MARCH, 1917

On a Certain Critic
Photograph of Mary Garden
Mary Garden
Prose Poems:
Thanatos
Hermes-of-the-Dead
Harold Bauer's Music
And—
The War, Madmen!
"Daybreak"
A Blow!
James Joyce
The Price of Empire
Harold Bauer's Hands
Zuluaga

The Reader Critic
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On A Certain Critic

Amy Lowell

Well, John Keats,
I know how you felt when you swung out of the inn
And started up Box Hill after the moon.
Lord! How she twinkled in and out of the box bushes
Where they arched over the path.
How she peeked at you and tempted you,
And how you longed for the "naked waist" of her
You had put into your second canto.
You felt her silver running all over you,
And the shine of her flashed in your eyes,
So that you stumbled over roots and things.
Ah! How beautiful! How beautiful!
Lying out on the open hill
With her white radiance touching you
Lightly,
Flecking over you.
"My Lady of the Moon,
I flow out to your whiteness,"
Brightness.
My hands cup themselves
About your disk of pearl and fire;
Lie upon my face,
Burn me with the cold of your hot white flame.
Diana,
High, distant Goddess,
I kiss the needles of this furze bush
Because your feet have trodden it.
Moon!
Moon!
I am prone before you.
Pity me,
And drench me in loveliness.
I have written you a poem;
I have made a girdle for you of words;
Like a shawl my words will cover you,
So that men may read of you and not be burnt as I have been
Sere my heart until it is a crinkled leaf,
I have held you in it for a moment,
And exchanged my love with yours
On a high hill at midnight.
Was that your tear or mine, Bright Moon?
It was round and full of moonlight.
Don't go!
My God! Don't go!
You escape from me,
You slide through my hands.
Great Immortal Goddess,
Dearly Beloved,
Don't leave me.
My hands clutch at moon-beams,
And catch each other.
My Dear! My Dear!
My beautiful far-shining lady!
Oh! God!
I am tortured with this anguish of unbearable beauty."
Then you stumbled down the hill, John Keats.
Perhaps you fell once or twice;
It is a rough path,
And you weren't thinking of that.
Then you wrote
By a wavering candle,
And the moon frosted your window till it looked like a sheet of blue ice.
And as you tumbled into bed, you said:
"It's a piece of luck I thought of coming out to Box Hill."

Now comes a sprig little gentleman,
And turns over your manuscript with his mincing fingers,
And tabulates places and dates.
He says your moon was a copy-book maxim,
And talks about the spirit of solitude,
And the salvation of genius through the social order.
I wish you were here to damn him
With a good, round, agreeable oath, John Keats.
But just snap your fingers;
You and the moon will still love
When he and his papers have slithered away
In the bodies of innumerable worms.
WAT did the critics mean when they used to say that never again in our generation would there come another Bernhardt? They didn't mean that there would be no other great actresses because they were writing of actresses, all the time, whom they considered great. In an argument they would talk largely of Bernhardt's personality. Let them call it personality if they are using the better Oriental meaning of the word: Individuality. But I fear they mean only to limit something unknown so that it may be understood. The more external nullities they bring to prove it personality the more its unknown nature is emphasized. The more talk there is of arresting qualities of person, acts, and dress, of frankness and ferocity, tears and terror—the more talk there is of all its eccentric sanities, the more it recedes and becomes definitely itself, aloof and unnamed.

Arthur Symons tried to express it when he wrote of Bernhardt: "Two magics met and united, in the artist and in the woman." But after all it is only that through the woman you feel the imminence of something as great and impersonal as the sweep of sea and the growth of flowers. In all the arts, whenever the magic of the artist has been united with this other magic the possessor has been of the first great. Michael Angelo and the dark troubled magic of him.

I wonder why, even in those people to whom has come some appreciation of the magic of the artist, there is still so often such strong resentment and distrust of this other magic. Because of their adventures in the great emotions, those who have it loosen new forces of life; they recreate the great passions; they add something to Fate.

Everyone feels that he has a right to a share in that which the millions are working together in uproar to add to existence. Many long for a share in that which the artists are making in silence for the soul. But who is there except the artist who is willing to feel in this thing the imminence of something beyond life and personality? Who else in the world except the lonely insane, because of their adventures in illusions and hallucinations, ever add anything to Fate? How easy to say that genius is akin to madness. All great antitheses are akin: all unknown things are mysteriously akin, as all known things are naturally akin. But how poignantly akin are the
known and unknown! Why does anyone exclude himself from any connection with the infinite?

When I was a little child I lived in a great asylum for the insane. It was a world outside of the world, where realities had to be imagined and where, even through those excursions in illusions and hallucinations, there ran a strange loneliness. The world can never be as lonely in those places where the mind has never come as in a place where the mind has gone. There were no books to read in this place except the great volumes in the Patients' Library; and I had read them all. There was no one to ask about anything. There was no way to make a connection with "life." Out there in the world they were working and thinking; here we were still. Very early I had given up every one except the Insane. The others knew nothing about anything, or knew only uninteresting facts. From the Insane I could get everything. They knew everything about nothing, and were my authority; but beyond that there was a silence. Who had made the pictures, the books and the music in the world? And how had they made them? And how could you tell the makers from just people? Did they have a light around their heads? Were there any of them in the world now? And would I ever see one? One day a name came to me suddenly. Some one was talking of a "wicked French actress" who was touring America:—"Sarah Bernhardt." Even when they said it the name had a light around it! She would come as far as St. Louis. I would go at once. But I was too little. I had no money. . . . I would run away. I would walk the whole distance to her. But she would be gone before I could get there. . . . Some day I would go to Paris. Other people had got that far. I would go on living for that.

And then she came again! I was there, the first night, sitting in the balcony with some other art students. We had sold our futures to sit so close. I was burning with hot excitement and shaking with cold fear until the moment—it was Camille—when the long french doors opened and she came languidly and as if from a great distance; hands extended as if balancing her exquisitely upon an enchanted atmosphere, her suave voluptuous tawny head bent slightly down. I threw myself mind and soul into the waves of that carressing fiery magic which swept out to us.

After this came a new agony: the critics had said there would never be another. There was Duse, whom I have never seen; but she has always filled me with a restless trouble. What artist has ever so dared to offend Art? Never in all her life as an actress did she choose a play in which her great art could come into its own. It always seems that there is more
laid upon the artist than a willingness to serve; it is almost a command to serve. Did Duse deny the command and by so doing add the martyrdom of Art to a great personal tragedy? Or was it because she tried to create an art out of nature itself that Art revenged itself upon her through nature? As an actress she had “no resources outside simple human nature.” As a woman she had no resource in Art.

Then a new name came across the world, with a new radiance. Not with the glow of Duse's halo, nor with the threat of Bernhardt's heat-lightning, but with the radiance of the Northern Lights it shone above the horizon. . . . Mary Garden! Her magics have this kind of splendor. She has brought a new temper into the drama—something not Latin, not English. Duse could never be unnatural; Bernhardt can never be unsophisticated, un-French; English actresses can seldom be unconventional. But Mary Garden . . . She brings a sharp new ecstasy of life, an inexorable sadness of love; she brings an energy that is grace and a calm that is energy; she brings a frankness that is mystery. There is something Norsk about Mary Garden. In her the pure metal of the mind seems to have been annealed by an Oriental fire, adding to it a passion without vehemence. There is something unconquered about her, as if she came from that land where the sun shines at midnight; from that race which never made for itself a beneficent God.

I don't know where to begin to write about Mary Garden's art. There is art within art within art, and then there is Mary Garden.

First of all, she seems to be the only singer who knows that all the arts come from the same source and follow the same laws. Critics love to say that pure song and pure music do not express human emotion, although drama, poetry, painting and sculpture do. What logic! Pure music and pure song express exactly what drama, poetry, painting and sculpture express. But none of them expresses human emotion; they express the source of human emotion. To express the emotions of life is to live; to express the life of emotions is to make art.

I wish I could tell beautifully what a great creative artist Mary Garden is. It is one thing for the artist to create a character within the outlines definitely or indefinitely drawn by the composer; to put himself in the place of the character and act as he would act. But the creative artist takes the character to himself and then creates from his imagination in his own image—the image of his soul. The more universal the artist, the greater his power to reveal his soul in different images. What an infinite thing
Mary Garden has shown her soul to be: Thais, the Jongleur, Monna Vanna, Carmen, Griselidis, Tosca, Mélisande, Salome!

And so when she creates a character she recreates the opera. Mary Garden is the only singer in opera to whom song is speech. Because in opera song and music have been fused with drama, the voice must become a medium for creating character, thought and emotion, together with the hands, face and body of the actor-singer. There is no need to discuss here what has or what has not been accomplished toward the creation of a new art by this fusion of the arts. You have but to hear and see Mary Garden in Pelléas and Mélisande to find poetry, music, singing and acting united so that the essence of each art comes to us with a rarer flavor than when free. No perfect thing can lose by being united with another perfect thing. However, it is no small task to do this in those older compositions in which music has been written to melodrama, to be sung by elaborate musical instruments. When the music carries beyond the true emotion of the drama, or when it does not reach to the limits of the drama, it is only an artist with flawless intelligence who can break over the barrier of the score and hold the music to the emotion with a backward line of the voice or carry it on by sheer genius to its full task.

And what a voice! You can't quite stand it when Mary Garden sings words like "amour," "pitié," "éternel." It breaks your heart in a strange way, because she makes you feel more precisely our brief longing, our frail tenderness and our deceiving hope. Many people don't like it—the same ones who don't like modern painting, the Imagists, Scriabine, and the rest. They have no idea that it is a new kind of instrument, to which they must bring new ears. They say: Why does she sing at all? Why doesn't she go into straight drama?—never realizing for a moment that she has a longer reach than Bernhardt, a stronger grasp than Duse. There is not enough resistance for her in pure drama. She must paint the canvas full.

Once before I called Mary Garden a great decorative actress. I am using decoration in the sense in which it is used in painting, where elimination and not elaboration is used to emphasize the intention of line and color. She carries this same idea into her costumes: she can give you the whole spirit and atmosphere of an historical costume by a mere silhouette of its lines. And she can draw in the whole psychology of a scene with one line of her body—the line of her walk. If she is to dominate a situation with her intellect or her beauty she walks from the center of her intelligence, which is the head, giving a length of line that makes the slightest step a stride; if it is a matter of the soul she walks from the center of her
presence, which is the top plane of the chest, moving like a Presence—not like a being; when it is love she walks straight from her heart, with a line that repeats a pain; when it is passion she sinks the line to a point lower than the hip, and prowls destructively. In Thaïs, when she is trying to enthrall the monk, she winds about the stage and him, bending slightly in hip and knee. Later, in a scene of contest with him, she lifts the line to her consciousness and stands to the height of her belief in her own beauty and power. When she goes over to the nuns, she moves away with that beautiful unconsciousness of action which is never so mysteriously perfect a thing as in Mélisande.

There is nothing so thrilling in life to me as to watch this living painting which moves in rhythm like a frieze. How I should love to see her working out her designs against a background that has carried out the line of intention of a poem. Imagine Mary Garden in the Tristan Liebestod, coming in upon a scene in which the short lines of a truncated castle rise from the endless planes of a black and purple sea; a fleet of violins in the orchestra singing the Love Death and Mary challenging all this dark negation with the one word "Tristan," in a voice which is a singing pain. But most of all I wish some one would make operas for her of those exotic things that lie outside of common experience, but which have their place in life: nature too heavily laden or too fantastically free or too weirdly true; bright precious hidden things, corroded jewels, heavy-hanging flowers of sleep—moon-flowers of the day. How passionately and reverently she performed that ritual of dark heat and sex savagery which is Salome.

The electric abundance of life in Mary Garden and the splendor of her body are dazzling at first. But it is a stillness of soul, an exaltation of passion which really stamp her. There is something inviolate about her. Other actresses may be soulful, grave, or innocent; but Mary Garden has authentic purity.

But what talk of all these things? I only want to say, "Ah, Conchobar, have you ever seen her, with her high laughing turbulent head thrown backward?"—this Aphrodite of the North, this bacchante from the sea, this viking of the soul. There is no other who has all beauty. She is the white sincerest pledge of deity.
Myrrhine, we have often sung of the sharp end of life, often mocked at death in the midst of the fierce ecstasy of our embraces. We have heard of this savage and mysterious god from the stately words of Homer; and we also have mourned for beautiful Bion. We have seen death graven in bronze as a drowsy youth scattering poppies from his delicate hands. And all this seemed very quiet and lovely—a tender farewell to the sweet lips of life. But when I saw for the first time the pallid shrunken face of a dead girl—and that girl our lover Kleone—my veins shrunk with terror and I feared through all my trembling limbs. Let others sing gaily or yearningly of death and deck this sombre lord with garlands; we are too timid, too frail-in-hope for that. Others may dream of the gold islands of the happy dead or of the calm spirits among the phantom flowers in the meadows beyond Acheron; We can only turn aside, holding heart to trembling heart, and number the dividing moments with close kisses, counting all time lost that is not golden with love. Drink, my beloved; drink from this wide silver cup; drink as the Maenads in the pine-crowned orgy of Iacchus! Drink, drink! And as our bodies meet tear the garland from my brow and the thin veil from my breasts. Those who are about to die fear only chastity and an empty wine-cup.
Myrrhine, when I was a girl in white Alexandria, I listened to the talk of poets, and of philosophers who came to my house to buy (as they said) "delicious remorse for five mines."

From them, had I been another Aspasia, I might have learned wisdom; but from poets I learned only to love and to know beauty, and from the philosophers I learned nothing except that "Death is not to be feared." And this I learned no better than they, for we are all cowards at the end.

But since I must go from you; since already the winged sandals of Kyllenian Hermes are rustling the Olympian air for me; since in your purse now lies the silver obol I must drop in the grim ferry-man's hand—listen a little to me.

When I am but a cupful of grey dust in a tall, narrow-throated stone vase; when the mouth that sang you and the lips that kissed you are withered and silent; when the hands that touched you have crumbled in the funeral flames; when the eyes that lighted at your beauty are quenched; when the ears that loved your beautiful voice are vanished; when the frail spirit that leaped and mingled with your spirit, like two flames, is a tenuous phantom which scarcely "is"; when life has left me: then you must live, live for yourself, but for me also.

For my sake Eos in a cloudless sky gliding from the many-isled sea must be more tender and more thrilling; for my sake the scent of ripe apples in the dim-gold autumn must be keener and more odorous; for my sake the music of Pindar and Theocritus must be more stately, more flower-like, more melancholy sweet; for my sake the ecstasy of love must be sharper, wilder; for my sake you must be more beautiful, more alert, more delicate.

I shall be loveless in a scentless land, where there is no change of light. I shall be desolate and alone and the memory of the dear words of poets will fade from me. But if you love and live fully and serve beauty for my sake, then some slight glow will lighten the dead sky and there will be some faint perfume for me in the chill blossoms of asphodel. Now loose my hand, for Hermes-of-the-Dead clasps the other.
Harold Bauer's Music

Margaret C. Anderson

The most interesting art in the modern world, to me, is Harold Bauer's playing of the piano. And one of the strangest phenomena in the modern world is the fact that people go to hear him and talk about what he does in terms of what other pianists do.

Now there is no connection between Bauer's playing and that of any other pianist who has so far come to light. The whole root and fibre of it is different. As I have tried to say before, he has more concern with sound than any other pianist. He loves the piano more. He believes quite different things about its potentialities. But you needn't know what he believes to know that he is doing something different. You can hear that, surely.

But still they babble: he does this as well as Hofmann, and this less well than Paderewski, and this better than so-and-so. Why do they keep on talking of what he does or doesn't do?—as though it were a matter of technique, this colossal art of conception? How I love to think of all the famous pianists who have gone to the piano to reveal themselves, and then of Harold Bauer who has brought the piano to himself, to reveal it. It's something like the difference between the artist and the average man: when any one talks to you of how the struggles and agonies of the artist mould his art you can show him that it's just the other way around: the artist in him is what moulds his struggles and his agonies. And it's something of this kind that must be said about Bauer's difference of approach.

As for the things he does, most of them are the things that any good musician does: he makes his conception run just ahead of his execution, like a switchman who regulates trains from a high tower; he makes tone contrasts that—what do the critics usually say? Of course he does many things better than most good musicians: he throws out handfuls of color that most of them would give their souls to achieve; he makes the piano sing more deeply than any one else has done; he strikes chords that no piano except his Mason and Hamlin has ever given forth; he never hurts the sounds, and he never applies music to the instrument instead of drawing music out of it, as even the best pianists have a way of doing. There is
less diffusion of sound in his performances; you have a feeling that it is the most closely-thought music you have ever heard. He edits the composition until it is flawlessly adjusted to the piano's best values. All these are essentials of his playing; but they are not the "difference" of which I wish to write.

Harold Bauer uses the piano as if it were an instrument endowed with an intrinsic "significant form." I once heard Fritz Kreisler play some accompaniments, and I shall never forget how he showed his feeling that the piano has a mysterious life of its own with which he did not mean to interfere. It was as though he simply touched the springs which set that life in motion. Not being a creator on the piano he did not try to do more than that. Bauer believes the same thing; but on top of that theory he builds up the edifice of his own "significant form." With most pianists you have a feeling that what they want to say is interspersed with what the piano is saying on its own account, and the result is a muddle. What Bauer has to say is placed carefully on top of that life growing just beneath, and the result is the most consciously-intelligent art I have ever come in contact with.

This is making the piano not what paint is to the painter, but what color is to him. There's a great difference. Even Hofmann can use the keys as if they were paint—colors to be mixed into color; but to touch them as if they were color—something already complete and living—is to do a significant thing.

And so in the case of Bauer you are made to realize that the piano is the thing, even more than the music that is to be played on it—far more than the stunts that can be done with it. I believe he says something to this effect: that the piano is the only instrument for which no technique is demanded; and "How, if I were to practice all day, could I possibly play at night?" I know that he has no use for the agonizing drill of even the greatest teachers of the piano. You can imagine him asking "Is there any longer any meaning in that? Does the sound of it interest you?" You can get any effect you want, on the piano, if you can think clearly what effect you want. You needn't practice six months to achieve a chord in which the middle note sings lounder than the other two: strike it the fraction of a second before the other two and the sound will be what you are listening for.

In January I heard his Modern Program in Chicago, and it was the most beautiful performance on the piano I ever dreamed of hearing. The other day in Aeolian Hall he and Casals gave a joint recital, in which
Bauer played the Schumann *Papillons* as his solo. In almost every measure of it you could hear effects attained by the kind of thinking I have described—marvelous values that can be offered only by one who can conceive greatly. But I heard musicians in the audience saying that they couldn’t discover any new thing in this music. Casals is very close to the soul of music, of course; but sometimes his mastery of the instrument is unrelated to its best beauty. His playing seems not to be built solidly on the beauty of sound; while with Bauer the emphasis is always on sound—which means merely this: that an interesting and compact phrasing made out of thin or harsh sound is as worthless as beautiful tunes played on a worn-out piano.

How I love these concerts of his in which you need never think of the magic of finger-tips—"the hand the perfect instrument", etc., etc., because of long patient years of diabolical muscular exercise. Once I believe I said that Harold Bauer was not a genius. It must have been in that period when I thought that the genius carries around with him always the look of being submerged in great emotions. I know now that he is probably the genius of our world—the man who has made something entirely of his own, and something that will live not only as a tradition of great piano-playing but as a great invention of new sound.
The Little Review

And—

jh.

The War, Madmen!

Honor:
Speculations in misery, forced famines, sweat shops, child labor, suppression of free speech, leaks, Lynchings, frame-ups, prisons...

Protection:
Millions for munitions: Starvation for millions...

Justice:
The death sentence for no crime and without trial: Conscription...

Freedom:
The right to be free: Prison...

Glory:
Parades, cheers, flags: Wooden limbs, blindness, widows, orphans, poverty, soldiers' homes, asylums...

"Daybreak"

It would be easy enough to be disappointed in the last volume of Pelle the Conquerer if you did not go any deeper than the story.

It is so silent. All the people seem to be gone—all the people who passed through the other books like a dark secret procession, each carrying his story in his hands. You miss the sounds of the many, many footsteps—the heavy footsteps of the workers, the fagged footsteps of the women, the searching footsteps of the children, and the wandering footsteps of the godforsaken, which made a dull pattern of sound behind the story of Pelle. In this book the strong confident foothall of Pelle strikes out clear against the faint fall of those who walk beside him or those who walk far off.

It is only when you have finished the book that the design of the whole story becomes clear and perfect: the design back of the life of man.
In his childhood he walked with animals; in his youth he gathered to himself knowledge and those after his own heart; in his manhood he became a leader of multitudes; and then, forsaken by all, in solitude he found his own soul.

For those who wish to read it that way *Jelle the Conquerer* may be a labor novel. But it seems to me that through all the story Nexo has gone the strong way of the artist and not the strict way of the reformer. Here in the last volume he leaves the labor question,—leaves the question as to whether Pelle's cooperative workshop is the solution or whether his working-men's homes are a success—as part of something that will work out its own fate or be worked out by the Pelles of the world. It is not something he has been teaching or solving. It is something he has been creating. Out of the drama of material poverty he has created the more profound tragedy of the poor-in-heart. And as if he could never forget them he turns to them again. With a few reluctant stories of prison life told by Pelle he makes the prison loom against our lives like "that dark mill over hell, grinding misery into crime."

And then, so that you may never forget, he chooses—not with that mere truth which is life but with that absolute truth which is Art—the child of the lovely dreaming Hanne, whom life so ironically sacrificed, to be again a sacrifice. The story of the death of this petulant child of little airs and sudden angers, of her pathetic and furious wrestle with the ghastly memories of her life, bites into your heart and you are maddened by the brutality of the life that takes away everything before it has given anything.

I should like to tell all over again why I think this book is the novel—greater than *Jean-Christophe*, *Jacob Stahl*, or any of them.

*A Blow!*

I MAGINE what it did to us to have Harriet Monroe say in *Poetry* that there is too much art in Amy Lowell's *Men, Women and Ghosts*? Too much art! And she is an editor and we know what kind of poems she has to read!

I can imagine a book having all sorts of too much, but art means not too much or too little of anything. How does Miss Monroe expect Amy Lowell to write, if not like Amy Lowell? She has not come the way of Masters or of Dreiser. She is really the first poet in America to express in her writing something of that leisure from which they tell us Art flowers best.

*Men, Women and Ghosts* is a beautiful book, full of stately measures.
James Joyce:

THERE isn’t time for me to write about James Joyce’s *The Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* in this issue. It came too late from the publisher. So far as I have seen the whole comment of the reviewers has been on the background for the portrait: “the social, political, and religious life of Ireland today”, etc. But there is the portrait itself—bearing a slight resemblance to the Playboy, a strong sensitive romancer; and the painting of the portrait—spontaneous, masterly, free: the color like this: “The spell of arms and voices: the white arms of roads, their promise of close embraces and the black arms of tall ships that stand against the moon, their tale of distant nations.”

Next time I shall have something more to tell of Joyce,—something thrilling and personal.

The Price of Empire

RICHARD ALDINGTON’S two poems, with their frail reticent sadness, were sent to us from the trenches. Why do poets keep on singing in a world which doesn’t value them? Why does the moon keep on shining? Surely it isn’t obligation!

Harold Bauer’s Hands

HAVE you ever noticed how Bauer brings his hands in when he comes out to play? He carries them as if he didn’t want to brush them against anything, for fear they would strike out music from whatever they touched. Or as if they were precious violins that might be broken.

Zoluaga

THERE is an exhibition of Zoluaga touring the galleries of America. If you have a chance don’t fail to see how he carries on the tradition of Spain as a place where great painters grow.
The Reader Critic

Note

Otto T. Simon, Washington, D. C.:

Your last magazine has just arrived. Be happy. You are sowing seeds of Beauty. You dig into the earth, cut the worm in two, bring the chrysalis to the light that it may flutter its wings, and even he mole mile blinks and maybe after a while may see.

"Spirit," etc.

Allan Tanner, Chicago:

Why so much worship of Bauer's art? He is a mere man who has approached the goal of art through human effort—through such a material thing as hard practice. Anybody will tell you that when he was in Paris he was not even out of the ordinary in technical skill, and that he really transgressed the piano. Those beautiful tonal effects are only mechanical things done to perfection.

While Paderewski—that spiritual thing—who dares not even listen to his own breathing, who makes the piano a living thing, capable of everything. That god! who was born to touch the piano with such divine signifigance that you sometimes dare not listen. With Bauer it is only that you can listen—so wonderfully beautiful it is. It is the same with Mary Garden. There you have that same spiritual thing. With Paderewski it is now serenity. With Mary Garden it is the same. And Bauer can never reach that for he is not born into it. Paderewski may sometimes play badly—make mistakes—but that is only when something material disturbs or penetrates that far-away vision—that mind which communes with space. When Bauer expresses passion it is only that physical nervous tension. But when Paderewski plays! It is that scarlet-colored heat which dims the light of day!

[This sounds like my own ravings in the early days of The Little Review, when I talked straight out of the air without anything to back up my words. So I will have to excuse you. But if you're going to talk about "spirit", with any meaning behind it, you will have to give up those wild phrases like "communing with space" and "the goal of art through human effort" and that very awful "dimming the light of day".

I heard a woman say the other day that Marcella Craft "spiritualized" the role of Salome because she made her a spoiled child instead of what she really was—a woman in whom sex had become too mad a thing. How such denials of the essence of things can become "spiritualizations" is beyond my comprehension. I suppose, by the same reasoning, that because Mary Garden understands that drama of "nature too-heavily laden" her performance should be called a "materialization".]
What do you mean when you say that Paderewski has that spiritual thing and Bauer has not—is not "born into it"? Any one with the slightest discrimination of human values will know from one glance at the two men that Paderewski was born with the look of a magician and that Bauer was born with the look of a maker. Both qualities are matters of "spirit". What vague mist is in your mind when you talk of "spiritual"?

And what is this about transgressing the piano? As you say, Paderewski makes the piano capable of everything. That is what nearly all other pianists have tried to do. But the piano isn't capable of everything. It is capable of some very special things, and Bauer is the first man to prove it. He has stood for that all alone in a world of ignorant criticism. No "spirit"? And then what do you mean by "out of the ordinary in technical skill"? Is that one of your criterions of an art? Don't you remember Arthur Symons saying that it isn't what you can perform but what you can conceive?—M. C. A.]

Alice Groff Again!

Alice Groff, Philadelphia:

In answer to Clive Bell, in the November issue, I would say, words are easy. What does "significant form" mean? Who is to decide what is "significant form"? An art form may be divinely significant to one mind, and be utterly insignificant, indeed without form at all, to another.

There is only one absolutely necessary condition to a good work of art, without which indeed no work of art can be brought into being, even; and that is: creative artistic faculty in the mind of some one artist. There is no human being or group of human beings capable of deciding whether such expression or embodiment of an artist's creative faculty is a work of art or not. The artist alone can decide as to his own work and leave it to evolution and time to bring a portion at least of humanity to agree with him. Meanwhile the petty critics continually spew out of their mouths the greatest miracles of art that have ever been given to the world.

[Answer this now, if words are so easy. I suppose if the sun were taken out of the universe tomorrow everything would hold its place as now and keep on going? The universe would hold without its significant form? Do you think we are talking of the shape of a vase when we say it has significant form?

I don't see where you get the word insignificant out of this talk either. You are like those people who talk about good and bad art. There isn't any such thing as bad art: there is Art and rotten stuff.

And who decides whether or not a man has "creative artistic faculty"? According to your generosity any one can elect himself an artist.

You are the woman who is always writing about art being the embodiment of an ideal. What's the ideal in Edipus Rex or in Salome or in the Mona Lisa—in any of them? And speaking of ideals, what is the art in Uncle Tom's Cabin?

"I am sick at my heart and I want to lie down."—An Artist.]
This came out of me after reading Mr. Puteklis’ letter in the January Little Review. I notice that all my socialist and anarchist friends hold a similar view, one going so far as to declare in the course of an argument on art with a well-known etcher that his etchings could not live because they did not portray the struggles of the masses. Being in principle an anarchist myself, and sympathetic towards much of socialism, I cannot speak as an antagonist to these people but as one of their number who sees that on this point of art’s purpose they are mistaken.

Mr. Puteklis’s communication reminded me again of the misconception of art’s essence noticeable among various classes of those today who possess what they term “social consciousness”. For though it is true that the strongest names in contemporary literature, painting, sculpture are those of men and women who in some extreme way are opposed to the existent social order, and the only being capable of producing profound and significant art is of revolutionary mind, essentially; nevertheless, we find in the socialistic university professor (as when Dr. Cox of the University of Washington writes in The South Atlantic Quarterly of “The Distemper of Modern Art and its Remedy”), in the intelligent working-man and the revolutionary worker, the same misunderstanding of art that we suffer from in the well-to-do bourgeois and in the church and other capitalistic institutions, with the same determination to degrade art to some form of direct utility.

The communal art of the past necessarily served the emotional life of the community. It was the “handmaiden”, as Mr. Puteklis puts it, “of oppression and superstition”. Much of pre-modern painting and sculpture, as we all so well know, was not painting and sculpture per se. It was merely symbols used like language for information on extrinsic topics by means of illustration.

A fallacy lurks in the too close judging of modern arts and institutions by their ancient history. Art as part of human progress has its revolutions. Once weak and a slave to ideas alien to itself, today, by recognition of the truth that it is entitled to its own intrinsic life, it is rapidly becoming muscular and self-sufficient. Those who continually regard modern art in the light of its history obstruct the progress of art, for in the course of art’s century-long process of coming to itself, a transmutation took place, the precise moment of which is difficult to seize, and the aspect engendered by this transmutation is so different from the ancient aspects of art that many nonplussed by it or dazzled, or blinded to ignorance of it, fail to grasp the fact of its quite complete newness. By this one would not be understood as saying that the history of art is illogical and contains bottomless and wide gulfs. The modern mind deeply cognizant of evolved art can trace relationship just as an anthropologist can trace the steps in the evolution of man; but we all admit in this latter department of human knowledge the looseness of judging modern man by the cave man. We concede modern man to be an entirely different being—a being in whom the struggle for animal existence is vastly complicated and modified as compared to his primitive ancestor, whose motives would be unseizable by that ancestor, and whose sensual, expressive, intellectual, moral and aesthetic forces have attained a volume which would
overwhelm to the mereness of a wolf or a bear that progenitor. It is not for nothing that humanity has the vision of going beyond itself—the vision of the more-than-human. Somewhere in the history of animal life, spirit slipped in and we have a new species. Somewhere about the time of Cézanne, or a trifle earlier, from the old communal pictorial representations of sin, death, Christianity, the will-to-be-itself slipped into painting and today we are witnessing the evolution through several varieties of manifestation of a new species of art.

We of today are not discussing in contemporary art the old art of the Renaissance—beautiful as that revelation was. We are not discussing art as the Greeks understood it nor as the Japanese of the past understood it, nor the Indians. We are discussing the new species, the birth of which we have almost ourselves witnessed.

But now we need an Emmanuel Kant, who in a *Critique on Pure Art* will investigate for us art's necessary limits and authentic nature and free it for us from its inheritance of superstition.

Truly much of the "social vision" today is blind, as blind as the vision of any fanatic. Those who are under its spell (and one does not deny it to be a world-renovating spell, on the whole) are determined to halt art and shackle it with the command that it serve the "masses." These humanitarians are still deluded by the idea that subject is the important part of art; they would retain art as a part of informative literature—denying it even the right to be a literature of power—and they would have it reduced to the level of illustration for the propaganda of socialism and anarchy. This attitude is tyrannical, and it is a refusal to allow art its place under the sun. Those of true social vision should perceive that all the forces of life—and are is perhaps the most potent—should be accepted and allowed to lift humanity along their course.

The human spirit is broader and deeper than mere class consciousness; for among other consciousnesses it includes the consciousness of the rights of the masses as against those who deny those rights. If we narrow all our activity to a direct service of social betterment, we shall never attain social betterment, for this condition, like the condition of happiness, or health, or any other valued state, is missed by a too-narrow and direct seeking.

Art fulfilling itself will be an inexhaustible source of power, mental and moral fertilization, of vitalizing spiritual life to all who come within its influence. But art reduced to illustration of class struggle, bound in service to mere social consciousness, will soon turn sterile and will fail to inspire even those it serves.

It is significant that only those individualities that have attained self-realization—true freedom—have inspired and lead humanity. The same must be true of any spiritual movement.

Art's strength today is in its revolutionary character. And the revolution of art, like the social revolution which accompanies it in the world's awakening, will react beneficially on the human spirit, helping it to ever greater realizations and liberations. But art, as such, cannot even exist if enslaved to the social movement.
This month really begins the fourth year of *The Little Review*, but since we have missed several numbers on account of our eternal poverty, and since we have a special editorial surprise for the next issue (a gorgeous surprise), I shall just call this the last of Volume III and let the next one begin the new year.

We are getting established in New York, and within a month can invite you to our office.

I am too embarrassed about the prize poem to say more than that it will really appear in the next issue. After dynamiting the judge who was holding up the whole contest we managed to have the poems sent on to the second judge; but it was beyond human effort to get the verdict here in time for inclusion in this number.

The photograph on page 4 is from *Grisilidis*, an opera of Massenet's given this season, for the first time in America, by the Chicago Grand Opera Company.

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These writers believe that Americans over-accent the personal circumstances and doings of artists and would rather let their work speak for them than their biographers. The publisher, however, suggests these few biographical details: Anne Knish is a native of Buda-Pesth, who has for the past few years lived in Pittsburgh. She is the author of numerous critical reviews in Continental periodicals, and of one volume of poems in Russian, but with a Latin title, "Via Aurea." Emanuel Morgan, the originator of the Spectra School of Poetry, has for years been interested primarily in painting, and is now beginning to publish his work in verse. He recently returned to Pittsburgh, his native city, after living for twenty years in Paris. Some years ago he met the late Remy De Gourmont, and out of this meeting there grew a close friendship. It was Remy De Gourmont, so it is stated, who suggested to Mr. Morgan that he devote himself to writing and to expression in the new form he invented. Mr. Morgan, however, does not claim that M. De Gourmont accepted the theories of poetry that are formulated and expressed in "Spectra."

Mr. Morgan, in answer to many inquiries from readers who are puzzled by Mrs. Knish's preface to the volume "Spectra," contributes this brief explanation of the theory: "The Spectric intention," he writes, "is to let the poem, or spectrum, focus through the surface to the heart of what is being considered."

Mr. Morgan and Mrs. Knish are preparing another volume of spectra, to include not only new poems of their own, but contributions by other members of the school. Meanwhile "Spectra," with its strange cover, and stranger contents, is meeting with a large sale at all bookstores.
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