

# ART

by Jean Charlot



## Pictures of Spain and Portugal

The Hunnicutt Art Gallery, at Punalu'u, presents a group show on the theme. "Spain and Portugal."

In the 18th Century, it was proper for young Englishmen of means to round out their education with a tour of foreign countries.

Italy was the favorite goal. Fragments of "antique" marbles were thoughtfully scattered by merchants on the tourist trail, and bought. The young traveler would also carry with him a sketchbook, art being a must for a gentleman.

Many an amateur artist has left us crayon and watercolor records of his travel's highlights. At times, as is the case with Ruskin in the 19th Century, the records were masterpieces, both accurate and deeply felt.

Today, post cards can be had for pennies. Cameras work overtime, and color slides are shared selflessly on return with one's stay-at-home friends.

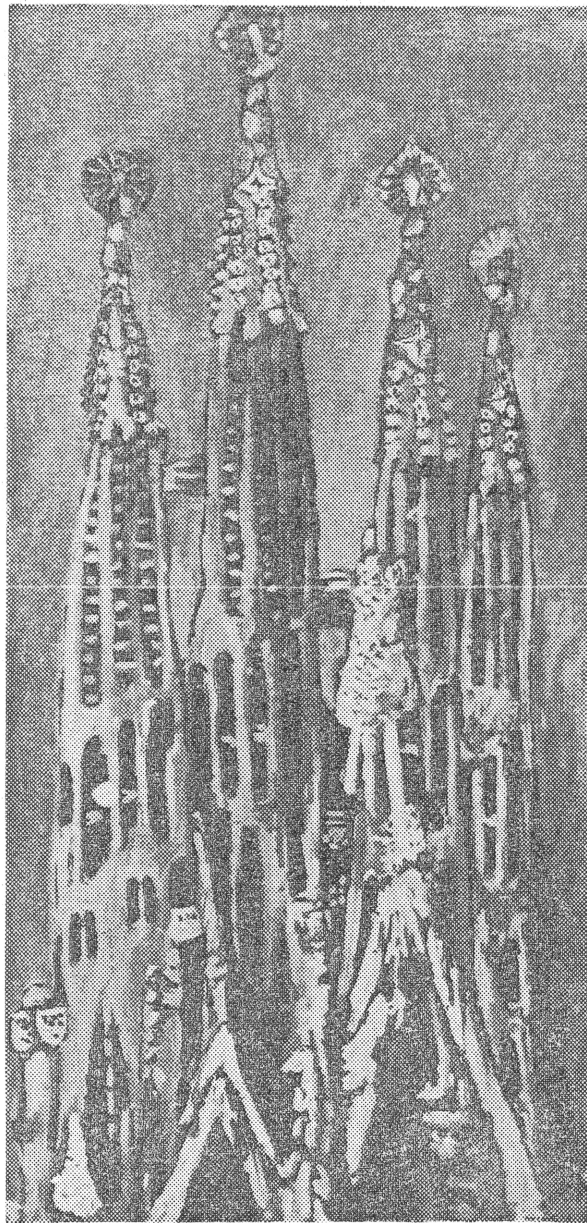
## There is a difference

Few miss the difference. Art making, however casual, implied an involvement between the voyager and nature that the machine misses.

The present show resurrects the old custom. Two pairs of travelers, whose trails I believe only casually crisscrossed each other, resolutely disdained the machine-made record. Instead they trusted their own hands and eyes.

Joan Beaumont and Joan Gima, Ray Gleba and William Tidd, Jr., collaborate in a group show of admirable unity.

The four exhibitors base their work on an unspoken and probably subconscious premise. Artists though they are, while the trip lasted their ego was laid at rest.



Joan Gima's "Sagrada Familia, Barcelona".

All four forgot about art as such. They attempted—and succeeded—in blending themselves with ancient customs and countries, with foreign cultures and sights.

The climate of the show accentuates Spain and Portugal before esthetics. Post card vistas held no fear for our travelers. The Alhambra is here, the Roman aqueduct near Segovia, the towers of Avila, Barcelona's famed

Sagrada Familia Cathedral.

Lesser sights awoke equal enthusiasm in all four artists. Some of their best work is wrought around commonplace subjects: Gleba's "Four Valencia Oranges," Tidd's "Spanish Orions," Joan Beaumont's "Wine Bottles en Espana," Joan Gima's "Seat and Four Cups Through Spain."

Created joyfully, this show communicates joy. Even

though this would be the last thing the happy travelers thought about, it also is an esthetic manifesto of a sort.

Nature and art have not felt as one of late. In fact, since the advent of cubism half a century ago, painters have been ill at ease when faced with beautiful sights.

The very exacting and exciting cogitations that resulted in the best of our modern art were created between the four walls of a studio, its windows hermetically closed.

Like the alchemists of old, some of our modern masters shunned light. Certainly they shied away from sunlight.

Claude Monet was perhaps the last master in love with sunlight. The impressionist master would have liked this show. Its means are far from impressionistic, but a lyrical joy blends anew art and natural beauty.

## The spirit of Iberia

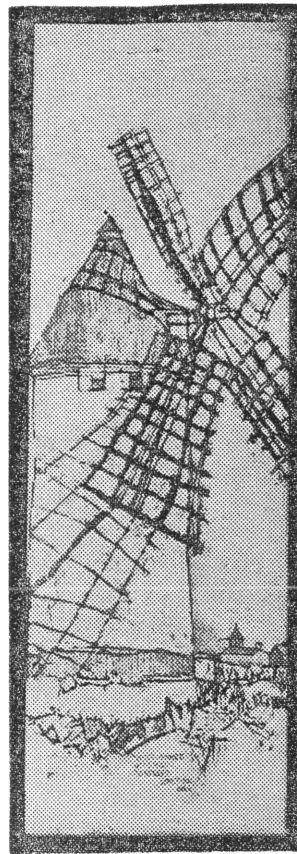
So strongly does the spirit of Portugal and of Spain tie the pictures together that it takes a while to disentangle the four personalities the one from the other.

For Ray Gleba and Joan Beaumont this is a first public appearance. Joan Gima and William Tidd have had shows before.

Tidd's masterpiece, "In search of Questa," is a complex painting. It includes a portrait of his traveling companion, Gleba. Also the loaded pack horse, a mongrel dog, a boy, a peasant girl giggling and holding a flower, a mother and her swaddled infant.

A slate gray light accentuates the sharpness of the drawing. Its insistent earthiness reminds me of Courbet, and of his dark landscapes set under leaded skies.

Joan Beaumont is the more restless of the four. She bucks against nature's beauty, but eventually ac-



"Whitewashed Windmill" in Portugal by William Tidd, Jr.

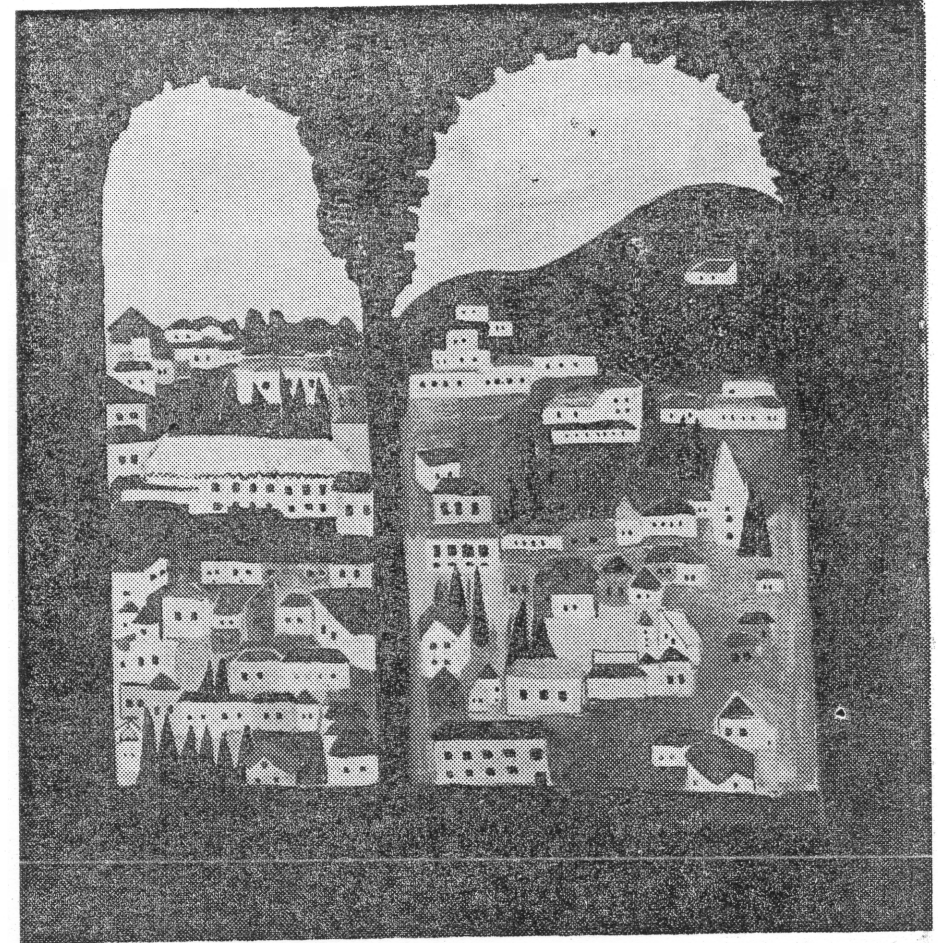
cepts it. I like best the piled up pigment in "Portugal With Moon," and as well, "Gredos Mountains, Spain."

Abstract of a sort she may be. Yet old man Monet would have approved of the swish of the loaded brush motored by romantic vistas.

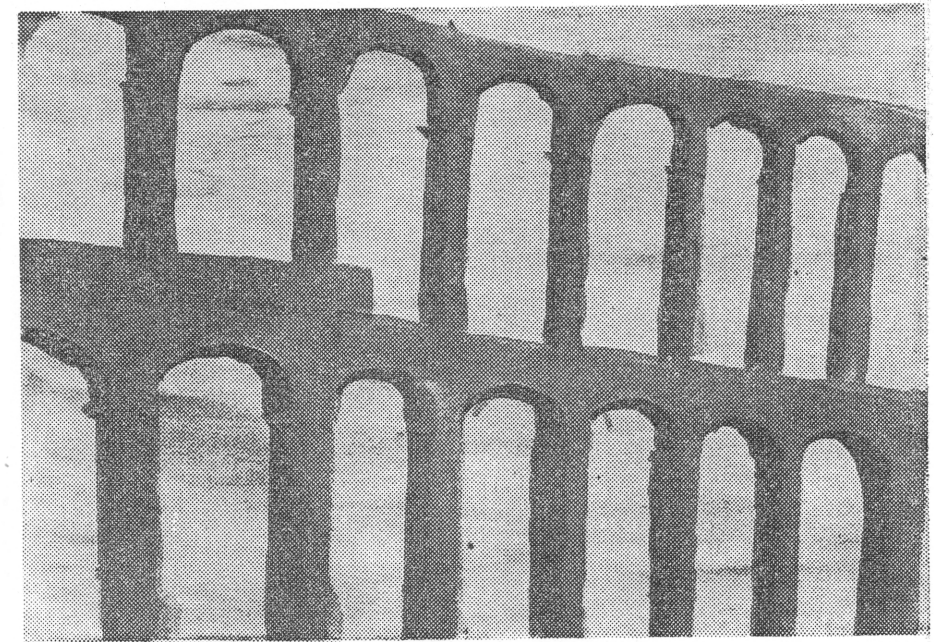
Ray Gleba is sure of himself. So much so that he tackles at wish subjects fit for picture post cards. (His "Roman Aqueduct" is reproduced on this page.)

"Arcos de la Frontera" with its grilled windows and arches bridging the narrow cobbled street is the essence of picturesqueness. It takes a second look to appreciate the delicate relationship of its creamy whites.

Joan Gima: Of her past work I remember best severe abstractions based, at least for this Westerner, on



"View from the Alhambra, Granada" by Joan Beaumont.



Ray Gleba's "Roman Aqueduct Near Segovia".

what I take to be Zen thought. It is pleasant to see Joan emerge into the fresh air and the sunlight.

She does things with and to architecture. Her "Avila" is haughty and forbidding. Her "Sagrada Familia,"

here reproduced, owes as much to the painter as it does to Gaudi, its visionary architect.

The Hunnicutt Art Gallery is cosily tucked in a beautiful corner of Punalu'u. For added color, Lucile Hunni-

cutt keeps an aviary that features proudly bedecked silver pheasants. Surf and sea are close at hand. It is perhaps too rich a frame for man-made art. Few shows could pass the test. This one does.