by Jean Charlot

I have just returned from a three-month trip to South America. Europe and the Mainland only to find myself thrust into the thick of the controversy astonishingly raised by the sculptress Marisol's gentle statue.

Men of many callings columnists, politicians, clerics even - have had their say. How could an artist escape the issue, even though it be at this late date!

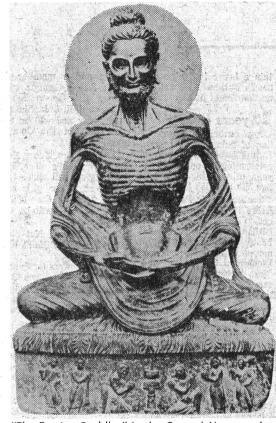
While in New York, friends sent me various clippings on the subject culled from our local papers. Some of the opponents of her work were brutally outspoken in expressing their distaste. I decided to interview the artist.

It seemed proper to remind her detractors that Marisol is neither a faker nor a joker. In fact, as she herself words it in necessary defense, she is undoubtedly "one of the most successful artists in America.

Or, as I stated in the published Star-Bulletin interview, she is a bonafide member of this most exclusive of all esthetic clubs, that of the tastemakers.

Her success is deserved. In its unassuming way, her Damien statuette contrasts with much that is disheveled dynamics in our contemporary mode of expression. sober beauty of basic geometric form.

For the art lover who



"The Fasting Buddha" in the Central Museum, Lahore, Pakistan.

the art maker.

Under the single term

Her model clings close to the seem superfluous. Not so for form of the art object, but its spirit as well.

Modeling starts with a "sculpture," two very differ- shapeless soft mass, classi- which we make such a proud seeks first and last the emo- ent techniques coexist: mod- cally clay. It uses the oldest display, of secondary importional impact of art, a dis- eling and carving. Each af- of tools, the human hand, tance. Of prime importance New York for England, to cussion of techniques may fects differently not only the The job of the modeller is to instead was the cubic beauty execute there still another

give form to formlessness.

Carving is quite another matter. What the sculptor starts from, be it wood or stone, already has shape, density, grain and color. The hardness of the material forces the sculptor to use tools whose handling and logic are different from handwork.

Regardless of their respective values, all entries submitted in the Father Damien contest are executed along the lines of modeling. All but one. Marisol's model is based on sculptural logic. Hence its outstanding individuality.

The sculptor must remain aware of the innate quality of the material of his choice. He will approach it with awe, afraid to weaken or to destroy what beauty nature has already endowed it with.

Basic geometric shapes govern sculpture. The block of stone comes out of the quarry in cubic shape.

It is the task of the sculptor to describe, more often than not, the human form, and at the same time to retain, to underline even, the original shape of the stone

Illustrated on this page is chin, arms crossed over the knees. The ancient stone carver deemed anatomy, of



Statue of Senusret-Senebef-Ni of Egypt.

of the original block of stone commission. that in the finished product remains unimpaired.

The cube is linked to the found in nature is the cylinby nature cylindrical.

an Egyptian rendering of a stands wood. Her statues are man in a squatting posture. as respectful of the logic of Legs folded, knees to the wood as are those of the Egyptian sculptor of the logic of stone.

Marisol is a very busy artist. She does not lack work. Indeed right now she has left

Why did she enter our local contest?

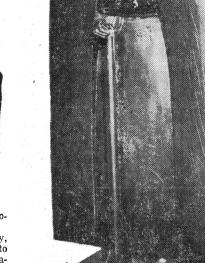
As I quoted her previously, stone block. By contrast, the what made Marisol decide to basic shape of wood as it is enter was the fact that Father Damien, like herself, der. Its trunk and branches, was a person who underits mode of growth, all are stood wood, who loved to work with wood, who carpen-Marisol loves and under-tered with wood many things, from coffins to churches.

Marisol's Damien statue, adapting itself to the basic logic of wood, is geared to the cylindrical shape. It para tree trunk. As happens lacks. with the tree, there is a sturdiness and a feeling of inner growth. The holy man, planted by his own will on his chosen ground, is there obviously to stay.

One should not forget that ings into words: the small model now on dissort of visual shorthand when I made the statue, lepusually to be seen only in the rosy was not the main feelworkshop.

As the true artist that she tend to merely enlarge the mien the qualities of a hero mize the anatomical horror. tentative model. She plans to in the sense that Napoleon carve full scale a new was: a soldier with an enorless many changes to adapt the world. the model to the new scale

Not only will the statue be my work in writing. larger than life. It will be raised on a pedestal. The be able to do the statue of viewer will look up at it. Father Damien. It has so Like mural painting, monu- much meaning for me." its full effect on an "angle opposes this extroverted mil-sion.



Marisol's "Father Damien".

In a letter just received by the Star-Bulletin, Marisol, somewhat surprised at the tempts to put her own feel- faiths understand this truth.

ing I was conveying . .

"I didn't know that I was

and to the new point of view. me that I have had to defend

"I really hope that I will

takes of the immutability of shot" that the small model itary hero to the religious ascetic, who seeks to hide his heroism from the world.

Letters from Star-Bulletin readers have already mencolossal commotion raised tioned that a saint becomes by her tranquil statue, at- a hero through suffering. All

I choose to illustrate this "I am aware that Father thought on this page with a play is only a first draft, the Damien had leprosy, but famous statue of Buddha towards the end of his heroic fasting. It is in the Central

Museum, Lahore, Pakistan, Certainly here the sculptor is, the sculptress does not in- expected to give Father Da- has not attempted to mini-

Thus for Marisol. If I have emphasized here the physistatue. There will be doubt- mous ego trying to conquer cal process of direct sculpture it is because, in living "It has never happened to art as in a living body, one cannot pull apart the spiritual from the physical.

The award of the commission seems eminently justified. I hope that Marisol will be allowed to carry her work mental sculpture depends for Her reference to Napoleon to its monumental conclu-