

ART

By JEAN
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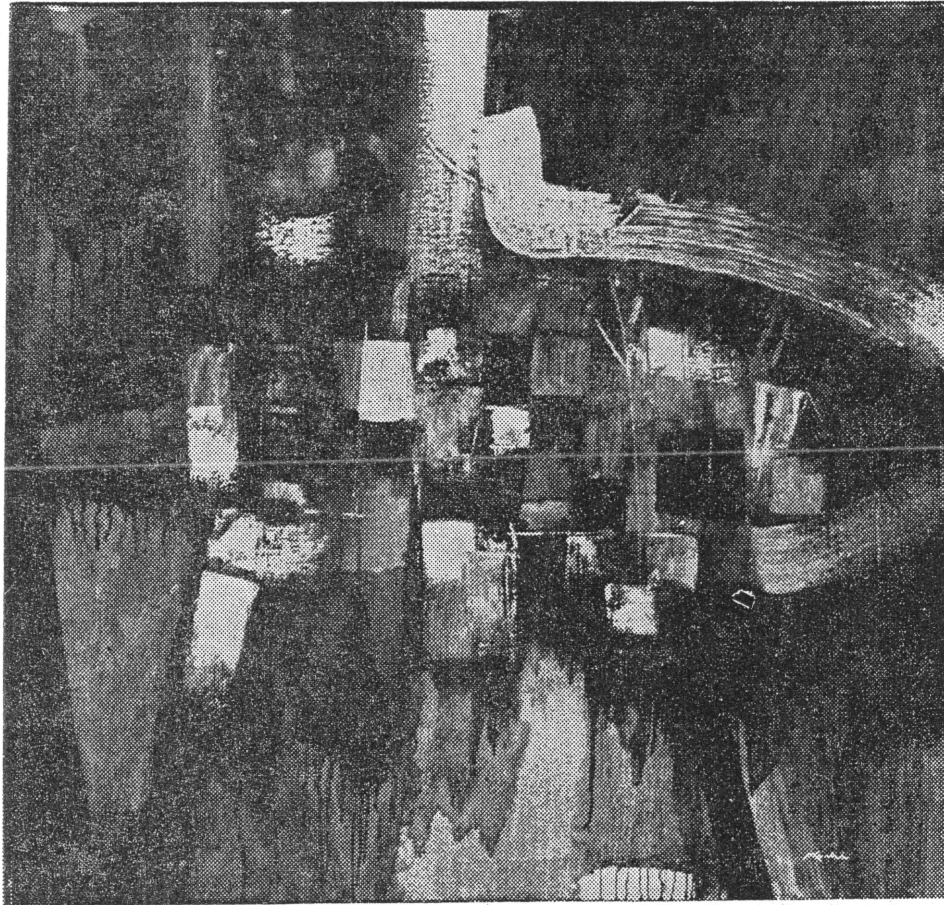
A small but exquisite show

A one-man show by Keichi Kimura is hung at the First Unitarian Church Gallery until June 15. It is a choice show, exquisite in quality though small as to the number of items.

Each artist has to arrange his life as best as he can in a society that makes no place for the artist as such. One reads enviously of past societies in which the scholar and the artist were very high men indeed on the social totem pole.

Today the scholar, or at least the scientist, has provided for himself a cozy niche thanks to discoveries that can be translated into brute might. Bedded with the military man, may the scientist rest in peace.

The artist has no similar haven, or one should perhaps say not yet. There are stirrings in government circles that suggest an esthetic concern. In the future — God and the Governor granting — the making of art may procure a sufficient living for the art-maker, perhaps even for his family.



"Tang" by Keichi Kimura

The only way to stay alive

However, up to now, our only way to stay alive has been to take a job, a job as society understands it, one that gives society instant profit rather than the more remote returns that a great artist deeds to posterity.

Some born artists give it all up in despair. Some take to teaching. Keichi has chosen an even more difficult course by becoming a commercial artist.

It is only in his spare time from this exacting job that he may paint such pictures as those seen in this show. This gives them a depth, a poignancy and a freedom that the professional fine arts artist rarely achieves.

Obstacles can lead to greatness

It is trite to say that obstacles in the path of the artist thrust him into greatness. It may prove true of Keichi. If he was at ease and at rest, if he could devote his time to the fine arts only, there could be a slackening in the tauntness that gives to each picture a unique personality.

From picture to picture the mood changes. "Jet-sam" suggests a stain of floating stuff — sewage or decaying seaweed — that mars the unpolluted blue

waters. The reflected disk of a pale orange sun deflects with its faint hope what otherwise would remain a pessimistic statement.

There is a mood of jubilation in "Phoenix." The bird rises still clothed in the warmth of the flames from which it arises. Wings stretched, its flight is upwards, far out of the limits of the painting and into infinity.

An Eastern flavor

"Tang" is perhaps more Eastern than Western in its calligraphy. It is not the easy flow of the so-called grass writing. The brush strokes seem as hard as scrolls of hammered bronze and the monochromatic gray gamut adds to the suggestion of an antiquity whose visual relicts are the more beautiful for being linked to forgotten rituals.

"Year of the Tiger," in contrast, is gay with colors and a folksy spirit that

blends the sinuous extravaganzas of the dance of a paper dragon with the motions of a bon dance. A central pavillon surges over the concentric dynamics of the dancers. One can hear the clapping of hands, the muttered singing, the beating of drums.

In contrast with the many in a boisterous mood stands the lone one in "Moon-watcher". I suspect that this moon-watcher is a tree. It could as well be a sage. Sage or tree, the shape is bathed in delicate nuances on the borderline between the visible and the intangible. Meditation is a key to the picture.

'Little Gallery' is opened

As Honolulu grows, a consciousness of art grows with it. Little galleries, and others not so little, dot our cityscape. The newly opened so-called 'Little Gallery' at 1943 South King Street is lovingly conceived. One recog-

nizes the master hand of Ken Kingrey in its planning and furnishings.

The roster of its artists is impressive. Isami Doi's work will be available here. Besides our local masters, there is a plan to contact kama'aina artists whom we could call expatriates, those who drifted to faraway places such as New York or Paris.

They made a name for themselves in the new milieu, but we see their work only rarely.

Ochikubo, Okimoto, Roselle Davenport are among them. I hope that a show of the sculptures of Satoru Abe may be eventually arranged. Altogether this gallery is a most civilized addition to our growing town.

And even in Punaluu . . .

Art also grows in what a Honolulu would call the countryside. The Hunnicutt Art Gallery at Punaluu affords not only a beautiful

Blobs, debris and wires: The image of modern man

Q—How does an artist explain to simple, ordinary people who read newspapers—and perhaps not much more—the strange, twisted, contorted figures which are supposed to represent human beings in modern art? I mean a few wires or a fat blob of stone or welded-together debris. I don't question it as art, but how on earth can it ever be explained to a common man with common sense but no highly developed artistic sense?

A—Any man with common sense and no highly developed artistic sense knows that a blob of stone, a few wires or welded together debris are not human beings. Human beings are made of flesh and blood, plus. Window dummies are the closest approach to representing human beings. They are life-size and painted flesh color. They are clothed in real clothes and articulated at the joints.

I found myself musing in front of a store window wherein a make-believe beach scene was depicted. Female dummies "clothed" in bikinis reclined on real sand. My musings were mostly detached from esthetic considerations. In the end, it proved to be a disappointing pastime.

To play the game of make-believe fruitfully, the spectator must be as active a participant as the artist. Each must bring an apportion of his own.

Though a snowman with stovepipe hat and pipe is not an everyday sight in our Hawaii, a snowman is a

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good example of a make-believe game that actively involves both the doer and the spectator.

Art is not too different a game, even though played for higher stakes. What material is at hand is put to use.

The Egyptians used granite and their sculptures remain as compact and monolithic as was the original chunk of stone.

The Greeks quarried their local marble, close-grained and soft textured. They could play at "snowman" with such a material with a closer approach to realism than one can play with snow or granite.

Our age is an age of metal, not of stone. No wonder that our game of make-believe is based on what metal scraps and bits of junk are at hand.

Our civilization relies on automation in war, on computers in love. As a result, contemporary pictures of man naturally partake of the mechanical robot. That any man claiming common sense fails to recognize his own self in these de-humanized monsters only proves that he has less common sense than he thinks.

ride on a most scenic route, but also a worthy goal. The gallery has grown with the addition of its newly opened International Room.

Lucille Hunnicutt is a master at presenting her wares in an intelligently contrived disorder. This apparently artless presentation adds zest to the visit. The gallery does not favor any one brand of art. Conservative elbows progressive. Realistic and abstract mingle. The lamb and the lion

lie at peace together.

The current show is called "A Life of Art and Travel". The artist is Flora Nash DeMuth. Perhaps her world is not our customary world. Accustomed as he is to an art created for its shock value, the art lover thinks of himself as immune. Yet there is a jolt left for him, however cynical he may feel. To look at the art of Flora Nash DeMuth is to see an art meant to please. more to come



"Kharak Singh" by Flora Nash DeMuth