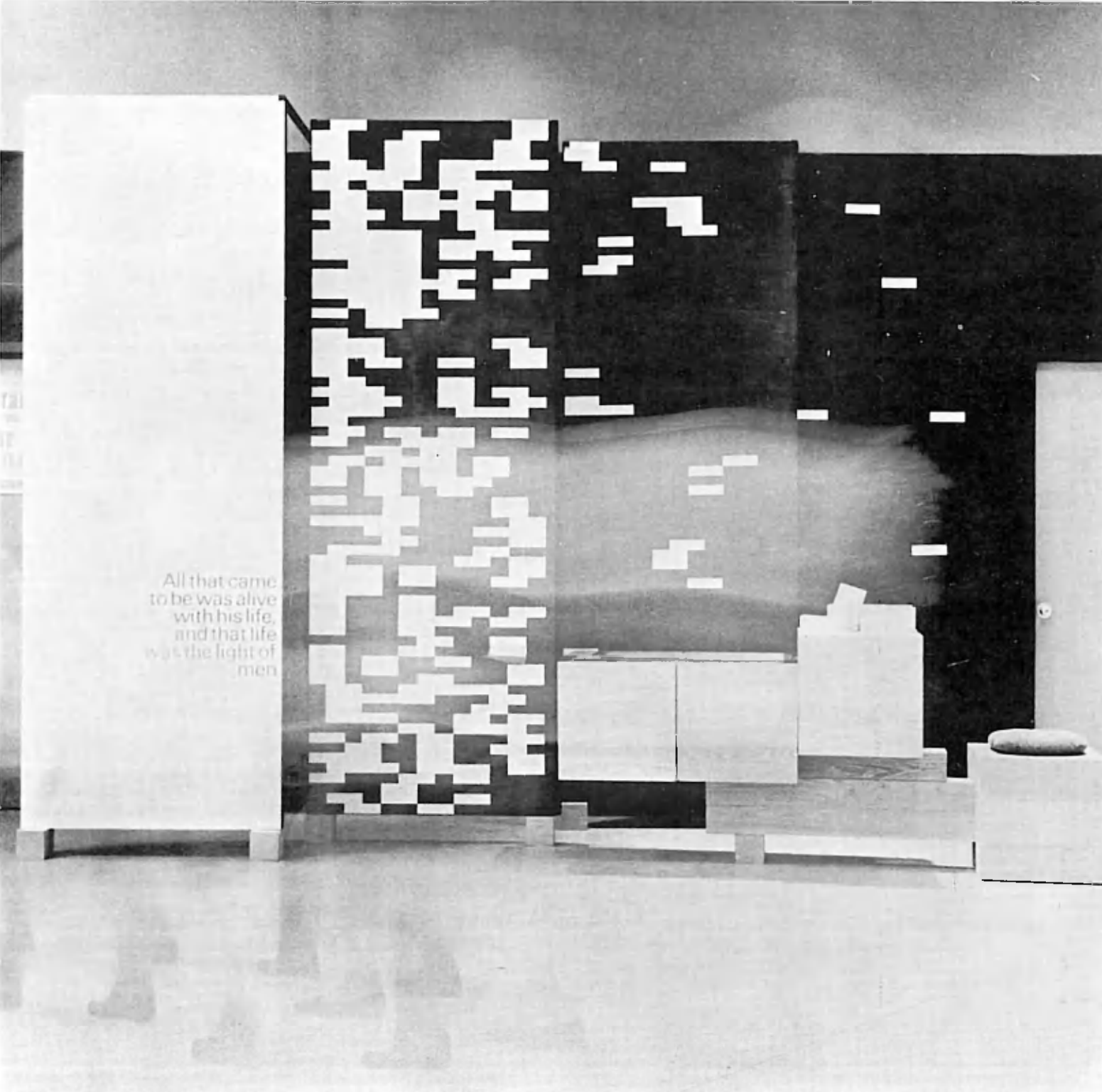


MENNONITE LIFE

JANUARY 1965



All that came
to be was alive
with his life,
and that life
was the light of
men

An Illustrated Quarterly Published by Bethel College, North Newton Kansas

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MENNONITE LIFE

January, 1965

Volume XX

Number 1

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COVER

Mennonite Display at New York World's Fair, by Kenneth Hiebert. The fourth panel at right includes symbols of problem situations in today's world which are penetrated by the darting white elements. Literature display and storage cabinets and seat form a unit governed by a rhythmic relation established in the panels.

Printing and lay-out by Mennonite Press
North Newton, Kansas

MENNONITE LIFE is an illustrated quarterly magazine published in January, April, July, and October by Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas. Second-class postage paid at North Newton, Kansas.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: One year, \$3.00; Three years, \$7.50; Five years, \$12.50. Single issues, 75 cents.

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IN THIS ISSUE

Mennonite Life has devoted many an issue to a specialized field. The fine arts have been treated as often as any other phase of life as can be seen from the article entitled "The Fine Arts in *Mennonite Life*." Few subjects have been treated with such intensity and devotion and so extensively as the fine arts have in this issue. The latter is evidenced by the fact that, although the October issue contained some articles on art "as a prelude to the art issue," the editors were now compelled to leave some outstanding articles, poems and works of art for a future issue. ¶ This issue tries to come to grips with art in general as it finds expression in literature, poetry, drama, painting, sculpture, drawing and music while architecture is included in the general treatment. An article and accompanying illustrations had to be postponed. ¶ The questions are posed as to what constitutes genuine art? Is there "religious" art? What is "traditional" art? What is "modern" art? What is the artist's responsibility toward Christianity or more specifically, toward the church? Answers to these and many other questions are found in articles dealing with the "significance of art" in general or when pointing out that art is "an act of faith without promise of reward." Many searching questions are raised about art in our day and particularly about art in a "post-Christian era" in which we may not be justified in looking for Christian views and ideas in all works of art. But many of the modern artists may function as prophets of doom and may be in a better position to arouse the average lukewarm Christian than is the gentle breeze pervading most of the piety of our day. ¶ It seems fitting to present in this issue some drawings and etchings of the greatest painter of biblical subjects of all times. The unconventional realism expressed by Rembrandt, who was doomed to poverty in his day, makes him appear to be more "modern" than most of his contemporaries. His Bible "commentary" in art and expressed in words by H.-M. Rotermund, will prove helpful and challenging to a generation that has grown tired of cliché art misusing biblical subject matter. ¶ This issue of *Mennonite Life* produced by the cooperative endeavor of the editors, staff editors and co-workers of the magazine may not be the easiest to read and to enjoy. We like to repeat at this time the inscription at the exit of a modern art display: "If you did not understand and appreciate all you saw (and read) come again. Many enjoyed it more the second and third time." You are also invited to the Art and Folk Festival which will take place on the Bethel College campus on April 2 and 3 at which occasion the questions posed in this issue will be discussed and works of art will be on display.



Jan Gleysteen

THE ARTS — A NEW FRONTIER IN THE CHURCH?

By David H. Sudcrman

THE FAITH OF OUR early forefathers was formed in a time of great tension and much persecution. Life was lived with a strong faith in God but in great uncertainty what the next day would bring.

Naturally, a full appreciation of cultural values was not always an integral part of their lives. When life is threatened, when life is in a state of crisis, the arts seldom have their rightful place. In times of crises, the urgencies of life do not always allow time nor inclination for reflection, contemplation and creative imagination. This must wait until the extremes of life subside in favor of what is termed more normal living. Thus the arts did not always find their way into the religious life of our forefathers except possibly in a peripheral way.

Should the Christian, however, relate himself to artistic expression? Should the Christian church or the Mennonite church relate itself to, or even embrace, more fully the arts toward Kingdom ends?

When reduced to its simplest level, the essence of the gospel of good news could be told with little overt use of the arts. Something of the love of God could possibly be communicated without music, poetry, drama, sculpture, painting or architecture; that is, the Gospel if it could be reduced to its simplest form does not presuppose much appreciation of the arts. Though some might question this assumption, let us accept it as a point of beginning.

But life does not actually move on such a simple plane. The creator planted something into the very nature of man which soon cries out for fulfillment. Man wants to respond to God, not only in the simplest manner, but in keeping with his God-given nature and inclinations. He desires to express his prayers or praises through song, poetry, drama or painting. His deep longings, hopes, aspirations and disappointments call for an artistic expression. And often these are more articulate-

ly expressed through the arts. This is part of man's nature. To deny this to man is to deny something of his human birthright. Man cannot escape his artistic inclinations. And the Christian, likewise, cannot escape them. Nor can the churches—even the Mennonite churches.

The arts are of the essence of life. Art makes visible those things which we sometimes prefer to keep silent; art makes illuminating comment on human life; art crusades against the dehumanization of man. For the Christian, art continues to have the same function. Art can reflect the evil of man's heart. But art can also reflect something of man's hope at its best. Unfortunately, not all artists realize the latter, and hence do not act responsibly toward it. The artist must dwell on the depravity of man to portray the human predicament. But the artist who claims the Christian faith can also portray something of redemption—the glorious hope of man whose life has been transformed through faith in Christ. This may be one difference between the artist who claims the Christian faith and one who does not.

As Mennonites we have not acted completely responsibly toward the meaning and role of the arts in our personal lives, nor in our corporate body—the church. Whether this is due to the belief that art brings with it something inherently evil; whether it is ignorance regarding the nature of art and its place in life, or whether circumstances have mitigated against a response to art, is not clear. It may be all three of these. Because of man's nature, art will need to play an important role in the life of the individual and in the community, including the church. Art aids self-realization and fulfillment toward the creator.

Protestant theologians, including Mennonites, have not always seriously viewed the arts in a theological context. Whether this is by default, or deliberate, is not

clear. It seems what is needed today is what Nathan Scott calls first principles of a theology of the imagination. For he says:

"(The) exciting and difficult challenge that is presented to us by the human scene in our time is that of searching the cultural experience of the modern period and the rich resources of the Christian faith for the first principles of a Theology of the imagination that will be relevant to the spiritual crisis of the present time. And this . . . will require us to enter into a new and hitherto largely untried collaboration with the whole community of the modern arts."¹

Scott continues to point out that we live in a time when the individual is caught up in a standardized mass society in which he can no longer respond as an

individual. The deep, inner sensitivities are dulled. Nothing seems to get through. Life has become shallow; even hollow as T. S. Eliot puts it. Man today is victim of being a *Massenmensch*. It is the artist, Scott argues, that can help to release the imagination and thereby enable man to see himself as he is, and as he might be, and to make it possible for him to respond—even to God in Christ. The theologian and the artist will need to form a new team and walk hand in hand in their attempt to guide modern man in his quest for meaningful living, even meaningful Christian living. This may well be a new frontier, not only in the Protestant church, but also in the Mennonite church.

¹Findley Eversole, Editor, *Christian Faith and the Contemporary Arts* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1957), p. 28.

BREAD AND WINE by Marvin Bartel. (Tempera Serigraph) 1964.



THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ART

By Gordon D. Kaufman

THE UNIQUENESS OF man, that which distinguishes him most sharply from animals, is his power to create and develop an artificial world in which he then lives, the world of culture. Unlike any other creature, man orders his life by complex institutions of law, custom and politics; he supplies his basic needs for food and shelter through complicated economic processes, which in turn produce for him many comforts and luxuries above and beyond his actual physical needs; he stores up his experience in great libraries of information and passes on what he has learned to succeeding generations through schools and universities. In his agriculture he has learned to make the earth produce what he wants; in his mining he has uncovered materials for building virtually any kind of structure he desires; and through his development of modern industry he has succeeded in becoming the conqueror not only of the land, sea and air which are his immediate environment, but now even the outer reaches of space are becoming subject to his continually growing power. The artificial world of civilization built by man has superceded the natural world as the environment which modern man knows as his home.

Though we Mennonites have been suspicious of the "world," we have not failed to participate in this construction of an artificial world of culture. In our work as farmers and housewives, as teachers and doctors, as engineers and more recently as scientists, we have helped to sustain civilization and contribute to its development in various directions. We have been inclined, however, to raise ethical and religious questions about participation especially in two dimensions of human cultural life: the political, because of its seemingly inevitable involvement with the sword; and the aesthetic, which has seemed to us, perhaps, frivolous. There is not time here to consider the historical reasons or justification for these attitudes; it is important that we see, however, that a rejection or suspicion of artistic activity rests on misunderstanding. For art is at the basis of all culture and civilization.

The Art of Communication

This is obviously true in the sense of the original meaning of the term "art" which is simply "skill," the ability gained through practice and knowledge to achieve

what one sets out to do, whether it is to build a house or grow a tree or put together a tasty stew. All of man's life, and indeed the whole of human history, can be viewed as the development of increasingly complex arts making possible the accomplishment of previously undreamed of objectives. But this means that art is really more than mere skillfulness: it is the very process through which human purposes are realized. That is, it is the way in which that which was originally within man as mere idea or desire or dream becomes externalized as an action performed or an object made; it is the means through which the private and subjective and inner becomes something in the objective and public world; it is the way in which we express (= "push out") our innermost being and thus communicate and commune with our fellows. Art is a human expression, and as such, the very means of communication; it is thus art that makes possible the binding of man to fellowman in community.

We can see this most clearly when we remember that language is fundamentally an art and is in fact the most fundamental of all men's arts. When he invented language, man devised a way to make mere noises (and various physical movements and gestures) serve his own artificial purposes. Instead of remaining mere vibrations of the air which might terrify or soothe depending on their natural quality or intensity, they came to "stand for" or signify realities quite different from themselves: a tree, a yellowness, a pain, jumping, food, joy, etc. The vast network of symbols by means of which we are enabled to think highly complex ideas, to remember the past and to imagine various possible futures, to work out plans and purposes—this whole symbolical world we take so much for granted that we may forget it is a human creation, the product of man's skill with noises and marks on paper; it is art. We can scarcely imagine what life would be without this means of thinking and expressing ourselves; it certainly would not be in any recognizable sense *human* life. In the creation and development of language is to be found the outstanding example of the way in which man has transformed aspects of the natural world in which he found himself so they could serve his purposes, thus becoming the artificial (= made by art) world of culture. In so doing, of course, he has transformed

himself into a cultural—and not merely a natural—being, that is, a being who can express himself, a being for whom that which is subjective and within can be made objective and public, a being who can communicate deliberately with his fellows.

Language is fundamentally art; and art is fundamentally language. That is, in all his arts man is expressing—making external and public—that which is within him, and thus through his arts he communicates with his fellows. Speech is a marvelous instrument for thought and communication, but it is, of course, limited. Why, after all, should we expect standardized noises to be perfectly adaptable to express and communicate anything and everything within us? Our world is full of colors and smells, actions and motions, purposes and resistance to our efforts, dreams and pains. To make external and public all that we experience and feel within, the widest variety of instrumentalities is required. If our spirits are genuinely to communicate with our fellows so that we can enter fully into community with them, all the arts man has been able to devise will be required. Each is capable of expressing some nuance or dimension of experience unknown to others.

The Art of Music

We Mennonites know this best, perhaps, in connection with the art of music. We have always enjoyed singing, and many of our congregations have fine choruses. But this has not been simply a matter of pleasure. Man cannot express his feeling of joy in, for example, the praise of God, in mere unmusical words; it is necessary to lift his voice in song. The many dimensions of sorrow and penitence, guilt and misery, can all be much more adequately shared with others in and through the mysterious power of music. The harmonies and dissonances of the chords, the changing rhythms of different beats, the melodic lines—each plays its indispensable part in enabling this art form to express and communicate something of the human spirit unknown and inaccessible to speech or writing. A poem or a prayer sung is not the same as simply spoken, for the very form of the expression transforms the content of what is expressed. A good musician is one with the ability and training and sensitivity to express with clarity and precision dimensions of our common experience which the rest of us would otherwise not notice or appreciate and certainly could not express. His art in this way clarifies and amplifies the meaning of our common life which would otherwise remain on prosaic and dull—and thus relatively empty and meaningless—levels.

What has been said of music applies equally to the other special arts. Thus in painting and sculpture, form and color and texture become the vehicles through which dimensions of man's inner experience not expressible in any other way become shared with his fellows. The great artist is always one who through the

use of his particular materials can enable the rest of us to sense dimensions of life and experience which would otherwise remain vague and hidden, without which our lives would be much the poorer. His work, therefore, is not some unnecessary ornamental luxury with which we could just as well dispense. In enabling us to see and feel what would otherwise remain hidden and invisible to us, he helps us realize more profoundly our own humanity and the nature of the world in which we live. Through him we come to discover the sorts of people we are, the problems of our cultures and our communities, the depths of meaning in our common life.

All Art Is Language

Once we realize that all art is language—and thus the very stuff of human communal and cultural existence, not some mere ornamental and unnecessary frosting for the cake—so-called modern art may become more comprehensible. For the contemporary artist is not trying to produce the "beautiful" in the sense of a kind of sweet or pleasing decoration of our lives. He is, rather, trying to reveal to us ourselves, to speak to us through his medium of dimensions of our common world which we might otherwise fail to notice or refuse to observe. Thus, if Tennessee Williams' plays portray powerfully the ugliness of dishonest and crude and destructive relations between persons, we should not criticize Williams for dwelling on the seamy side of life instead of giving us a picture of superficial happiness and peace; we should rather thank him for helping us to see more clearly and vividly the terrifying inhumanity and wickedness in our slick and "civilized" culture and in our own souls. If in Picasso's paintings appear twisted and contorted faces, human bodies broken to pieces, images of chaos, instead of disdaining what seems to us the disorder of his painting, we should ask whether he has not reflected and expressed in an especially vivid and profound way the destructive horror of the actual world in which we live, which tears men to shreds in atomic war and death camps and racial hatred.

If much modern painting and modern music has become so abstract that the colors seem to us to have no order or meaning and the dissonant sounds break upon our ears as sheer noise, we may ask ourselves whether life in modern industrial America has not become so sterile and abstract as to be virtually empty of meaning and whether, therefore, this does not in fact faithfully represent to us what we are and what we live for. Moreover, in all these cases, were we to look less superficially, we might well discover that the artist has uncovered beyond the chaos or abstraction which he depicts some hidden order and form and meaning which we had failed to see before and which we could never have seen without his prior vision. In every generation the art forms lay bare the meaning of the lives of those

in that generation. If we find ourselves preferring the music of Bach to that of Bartok, or the painting of Rembrandt to that of Roualt, this is perhaps an indication of our unwillingness to face the harsh realities of life in the twentieth century and a secret desire to live in some supposedly more tranquil and easier time. The contemporary artist, as one who is especially skilled in making the materials of experience—color, shape, sound, rhythm, speech, action—express openly and publicly what is within us can reveal to us our lives and our world, and thus our very selves. If we wish to know ourselves profoundly and not falsely, we had better listen carefully to what he is saying to us through his medium.

Religious Significance of Art

It is possible to tie together what I have been saying with an explicit word about the religious significance of art and about so-called religious art. I have been arguing that art is not a kind of separate and perhaps unnecessary realm of culture, but that it is the activity at the base of all culture and all community, the activity of expression and communication. Without it, therefore, our life would be less than human. Everyone engages in art each time he speaks or acts and thus externalizes that which would otherwise remain a mere vague and formless inner feeling. The "artist" (in the narrower and more ordinary sense of the word) is one who is able to create words or other forms which express and communicate with more precision or more sensitivity dimensions of our common subjectivity which we would otherwise fail to apprehend and appreciate. Far from being a dispensable luxury, he is the servant of us all at the deepest level of our needs as selves and communities. In this sense of dealing with the most profound levels of life and experience, all art has an important religious function. For it is through works of art that we discover what is the really "ultimate concern" (Tillich) of a culture or a generation, what are the gods or idols really worshipped there. It is through their art that men betray their real faith, whether it is in God or some other. In this sense the most "secular" painting or "profane" play is of religious significance.

Art that takes as its symbolic vehicle a "religious" subject, such as Christ, or the creation of man, or the last judgment, may of course have a further religious significance, either positive or negative. For here the artist is attempting to use the symbols of forms, believed by the community to express its deepest faith, to throw light and understanding on certain dimensions of the life of that society. If words about sin and salvation, or images of a cross or of God's fatherly love, authentically express the deep strata of the existence of that community, then a piece of authentically religious art may be produced; and the work of art will become a further vehicle of genuine faith in God, itself enhancing and deepening the faith of those who see or hear it.

For many Bach's music, or in our day, Roualt's painting, has this quality and power. On the other hand if these religious symbols are used in a spuriously religious or merely sentimental way—as in such contemporary paintings as Sallman's "Head of Christ" and such tepid and phony "religious" novels or movies as "The Big Fisherman," with their saccharin sweetness and artificiality—the very symbols are degraded and their religious power is only further weakened and destroyed. For the faith that they express and inspire is merely sentimental feeling, not the substantial stuff on which real life in this hard world can be built; such art is mere decoration, not the very substance of life. "Secular" or "profane" art that honestly expresses the actual existence in which we find ourselves is more authentically religious than this dishonest and superficial art which misuses "religious" subject-matter and symbols.

Art is of great importance to the church. Not because the church needs fancy ornaments or nice doo-dads here and there but because the church is our community of faith, and if we are to live as men of faith in that community, we must learn to discern and to express and to communicate both the many dimensions of our lives and this faith. It is art in its several forms that makes such discernment and such communal life possible. But art—the expression of life—can also be false and misleading and deceiving, and can thus be destructive of our common life and faith. It is important, therefore, that we learn to cultivate and appreciate truly good art in its various forms, and that we encourage those artists and potential artists in our churches to develop and educate their special gifts. For theirs are the eyes which will finally enable us to see with genuine insight who we are and in what our life really consists; theirs are the creative spirits which can give us the words and other symbols with which to express and communicate our life and faith. Without their work Christian faith as understood within the Mennonite church cannot grow or even survive as a living faith in the modern world.

THE READER SAYS

Dear Editor,

I am most delighted and appreciative of your October, 1964, issue of *Mennonite Life*. This issue is a gem. Thanks for your excellent work. It is spectacular for the following reasons: It has a wide range and good variety of materials. It has current information as well as historical information of value. The articles by Theodore O. Wedel, Arnold Nickel, and Russell Mast are of top quality and demand a wider range of circulation among our people. The poetry in this issue is unique and excellent in every respect. The article "The Mennonite Artist and the Church" is thought provoking as well as informative. The historical articles by Wiebe, Hohmann, Koolman, and Dirrim are very good. They give insight and are thus valuable to the average reader.

Very sincerely yours,
Jonas Christner

CONTROVERSY AND THE RELIGIOUS ARTS

By Warren Kliever

THE JEWISH AND Christian traditions have at many times in history been suspicious of the creative artist, not only because they have worried a little about what he does with his leisure time but also the products of his working hours have been annoying, bewildering, or presumably blasphemous. Frequently, the solution to this problem has been to choose the work of a docile, second-rate artist, a shallow hymn-writer, a derivative architect. And the result, naturally, has been bad theology. For second-rate art does not serve the faith; it destroys the sensibility. Another solution has been that of George Fox—to ban all of the arts and all artists from the Society of Friends. This is extreme, but it is consistent.

But not even the Quakers have been able to stay aloof from the contemporary churches' rediscovery of the religious arts, and the church must again deal with the problem of the artist. The result has frequently been controversy. (How many stories I have heard about art exhibits in the fellowship hall which offended someone who then whispered to the pastor that that "arty" assistant pastor shouldn't be rehired, or about the plans for a church building delayed for eighteen months because a large minority in the congregation thought the design was too modern!)

Art Must be Controversial

These artistic controversies in the church are a little like tornadoes: exhilarating in the movies but awesome in real life. Someone who has experienced the real thing is tempted to run for cover. And the power of controversies and tornadoes, the irrational power of forces rushing in from all sides toward a central point, is far too dangerous to be dismissed casually. One wishes that nature were more pacifistic and had thought of a gentler way of re-establishing equilibrium.

And yet in spite of the danger, it is absolutely necessary for the artist to be controversial: when an art form or a particular work of art no longer creates controversy, it has in one sense of the word died. Of course, to say that a particular form or a particular work has "died" is not to pass judgment on it: it may mean only that the work has been accepted by its audience and has entered the canon of acceptable works. There are few battles about modern dance now,

not because further developments are no longer possible, but because we have come to think of modern dance as an art form separate from ballet and significant in its own right. Modern dance, then, is dead—not in the sense that dancers no longer dance in that form but in the sense that Martha Graham is no longer making her most startling discoveries. Similarly, John Millington Synge's *The Play Boy of the Western World*, a play which caused riots at the first production in Dublin, is a dead play. It can still be performed; it is still entertaining and moving; we may still have varying opinions of it. But it is not alive now in the same way it was when it was first created, when it first held up a new form and a new content which could not have been predicted by the preconceptions of its audience.

For art seems historically to run in cycles beginning in the artist's revolt countered by the audience's reaction and ending in the audience's finally accepting the work as an historical fact. Even a cursory glance at the history of the arts would add dozens of examples similar to the acceptance of Martha Graham and J. M. Synge: the early plays of Shakespeare, the music of Beethoven, the operas of Wagner, the landscapes of Cezanne. The recent controversies over the Theater of the Absurd and the music of John Cage are not unprecedented; even they will probably take their place in the museum.

However, to say that new art provokes controversy will not, of course, prove that new art must be controversial. And it would clearly be bad advice to tell a young artist that he must set out to shock his audiences, though one could realistically warn him that honest art will always raise some eyebrows. One does not and should not aim for controversy, for it is only an unfortunate but inevitable side-effect of two artistic relationships: the relationship between an artist and his audience and the relationship between the form and the content of the work of art. I should like to examine these relationships and thus attempt to discover why controversy seems to be inevitable.

The Artist and His Audience

First, however, I should like to complicate the problem by adding another dimension, for a problem can sometimes be clarified only by avoiding oversimplifica-

tion. If we can reasonably draw a distinction between secular and religious art—and I think we can if we keep in mind that the religiousness inheres not in the work itself but in the reality to which it alludes—then the problems of artistic controversy are clearly more complicated and more severe for the artist who has a concern to explore religious insights in artistic form. The religious artist deals not only with relative values or artistic perception but also with the concerns, doctrines, and values of the religious community of which he is a part.

To the extent that the religious artist considers his religious insight more serious than his, shall we say, humanistic insight, to that extent he must take his controversies more seriously. (Again, I am not saying that he must avoid controversy—for a Protestant that would be a contradiction in terms. I am simply saying that the subject matter of the religious arts must not be handled irresponsibly.) The religious artist must be very sure that he understands the meaning of controversy and, indeed, the opportunity inherent in it.

In considering the relationship between an artist and his audience, I shall begin with a generalization about the artist's audience, and I don't really intend to be as unflattering as I may sound. I think it is only realistic to say that audiences are always a little slow, that they are always lagging behind the artist. How could they be otherwise? If they were not lagging, they would be artists, not viewers. One cannot possibly be expected to understand the hundreds of artistic choices that lie behind, for example, the novelist's choice of a protagonist—one cannot understand, that is, unless one participates at first hand, as the novelist does, or vicariously, as a thorough scholar does. To participate in the finished work of art is not by any means the same process as participating in the making of a work of art.

I draw this distinction in order to elucidate the fact that an individual artist—and by extension, an artistic movement—develops by means of finding solutions to one technical problem after another. And the audience, which by definition is not involved in the technical problems, is not likely to see in what way the artist's discovery of new technical solution has made a new form or a new content possible and necessary. A few years ago I saw an exciting retrospective exhibit of the paintings of Jean Dubuffet at the Los Angeles County Museum, and the exhibit made very clear something which must be difficult or obscure to those who see only one or two of his paintings. In seeing the paintings arranged in chronological order, one can see Dubuffet's developing facility with paint, then his growing dissatisfaction with paint, then his choice of materials other than paint to work with, and finally his submission to the demands of the new materials.

One of the recent collages, *The Gardener* (1959), doesn't look like any gardener I have ever seen, but of course it would be ridiculous to say that the distortion

proves anything about Dubuffet's vision or his ability to draw or his view of human nature. For, *The Gardener* is a picture constructed not of paint, which is flexible, but of leaves, which are inflexible. The outlines of the picture follow the organic forms of the leaves. The material chosen by the artist has determined the form of the work of art: the fundamental artistic choice of the material caused the form which caused the content—in this case the relationship between a gardener and the material he works with.

Form and Content

Artists almost always work from material to form to content—from language to sonnet to the ideas inherent in the poem, from dance technique to *pas de deux* to the idea implied in the dance. And the audience will always reverse the process and begin with the finished work unless some member of the audience chooses to lose his amateur standing. And therefore, the audience as audience necessarily cannot keep up with the artist. For that matter, why should it want to? It is the artist's job to take care of the technicalities of art.

If then, we are aware of the way in which an artist reasons from material to form to content, we can understand part of why new works of art easily offend audiences. For every new choice of material will ultimately bring about a new content, and we cannot be sure that this new content will fit easily into the thinking of the audience. If an architect chooses a new material such as pre-stressed concrete to use in constructing an office building, he can eliminate thick wall structures. But will the buyer and renters feel uneasy in a building that looks flimsy and has no columns or decoration on the facade?

Now, this is an example which will not offend anyone's doctrines. But as I suggested above, controversies over the religious arts are more serious since the artist deals with the values of his religious community, and of course this community cannot justifiably tolerate anything which looks like a threat to its most important reasons for being. Therefore, the new surge of religious artistic activity which we have seen in the last half-century has frequently brought about reactions and condemnations far more violent than would have been the case if the artist had not ventured from a purely secular art. Naturally, I shall not attempt to establish permanent harmony; my far less ambitious intention is simply to search for a framework in which the controversies can be conducted rationally.

This framework, I would suggest, lies in the area of symbolism: usually artists and their religious communities do not understand or deal with their symbols in the same manner. Yet both consider symbols to be extremely important. Artistic work is always based on the symbols appropriate to the particular art, on language or symbolic gestures or iconography. Similarly,

the religious community thinks in terms of and worships by means of symbols, the crucifix or the Star of David or an altar or a symbolic concept like the Blood of the Lamb. It is necessary, therefore, to make explicit our attitudes toward these symbols if we are to mediate between a religious artist and his community.

The Meaning of Symbols

To at least a part of the religious community the symbols of the church or temple are traditional and sacred, and therefore not subject to change. That is, since the content of the symbol is traditional, we are not entitled to tamper with its form. An analogy is the traditional Roman Catholic argument for conducting the mass in Latin. Since living languages necessarily change and since Latin is a dead language and does not change, using Latin will preserve intact the truth of Christian doctrine. If one grants the assumption that Christian truth does not change and at the same time grants the accuracy of the Latin statement of it, the argument is above reproach.

Underlying the argument is a very important and, I think, true assumption about the relationship between the form and the content of a symbol. This assumption is that the form of a symbol is part of its truth, and that one cannot change the form without thereby changing the content. Let me illustrate. Not too many years ago it was customary for the pulpit in a Methodist church to be located in the center of the chancel. But more and more Methodist churches now place the pulpit at the side of the chancel. This small change has changed the meaning of the minister: he is no longer so clearly at the center of the congregation's act of worship. Perhaps this change is small, but it is real.

In the same way every time an artist changes the form of a traditional religious symbol, he changes the meaning. For whenever the artist chooses a new material, the work of art will take a new form, and therefore the symbolic content will change. When the French painter Georges Rouault chose to paint with thick rather than thin lines, the choice necessarily resulted in his paintings' having a different meaning. His *Crucifixion* (ca. 1918) does not mean the same thing as, say, Rembrandt's painting of the same subject, for Rouault's is made of different material. Part of the meaning is of course that a thick line means something different from a thin one. This is not a meaning which we can translate into words; rather, it is a sub-rational insight resulting from a new perception. But in the case of Rouault's *Crucifixion* there is probably an additional dimension which is rationally understood. For the picture looks a good deal like a stained-glass window. And by arousing this association, Rouault artistically alludes to the church tradition which lies behind stained-glass windows. Rembrandt's treatment does not make this same allusion.

It would appear, then, that it is impossible for an

artist to concern himself with religious themes unless he first assumes that religious truth is not immutable. Also, if it is not possible for a serious artist to repeat the forms of a previous generation, therefore it would not be possible for him to assume that the truth is expressed by a previous generation was a final truth. This as a matter of fact is what many artists assume, expressing this in an organic metaphor of renewal: ideas and artistic forms are born, they mature, they die, and new ones must then be brought forth.

But artists do not argue thus simply for the sake of the health of the art. They also have in mind the responses of the audience, pointing out that the continued use of traditional symbols may result not in continuity of traditional meaning but in a shallow stock response. Notice, for example, the response to the symbol of the cross. It is an excellent symbol for many reasons, one of the important ones being that it has developed from its literal referent to an object with symbolic connotations. But I should like to question whether this symbol continues to include its literal origin in its present meanings? Does a cross on a steeple remind you of a death under the most painful and horrible conditions? Possibly not. Perhaps one could justify this kind of a cross by arguing that a symbol does not have to include a footnote on its origin. But in this case the traditional symbol has maintained its form, but its meaning has changed. For the spectators of the cross are living, changing, forgetful human beings.

I would suggest, then, that the only way to preserve the meanings behind such traditional symbols is constantly to change the symbols. This is of course a paradox, a creature around which people tiptoe a little uneasily. But when dealing with religious insights or human beings one needs to give complexity its due: one cannot preserve an unchanging religious tradition unless one is willing to renew it with constantly changing forms.

I might mention in passing that many religious reform movements have been involved in similar paradoxes. In the Reformation, for example, there was an earnest desire to get back to what the primitive church had been—in other words, to re-establish continuity. But the music of the church, to mention only the art most closely associated with worship, had to be composed anew. Martin Luther, clearly recognizing that the chants of the Roman Catholic Church were incompatible with the new theology, became an accomplished hymn writer. Thus the tradition was re-asserted by means of an artistic revolution.

Religious Art

It is out of the tension of this paradox that controversies over religious arts arise. The religious community must be jealous for the unchanging tradition. Yet it is not easy to differentiate at first glance between the

work of art which violates the tradition and the kind which re-asserts the tradition in a new form. Similarly, the artist must guard the health of his art. But how can he know that the religious community has in good faith corrected his errors or distortions and that it is not attacking in an irrational fear of losing its own ignorance?

It would be glib (though true) to say that both sides must communicate better. It is less glib and more manly to say that the tension must be nurtured. For the religious community is re-discovering that it needs the serious artist. Art is not decoration, which the church can do without, nor is it entertainment, which the church has no time for. But art is a fundamental mode of recognition: it is a way of knowing reality. This cognitive mode is as valuable and as true as scientific or logical modes, but it of course uses a different symbolism pointing to a different reality.

When we speak of religious art we define this reality in the adjective religious. Of course we do not mean that the work of art is religious; to say that an object is in itself religious is idolatry. But the work of art acts as a symbol pointing to a transcendent reality, a reality that lies beyond ordinary human perception. Religious art does not allow the spectator to remain within the limitations of his human condition. I should like to illustrate this with the opening scene of a play which has become rather popular now within religious circles, Charles Williams' *The House by the Stable*. In the opening scene we see the protagonist saying to a beautiful woman:

It was a high and happy day when we met.

Will you never forget it? and love me always?

She agrees to love him forever as one would expect. And the hero continues:

So I believe indeed,
and feed on the thought—to be everlastingly loved.

At first glance this sounds like a cozy little love scene, and perhaps it is that in a superficial way. But Charles Williams does not allow you to think only in human terms, for the man's name is Man and the woman's Pride. These are characters that transcend individuality, and the action of pledging undying love, instead of being a solution, creates the theological problem of sin; the dramatic situation, then, begins in an impasse which can be resolved only by a higher reality, grace.

Quite clearly this play proceeds by destroying customary notions of verisimilitude. And I should like to emphasize the action: destroying. The assumption seems to be that only by destroying a customary, realistic mode of recognition can the fundamental symbolic mode inherent in all art be re-asserted; only by destroying stage realism can the playwright develop an action which points its human audience toward the non-human reality of grace. The dramatist, therefore, apparently found it necessary, if he was to point his audience to reality beyond themselves, to destroy their preconceptions. The first half of the creative process is destruction. If the church's new interest in art is genuine and serious, the church must learn not only to understand but also to accept the artist's need to destroy. A responsible artist destroys only as much as is necessary in order to begin creating.

SONG OF THE FIRST DAY

By Ruth Eitzen

Long ago

before the sun rose

I saw darkness.

It rushed upon me with
the awe of evil unfolding.

Why should I be horrified?

I was too young to know the deeds
that he can do,
that son of darkness.

I was an infant wrapped in
gentle night, unborn.

I was Eve in the garden,
untouched, unharmed.

I was primitive man

lost in a question among
the singing sound of birds.

Wave high, trees, in the forest of rain.

The wind blows where it listeth
and I hear the sound thereof.

Lie down, lion and lamb, in
the garden of Paradise.

Rock, soul, in a safe land where
no word has obscured.

Now, now is the day of creation.

CONTEMPORARY ART: AN ACT OF FAITH WITHOUT PROMISE OF REWARD

By Robert W. Regier

SEVERAL YEARS AGO the Protestant public was presented with a "modernized" portrait of Christ by Werner Sallman. It was the same figure formula everyone had seen before, but now hopelessly enmeshed in a grid of cubist circles and lines. Modern form was being cheaply used as a device to update. To use modern forms without understanding—as a gimmick—is no improvement over the other extreme that has characterized much of the religious community: total rejection of a contemporary expression.

Certainly the most damning judgment of any religious object is the label of irrelevance. To help ward off the finality of this judgment there have been uneasy attempts at appropriating new art forms for religious uses. With the new Sallman seldom is the reason for new form understood and rarely is it executed with authority. Tragically, this type of shallow attempt to look relevant or modern does nothing more than underscore irrelevance. Scores of bizarre pseudo-modern examples of architecture and art reveal an enormous lack of insight into the contemporary arts.

With the religious community feeling uneasy about its past rejection of new forms but uncertain in its present use of them, a future wholesome relationship between religion and the arts will not automatically arrive.

The first step out of the dilemma is to begin looking at contemporary art on its own terms; to attempt to understand it for what it is, not for what we would like it to be. Let us abandon overzealous efforts to capitalize on new art for our own purposes, forcing it to play unintended roles. Let us avoid arbitrary categorizations, one being the free application of sacred or secular labels. The entire idea of "religious art" should be suspect. It too often leads to the exaltation of poor art. For the present let us only concede that some art may be more useful within the religious community than other art. This should not tempt us to make a value judgment on the "other" art. Art cannot be judged as art on the basis of its religious or moral subject matter.

The Everpresent Avant-Garde

How do we look at contemporary art on its own terms? We can begin with a definition. Contemporary art is simply the currently produced art that is in

transition. Some naively believe that it is a phenomena peculiar only to our own time. Every age has had currently produced art in transition. Every generation has had to struggle to understand its avant-garde, those on the cutting edge of creative development. Contemporary art is changed art, art that cannot be catalogued with previous art experience. It is inevitable art, because change is inevitable in any creative experience.

Paradoxically, the most stable element in art is change. Absence of change signals the decline of art. Basic to any definition of art is innovation. Without innovation, any repeated act becomes routine. A routine may require skill; by skill, though a facet of the art process, is certainly not a synonym for art. Art history clearly reveals the permanent process of change. Though it is often threatening and is not always synonymous with progress, we should expect it if we expect art to exist.

Any who produce or respond to a contemporary work of art are engaged in an act of faith, for one can never be certain where it might lead, and time cannot yet serve as a reliable test. Willingness to enter into this act of faith and refusal to be shocked by that which does not conform to previous art experience are the first prerequisites for a meaningful response to contemporary art.

Form, Subject Matter, and Content

Perhaps we can look at any work of art more clearly if we are aware of three components: form, subject matter, and content. When discussing these components, however, it is well to remember that the distinctions between them are more easily made verbally than visually.

Form refers to the physical configuration, the visual elements of line, value, color, depth, shape, and texture take in the material of any particular work. Using Picasso's *Guernica* to illustrate, we could briefly say that it is a large black and white painting employing dynamic, sharp angular shapes, yet classically balanced by the use of a stable pyramid structure through the center of the painting. One could continue discussing its abstract visual characteristics at length. The point here is simply that this would be a descriptive summary of its formal character.

Subject matter is what a work is about. In *Guernica* the subject is agonized humans and animals portrayed during a moment of terror caused by a brutal Fascist air raid on the small Spanish community of Guernica.

Content is the meaning expressed through the combination of form and subject. In *Guernica* the meaning is that of protest, a cry against man's inhumanity to man. Actually, the painting has a very complex symbolism which makes the analysis of content a detailed, consuming study. But for purposes of illustration we shall risk oversimplification. We should be aware that the use of bold, angular dynamic shapes contributes to the meaning as much as any part of the subject, such as the dead child in the mother's arms. In a good painting form and subject are allies—both contributing to the meaning. Form cannot be an arbitrary, unrelated thing as it was in the circles and lines of the "modernized" Sallman's Christ.

Most people are subject matter-oriented, never contemplating the formal elements and rarely investigating content. The involvement in a work of art usually ends with the identification of the subject.

Though subject matter may be important to the viewer, it must be remembered that artists have many different attitudes toward it. It was important for Picasso in the mural *Guernica*. It was not important in the improvisations and compositions of Kandinsky who rejected subject matter as early as 1910. In *Improvisation* (page 14) we wonder what happened to the subject. The answer characterizes a

large percentage of contemporary art: subject has not disappeared but has merged with the other components. More and more, subject, form, and content are becoming one. A painting becomes completely self-contained. It is not about anything. It is only about itself. Thus, a search for some part of the real world or an insistence on finding meaning is a futile search because it bypasses the artist's intention. Material and form have become the subject and subject becomes the content. Art in which form and subject have merged is known as nonobjective art.

Art which is still a window to something beyond itself, to the world that is the source of objects and motifs, is known as representational art. Both non-objective and representational art are strong on the contemporary scene. As representational art becomes more abstract the line between the two becomes less and less distinct.

Whether subject is considered important or not, by artist or viewer, has little to do with the quality of a work. For the past hundred years the art world has resolutely insisted that the clue to the quality of a work of art lies in the formal aspects: or at least in the totality of form, subject, and content, not in subject or content alone. The body of judgment that has accumulated all through the history of art would tend to support this view.

This is a crucial point for the church. The church naturally gravitates toward the use of art that contains subject matter related to it. The temptation that fol-

GUERNICA by Pablo Picasso (1937). Museum of Modern Art, New York, lent by the artist. A strong cohesion of form, subject, and content.



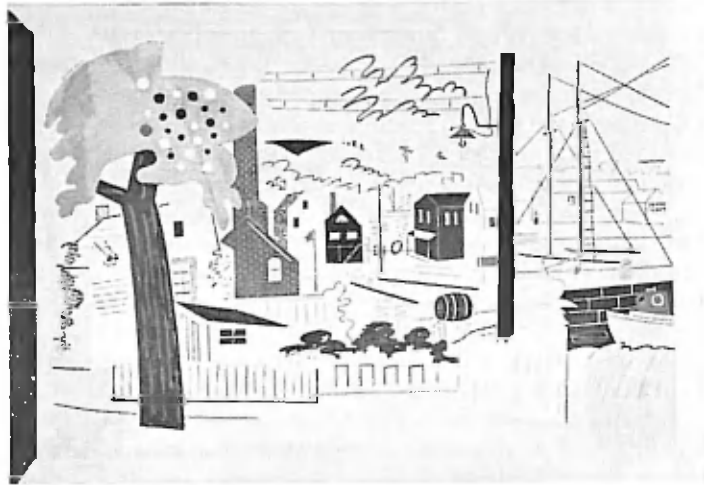


IMPROVISATION by Wassily Kandinsky (1915). Museum of Modern Art, New York. Of his work Kandinsky said: "The observer must learn to look at the pictures . . . as form and color combinations . . . as a representation of mood and not as a representation of objects."

lows is to imply that worthy subject makes worthy art. This accounts for so much bad art in the church. Worthy subject matter presented in the framework of poor form cannot culminate in effective content and is bad art. The danger is that the church can become the patron of practitioners who wittingly or unwittingly resort to "holy" subject matter to compensate for other deficiencies. Historically the church has been the patron of great art. But it was at the time when the church was a major force in the shaping of culture. The leading artists were in its ranks. This is no longer true. Now, for the most part, important artists and the church ignore each other. Cultural change has been partly responsible. Prior to the printed page the artist served an indispensable teaching function. The cathedral with its sculpture and stained glass was the Bible of the illiterate. Now the illiterate have become literate. Instead of being in the public service, the artist is now engaged in a more personal, private activity. Though he may not be doing what we prefer, his work continues to be pertinent for the church.

Act More Than Fact

What are the purposes of contemporary art—parti-



SUMMER LANDSCAPE by Stuart Davis (1930). Museum of Modern Art, New York. Representational art provides a window to the tangible world. Naturalism and representation are not synonymous.

cularly nonobjective art—if subject is not necessarily important. Before attempting to provide some answers we should remind ourselves that one characteristic of contemporary art is its wide diversity of intent.

Guernica is intended to prod the social conscience. So is much of the work of Kollwitz, Nolde, Rouault, Lebrun, Shahn, the Mexican muralist, and others. While subject may not enhance the value of a work, it can serve as the door through which some artists walk in order to find motivation.

In nonobjective art beauty and decoration are frequently mentioned as valid purposes. There are other intentions of value that relate more to the expressive act than the resulting object. Consider three of these.

Freeing the Imagination. Picasso once stated, "No, painting is not done to decorate apartments. It is an instrument of war for attack and defence against the enemy." The enemy in our culture is everything that limits the freedom of the imagination. In both nonobjective and representational art the imagination can soar. In representational art the imagination engulfs the world outside oneself. In nonobjective art the imagination turns inward.

Introspection. In a sense nonobjective art has a subject: its creator. Allen Weller, an articulate writer on contemporary art, has stated that nonobjective art is now the most completely humanistic art there is. Everything in it comes from the creator. It reproduces nothing. It is an interaction between media and the unique personality of the creator. Weller continues by stating that there has perhaps never been a time in which art provided a surer insight into some of the most basic qualities of the society which has produced it.

The insight may not be comforting. If it is not, this is not a judgment of the art or the artist any more than it is a judgment of all of us, for we make up the fabric of the society which the artist reflects and from which he draws sustenance.

Individuality. One of the few remaining areas in which a person has the freedom to conceive and execute a "whole" product is in the arts. Whether representational or nonobjective, the artist can quietly proclaim a diminishing commodity—individuality. He can personally react to the impersonal forces which seem to inundate, desensitize, and make us immobile.

All this seems to suggest that now the personal act, and not the proclaimed fact, is the important contribution of art—statements, but not statements about something. The artist and the material are the two important elements. The eventual implications of this are not clear. But an awareness of this will help as we view contemporary art. Instead of forcing great ideological profundity into every work or vainly searching for the objective world, it is possible to simply celebrate the joy of an independent, well-executed act. We do this instinctively with children's art but often act as though this spontaneous buoyancy is not an adult's prerogative.

Seeing and Feeling

Finally, helpful for the understanding of contemporary art is a consideration of the relationship between seeing and feeling, or the perceptual and the conceptual. The perceptual act is an attempt to record reality exactly as the eye sees it. A conceptual statement is a motif that represents an idea of reality. It is more subjective. It not only represents reality, but reveals how the artist feels about it. The conceptual representation allows for a great deal of shorthand. An artist may record only those aspects of a subject he feels important. Children's art serves as an example. A child's representations are conceptual. A drawing of mother is an idea of mother, not an actual image of mother. A child, of course, is limited and is incapable of producing a perceptual image.

All through the history of art artists have, to greater or lesser degrees, been conceptual in their response to reality. A rewarding approach to art history is an analysis of artists, periods, and cultures in terms of conceptual or personal dominance. The result is the realization that only a tiny fragment of the total span of art history devoted itself unreservedly to perceptual art. The nineteenth century followers of the French painters David (1748-1825) and Ingres (1780-1867) tried vainly to compete with the camera in recording "natural" images. The rest of art history reveals strong conceptual elements in every period.

Today, practically all art is highly conceptual. Ideas and feelings about the inner and outer worlds completely dominate any desire for objective reporting.

Yet, many people are still clinging to the little island of nineteenth century naturalism as their standard. It is little wonder, then, that to them contemporary art is offensive and senseless. Instead of being receptive to attitudes and ideas, they end their receptivity when any image crosses the boundary of a natural, objective world into a subjective world. Even more disconcerting is the implication by the defenders of naturalism that art has always conformed to their standard and that only now has it broken away from a sound tradition. This point of view reflects ignorance of history. For example, the geniuses Michelangelo, Rembrandt, and Goya who might naively be claimed as members of the perceptual tradition, are great partly because of the profound subjective forces which were visible in their art. The difference is that now the injection of feeling is more obvious.

The world of contemporary art is a forbidden world to any who rigidly cling to a narrow standard.

Where Do We Begin?

There is no short-cut. The disquieting nature of all worthwhile art is that its potential joys are hidden. Only through persistence are they revealed. And for contemporary art even persistence may not be rewarding. For we must remind ourselves again that a response to contemporary art is an act of faith without promise of reward. This has always been the nature of contemporary art.

For those willing to accept the risk of wasted persistence, and an actual encounter with art is the only beginning. There are dozens of ways to do this. Here is one suggestion. Naturally, a reproduction is only a shadow of an original. But for many it will have to do. Reproductions have become inexpensive. Find one that is on your threshold of dislike, one that makes you uncomfortable. Hang it in the most accessible place you have. Live with it. When it becomes a comfortable part of the environment, remove it, and look for another to test your tolerance. Most art in homes is completely passive. We never did respond to it or ceased to respond long ago. It is nothing. It is only there. Take it down. Replace it with art that forces an encounter. You will have taken the first stimulating step into a world of visual, mental, and spiritual reward.

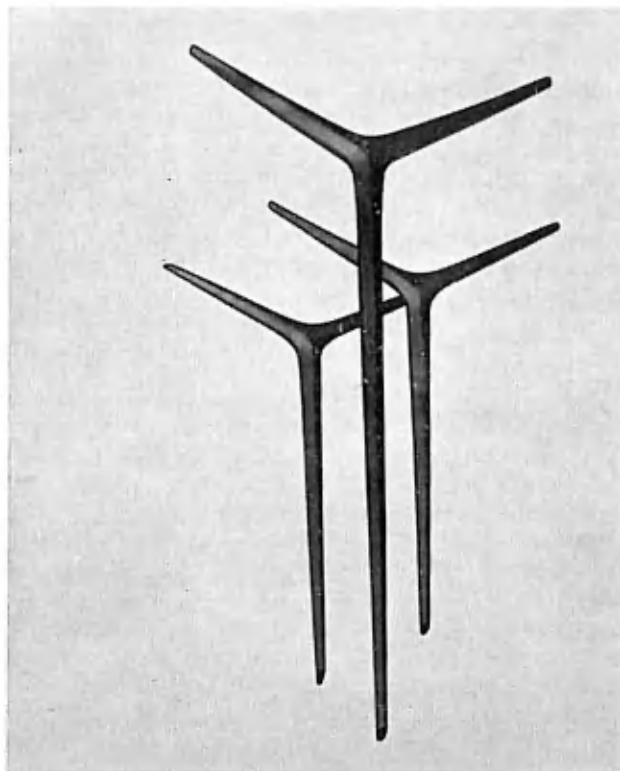
HELPFUL BOOKS

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GRANTED PETITION by Paul Friesen

THE THREE CROSSES on the Chancel Wall of Whitestone Mennonite Church, Hesston, Kansas, by Paul Friesen



CRUCIFIXION by Paul Friesen

REFUGEE WOMAN by Paul Friesen



A SCULPTOR SPEAKS ABOUT HIS WORK

By Paul Friesen

A SCULPTOR, Clark Fitz-gerald, has said that "an artist has several roles; he may be craftsman, translator, interpreter, prophet, or just a voice." In a work of sculpture requested by a congregation for the chancel of their new church, the truth of Fitz-gerald's statement seemed to ring loud as the assignment stipulated the theme of three crosses, which would signify atonement, redemption and rejection. My first reaction to the theme was negative, probably due to the commonplace which the cross seems to have taken in our present society. Its Latin form, the 3-3-3-5 relationship, is used not only on churches and altars but even on those items which hungry business wants to profit via the dime-store counter and the religious bookstore shelves.

It would seem that the church has at times identified itself with the symbol, rather than with the reality it represents. If this is the situation, one can easily understand our hesitancy to change symbolical form even in the slightest degree. We must somehow realize that the symbols we use must anchor themselves in our need for God. If they fail to do so, there is little chance of their being anything more than sounding brass and tinkling cymbals.

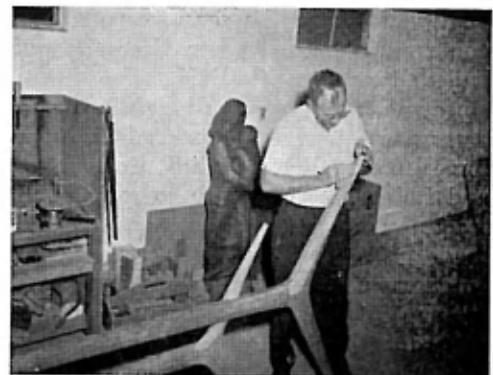
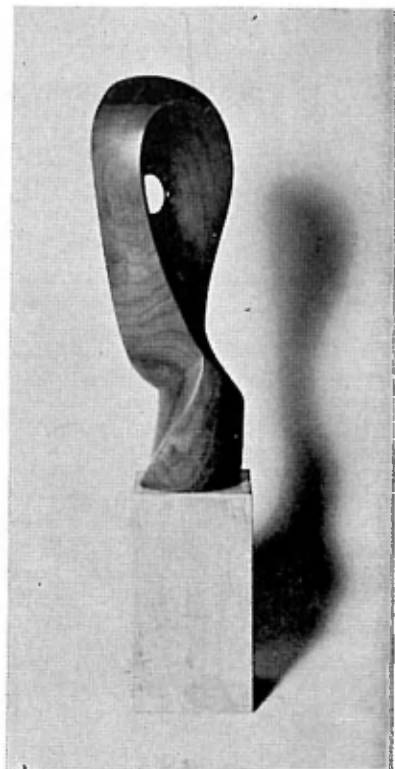
Any symbol in art is a visual form which in some way incarnates an abstract idea or affirms some level

of reality. It should possess the power to demand, excite, challenge and repel. And, unlike the sermon which must come a word at a time, a piece of sculpture can be grasped completely at a glance.

The interpretation of his time is the craftsman's responsibility. In most instances this responsibility is carried out intuitively rather than consciously. In my own search for a cross symbol that would possess more power, I consciously searched for a form that would embody more of the human for associational purposes. The use of the Greek letter *tau* seemed to achieve through manipulation the truth which one finds in the theme of the three crosses: union between redemption and atonement, a gentle and compassionate spirit even in times of severe suffering, the severance and decay of life brought about by rejection, the means of torture such as the thorns, the nails and the cross.

Unless our symbols speak to us, they are of little value. In order to speak both observer and artist are responsible for doing their respective part. Not only is it important that our symbols have a tinge of prophecy about them, but equally important that each of us exert some effort in developing the aesthetic aspect of our brain as we do its economic, sociological and scientific side.

THE EVE OF MAN by Paul Friesen



Paul Friesen at work on his "Three Crosses" for the Whitestone Mennonite Church. In the background is his "Refugee Woman."

OF CHRISTIANITY AND ART

By *Elaine Sommers Rich*

IS ART AUTONOMOUS? Is art its own measure?

For a Christian the answer is *no*. Art like the natural creation, is under the lordship of Christ. All of life, including art, stands simultaneously in God and under His judgment. "All things were made through him, and without Him was not anything made that was made." John 1:3 "In Him we live and move and have our being." Acts 17:28. "Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble—each man's work will become manifest; for the day will disclose it, because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done" I Cor. 3: 12,13.

This is not to say that the excellence of an artistic work is not determined in one sense by its own canons. But it is to say that, for the Christian, important additional dimensions, such as motivation and effect, exist.

Why does an artist create? Johann Sebastian Bach wrote his magnificent chorales out of his love for God. During his days at Weimar he accepted as a lifetime motto: The object of all music should be the glory of God. Henrik Ibsen, on the other hand, kept a scorpion in a jar on his desk. The scorpion's ejection of poison served as a symbol to him that he must write in order to rid his own system of poison. Which of the two created as a Christian?

Which will preoccupy the Christian writer—the portrayal of meaninglessness and radical evil or the portrayal of joy and grace? Which is the more difficult?

Christians also ask about the effect of artistic works on the artist and the consumer of the art. Was anyone really surprised when Ernest Hemingway put a bullet through his head? He wrote masterfully of violence and cruelty, a way of life which is in the end self-destructive. A novel, poem or drama may call its consumer to bestiality, brutality, revulsion, or to love, joy, and fullness of life. Even to make such a statement means legitimate judgment. And the judgment is not made only from inside the artistic work. The non-autonomous factor is present, and that factor is the "testing of the spirits" spoken of in 1 John 4:1.

What is Christian art? Is it not simply that rare gift, art created by one whose highest loyalty belongs to Christ? When down through the centuries Christians and artists have been so few, is it any wonder that the two have so seldom converged in the same person?

This does not mean that non-Christian artists may not praise and reveal God, sometimes by showing the unreality of His absence, just as non-Christian religions do. In a sense all works of men praise God. Art would not exist were not man created in the image of his creator.

Art is not a tiny square inch of one's life; it is of the whole fabric. A Christian does not cease to be a Christian when he faces a page of paper or a canvas. He is Christian first and artist, parent, breadwinner or reader second. For this reason the Christian artist need be no more surprised than any other Christian that the cross is still scandalous. Has it not always been so? Did not our Master tell us to expect this? What a storm of criticism broke out when Tolstoi in later life decided to write for God alone. Those simple, much-loved tales, "How Much Land Does a Man Need?" and "Where Love Is God Is" were called propaganda rather than art. Tolstoi's critics are now forgotten, and his stories are weathering the years quite well. What scorn has been heaped on Robert Browning for his Christian faith! Yet he is still read and taught, and I suspect that he will be long after anyone goes to see a Tennessee Williams play or reads *Lord of the Flies*. Why? Because in the end truth endures. Jesus Christ is Lord.

Art is not autonomous. It exists only in God and under His judgment.

FIVE LOAVES AND TWO FISH by *Marvin Bartel*,
(Oil) 1962.



EXPRESSED MATERIAL CONTRA MATERIALISM

By *Kenneth Hiebert*

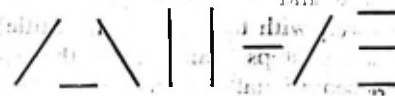
fogogofgfgfgf
fogogo fo gofo gof ogogogo
fog o go go fog o go go go

The sequence above shows a progression from unorganized material in terms of letters and sounds to a still abstract but organized rhythmitization and then to a line which maintains an abstract rhythmic structure but is unmistakably communicative—if read. Because of its abstract character even this unmistakably communicative line will require a supreme effort of concentration and willingness on the part of the reader. The reason is probably the fact that not a particular situation is being described or reacted to, but an essence translated into the native letter sounds. This is different from alliteration, which is a device to heighten the effect in literary description. In our example we are not describing fog or departure but we are creating a kind of fog and a kind of going by placing the sounds f, o, and g in a sequence that generates a fog and a going as opposite sounds. They exist in a mutually sustaining rhythm which makes them plausible in their humble states as words. We call this expressed material. Because they're honest sounds honestly sequenced they permit us to make the step beyond to the reality of our experience with fog. We are freed to this experience because we have not been bound by a description of a particular fog and because we have not been harnessed by a materialistic treatment of the theme which might have read "go fog, you are so depressing," which communicates in a superficial sense very quickly, but calls forth no essential participation or sustained experience. It is important to note the difference between expressed material and materialistic as used here. The materialistic expression gives no evidence of having recognized the material for what it is but depends on a certain vocabulary for its formulation. Sounds are uttered and killed in the same instance, their sequences are arbitrary. It uses material freely but without significance. By contrast our example of expressed material repeats sounds, yet each sound remains valuable, indispensable, significant in the sequence. In this example the expression of sound was of primary importance. The visual pattern of the letters played a subordinate role. The following example shows a situation where the visual is primary, the auditory negligible.

Here we have a progression:



1 selected but not consciously organized material (blackened match sticks full-length and half-length).



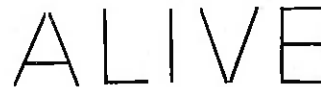
2 a rhythmically organized letter-similar row, already rich in connotation but void of specific meaning; phantasy stimulating.



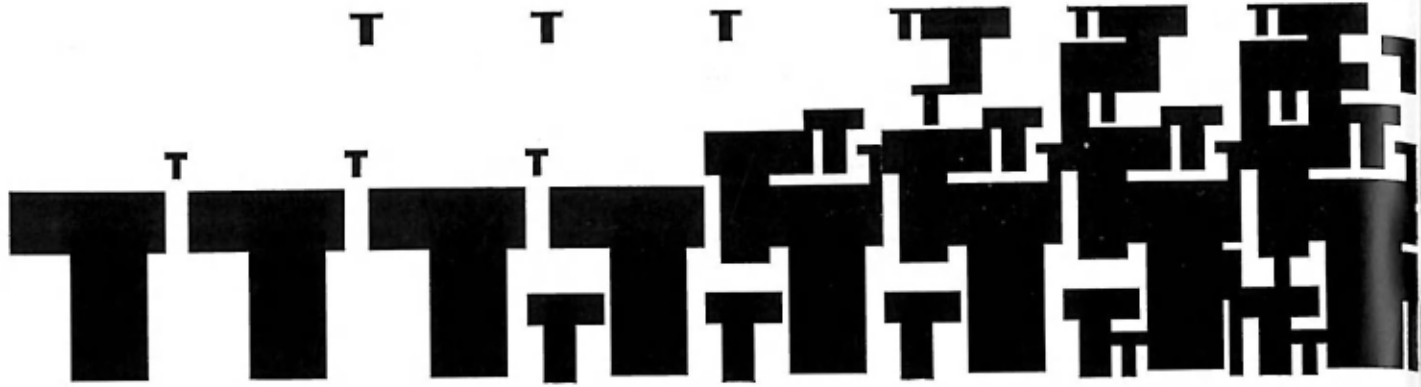
3 the same elements organized on the same rhythmic basis of equal distance between elements, this time with breakthrough of specific meaning but preserving overtones of feeling which also now tend to become specific. As in 1 and 2 this feeling persists regardless of the angle from which the structure is viewed.



4 explicit letter forms in a healthy rhythmic relationship. The expressional overtones caused above by the activity of space have receded. There is no longer sufficient life in the structure to support it if it should be inverted and no longer be readable.



5 a degenerated word structure which used 4 as a basis but no longer understood 1-3; no understanding of the functions of spaces and form categories.



In the fine arts today activity at levels 1 and 2 have become prominent. At level 1 many artists have discovered material and ordered it, at level 2 connoted it (sometimes only with the addition of a title). Today there is a trend to steps 3 and 4, but the outcome of this new representational art has been strongly influenced by the period of material experiments at the more elementary levels. The engagement with ultimate material realities has left its strong mark with those seeking to express ultimate spiritual realities in a new religious art.

Needless to say, however, most popular art, most of what passes for religious art and most applied art is below level 4. In terms of material expression, these works become basically propagandistic, deceptive devices. Material is forced to say or do something out of accord with its nature.

It might be pertinent here to point out in terms of a common form, the preprinted personal check, a comparison between visual material which grows out of necessity (the computer number-markings), retaining a primeval expressive character, and the remaining type forms which are an assortment of degenerated types seeking to superficially establish feelings of trust and dignity).

Techniques are unscrupulously appropriated from other artists without the generating experience with material, without the existential decision-making process en route to a result. The results are self-conscious, actually arrogant statements. The phantasy of the viewer is sealed by the pretense of the artist to know ultimate reality independent of a knowledge of material reality. It is necessary to allow for the imaginative participation of the audience because our personal visions are unworthy of absolutizing. Our answers are too relative and inadequate. If I confess that I "see darkly" now, who am I to presume to expose fully? The concept of expressed material presumes a healthy acceptance of material and its physical nature. Real

acceptance of material implies acceptance also of its limitations and corruptibility. It decrees that materials reveal themselves for what they are but be used in a way (in terms of quantities and interrelationships) which prevents them from becoming an end in themselves. In this kind of situation a tension between physical nature and trans-physical expression is brought into play in a way expressive of our own metaphysical dichotomy.

The principle of material expression results in extreme material control and permits criteria for value judgments of these works to be based on necessity instead of money value or taste or status. Hence it is possible to furnish a house for \$500 or \$5000 and attain equal degrees of material expression or build a church of the same size for \$50,000 or \$500,000. Indeed, it is possible to create all sorts of grotesque economic value discrepancies between economic and artistic value.

There is in Switzerland the saying that if you give a cabinetmaker a hundred francs to build a table, he will do a respectable job; give him 500 and beware. Of course, there are many instances where in order to obtain material expression more would have to be expended than is the case in sham articles or buildings where materials have become too weak out of petty, strictly economic considerations. Generally speaking, material expression is not injurious to an economy; it makes an economy meaningful because its every product is imbued with some kind of significance. There develops a new value pattern which makes new demands on an economy.

It must now be emphasized that the finely felt tension between material nature and function is seldom realized in our present world. This does not mean, however, that material expression is a concept too sophisticated for a democratic society. It is in fact very closely allied with democratic principles, for according to it every true material expression is un-

T-LETTER by Kenneth Hiebert. "T" stands for TÄUFERHEITRÄGE, which is a publication project of the Agape publisher of Basel, Switzerland, for a series of Anabaptist booklets. In a general sense, the multiplication of voices and the eventual complete submerging of once clear beginning form in a complex church structure is demonstrated by the way the "T" multiplies and changes dimensions until it submerges in a complex architecture. The design permits the use of one inexpensive linoleum block for the whole series.

ashamedly valid independent of money cost; by it people can live more independent of social pressures for economic status.

Honest material expression occurs frequently at grass roots level in society. Primitive cultures show an astonishing measure of material expression. Many folk-art movements with an organic growth pattern and which have not become self-conscious show it. The Shaker and Anish societies show an amazing relationship to the material, complicated in the latter instance by a historical fixation. Negro sections of our cities frequently demonstrate a clarity of material expression not attained in higher class white areas. The problem of materialism, i.e. the loss of material expression, becomes acute in a society where status is sought through the concealing of material and parading effects are sought. We reward the man that can make plastic look like wood with the verdict clever. The man who uses plastic expertly as plastic is not rewarded, and he is consequently also almost nonexistent. The many fine artists working with new materials show how materials can retain their identity and at the same time submerge in a greater harmony. That these harmonies are frequently interpreted as chaos by the uninitiated viewer is because the initial concession that any material is valid is lacking. The criterion of dogmatic safeness is invalid for material content of a work. There are, God knows, thousands of "safe" expressions of spiritual events and states, many of them in our Sunday schools, which were created from a pious, deceptive dream and not from honest material translated into the expression of something more through the equally honest work of an artist.

Honestly expressed material makes unusual demands on the viewer. His first temptation is to think the work is nothing because the material is so evident (and that is true whether it is a drawing by Rembrandt, a collage by Braque, a painting by Nicholson, or a sculpture by Moore). It preserves evidences of having

come up out of nothing. If the viewer is honest and unprejudiced and the work he encounters has reached some maturity he will have a vehicle to realms far beyond the immediately material. If one or another of these conditions is not met he radically rejects the work. What we call abstract art is frequently a confession of the extent to which material can be organized without violating itself.

The foregoing applies to the work for the Inter-Mennonite World's Fair Committee—an expression of the Protestant pavilion's theme installed experimentally in New York this fall. The panels to the theme "Jesus Christ, the Light of the World" were conceived as a protest against the prevailing philosophy of furthering "good design" "to keep pace with the world." The means chosen were based neither on the canons of beautiful design nor on avant-garde secular standards in the fine arts. They came very simply from today's marketplace and were used in an unsensational way to express the given theme. That some sensation resulted was inevitable because the correlation between the common manufactured products of our civilization and spiritual expression is rarely attempted, certainly not where statistical success is at stake. The materials, in fact, determined the limits of the expression. This is not a negative factor. The material confrontation standing on a sandy shore and looking out to endless sea is extremely limited and abstract; yet who will dispute the power of this reduction of the material to sand and water and sky to release the spirit. It is true, as one viewer said of the World's Fair project: "Something seems to be missing." This must be so because art is only a catalyst, if you will, in the reaction between you and ultimate reality and never an end in itself. That person who gives himself to the experience supplies the missing part.

The specific materials in this instance were Formica and flooring adhesive on canvas. It is possible that some correlation will be seen in the way the white Formica elements have been composed to express light diffusing from an absolute source and the development of word rhythms earlier in this article.

Mennonites looking for their stand at the fair are generally appalled at what they find. Their verdict of ugly is not surprising because they are accustomed to segregating "beauty," used to denote a collection of material disuse in the living room, and functioning honest material. The distance between this concept of beauty and mundane material is too great and the ego-involvement an additional preventive to understanding. What is true of Mennonites is only a little less true for the whole stream of Protestant pilgrims to the pavilion. While there are certain possibilities for maximizing or minimizing the communicative value of such an endeavor, such a vehicle will at this juncture never elicit a wholesale response, because of the conditioning of the populace to superficially communicating, materialistic, visual forms.

RELIGIOUS VALUES IN CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE

By Elmer F. Suderman

THE CHRISTIAN CANNOT afford to be ignorant of contemporary literature, difficult as it is to read and offensive and blasphemous as it appears at first glance to be. He may, indeed, have to be critical of it, disagree with its values and outlook, but he must return to it, live with it, speak to it, and above all listen to it. He cannot ignore it; he must engage in a dialogue with the literary world.

The Christian and Literature

Three further points must be understood if we are to avoid considerable confusion in a discussion of religious values in contemporary literature. The first is that the Christian cannot assume that just because he is a Christian he is therefore automatically better equipped to understand and to judge contemporary literature. We do not assume that because a man is a Christian he will therefore understand scientific laws better than the non-Christian. Similarly the Christian critic of contemporary literature, either lay or professional, is not more perceptive or more understanding than the non-Christian. He must subject himself to the same stringent demands that perceptive reading requires of all alike, atheist, agnostic, Jew, Catholic, Protestant — or Mennonite. Likewise the fact that an author is Christian does not make him inherently a better novelist, poet, or dramatist.

If there is nothing inherent in being Christian that enables a man to offer a magic formula that can unlock the secrets of literary art, it follows, in the second place, that the Christian critic must ask exactly what literature demands of him and not impose foreign requirements upon it. While the world of literature and religion converge upon each other, the two cannot be equated; they have different spheres, even though the spheres may at some points overlap. The purpose of the literary artist is not to preach, to moralize, to teach true doctrine. It is undeniable that literature is involved in the total human experience, that it makes moral and religious judgments upon the conditions of human life; but we must not forget that it makes these comments in a way different from the sermon or the philosophical and theological treatise.

Manner and Matter

The literary artist is concerned as much, perhaps more,

with the manner in which he writes as in the matter. He must therefore be concerned with the demands that aesthetics makes upon the material to shape it in a pleasing and satisfying manner to produce a work of beauty as well as of truth. Beauty has its own laws and its own realm, a realm as important as religious, historical, or scientific truth and as much a part of God's creation. The literary artist will, therefore, be concerned with structure, style, metaphor, with creating a work that will be self-contained and able to stand in its own right.

Keeping in mind that the writer must be concerned with the aesthetic demands of his art, we can realize how difficult it is to judge the religious values of fiction, drama and poetry. Often the writer speaks not in his own voice but through a persona who occupies a stance, a point of view which may be different from that of the author's but through which the author is able to reveal to the reader one vision of the world. Indeed, the modern writer often prefers to stay out of his work, to allow it to be its own comment; he attempts not to intrude and tell the reader in his own voice what he means but to show the reader by a specific instance. Unlike theology, which makes an explicit statement, creative literature is bound by its nature to be indirect and implicit. The creative writer will not tell us directly, as St. Paul did, that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God," but he will show us, as Faulkner shows us Popeye in *Sanctuary*, the sin embodied in a particular character. But to show us man's depravity is often offensive and uncomfortable, particularly when it is done with the skill and frankness of a Faulkner. The generalization is easy enough to comprehend and not very shocking, but the specific exemplification of the "evil thoughts, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander," which Jesus said proceed from men's hearts often shocks and offends us.

Truth and Faith

In the third place it is important for the Christian critic to remember that there can be truth outside of the Christian faith. In examining religious values in contemporary literature he may find them in the most unlikely and unexpected places. The novels of Ernest Hemingway and Albert Camus, for example, though

they are not written from a Christian perspective, nevertheless offer the Christian reader insights into the nature of the world in which he lives. While the modern author is concerned with producing a work of beauty, he is also involved in the shaping of human experience—the way in which he shapes his material is in itself a most important comment upon the experience—and in the clarification and deepening of our perception of the realities that constitute our environment. It is this function of illumination, in uncovering for us, as H. D. Lewis has called it, “the character of particular things in the starkness and strangeness of their being what they are,” that contemporary literature can have religious values for us, even when religious values were not intended.

The Christian critic, then, must listen humbly to what the contemporary writer tells him about himself and about the world in which he lives. Most writers today are dedicated men concerned to face boldly the essential and important facts of life, to explore the depths of life in order to depict truthfully and vividly the conditions of the human soul in its relations with God, with the universe, and with himself. They are not satisfied merely to titillate by emphasizing the adventurous, the external, the peripheral. They are, in short, interested in religious questions even when they do not approach them from a Christian point of view. For the Christian to ignore these writers, no matter how difficult they are to understand or how somber their report of the human condition may be, or how offensive their depiction of human life, or how vitriolic their maledictions against the Christian, would be to ignore the most sensitive impulses from the finest listening posts of our day. The committed Christian must together with the contemporary writer face the truth of being with all it implies both of misery and of grandeur. Together they must attempt to fathom the abyss of terror in which we live. Living as a Christian today requires drastic and unpleasant exposure to a terrifying world and nauseous experience. Contemporary literature affords one of the best entries into that world and into the country of the mind inhabited by the men of our time.

What is the mind of contemporary man—and we must remember that the Christian is also a contemporary man, sharing the same climate of opinion as the writer—on the perennially important questions of life? What, to begin with a central religious problem, does the contemporary mind think about God? While the earlier warning that the literary artist is not a systematic theologian must be repeated and a further warning added, namely that theological questions are hard to convey in fiction, poetry, and drama, it is reasonably obvious that the world of contemporary literature is a world from which God has virtually disappeared. The reader of Dante's *Divine Comedy*, Spencer's *Faerie Queene*, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, and Milton's *Paradise Lost* senses the pervasiveness of God's presence both explicitly and implicitly on every

page. On the other hand, to read Hemingway's *Farewell to Arms*, Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*, Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* is to be impressed not with God's presence but with his absence.

A scene in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* exemplifies the world without God so often presented in modern novels. The World Controller, Mustapha Mond, and the Savage are looking at copies of the Bible, *The Imitation of Christ*, and William James's *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. The Savage asks the World Controller if he thinks there is a God, and he replies that quite probably there is one, but that he manifests himself in different ways to different men. “In pre-modern times he manifested himself as the being that's described in these books. Now . . . he manifests himself as an absence; as though he weren't there at all.” And the World Controller goes on to argue that “God isn't compatible with machinery and scientific medicine and universal happiness. You must make your choice. Our civilization has chosen machinery and medicine and happiness.” But Huxley presents the world without God as sterile and stripped of the ideals that really matter.

Absence of God Cause of Rejoicing?

It is much too simple to say as Edmund Fuller in *Man in Modern Fiction* has said that this generation of novelists is the first to work, in many instances quite unconsciously, “on the tacit or declared premise that there is no God.” While Anne Dubreuilh, in Simone de Beauvoir's *The Mandarins*, can say, “I've never felt sorry about losing God,” the theological climate in contemporary literature is not that simple. It is the rare book in which the absence of God is a cause for rejoicing; it is usually a cause for regret. The sensitive and lonely character who, living in a world without God, nevertheless cannot put God out of his mind, cannot live without him, is always grasping at evidences for a faith which he cannot find, is a common type in contemporary literature. Men mourn at the grave of God; they do not cheer. They do not share Nietzsche's conviction that the idea of God is the gravest danger for the superman, his delight that God could be considered dead, his satisfaction that the way was now open for men to be free from the fetters of religion.

The poignant expression of the loss of God is prevalent in much of contemporary literature but especially in fiction. It is revealed mostly not by explicit statement but in that subtle, almost undefinable aspect of literature which we call atmosphere. It can be clearly seen in the novels of F. Scott Fitzgerald. In *The Great Gatsby* the characters live in a world from which God is either absent, or if he is present he is sightless.

In the novels of Ernest Hemingway the absence of God is pervasive in the atmosphere and is at times made explicit. In his first novel, *The Sun Also Rises*, Lady Brett tells her friend Jake Barnes that she has

left the young Spanish Bullfighter whom she has seduced. She is proud of her gesture of denial and tells Jake that it makes her feel rather good deciding not to prostitute herself: "It's sort of what we have instead of God." But Jake observes dryly and with a sense of loss: "Some people have God. Quite a lot." But neither Jake nor Brett have God, nor do most of Hemingway's characters. Anselmo, in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, says, "We do not have God anymore, neither his Son, nor his Holy Ghost." Frederic Henry, in *A Farewell to Arms*, admits that his religious feelings come only at night. It is worth emphasizing that none of these characters are happy that God has fled. Perhaps the violence and meaninglessness which they experience are a direct result of the loss of God.

A World Without God

The disappearance of God leaves the writer with no option except to depict the intense spectrums of horror so commonplace in Hemingway, Faulkner, Fitzgerald, and other modern writers. With God gone, demonic forces have taken over. No American novelist has pictured these demonic forces as clearly as William Faulkner. He seems apparently to ignore all the moral and gentle aspects of life in order to present the most abnormal, sadistic, cruel and perverted life possible. What happens in Faulkner's novels is vulgar, ugly and grotesque.

But in reading Faulkner, no matter how offensive his material may be, some readers have the feeling that his vividly realized but terrifying world is so twisted and distorted precisely because it is a world without God. Martin Luther made us aware of the paradox so important to contemporary theology: where God is revealed there he is also hidden and where he is hidden there he is also revealed. It is difficult to determine whether Faulkner intended to convey this theological paradox, but for many readers of Faulkner it seems so.

Contemporary literature, then, does tell us much about a world without God and about a God who hides himself. It has often been criticized—most recently by John Killinger in *The Failure of Theology in Modern Literature*—for ignoring the central Christian affirmation that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. Certainly the novels of Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Camus—others could be mentioned—do not depict a world which has experienced the Incarnation and the Resurrection. Yet it must be remembered that Faulkner, Robert Penn Warren, and Thornton Wilder in America, Graham Greene and Evelyn Waugh in England, Mauriac in France, Bergengruen in Germany, Kazantzakis in Greece, have, even while depicting evil, pushed the limits of fiction to include the facets of redemption. There is in these novelists an effort, often successful in spite of the difficulty of portraying redemption effectively in fiction, to express a fictional counterpoint of grace for the fall, hope for despair. To

this list of novelists one could add the names of poets and dramatists like T. S. Eliot, Christopher Fry, W. H. Auden and others.

But redemption for these novelists and poets is never won easily. In their effort to view the world honestly and to see the implications of a world in which "the religious sentiment is superfluous," as the World Controller suggests in *Brave New World*, contemporary writers have pictured a world which seems to be stripped of meaning. It has not been created by God. It has no ordered unity. It is, therefore, alien, hostile, unbearable. If God is not in his world, all is wrong with the world. Since Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* (1833) writers have had to live with the possibility that the world is a "grim Desert . . . wherein is heard only the howling of wild beasts or the shrieks of despairing, hate-filled men; and no Pillar of Cloud by Day, and no Pillar of Fire by night, any longer guides the pilgrim." Honesty compels the literary artist to consider the world in which we live, as Carlyle's Teufelsdröckh did: "all void of Life, or Purpose, of Volition . . . one huge, dead immeasurable steam-engine, rolling in its vast indifference to grind [men] limb from limb."

The picture is not a pretty one. But literature, we must remind ourselves, is not an escape from reality but a vivid and imaginative reconstruction of reality. Though the Christian reader may not share the world view presented by the contemporary writer, he must recognize that this violent world of contemporary literature is the world in which he lives. Even less than the creative writer the Christian cannot afford to blink the terrible realities from which it is easy to hide. Thomas Hardy was certainly correct when he reminded us that "If a way to the better there be, it exacts a full look at the worst." It is still true, as Henry Van Dyke told us, no matter how gloomy, a "sober, stern-faced pessimism which looks the darkness in the face is sounder and more heroic than the frivolous, fat-witted optimism which turns its back and shuts its eyes, and laughs." The Christian must examine carefully and honestly the evil world to which he has been called to bring the good news.

Man Talking to Himself

The contemporary writer who forcefully confronts us with the fact that we are living in a post-Christian age—an age after the death of God—who shows us a world without a moral pattern or ultimate purpose also opens our eyes to the plight of man in such a world. Denied the presence of God or the existence of a friendly universe, modern man is at the mercy of irrational demonic forces beyond his comprehension or control. Indeed, he often becomes a part of these forces. The biblical view of man as innately sinful is pervasive in contemporary literature.

In a world without God it is not surprising that

some writers—and this was especially true early in the twentieth century of novelists like Theodore Dreiser, James Branch Cabell and Jack London—picture man as an animal. Evolution has only recently raised him from the other animals, and he still shares the animal nature. James Branch Cabell labeled man as “an ape reft of his tail and grown rusty at climbing. . . . reeling blunderingly from mystery to mystery with pathetic makeshifts, not understanding anything, greedy in all desires.” Man is a mere nothing, an object of horror with his puny and meaningless strivings, his vanities and conceits, his incessant pursuit of the trivial. Like the animal he enjoys the exhilaration of killing. Sex often becomes nothing more than lust and personal gratification. The modern literary artist, according to Samuel Beckett, pictures man as “flat on his belly, in an endless plain of mud.”

More important to the mid-twentieth century writer is a man's isolation and aloneness. He cannot pray, for he would only be talking to himself; there is no one who answers or listens. Hemingway's waiter in the short story, “A Clean Well-Lighted Place” who solemnly prays not to God but to nada (the Spanish word for nothing)—“Our nada who art in nada, nada be thy name”—is a poignant picture of man alone in an alien universe. Even though the waiter does attempt to cope with the engulfing dark by facing it honestly and with dignity and by imposing upon an indifferent and meaningless universe an area of order, by trying to create for himself a tiny room in bedlam where order still exists, his plight is nevertheless sad. Once the God who took heed of the sparrow's fall is acknowledged to be dead, life has lost much of its meaning. Man no longer lives in the light of eternity but is caught in the trap of time where his existence is brief, precarious, and even though he may attempt successfully to impute meaning to his brief existence, that meaning will die with him.

But man is isolated not only from God but from others. Even loved ones are dumb in each other's presence; the mystery of the human heart remains forever unexpressed. Though modern man would like to speak, he cannot, for there are no words. Camus holds that solitude is “the cruelest burden this age has laid upon man.” Man seems to be, as Mauriac says, “fated to carry loneliness about as a leper carries his scabs.” For modern man, as he moves through contemporary literature, there can be only a heartbreaking answer to the question, “Where can I feel at home?”

No Longer a Child of God

Man, furthermore, has become insignificant. He is no longer a child of God, but a cipher, or at least dull, plodding mediocre, unheroic. Science, technology, and industrialism have dwarfed the dimensions of his spirit. To quote the World Controller again, “civilization has absolutely no need of nobility or heroism. . . . In a

properly organized society like ours, nobody has any opportunities for being noble or heroic.” There are few heroes with large compelling ideas, with a special gift for the endurance of pain in modern literature. It is easier and more convincing to depict a Willie Loman—the name itself symbolizes his low status—in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*, or Mr. Zero, the mechanized antheap in Elmer Rice's *The Adding Machine*, or J. Alfred Prufrock, the inept hero of Eliot's “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock.” In some cases the character, Clyde Griffith in Theodore Dreiser's *An American Tragedy* for example, does not really exist except as a creature of his milieu. Such characters cannot be tragic for they do not have the goodness, the greatness, the freedom to suffer magnificently for a noble cause. They are either moved by forces outside of themselves over which they have no control, or determined by social conditions not of their own making, or driven by inner compulsions and psychological conditions. Contemporary literature makes us more aware of the littleness and helplessness of man than of his possibilities of magnitude.

But again the frightening portrait of man drawn by the modern literary artist does leave room for a sense of man's significance and worth. Even the naturalists of the early twentieth century—Jack London, Theodore Dreiser, Frank Norris—expressed compassion for man, no matter how puny, impotent and insignificant they found man to be. Even the work of art based on denial “still affirms something, and rings the praises of our miserable and magnificent existence,” a later novelist, Albert Camus has pointed out.

There are many authors today who have shown us characters who maintain their dignity in spite of the degrading influences of modern life. Even the novelist not in sympathy with the Christian tradition presents characters who, though they have lost all, hang on through pain and emptiness. Even though loss and waste threaten to blot out all that matters, Santiago in Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* faces the inscrutable forces of life courageously, hopefully, and creatively. Santiago, though suffering great pain, though he cannot understand the forces against which he strives, though he has no prospect of restoration and relief, still refuses to surrender. Something outside of him sustains him, even though he does not realize what it is. Santiago is only one of a vast gallery of such courageous characters who help us to see the grandeur of man.

Dilsey in Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* does know what sustains her. Her strength is found in the Christian faith, a rugged faith from which she refuses to be separated by death, or life, or angels, or principalities, or powers, or things present, or things to come, or height or depth, or any other creature, or even the hellish world of the Compsons of which she is a part. She and other characters like her know the

Pauline virtue of perseverance because they never underestimate human tribulation or the sinfulness of man, particularly their own sinfulness. They find no easy salvation or cheap grace. They realize that man to achieve salvation must practice discipline, sacrifice, suffering.

Human Depravity

The great literary artists of the twentieth century have never underestimated human depravity. In laying bare the human soul they have revealed it as a foul cavern from which issue all the shapes of wrong and misery. They never make the mistake of sentimental religious literature which makes the road to salvation a very broad road indeed and redemption a very easy achievement.

The picture of contemporary life in modern literature can hardly be called optimistic or hopeful. A world from which God has disappeared or become inoperative; a universe which is indifferent or hostile to man; a picture of man as wretched, wicked, insignificant, lonely, afraid of existence; an atmosphere pervaded with the nightmarish feeling that man is doomed

—this is the *Weltanschauung* of the best contemporary literature. It is not a healthy picture. It is frightening. But it may unfortunately be the real world, the world in which we live, desperately sick, anxiety-ridden, neurotically driven. Can it be, then, that it is not our authors and their literature that are sick, but the world which they must live in and describe? The novelists, dramatists, and poets of our time reveal to us the full measure of our sickness, using, as it were, nail scissors to snip off our eyelids so we cannot close our eyes to the evil around us anymore. Fortunately they also show us, not always as forcefully and clearly as we might like, that even in a sick world there is some hope: God may reveal himself in his silence and apparent absence (Bonhoefer reminds us that it is only when the light of the divine in us seems to be extinguished that we are ready to see God); the world at its worst still has much of good and of mystery in it; there is still the possibility of dignity and redemption for man no matter how sinful he may be. While contemporary literature at first glance seems irreligious and even blasphemous, it is, nevertheless, a fruitful source of religious values for the Christian reader.

THE COMPOSER AND THE CHURCH

By J. Harold Moyer

THE COMPOSER WHO seriously seeks to relate his creative efforts with his Christian faith will deal with two areas of relationships. Though these areas are closely related artistically, they are more distinct functionally.

The first area is that of music which is to be used in the worship service or related functions of the church. This might also include music with a biblical text such as an oratorio or cantata which, though often performed in a concert hall, would have a direct connection with the message of the church.

The second type of music is that which is not explicitly related to the church. This would include vocal music with a secular text and most instrumental music.

In making these distinctions there is a danger in assuming an easy categorization of music as either sacred or secular. While it is sometimes possible to

classify poetry in this way, it is difficult to label music as sacred or secular. This is particularly true of instrumental music. The church teaches the importance of discipleship in all aspects of life. Thus, for the Christian composer, all of his writing should be in harmony with his basic faith and his experiences in life. The distinction we are making is one of function and situation, rather than a qualitative one. For the purpose of this article we will consider the first relationship, music written for the church, although we do not wish to overlook the significance of the other area.

A Look at the Past

Throughout the history of the church the arts have held varying degrees of importance in the life of the church and the Christian community. Practices have

ranged from almost complete rejection on the one hand to an indiscriminate absorption of the immediate culture on the other.

The early church inherited the rich Jewish tradition of psalm singing. A new body of Christian hymns and chants developed and by the fourth century the use of instruments was rather common. The development and use of the Gregorian chant in the following centuries was a musical high point not only for the church but for the development of music in western civilization.

During the years 1000 to 1500 A.D., the music of the church was at the very heart of the musical culture of its day. Composers of church music were in many cases men of considerable stature in their society, and the church served as a patron of the arts. The perfection of the art of polyphonic writing (writing for several voice parts) contributed to the sixteenth century's golden age of church music.

During the same century the various reformers modified or drastically altered the role of church music in their own practices. Martin Luther shifted the emphasis from the choir and organ to the congregational hymn. He and his followers wrote new tunes or adapted melodies from other sources. During the following two hundred years a rich tradition of Protestant church music developed, centering in Germany and culminating in the incomparable music of J.S. Bach, who wrote cantatas, oratorios, passions, and a great variety of organ works for use in the church. Bach was employed by the church as a composer and performer.

The Reformed Church of Zwingli and Calvin discontinued the use of instruments and emphasized the singing of psalms. Some reformers omitted all singing, but this did not become a general practice.

The Anabaptists rejected instruments, and used hymns from their own experiences such as the martyr hymns of the *Ausbund*, or borrowed from the new hymnody of the other reformers. Eventually, unaccompanied four-part singing became a standard practice for many Mennonite groups, and singing played a vital role in the worship of the people.

Organs were introduced in some European Mennonite congregations in the eighteenth century and in North America in the nineteenth century. Current practice includes some groups which freely use choirs and organs in their worship. Others retain unaccompanied congregational singing, and either do not have choirs, or use them only for occasions other than the worship service. The performances of cantatas and oratorios, representing some of the great choral works in music literature, are important events in many communities and church-related schools.

Many migrations and persecutions, rigors of pioneer living, and emphasis on simplicity in living, and a general suspicion of the arts have in the past limited American Mennonite participation in the arts. How-

ever, in the twentieth century, new attitudes have been developing and many Mennonites have made and are making significant contributions to music as composers, performers and teachers.

The Nature of Music

Tensions between musicians and the church sometimes arise from a misunderstanding of the nature and role of music.

Music consists of sounds of definite pitch organized in a significant way through the use of melody, harmony, rhythm, and timbre. A meaningful form is achieved through the use of basic aesthetic principles such as tension and resolution, unity and variety, and development. Music has the ability to articulate important aspects of human experience which cannot be adequately expressed through ordinary speech. Simply stated music expresses human feelings. It is, however, not just the self-expression of personal emotion; perhaps one might say that music expresses the nature of human feeling. Certain emotions can be expressed more directly by laughing, crying, or shouting. Music is abstracted or removed from the immediate situation and gives us a way of looking at or listening to our inner experiences. The rise and fall of melody, the changes in tempo, the shifting harmonies, and the motion of the rhythm have a resemblance to the inner dynamics of our experiences—the patterns of our thinking and feeling. The composer develops musical ideas which relate to his experience and the listener responds by recognizing similarities to his own.

Words have a relatively fixed meaning and can be translated and defined, while the individual musical note is dependent on its context for meaning. Since music expresses certain aspects of experience which words are less able to do, it is not surprising that a clear verbal description of the meaning of music is difficult to formulate. This situation has led some people to erroneous attitudes toward music. Two opposing views must be mentioned.

Some musicians have assumed that music is on a higher and more exalted level than words. They would have a condescending attitude toward those who do not find significant meaning in music. This attitude is not justified. There are some persons with keen and sensitive minds for whom music does not speak significantly.

A more prevalent danger is the conclusion that since music cannot be clearly defined or explained it must be unimportant. Some philosophers and theologians seek neat systems of thought and have difficulty incorporating the arts into their systems. There is a temptation to dismiss as irrelevant that which cannot be readily defined or classified.

Though music often exists autonomously in the concert hall, in the church it is related directly or indirectly to verbal expression. In the Bible, the written word

records and interprets the events of the Incarnation. The reading of the Bible, corporate prayer, and preaching are primary aspects of our worship. Our Christian faith and experience are transmitted primarily through the written and spoken word. But we also sing of our faith.

Music With and Without Words

A hymn, an anthem, a cantata, or an oratorio represent a fusion of two modes of expression—words and music. The composer attempts to strengthen, enrich, and interpret the text through music. When the two elements are compatible they will strengthen each other, and yet each will have an artistic integrity of its own.

The use of music without words (instrumental music) has been more controversial in the history of the church, particularly pertaining to its role in the worship service. Some churches exclude instruments in order to preserve the simplicity of unaccompanied singing. Others use instruments, particularly the organ, to accompany the congregational hymn, the choir anthem, or to play a prelude and offertory.

During the late medieval period voices and instruments were sometimes freely interchanged in performance depending on the performers who were available. The development of independent organ works for the church reached a high point in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, particularly in the music of Bach. Many of his organ works are chorale preludes which are a type of hymn-tune variation. Other organ works without a specific chorale melody are also appropriate in character for use in the church. A clear line of distinction cannot be made between sacred and secular instrumental music. The presence of a familiar hymn tune does not automatically make a piece appropriate for the worship service. On the other hand we do not need to have a verbal association with all the music used in worship.

A composer of instrumental music needs some guidelines as to what is most suitable for the situation. A suitable instrumental piece for worship should have artistic merit and integrity, sincerity, a contemplative quality, and be free from sensational or cheap effects. It is frequently, though not necessarily, based on a hymn tune. It should have a quality which implicitly leads the listener to praise God and to seek to draw closer to Him in spirit. Its purpose is not to entertain, or merely to create a mood, but to glorify God.

The Contemporary Scene

Until the sixteenth century the writing of music for the church was at the very heart of the creative effort of many of the great composers. Despite notable exceptions such as Bach, the center of creative effort moved away from the church in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Though most composers wrote

some oratorios and masses, the typical composer of the nineteenth century was focusing his chief attention on the symphony, chamber music, piano music, art song or opera. In the twentieth century, writing for the church is typically a sideline or in the hands of composers of lesser stature and ability. There are, of course, notable exceptions to this generalization. The twentieth century has produced some great oratorios and masses which are frequently performed in churches and concert halls.

The music of the church usually is written in the style of its time. However, being generally conservative musically, the church has sometimes preferred a style from a previous century rather than the current idioms. Our century has seen rapid changes in musical expression. Greater use of dissonance, new rhythmic procedures and modification or rejection of traditional melodic patterns have caused frequent misunderstandings between composer and listener. Though some contemporary music is difficult for many persons to understand, there has in recent years been increased receptivity and openness to the newer music among most listeners. Much of this change is attributed to unconscious conditioning through the "background" music of radio, television and cinema.

Today's composer of music for the church will likely receive his training in a university or conservatory and will develop a style of writing compatible with his time period. His music will therefore not sound like Mendelssohn, just as Mendelssohn's music does not closely resemble Bach's. He must accept some limitations both technical and stylistic. Technical limitations are common to all compositions—writing music which is singable or playable by the intended performers. These limitations vary tremendously. Compare, for example, a song for primary Sunday school with a piece for professional choir and orchestra. Stylistic limitations are more difficult to define. A composition of merit must present something new and fresh and yet not be incomprehensible. It must be close enough to the experience of the performers that they can effectively interpret it. The music of the church must be of high quality; it should speak in the language of its time, and yet it is a doubtful place for most avant-garde musical experiments. It should be remembered that complexity and quality are not synonymous in music; neither are simplicity and mediocrity.

The increased use of harmonic dissonance in contemporary music is disturbing to some persons. This is true partly because of the feeling that good music must be beautiful in the narrow sense of being "pretty." The stories in the Bible are not all "pretty," neither is forceful preaching of the Gospel. The deeper experiences of life include tensions and struggles, and our music should express these. Sometimes a worship service needs to be disturbing as well as comforting. If used properly, and in good balance, dissonance can

add tremendously to the vocabulary of the composer. It might be added that unrelieved dissonance is as monotonous as unrelieved consonance.

A musical idiom in itself does not make music better or poorer. The twentieth century will have as many great composers as did the eighteenth. One difference is that time and usage have revealed the great works of the past, while the weaker ones have become lost. In the present scene this sorting process has not yet taken place; therefore, we hear today's music of enduring quality alongside that of lesser quality.

The contemporary composer of church music will find a challenging field in providing anthems, cantatas and organ music for use in the church and by performers in church-related schools and colleges. He may also have opportunity to write larger works for a choir with orchestra. The field of hymnody, however, may present some problems. The contemporary idiom has not yet adapted itself readily to singable, four-part congregational hymns. The hymnody of churches which traditionally sing unison melody offers a wider range of possibilities. A simple melody for the congregation combined with imaginative harmonic patterns for the organ is less limiting in its possibilities. There are examples of creative new works in the field of hymnody, and it is hoped that these will continue to be produced. The need to combine high quality with simplicity can be a real challenge for a composer.

The Christian should seek to relate all aspects of his life with his faith. In addition to music specifically for the church, the composer will write other works such as for piano, chamber music and symphony. It is his hope that the musical ideas which are expressed are compatible with his total life experience, and his relationship to Christ. This cannot be done in an overt or conscious way, but must come as a free and honest expression of his insights and understandings.

Future Trends

Some current developments in the musical world should be mentioned.

The first is the use of jazz for the worship service. Shocking as the idea is to some, experiments have been made with a jazz liturgy. There is a logic in saying that church music must be in the language of the people. Since jazz is the primary musical experience for many, some feel that the church must appropriate it for its purpose. It is true that much church music has secular origins. However, it is usually after the secular connotations are forgotten that it becomes most effective in the church. For example, we are not bothered by the fact that the melody for, "O Sacred Head Now Wounded" was originally used for the text, "My Peace of Mind Is Shattered by the Charms of a Tender Maiden." Many jazz procedures have been incorporated in the mainstream of contemporary music. However, jazz will probably not be readily appropriated by our generation for church use, because of its strong associations with other situations.

Even as the general public is becoming acquainted with Bartok and Stravinsky, and the musician is studying Schoenberg and Weber, the avant-garde composers are moving in new directions. One of these areas, electronic music, uses a variety of generators, a distortion of sounds and the tape recorder. The listener hears electronic music directly from the tape; thus the performer is bypassed. A vast gamut of sounds and complexities of rhythms can be produced in this way which are beyond the capabilities of the human performer. One might say that this type of music is definitely still in an experimental stage.

Some experiments bear fruit; others die in a short time. It is easy to dismiss the experimenter as being irrelevant, only to find his work coming to prominence at a later time. Though it would be premature to try to incorporate some of the newest trends into the music of the church, we must be continually open to finding new avenues of expression. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is not limited to one mode of expression. Each generation must find a fresh way of presenting the truth of the Gospel and communicating the experiences and insights of those who attempt to live by it.

THE FINE ARTS

Featured in *Mennonite Life*

SINCE 1946 WHEN *Mennonite Life* was first published it has featured various phases of the fine arts. The view that the Mennonites have "never" been interested in the "fine arts" needs to be explained. It is true that the rural Mennonites of America and some European countries have been late in appreciating and participating in the production of the fine arts. They have in certain areas developed fine qualities in and an appreciation of the practical arts, but have lagged

in an appreciation of the higher arts with the exception of singing.

However, Mennonites in urban settings, particularly in Western European countries, the Netherlands and Northwest Germany, have made an unusually significant contribution in the realm of the fine arts including painting and literature. The following list of ar-

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THE LIFE AND METHOD OF MUSIC

By Mary K. Oyer

MOST CHRISTIAN GROUPS find that music is a basic means of expression. They have grown up singing hymns, and they assume that music contributes something to the texts. However, when the texts are removed the music becomes a bit more mystifying; and when a composition extends to twenty minutes in length, it leaves the realm of the "useful" and "practical." If it should include harsh and strident combinations of sound, questions of its validity may arise.

Is music a valid part of the Christian's world? Does its significance go beyond the role of supporting a text? An examination of a simple hymn tune could point to some basic characteristics of music:

Tallis' Ordinal



Tallis' Ordinal was written for a specific text, but for nearly four centuries it has been used as a "common tune"; it appears with a large number of different texts in common meter—eight syllables followed by six with a second pair of eight and six. In spite of its simplicity and brevity it has maintained its interest throughout the years and appears now in many hymnals.

The tune would usually function as a vehicle for the text. It would likely support pairs of phrases and the rhyme scheme of the poetry. But beyond that it would "say" something in itself—something nonverbal. Just what its message is can hardly be captured in words. We can only see some of the ways in which the music "speaks."

It consists of four phrases which group in pairs. The rising first phrase is answered by the second, which reaches the highest point of the tune. The third begins again as the first and is answered by the fourth, which is parallel to but lower than the second. Phrases one and two form the first member of a pair which is completed by three and four.

The word "answer" suggests a parallel with speech.

In a sense the melody is like a conversation in which questions or statements are presented and answered. In this case the questions are identical except that one comes after the other. Phrase three is asking the same question, perhaps more emphatically; it receives a related, yet different, answer. The first answer, Phrase two, reaches to the highest point and pulls the farthest away from the low keynote (F) on which the tune begins and ends. The second answer, Phrase four, has the same shape as the first. This time, however, it ends on the keynote and makes a more convincing conclusion—a more decisive answer to the question.

The tune also reflects basic movements in nature. Question and answer pairs appear in many things that move; time, with alternating day and night, tides, with their ebb and flow, and breathing are a few of the clearest examples.

The low keynote presents a kind of pull not unlike a gravitational force. It is an insistent note which creates tension whenever any other note is sounded and constantly urges the melodic line back to itself. We respond to the pull with a sense of relief and satisfaction when we arrive at the last note.

The repetition of a pulse, similar to a heart-beat, characterizes the tune. However the monotony of too much repetition is broken by the always-changing direction of the melody which the rhythm supports. The presence of both repetition and change, inter-acting upon each other, reflect one of the most basic characteristics of the created world. The leaves on one tree are similar but never identical; they are always varied. Clouds appear frequently enough that we recognize and identify them. However, the sky never appears exactly the same. It is always shifting, both in cloud formations and light effects.

The tune is related also to human experience. It touches the emotions in some way. Tension, relief, satisfaction have been mentioned already, but these are quite general emotions that would characterize the large majority of musical works. The smooth movement of this particular melody might suggest an over-all effect of calmness and peace, with one active, stretching spot in Phrase two. It is probably fairer to say, however, that a specific emotion can hardly be identified. Rather the listener encounters a combination of emotions—perhaps opposing ones appearing at the same time, much as joy and grief,

for example, may appear together in an actual situation. The hymn tune presents emotions, but they can be known better by direct experience than by attempts to verbalize them.

This brief tune is a miniature version of aspects of many long and complex compositions. The first movement of a symphony usually makes a statement, departs from it, and returns to a restatement in the original key. The statements and departure are of course expanded far beyond the limits of this hymn tune; but the basic principles of construction—the logic of the “speech”—are much the same.

Music, then, has a life and method of its own which in some ways parallels communication with language. It makes use of basic movements of nature and reveals areas of experience that cannot be cap-

tured by words.

The listener welcomes music because it expands his experience. It stretches his ways of knowing life and lets him share in the experiences of a composer who took the trouble to turn his insights into sound rather than speech. The listener can understand these insights providing he cares enough to follow as attentively as he would another person in conversation. Patient reflection will help him to see why twenty minutes rather than two were needed to carry out a particular musical conversation in a logical way. It may show him how clashing, “ugly” sounds might be needed to make resolution clear. Music is as valid for the Christian as any serious attempt to communicate with another person—to share a significant area of experience.

THE FINE ARTS IN THE BIBLE

By Orlando Schmidt

“*Jubal* . . . the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe.” “*Miriam*, the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, with timbrels and dancing.” “*Huramabi* . . . trained to work in gold, silver, bronze, iron, stone, and wood, and in purple, blue, and crimson fabrics and fine linen, and to do all sorts of engraving and execute any design that may be assigned him.” “*Heman* and *Jeduthun* (with) trumpets and cymbals for the music and instruments for sacred song.” “*Chenaniah*, the leader of the music of the singers.” (Gen. 4:21; Ex. 15:20; 2 Chron. 2:13,14; 1 Chron. 16:24; 1 Chron. 15:27.)

These are only six people skilled in the fine arts, who are mentioned in the Bible. There are hundreds more. We might recognize a few of their names, like David and Miriam; but almost all of them are strangers to most people. They live in many social positions, from the laboring class to royalty. Some of them seem to express themselves spontaneously, without much previous experience; others are well trained. Certain men and women are engaged in artistic expression daily, by appointment, and as their sole occupation, dance while they work and play just because they want to. All of them are a part of what might be called “Fine Arts in the Bible.”

A Definition of the Term

Technically all of the Bible would be considered as an expression within the realm of the fine arts. For literature is often treated as such, especially when the beauty of language and forms becomes as important as the subject matter of the writing. And where is there a peer for the succinct narratives of Genesis and Samuel, the short story of Ruth, the drama of Job, the musical poetry of the Psalms, the images of Jeremiah and Zechariah, the beautiful language of Hosea and Amos, the direct and purposeful accounts of Luke and the almost fantastic visions of the Apocalypse? But literature is not within the limits of this study. Here we are more interested in the nonverbal expressions that have become part of everyday life.

A popular notion of the fine arts would include anything that is concerned with the beautiful—beautiful carvings, beautiful columns, beautiful cloth or beautiful music. And it is true that some well-recognized authorities define it thus. But we can hardly limit our study with such a fickle explanation; for beauty has never been satisfactorily defined, even after generations of effort. A broader definition would include all

creative activities that are not useful. In the light of the increasing dignity and worth associated with the utilitarian in our own day, and particularly in the absence of such a concept in the Scriptures, this second definition also cannot be accepted.

To simplify matters and for purposes of classification, this discussion will be limited to those creative, nonverbal expressions which today are generally accepted as composing the fine arts—architecture, music, sculpture and the graphic arts (ideas expressed by means of lines or colors on a surface). The dance is usually included in this list, but since it finds only a minor role in the Bible and is generally associated with music, it will not be studied separately.

I MUSIC

From the first reference in Genesis to the Hallelujah chorus of the redeemed, the Bible includes more than 250 portions that mention the musical expression of its characters. This material begins with the name of Jubal, a descendant of Cain and of the ninth generation in the Biblical account. All we know of him is that "he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe." His family must have been outstanding, for his brother, Jabal, was "the father of those who dwell in tents and have cattle." A half-brother, Tubalcain, "was the forger of all instruments of bronze and iron." This one statement does not say very much. We do not even know precisely what kind of instruments the lyre and pipe may have been (the King James version calls them "harp and organ"). No doubt the earliest lyre produced its tone with several strings, and the pipe sounded a coarse fluty tone, originating with a reed or bone. It is noteworthy, however, that in this early account from the dawn of civilization, musical instruments are listed together with working tools. Musical expression apparently was considered as important as the development of occupations. Whether this music was utilitarian or aesthetic in nature we do not know. But perhaps its presence at this point is enough to indicate that the ability of expression in a nonverbal medium is basic to man.

Songs, Psalms and Hymns

The most cumulative and impressive body of "musical" material in the Bible is made up of songs generally inspired by great and unusual experiences of God's people. The earliest song was sung "to the Lord" by Moses and the people of Israel, who burst forth with thanksgiving for the Red Sea deliverance.

"I will sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea" (Ex. 15:1).

This was repeated by Miriam and the women in continued singing and dancing. Other songs of Israel evolved when the Lord provided water at Beer, and when the Amorites were defeated. One of the most poignant

lyrics is the song of Moses, given to the people before entering the land of Canaan (Deut. 32). Debora and Barak after the victory over Sisera sang in contemplation of what had happened. A large choir accompanied by many instruments sang a worthy song of praise when the ark of God had been restored to Israel.

The hymnbook of the Bible, the Psalms, is a collection of verses that has been sung more often than any other literature. Many of the Psalms, according to their titles, were inspired by moving experiences of David, like his flight from Absalom, his escape from the enemies of Saul, the encounter with Nathan "after he had gone in to Bathsheba," following some unusually great victories in battle and when he was in the wilderness. Probably the best-known psalms and the ones sung most often are the fifteen Psalms of Ascent (120 to 134). These are songs that were sung by the faithful while traveling three times a year to Jerusalem for the various feasts. As they climbed the road up through the hills and pitched their tents they sang these songs, which over a long period became something like folk songs, charged with deep religious feelings.

Where are the songs of the New Testament? We know the early church was a singing church, for Paul wrote on several occasions about the "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" that were obviously a part of the worship of the church. But what did they sing? Even as the "hymn" sung by Jesus and His disciples at the Last Supper was likely a Psalm, so the earliest Christians sang the Psalms; for these were the songs they knew and loved. But we can also assume that something new was added! Though the New Testament does not offer labels, several short expressions seem to be fragments of hymns.

"Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead,
And Christ shall give you light." (Eph. 5:14)

"He was manifested in the flesh.

Vindicated in the Spirit, seen by angels,

Preached among the nations.

Believed on in the world, taken up in glory."

(1 Tim. 3:16)

These and others were likely known so well by the early Christians that the writer did not need to comment on the fact that they were portions of hymns. Then there is the Revelation of John, sometimes called the "hymnbook of the New Testament." Some scholars believe that the hymns of the Apocalypse are not merely visionary but based on the practice that was current in the church in that day.

"Great and wonderful are thy deeds,

O Lord God the Almighty!

Just and true are thy ways,

O King of the ages!

Who shall not fear and glorify thy name, O Lord?

For thou alone art holy.

All nations shall come and worship thee, for thy judgments have been revealed." (Rev. 15:3)

What about the tunes of Biblical hymns? Although some systems of notation may have been devised, we have no knowledge of them. Thus we cannot really know the melodies of the ancients. We can only surmise that they were exceedingly simple, unison melodies of several notes.

Organized Choirs and Orchestras

The organization of musicians for worship, established by David, continued in Solomon's time and revived during times of reform, was quite imposing. The importance given to these musicians was remarkable. Many names of singers, as well as instrumentalists, are listed. Musicians lived in the chambers of the temple, were free from other services and were required to be on duty day and night. They were dressed in fine linen, (the first choir robes!) were supported by the people and had a specific salary for their services. Instrumentalists seemed to be as important as the singers. When David was old he appointed the Levites for services in the house of the Lord, saying, ". . . four thousand shall offer praises to the Lord with the instruments which I have made for praise" (1 Chr. 23:5).

One of the most unusual, recorded events of the Old Testament took place during the reign of Jehoshaphat, when "those who were to sing to the Lord and praise him in holy array" went before the army to meet the enemy, singing, "Give thanks to the Lord, for his steadfast love endures for ever" (2 Chr. 20). In the New Testament there is no record of organized choirs for worship.

Musical Instruments

The study of musical instruments in the Bible is fascinating but difficult, fascinating because of the many references in so many contexts, and difficult because it is not easy to translate various Hebrew terms used for musical instruments. Some were used for worship, others not. Some were played only by women, others only by men. There were bells attached to the high priest's robe, cymbals used mostly by priests to accompany other instruments, castanets (rattlers) for making noise at joyous occasions, the secular flute or pipe, never played for formal worship, trumpets of all sizes and shapes played in battle as well as in worship, the shofar (ram's horn) for special use as a signalling instrument but also for certain rituals, and the timbrel, a typical women's instrument not permitted in the temple. The most complex and aristocratic instruments were the strings, such as the lyre and the harp, which belonged to the Levitical orchestra. Bands of prophets prophesied with harps, tambourines, flutes, and the lyre. Trumpets were blown

to start or stop fighting and to scare the enemy. David played the lyre to assuage the madness of Saul. Harps, lyres, and cymbals accompanied the ark into Jerusalem. When Solomon was anointed king, the trumpets and pipes were so loud that "the earth was split." Trumpets and horns accompanied the oath that Asa took to the Lord. The Levites with the "instruments of David" and "priests with trumpets" played no small role in the opening of the temple under Hezekiah. The often used "Selah" of the Psalms and Habakkuk has never yet been satisfactorily explained but was probably an indication for an instrumental interlude during the singing. The most classic and complete listing of instruments in praise of God is the 150th Psalm.

According to Isaiah, God's punishment will be accompanied by timbrels and lyres. People go to the mountain of the Lord to the sound of the flutes. For Jeremiah the trumpet warns of impending destructions. Ezekiel refers to the lyre as a symbol of joy and prosperity; the same prophet speaks of "one who sings love songs with a beautiful voice and plays well on an instrument" (serenade?). Amos denounces those who had lost a true sense of justice and yet sing songs accompanied by the harp. Trumpets and harps are the instruments of the Revelation to John, the former to announce, herald or warn and the latter used in the worship of God.

In summarizing the place of music in the Bible, three suggestions can be made. Music was a part of the texture and structure of life itself. It was particularly suitable for the worship of God. The detailed accounts of the Old Testament make this obvious, and the New Testament references imply that music fulfilled a need in the worshipping community as the Christian church was in the throes of life. Music was basically a form of communication, capable of expressing truth and human emotions.

II ARCHITECTURE

Probably none of the fine arts made such a profound impression on the Hebrews and received such a generous description in the Bible as architecture. Occasionally the Bible speaks of the construction of houses and palaces, but the one great subject for the record is the house of worship.

Tabernacle

The tabernacle or tent of meeting was the first of the centers of worship of Israel in Palestine. The meaning of the term "tabernacle" is dwelling. It was a dwelling place of Israel's God. And since it formed the basis for the later temple, it cannot be dismissed as unimportant. God commanded that this sanctuary should be erected with voluntary gifts from the people. The tabernacle was a tent of ten curtains of various colors held together with violet thread and gold clasps. Over this was a tent, made of several curtains of goat's hair,

completely covering the tabernacle. In addition to the curtains, the tabernacle required metals of gold, silver, and brass. Other textile fabrics of blue, purple, scarlet and white were needed. Badger skins and ram skins dyed red were used. The wood was the product of the wild acacia, which grew in the desert. Oil, spices and incense were requested for anointing and burning. The people gave jewels for the robes of the priests. All these contributed to what became the center of Israel's community.

The focal point of this place was the ark of the testimony, constructed with acacia wood, overlaid with gold and containing the tables of the law. This ark was placed within the innermost portion of the tabernacle. Above it was the "mercy seat," a gold slab with little figures of gold at each end known as cherubim. This is where God said "I will speak with you of all that I will give you in commandment for the people of Israel" (Ex. 25:22). Other articles in the tabernacle included: an altar of incense made of acacia wood overlaid with pure gold, a seven-branched golden lampstand decorated with almonds and floral designs, a table of the shewbread also constructed with acacia and covered with gold. In the court of the tabernacle were placed the bronze altar of burnt offering and the laver, or washing stand.

In studying the accounts of Exodus several conclusions become rather obvious to the reader. First of all is the extensive detail of the instructions for this sanctuary. The Lord was positively specific in the description of every detail. Secondly, there is a purpose for everything. Although the symbolism of this structure may not seem relevant to twentieth century concepts of Christian worship, it was a fulfillment of the most solemn aspirations of the Israelites in the desert and an adequate expression of their understanding of God and worship. Thirdly, the materials for the tabernacle were the finest that were available and demanded the best that could be offered by the people who built it.

The Temple

Four hundred and eighty years after the Exodus Solomon began to build the first of the three Jerusalem temples. He was inspired by his father, David, who wanted to construct it himself and prepared many of the materials and plans. Solomon called on Hiram, the Phoenician king of Tyre, to provide skilled workmen as well as materials. Thirty thousand forced laborers from his own country were put to work. Although wood came from Lebanon, bronze from distant copper mines, and gold and ivory from far away in the south, the basic building material came from the stone quarries in and around Jerusalem. Seven years were needed to finish the task.

The ground plan of the temple was an enlargement of the tabernacle with a few changes and additions, such as rooms along the sides and two massive

columns at the entrance. A huge basin rested on twelve bronze bulls. The cherubim in the holy of holies were enormous figures made of gold-trimmed olive-wood. The inside rooms and ceilings were covered with wood, carved with figures of palm trees, cherubim, gourds and flowers. Doors were covered with intricate art work, and the capitals of the columns were decorated with lily-work and pomegranates. In speaking of the furnishings the Biblical account uses freely the word "gold," indicating the lavishness of the overall scheme.

After reading the complete description of Solomon's temple, one receives several strong impressions. First, there is a strong emphasis on the decorative, rather than the functional. Although the overall plan was no doubt based on the worship pattern, the writer seems to be especially concerned about the greatness and the beauty of it all. Secondly, the descriptions speak very little of basic lines but a great deal about carvings and furnishings, gold and precious wood, jewels and fabrics, and carved cherubim, oxen and floral designs.

Zerubbabel's temple, completed on the same site about 450 years later, although similar in plan and size to Solomon's structure, was not so rich and costly. Some furnishings were absent or fewer in number, and the temple stood alone, not in a palace complex.

Herod's temple was started about 20 B.C. and destroyed in 70 A.D. Solomon's ground plan was maintained with little change, but Herod greatly enlarged the surrounding area with numerous porticoes, all in the Greek manner. The New Testament offers more than a hundred references to this temple, but few offer any information about the structure itself. We do know, however, that the building must have been a most impressive structure and played an important role in the Jerusalem of Jesus' day.

III SCULPTURE AND GRAPHIC ARTS

"You shall not make yourself a graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. . ." (Ex. 20:4). These strong words of the second commandment were taken seriously by Israel and no doubt were responsible for the paucity of expression in this area. The above quotation was intended to prevent the practice of idolatry, which was the prevailing custom of all the nations that surrounded Israel. ". . . you shall not bow down to them or serve them."

In the light of such a strong command, it is surprising that the temple building and furnishings included any carvings and sculpture at all. The golden cherubim, the bronze bulls and the numerous carvings on the walls, however, were clearly decorative or symbolic in nature. They were never intended for objects of worship.

In Israel's earlier history a fiery serpent was made of bronze, set up on a pole for the healing of those

afflicted with snake-bite (Num.21:8.9). Even this serpent, which had been preserved, was later destroyed; because people had been burning incense to it (2 Kings 18:4).

The mother of Micah, an Ephraimite in the time of the Judges, had a silversmith make a graven image with 200 pieces of silver, after the silver had been consecrated to the Lord. This was obviously not an acceptable practice, for the account ends with these words: "every man did what was right in his own eyes" (Judges 17:6).

Creations in the field of the graphic arts are practically nonexistent in the Biblical record. This is quite understandable, for the materials that we think of in terms of this medium simply did not exist in ancient times.

Observations

1. Since the purpose of the Bible is not to present a record or a study of the fine arts, the reader is im-

pressed with the *many* references, indicating that non-verbal expressions were considered acceptable and desirable.

2. The New Testament has relatively few references in comparison to the Old Testament. This is understandable when we consider the brief time covered in the narrative, the nature of the material, and the unsettled conditions that accompanied the establishment of the Christian church.

3. The bulk of the material that speaks of the fine arts is related to the worship of God. This seems to indicate that it is quite normal for man to employ the fine arts in an effort to preserve the revelation that has come from God and to respond to Him in acts of worship.

4. The fine arts in the Bible are never really in a position for moral criticism as arts. They are accepted as legitimate means of expression, growing out of the nature of man, enriching his total experience and contributing varied dimensions for the expression of truth.

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articles constitutes a selection of articles which have appeared in *Mennonite Life* since 1946. A more complete list can be found in the index published in January, 1956 and January, 1961 under: "Art," "Architecture," "Fiction," "Hymnology," "Music," "Poetry," etc. Copies of the issues of *Mennonite Life* can be obtained from the *Mennonite Life* Office, North Newton, Kansas, at 75 cents each or 50 cents each if three or more copies are ordered.

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CRACKING WALNUTS

By Arnold Willis Cressman

Part I

I USED TO CRACK walnuts with a vise. It was easy. You'd turn up the vise until it was caught and then you'd take your time—just a little tighter and a little tighter. Some would take a lot more effort than others. Some would resist the squeeze with little crackles. Others would crumble suddenly with one sharp crack and a quick collapse. But you never hurt your fingers with a vise. You could give the nuts all the punishment they would take.

We have been crushing the artist like a walnut. More than anyone else the artist needs to be appreciated. But we have not appreciated him in the American Mennonite church. We have asked him to paint for us. Then we have hemmed him in by telling him out of our utilitarian blindness what to paint. O.K. he said and he began. He put his whole life into it. He painted the picture with drops of his blood (if you can stand the image). And he produced a masterpiece of creativity and message, in spite of the limitations imposed upon him. As he brushed in the last expressive touches, we looked over his shoulder. While he waited for one word of appreciation, a hint of understanding, some response—verbal or nonverbal—anything—he held his breath because his life was in it. The talent that is so rare that God entrusted it only to a few had been given to him and he had not buried it. While his brush was poised for the finishing touches, he waited hopefully for a gentle pat on the back. Just an appreciative pat—that would have been enough. We looked on perfunctorily like an insensitive father looks up from his newspaper when the little boy says, "Look, Daddy, my block castle is finished!" Then we walked quickly out of the room a little ashamed we had wasted our own time and kept the artist from his work. We paused momentarily at the door to say curtly, "Put it on the shelf," then we hurried away to do more important things.

Real understanding for good achievements is sorely needed by the contemporary Mennonite artist. Without an appreciative reaction, we crush the creativity God has given him. And when we do, we are guilty. Unless we say, "Well done," we are spading a burial spot for talents that could greatly enrich the church.

Of course we excuse ourselves. We are not ordinary

ly artistically oriented. We come from a utilitarian background. If a Mennonite woman did have an artist's heart in those days, she had to make a butterfly quilt because a quilt was at least useful. Art for art's sake was literally for the birds. We forgot that Jesus did notice the birds and the lilies of the field. Well, we did not come here by accident. Many currents and winds pressed in upon this particular utilitarian shore. But we need not stay here. There are hints that we won't. There is a whole continent of undiscovered value for us in good art. Presently it is difficult for us even to know what is good. We are apt to think only of its functional value. A picture, we think, is to be hung on an empty wall in a living room. It is not the message that matters to us. We'd rather match its colors with our rugs. There are better values in art than this. We haven't really learned how a picture can talk to us or even which ones can talk and which ones are mute.

Here is where the artist will help us if we will let him. He will teach us the language. He will start with us where we are, at the utilitarian level, if only we will give him the satisfaction of a little progress. We must recognize that there is a Gamaliel at whose feet we can learn a great deal. He can open the windows of our soul.

There are some needs in the artist himself which must be met before he will be set fully free to help us. We must take him out of the vise. We must stop thinking of him as a nut. We will not get the kernel by cracking him. He must have freedom—freedom to express himself in unconventional ways. He must be given room to experiment, to fulfill himself. He has a right to be himself, to make mistakes like the rest of us.

We should make it possible financially and otherwise for our Mennonite artists to communicate with each other. For the Mennonite writer, there is the *Christian Writer* and occasional writers' conferences, but what is there for the artist? What encouragement has been given to an artists fellowship or an inter-Mennonite art display? Why not? Mostly we have relegated the artist's talent to the dungeon of marginal time—at least the truly creative part of it. We will pay him to illustrate what someone has written, but we will

usually not pay him for what he himself has truly created out of his own soul. We have usually not let him speak to the issues of our time through a picture. And this is ironic if we believe that "one good picture says more than a thousand words."

Jan Gleysteen has spoken to me about the artist's part in bringing the Mennonite audience from the purely utilitarian approach to the artistic to the more unconfining use of art as a form of worship and of communication.

He feels that it is a tremendous challenge, almost an impossible challenge, to serve artistically in the Mennonite church at this point in its history. He is not sure but that he may have walked over the hill before real art will be truly appreciated generally among Mennonites. However, he feels that the right place to work at it is in the denominational publishing house where the traffic of communication flows the thickest. He feels too that there is hope on the horizon. Already

people are beginning to talk about the specifics. And just like the appreciation level for good music and good writing has gone steadily up in the last decade, so it will go up in art. The day will come when we will once again find the measuring stick for good art which our fathers threw away in the wilderness of their utilitarian preoccupation. But we must let the artist help us find it.

Or to put it differently, we must let him teach us the language. I get the impression that we are doing little more than making noises about art. We are not saying meaningful words. And since we know we are artistically illiterate, we are afraid even to say what we feel and think even at the low level of our understanding. This is terribly hard on the artist because if we thank him at all we thank him for his simplest stuff. This is the only art we understand. And this is sobering in its seriousness. How long would a violinist play Handel on a desert island where there is nobody but a chimpanzee to grin at him from a tree branch?

Part II

FORTUNATELY WE already have a few accomplished artists who are at work in our churches. In these lies our hope both of becoming more literate ourselves in art appreciation and more creative as Mennonites in artistic techniques. But we must encourage and not crush them. Perhaps the first step is to get to know the artists themselves. This must be done one at a time. Let me tell you about Jan Gleysteen.

Jan was born in a Mennonite home in Amsterdam, Holland, in 1931. Very early he became aware that he had been given an artist's heart. At 17 he began studying at the Amsterdam Municipal School for Art and later he studied, simultaneously in the evenings, at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts. During vacations and for a whole year after completing his education in Holland, the artist within him drove him by bicycle throughout western and southern Europe. He sketched and painted as he biked, getting acquainted with the well-known European artists and visiting the art museums. In 1953 the Mennonite Church of Amsterdam put on a one-man show of Gleysteen's travel sketches, paintings and prints. And fortunately there were enough Amsterdammers who recognized good art and were willing to pay for it. The sale of his work provided just enough money to come to America where he studied at Goshen College and at Eastern Mennonite College. He worked as an artist at the Mennonite Publishing House during vacations for two years and full time since 1955. Although Jan has been influenced by a fellow country man, Vincent van Gogh, and the French impressionists, he has, like all accomplished

artists, developed an originality all his own. He has fallen in love with our country to the extent that he has been back to his native land only once for a visit, although he originally intended to stay in America for only one or two years. And recently he became a U.S. citizen. He is married and has a daughter, Linda Jo, who is two and already enjoys doing the impressionistic work in watercolors.

Although Jan, like any American Mennonite artist at this time, works in the face of our deadpan unresponsiveness, he refuses to let his life become prosaic. Although the feedback of nine years of creativity in the Mennonite Publishing House publications has been crushingly disheartening, he refuses to let his talent lapse into mediocrity. This would be quite easy to do, of course, since most Mennonites would not detect the difference anyway. I am amazed repeatedly at his hopefulness for the day when art will be more fully on its own. He paints away enthusiastically as if to paint that day into existence the sooner. Yet no success is self-made and he admits it. One day he told me, "I don't know where I'd be myself without those who have believed in me."

Like all creative souls, Jan has an unusually wide range of interests. He has many hobbies; railroads, covered bridges, geology, travel, research writing, photography. It is difficult to separate interests and hobbies from actual work because Jan thinks of his work as a total job and there is only one way to do it, namely to work at it continuously. To abdicate even for an instant would be to break the continuity. Like Picasso,



NO ROOM FOR THEM IN SUBURBIA by Jan Gleysteen



MAINZ WORK CAMP, Germany, by Jan Gleysteen

he makes pictures all the time, day and night, seven days a week, mentally and concretely. He cannot do otherwise. He agrees wholeheartedly with the life motto of America's foremost painter, Andrew Wyeth, which is, "Be like a sponge, sop up every experience in life, and then don't forget to wring yourself dry." Thus his vacations are only extended "onlooking" (Martin Buber) experiences. These really are an extremely necessary phase of the artist's work. He gives his memory no tasks; he trusts its organic work which preserves what is worth preserving. He reads and travels all he can, taking as many different roads as possible between here and there. Often his wife, Barbara, does the driving, while in his "onlooking" he "sops up like a sponge." You ask him, "How long did it take to do that painting?" And he replies sincerely, "My whole life, up till now!"

Because of this wholistic approach to his work, Jan needs to spend no research time at all to draw a Conestoga wagon, Virginia mountains, old French towns, Burr truss bridges. It is this very trait that characterizes the true artist more than any other. He can never really take a vacation. His work is always where he is.

"Onlooking" broadens the perspective of the artist. Nothing can be seen in isolation. All things relate to everything else. So if you would ask Jan for his subjects the list would be formidable. He has painted birds, landscapes, architecture, city and town scenes, railroads, cathedrals, toys, fish, tollhouses, insects, watermills, and people. All of these come out in specifics so that the car parked by the old mill is a 1937 Ford down to the half-inch bars on the grill.

Jan's artistic spontaneity is another phase of his wholistic approach to art and is clearly related to "onlooking." He hardly ever follows the common practice of making preliminary sketches for two reasons. One is that he does not need to. The other is his fear of stifling spontaneity. He feels that when anything is copied, even from one's own sketches, one loses some spontaneity. He feels deeply that a more natural, unlabored result comes about by working directly on the full-sized final product. It is most interesting to watch him work. He draws directly in ink, or wash, as the case may be, and keeps on composing as he goes along. The final proportions of the art are usually determined when he decides the work is finished. "What if the result is unsatisfactory?" I asked, and he replied, "That happens occasionally, but for me this method is less time consuming in the end than a system of preliminary sketches and it is much more expressive." Jan is modest about his speed but the records speak quite clearly. He will do a "spot" in 20 minutes, a complete woodcut or an average illustration in two and one-half hours. A large watercolor piece will be completed in four to five hours, and a full sized illustration in six to eight hours.



DAWSON BRIDGE, by Jan Gleysteen

Another measure of the accomplished artist is the versatility of his techniques. While one method may catch the mood in one case, another may be far more apropos in another. Here the artist must have two qualities. He must choose which of a wide range of techniques outshines all the rest for a particular expression. Having made his choice he must be the master of the techniques he has selected. Jan Gleysteen has this versatility. He is clever with pen and ink, wood and linoleum cuts, scratchboards, watercolors, oils, cut paper, wash drawings, photograms, calligraphy, silkscreen, and monoprints.

Versatility comes out in another way as well—the scope of his work and activities. Besides being a staff artist for the Mennonite Publishing House, particularly in the area of adult magazines, he does tourist maps for counties, place mats, calligraphy, free-lance work such as folders, posters, brochures. Jan participates in art exhibits. He is a member of the Westmoreland County Museum of Art. He was president of the Scottsdale Art League and serves as chaplain for the Pittsburgh Club of Printing House Craftsmen. He is often asked to speak from his experience to art clubs. He regularly exhibits at western Pennsylvania art shows.

The American Mennonites are fortunate to have in Jan Gleysteen such a versatile and gifted artist at this point in their history. He is conventional enough in his approach to bridge, at least inasmuch as it can be done, the gap between contemporary art and the utilitarian appreciation of art from which they are emerging. For this reason he does not get a lot of negative letters. He does not find himself in a battle between artist and audience. Rather he shows tremen-

dous concern for the church where it is and sees the challenge of helping it find its ways through the haze. He believes sincerely that there will be a day when the bright sunlight of understanding will shine for us on many art forms.

There are a few ways to speed the process. One is to do more in the area of independent art. That is art that is not the window of an article, but art that communicates truth and convictions without words. Once we have learned that art is a way of addressing humanity directly and not just a gimmick to break the monotony of solid type on a page then a whole new dimension for its use will open to us. Jan has spoken out of his convictions through a piece of this type of art a few times in the *Christian Living* magazine. And there is another way. This is to shore up the artist himself in a Mennonite artist fellowship. There is no limit to the value of this. A greater self-awareness is needed in the artist group. They would need to answer many questions that are seldom asked such as, What is a Christian philosophy of art? What is our place in the church as responsible stewards of our artistic talents? How can we make people conscious of poor and good art? How can we make art best communicate to the church where it now is? An artist fellowship might include both professionals and amateurs with membership based on submitted works. It might have regional, local, and national meetings. It could sponsor exhibitions and sales, annual awards, and a bi-yearly magazine would help to stimulate interest. The cross fertilization of inter-Mennonite participation would be most valuable. (See also Jan Gleysteen's article "The Mennonite Artist and the Church," *Mennonite Life*, Oct., 1964).

REMBRANDT'S BIBLICAL DRAWINGS AND ETCHINGS

By *Hans-Martin Rotermund*

Translated by *John M. Janzen*

This essay forms the slightly abbreviated introduction to H.-M. Rotermund's book: Rembrandt's Handzeichnungen und Radierungen zur Bibel. (See review in this issue).

IN THE REMBRANDT anniversary year of 1956 large portions of the production of the master was assembled into two exhibitions in Holland; the paintings in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam and the sketches and etchings in the Boymans Museum in Rotterdam. For many of the visitors of these exhibitions— even those who imagined themselves well acquainted with Rembrandt's work— it was a surprise to discover to what extent the great Dutch master had turned to the Biblical pictorial themes in his work. Approximately one-third of all of Rembrandt's works, it has been estimated, are devoted to Biblical themes. About seven hundred sketches of Biblical scenes have come down to us. A generation or two before Rembrandt it would not have been surprising for an artist to devote a third of his life's work to Biblical subjects, but with the intellectual and theological situation of the time being what it was in Holland, this demands some attention. Under the influence of Reformed and Calvinist theology the tradition of church art had been largely disrupted. "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness . . ."—thus it stood in invisible script, so to speak, above the door of every one of the completely decor-less Reformed churches. The artists of the time were caught in the middle of the movement and were compelled to turn their attention henceforth to purely secular pictorial assignments: whence the still lifes such as the flower- or fruit-pictures, the seascapes, and the historical genre-pictures. In this situation Rembrandt turns to the Biblical pictorial theme in such a striking manner and introduces a completely new style of portraying the Biblical message.

One can say of the young Rembrandt that above all he set forth the Biblical material for the sake of the interesting, often richly-dramatic and conflict-filled scenes, such as are contained particularly in the Old Testament writings; in other words, for the sake of the purely human content of these accounts. Yes, one can even recall examples in which here or there he distorts the Biblical sense precisely for the sake of an artistic or a compositional effect. Later, however, after the year 1642 in which Rembrandt lost his wife Saskia

in death, this tendency takes another direction. Above all, the hundreds of Biblical scenes of this period point toward a strong intensification and deepening of spirit.

Relatively few of Rembrandt's sketches are identifiable as studies for a specific painting, as is the case with Rubens, his important contemporary and antipode. Such hasty, incomplete sketches as Rembrandt's in particular, had no individual sales value at that time. But whence this abundance of Biblical drawings? Two answers could be given. One could say: The wellspring of Rembrandt's artistic imagination was obviously so strong that but little of it led to completed work, while most of it was cast in the form of sketches. This answer is certainly correct. But equally correct is the other: Rembrandt's relationship to Biblical accounts was so intimate that he was persistently compelled to represent that which he had read there. These sketches of Rembrandt's have the immediacy of a diary-like character. Rembrandt, the Bible reader, as it were noted down for himself on the white margin of his Bible how one or another Biblical account might have happened. These sketches are witnesses, self-expressions of Rembrandt the Christian; documents of devotion of the same stature as Pascal's *Pensees*, or the pages of Kierkegaard's diary.

From the point of view of art analysis this treasure of Bible interpretation has been investigated up to the finest stylistic detail. Rembrandt's art is far from being exhausted for theology and for the Christian church. And yet, it is precisely today that we have need of this treasure, for infinitely much "Christian art" has lost its power of expression to us. One can express this thought without thereby becoming an iconoclast. There are representations of Biblical events—especially those representations of the 19th century—which might have been a medium of Christian content to the generation of our grandfathers, but which obviously do not stand up against experiences of the reality of our time. Thus it is, as the publisher and the editor of this volume contend, the time has actually only now come that Rembrandt's Bible illustrations, in their harsh realism, will begin to speak to a wide circle in community and church.

A great intimacy of acquaintance with Biblical accounts is revealed by Rembrandt's representations of the Bible. One recognizes from these how differently



LIBERATION OF PETER FROM THE PRISON (*Acts 12:7*) ca. 1649, Frankfurt
 Behind Peter stands the angel dominating the scene. With one hand he touches the apostle and with the other he points to the open prison door. Peter's arms are raised in a gesture of astonishment, and he stares into the light. H.-M. R.



THE WASHING OF THE FEET
 (*John 13:8*).

ca. 1653, Amsterdam
 The drawing emphasizes the figure of Peter. He does not wish to accept the service of Christ or perhaps he does not feel in need of it. The print is executed with the greatest firmness of hand without any correction. H.-M. R.

the people of the 17th century lived in and with the books of the Bible from the people of our day—in any case, insofar as the narrative parts of the Bible are concerned. Today's student of Rembrandt's representations will thus be led into unfamiliar portions of the Bible and a more profound knowledge of the Bible will be evoked: some of those who look at this volume of drawings will have an experience, especially if they study the sketches together with an open Bible.

Where is the source of the spring of Rembrandt's great intimacy with the material in the Bible? In the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam hang two paintings which show Rembrandt's mother; the one is painted by himself, the other by his pupil Gerard Dou. In both paintings Rembrandt's mother is holding a Bible or a devotional book in her hands. The old woman's face is strikingly cast as a spirited intellectual one, even though Rembrandt's mother certainly didn't receive much "higher education" in our sense of the term. It is a face molded through daily encounter with the Scriptures.

The painting of G. Dou, who in 1630 (still in the mill at Leiden) worked in the young Rembrandt's workshop, is painted with this artist's own care and precision. Thus one can identify the book which Rembrandt's mother holds. It is a Pericope book in which the Sunday scripture readings are contained. A woodcut accompanies each Sunday's scripture. If one reflects on the fund of these woodcuts, one makes a surprising discovery; in their composition and structure certain of these pictures recall sketches of the mature Rembrandt. One would imagine how Rembrandt, as a child, pored over the woodcuts in his mother's devotional book again and again, and out of them gained his first pictorial notions of the sacred stories. Later, in an unconscious manner, they reappeared in the creation and composition of his work.

It may also be that one painting which presents the young Timothy and his grandmother Lois instructing him from the Scriptures (II Timothy 1:5) may mirror Rembrandt's memory of how his own mother related the Bible stories to him, her little son. Here we encounter the same wellspring of Rembrandt's familiarity with the narrative parts of the Bible out of which originates one of the principles of his manner of representing Biblical events; namely, the joy of telling the Biblical message. The way Rembrandt presents the story of Joseph and the fact that the master's sketches almost totally illustrate the book of Tobias, make it evident that these Bible stories can be rendered only by a person who has been familiar with them from his childhood, and whose joy at telling the Biblical message stems from that time.

Still, Rembrandt's relationship to the Biblical message is not exhausted at the mention of childhood memories. This becomes clear with the ever-growing identification of a parallel between his own life's situa-

tions and his presentation of the Biblical accounts. Again and again it is evident that Rembrandt takes certain Biblical events as subject matter just when comparable events occur in his own life history. One was already aware of this feature in Rembrandt's Biblical representations at an earlier period even though its religious implication usually was not apparent.

Rembrandt executes this identification of his work with his own experiences in part in a naive exterior manner. Thus the young artist Samson threatens his father-in-law with raised fist; in this picture Samson carries Rembrandt's own features. One does not err in assuming that this picture expresses Rembrandt's anger at Saskia's haughty kinsfolk, who had not been willing to give him, the boy from the miller's house, their patrician daughter. But the identification does not stop with such external associations. When his mother dies (1639), Rembrandt etches the death chamber of Mary, based on a representation by Albrecht Durer. When his marriage with Saskia seems to remain childless—one child after another died at a tender age—Rembrandt draws the picture of Manoah's offering. Manoah and his wife pray to God for the earnestly desired son; in the flames of the sacrificial fire an angel ascends to carry the prayer before the throne of Almighty God. After Saskia's death, when Rembrandt longs for a quiet life with his son Titus, he selects themes from the childhood stories of Jesus. How his later living together with Hendrikje, the maid, and the experience of guilt which haunts the master at the early death of Hendrikje, is reflected in the choice of certain pictorial subjects, is carried out in this edition in the representation of the woman accused before Christ by the Pharisees (210, 211) as well as in the story of David, in which Nathan convinces him of his guilt with respect to Bathsheba. When Rembrandt loses the riches and the good fortune of his life, he finds preoccupation in the theme of the rise and fall of Haman, a man first mighty in the Persian court, but then disgraced (130-132). In the year 1668, the year prior to his death, Rembrandt paints "The return of the prodigal son." Writing in his large monograph on Rembrandt, C. Neuman has entitled the chapter dedicated to this painting as "Rembrandt's last words." On his easel at the time of the master's death was an unfinished painting portraying the aged Simeon holding the Christ child in his arms. It is a painting through which Rembrandt takes to himself and makes his own the words: "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy Salvation" (150, 152).

A certain biographical curiosity may be back of the observation of such parallels between Rembrandt's life situations and the choice of his pictorial subject matter. One might also be tempted to find imaginative combinations. Nevertheless, throughout there is a definite Christian insight expressed. Even today it

is important for the serious Bible reader again and again to identify the Biblical message with his own life's situation.

The Bible—especially the Old Testament—is first a non-religious book for Rembrandt; it is the great revealer of the inner nature of man; of what can move the human breast in joy and sorrow, in trial, in guilt, or in victory. His relationship to this book could be summed up in the dictum: *Greif nur hinein ins volle Menschenleben, und wo du's packst, da ist es interessant.*¹ Another saying which applies: *Nihil humanum mihi alienum est* (Nothing human is strange to me). Now it is apparent that Rembrandt did not aim first at presenting the pious or the edifying stories of the Bible. Often his illustrations have to do with unedifying, or scandalous matters. The reader will compare themes such as "Lot's Daughters"; "Joseph and Potiphar's wife"; and the two old men who surprise Susanna in her bath with their unchaste intentions.

If such is the case—and the above-mentioned examples have been cited to clarify the issue—then the question arises: why call the theologian to interpret these sketches? Is not the art analyst or even the psychologist more competent? Ideally, perhaps the psychologist within the art analyst? At least, the matter has been introduced and asked in this wise.

And yet, with the same realism as all the abysses of the human heart and the commonplace and profane realms of life are presented, Rembrandt renders the great theme of the encounter of the lone individual with God. Entire groups of illustrations in our edition give a convincing impression of this. Thus we see the representation of "Abraham's Call" and of "The Visit of the Three Angels" (7, 13); thus the representation of "Hagar in the Desert" (12, 27); the Elias scenes (120, 121); "The Call of Moses," a man who is afraid to risk taking on God's task for him (72), likewise "Moses, on Mount Nebo," who is granted the sight of the Promised Land, in spirit, before being taken up on high (76).

The encounter of the lone individual with God, a frequent subject in Rembrandt's Biblical illustrations, is not defined as a unique edifying realm, out of contact with the ordinary everyday life of men. Rather, as in the Old Testament itself, it is this encounter that serves as the natural element in which man dwells, the air which this same man, seen as nothing, breathes. In all of this there is a realism at work, and nowhere does it defer to a seemingly pious "upper" world for advantage. It is this present earthly, everyday life, which Rembrandt fashions. But, this very earthly world, can exist only because it is finally founded on God's almighty power and grace. If theology of today has found its way to a "believing realism" then it stands at just that point where in a surprising manner it can begin anew to understand Rembrandt's interpretation of the Bible. With the word "believing realism"



THE SUPPER AT EMMAUS (Luke 24:31) ca. 1645, Cambridge
Only once Rembrandt undertook to represent this part of the story of Emmaus. The candle is burning on the table. It throws its radiance against the wooden shutters, but quite another light glows above the chair in which Christ had been sitting. H.-M. R.



THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST (*Matthew 3:15*) ca. 1660, Dresden
A beam of light shines on the hand of John the Baptist. It is this hand that carries out God's command. Jesus has placed himself completely under the law of God: "for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." H.-M. R.

CHRIST'S BURIAL (*Luke 23:53*) ca. 1633, Berlin
Three men carry the body of Christ. One of them holds a burning torch in his hand. In the group, Mary dries her tears with a cloth. H.-M. R.



we come upon the nerve center of the reason why Rembrandt's Biblical illustrations, even though they are hundreds of years old, are so much closer to us and have more modern appeal than much contemporary Christian art.

Rembrandt does not present a continuous account of the Biblical narratives. It is more the particular narrative themes with which he is concerned, some throughout his life. These are: the Abraham-Hagar scenes, the story of Joseph, the book of Tobias, the parable of Jesus, the Passion, and the meeting with the risen Lord in the Easter message. The intention of our publication is to do justice to them. In this "Bible illustrations volume" it is singularly exciting to observe the different versions of the same narrative side by side; versions which often stem from completely different decades of Rembrandt's creative work, which reflect his human and artistic development, and the unfolding of the history of his personal Christian life. With this one can observe how Rembrandt often brings an alternative psychological moment of the event into various related versions of the same Biblical account.

Following are a few observations on Rembrandt's relationship to the texts of the Bible stories which he represented:

Rembrandt sets forth the particular narrative account of the Bible. Lacking are all messianic portions of the Scripture. Nowhere does he give a pictorial description of that which is said in one or another Psalm—even though he may certainly have lived as a Christian from this book of prayers of the Old Covenant. Although Rembrandt presents some prophets, he does not present Isaiah, Hosea, and Amos—prophets whose sermons have been brought down to us. Rather, he seizes upon reports such as the narrative of Nathan, who convinces David of his guilt; or on such scenes in which a prophet effectively intervenes in the fate of man (100, 103). From the New Testament there is not one single representation for the Apostles' letters, a portion of scripture which comprises as large a volume as the Gospels. Any representation of a pronouncement or image of eschatological intention out of the Bible is lacking, as is the case with the Revelation of John. It is the single meaningful scenes which he set forth.

Thus his representations are so concrete that one can detect almost to the verse which moment in the events of the report he has in mind. This applies especially to the New Testament scenes in which one particular word of Jesus is concerned. In many instances the best rendering in words of the content of Rembrandt's illustrations is the appropriate Bible verse. And one will discover that every line of the drawing matches a specific moment of time in the happenings recorded in the Bible verse.

Rembrandt is never explained allegorically or para-

phrased symbolically; not even where such material is found in the Bible. A pictorial theme such as the deer crying for fresh water, or the shepherd carrying the lost sheep on his shoulder, will be sought for in vain in Rembrandt's work, and these are motives which since early Christian art belong to the enduring core of the western pictorial tradition. In none of the illustrations depicting how Joseph interprets dreams to his brothers or to Pharaoh, does Rembrandt graphically draw out the content of these dreams.

It would be wrong to imagine Rembrandt in his artistic work with the open Bible beside the easel or sketchpad. As close as Rembrandt stays to the text, his relationship to the transmitted accounts of the Bible is nonetheless one of creative freedom. Often he draws short suggestive lines in the Bible, thus to introduce graphic forms into the event. The textual references of the illustrations in this edition recall such motives. Yes, there are even examples to be found which show that Rembrandt strays from the Biblical account because he is not certain of details, or even, because he is in obvious error. One must assume therefore that as a rule Rembrandt presents the Biblical accounts from the memory of things read earlier, or even from that which he has heard.

However, even more important than the observations which concern Rembrandt's relationship to the particular Biblical accounts which have come down to us, is the question: how does Rembrandt stand with respect to the inner claims of the Bible, that it is not merely historical description, but also the operation of revelation; that it is not merely man's work, but that it is God's word as well. At the threshold of the last year of his life, Rembrandt painted a series of works portraying apostles and evangelists. The most impressive among them shows Matthew together with the symbol of the evangelist, the angel. The Apostle pauses in his writing. His glance is set at a distance; not as if he would compel divine wisdom with his own power of thought, but in a mood of inner meditation. Behind him the angel who whispers divine truth to him becomes visible. Rembrandt utilizes the symbol of the evangelist—which otherwise often appears solely as an external mark of identification—near the Apostle, in order to make a statement of content. The word which the evangelist notes down—as it is attested by the appearance of the angel—is not his own word, but the revealed word which can be comprehended with the innermost ear.

In an essentially earlier sketch, namely that of the sleeping Joseph who in a dream receives the order from the angel to flee to Egypt with Mary and the child, this motive of the word which can only be comprehended with the innermost ear, is already anticipated (156). This drawing, in which Joseph learns of the command of God, verifies at once how the word of divine revelation is for Rembrandt not just that



CHRIST HEALING A LEPER

ca. 1660, Berlin

Although the look of Christ seems austere, this later drawing by Rembrandt illustrates the force of expression in the composition of the picture. H.-M. R.

word which found its way through the canon into scripture, but at the same time a word which is made accessible in concrete life situations.

Earlier it was mentioned how in Rembrandt's time the pictorial tradition of the church had been for the most part disrupted in the Netherlands. Rembrandt did not quite regain what was lost at that time. He does not formulate that which in the true sense is a worshipful picture. There are only a very few paintings of the elderly Rembrandt which one could imagine taking the place of a medieval altar painting in the choir of a Christian church. But one could well illustrate a Bible edition with Rembrandt's hundreds of drawings from Biblical scenes. A fundamental evangelical understanding of the Bible would find expression therein: namely, the relationship of the individual human heart with the word of the scriptures.

Again and again there has been talk of the artistic sterility of Protestantism. The richness of works of art in the Catholic church has been pointed out, and it has been said that in the evangelical realm only one area of artistic energy has been released, namely that of church music—of the Biblical words put to music in the cantatas of Johann Sebastian Bach. But beside Bach stands Rembrandt; certainly, more alone, certainly with less acclaim, but having grown up out of the same wellspring of Evangelical Christianity. And it can well be that like the rediscovery of Bach in the last century, and the meaning of this for Christianity since then, the work of Rembrandt can be similarly meaningful for our visually-awakened generation. For Rembrandt as a Christian artist passes an ultimate legacy on to us: the contemporization and the testimony of the Word in the sacred scripture.

Rembrandt's Drawings and Etchings

Reviewed by Kurt Kauenhoven

Rembrandt's Handzeichnungen und Radierungen zur Bibel by Hans-Martin Rotermund, Stuttgart: Verlag Ernst Kaufmann, Lahr, Schwarzwald, und Wuerttembergische Bibelanstalt, 1963. 32:28 cm, 240 pp. illustrations, 66 pp. text, cloth DM. 69.

The author of the stately volume under review is well known both as a scholarly Protestant theologian and as an expert on Christian art. First of all, he is an authority on Rembrandt, as is proved by quite a number of learned studies which have appeared in internationally established journals and yearbooks. His latest article on Rembrandt appeared in the new edition of the widely known standard reference work *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, vol. V.

It is therefore obvious that the reader will open the book under review with high expectations. It is an outstanding piece of work, indeed, both in the high technical and artistic quality of the reproductions and the careful selection of the originals. The format of the book gave the author the opportunity to reproduce a large number of drawings and etchings in their original size, thus offering the impression intended by the artist himself. Furthermore, the technique of reproduction used is of such excellence that the illustrations come very near to the perfection of the originals.

The purpose of this book is not to supply the public with another of the existing "Rembrandt Bibles" in which the Bible text is supplemented by numerous reproductions from Rembrandt's paintings, drawings, and etchings, thus giving the reader in their comparatively small sizes but a very imperfect idea of the originals. It was the author's intention to supply the lover of Rembrandt's art with an adequate survey of the master's biblical drawings and etchings, not accompanying them with a reprint of the relevant biblical text, but with a running commentary to the religious and artistic meaning of Rembrandt's graphic art. Thus the reader will not find any reproduction of Rembrandt's numerous biblical paintings in this book. It is entirely restricted to Rembrandt's drawings and etchings of biblical subjects, a limitation which is a most happy one. We thus get Rembrandt's impression of the Bible and his biblical interpretation at its highest, for it is the drawing which embodies the artist's ideas and feelings with the greatest freshness and intensity.

The author wanted to show us only a limited number from a total of about 700 drawings and 70 etchings by Rembrandt with biblical subjects. He rightly put the strongest emphasis on the drawings by selecting 219 from them, whereas he only chose 37 etchings. The reason for this principle is not only that a drawing surpasses an etching by far in its spontaneity and impressive simplicity, but also for the fact that drawing—for its uniqueness—is far less accessible to the lover of art than an etching is. Rembrandt's etchings have been published in numerous reproductions and books, and their originals are to be found at least in the print rooms of most of the great art museums of the world. The author has selected 137 illustrations

from the Old Testament; while the New Testament is represented by 118.

The treasure house of the Old Testament pictures is chiefly represented by a series of drawings taken from the stories of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, by the stories about Joseph, Moses, from the Judges, about Samuel, Saul and David, from the Books of Kings, from Esther and some of the Prophets. It is noteworthy that Rembrandt had a predilection for certain stories, and it is quite justified that the author offers us a more detailed knowledge of these "cycles" by publishing several drawings from the same stories, e.g. the story of Hagar (5 illustrations), Isaac blessing Jacob (4), the story of Joseph (20), Nathan and David (3), etc. In this way we are enabled to compare Rembrandt's treatment of the same theme at different times and to penetrate more deeply into his interpretation of the biblical subject. It was the author's intention to make Rembrandt's less known drawings of Old Testament subjects accessible to a larger circle of lovers of his art.

The New Testament illustrations center around Christ. Rembrandt never treated the resurrection of Christ in his drawings and etchings, but in many compositions of wonderful delicacy he gives his vision of the resurrected Christ. He also never tried to draw any scenes from the Revelation of John, quite unlike Dürer who found fame as an artist on woodcuts about this book so rich in mysteries. In the New Testament part of his work Rotermund uses the same method of comparing kindred subjects. He shows no less than five different sketches about the parable of the good Samaritan, seven of the story of the prodigal son, and he selected three drawings and two etchings referring to the story of the Samaritan woman.

The text accompanying the illustrations is a convincing proof of the author's penetrating understanding of the Bible and of his power of introducing the reader into the specific meaning Rembrandt wanted to give to his drawings and etchings. He dwells upon the deep psychological insight which is so characteristic of Rembrandt's art, enabling him to give a masterly expression of the soul of his figures. The author rightly says that Rembrandt's drawings may be looked at as shorthand notes of psychic events. This distinguishes him from so many other "biblical" artists and gives him an eternal place in Christian art.

It is of special interest to note what the author has to say about the Dutch Mennonites in connection with Rembrandt's art. In three places he points out that Rembrandt not only had contacts with the Mennonites and painted portraits of Mennonites of his time, but that he also held convictions akin to those of the Mennonites which may still be recognized in three of his drawings. When speaking of the baptism of Jesus he states that this drawing will always have to be mentioned in any discussion of the much debated question whether Rembrandt experienced Mennonite influences in his understanding of the Bible. Besides the report of one of his pupils that Rembrandt at that time (1642) had been an adherent to the religion of the *Menists*, there are a series of single observations sug-

gesting that Rembrandt—though he himself had been baptized when a child and had belonged to the Reformed Church throughout his life—had undergone essential influences from the Mennonites and Collegiants at certain times of his life. "The accent which here lies on the hand of John the Baptist when executing the act of adult baptism of Jesus, is in accordance with the interest which Rembrandt takes in baptismal scenes elsewhere."

A second picture indicated by the author as revealing Mennonite influence on Rembrandt is the drawing "Christ washing Peter's feet." Here Rotermund says in his commentary that "feetwashing" used to be a "liturgical" custom with the Mennonites, originally performed on all members of the congregation before communion, later on with refugees as a token of brotherly admission.

The last picture where Rotermund speaks of a probable Mennonite influence on Rembrandt is his discussion of the scene at Emmaus when Christ after his resurrection appears to two of his disciples and "took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave them." In this connection Rotermund reminds the reader that communion was originally called the breaking of the bread by the Mennonites.

One may even go a little further and say that Rembrandt's special interest in the parables teaching practical Christianity may also be attributed to Mennonite influence. His numerous illustrations of the good Samaritan, five of

which have been selected for this book, may also point in this direction.

The author's text is supplemented by an appendix on the literature about Rembrandt and register of the illustrations in this book. This index gives all the necessary data about the pictures, their number in the standard catalogues by Valentiner and Benesch, their probable date of origin, the name of the collection where every picture is preserved, its technique and its size. This is a useful source of information for the reader who wants to know more about a special picture. It may be added that the printing of the book has been done with the utmost care and skill as regards the illustrations as well as the text. There is only one printer's error on p. 262 and in the description of the pictures on pp. 15, 183, 187, 263 the distinction right and left have been exchanged.

Of course, some readers of the book will miss one or the other of their favorite Rembrandts, e.g. the writer would have liked to find the powerful etching "The angel and the shepherds" of 1634. But we must admit that the author's selections are well balanced.

The author has succeeded in producing a work which may serve both as a devotional book, as an "eye-opener" to Christian art, and as an introduction to one of the greatest artists ever brought forth by Protestantism. The author compares him in his importance to Bach, and when he hopes that Rembrandt will play a similar part in the Protestant world today, the present writer wholeheartedly agrees.

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Poetry

- "Be Silent Soul," Warren Kliever. Ja. 1955, Inside back cover.
- "Expectation," and "The Shoe Last," Elmer F. Suderman. Oct. 1964, p. 158.
- "First Fruits of a Poet," Elmer F. Suderman. Ju. 1960, p. 130.
- "The Goat," Warren Kliever. Apr. 1955, p. 86.
- "Gospel Herald," Jacob Sudermann. Jan. 1956, p. 3.
- "A Grain Elevator," Warren Kliever. Apr. 1955, p. 82.
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- "I Only Thank and to the Angels Listen," Joanna Andres. January 1946, p. 4.
- "Islands," "The Poet," "Controversy," "Junc," "The Birthday Gift," and "St. Thomas," Jacob Sudermann. Oct. 1964, p. 158.
- "Jacob," Warren Kliever. Ju. 1959, p. 101.
- "Mennonite Saga," Vonna Hicks Adrian. Ju. 1957, p. 126.
- "My Children Have the Mumps," Joanna S. Andres. Ju. 1947, p. 44.
- "Paul Bunyan," Warren Kliever. Ju. 1954, p. 104.
- "Pilgrim's Letter," Warren Kliever. Oct. 1960, p. 168.
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- "Simplicity Laments Corrupted Manners," Pieter Langendijk. Ju. 1955, p. 129.
- "Spartan Fox," Jacob Sudermann. Ja. 1960, p. 20.
- "The Temptation," Harold Buller. Ju. 1946, p. 27.
- "To a Little Shack in Montana," Harold Buller. Apr. 1956, p. 26.
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- "Vachel Lindsay Among the Mennonites," Paul Erb. Apr. 1948, p. 39.
- "Wanderer," Warren Kliever. Apr. 1958, p. 57.

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- "The Musical Instrument in Worship," Vernon Neufeld, Apr. 1948, p. 33.
- "Organ in the Mennonite Church," Cornelius Krahn, Ju. 1958, p. 124.
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Annual subscriptions \$3.00
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