

# ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ART SHOWS EVER TO COME TO ATHENS IS NOW UNDERWAY AT THE FINE ARTS BUILDING

BY JEAN CHARLOT

One of the most important shows ever to come to Athens is hanging now in the gallery of the Fine Arts Building. Picked by a symposium of dealers and sponsored by southern museums and universities, it represents the cream of what contemporary American pictures are available in the New York art market.

A foreword by Peyton Boswell points to the fact that American art emerging from a depression that stemmed from the economic depression of the 20's discovers a more healthy, optimistic America, that of which Walt Whitman sang.

The choice is most catholic, varying as it does from an abstraction by Stuart Davis ("Landscape in the Color of a Pear") to academic performances such as "Pony Creek Valley" by Pleissner, and playing the whole gamut of surrealists and neo-romantics that paint in today's most modish mood. It should thus appear both to the connoisseur of technique and style, and to the man in the street, to the fans of Picasso as much as to those of Norman Rockwell.

## Very Best Pictures

The very best pictures hang in between both extremes. Poised, straight forward statement by honest American John Stuart Curry, "Oak Tree" is well rooted in rich soil. So are the trees that Henry Varnum Poor depicts with a freer hand in "Mountain Ranch." Our own Lamar Dodd is represented by one of his rare figure scenes, "Athens City Dump," that would constitute a social comment if one could divest the scene from its exquisite gamut of grays that sing of bouyancy and joy while the grim subject matter sets subdued left hand chords.

A picture small in size and minor in mood, Arbit Blatas' "Dorothy Eating Breakfast" should be one of the major hits of the show. Rarely is childhood depicted from a child's own point of view, and this is one of the few pictures that succeeds in doing it.

Besides pictures good "per se," there are pictures that illustrate most interestingly the diverse and conflicting trends of modern art. Less dominant than it would have been ten years ago, the influence of the School of Paris prevades Stuart Davis' "Landscape in the Color of a Pear" of cubist vintage, and Karl Zerve's "Rue de la Glaciere" as French in its handling of pigment as in its title. For contrast, the American scene is glossed upon in true vernacular by the cowboy artist, Peter Hurd, in his "Baptizing at Three Wells," and in Parker's "Calamity in Carolina."

## The Dominant Note

The dominant note is today that given by the twin styles—neo-romanticism and surrealism—ominous skies, ruined buildings, futile gestures against impending gales, stamp the neo-romantic mood, which is well represented

by Pittman, Breinin, Orr, Kayn, Baker and Glaster. Surrealism, tragic with Haucke's "Shadow of Blood" and Castellon's "Allegory" becomes a lighthearted affair with Edna Reindel's "Susanna and the Elders."

A substantial portion of the show is taken by the able professional work of well-known artists whose brush is always able, if not always inspired. Of interest to art students in quest of the secret of success are such excellent portraits as Speicher's famous "Head of Red Moor" Carroll's "Marguerite," Phillip's "Rochelle" as well as the experienced rendition of the figure in Corbine's "Circus Performer," DuBois' "Chilean Indian."

Landscapes, seascapes and still-lives round up the show. Among the latter, one singles the studious search for textures of George Groz, the opulence of Gladys Davis.

Truly a varied, brilliant report on the state of contemporary painting in the United States, the show will remain on view until April 25.