

ART

by Jean Charlot

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The 22nd Annual exhibit of the Hawaii Painters and Sculptors League may be seen at the Contemporary Arts Center on Kapiolani Boulevard through Feb. 23.

This year, an exceptionally drastic pruning makes for a pleasantly decorative unity as one enters the hall. Few are the scenes from a recognizable world. Many are the images dredged out of varying depths of the subconscious. Mixed media, constructions and collages of varying degrees of ingenuity each proposes a novel panacea for what it is that ails art.

There are drawbacks to such an artificially arrived at unity. Since classical times the touchstone of great

art has been the one theme of the human body. One searches in vain for this humanistic approach. Marozzi's direct sculpture, "Pas de Deux", is the one obvious exception. One could add the stick men scratched on rock seen in Juanita Vitousek's "Ancient Hawaii." Petroglyphs, however, even when dealing with naked men, are so un-Greek as to qualify as abstractions.

OR IS THIS show as abstract as it seems? The old hallowed categories, landscape, seascape, figure painting, are undoubtedly obsolete. Portrait barely exists. The obsession with faces, their features patterned after the certitudes of the da-

guerereotype, this too has been thoroughly washed away by the new visual tentacles that man the inventor has sprung of late over the microcosm and the expanding universe.

Microphotographs — such as the series recently published in Life—have mapped the human anatomy anew in ways vouched for by the machine but forever out of bounds for our sensuous experience. No Greek sculptor could acknowledge as valid what the camera says is true. No lover ever dealt with the single cell.

Space photographs prove equally truthful and equally disquieting. To see our earth as little more than another moon, a football in blue,

white and brown, with the old majestic certitudes—mountains, rivers, valleys—faded into nothingness, forces us to re-estimate the landscape genre. Today's landscape deals with whole planets and the ellipses of their orbits. Sueko Kimura's "Eclipse" illustrates daintily the potentialities.

Indeed painters faced with these never before seen images could not fail to modify their visions. Vermeer of Delft did just that when, in the 17th century, the scientist Leeuwenhoek shook his faith in the validity of the visual world by bidding the artist look at it through the first microscope, of which Leeuwenhoek was the inventor.

COMPARING paintings in this show discloses an up-to-date overlapping between the artist's inner world and an outer world marked with new strangeness, until the wall of words erected between the two crumbles.

Juanita Kenda's "Waves," a watercolor, is just what the title implies. It is the one picture that suggests unalloyed humility on the part of the painter before a recognizable sight.

Peter Kobayashi's "Landscape No. 5," starting from the expected hills and vales dissolves them, in cinema parlance, into rivulets of greens and creams, not anymore a landscape and not as yet an abstraction.

With Lois Horne nature is still at the core of the work, in this case a nature perhaps more tactile than visual. "Ka Ua Kiawe i luna o ka La'au" is more than a quote from the Pukui-Elbert Hawaiian dictionary. It catches the odor of the thick foliage slicked over by the rain in a green all-over texture that could pass for an abstraction, had one never stood in a forest in the rain.

WHEN is an abstraction not an abstraction? Jerry Clark's "Untitled" is a splash of red, yellow and black that can best be described in the words of Ruskin, who spoke of Whistler's "Nocturne in Black and Gold" as a pot of paint flung in the public's face.

Those were slighting words when said, a century ago. A century later the public, having experienced many more pots of paint flung at it, rather rejoices in the sport. What was meant as scathing turns

into a homage.

It is interesting to pair Jerry Clark's undiluted abstraction with one of the few objective pictures in the show, Louis Pohl's "Eruption." It is a factual report on this awesome sight: a surge of lava fountains at night. It proves nature to be an old lady of many moods, and how, eons of time before we contemporary artists came on the scene, she knew how to deal in abstract tableaux.

In New York in the '30s, there emerged a group of painters who were promptly dubbed "The Immaculates." They shunned what marks of inspiration that are easily faked, such as slashed brush strokes and impasto. Instead they polished the image patiently and lovingly. In the histories of art of the future,

Charles Sheeler will probably represent the group.

IN HAWAII today we may well boast of our own Immaculates. They too disdain to display the physical marks of their inspiration. They too aim at building up an image of ectoplasmic purity, without trace of what manual labor and sweat go into the making of a painting.

Tadashi Sato in "Surf and Water Reflections" deals in illusive trails of sun and sky on water as Monet had before him, though differently. Even the few pebbles huddled in the foreground lose density and weight as they are glossed over by films of shallow watery ripples.

John Wisnosky in "Kitten Ocean" parallels visually a glissando sound on a string instrument as he passes im-

perceptibly from gray sea to mauve sky, helping himself, at the bottom of the panoramic scene, to a neat bit of Italian perspective, clean cut as any by Paolo Uccello.

In both works the pulchritude is obvious, but strength underlies it. Both men are now pitting their art on a monumental scale against an architecture. Sato's floor decoration for the State Capitol is in process of installation. Wisnosky's mural for the Osaka Fair, Expo '70, is on its way to Japan.

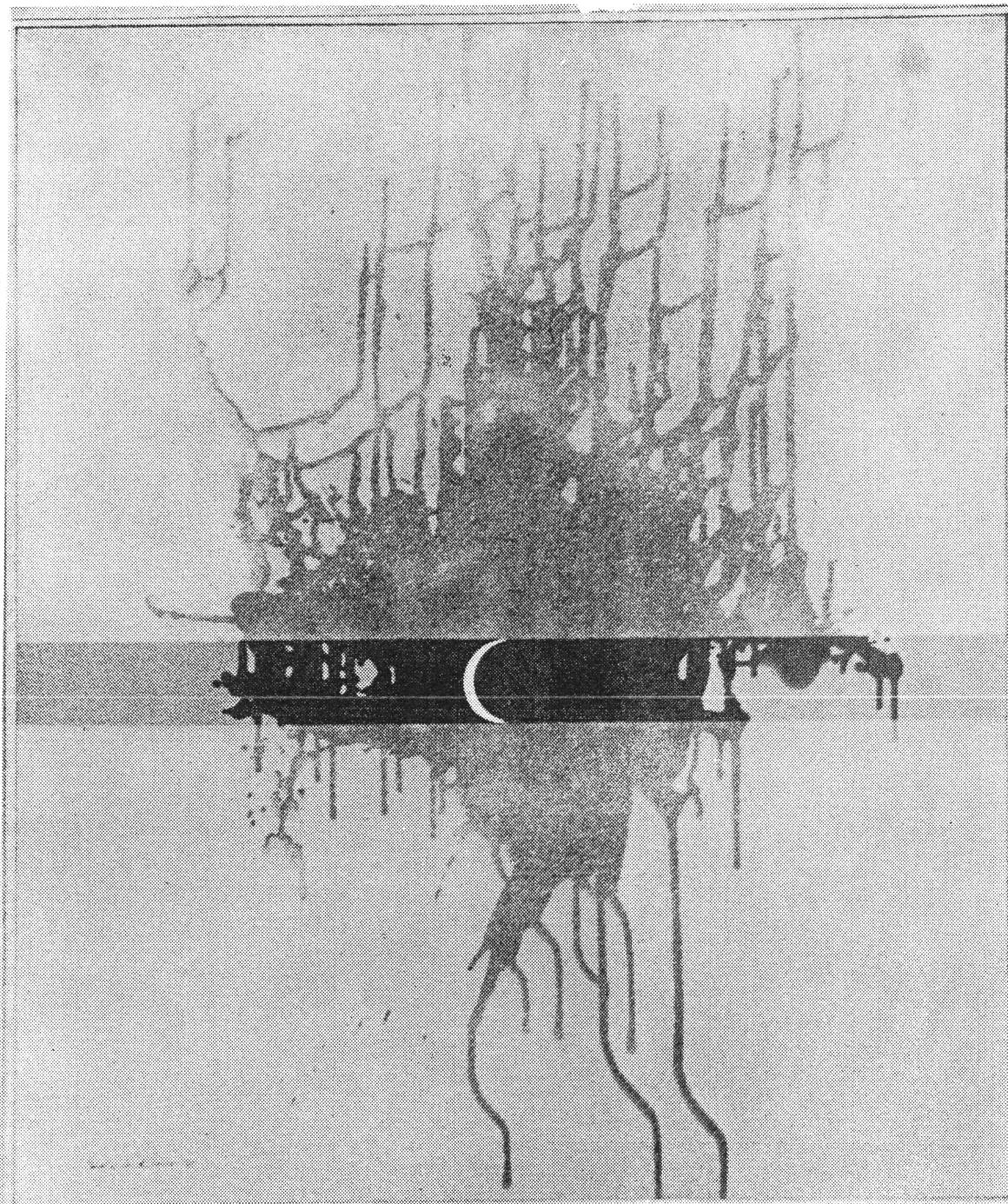
THIS SHOW was juried by a single juror, Theodore Haupt. His credentials are his own work, exhibited in a recent one-man show at that unusual gallery, The Foundry.

At the Contemporary Arts Center Haupt is represented by "Flight." It is a piece of

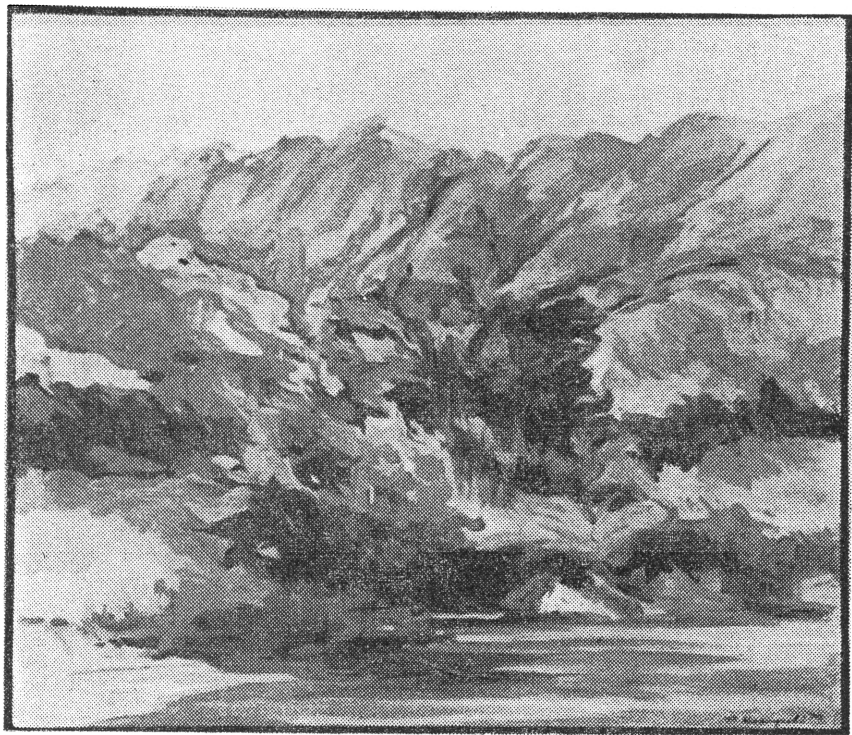
Op art of stature. Its clean technique proposes in believable 3D an unbelievable image, perhaps rotor blades in motion under cover of a floating cloak, zebra striped, a black-and-white apparition whirling in brick-red space.

This private visual world of Haupt proved crucial in his selection of works by other painters. Juror though he was, Haupt remains pre-eminently an artist. He looked in simple faith in the works of others for qualities akin to his own. This faith in self resulted in a show that comes close to being an unconscious self-portrait.

Praiseworthy for its sincerity, Haupt's dogmatism led him to bypass able works if they did not adjust to his personal requirements. Good as the show proves to be, it does hardly reflect its catholic title, "Hawaii Painters and Sculptors League."



THE POTENTIALITIES — "Today's landscape deals with whole planets and the ellipses of their orbits," as in Sueko Kimura's "Eclipse." — Photos by Warren Roll.



"LANDSCAPE NO. 5" — Peter Kobayashi's work—not a landscape and not an abstraction.