NEW HORIZONS in AMERICAN ART

An exhibition of representative fine art from The Federal Art Project of the Works Progress Administration. Presented daily 1 to 5 p.m. Wednesdays and Sundays until 8 p.m.

CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT and THE ART INSTITUTE

ADMISSION FREE

JAN 10 to FEB 1 1937
The Federal Art Project, which is represented in this exhibition, was set up in August, 1935, by Harry L. Hopkins, Administrator of the Works Progress Administration. This project has been functioning for a little more than a year. It took over a number of small state projects operating under the Federal Emergency Relief Administration and unified them under a national program.

When the present Federal Art Project was organized, the number of artists on relief was approximately four thousand, and it was clear that something like fifteen hundred or two thousand others, not yet on relief, were living on a margin of subsistence. Today, approximately fifty-three hundred artists are working on the Federal Art Project, which is directed by a small staff in Washington. Artists, museum directors, and art teachers in public schools, colleges, and universities have been chosen to act as advisers in the field and as state or regional directors.

The organization of the Project has proceeded on the principle that it is not the solitary genius but a sound general movement which maintains art as a vital, functioning part of any cultural scheme. In a genuine art movement a great reservoir of art is created in many forms, both major and minor.

In organizing the Federal Art program the many forces which tend to build up a sound art movement have been considered. An effort has been made to view American art in perspective, both as to the past and as to the future. While the fate of the workers in the fine arts has seemed of paramount importance, it is clear that under the most favorable conditions these artists cannot prosper alone, nor can they by their solitary efforts create a fully developed art movement in America. The importance of the integration between the fine arts and the practical arts has been recognized from the first by the Federal Art Project, as an objective desirable in itself and as a means of drawing together major esthetic forces in this country.

The problem of the young artist of distinguished but still emergent gifts has been of major concern. (In the present exhibition, 35 of the 48 artists included are between 22 and 35 years of age.) If American art is to continue, the talents of the younger generation of artists must not only be encouraged but must be given an opportunity to develop. Under the Project arrangements have been made by which the experienced professional artist has directed the work of groups of young workers in the fine arts. Something like the master-pupil relationship of the Renaissance has developed.

For the young artist another relationship has seemed of importance. Because of the development of local or regional creative or teaching projects, the young artist has tended for perhaps the first time within the modern period to attack the problems of art at home, in his own setting, among familiar surroundings, in the midst of a social life which he is likely to know well. This situation—part of it enforced by the depression—has meant at least a beginning toward a naturalization of art in all our communities, an
"New Horizons in American Art," an original exhibition of all types of work done under the Federal Art Project of the Works Progress Administration, was arranged and shown by the Museum of Modern Art in New York during September and October 1936. It was intended to serve as a visual report to the public; a documented survey of one year's activities. The material was assembled from every section of the United States, but was selected for its artistic value alone, no attempt being made to consider it from a regional aspect. From the Mural and Easel Painting sections of this significant exhibition, 60 representative items have been chosen for presentation at the Garfield Park Art Galleries.

outcome which must be achieved if our art is to be anything more than an effervescence along the Atlantic seaboard.

An attempt to bridge the gap between the American artist and the American public has governed the entire program of the Federal Art Project. Experience under the Project, as this has developed throughout the country, has shown a sincere response to art, a genuine demand for it, and a widespread popular interest. The problem has been to meet this popular concern by the best use of the available talent.

A full and free expression on the part of creative artists may have come about in a measure at this time because of a release from the gruelling pressure which most of them suffered during the early part of the depression. It seems to have its origin also in a special set of circumstances determined by the Project. The new and outstanding situation is that these artists have been working with a growing sense of public demand for what they produce. For the first time in American art history a direct and sound relationship has been established between the American public and the artist. Community organizations of all kinds have asked for his work. The artist has become aware of every type of community demand for art, and has had the prospect of increasingly larger audiences, of greatly extended public interest. There has been at least the promise of a broader and sounder base for American art with the suggestion that the age-old cleavage between artist and public is not dictated by the very nature of our society. New horizons have come into view.

American artists have discovered that they have work to do in the world. Awareness of society's need and desire for what they can produce has given them a new sense of continuity and assurance. This awareness has served to enhance the already apparent trend toward social content in art. In some instances the search for social content has taken the form of an illustrative approach to certain aspects of the contemporary American scene—a swing back to the point of view of the genre painters of the nineteenth century. Evidences of social satire have also appeared. In many phases of American expression this has been no more than a reaction against the genteel tradition or a confession of helplessness. The dominant trend today, as illustrated by the Project work, is more positive. This is a development toward greater vigor, unity, and clarity of statement, a search for an adequate symbolism in the expression of contemporary American experience, less dependence on
the easily obvious in subject matter, and a definite relation to local and regional environments.

It is significant of contemporary trends in American art that so many of
the artists working on the Project have submitted themselves to the disci-
pline of a severe medium (mural painting). Mural painting is not a studio
art; by its very nature it is social. In its great periods it has always been
associated with the expression of social meanings, the experience, history,
ideas, and beliefs of a community. There is no question that the work here
presented clearly indicates an orientation in this direction.

It is significant that a large proportion of the murals produced under the
Federal Art Project during its first year are by young artists. These artists
came to maturity at a time when mural painting, because of government
support, was no longer a dream. The country was asking for murals. The
many problems involved, problems of large space, architectural limitations,
technical complexities, the handling of subject matter, were a challenge
which the artists accepted. A variety of styles has developed, but the murals
have in common a feeling for monumental construction, for design control,
for rhythmic balance and inter-relation of parts.

During the first year of the Project 434 murals have been completed, 55
are in progress, and sketches are being prepared for a great many others.
These murals are requested by public institutions which defray material costs.
It is a most encouraging sign that, in addition to the murals already men-
tioned, there are hundreds of requests for others. In every section of the
country there are waiting lists for Federal Art Project murals. It is not too
much to say that this work, as it develops, gives promise of a truly monu-
mental art which will express with honesty, clarity, and power the expe-
rience and ideas of American communities.

Evidence of a recovery of social context is clear in the work of the easel
painters, but it is natural that this should be less striking than it is in the
work of the muralists. Emphasis upon technique for its own sake may not
have entirely vanished from the work produced on the Project, but a strong
tendency away from it has become apparent. The modest but essential vir-
tues of honesty and freshness have developed. With the decline of dependence
on outside influences, precious and self-consciousness have tended to dis-
appear.

An outstanding characteristic of the easel painting under the Project has
been the initiative in meeting new problems, coupled with an admirable
command of the several media used. These artists have been making their
own free and confident assertions. Figure paintings and still life have inter-
ested them very little. Few studio subjects have appeared. This new work
is often close to the quick, spontaneous life which is at the artist's door
which at least, he now perceives to be at his door. "Imaginative realism"
may be used to describe the trend, a realism which means a genuine recovery
of emotion.

It is fortunate that, under government auspices, an opportunity for the
development of significant new tendencies has been provided during these
crucial times. The outcome is full of promise for the future. Certainly there
is no dearth of genuine talent in this country—talent of a rich order. Under
the most difficult circumstances American artists have shown themselves
ready to attack new problems and to make fresh adaptations. They are
growing in stature and power. They have the technique, the discipline, and
the impulse to carry American art to new heights. The question for the
future is whether they may continue to maintain that sound relationship with
a wide public which has been shown to be essential for a living art.
CATALOG OF THE EXHIBITION

MURAL PROJECT

CHARLES ALSTON
1 Mystery and Magic Contrasted with Modern Science and Medicine: two panels in entrance lobby of Women’s Wing, Harlem Hospital, New York. Oil on canvas, 250 square feet.
Full-sized detail, oil on board

LUCIENNE BLOCH
Photograph of finished panel

EDGAR BRITTON
3 Classroom Studies and Their Application: six panels in entrance hall of Bloom Township High School, Chicago Heights. Fresco.
Detail, egg tempera on board
4 Photographs of completed panel.

ALFRED CRIMI
5 Preventive Medicine and Surgery: panel in Medical Board Conference Room, Harlem Hospital, New York. Fresco, 250 square feet.
Cartoon

WYATT DAVIS
6 Mechanical Aspects of Airplane Construction: photo-mural in Administration Building, Newark Airport, New Jersey. Photo-montage, 204 square feet.
Photograph of Study

PHILIP EVERGOOD
7 The Story of Richmond Hill: three panels on one wall of reference room, Richmond Hill Branch Library, Richmond Hill, Long Island. Oil on canvas, 180 square feet.
Color Study

RALF HENRICKSEN
8 Model Showing Interior with Mural.

RALF HENRICKSEN
9 The Elements: four panels in Gordon School, Lake Forest, Illinois. Oil on canvas.
Watercolor study for two panels: Earth and Water
KARL KELPE
10 Pioneer Days: two panels in Hawthorne School, Oak Park, Illinois. Oil on canvas.
Watercolor study: Early Settlers
11 Watercolor study: Early Farmers.

DMITRI KESSEL
12 Symbols of Aviation: photo-mural for first floor of Administration Building, Newark Airport, New Jersey.
Photograph of study

HESTER MILLER MURRAY
13 Three panels in Irving School, Oak Park, Illinois. Oil on canvas.
Tempera study for one panel: World of Children
14 Watercolor study for one panel: Animals.

JAMES MICHAEL NEWELL
15 Evolution of Western Civilization: five panels in main reading room of library, Evander Childs High School, Bronx. Fresco, 1400 square feet.
Photographs of two completed panels
16 Model showing interior with murals.

ANATOL SHULKIN
17 Historical and Social Function of the Court: four panels for main entrance lobby of courthouse, Morristown, New Jersey. Fresco or oil on canvas.
Color study, tempera
18 Pencil studies.

MITCHELL SIPORIN
19 Prairie Poets: proposed fresco.
Study, egg tempera
20 Children of American Literature: proposed fresco.
Study: egg tempera

JOHN WALLEY
21 Indian Drama: stage curtain for auditorium of Lane Technical High School, Chicago.
Color study, gouache and charcoal

EASEL PROJECT: OIL PAINTINGS

AARON BOHROD
1 Landscape in Winter, oil on composition board.

ALLAN ROHAN CRITÉ
2 School's Out, oil on canvas.
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<th>Artist</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Medium</th>
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<td>STUART DAVIS</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>Waterfront, oil on canvas</td>
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<td>JOSEPH DE MARTINI</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>Moonlight, oil on canvas</td>
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<td>EMMET EDWARDS</td>
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<td>KARL FORTRESS</td>
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<td>LOUIS GUGLIELMI</td>
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<td>Wedding in South Street, oil on canvas</td>
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<td>Hague Street, oil on canvas</td>
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<td>JACK LEVINE</td>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>Card Game, oil on composition board.</td>
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<td>Conference, oil on canvas</td>
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<td>AUSTIN MECKLEM</td>
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<td>Skiers, oil on canvas</td>
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<td>ROLAND MOUSSEAU</td>
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<td>Sun Sets Early Now, oil on canvas</td>
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<td>HESTER MILLER MURRAY</td>
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<td>Buffalo at Night, egg tempera</td>
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<td>GREGORIO PRESTOPINO</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>Green Mountain Village, oil on canvas</td>
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<td>WILLIAM SCHWARTZ</td>
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<td>Village Square, oil on canvas</td>
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<td>CLAIRE SILBER</td>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>Napoleon Docks, oil on canvas</td>
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<td>MANUEL TOLEGIAN</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>Pennsylvania Landscape, tempera with oil glaze on gesso board.</td>
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<td>BUMPEI USUI</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>Coal Barges, oil on canvas</td>
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<tr>
<td>FREDE VIDAR</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>Pool, oil on canvas</td>
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<tr>
<td>EDGAR YAEGGER</td>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>Still Life, oil on canvas</td>
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EASEL PROJECT: WATERCOLORS, GOUACHES, PASTELS

RAINEY BENNETT Illinois
1 Garden Entrance, watercolor.
2 Storm Threat, watercolor.

CAMERON BOOTH Minnesota
3 Street in Stillwater, gouache.

RAYMOND BREININ Illinois
4 Lonesome Farm, gouache.

SAMUEL J. BROWN Pennsylvania
5 Mrs. Simmons, watercolor.
6 The Writing Lesson, watercolor.

JOSEPH DE MERS California
7 Post No Bills, watercolor.

ORONZO GASPARO New York
8 Promenade, gouache.

ISOLDE THERESE GILBERT Massachusetts
9 Millbridge Road, watercolor.

ALBERT GOLD Rhode Island
10 Head, oil on paper.

EDWARD LEWANDOWSKI Wisconsin
11 Lobster Markers, watercolor.

ANN MICHALOV Illinois
12 Approaching Storm, watercolor.

LESTER SCHWARTZ Illinois
13 Circus Day, gouache.

WILLIAM EARL SINGER Illinois
14 Little Immigrant, watercolor.

WILLIAM SOMMER Ohio
15 Ordering Lunch, watercolor.

JOHN STENVALL Illinois
16 Ohio River Flood, watercolor.

RUFINO TAMAYO New York
17 Waiting Woman, watercolor.

JOSEPH VAVAK Illinois
18 The Dispossessed: Contemporary History, watercolor.

KARL ZERBE Massachusetts
19 Houses on the River, gouache.
Sculptures and Paintings done for Federal Buildings.

Outstanding work from the Treasury Department's newly established Art Program.

On Exhibition Through April 15

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