

ART

By JEAN CHARLOT



Charlot answers a question on art

Q—Modern reproductions of masterpieces of art are, in themselves, masterpieces of modern, technical craftsmanship, printing, color engraving, tones, shades, et cetera—everything except the texture and third-dimension quality of rough-surfaced works. Why is the original masterpiece so priceless and the copy so relatively worthless? Are not both of almost equal value in the service they perform for the viewer? Don't they give approximately the same "kicks" or impressions or feelings, or arouse the same thoughts, or do whatever art is supposed to do to the beholder? Is there something profoundly, immensely, vastly, extraordinarily different between the original and the finely printed copy? If a modern engineer were to recreate a Taj Mahal, would it be less beautiful because it was the second one, and built more solidly, and new?

A—Speaking of the plaster casts—made after classical sculptures—that were used as models by beginner art students, Jean Cocteau said, "They have everything that the original marble has, and nothing."

Painting is even more impossible to duplicate than sculpture. Oil may be opaque or transparent, its glazes may superpose in depth.

It can be in parts thick or thin and the trail of the brush is as significant as is the pigment that loaded it.

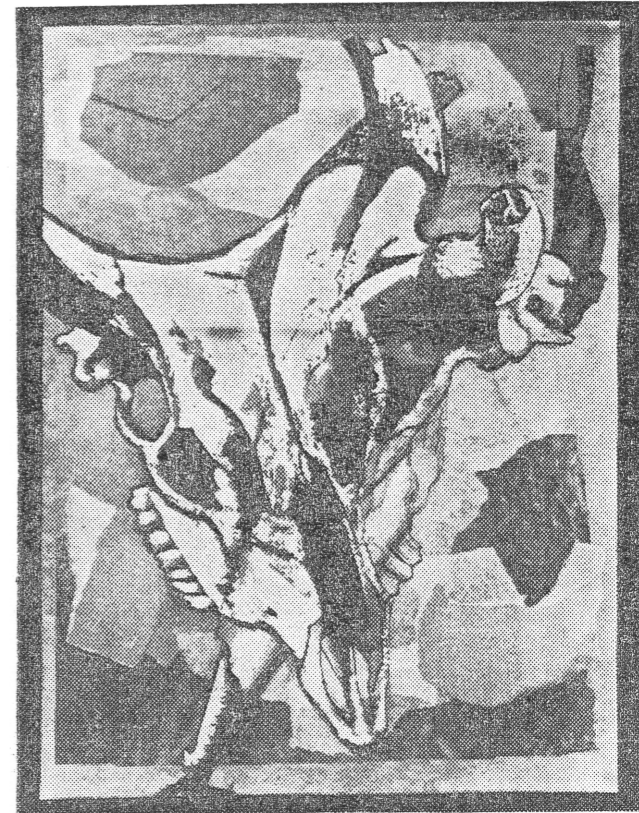
Photographic reproductions use colored inks on paper. High gloss paper gives the finest reproductions. Its monotonous texture is the exact opposite of the varied surface of an original.

Some firms short on ethics print their reproductions on a paper embossed before printing with bumps that purport to suggest the texture of brush strokes. Naturally the colored inks fall at random on such trickery.

Scale is another factor. To reproduce an original actual size is in most cases impractical. Reducing an original falsifies it. To confuse this reduced image with the painting itself is playing at the childish game that a doll is a live person.

An original work of art is the very matter that has been manipulated by the artist in the fever of creation. It is packed with spiritual power. To be unique is in itself a beauty. To commune with this unique object is an experience that no reproduction can help us to even approximate.

Readers may send questions on art to: Jean Charlot, University of Hawaii Art Department, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822.



"Skulls" by Helene Cailliet

Steer skulls on Kalakaua Avenue

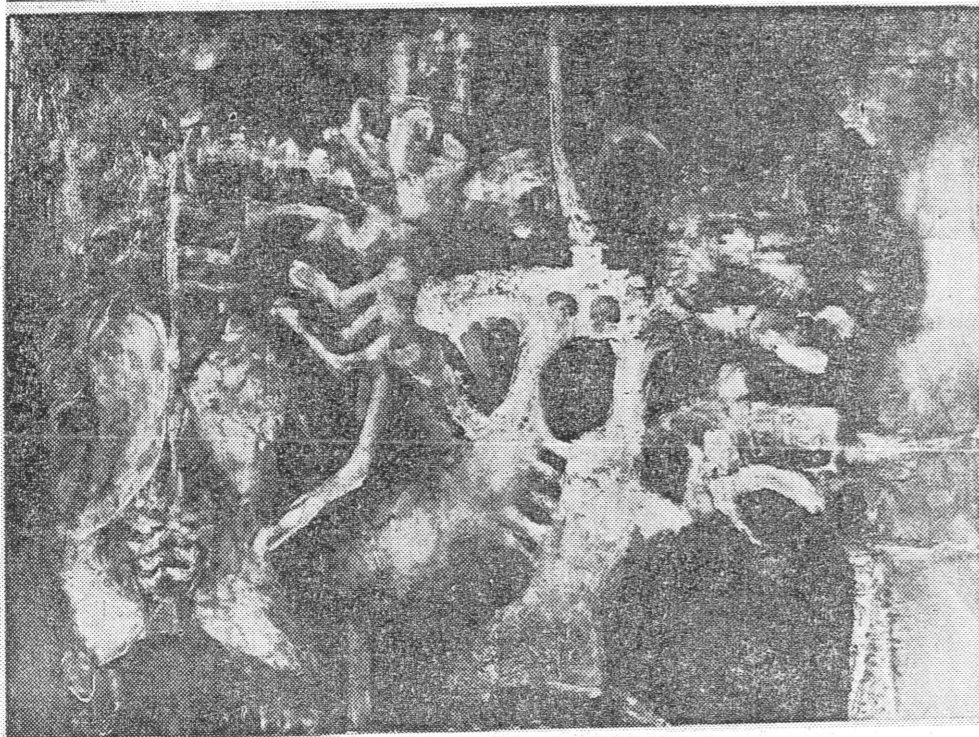
At Grossman-Moody on Kalakaua Avenue, Helene Cailliet exhibits collages and oils. Her work hangs in the midst of the many scattered objets d'art that are the firm's usual display, carved jades, lacquered netsukes, enameled snuff boxes.

Rather than diluting attention away from the paintings, this background de luxe isolates them, emphasizing their dignity. Maybe there is truly a difference between art and applied art.

Helene Cailliet, nee Amoy, is a true kama'aina. Her paintings state her quiet pride in the fact.

Western in their solid rendering of form and suggestive in their subject matter of the great wild West are the pictures of steer skulls. But the models were found close to home, in Saddle City, Waimanalo.

The sturdiness of the artist's Chinese background is stressed effortlessly in such pictures as "Carps".



"Untitled" by Peter Persson

Yet the approach goes deeper than sightseeing, comes close to a kind of geological understanding.

The earth surges upwards and folds of itself into those vertical serried valleys so typical of Hawaiian palis.

Man is absent from these landscapes. They illustrate the epic that ancient Hawaiians used to chant in their own language. Of the first day of creation the Kumulipo had this to say:

O ke akua ke komo. 'A'ae komo kanaka.
(The gods are already here. Man is yet to come.)

Some secrets of an opening

This week, as the green reporter that I am, still obsessed by deadlines, I ventured to visit a few shows before their formal opening. I find the experience worth sharing.

The public knows something of the dynamics of theatre rehearsals. At times, spectators are allowed in the

wings, climb over props and peek at actors in the act of making up.

A similar disarray precedes the opening of an art show. Here in a sense the drama precedes the representation.

In the midst of the wiring, hanging and hammering, rejected artists search dourly for their misunderstood offsprings, turned against

the wall or stuck in dark closets.

To witness this is to understand how the art object and its maker are inextricably one.

Lights, action, camaraderie

The show is ready at last. Now paintings are aligned on gallery walls in military formation, as silent and subdued as tin soldiers.

Come preview hour, the punchbowl of fake cut crystal is brought out and filled. The art-lovers enter. Social banter fills the air.

Scrubbed and garlanded artists stand at attention, each admiring his own work. They receive more leis and congratulations.

Before preview, there is still a give and take between accept and reject, between elation and dismay. Such a mood was in the air when I dropped in at the Church of the Crossroads Gallery. An exhibition of drawings and sculptures was in the offing.

As sole juror, Kenneth

Bushnell had already separated sheep from goats. Hanging was in progress. I singled out a James Rosen landscape. It is, alas, so delicately atmospheric that its range of grays lies outside the craft of the cameraman.

Francis Harr proves once more in "The Gnome" his deep comprehension of Oriental calligraphy. Margaret Robinson's "Sea Grape" was just that and more, a stem, a leaf, a few buds and berries, realized lovingly.

Camera in hand, Shep Glandes was busy photographing his own fine set of sculptures. Created from worthless metal scraps, they

are extraordinarily evocative.

"Strobe Turkey" may be his masterpiece. Mostly contrived with twisted and gilded coat hangers, the bird arises, phoenix-like, a god born from a junk pile.

A turmoil in Hemenway Hall

At the University of Hawaii, Hemenway Hall also was in a turmoil. "Art Kaleidoscope '66" was being born. For this once, faculty and students show side by side.

It may shatter the complacent image of man and su-

perman that we, members of the art faulty, nurse, even though ever so hesitantly.

Youth has a vivid way of feeling its ups and downs, and youthful art reflects both moods. As to the ups, mocking the sacred cows of art is for the young a joyful pastime.

Jackie Jones exhibits a modified version of "Nofretete," the beauteous Egyptian queen. She of the swan neck and the doe eyes is lampooned in a sculpture made of casting resin, and barbarously d a u b e d with splotches of green, blue, red and yellow. The beauty of the queen strangely survives the rough treatment, whatever may happen to Jackie Jones.

History repeats itself. Ca. 1913, Marcel Duchamps infuriated his elders by dabbing mustaches on the upper lip of the Mona Lisa. In that case, both Mona Lisa and Duchamps survived with honor.

The manipulation is complex

So far for the mockers. Among the sufferers, one of Peter Persson's paintings shows a remarkably com-

plex manipulation of pigment.

Thought the title—"Untitled"—stands guard over the work, forbidding us to delve further in its secrets, the canvas suggests a field of rotting bones.

Humanity has been trampled over by the hoofs of the four horsemen of the atomic Apocalypse whose fleshless knuckles knock ever so insistently at our door.

DeMuth art to be shown in Punaluu

An exhibition by Flora Nash DeMuth, entitled "A Lifetime of Art and Travel," will open Saturday and last through Thursday, June 9, at H u n n i c u t t Art Gallery, Punaluu.

The hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily, including Saturday and Sunday.

Portraits, landscapes, animal pictures and book illustrations in oil, watercolor, pastel and etching will be displayed.

Mrs. DeMuth has been a full-time artist for over 40 years. She belongs to the Guild of Free Lance Artists and the New York Society of Illustrators.