



SIGHTS and SOUNDS

IN THE WORLD OF ART

By MOSES SOYER

A FESTIVE atmosphere pervades the ACA Gallery. Its walls are alive with bright colors, and among the people who come and go one notices many whom one does not associate with regular gallery visitors—sailors and soldiers, working men and women, mothers with children. Reason: old one-eyed Burliuk is holding his annual court.

The exhibition is up to Burliuk's usual standard. By this I mean that it's full of beautiful pictures of red-cheeked stocky peasant girls in carnival dresses, realistic renderings of city streets, fanciful tea-parties, surrealist portraits of friends and fellow artists (among them a noble study of Nicolai Cikovsky and a lovely, tender watercolor of your correspondent's wife), lush, fresh flower pieces, intimate studies of nature in its many moods, and so on. The *piece de resistance* of the exhibition is, however, the "Children of Stalingrad" (reproduced in *NEW MASSES*, December 19). Like the "Unconquerable Russia" which Burliuk exhibited last year, this is a huge sombre tapestry of a painting in which he has woven together in rich, resonant, fiery colors and many styles the horrors of the dread and heroic eighteen months of the Stalingrad siege. We see "scenes of scorched earth, moments of terror and suffering, desperation and courage . . . fire, destruction, pillage and flight." In the center is the heroic figure of Mother Russia who "gathers up from the ruins her bruised children." (No one, I am certain, will fail to recognize Mary Burliuk in the figure of Mother Russia. A touching tribute to his lifelong companion and the mother of his two sons, who are now overseas with the American armed forces.) There is a group of gay children sitting at a table; playing games and drawing pictures, children already rehabilitated and secure. Against a flaming sky pierced by Nazi planes one can see guerrillas armed with pitchforks, peasants with their cattle moving into the forest, a rough Red Armyman holding tenderly in his arms a child that he rescued from the Nazis. It is Burliuk at his most resourceful and inventive, most respectful of traditions yet most disdain-

ful of artistic rules; in other words, at his best. He is a profound and humble, and as he says himself, "diligent," student of art. As in the case of Renoir, his work grows younger as he grows older. It is a message full of hope for the future. It reflects a lifetime rich in human experience and full living. Burliuk is, truly, a people's artist.

ARTISTS of the past, before they dared to show their work or accept commissions, had to go through a long pe-

riod of apprenticeship and study. No such idea of artistic education exists now. The standards by which art is judged have changed. One does not expect from an artist today the great technical accomplishment of the past, but rather originality and that he be different from the next fellow. It is possible to achieve good art without traditional art education; for example, Van Gogh, who did practically all his work in ten years, Gauguin, who started painting in middle life, and Rousseau,



"Autobiography," by Frank Kleinholz.

NEW MASSES

Classified Advertisements

50¢ a line. Payable in advance. Min. charge \$1.50. Approx. 7 words to a line.
Deadline Fri., 4 p.m.

RoKo FRAMES

RoKo GALLERY

OUR USUAL HIGH STANDARD in paintings, watercolors, drawings, serigraphs, sculpture, ceramics by leading artists. \$3.00 to \$100.00.

WE SOLVE ALL FRAMING PROBLEMS for large paintings as well as prints, drawings, watercolors, mirrors. Original designs and finished. Prices moderate, quality high.

51 Greenwich Avenue

CHelsea 2-7049

FRAMING—44th ST. BOOK FAIR GALLERY

WE'LL FRAME THAT ORIGINAL or reproduction to fit the interior you have in mind. Widest variety of moldings and texture finishes. Lowest prices, 133 West 44th Street.

A.C.A. GALLERY PUBLICATION

PICASSO—Elizabeth McCausland's critical appraisal of the artist; 36 pages—10 illustrations; 60¢ post paid. A.C.A. Gallery, 63 East 57th St., N. Y. 22.

FINE FURS

SKILLED FUR CRAFTSMAN with Showroom and Factory in Wholesale District offers you up to 30% Reduction on Ready-to-Wear and Made-to-Measure FURS. Extremely Low Rates on Remodeling, Repairing, Cleaning. ARMOND CHENE, 350 Seventh Ave. nr 30th St. LOngacre 5-1853.

INSURANCE

PAUL CROSBIE—Insurance of every kind—whatever your needs—FREQUENT SAVINGS. 80 West 40th St., New York 18, N. Y. Tel. PENnsylvania 6-6788.

INSURANCE

LEON BENOFF—25 Years in Business and expects to run this ad another 25 years. For Insurance, See Mr. Benoff, 391 E. 149th St. ME 5-0984.

THE HEALTH REST

Delightful, Warm, Homelike. Progressive vegetarian resort. Moderate rates. For information Spring Valley, N. Y. Phone Nanuet 2316.

GYMNASIUM

WOMEN—Reduce—Keep fit. Open daily 'til 9:00 P.M. Individual Exercise—Massage—Bicycles—Steam Cabinets, etc. Complete trial visit \$2.25. Special budget exercise course \$12 monthly. Special Saturday corrective exercise courses for Children. GOODWIN'S GYMNASIUM, 1457 Broadway (42 St.). Wisconsin 7-8250.

You are cordially invited to attend a discussion on

THE NEGRO AND THE POST WAR WORLD

By OSCAR BROWN

Pres. of the Natl. Asso. for the Advancement of Colored People

AUCTION OF PICTURES BY NEGRO AND WHITE ARTISTS

SATURDAY, JAN. 13th, at 8 P.M.

at the Home of HILDA DIAMOND
5642 HARPER, CHICAGO, ILL.

ENTERTAINMENT

REFRESHMENTS

ADMISSION FREE

Sponsored by FRIENDS OF NEW MASSES
Chicago

BACK THE ATTACK



WITH



WAR BONDS

an amateur who painted only on Sundays.

Frank Kleinholz, whose exhibition at the Associated American Artists has just terminated, is a case in point. A lawyer by profession, he has, like many other businessmen, been painting weekends and in his spare time as a hobby. It is only five years ago that he decided to take up art seriously and this is already his second large one-man exhibition. His success was quick, because the critics who delight in labels acclaimed him immediately as an American Gauguin. This worked both to his advantage and disadvantage, for in acquiring this quick success he has been forced to show results faster than in more ordinary circumstances.

This exhibition proves that for once the critics have not been barking up the wrong tree for Kleinholz is without question a talented artist of serious intentions. The greatest asset in his work is his fine, rich, opulent color and his sense of humor, which at times is ribald, but more often kind and sympathetic. His subject matter concerns itself with the poor people who live in the tenement districts of lower New York. He paints with human understanding homely incidents of their drab lives. One of the most successful of his larger pictures is "Housing Project." It depicts a large tenement house overflowing with turbulent life, whose very sides seem to heave and spew forth the human and animal life ordinarily confined within its partitioned walls. In his other large paintings he shows his faults most clearly, particularly in his drawing, which he had not time to learn because experience in drawing can only be acquired by long and assiduous practice. Kleinholz tries to cover this lack by striking technique, dramatic color and over-emphasis of form. He is most successful in his small paintings such as "Leah," and the nostalgic "Summer Must End," which depicts a man and a woman embracing against an orange autumnal tree; the black-eyed "Anna" and "Correct Weight," an earlier painting in which Kleinholz has caught successfully a moment of drama and suspense.

This exhibition demonstrates clearly that in spite of the silly hullabaloo Kleinholz is an artist of talent and resourcefulness who gives definite promise of steady growth, devoid of sensationalism.

SIDNEY JANIS, in conjunction with his book, *Abstract and Surrealistic Art in America*, has arranged an exhibi-

tion at the Mortimer Brandt Gallery under the same name. I will not discuss the abstract part of the show. Abstract art in this country is, to my mind, already a thing of the past. It has done its work of liberalization and the artists who practice it today, no matter how good they are, are somewhat behind the times. It is altogether a different matter with surrealist art. It is very much in vogue now, and very much alive, but don't let anyone tell you that surrealism is something new. It has existed before in the work of Breughel, Bosch and, in later times, in some of the work of Blake and Redon. The surrealism of the past, however, was on a much higher scale than the surrealism of today. It was a social surrealism and dealt with superstitions, mysticism, life, death and general living conditions. The surrealists that Mr. Janis exhibits paint only in terms of Freud.

Surrealism plus symbolism lends itself well to the telling of a story with a moral; it has infinitely more possibilities than a painting of the conventional type that deals only with an incident. There are a few artists in America today who attempt to use surrealism as it was used by the great artists of the past. The artists I have in mind are Gwathmey, Burliuk, at times Evergood, Peter Blume, Tchachbasov and others. None of these artists appear in Janis' show. The artists who appear seem to say through their pictures, "We live in an Ivory Tower. We do not paint for the common people. We speak a difficult language and we paint only for ourselves and the chosen few." It is a depressing and decadent show.

It is unfortunate that my last article went to press a day before the opening of the De Hirsch Margulies' exhibition. The exhibition consisted of two parts: one of water-colors, for which he has been known, and one of oil paintings, which is a departure for him. In spite of the involved introduction to his catalogue in which he speaks about time and space symbols and tensions in time, he is an able artist. His water-colors, to my mind, are still the better part of his work. They are straight-forward, dynamic and direct statements. His oil paintings are so thickly loaded with paint that at times one forgets what his dominant idea was and it takes on the appearance of applied art. His color is always well related. It is evident from this exhibition that Mr. Margulies is experimenting and is working toward a definite goal, and that his paintings will

January 9, 1945 NM

become more understandable as his searchings crystallize in his mind.

Ballet International

BY NOW it is common knowledge that enough funds for at least two B-29's were invested to launch a new ballet company which, under the inverted title of Ballet International, gave the New York public two months of old favorites, new works and a couple of world premieres at its own theater on Columbus Circle. It is equally common knowledge that these funds were made available to ballet because George de Cuevas, married to a Rockefeller, "had a dream [quoting the organization's statement of principles]: "to form a foundation to foster ballet; a foundation which would make still more perfect that illustrious marriage of the arts; a fostering of dancers, composers, choreographers and artists."

The dream had certain nightmarish overtones for this reviewer, although it is not our intention to condemn the proceedings wholesale. Whether they come from Rockefeller or other equally affluent sources, half-million dollar clips for the furtherance of culture, for the subsidy of art and therefore of artists, are all to the good. There should be more such gestures.

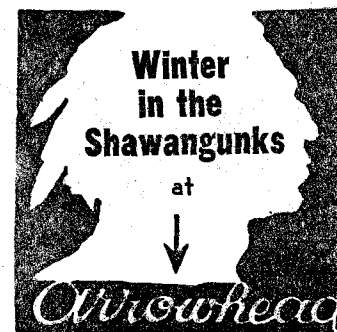
But generosity and dreams are not enough. Other elements are needed for the launching of praiseworthy cultural ventures. For instance, a professional *corps de ballet* in which *all* members, not only a few, warrant professional rating. Or what about artistic taste? integrity? authority? Well, you can't buy all that in packages. And George de Cuevas, admitted artistic director of Ballet International, must assume full share of responsibility for the patent weaknesses of the project.

De Cuevas is no Diagheliev, although he, too, gives with a lavish hand to composers, artists, choreographers, designers, and dancers, and hopes that under his guidance they will make a contribution to the world of art. But de Cuevas seems incapable of rendering sound artistic judgments, which certainly is part of his function. No firm hand was laid on the artistic extravagances in which the repertoire abounded. There was apparently no one around who knew how to build artistic unity and cohesiveness in the company; who could solve its creative problems with something approaching taste and authority; who would aim above all for dignity, if not distinction, in its presentations.

Let's get down to cases. "Sentimental Colloquy" took sensitive music by Paul Bowles, an exquisite Verlaine poem, and then gave it to Dali to drown out with naked bearded old men riding on bicycles all over the set. It permitted a good ballet work, "Constantia," choreographed by Bill Dollar, to be costumed in lavender and mauve chiffon in the boudoir lampshade tradition. It condoned a real atrocity, "Pictures at an Exhibition." Mme. Nijinska, its choreographer, was staging Moussorgsky, so she said, as it would be done in one of the Russian theaters today. Now, not a single correspondent—Ambassador Davies, Willkie, Eve Curie, Quentin Reynolds, others—failed to report on the glory of Soviet ballet, its gorgeous and lavish spectacle maintained in the midst of and despite the war, and the passionate love the Russians have for these very spectacles. But Nijinska decided that "a luxurious production, complete with rich scenery and costumes, *would not only be impossible to obtain, but would also be strange and unacceptable to the Russian audience.*" This is not only ignorance, it is plain effrontery. And the ballet itself was of a piece; drab blouses and boots and kerchiefs and unpainted benches and ladders for props; the dancing a hodge-podge of folk and character, of stupid realism and ridiculous games. It was quite an unbearable business. Both Nijinska and Boris Aronson, set designer, ought to be thoroughly ashamed of themselves.

On the credit side of the ledger, "Sebastian," choreography by Edward Caton, music and plot by Gian-Carlo Menotti, Oliver Smith and Milena doing sets and costumes, is a good piece of ballet theater. "Constantia" has several excellent sections in it, notably a fine second movement. "Mute Wife," based on the Anatole France story, is charming, and introduces a new witty choreographer, Antonia Cobos, who dances the title role also. And then "The Mad Tristan," with choreography by Massine, but salvos to Salvador who emerged with a shockingly exciting set and costumes and a mad, mad libretto, "the first paranoiac ballet based on the eternal myth of love in death" to quote the master himself. Its sheer insanity of symbol and juxtaposition of image set to Wagner's turbulent music made the whole business a fascinating, if somewhat gruesome, show.

The dancers, too, some of them, were good. Marie-Jeanne is one of the few young ballet performers who has strength as well as beauty in her style.



Skiing
Sleighing
Skating
Lectures
Square
Dancing
Record-
ings
Entertainment

- Spark up mind and muscle
- Headline entertainment
- Make early reservations
- Reasonable rates

Write

ARROWHEAD, Ellenville, N. Y.; Tel. 502

INVITATION TO RELAX

Enjoy the serenity of Plum Point. Gorgeous country-side, roaring fireplace, delicious food—and fun. Only 30 miles from New York. MAKE RESERVATIONS

PLUM POINT
"Year-Round Vacation Resort"
New Windsor, N.Y. Tel. Newburgh 4270



(55 Miles from New York)

NOW OPEN

Games: Ping-Pong, Music, Hikes, etc.
Weekend Entertainment

\$35 WEEKLY :: \$6.00 DAILY

Make reservations with Deposit

Mickey Horowitz, Mgr.

BEACON, N. Y. • TEL. BEACON 731

N. Y. Office, 207 4th Ave. ST. 9-0624
Bronx Office, Phone OL 5-6900

Mamasasco Lake Lodge

RIDGEFIELD, CONN. TELEPHONE 820

A magnificent country estate fashioned into a vacation paradise. All seasonal sports including skating on mile long lake. Ping pong, bicycles, dancing, recordings. Fine library, open fireplaces, congenial atmosphere. Famous cuisine. Ask for booklet. Only 50 miles from New York.

Intimate
Delightful
Different

OAKWOOD

NEW
WINDSOR,
NEW YORK

Tel.: Newburgh 4477. Only 53 miles from N.Y.C.

SKATING ON OUR PRIVATE LAKE

Enjoy the beauty of Winter midst the hospitable surroundings of this charming Colonial Estate. Unexcelled cuisine, open fireplaces.