

ART

by Jean Charlot

An exhibition by craftsmen

The second annual exhibition of Hawaii Craftsmen is currently held at the Ala Moana Center. It will close Saturday.

Last year's showing of the group, the first, was an improvised affair, lasting only two days. It was so timed to coincide with the Governor's Conference on Culture and the Arts.

This year's show is smaller and severely pruned. The sole juror, Trude Guernonprez, is herself a craftsman of note. She teaches and practices weaving in California.

As a guest, she exhibits some of her weaves. Their quality is a sure token of her

understanding of art. "Crystal," especially, is a refined affair, a textile mobile whose open weave is shot through with space and light.

In gold, cream and gray, it conjures for me a ghostly Christmas tree, its sloping branches glittering under the weight of an impalpable hail of crystal snow.

Not unnaturally, this weaver's choice underlines her interest in woven entries.

In contrast with Miss Guernonprez's exquisiteness, a whiff of the outdoors stamps our local weavers' craft. Twigs, fibers, shells and seeds, fragments of our tropical setting, are bodily incorporated in their art.

Last year, at this date, the State Foundation on Culture

and the Arts received the healthy slap that ushered it, bawling, into life.

This year, the Foundation is a mature reality. Funneled through it, money from Washington trickles effectively—if parsimoniously—to reward individual artists.

From among the ceramics displayed, the Foundation has acquired Sally Fletcher's round pot, aptly titled, "Round, round." As in the case with a previous and equally felicitous choice, John Kjargaard's "Yellow Garden," it will eventually be displayed in one of the State's buildings now abuilding.

I also enjoyed Shige Yamada's, "Id." A delicately modeled clay head, fully

realized, is encased in a smooth egg shape that seals it off, away from prying eyes. One can get no more than a glimpse of this inner face through a crack in the outer shell that insulates it from reality.

Here clearly symbolical, this invisibility of a work of art is close to becoming a new trend.

In New York, in an outdoor show staged in Central Park, a sculptor dug a hole in the ground, filled it up again, and entered it as "beautiful underground sculpture." It attracted quite a crowd.

Among metal works, Joan Lintault's, "Ian's Toy" is pleasantly unassuming. A sort of suspended merry-go-round, it alternates cut-outs of suns and sirens—or are they muses?—hanging upside down and downside up.

Last year's show may have failed to reach the present level of impeccable achievement, but its relative casualness made a more lively impression.

What one misses most this year are entries that could be called unequivocally Hawaiian.

I miss Charles Chow's wood carvings. Even though wrought with modern tools, one felt in them the logic of the stone adze at work.

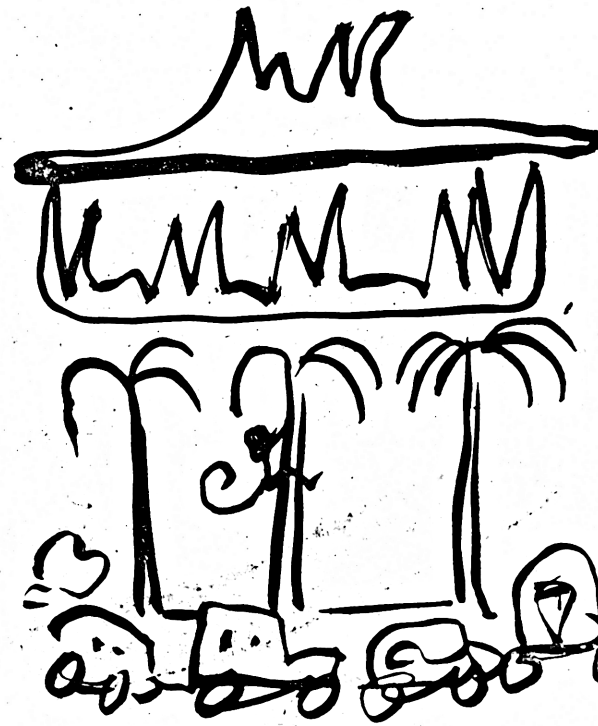
I also miss the hala weaves and tapa samples entered last year by the Ulu Mau craftsmen. And where, oh where can a feather mosaicist exhibit works in his chosen medium, hallowed above others with ancient spiritual meanings?

Some criticism of architecture

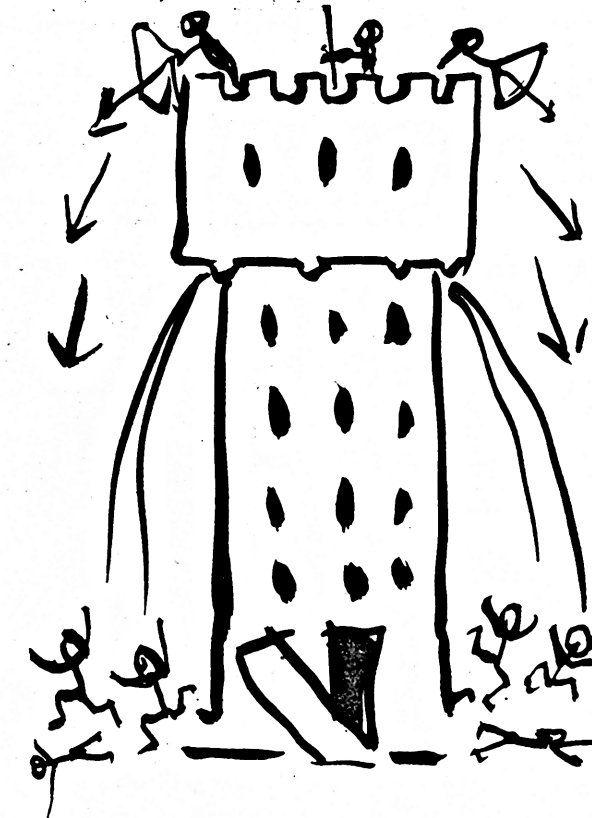
Diffident though I am in voicing an opinion concerning architecture, I was heartened of late by the urgings of a bona fide architect. Thomas H. Creighton, a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects.

Lay people, said he, should attempt a do-it-yourself criticism of the many buildings that mushroom, these days, all around and above us Honoluluans.

As a layman, I qualify. I



"There they stood, suggesting geriatric dentures . . ."



"... a huge castle, dark and forbidding . . ."

admit that what I know about architecture is little more than can be gathered from textbooks on the history of art.

But I know what I like. So here goes!

Once there was a wicked giant. Or perhaps he was more feeble minded than he was wicked. Spying a grove of coconut trees, by magic he froze them in gray uniformity in a rigid square formation.

This giant had very unruly hair, and tough. His giant combs would quickly lose some of their teeth in his mop.

He took four of his old dis-

carded combs and stuck them upright on top of the coconut trees.

There they stood, suggesting geriatric dentures. On top of it all the giant put a flat top, squinted, decided it was too flat.

So, with a giant uppercut, he drove his fist through the

flat top, poking in it a giant hole, all shredded upwards at the edges.

It still didn't look too good. Magically, the giant conjured all kinds of cars and buses and trucks that madly built a huge traffic maelstrom around his flawed masterpiece, in the hope that the people, busy dodging death, would forget all about what he had done.

What is it?
Answer: The State Capitol.

Conjured by rubbing the brass lamp, the jinni politely asked me what was my wish.

I said I wanted to see a medieval fortress bigger than any medieval fortress ever built. "Rub the lamp once more" said he.

It happened. Before me stood a huge castle, dark and forbidding, flaunting threateningly its crenellations and machicolations.

Protected by the crenellations, archers stood ready to

throw floods of flaming arrows against incoming waves of assailants.

Should these manage to roll their battering ram across the moat, then the machicolations in the jutting upper stories came into play.

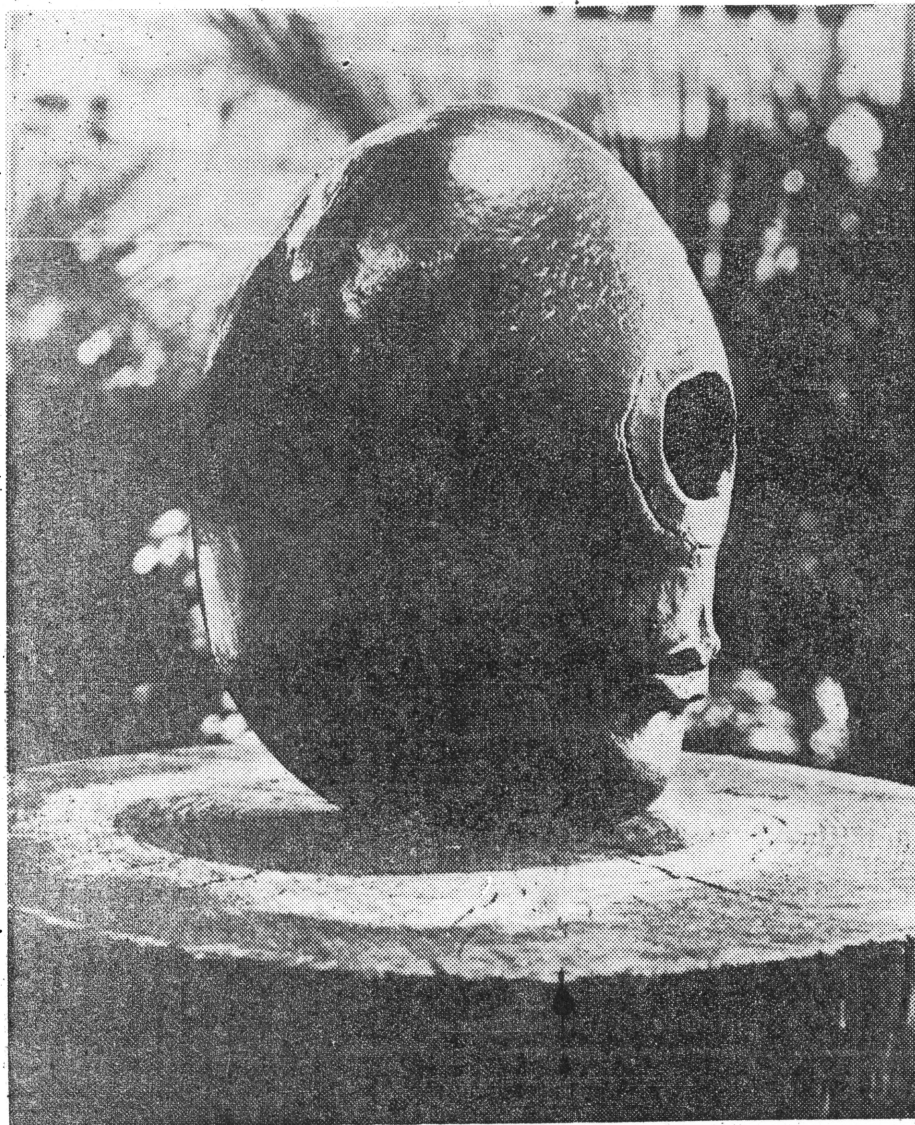
Molten lead, heated in giant iron kettles, stood ready to be poured, thick as waterfalls, from each one of the pukas punched up there for this deathly purpose.

Surely no one would ever dare approach this most forbidding fortress!

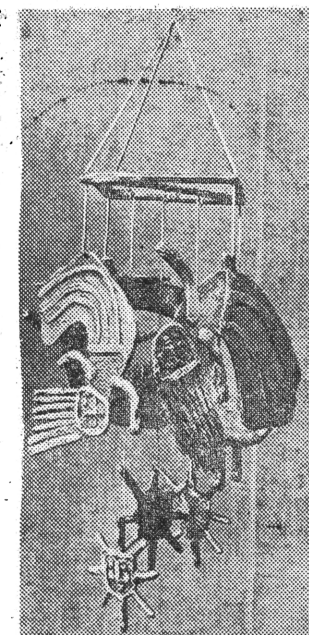
I thanked the jinni who, according to my wish, had resurrected for me the feudal horror and splendor of times long past.

The jinni smiled a thin smile. "Ha, ha! I fooled you," he said. "This is not a medieval castle as you thought. It was built only yesterday. As a fact it is still abuilding. It is . . ."

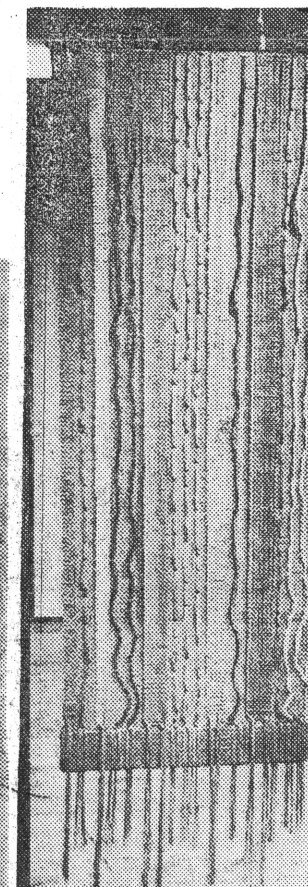
Pacific.
The Castle and Cooke Tower in the Financial Plaza of the



"Id" by Shige Yamada



Joan Lintault's "Ian's Toy"



Ruthadell Anderson's "Wall Hanging"