

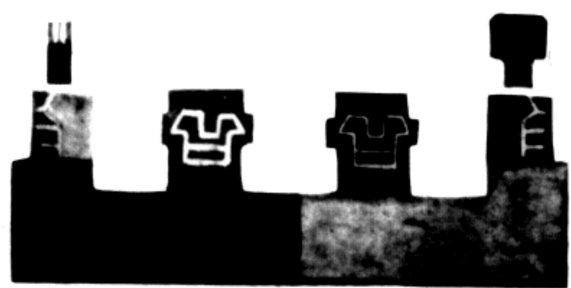
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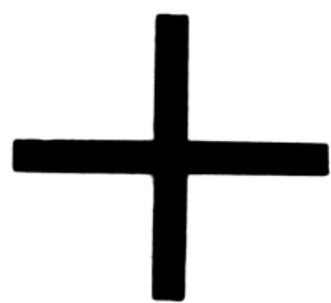
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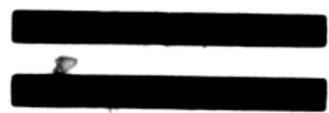
ART FRONT



JOBS FOR THE ARTISTS



MUNICIPAL ART
CENTER



ART FOR THE
PEOPLE

FOR A FEDERAL ART BILL

ON OCTOBER 27 1934 DESPITE POLICE BAN



ARTISTS' UNION FEDERAL ART BILL

Why a Federal Art Bill?

WITH the deepening of the economic crisis, the artist's traditional poverty has become acute. Private patronage has almost disappeared. Increasing numbers of artists are on relief rolls, unable to buy materials, scarcely able to exist on the meager sum allowed them. Some attempts have been made to alleviate the artist's condition through art work relief, either publicly or privately supported. Such relief has been temporary and insecure. The jobs are soon ended, the artists left more desperate than before.

The most notable of these temporary measures was the P.W.A.P., undertaken by the Federal Government last year. It employed over three thousand artists for varying lengths of time from one week to five months. The artists were encouraged to believe that the government took some interest in the fostering of American art, and that from that time on artists might expect a measure of relief, a certain feeling of responsibility on the part of the government for their welfare.

Relying upon these promises, the artists have entered the sixth bitter winter of the depression. No relief has been forthcoming, no jobs have appeared. The government has lightly waved aside the high principles expressed last year and left thousands of artists stranded, incapacitated for work, in some cases facing starvation.

In recognition of the universal distress of these artists, and of many others, the Artists' Union has drawn up a Federal Art Bill, which it hopes to have introduced into the coming session of Congress.

The bill has been created by artists and is built around the common needs of artists. It incorporates much of the P.W.A.P. on a more inclusive scale, and summarizes the several plans that have been advanced from time to time by the Artists' Union. The bill is not yet in final form. We are particularly desirous of receiving the additional suggestions of artists and of art organizations throughout the country. Send in your suggestions if possible before January 1st.

EXHIBITIONS

Brummer Gallery, 53 East 57 St.—Sculpture by Charles Despiau, to Dec. 29.

Caz-Delbo Art Galleries, 15 West 49 St.—Group Show by American and French artists, to Dec. 31.

Downtown Gallery, 113 West 13 St.—American Print Makers Society Exhibition, Dec. 3 to 31, and Group Show of eight artists.

Durand-Ruel Galleries, 12 East 57 St.—One-man show by Vera White, Dec. 3 to 24.

Ehrich-Newhouse Galleries, 578 Madison Ave.—Drawings by Angna Enters. Third annual exhibition of American Genre Painting and water colors by Thomas Moran and Charles Russell, Dec. 17 to 31.

Whitney Museum of American Art, 10 West 8 St.—Second Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary American Paintings, to Jan. 10.

Uptown Gallery, 249 West End Ave.—American Expressionists, Dec. 4 to Jan. 7. Frescoes, oils and water colors by Helen West Heller, Dec. 4 to Jan. 7.

Keppel Galleries, 16 East 57 St.—To Dec. 14. Etchings by Whistler, Dec. 15 to Jan. 15.

Kleemann Galleries, 38 East 57 St.—Paintings by M. Soyer, Jan. 15.

The Bill

The following paragraphs summarize the provisions of the Federal Art Bill:

REGIONAL ART CENTERS

A territorial division similar to that of the P.W.A.P. into sixteen regions is asked. Each of these will constitute a regional art center around which will rotate the various art activities.

ART JOBS

Artists will be given work in their particular fields at non-graduated salaries based on a thirty-hour week. The pay has tentatively been placed at \$38.25, the amount paid New York artists who worked under the P.W.A.P.

Jobs will include:

- Easel painting
- Mural painting
- Decorative and monumental sculpture
- Sculpture for exhibition
- Lithography, etching, woodcut and other graphic arts
- Applied arts
- Commercial art, that is, illustration, lettering, poster-making, work for all types of reproduction
- Teaching in all the above branches
- Art research

Artists will work with complete freedom in their own media, choosing their own subject matter and style of work.

ELIGIBILITY

The Artists' Union has defined an artist as anyone who is trained as an artist and who makes art his regular profession. It does not presume to pass judgment upon relative merit. It is not difficult for an artist to prove that he is professionally an artist. Beyond that it is no one's office to pronounce upon what is and what is not art. Under the Art Bill all professional artists in all fields are eligible to work. Preference is given to those who are most in need of immediate help.

REPRESENTATION

Artists elected by the artists at large will serve as representatives upon all administrative boards.

ART LENDING LIBRARIES

All work produced by artists employed will be classified according to medium, school, subject matter or other useful classifications. This work will be placed in art lending libraries. It will be available for exhibitions to schools, hospitals, libraries, churches, other institutions both

(Continued on Page 8)

What Can the Artists Do?

1.

Copies of the Federal Art Bill will be sent to artists on request.* With the bill will be enclosed petitions with space for names. These spaces should be filled with signatures, especially those of cultural leaders of the community.

2.

On the basis of the bill, artists should be called together for discussion, and for the formation of organizations. From these organizations committees may be elected to present the bill to the Congressmen of the districts, and to ask the support of persons interested in art.

3.

Personal letters should be sent to the President, and to the Senators and Congressmen of the State. These should be sent not only by well-known persons, but by the artists themselves. All letters sent either to the President or to representatives are read, and are summarized in a weekly report.

4.

The Artists' Union wants your suggestions and your cooperation. The Federal Art Bill is for all artists; the needs of every artist have a place in it.

5.

Congress convenes in January. It is imperative that this bill be presented early. Send in your suggestions. Work toward getting the Art Bill on the Congressional calendar. Organize your local artists to put it through. The Artists' Union will gladly cooperate with you by sending any information you may require. Address: The Artists' Union, 11 West 18th Street, New York City.

* If convenient, please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

C. W. Kraushaar Art Galleries, 680 Fifth Ave.—Christmas Exhibition of Color Prints, Dec. 5 to 29.

Julien Levy Gallery, 602 Madison Ave.—Drawings and paintings by Pavel Tchelitchev, Dec. 11 to Dec. 31.

Pierre Matisse, 41 East 57 St.—Paintings by Nikolai Arbit-Blataf, Dec. 5 to 22.

Fifteen Gallery, 37 West 57 St.—Exhibition of invited work, Dec. 17 to Dec. 29.

Milch Gallery, 108 West 57 St.—Recent paintings of Vermont by Edward Bruce, through December.

Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 St.—Fifth Anniversary Exhibition, to Jan. 20.

Georgette Passedoit, 485 Madison Ave.—Paintings by Boris Grigoriev, Dec. 4 to 26.

Raymond and Raymond, 40 East 49 St.—Degas Facsimiles, Nov. 29 to Dec. 29.

Frank K. M. Rehn, 683 Fifth Ave.—George Biddell and Henry Varnum Poor, through December.

Reinhardt Galleries, 730 Fifth Ave.—Landscape paintings by Ian Campbell-Gray, Dec. 3 to Dec. 24.

Jacques Seligmann Galleries, 3 East 51 St.—American Group Show, Dec. 28 to Jan. 10.

Ten Dollar Gallery, 152 East 35 St.—Water colors by Louis Ferstadt, and Group Show, Dec. 15 to 30.

Artists' Committee of Action

— AND HOW!!!

ARTISTS' HULLABALOO

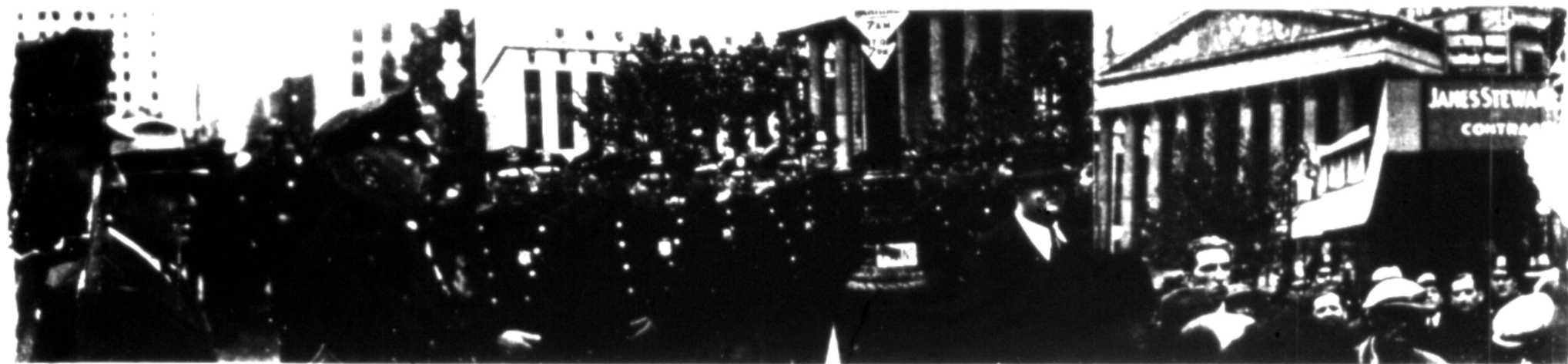
NEW YEAR'S EVE

Kallund and his Night Ramblers
Famous Negro Orchestra

915 EIGHTH AVENUE
Between 54th and 55th Street

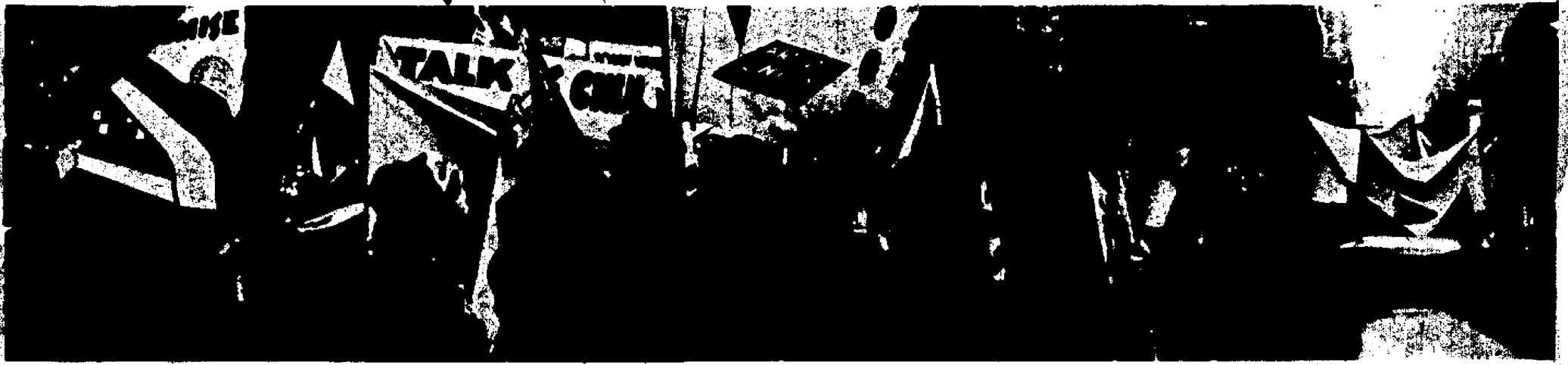
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ON OCTOBER 27 1934 DESPITE POLICE BAN



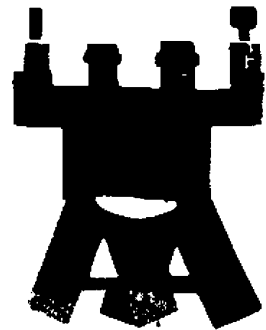
ARTISTS UNION FEDERAL ART BILL

ARTISTS MASSES AT UNION HEADQUARTERS



ART FRONT

JANUARY, 1935
VOL. 1, No. 2



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WHAT NOW, MR. BRUCE?

ON Wednesday, November 28, Mr. Edward Bruce, Chief Administrator of last year's Public Works of Art Projects, spoke to a number of artists and sculptors at the Metropolitan Museum, outlining a new art program to be undertaken by the government.

The new program differs from the P.W.A.P. in a number of ways. It is not designed to benefit great numbers of impoverished artists; need is no factor in getting a job. Artists will work under contract, jobs will be few and salaries high. Work contracts will be given in some cases through competition, in some on the basis of the artist's reputation. Administration of the program will be through a newly created department—the Painting and Sculpture Section. The work will be limited to the embellishment of public buildings by sculpture, murals and a few easel paintings.

Mr. Forbes Watson, co-administrator, in enlarging on the report, declared that he was resolved that politics should not enter into the giving out of contracts, but that they would be based solely on merit. While Mr. Watson's stand is admirable, it is difficult to see how a department created through political wire-pulling can escape it in its administration. Furthermore, in the scramble for the few desirable jobs to be had every kind of influence and pressure will be brought to bear. At a time when all artists are faced with poverty, to give out a few highly paid jobs on the undefinable basis of merit is in itself objectionable. But it is doubtful whether even merit will play a very heavy part in the final awarding of contracts.

Mr. Bruce was asked by several persons in the audience how the government intended to provide for the great numbers of needy artists who had been suddenly dropped by the P.W.A.P. without resources to live on, and for the much greater number who, however great their need, were never hired by the P.W.A.P. Mr. Bruce indicated that the government had no program other than the contract plan.

It will be recalled that when the P.W.A.P. and C.W.A. were first undertaken, they were publicized as the proper course of a responsible government, during a severe crisis, to prevent the lowering of the living standards of its workers, and to prevent the submergence of its professional and cultural strata. This was called the only course for a government which felt its responsibility toward the welfare of its people.

Has the attitude of the government now changed? Does it no longer feel this responsibility? Do culture and good standards of living no longer matter? The abandonment of the P.W.A.P. and C.W.A., and the subsidizing of such a plan as the private contract one point to politics rather than public responsibility as the chief concern of the government.

The only way to achieve the freedom from politics that seems so desirable to Mr. Watson is

through an art program broad enough to eliminate competition, and through a non-differentiated salary scale. The only way to achieve a program of the national importance which Mr. Bruce promises for the contract plan is to open the way for all the artists of the nation to work and produce. Such a program is fully provided for in Federal Art Bill only.

"SELF-HELP"

THE Artists' Union, during the year of its existence, has fought consistently for economic security for the artist. It has pointed out to its membership and to the public at large that the only means of achieving such security is through government support. There is no form of private assistance which is adequate to provide for the numbers of artists who are in desperate need, or which can be consistent enough to furnish security.

There have been numerous moves made to beguile the artists away from their straight and determined stand for federal or municipal aid. Organizations come forward from time to time with rather alluring schemes through which the artist is promised an easy road out of his difficulties. The authors of these schemes always ask the artist to depend upon possible sales and possible contributions for his livelihood.

Such plans naturally find ready support from government officials who are hard put to it to raise enough money for relief. At Washington there is an entire department devoted to "self-help" whose business it is to foster and encourage any plans that may remove the burden of direct relief from the relief department.

A new attempt at such a self-help plan for artists is now under way. Its entrepreneur is D. G. Plotkin, a director of the Artists' and Writers' Dinner Club. Plotkin has sent letters to members of the Dinner Club and to a few outside persons asking them to become charter members of a cooperative gallery. The artists will, Plotkin promises, be able to sell their art free of any expense.

Plotkin's self-help plan is being undertaken in direct opposition to the municipally supported Art Gallery Plan which was initiated by the Artists' Committee of Action, and which has enlisted the support of the Artists' Union, the Independent Artists, and many other mass organizations and individual artists.

It is in opposition because it substitutes an ephemeral private patronage for a very direct and real government support of art and artists. It is in opposition because it selects some two hundred artists to be favored out of the thousands who have equal claim to economic security and who need it. Mr. Plotkin has suggested that some federal aid may be secured for his cooperative gallery. By such a suggestion he offers the government an alternative to the more burdensome, if more adequate, plan of

the Artists' Committee of Action, and an alternative to the long fought for demand of the Artists' Union for adequate federal support.

If Plotkin's integrity is not to be questioned it must be asked why he has attempted to set up an opposing outside organization, and a limited one, rather than to throw his energies and attention into the furtherance of the thoroughly comprehensive plan already in existence.

Artists are seriously warned against accepting the compromise offered by Mr. Plotkin, or any similar self-help plan. In their present insecurity the interests of artists lie more than ever together. Only through government support can anything approaching an adequate livelihood be guaranteed, and this can be won only by the united efforts of all artists.

SOCIAL INSURANCE AND THE ARTIST

MORE and more the artist along with other professional and intellectual workers has begun to recognize his common need with the worker and farmer. Realizing that in the antagonisms of the modern day crisis, the alignment must be with those elements of society which are struggling out of chaos, artists are joining in the demand for the immediate enactment of a federal system of social insurance.

Unemployment and social insurance, receiving, as they have, the attention of both the sincerely interested and the professional "Utopians", have been outlined in various forms. But one thing is certain—any adequate program must be designed to assure the people against any lowering of their standards of living. Of all the bills and plans advanced, the one that most completely provides for the workers at the expense of the government and employers, has been endorsed by the Artists' Union—the Workers' Unemployment and Social Insurance Bill, H.R. 7508. In line with its endorsement, therefore, the Artists' Union is calling upon all artists to support the National Congress for Unemployment and Social Insurance, which will be held January 5, 6 and 7, 1935, in Washington, D. C., and which will formulate plans for the enactment of this bill. The congress will also call for representatives directly elected by the workers who will administer the social insurance system so that it will operate in accordance with their conditions, interests and needs. The congress will further demand that the benefits of social and unemployment insurance shall be extended to workers in every field, without discrimination as to age, sex, race or color, religious or political opinion or affiliation, "whether they be industrial, agricultural, domestic or professional workers." In no case shall the unemployment insurance be less than ten dollars per week, plus three dollars for each dependent.

This bill, embodying as it does all the essential principles of genuine social insurance, should be given full support.

ARTISTS MASSED AT UNION HEADQUARTERS



**ART
FRONT**



AND MARCHED THROUGH THE STREETS



Artists on Work Relief

Project Organization — Artists' Union

THERE is a great need for the services of unemployed artists. There are public buildings which need the work of mural painters and sculptors. There are hundreds of social institutions which require the services of teachers of arts and crafts. The city administration said that it recognized this need, and that it was going to carry out an art program which would arouse the creative and appreciative faculties of the millions of underprivileged children and workers in the city. The city hired two hundred and ninety-three unemployed artists to do this. One hundred and fifty-three of them are teaching painting, drawing, crafts, sculpture, pottery, marionette production and commercial art. One hundred and eight are decorating the walls of schools, hospitals, and welfare institutions, prisons, and other public buildings. Twenty-eight are busy doing posters for tax-free or tax-supported institutions.

The city sent these artists to places where an art program was never heard of. They went into the poorest and most slum-ridden sections of the city. They succeeded in interesting thousands of children and adults who never had an art education. Their exhibitions were praised everywhere. Public officials from the mayor down were photographed visiting workshops, lauding exhibitions, and shaking hands with puppeteers.

The city administration was going in for Art in a big way. The mayor loves art, and he wants the city to love it, too. But the artists, to say the least, are a little skeptical. Only a handful are employed at present. Thousands of applications of unemployed artists are gathering dust in the College Art Office. The artists who are on work-relief are under the continual threat of lay-offs. This whole art program has taken the form of a cheap political gesture and not that of a program which the administration announced—one which would meet the needs of the unemployed artists and the masses of New York's working people who would benefit from a thorough-going art program.

The work of these artists has successfully testified to the legitimacy of their demand for permanent jobs with professional wages. The administration and its dictators, the bankers, don't think so. They don't think they are getting art cheaply enough. In spite of the fact that the city only pays twenty-five per cent of the salaries of these artists, which amounts to six dollars per week per artist, they still think the cost of art too high. The administration and its bankers have decreed that work-relief must go. City Chamberlain, Mr. Berle, makes the following statement in the N. Y. Times of Dec. 7th: "The general attitude to unemployment that appears to be existent in financial circles favors the substitution of a subsistence dole for work-relief." This "attitude" has been made concrete by the renewal of investigations of artists on work-relief. This is the prelude to lay-offs and wage-cuts. Mr. Corsi, head of the Home Relief Bureau, announced that all workers with less than two dependents will be dropped from work-relief rolls. The bankers, the Mayor, Hodson and the College Art Association are making no bones about their antagonistic attitude toward artists on relief. Hodson has recently further outlined the policies of the administration. He suggests that in order to salvage the pride of all those on home-relief, they should have the opportunity of working for their miserable dole. This means that artists will find themselves teaching and

painting on walls at two dollars and fifty cents per week. This is clearly a forced labor policy. This is how the administration plans to carry out its art program.

In the face of these policies, the only resource left to the artist that can protect his means of livelihood is organization. The artists on the projects are realizing this more keenly every day and are joining the Artists' Union in growing numbers.

Each project has elected its own grievance committee which handles all cases of discrimination and injustice. These are many. The mural projects have received inadequate supplies of materials after long periods of delay. These, when received, are found to be of poor quality and hamper the progress of the work on the walls. The scaffolding is of the most inferior kind and no definite statement has yet been received from College Art on the question of workmen's compensation in case of injury. All sketches must be submitted to an art commission, which enforces the strictest censorship. Jonas Lie heads this commission. Jonas Lie, you will remember, paid for the release of John Smiuske, a jailed Rooseveltian who destroyed a painting which did not deal sympathetically with the President's countenance. By this action Lie definitely showed himself as an opponent of our democratic rights which to the artist, mean freedom of expression and conception. These are a few of the difficulties of the mural painters.

On Project 259, which consists of art teaching in settlement houses and in social institutions, other grievances are encountered. These artists are over-supervised, not only by a staff of supervisors and snoopervisors, but also by timekeepers who arbitrarily dock them a half day's pay on the timekeeper's own opinion of what constitutes lateness. They have also been subjected to continuous transfers, which greatly hamper the development of their work with the children. This last grievance, however, has finally been eliminated through the activities of 259's Grievance Committee. Artists can no longer be transferred at the whim of a supervisor or a house. The artist must be consulted first. Many art teachers have been forced to purchase their own supplies in order to keep their groups going. The Grievance Committee has taken this up, too, but many of the artists hesitate to press this issue, fearing that it will jeopardize their jobs. These are but a few of the local grievances which organization has taken steps to eliminate.

Every grievance can be eliminated. Every demand can be won. Every job can be made permanent, and at professional salaries, if the artists solidly organize their ranks against the policies of the administration and its bankers. The artist must realize that passive resistance cannot stave off the waves of lay-offs and wage-cuts and the recurring relief crises. Adequate appropriations must be forced to maintain all artists now on work-relief and to expand the program to include all unemployed artists in the city. This can only be guaranteed through the united action of the employed and unemployed artists. Build the Union!

The demands of the project artists are:

1. Permanent jobs.
2. Professional salaries.
3. Workman's compensation.
4. Supervision by and for artists.
5. No discrimination against organization.

Artists' Committee of Action meets every Monday, 8:30 p.m., at its new headquarters, 919 Eighth Avenue, between 54th and 55th Streets.

ARTISTS' COMMITTEE

For the Municipal Art

9 MACDOUGAL ALLEY NEW

To His Honor
Mayor Fiorello H. LaGuardia,
City Hall,
New York.

Sir:

The idea of a permanent Municipal Art Gallery and Center was conceived and made popular, through energetic efforts, by the Artists' Committee of Action: An organization of more than 1,000 New York artists. An outline of the plans was submitted to you, through your Secretary, on May 20, 1934.

The Municipal Art Gallery and Center would be a potent factor in promoting the cultural and economic interests of all New York artists. The support of thousands of cultural workers was enlisted, and groups of artists, such as the Society of Independent Artists and the Artists' Union, have officially endorsed the Artists' Committee of Action. This organization includes members from every existing art group in New York City.

The fundamentals governing this organization can be summarized thus: (1) Only artists can hold executive offices. (2) All executives are duly elected by the artists themselves.

Aims of the Municipal Art Gallery and Center:

1. Galleries for exhibition for use by artists throughout the year.
2. Free schools for painting, sculpture and graphic arts.
3. Circulation department for rental of art works to individuals and public institutions.
4. Forum for discussion and popularization of art.

HUGO GELLERT, Chairman

STUART DAY

Toward a Collection

AN EXHIBITION of paintings and sculpture sponsored by the Artists' Committee of Action, in which all artists are invited to participate, will have an outstanding importance among the exhibits of the season.

The subject of this exhibit is the struggle for the Municipal Art Gallery and Center. The exhibit is an act planned to focus the diverse talents of a group of artists on a single problem. Open discussion, in the successive meetings of the A.C.A., of the problems connected with the exhibit have acquainted the participants with many attitudes and points of attack other than their own. This fact alone sends the artist to his studio in a frame of mind different from that in which he would have approached the painting of this exhibit without such collective discussion. His creative efforts will be oriented and conditioned by this field of group rationalization which preceded them. The field will be broader and of stronger fiber than the one generated by his own logic unaided. Thus the artist goes to his work with a clearer plan than he would develop in isolation.

Group action in recent art history has had great success and has shown the power of this mode of attack. The impressionists and the cubists, for example, worked as small groups toward a common objective. This was true to such an extent that in some cases it is difficult to tell the work of one man from that of another without prolonged examination.

The collective action of these groups succeeded. They solved their problems and have continued.

AND MARCHED THROUGH THE STREETS



Artists on Work Relief

ARTISTS' COMMITTEE

For the Municipal Art

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COMMITTEE OF ACTION

of Municipal Art Galleries and Center

NEW YORK GRAMERCY 7-5525

We wish to emphasize the necessity of having The Municipal Art Gallery and Center, an institution ADMINISTERED BY THE ARTISTS, for the benefit of the community. Its success depends upon that provision.

We understand that you, Mr. Mayor, appointed a Municipal Art Committee of One Hundred. We welcome ADVISORY cooperation from that or any other committee; but actual control of The Municipal Art Gallery and Center must be retained by the artists themselves. This was made very clear in the administrative plans for The Municipal Art Gallery and Center as submitted by the Artists' Committee of Action to your representative, Mrs. Henry Breckinridge. Mrs. Breckinridge, chairman of your newly appointed Municipal Art Committee of One Hundred, acknowledged receipt of these plans and approved them in a letter to the Artists' Committee of Action, dated August 22, 1934.

We request you, Mr. Mayor, to put the building, located at 62 West 53rd Street, at the disposal of all the artists of New York City by establishing The Municipal Art Gallery and Center as proposed by the Artists' Committee of Action, to enable the artists to give their best and fulfil their calling as artists for the enrichment of the cultural life of the community.

Thousands of New York artists await your decision.

Cordially yours,

HEYWOOD BROWN
JOHN DEWEY
AMOS PINCHOT

AVIS, Secretary

SAUL BERMAN, Treasurer

Collective Exhibit

much to contemporary technological equipment in painting.

Our group attack is much broader in intention. We ask all artists to participate. We do not seek to establish an aesthetic clique. The greater the numerical participation, the broader and deeper will be the ideological and technological content of the work.

We do not go to this work with a preconceived aesthetic creed. In its place, we have established definite material and ideological limitations which are for this exhibit only. By this directed act we will have made material for further action and theory. A series of such directed activities by artists working as a group will produce new material because it is a new mode of action by the contemporary artists.

The plan of limitations for the present exhibition was discussed and accepted in the open meeting of the Artists' Committee of Action on November, 1934. The plan is as follows:

1—Subject of the Exhibit:

The mass meeting and demonstration of the A.C.A. and the Artists' Union for the Municipal Art Gallery and Center.

From this general subject a limited number of experiences and incidents have been collectively agreed upon at an open meeting. These subjects are being assigned to those artists who express preference for one or another. Thus any given subject will have a number of artists engaged in its exhibition.

2—Objects:

Each accepted subject will have a specified set of visual objects attached to it. All artists using the same subject will also be using the same objects as their visual material.

The composition is unrestricted. For example, one subject might have objects A, B, and C as its visual material. All artists working on this subject will use only objects A, B, and C in their compositions, but will arrange them in any way they choose.

3—Color:

The colors to be used are limited as follows:

Black.

White.

Red—Vermilion, Harrison, Cadmium.

Blue—Cobalt or equivalent.

The color limitation is an arbitrary disciplinary measure calculated to establish a material unity in the work. No restriction as to how these colors are to be applied, whether pure or mixed, has been imposed.

4—Size:

All the canvases or boards are to be the same size, 30x36 inches, and the paintings are all to be composed in the horizontal direction. Framing will be uniform.

The material limitations applying to the sculpture are as follows:

1—The work will be three-dimensional. No bas-reliefs will be included.

2—The material will be plaster. The same four colors—black, white, red and blue will be used to color the work.

3—The size will be the same as that employed by the painters—30x36x30 inches.

Notices

The Contemporary Print Group has undertaken a venture in prints that may become important, both to artists and to the public. The most interesting current lithographs having some social content will be reproduced and arranged in portfolios to be sold at low prices. Suzanne La Follette writes of these reproductions:

"As we become more and more alive to the tremendous social forces that are moving the world today, we should feel more and more the importance of knowing what our artists have to tell about the way in which these forces affect our lives."

The John Reed Club and the Trade Union Unity Council have arranged a Cultural Festival—the first to bring together the Trade Unions and the various cultural organizations. The festival takes place on December 21st, at Irving Plaza. The program includes the following: The John Reed Club in a mass chalk talk, the Workers' Laboratory Theatre, Film and Photo League, Bunin's Puppet Show, and the Pierre Degeyter Club.

Opening its school year on October 1st, the John Reed Club School of Art is conducting both day and night classes. Maintained by the Artists' group of the Club, this school is perhaps the only one in the country that endeavors specifically to prepare the art student to express in his work the political and social conflicts of today. Classes are conducted in painting, sculpture, political cartooning, lithography, fresco, poster design, composition, the woodcut, and the chemistry of artists' media. The faculty includes such well-known artists as Nicolai Cikovsky, H. Glinenkamp, Louis Lozowick, Hideo Noda, Ben Shahn, Raphael Soyer, Anton Refregier, Hugo Gellert, Robert Minor, and others.

The Commercial Artist

The commercial artist through his creative abilities and stimulating imagination has presented to the public in pleasant form the coldest and driest of factual statistics, as well as the most elementary and complicated ideas of advertising. He has interpreted slogans, which have become nation-wide expressions, and has impressed indelibly on the minds of millions the form and color of the symbols of nationally-known products.

But with all his utilitarian capacity, the commercial artist has been of very little use to himself. Witness the fact that he is quite lost, desperately trying to preserve his creative integrity in spite of a continued lowering of his standard of living. Fairly bewildered, he is now entering the sixth year of the crisis and is now finding himself, along with thousands of other professionals, in a precarious economic position.

Thousands of artists are literally tramping the streets, samples in hand, vainly seeking employment of any sort. Forced by regular unemployment, they continually fall victims to the pressure of the art buyers, who, keenly aware of their desperate position, force them to accept what available work there is at the buyers' prices—prices which tend more and more to threaten the existence of all commercial artists.

"Price over Quality" becomes the slogan of the day and the consequent degradation of the artist as a creator follows. Continually on the alert, the employers are aware of the swollen army of unemployed artists. They utilize this very situation to force employed artists to accept without a murmur of protest such conditions of employment as lowered wages, unpaid overtime and speed-up.

The outlook for thousands of students graduating yearly into the army of the unemployed is discouraging. These students are forced, in order to gain experience, to work for little or nothing, thus further aggravating the uncertainty with which they are faced.

To counteract these vicissitudes, commercial artists must understand the necessity of organizing in order to solve their problems. Commercial artists may well look to the professional painters and sculptors who, faced with insecurity and possible hunger, have learned trade union methods of combating these evils. Painters and sculptors are keenly aware of the significance of their collective strength and have organized the Artists' Union which has rapidly acquired a membership of over eight hundred. The purpose of the Artists' Union is to unite all artists in their struggle for economic security and to encourage a wider distribution and understanding of art.

Thus aware of the problems of commercial artists, aware of the close bond linking commercial and non-commercial artists, the Artists' Union has formed a section of commercial artists. It is proceeding to organize all branches of commercial art. With a view to the immediate betterment of conditions under which they work, the commercial artist group of the Artists' Union has issued a call to all commercial artists employed, unemployed, free-lance and students to come to a broad general meeting where discussion on the common problems will be taken up and organizational steps to better their conditions immediately acted upon.

Weekly meetings are held every Friday at 8:00 P. M.

O F N E W Y O R K T O C I T Y H A L L



ITEE OF ACTION

Commercial Art Center

The Commercial Artist



MEDIA

The Materials of the Artist, by Max Doerner. Translated by Eugen Neuhaus. Published by Harcourt-Brace & Company. (\$3.75.)

THIS invaluable book for the artist relates to the chemistry of pigments and media. It is compiled from Doerner's lectures at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich, and was first published in German in 1921. The translation has been made by Eugen Neuhaus in collaboration with Doerner, and incorporates the revisions which Doerner will include in his fifth German edition next year.

The book takes up in detail the technics of grounds, pigments, binding media, for all phases of the craft. The section on pigments deals with their nature and composition, including the very important division of coal tar colors. These colors are now being marketed and mislabeled not as substitutes but as true colors; the "hands off" policy is generally recommended. Since Doerner takes issue throughout this book with manufacturers who make exorbitant claims for cure-alls—who market untested and questionable colors—it would be well for American painters to read and realize the numerous misapprehensions under which they paint. It is hoped that American painters will demand from manufacturers what German economic unions have for years demanded from their manufacturers. They have insisted that manufacturers state the contents of tubes, furnish an exact analysis of the contents so that the artist may know the amount of cutting and extending materials, and omit arbitrary color designations. We might sometimes hope for a little cooperation in these demands from the Bureau of Standards, but this bureau seems to have been established more for the assistance of big business than for the benefit of the consumer.

To point out the difference in our materials, one manufacturer gives an analysis of tube contents, whereas another (one of our largest paint dealers) peps up his pigment color with dye and does not label it to that effect. For the artist's own protection, he must demand labeling with the analysis, not only from the standpoint of permanency and chemical stability, but from the point of getting true valuation.

Doerner, with Toch, Laurie and other paint scientists, has recommended this, but it will take the artists' profession to put it through. Doerner, throughout his book, analyzes fallacies such as Buttner's cure-alls, Blockx' wet primed canvas, and various so-called secret painting media. This should enable the artist to understand his needs, and the great variety of materials and methods open to him by making his own materials.

The book discusses all phases and techniques of painting, fallacies, and helpful methods as practiced by old masters. Among many of our present painters whose paint knowledge comes from advertisers' pamphlets, there has arisen a belief in secret processes and secret pigments supposedly used by the old masters.

Doerner has very clearly analyzed the traditional processes. The tempera technique of Florentine painters, the mixed technique of the German and the Van Eycks, the resin oil over tempera technique of Titian and the Venetian school, Rubens' methods of resin oil painting, and the Rembrandt technique. His sources and the references of this book are such that the reader, if interested, can make further research. Many of the practices of these earlier painters could be utilized by modern artists to the enrichment and permanence of their products. *David Smith.*

REVOLUTIONARY ART AT THE JOHN REED CLUB

THE fifth annual exhibition season of the John Reed Club was ushered in at their headquarters by the current show, "Revolutionary Front—1934." The forlorn and neglected ghost of propaganda wanders aimlessly about the gallery frightening no one, except those who fear the message on the walls. For the John Reed Club artists make no secret of the fact that they have cut themselves adrift from the Juggernaut of capitalist imperialism and have identified themselves, and consequently their art, with the working class struggle for power. This struggle, particularly acute today, is generating a new set of values based upon a different conception of the world—a revolutionary class conception of the disinherited proletariat which is forced, through historic necessity, to exert its class will. This vast and international upheaval of a mature, healthy and creative social force, whose object is to liberate the productive energies and potentialities of the human spirit by changing society from the capitalist to socialist form, is attracting many artists to its banner.

Such a viewpoint seems the only courageous one in a world driving toward fascism and the second world war. Only this stand can develop the artist from the child of a little rose-colored world into a mature person who paints the dynamic and living truths of our revolutionary age.

Judging from this viewpoint, the John Reed Club show is not all it should be. True, it is a vital show—it has meat. But as a political expression, its emphasis is on the negative rather than on the positive aspects of the working class outlook. The rich values



"Stop Munition Shipment" by M. Sforza
John Reed Club Exhibition

the workers have brought to the surface of life, their power, health and potentiality, have been overlooked by most of the exhibitors. The canvases seem sad, drab and crushed. Such an outlook shows only half of the situation and, as such, leads to only half the truth. The heroic effort of the proletariat in struggle must make itself felt in an exhibition of this nature, if the artists' work is to be within hailing distance of the class-struggle front.

Jacob Burck's painting, "The New Deal", is closest in outlook to the exhibition's purpose. It is a dramatic—perhaps too dramatic—picture, but undeniably powerful. Its arbitrary color, however, is reminiscent of graphic work and leads to the belief that Burck is still more at home in his devastating political drawings than in his easel painting.

Selma Freeman's "Strike Talk" is sensitive and honest, though the girls leaning over their sewing machines, passing the word for a strike meeting, are not sufficiently tense for the situation. As for the composition of the picture, let us hope the strike itself is better organized. In spite of these weak points, the painting is good and its feeling genuine.

Abraham Harritan's "Death of a Proletarian Hero" is the converse of Miss Freeman's picture in many ways. Harritan's picture is superbly designed, the color is ringing and the structure architectonic. But these considerations are couched in classic and archaic terms and serve to obscure the subject—the death of a worker—and to make the emotional impact of the picture an abstract one.

Nicola Cikovski's "East Side Landscape" is painted in his usual able manner; Philip Reisman's "Hooverville" is good stuff, but crowded, and Max Spivak's "Right to Organize" is nicely handled and broadly painted, but tends toward looseness both in organization and in form.

There are other dramatic pictures here, such as Tully Filmus' "Workers' Meeting," C. Yamasaki's "Japanese Workers' Club," Louis Ross' "Demonstration," Walter Quirt's "The Past and the Present," Jim Guy's "A Kiss for Every Hero," and others.

In the graphic section, Harry Sternberg's fine lithograph, "Industrial Landscape—1934" is the outstanding exhibit. This is not mere drawing. It has power and passion. Sternberg is not afraid to let you know that his sympathies are with the working people. It "conquers one's detachment," which is Marian More's excellent description of the first requisite of a work of art.

Among these drawings particularly interesting are Julien Alberts' beautifully handled "Profits for God," Barbara Burrage's sensitive and human "Miner and Wife," William Gropper's masterly "Sweetshop," Butch Limbach's satirical "Reviewing Stand," Edward Laning's "Riders," J. Margolis' "We'll Put It Back," Louis Lozowick's "Strike Scene," and Joseph Vogel's strong and honest "Hungarian Miners' Hunger Strike."

The outstanding piece of sculpture is the "Driller," by Aaron Goodleman, a work of exceptional intensity and power. His "Moishe Nadir—Revolutionary Poet" is another example of his strong art.

Sam Becker's "Pickets" is a fine little group, a genre piece rather than monumental sculpture. Nat Werner's "Taxi Driver," Ann Wolfe's "Eula Gray," Sahny Olenikov's "Head" and S. Lipton's "United Front" are other pieces of interest.

On the whole, the show is on a technical level which is unusual for so large an exhibition.

Jacob Kainen.

EIGHT MODES OF MODERN PAINTING

A College Art Association Exhibition
Julien Levy Gallery

THE exhibition is arranged with a good deal of taste and elegance. The classification, however, is inaccurate and confusing. This would not be worth mentioning except for the fact that the public and art students have been buffeted long enough between

T O P R E S E N T T H E I R D E M A N D S



MEDIA

REVOLUTIONARY ART AT THE
JOHN REED CLUB

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THE MILITARY IS THE PROBLEM
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forces, both irresponsible and foreign to art, to allow such confusion to go unnoticed. Young artists are already disheartened and lost between what they honestly think to be art and the saleable art. I wish to note inaccuracies, innocent in themselves but harmful in their consequences, for they bring more confusion into a realm already overcrowded with bewildering issues.

The classification adopted by the catalogue is neither aesthetic nor scholarly. There is no necessity to call Fauvism a Free Style or to translate Surrealism into Super-realism. Fauvism and Surrealism are international technical terms and are not translatable any more than are words like aeroplane and bolshevism. The attempt to translate such terms can be ascribed only to lack of imagination. It reminds one of a post-war country formed in Europe which, too eager to express its new independence, has translated the universal word automobile into "self-pusher" or "self-kicker". As to definition—Surrealism is an art which insists upon the irreality of the material world and the reality of the immaterial world; it brings to one denominator things never brought together before; it expresses the intensive through the extensive; it is, as all abstract art, truly revolutionary, since it teaches the unconscious mind—by means of transposition—revolutionary methods, thus providing the conscious mind itself with material and necessity for arriving at revolutionary conclusions. The method of abstraction or transposition is the most efficacious, for it registers upon the generative sources of the human being. Then, digested, it emerges from depths automatically into the conscious mind as a revolutionary vision. Bookkeeping and story-telling methods may excite the conscious mind for a moment, but they leave no germ to grow.

Mondrian, Leger and Charcoune are mistakenly included in the Purist school. There is only one Purist painter—Ozenfant himself, the school's founder. Mondrian is the head of the Neo-Plasticist movement in which Leger may also be listed.

As to the Neo-Romantic school, it offers sentimental and very poor painting. Neo-Romanticism is nothing but an attempt to stall and hold.

Those who think that abstract art is just a passing phase are mistaken. Rivers do not flow backward. Every progressive movement now and then retraces its steps in apparent renunciation of original postulates, only to make later a stronger thrust forward.

John D. Graham.

PAINTINGS BY SALVADOR DALI

Julien Levy Gallery

THE paintings of Salvador Dali are completely successful. His expression is achieved to a degree which demands comparison with artists who are regarded as the leaders in the different epochs. His native skill in the reproduction of common optical effects is unique relative to artists of the day. Manual and muscular sensitivity are apparent in the execution of his paintings. His observations of visual aspects imply a man who is not nervous in the contemporary sense. His sense of time belongs to another century. His paintings are robust and have in them that sense of security in familiar associations which are common to people whose psychological environment is undisturbed. The paintings of Dali are so concrete in their expression that the spectator cannot help but feel the earth beneath his feet. Here is an artist who includes in his subject matter not alone the human model, the still life and

the landscape, but also all those immaterial and equally real mental associations which are a part of the conscious life of the human being. His ability to isolate and give concrete form to the associational aspects of a subject is unparalleled. The intensity of curiosity displayed in these paintings is astounding. Dali shows himself to be a human being of admirable vitality, incorporating dignity, humor, tenderness, cruelty, etc.

The work of Dali is in no sense revolutionary. His extreme concern with the commonplace aspect of his subjects precludes any intention of change or movement. To Dali, a sky is blue, a rock hard, water wet, and a human figure is the well-known shape and color. His primitive realization of these facts constitutes his strength and his conservatism. To Dali, that which is real is the established. His visualizations of the immaterial are as commonplace as a calendar picture and as casual in their acceptance of the conventionally beautiful. Dali paints to-



Dali—fragment, Courtesy of Julien Levy Gallery

gether the lion and the lamb, it is true, but there is no sense of the revolutionary structure. He paints only that which has been painted, but his energy in gathering the conventions of the past is phenomenal.

His fantastic visual juxtapositions are the property of all. He expresses with great clarity and precise discrimination the uncoordinated in human emotions and thought. To these careful visual symbols of the immaterial he assigns the most commonplace materiality. There is no form of painting of Dali with which we are not familiar. We contemplate a desert of the familiar bric-a-brac of human hopes and realities and through them a man wanders with a dust cloth and a moth spray. In these scenes one looks only backward and the sun is setting. Artists who intend to continue will have to change cars.

Stuart Davis.

LUIS QUINTANILLA

Pierre Matisse Galleries

CUTTING cleanly into his zinc and copper plates, Quintanilla builds up a new dark and tumultuous Madrid that teems with the life of its workers, its cocky soldiers, fat priests, sleazy prostitutes, circus men, cuckolds and lovers—whoring, rioting, living between narrow, filthy houses, in dark alleyways and in back rooms behind bright cafes. There is not, in these masterful etchings, any smudging. The line is firm and crisp. One feels that the acid has cut as incisively into the grooves, sharply defined in the metal, as has Quintanilla's bitter humor and pungent satire cut into the conventional roadways of his beloved Madrid. Quintanilla is an artist whose vision is as clear and as steady as his hand that cuts out that vision in the metal. There is in these etchings no sentimental yearning, no enameling, no glossing over, either in technique or in subject. This is the world as seen by a man and an artist; with awakened eyes and a stinging sense of humor.

Quintanilla as an artist is not a "propagandist"; he is not an "agitator". But, if revolutionary art is

to be considered more than simply propaganda, if revolutionary art is to include that work which integrates the outward world with an inward comprehension and understanding of the forces at play in that world, then Quintanilla is a revolutionary artist. Interwoven with his searing revelations of a fat middle class Madrid is an understanding of Madrid and a deep and sensitive love for its working class.

As a man, Quintanilla brings to his life the same gusto and clear-headedness as he has brought to his etchings. Prominent in the revolution that sent Alfonso and his haemophilic sons packing, he has since that time—two years ago—worked toward a revolution that would wipe out the present ruling class of Spain, the infamous, historically super-reactionary trinity—landlord, capitalist and church.

Today Luis Quintanilla is in jail, with the State demanding a sentence of sixteen years, because of his forefront position in the recent revolt of the Spanish proletariat against the dictatorship of Lerroux. Sixteen years is a long time for an artist to be taken out of the currents of men and affairs. Perhaps, if he is sent to jail, he will be able to work there. Perhaps not. Artists all over the world should show their oneness with the artists of the Spanish working class by protesting his imprisonment by the Lerroux government.

Using the Quintanilla etchings as an excuse, Ernest Hemingway, in an introduction to the exhibition at the Pierre Matisse galleries, removes himself from the bull-pen and takes time off to deride revolutionists in general and the Macaulay strikers in particular. With these splendid prints as a springboard, this exponent of pure sensation plunges into a tirade against unsensational, sober, day to day struggles of workers, empty of spectacular bombast and swashbuckling romance. If you haven't had a horse shot from under you, he says, you should be taxed for the use of the word "revolution", and "guest pickets, if they wish to speak it at the Event of the Year, should wear a celluloid badge, something like a hunting license, showing they have paid for the privilege." Hemingway, of course, to be the chief assessor.

Hemingway, as art critic, considers the social aspects of Quintanilla and finds him to be a good revolutionist because he raised the republican flag over the royal palace when Alfonso abdicated. Because, according to Hemingway, he has thrown his body and his liberty into the balance, Quintanilla has a right to the use of the word and, having that right, uses it quietly—as a polished gentleman should use it. And now that he is in jail, Quintanilla, continuing the Hemingway version, does not, in the boorish manner of other revolutionists—who, anyhow, have not the right to the use of the word—write about the atrocities of his captors or the conditions of the jail in which he is kept, but rather writes that "really, in jail it is very funny."

The fine revolutionary passion of the Quintanilla etchings, with their unfolding of a Madrid not seen since Goya, and the portrayal of the life of that city with its meannesses and starvation and the crude rubbing of man against man, and only the life of the working class rising solidly, healthily, cleanly out of the morass, are not discussed in the Hemingway article. Quintanilla himself as the quiet worker from day to day in the revolutionary movement is not discussed either. Quintanilla climbing a flagpole, but not Quintanilla on the picket line, organizing, talking, working. Hemingway, in his eagerness to get in a track at revolutionists, seems to have missed the point.

Ethel Olenikov.

FOR JOBS RELIEF AND ART CENTER





(Continued from Page 2)

private and public, and to individuals at stipulated rental fees. With specific exceptions, all work will be open to purchase.

EXHIBITIONS

Exhibitions of the work produced will be kept in constant rotation. Exhibitions for sale will be held at regular intervals.

EMPLOYMENT BUREAUS

The art centers will serve as contact bureaus between artists and private patrons. They will promote mural and monumental projects by private and public institutions and individuals.

CLASSES, LECTURES, LITERATURE

The purpose of the bill is twofold. It will provide some economic security for the artist. Further, it will serve to acquaint the public with art, educate the public taste and make original art available to all people. The art centers will sponsor lectures and discussions, and will circulate literature. In some cases they may undertake the preparation of monographs and brochures dealing with art.

Classes will be conducted in various branches of art, giving the student, too, benefit of the art center.

FUNDS

Funds will be provided by the federal government, added to by rental of pictures and exhibitions, by sale of literature, by percentages from the employment bureaus, and by lectures and classes.



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Boris Goresick

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