One of the most important art shows ever to come to Athens is now under way at the Fine Arts Building. Picked by a symphony of dealers, 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 collapse of 1929, is a healthier, 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 Pleasner, and playing the whole gamut of surrealists and neo-romantics that paint in today's most modern mood.

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' "Custody, Eating Break," 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 conflicting trends of modern art. Less dominant than it would have been ten years ago, the influence of the School of Paris is felt in Stuart Davis' "Landscape in the Color of a Pear" of cubist vintage, and Karl Zerve's "Rue de la Glaciére" as French in its title. For contrast, the American scene is glossed upon in true vernacular by the cowboy artist, Peter Pittman, in his "Baptizing at Three Wells," and in Parker's "Calamity in Carolina."

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 free hand in "Mountain Ranch.

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The Dominant Note

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