

Unabashed Return to Subject Matter

Few Abstractions in Academy Show

(The annual "Artists of Hawaii" show opened Thursday night at the Honolulu Academy of Arts. The paintings and sculptures will be on display until Dec. 1. Jean Charlot, professor of art at the University of Hawaii, reviews the show for The Advertiser.)

By JEAN CHARLOT

Academy shows of the near past have had a tendency to feature abstractions. This year heralds an unabashed return to subject-matter. Landscapes, figures and still-lives outnumber the outpourings of the subjective. Is the changed hue of this year's exhibition due to a change of heart within the walls of the Academy that plays hostess to the show? Is it a revolution, or a counter-revolution? Some will grumble while others will blithely enjoy the segments of the objective world exhibited on the Academy walls, palm trees silhouetted against sunsets and fragrant flowerpieces.

FOR ME, Brownlee's "Mele

o Pueo," a statue of steel bronze incrustated with mosaic, is the champion of all breeds. Hawaii is much in need of monuments to its heroes, worthy of its heroic past. A statue of Kamehameha by Brownlee, majestically set in a civic site, would fill a need no longer filled by the older version of the king, with its gold and chocolate esthetic.

As should happen in Hawaii, where man is happily dwarfed by the unmatched trinity of sky, sea and mountains, landscapes are numerous. They range from Ochikubo's "Wintery Moon," an abstraction white-on-white that glitters with frost, to Fredda Holt's "Night Scene from the Ala Wai," black-on-black, pricked by the pinpoints of light on the hills. Tseng Yu-Ho's diptych, "The Settlement," uses a Mi-Fei theme in reverse. Where as the old master pours majestically amorphous clouds in-

to the mold of the valleys, Tseng Yu-Ho's screen, these same valleys are filled with a rising flood of cubic houses packed against cubic houses, while nature and contemplation are on the run.

NOT OFTEN DOES a picture commune with its author deep enough to force its pulse and its wisdom on the spectator. May Fraser's "Flowers for Teacher" does this, capturing with mature means an adolescence thus rendered timeless. So does Louis Pohl's "Afternoon Sun," with a blend of the casual and the complex, projecting the personality of the child at play through the visual hurdle of the half-unrolled bamboo blind.

Viewing this show, one feels no loss of quality when compared with previous ones. Highlights are reported equally between the objective and the subjective camps.