never made, *The Dynamic of the Metropolis*. In truth, even in 1925, Moholy-Nagy had ideals relevant still in the seventies.

Lazar Lissitzky, known by his nickname "El," was neglected for some of the same reasons that plagued his friend Moholy-Nagy's reputation — the diversity of his achievements, and truly innovative work in arts that have as yet no standard histories; and his posthumous reputation, in the West at least, was smothered by the fact that Lissitzky stayed in post-Revolutionary Russia. Not only did the Soviets fail to make his work freely available, but most histories of modern art have dealt all but entirely with the Russian emigrees. Born in 1890, Lissitzky studied engineering and architecture before entering German circles just after World War I, and of the several major 1920's modernists who elected to stay in Stalinist Russia, Lissitzky made probably the fewest stylistic compromises. The text of this book was written in Russia by Lissitzky's German-born widow, and then published in East Germany before it reached the West. It includes Herbert Read's generous and characteristically precipient preface, a selection of the artist's letters woven together by his widow's biographical narrative, an abundance of fine plates, a number of previously published (and sporadically interesting) texts by Lissitzky himself, and several essays, mostly by eminent critics, about the man and his work. There are too many gaps to make this book a portrait as definitive as Wingler's; many passages read like bad translations; and the omissions include several important texts available in the West. There is no internal explanation (and, thus, much reason for suspicion) of why all this appears so many years after its subject's death (1941); and the illustrations demonstrate what the text does not admit — that his Soviet work (or at least those works illustrated) was neither as excellent nor as path-breaking as his earlier art.

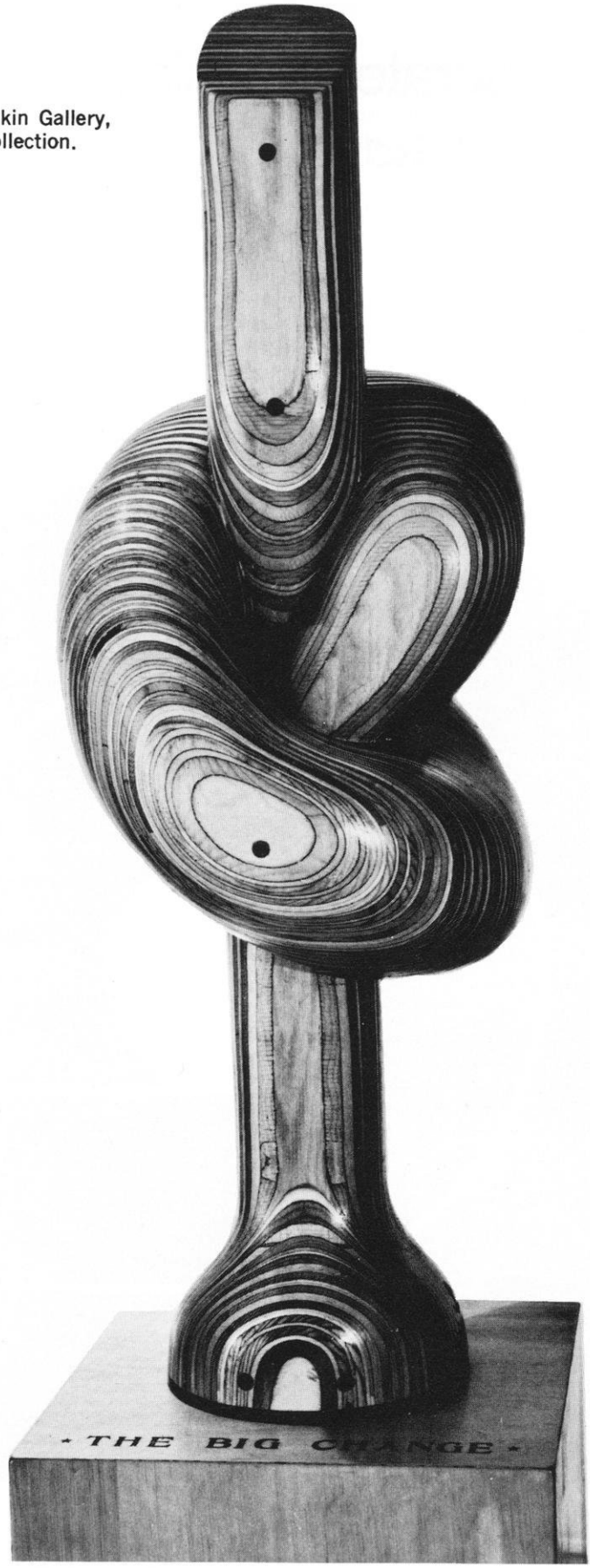
Nonetheless, it is clear that Lissitzky realized, in addition to his more familiar constructivist paintings (patently indebted to his friend Malevich), some of the great modern posters; much good book design; a children's book entitled *Of Two Squares* (1920) that would be strikingly innovative if published in New York

tomorrow; several first-rank darkroom-doctored photographs and photomontages; a fertilely specularly esthetic conception in "Proun" (defined as midpoints between painting and architecture); and one of the first great artistic environments, which is to say an artistically defined space. It is a pity that *El Lissitzky* does not reprint the description by that last work's sponsor, Alexander Dorner, then director of the Hannover Museum, who wrote about Lissitzky's environment in his neglected but brilliant *The Way Beyond "Art"* (New York Univ., 1958):

> *The walls of that room were sheathed with narrow tin strips set at right angles to the wall plane. Since these strips were painted black on one side, gray on the other, and white on the edge, the wall changed its character with every move of the spectator. The sequence of tones varied in different parts of the room. This construction thus established a supraspatial milieu for the frameless compositions. . . . All display cases and picture mounts were made movable to reveal new compositions and diagrams. This room contained many more sensory images than could have been accomodated by a rigid room. Mobility exploded the room, as it were, and the result was a spiritual intensification, proportionate to the evolutionary content of the display cases, which tried to demonstrate the growth of modern design in its urgent transforming power.*

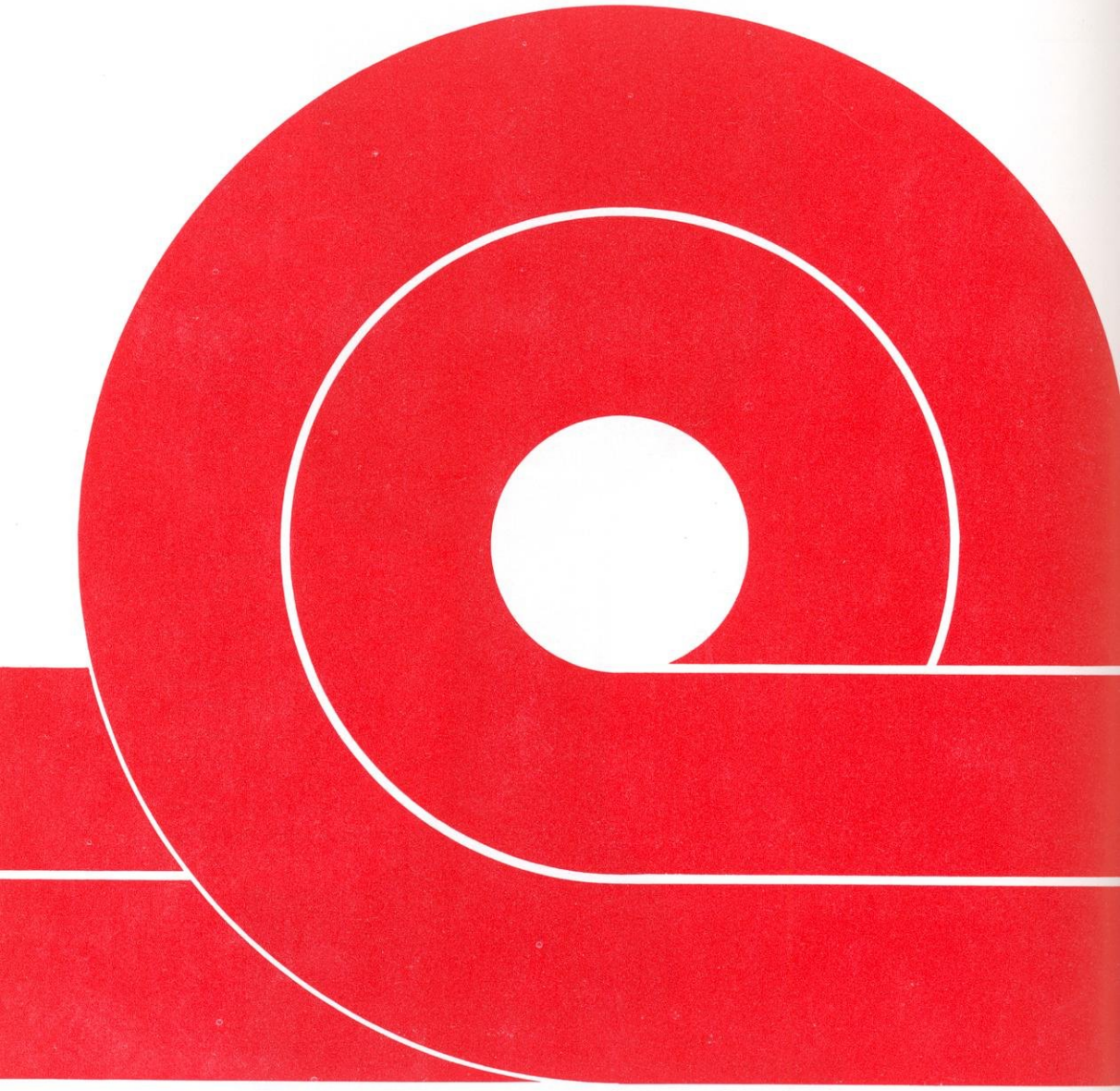
The suspicion remains that Lissitzky could have been as great an artist as Moholy, had his physical constitution been as robust, and had he not made political choices detrimental to his art. Nonetheless, the wisdom exemplified by both these artists is that the creative adventure need honor no imposed limits; and the personal freedom intrinsic in unending process (and their polymathy), in addition to the excellence of their work, realized a Bauhaus ideal that sets a persuasive example to this day.

The Big Change
by H. Westerman
Courtesy: Allan Frumkin Gallery,
William H. Copley Collection.



A Desperate Optimism

by Jack E. Frisch



Emory Lewis. Stages: *The Fifty-year Childhood of the American Theatre,* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1969. $7.95.

Emory Lewis, former drama critic for *Cue* magazine, has written a perceptive, no-nonsense review of American theatre. Quickly dismissing the couple hundred years prior to 1915 as "one of the longest gestation periods on record," the author gives a thorough (if at times a "name-dropping") critique of the ups and (mostly) downs of stage fare in America.

As the sub-title of the book might suggest, Lewis wants desperately to be optimistic about the American theatre; but his perception and his honesty do not permit him a false exuberance. He extolls the beginnings with the Washington Square and Provincetown Players, but retains undeniable reservations. The reservations become more and more dominant as such exciting ventures as the Group and Federal Theatres and LeGalliene's Repertory attempts are too soon aborted.

A section on regional theatres ("Out There") seems rather superficially sanguinary and lacks Lewis' other insights. But those on musical theatre ("Tap Dancing and Total Theatre") and the integration of the arts in theatre ("The Collaborators") are timely and well-handled. Multiple artists working in the theatre — especially when it occurs audaciously and with no cop-outs — offers a fine potential for viably-meaningful stage art, and one well suited to an America in the forefront of musical theatre, technology, and artistic innovation.

Finally, however, this is an excellent book for a quite singular reason: its pertinent and valuable point of view that — regardless of intent — theatre and society are one. As we are coming to realize in the physical sense, we must also realize in the cultural sense: *nothing **is** in and of itself, separate from any or all others. A theatre event is a life event and thus involved in the interactions among ourselves and our environment. This is becoming more and more evident as media quickly and thoroughly **cover** various events.

*Perhaps best remembering the etiology of **culture** and **cultivate.**

At root, Lewis makes this point by recurrently reminding us that the theatre and its audience are what each other deserve. The critic is singled out as a member of that deserving audience. In more than one section of the book, Lewis effectively points out that critics, as audience members broadly disseminating their reactions, must not "kill with kindness." They must accept the responsibility of performing a "larger social task," that of being revolutionary and educative. Rather than reflect the tastes of the audience, the critic would better serve by rebelling against and leading it. Consequently, Lewis tentatively champions the "Revolt Off Broadway" (by which he seems equally to mean off-off Broadway). In spite of its own hang-ups, this Other Theatre comes closest to a radical breakthrough in the "entertainment factory" that is the "Blight of Broadway."

Such projected hopes for critics and rebel theatre are nonetheless characteristically tempered by reiteration of the probability that only when the tone of American life itself changes can such a breakthrough really occur. Since for Lewis theatre "is the dance of life, transfigured reality become art," the quality of life and the quality of theatre become equated. We are reminded in one way and another that

. . . the nation is not ready to take theatre seriously. Everywhere there is a studied evasion of reality . . . The truth of our city jungles seldom gets on the stages and when it does, it is smothered in sentimentality and half-baked Freudianism.

Consequently, the most impassioned chapter of the book is "Blackface, Whiteface." Here, in no uncertain terms, is an awareness and pursuit of theatre not as reflector or barometer, but as integral to the cultural ecology. Theatre can not sit outside, somehow above and beyond its society, safely and smugly commenting upon it. At least it can not do so and hope to survive.

For even such "safety" is false: non-involvement is involvement — destructively so. Elsewhere ("Future Stages" chapter) Lewis calls for fostering "a rising swell of dissent, a theatre of protest, or, better still, a *theatre engagé.*" Such a theatre most certainly could also be destructive. Indeed, the more engaged, the greater the risk. But risk contains

possibilities in various directions. Disembodied pap does not; it is ecologically self-destructive. "Harmless" DDT comes back to haunt us.

And so do Black Sambo and the Minstrels. Precious few major plays by blacks about black life have been produced on Broadway — and those only very recently. Furthermore, "nothing on our stages compares in intensity and fervor (not even the dramatic implosions of [LeRoi] Jones) to the new black militancy" in the streets. *Dozens of black playwrights are now standing in the wings. If they are allowed to tell their story in all its savagery and all its beauty, in all its horror and hope, they will create one of the richest and most dramatic epics in American history. They might help heal a sick and divided nation, and they might give vital restorative powers to a moribund theatre, bringing sanity to a neon madhouse of trivia.*

How right Lewis is. **But** — are there that many waiting in the wings? As with the popular thrust stage, the wings have virtually disappeared. Jones' drama does **not** compare; the most intense theatre — regardless of race, creed, or color — is in the streets. Lewis mentions briefly the Teatro Campesino, SF Mime Troupe, and Bread and Puppet Theatre. But the Yippies moved beyond that — to the streets and courtrooms of Chicago. Ably supported by character actor Judge Julius Hoffman, Abbie and others have fittingly closed out the 60s and brought us into the 70s. The reality of theatre in the ecology becomes more readily recognizable. And, as it does so, we begin to see further realities and possibilities. Chicano Power becomes as visible as Black Power; Red (Indian red) Power — at least with the re-confiscation of Alcatraz — begins its rise from that oft-bitten dust.

It is too much to expect Blacks, Chicanos, Indians, *et al* to concentrate on cultural heritage at this point in history. Too many battles must be fought — long, hard, bitter *and* successfully. Yet the Indians especially are beginning to give us a hint of how inevitably theatre *is* ecological, and of how ironically self-impoverished we are by ignoring that fact. At a time when so much of current theatrical excitement is centered about the ritual theatre of the Balinese, Kathakali, Oriental, and innumerable other peoples, we find ourselves bereft of a potential immediately in our midst. What is the "theatre"* of the Indian? How does it happen? What is its function — as cultural event, social event, religio-magical event? Are these separate or separable?

Further, what might it offer to our own visions of theatre — in and of itself and/or seminally? As the Indians have begun to say, "it's not a question of how you can Americanize us, but how we can Americanize you." Perhaps such real Americanization could give an authentically indigenous shot in the arm to "American Theatre."

An occasional Pow-Wow long since contaminated by hoked-up tourism and a pageant of the white man's Hiawatha or palefaces land-grabbing from redskins are not the answer. There are deeper, more mythically-culturally crucial possibilities. Possibilities that are important to the Indians and important to us — because important at that level where there is no Indian and no us, but simply Man.

This "ecological crisis" in the American Theatre is double-edged. First, there is the same evasion of which Lewis speaks: where is there anything on our stages of the shamefully and painfully grotesque situation of America's most completely impoverished and degraded minority? Second, there is that rich lode of lore and ritual with which native Americans could enrich our theatre and its society.

There is a rationale, however, for our concern with the ritual theatre of far-off cultures: they seem to remain essentially what they have been for centuries. Is it already too late at home? Our first task is to find out. And it seems to me we must.

For one sympathizes fully with Lewis' recurring desperate optimism: a childhood will hopefully grow into manhood; but not without some nurture. At least if not

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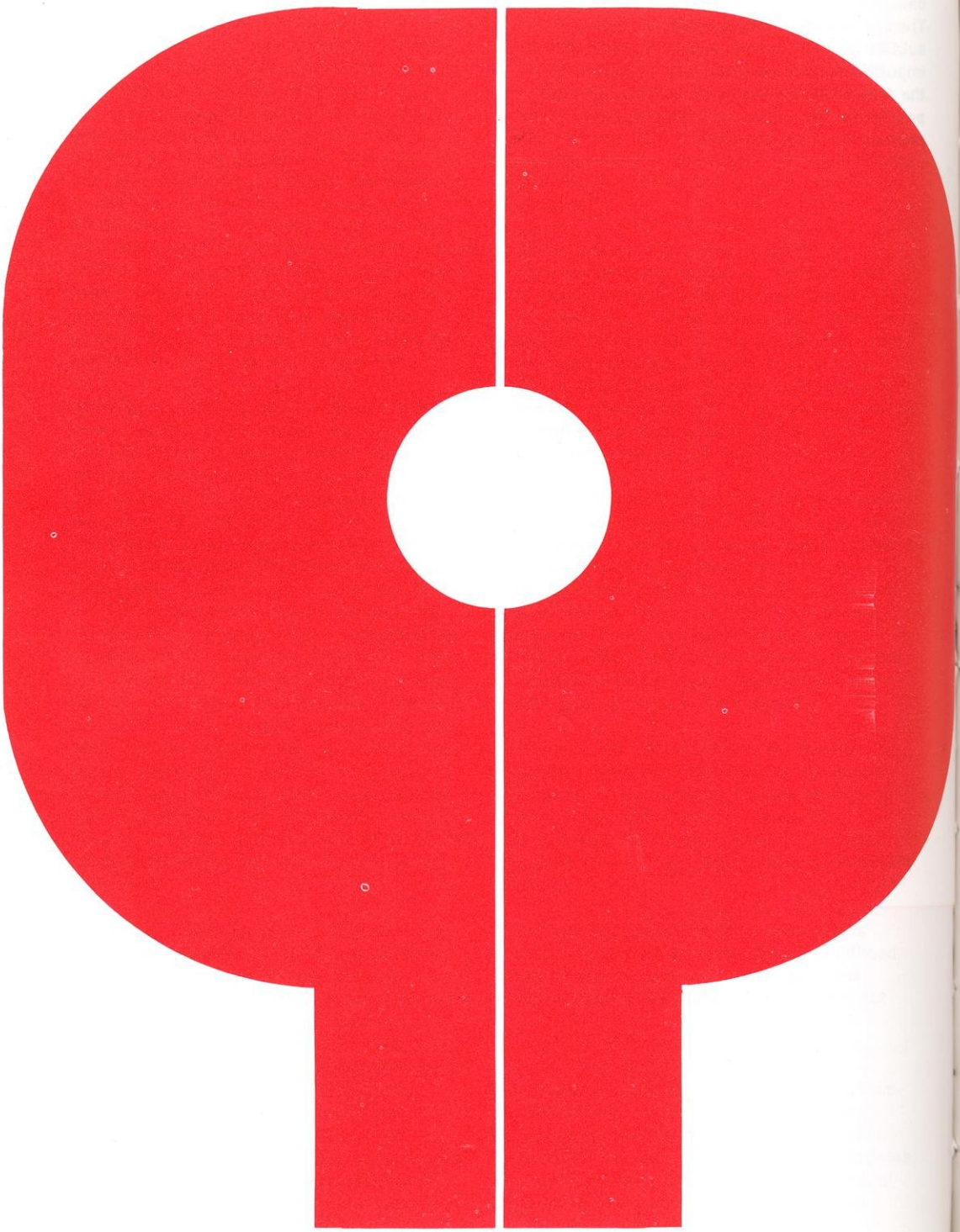
**One must include quotation marks because of the transitional phase of term-definition in which we find ourselves. As often indicated via Artaud, McLuhan and others, one doesn't speak of Balinese "art" or "theatre" except as an outsider putting one's own linguistic label upon an event.*

destroyed through complete neglect. Ultimately, the incredibly and inexcusably younger mortality age of our minority groups is highly significant. The childhood of the American Theatre might well have its best chance of maturing if and when the children of our minorities have theirs. Therein lies the real impact of Lewis' subtitle and of his somewhat veiled but important ecologically-focused survey of the American Theatre. Has the malnutrition progressed far enough to have caused permanent brain damage?

Poetry



ALDO PALAZZESCHI was born in 1885 in Florence, Italy. He was twenty when he published his first book of poems. In 1909 he adhered to futurism; but in 1914 he broke away from the movement. Now, he lives in Rome and in Venice, greatly revered as a poet, and famous as a novelist. In 1926 he was awarded the Laura Honoris Causa by the University of Padova. The recurrent theme of his poems is his vivid imagery; colored with irony and bitterness. In moments of extreme lucidity he abandons this state of inner emptiness craving for a life of real humanity. In this light he is considered among the great of his time.
Poems translated by Dora M. Pettinella

NOVEMBER by Aldo Palazzeschi
from the Italian: NOVEMBRE

Young men and old
gather in groups
amid the warm ruins of Rome,
over which plane trees shed
golden leaves
rustling like paper.
The young men let their elders know
whatever they wish
but cunning old men lend deaf ears.

FORBIDDEN GAMES from the Italian of Aldo Palazzeschi: GIOCHI PROIBITI

Invisible mirrors, wrapped in mist
lightly brush one another,
leaving no traces in shadow,
mirrors have no reflections,
no dark shadow falls over them,
no golden gleam.
A ray of yellow light
breaks from the center.
It holds thin impalpable
imprints of smoke of light of clouds:reflections.
They appear and disappear slowly
now vivid now lifeless
slowly appear and disappear.
Now and then, faces emerge,
stark white faces,
whose pallor is faintly revealed by the light.
Flowery shawls often glide by,
slowly, iridescent in splendor.
Often the faces pause,
clearly etched in stillness,
suddenly bright, all agleam,
with two pungent eyes running, searching,
their depths confused, languid, half-dying.
Slowly shrouded in mist
their gaze dimmed in gem lustre.
We follow below
the riot
of the tiny points, of dancing dice.
Two giant dice remain motionless,
black dots glimmer intently.
Dark imprints of light, of mist
lightly overcast them; reflections.
They appear and disappear slowly
now vivid, now lifeless
slowly they appear and disappear.

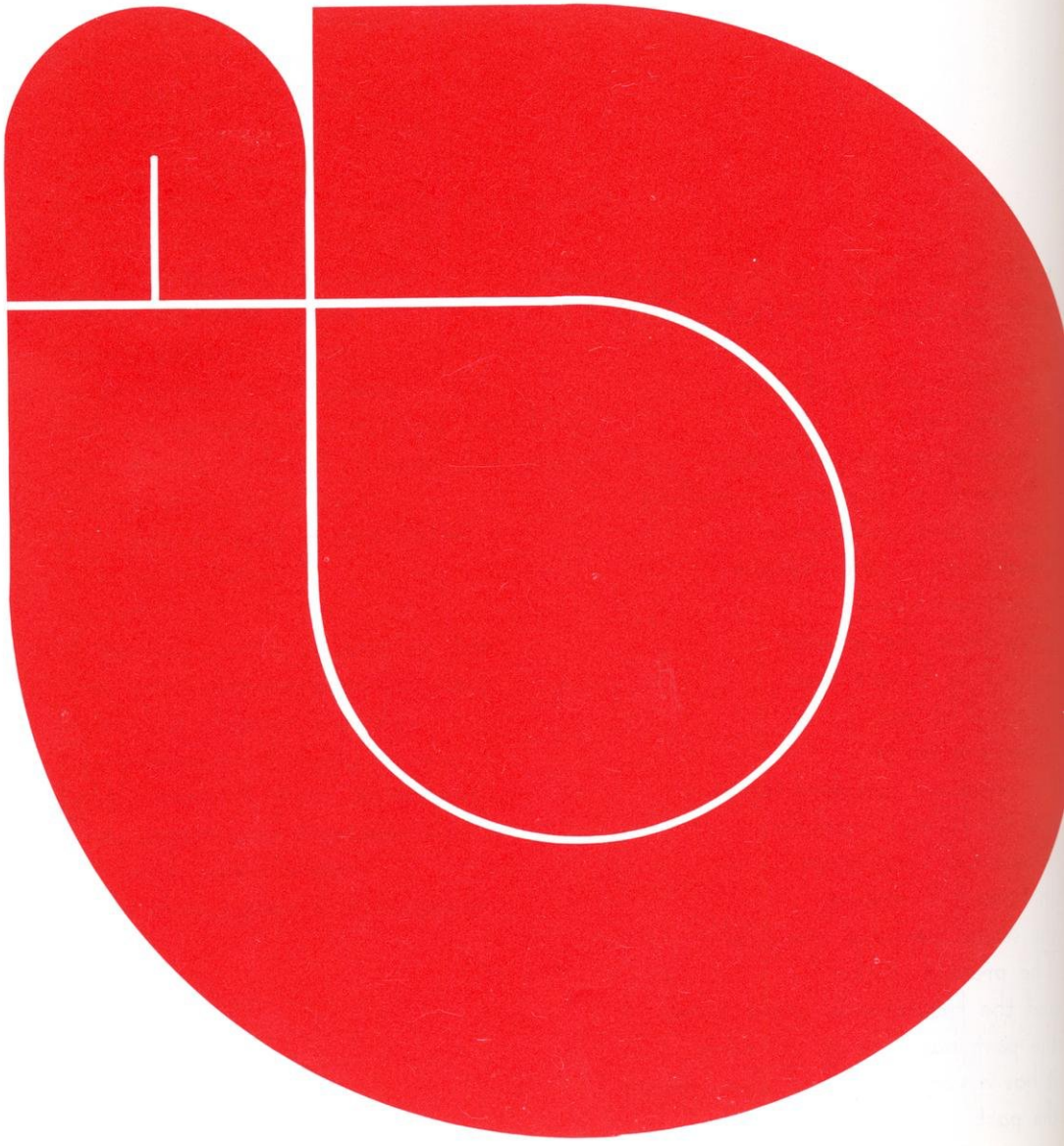
THE STEPS OF THE NAZARENE NUNS by Aldo Palazzeschi
from the Italian: IL PASSO DELLE NAZARENE

The little churches open their doors at sundown
and slowly the nuns emerge walking toward the bridge,
in the center they meet, they bow,
nuns robed in white and black,
all going to church at the Angelus
where they say a brief prayer
and quickly return toward the bridge.
Again they meet, they bow, rows of nuns, white and black,
every evening at sundown
they meet at the hour of the bells.

PALATINE by Aldo Palazzeschi
from the Italian: PALATINO

On soft cushions of time
the body rests
this torrid summer afternoon.
The mind is helpless in recalling
shadows and phantasms,
the eye can hardly perceive
transparent vapors
rising from the ground
melting in light's heat.
Wasted by sun
stones are white
like nameless forsaken tombs,
and the foliage trembles
in celestial inspiration.
In heated disregard
the senses perceive one smell,
The present stinks,
and the future is a vague word,
the past has lost its ill odor,
it has a vague smell of dried leaves,
the past.

Notes and Discussion



The White Poetry Syndicate: An Open Letter

by Walter Lowenfels

The white poetry scene in the United States is in control of a literary Syndicate. It is divided up into different families, each of which has its favorite critics, and anthologists, all of whom exclude non-white poets.

The New York Times has a tradition of doing business with this poetry Junta. To review "Poetry in the Sixties" it hired Louis Simpson, who may be remembered for having written the following in the New York Herald Tribune:

". . I am not sure it is possible for a Negro to write well without making us aware he is a Negro; on the other hand, if being a Negro is the only subject, the writing is not important."

Another exampe: to review anthologies of poetry for young people the Times chose a critic with a similar approach to black poets, Selden Rodman. He wrote in the *Times* (Nov. 9, 1969): "Until recently there hasn't been any Afro-American verse that was more than that — verse. When I was editing anthologies in 1938, and again in 1946, I remember going through the complete works of Countee Cullen, Claude McKay, Langston Hughes, and the others, hoping desperately to find a **poem,** and falling back reluctantly on the spirituals and the blues . . . "

In a letter to the Times, June Meyer Jordan pointed out that in addition to Cullen, McKay and Hughes, "the following major black American poets had published prior to 1946: Jean Toomer, Margaret Walker, Sterling A. Brown, Melvin Tolson, Gwendolyn Brooks; Paul Vesey, and Robert Hayden." The Times did not publish this letter.

The *Saturday Review* has its own family of poetry favorites and they do not include poets of color. The approach of its poetry editor was summed up in a recent letter:

"Practically every editor . . thinks naturally of the full orchestra, of the great tradition of poetry in English. He listens for the marvels of language in poetry.

"Most of the black poets I have read are full of enormous intensity and huge assertion but fail to awake the full resources of language, mainly because they have not listened to enough of the possibilities of the English language. I suppose you'll accuse me of being a racist for saying this much. I am simply pointing out that blacks have been denied education and have encouraged one another to think that assertion can take the place of language in poetry. It is conceivable that the force of their conviction any energy could create a new school of poetry. I cannot believe however that school will be worth anything until the black poets care as much for the language as they do for their angry energy. . . . "

Young Chicano and Indian poets are even more invisible to the white poetry Junta. There are over 25 Chicano newspapers published in the southwest, and an outstanding magazine, *El Grito.* All contain poets who are completely eliminated by the white poetry rulers.

An article in the *Negro Digest* (Dec., 1969) by the managing editor Hoyt W. Fuller, documents the exclusion of black writers from the American Literary Anthology. He concludes with a letter protesting that his name was included among those to whom the editors were "indebted," and states "The title of that anthology, for purposes of accuracy, should be The White American Literary Anthology."

A list of white magazines, anthologies, books of criticism that exclude or deny the stature of colored poets would fill several pages. I draw attention to this "white only" policy 19 years ago in a review of a book which I said should be called "The Oxford Book of White American Verse."

The exclusion of poets of color from the white academy is part of an approach which also excludes many of the best new white poets whose work is already classic in the poetry underground. White poets from Bukofski and Cabral to Shechter

and Wantling as well as colored poets from Atkins to Sanchez, Saavedra, and Welch are victims of a literary Junta whose rule extends throughout the schools and colleges and the white bookshops of the United States.

Aside from my own multi-racial anthologies, only one or two anthologies contain a token colored poet, but even that is exceptional. I asked an editor of a widely distributed anthology published by Harper & Row why his book contained no black poets, he replied: "That troubled us also. We couldn't agree on which black poet to include."

What's at stake is not solely a literary affair; it is part of a genocidal attack on colored people. "To manipulate an image is to control a peoplehood," — Carolyn Fowler Gerald wrote recently in the Negro Digest.

Those who deny the stature of red, black and brown artists are accomplices in the murder of colored people that continues throughout the U.S.A., not only with police guns, but with job rejection, and poverty and slums.

Gwendolyn Brooks wrote recently:

Black poets are the authentic poets of today. Recently one of the Critics (Jascha Kessler, 'The Caged Sybil'. Saturday Review December 14, 1968): opined (of white poets): 'It's hardly surprising to find a deep longing for death as the terrible sign of their self-respect and indeed the means by which they continue to live — if not as men, at least as poets.' And so on: 'Although death may not be the resolution of everyone's problems, it is nevertheless the one poets wait and pray for . . . '

"Can you imagine Don Lee subscribing to any of this? Black poets do not subscribe to death. When choice is possible they choose to die only in defense of life, in defense and in honor of life.

"White poetry! Never has white technique-in-general been as scintillant and various. Never has less been said. Modern corruption and precise limpness, modern narcissism, nonsense, dry winter and chains have a grotesque but granular grip on the white verse of today.

"Sometimes there is a quarrel. 'Can poetry be black?' Isn't all poetry just **poetry?'** *The fact that a poet is black means that his life, his history and the histories of his ancestors have been different from the histories of Chinese and Japanese poets, Eskimo poets, Indian poets, Irish poets. The juice from tomatoes is not called merely juice. It is called* **tomato** *juice . . . The poetry from black poets is black poetry. Inside it are different nuances* **and** *outrightnesses.*

The Poet Don Lee, whose book *Don't Cry, Scream,* Miss Brooks was introducing in her remarks above, wrote:

Black poetry is written for/to about & around the lives/spiritactions/ humanism & total existence of black people. Black poetry in form/sound/word usage/ intonation/ rhythm/repetition/ direction/ definition & beauty is opposed to that which is now (& yesterday) considered poetry, i.e., white poetry. Black poetry in its purest form is diametrically opposed to white poetry. Whereas, black poets deal in the concrete rather than the abstract (concrete: art for people's sake; black language or Afro-American language in contrast to standard English, &c.) Black poetry moves to define & legitimize black people's reality (that *which is real to us.) Those in power (the unpeople) control and legitimize the negroes' (the realpeople's) reality out of that which they, the unpeople, consider real . . . Black poetry will move to expose & wipe out that which is not necessary for our existence as a people . . .*

The poet, Nikki Giovanni, wrote recently about the new Black Renaissance in poetry: "there is no difference between the warrior, the poet, and the people . . . . No more movement that all the people aren't part of. We are all the same . . . ." This applies also to Chicano and Indian poets.

Black, Brown and Native Americans are all nationalities within the United States, all part of our multi-racial country. They have their own way of speaking, their own music and cultural patterns. The crime of the white literary Junta is to deny this cultural validity to over 30 millions living in the United States, paying taxes, being drafted, voting when they can, and supposedly part of a nation which was once dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Synergic Sculpture

by J.J. Jehring

In our present age, change is universal. It is occurring at a geometric rate of progression. It is limited neither to one country nor to one sphere of man's activity. Possibly the only societies which are aloof from the mainstream of change would be those who have remained isolated from the general trend of world progress such as the Bushmen in the Kalahari desert and the Quetcha Indians in the Andean mountains. However, there is evidence that even such isolation is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain in today's world.

The search for new organizational solutions to the problems man faces also seems to be progressing at a maddening pace. One competent observer remarked recently that "Our familiar institutions . . . are changing so rapidly that the change is becoming more familiar than the institutions themselves."[1] Nowhere has this element of change been so rapid as it has in technology where in a short span of years we have witnessed the development of radio, television, atomic energy, and the computer. It is generally conceded by scholars that necessary revisions in our socioeconomic institutions have not kept pace with the tremendous recent advances in technology. Thus an ever-widening gap results in many stable and time-honored institutions which are now coming under attack. Under such circumstances, the question may be raised as to what new contributions the arts can make to help bridge this gap.

Over the last several decades the elements of social criticism in the arts stand out strong and clear. It is especially evident among the leading painters in many countries but it also is apparent in some of the modern developments in sculpture, music, literature, and drama. This function of social criticism in the arts no doubt has been a valuable and necessary contribution to man in preparing him for the acceptance of change in our environment. It would seem, however, that this need has been adequately met and the artist would do well to turn his attention to constructive efforts. Unfortunately, in recent years artists have contributed very little significant work in this positive direction. If the arts should continue blindly to pursue only social criticism, the artist may succeed in assisting man in destroying his old institutions but leaving him with nothing to replace them.

However, artists alone are not concerned with this problem. There are some indications that experimentation and innovation in the social sciences as well as the arts are leading to discoveries of important new principles which can be adapted to the organization of institutions in a technological age. If the artist will focus his vision on these new developments, he may be able to contribute a very important new and constructive insight so that man may be able to gain a deeper and better understanding of the new social, economic, and political institutions he is beginning to form for the world of tomorrow.

Many of the men who are forming these new institutions in business and government have a very limited understanding of their true nature and, therefore, do not fully grasp the implications of their actions. It is possible that only through the arts can man realize and appreciate the vast dimensions of these evolving organizations and how to adapt them to our present and ever-changing needs.

The Development of the Concept of Synergy

The most progressive groups in investigating organizational change in recent years have been the behavioral scientists. Their ideas have much to contribute to the formation of new and significant socioeconomic organizations which are capable of putting the new technology to work for the betterment of man. One idea which has special relevance to the world of tomorrow is described by Dr. Abraham Maslow in his book *Eupsychian Management.*[2] It concerns itself with the concept of synergy.

Evolution of an Idea. In the 1930's

Ruth Benedict, in the course of making comparative analysis of various primitive societies that she had been studying, noted that in her mind she was constantly classifying cultures as either "good" or "bad." She wanted to determine if she could discover what one factor was at the root of the decisions she was making in classifying these societies. It was at this point she devised the concept of synergy as it is used in the social sciences.

Synergy Defined. Dr. Benedict defined synergy as organizational practices which resulted in a dissolution of the polarity between selfishness and unselfishness on the part of the members of a given group. She found that various socioeconomic institutions in the primitive societies she studied could be classified as having high or low levels of synergy. Following is an example of an organization having a high level of synergy in a primitive hunting society:

The men would hunt in groups rather than individually. After the kill there would be distribution to the hunters according to a pre-agreed formula for sharing.

Under such an arrangement, the individual who decides to be selfish and attempts to obtain more for himself, automatically, because of the sharing system which is built into organizational structure, benefits all the other members of the hunt. In a like manner, if he decides to be unselfish and works hard for the benefit of the others in the group, he cannot help but benefit himself because his share will be larger also. Thus through the organizational pattern, the polarity between selfishness and unselfishness among the hunters has been destroyed and the organization is said to have a high level of synergy.

The Development of Socioeconomic Cybernetic Systems

The new concept of forms of organization which develop high levels of synergy is the contribution of the anthropologists, but another group of people in the process of making an equally important and closely allied contribution are the relatively new scholars who classify themselves as cyberneticists. These people who were originally concerned only with the use of the computer in society are now attempting to apply the cybernetic form of organization to socioeconomic institutions. Norbert Wiener, the "father" of cybernetics, mentions early in his book on cybernetics the possibility of using such an organizational pattern in the design of socioeconomic organizations. However, this group has been concentrating on the application of these concepts to technology and only recently has begun to explore the use of these concepts in the design of business organizations. The socioeconomic cybernetic systems which are evolving are capable of reaching high levels of synergy because they tend to generate sharing, participation, and cooperation as a means of attaining very high levels of productivity.

Cybernetics and the Arts

While the behavioral scientists and cyberneticists are attempting to evolve more efficient forms of organization, a small but growing group of artists is busily engaged in allied activities leading in the same direction. This trend is especially apparent in a new breed of sculptors who are designing pieces such as those recently displayed in the show titled *Options* at the Milwaukee Art Center.[3] Much of the work included in this exhibit incorporated some aspects of cybernetic forms of organization. Some of the compositions were actually designed to use computers as an intergral part of the sculpture. One of the unusual characteristics of many pieces in this show was the involvement of the viewer in the sculpture itself. The viewer's actions created a response in the sculpture, and he in turn was influenced through feedback from the environment. In such pieces the sculptor used a definite cybernetic pattern of organization.

However, most of the work in this exhibit was designed with the individual viewer in mind. One possible exception to this was a piece called *The Game Room* by Tony Martin where four people standing at certain spots in the room itself could "activate" the sculpture.[4] Another offering titled *Sonic II* by Howard Jones also could involve more than one person at a time. It consisted of a long convex metal form which contained photo sensitive cells at set intervals across the center line. Each of these was connected to a device which produced an electronic sound which in turn could be triggered by passing the hand in front of the cell,

cutting off a fixed light source. With this sculpture, it was possible for individuals to "learn" to play a tune by passing their hands across the light beams according to certain patterns. Several people could "play" this sculpture by moving their hands according to a specified agreed upon pattern. This again was an example of sculpture incorporating a cybernetic pattern where feedback was used in the form of electronic sound and individual viewers became involved as part of the total system.[5]

Another artist who has done some interesting experiments combining cybernetics and art is Professor Ted Kraynik of The University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee who has developed what he terms a video-luminar. His piece is designed to be activated by an image from a television screen. The screen is sensitized by a series of photoelectric cells which in turn controls a series of moving lights positioned behind several large plastic screens. The varying television images produce constantly changing patterns on the screens. Thus one is able to view a television program as a continuously changing abstract pattern on a large illuminated screen.[6]

Synergic Sculpture

These new concepts which some sculptors are now developing where color, lights, sound, and forms are used to create an environment influenced by individual or group participative action could lead toward the achievement of a truly synergic sculpture. Such a sculpture would be visualized as a totally designed environment made up of changing forms, moving lights, and sound controlled by group participation. Through the use of electronic technology the various actions of the individuals could influence the environment in a number of different ways. They might set off colored lights, move solid forms, create electronic sounds, change water fountains. This sculpture could be programmed through a computer to vary the reactions of its parts to such stimuli. Groups of people could learn how they might be able to achieve certain effects through anticipated cooperative action. Choreographers also might design special dances which would activate the sculpture and create unusual effects.

This type of sculpture would be most effective if it were designed to entirely surround a large plaza similar to one found in a government or civic mall or shopping center in some of our large cities. A large building or an international fair might also serve as a suitable setting for such a piece of art.

Perhaps an important contribution of synergic sculpture might be to give man a feeling of participation and of group interaction. Today all too many people are isolated and are, or feel they are, nonparticipants. People must experience the feeling of participation to really understand what it means.

Synergic sculpture could be a dynamic inspiration and benefit to man in arriving at a better appreciation of the world he will be building during the next decades. It could serve to give man a positive direction for growth in our changing world which he could not get from merely reading about the principles of cybernetics and organizational theory. It could provide a vibrant, visual medium to unite technology and art, and thereby prove to be an evocative testing ground for the solution of many of man's social problems.

NOTES

[1] Emmanuel G. Mesthene, "On Understanding Change," *Technology and Culture*. Spring 1965, The Society for the History of Technology.

[2] Abraham H. Maslow, *Eupsychian Management*. Homewood, Illinois: R. D. Irwin, 1965.

[3] *Options* catalog, page 3. Options means: 1) the power or right of choosing, 2) something that may be or is chosen, or 3) the act of choosing. All the works in the present exhibit relate one way or another to spectator participation. Participation is sharing. To participate is to take or have a part or share as with others.

[4] *Options* catalog, page 6. Spectator participation can be described in terms of games. A game is a conflict but one that is carried out according to a set of rules. As the spectator learns the rules and selects his play in the prescribed situation he is in a sense winning though the artist is not losing.

The gain is in the spectator's right to draw on the art content of the work. (Pictures of this work should be available by writing to The Milwaukee Art Center.)

[8] *Options* catalog, page 7. The artist states: "The work relies on a player becoming part of the art object. He and fellow participants are not only in physical contact but are required as part of the object and activator of the object. (Pictures of this work should be available by writing to The Milwaukee Art Center.)

[9] Jack Burnham, *Beyond Modern Sculpture.* New York: George Braziller, 1969, p. 307.

Dear Mr. Kamarck,
Recently I read a copy of "Arts in Society," Vol. IV, No. 2, 1967, containing a section entitled "Censorship and the Arts." I read it with great interest.

Enclosed for your information is a copy of a statement of the general aim and nature of the recently formed Pasquino Society, one of the activities of which is the study of the subject of censorship. This may interest you. As we operate without sponsorship and any society work is done in members' spare time, there is a limit to what we can get done, but we do what we can.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Macnamara (Mr.)

Chairman: PASQUINO SOCIETY, South Africa

THE PASQUINO SOCIETY

General Aim and Nature

The broad aim of the Society is to promote discussion of, and access to, literature and the arts.

Important activities associated with this aim are the study of all aspects of the subject of censorship (in the broadest sense of the word) and enquiry — whenever possible — into particular instances of banning or censorship. The immediate occasion for the formation of the Society was, in fact, the suggestion that a locally produced film might be banned or heavily censored.

We are aware that the subject of restriction on freedom of expression may be complicated, but we believe that unwarranted censorship leads to cultural deprivation and would wish to prevent its having this effect in South Africa, now or in the future.

We intend to delegate specialized research projects to sub-committees composed of members of the Society and experts in the field concerned. Several consultants have already offered their services. We also hope to offer encouragement to artists whom we believe to have been unduly restricted by censorship.

The deprivation we have in mind takes several forms. The suppression of individual works and the loss of the opportunity to assess these according to one's own lights creates a cultural gap and may cause the arts to stagnate for lack of stimulus. Artists working with the idea of censorship at the back of their minds may be inhibited in expression, or leave the country, thus widening the cultural gap further.

The Society has no political or social affiliations and is not sponsored by any organization. The work of members is purely voluntary. We intend to issue statements in both official languages and welcome suggestions from all language and race groups. Our aim is rational and dispassionate enquiry. At present the Society includes university lecturers, an art professor and painter, lawyers, writers, poets and people actively concerned with the theatre and cinema. We hope that all sections of the public will eventually be represented. Membership is open to anyone seriously interested in promoting communication in our society.

Correspondence should be addressed to the Secretary: Mrs. H. L. Jurgens, 35, 21st. Street, Menlo Park, PRETORIA, *South Africa.*

Dear Mr. Kamarck:

I would like to take this opportunity to announce the publication of *Chirmo,* which is the Shona word for "Spring," a magazine which is edited and produced by my husband and myself. The magazine started as being devoted purely to poetry but, with the political situation here getting more and more critical, we found that *Chirmo* was one of the few remaining structures devoted to furthering the principles of universalism and humanism. We did, therefore, feel a vital need to extend the scope of *Chirmo* to cover as many fields as is possible, and so we have increased the publication accordingly. The whole of Volume 1, however, remained devoted purely to poetry to enable us to establish ourselves and to prepare fully for the transition. We have published to date a full set of *Chirmo* (four numbers) which includes: (a) The first ever disc for readings of Rhodesian poetry, (b) Poems in African languages and English, the former also being accompanied by English translation renditions, and (c) *The Menke Katz* with translations into

Shona and a foreword by Professor George Fortune going into some of the aspects of Shona and the difficulties encountered in translation. This volume is also the first of its kind, and is an attempt to show how art forms can be universal, and cross-cultural contact established through these media.

Yours very sincerely,

(Mrs.) K. O-lan Style
Joint Editor CHIRMO with Colin Style,
Salisbury, Rhodesia

Dear Mr. Kamarck:

I would like to take this opportunity to acquaint you with the work my partner, Doug McEachern and I are involved in.

Audium is a unique medium, conceived to open new realms both in the world of music composition and in the listening experience. It reveals a new dimension in sound-space in quite a physical way. Heretofore, stereo, and the more recent quadrophonic sound, have attempted to give a strong illusion of space. In Audium, the space emanates not only from in front and behind, but also from above, below, to the sides, and from multi-dimensional planes in space. Sounds travel through 61 speakers according to the demands of the compositions by means of a control booth and tape performer. The audience, seated in concentric circles, is at the very center of this sound world. The listener is totally immersed in sound, and experiences his hearing sensibilities as never before.

The core of our concern is the idea that sound in its travel through space, defines new, provocative relationships. To the composer space becomes sculpture; sound location, speed and direction in time and space open up a new kind of compositional vocabulary. He must surpass traditional writing and become sculptor, architect and choreographer. The tape performer spatially executes the works, and his live performance enables variance according to audience size, mood, response, etc. The environment is no longer a passive receptor, but is a new medium interacting with the new multi-dimensional instruments, the speakers.

We strongly believe that the statement we're making is of significance, not as a passing musical phase in this electronic age, but as a furthering, a redefinition of music.

Sincerely,

Stan Shaff

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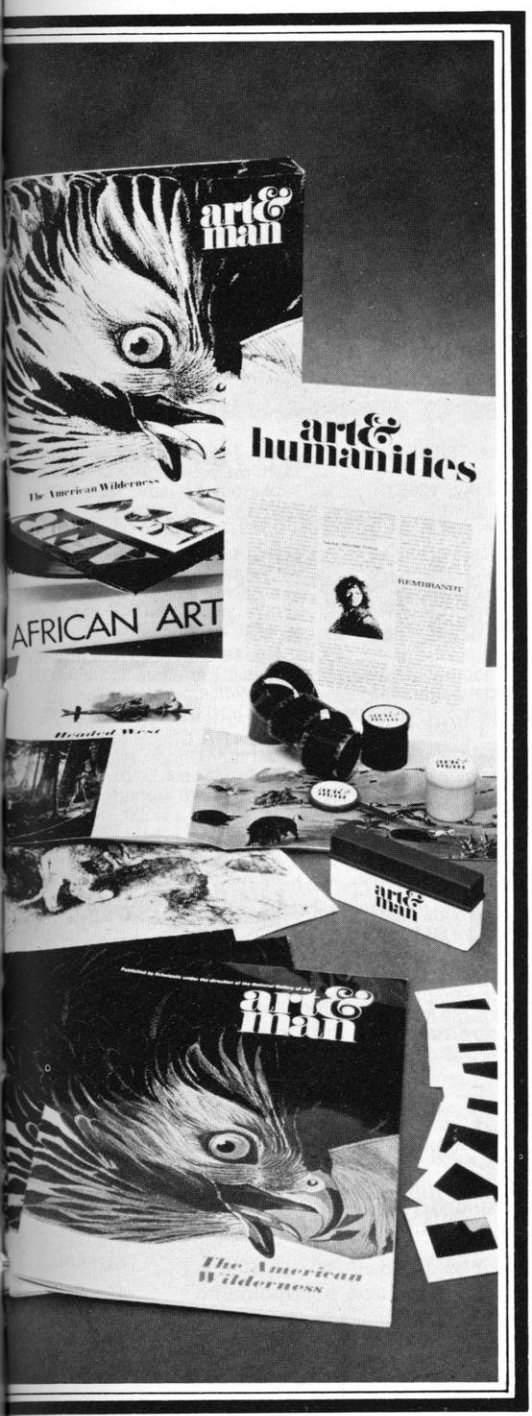

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