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PLATES

ANNIE W. BRIGMAN

I. The Cleft of the Rock
II. Dawn
III. Finis
IV. The Wondrous Globe
V. The Pool
THE IRONICAL IN ART

As irony is the supreme method of perception, so it would seem in art that all aesthetic impulse must at last end in that comic calvary wherein the painter, the poet and the musician play the crucified before their own sly eyes.

This thought was evoked in me as I stood before the extraordinary sculptures of Matisse lately exhibited in the Gallery of the Photo-Secession. Matisse, Picasso, Baudelaire, Nietzsche, Flaubert, Felicien Rops, Geiger: what do they represent except Art doubling on itself, thought and feeling achieving a sublime mockery of itself, Columbus cursing his new-found America?

To write "the book of revenge" (as James Huneker calls Flaubert's "Bouvard et Pecuchet"), to paint the picture of revenge, to chant the psalm of revenge—is not that the secret dream of all great artists? In the last analysis, all revolutionary art, like all religion, is a kind of vengeance. The dreams of artists are nympholeptic dreams of Perfection. Never being able to reach perfection they revenge themselves by ridiculing it. Have not Matisse and Picasso done this? Is it not that the secret of Futurism and Post-Impressionism and all the other isms that now run riot and will continue to run riot in a glorious and impenitent world in spite of the beatings of the obscure employee of the Wall Street Edition of a bright and spleeney evening sheet?

Irony in art is the expression of a lifelong vendetta of a penned-up, often impotent Ego against the commonplace and the limited; the cry for perfection à rebours. Richard Wagner was a demi-god, and he dreamed of heroic fornications and Olympian sex-frenzies. Not being able to satisfy this madness in the "Ring" and "Tristan und Isolde", he wrote "Parsifal," the apotheosis of venom, spite and unassuaged lust. He spat on women and deified the eunuch. Wagner should have lived in a harem of Junos; but being only mortal with the voluptuous dreams of a thousand Joves packed into his body, he flung at the world his opera of revenge,—"Parsifal," the epic of spleen.

Every great painter dreams of doing a "Parsifal" in color.

The root of nihilism in art is spite. "Les Fleurs du Mal" is spite. "Thus Spake Zarathustra" is spite, "The World as Will and Idea" is spite. All Futurism, Post-Impressionism, is spite. Great men are known by their contempt. There have been geniuses who have never given their spite to the world; it was because they lacked the time, not the will.

All great movements begin with the gesture of hate, of irony, of revenge. This is as true in art as in social history. Irony is the perpetual heaven of escape. Nothing can follow the mind into that sanctuary. Against self-dsdain and self-mockery the world wars in vain. It redistributes and revalues everything that comes to it for appraisal.

There is a revaluation going on in the art of the world to-day. There is a healthy mockery, a healthy anarchic spirit abroad. Some men are spitting on themselves and their work; and that is healthy, too.
After thinking of some of the things that Matisse and Picasso have done I thought that all seriousness is a defect of vision. It is quarry for Fate and Fury. There is no form of seriousness, even in art, that has not in it the germ of disaster for the mind that is a slave to it. It is the soul of tragedy, the protagonist of every emotional and mental ill that besets the human being. There is something in seriousness that runs counter to the spirit of things. No ideal is complete until you have smashed it. No art is perfect until the creator of it has caricatured it. Do not affront the God of Carelessness! In a universe that wavers and totters and flows and blends, that melts and reappears eternally, Seriousness attempts the static pose. It tries to stanch motion by predicating a cohesive finality. Before an imponderable, riant god it assumes a cumbrous avoirdupois. There is a hidden diabolism, Puck-like, in this New Movement. Will the bright employe of the Wall Street Edition take it all too seriously?

Has Matisse, has Picasso, has De Zayas whispered into the ear of his generation what Satan whispered into the ear of St. Anthony, “Suppose the absurd should be true?” The absurd has an inexorable logic; it is the mother of irony and the wing of Perception and the Cain-brand on the forehead of every new movement. There is life itself to prove the supremacy and legitimacy of the absurd.

Why should the dreamers and thinkers and painters of the Other Plane despise this age we live in?—this age of shreds and pasteboard, of superficialities and stupidities, of inanities and material prosperity? Has it not given to us the divine ironists, the supreme haters, the mockers, the merry-andrews of art? Has it not given to us the disequilibrated geniuses of destruction, the pessimistic analyzers and dissociaters of all the humbug done under the sun in the name of classicism? Out of the entrails of this disorderly age have come Thomas Hardy, Swinburne, Baudelaire, Rodin, Monet, Cézanne, Manet, Schopenhauer, Whitman, Nietzsche, Verlaine, Debussy, Wagner, Matisse, Picasso, Carlyle, Bloy, De Maupassant, Remy de Gourmont, Redon, Geiger, Anatole France, Marinetti, James Huneker, De Zayas, Maeterlinck, Jules Laforgue, Arthur Symons, Hauptmann, Sudermann, Tolstoi, Ambrose Bierce. It is a glorious age and a glorious anarchic world of color, motion, vibration and scintillating creative-destructiveness! We have made our wounds sing, and sometimes we have put a tongue into them and made them spit out the venom in our souls. We have drawn the unguents of ideal beauty and the acids of healthy mockery from our sores. Blessed be the devil of material progress! It stands forever redeemed in Ibsen’s venom and the diabolic spleen of Felicien Rops.

There is a kind of mind that grows more beautiful the closer and the more continued its contact with the ugly. It is the kind of mind that grows in direct contrast to physical and economic development. It becomes stronger through an enkernelled principle of revolt and dissent as it comes into contact with the things that tend to weaken it. It is the revolt of the cell against the organism. It is the root-principle of genius, of ironic genius and spleen-genius.
After all illusions have gone the prying Intellect still remains—the stealthy ghoul who creeps to the grave after the interment of the corpse. That is irony. That is the phase the intellectual and aesthetic worlds have reached.

Is all painting, all art, ascending into the heaven of irony, the zenith of scorn and mockery?  

**Benjamin De Casseres**

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**THE ESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MOTION PICTURE**

No other form of popular amusement to-day enjoys as steady and general a patronage as the moving picture shows receive.

The people in the larger cities can hardly imagine what this entertainment means to town and village populations. It is cheap and within the reach of all. And it is in many communities the one regular amusement that is offered. A town of six thousand inhabitants will easily support three to four houses with continuous performances of three reels each. Larger towns of sixty thousand residents, where concerts, lectures and theatrical performances occur more frequently, furnish sufficient patronage for eighteen to twenty of these amusement halls. This shows a decided decrease in the percentage of attendance. In the larger cities where the motion picture is taken less seriously, the percentage is still smaller. It takes the place of the theatre only among the lower strata of society.

But its popularity is undeniable. It contains some element that appeals to the masses, and whenever I see one of these auditoriums packed to standing room only, I become conscious that I am in the presence of something that touches the pulse-beat of time, something that interests a large number of people and in a way reflects their crude esthetic taste. And it is not curious, with the popularity of this kind of pictorialism, regular art exhibits should be deprived of a similar appreciation. Generally no admission is charged and yet the public does not take advantage of these opportunities with any sort of enthusiasm.

The public is as fond as ever of illustrations, stationary art, and cheap reproductions, perhaps more so than formerly, but it does not feel at home in art galleries. The fine arts seem to evade popularity. Works of art are generally so high-priced that they are beyond the means of the middle class. And merely to study them is too much of an intellectual exertion. People understand a Tschaikowsky symphony as little as an Impressionist exhibit, nevertheless ninety-nine out of a hundred will prefer to hear the concert, while one solitary individual will derive a similar pleasure and satisfaction from the paintings, for the simple reason that music is easier to enjoy. One pays a comparatively small admission, sits down and listens, and the music drifts without any personal effort into one’s consciousness.

Paintings are seen to the best advantage in daylight, when most people are busy in the more material things. They have to be enjoyed standing and
walking about. One is forced to make one's own selections. Rather a laborious task, even for connoisseurs and critics.

No, there is something wrong in the present distribution of art products. Exhibitions are naught but battlefields for the survival of the fittest, and museums the morgues for pictures that are unsuitable or too unwieldy for private possession. Pictures and books should be owned by the people. Museums and circulating libraries are the products of a trust civilization. They are abnormal. Historical collections and reference libraries, like those of the Louvre and the Vatican, are not included in this statement.

Of course, there are many solitary works of art that can claim a certain popularity. Botticelli's "Spring" shares this distinction with "The Doctor's Visit" by Lucas Fildes. Madame Le Brun's portrait of herself and daughter is popular and so is Gibson's latest drawing. It is largely the problem of quality—of the work, versus quantity—of the appreciation. An explanation is difficult. My contention is that every masterpiece must possess some of the "buckeye" element, or in other words, no matter how elaborate, fascinating and exquisite in finish a painting may be, it must offer some tangible, ordinary interest that the average mind can seize in order to be truly popular. And it is this element which modern painting lacks, and which the motion picture possesses to an almost alarming degree, for it contains all the pictorialism the average person wants, plus motion.

Readers may ask whether I take these pictures seriously and whether I see any trace of art in them. Yes, honestly, I do. I know that most cultivated people feel a trifle ashamed of acknowledging that they occasionally attend moving picture shows. This is due to caste prejudice, as the largest percentage of the attendance belongs to the illiterate class (at least as far as art esthetics are concerned). To my mind there is not the slightest doubt that these performances show much that is vivid, instructive, and picturesque, and also occasionally a fleeting vision of something that is truly artistic.

Judging from the ideal standpoint that a moving picture reel should reveal action in a series of perfect pictures, of course the majority are still very imperfect and unsatisfactory. There is too much bad acting and stage scenery in most of them. And many are absolutely tawdry and foolish, in execution and sentiment. My arguments in favor refer necessarily to the more practical ones.

The French film makers are in every way our superiors. They succeed in making excursions even into purely imaginary realms. I saw a Pathé reel in color representing Poe's "The Masque of the Red Death" which was done in a masterly way. There was more real art in the composition and arrangements of these groups and natural backgrounds than can be found in the majority of paintings of our annual exhibitions. The French command better talent and more picturesque scenery. They know how to handle costume and scenes of dramatic interest. The Americans excel only when they put aside cheap studio interiors, go into the open and handle realistic episodes of modern life.

Of course, it is generally not the story which interests me but the repre-
sentation of mere incidents, a rider galloping along a mountain path, a handsome woman with hair and skirts fluttering in the wind, the rushing water of a stream, the struggle of two desperate men in some twilight atmosphere. These fragmentary bits of life, or merely of scenery, with the animating spirit of motion as main attraction, contain all the elements of pure esthetic pleasure, although we still hesitate to acknowledge it. But the motion picture will steadily gain in recognition, for it has come to stay. No doubt it will undergo many transformations. It will be in color and accompanied by phonographic speech. It may become like the piano-player, a home amusement, and also enter the domain of home portraiture. And the reels will be free of all blemishes that will obscure the image on the screen. All this, however, will not make it more artistic.

More artistic it will become solely by more artistic handling, and there is no reason why some genius like Henry Irving, Gordon Craig, or Steichen should not invade the realm of motion picture making and more fully reveal its esthetic possibilities. As long as dramatic action, story telling or records of events will constitute the principal aim, it will remain imitative of the stage. Only when poetic and pictorial expression become the main object will it develop in esthetic lines. Some literary theme will always be necessary to support the action, but it could be the theme of a painter that is stage-managed by a poet or vice versa.

Imagine Böcklin’s Villa at the Sea as a motion picture:—Old Roman architecture, with waving pinions, and the approach of a coming storm. The waves would caress the shore, the leaves would be carried away by the wind, and into this scene of melancholy and solitude would enter a dark draped figure who in a few superb gestures would express the essence of grief. Many paintings of Leighton could be rendered in such a poetic fashion. And also themes of more realistic painters, like Breton, Cottet and Liebermann, would be available. Short episodes in which all the laws of composition, color and chiaroscuro are obeyed, just as in a painting, only with the difference that there would come to our vision, like a series of paintings, one perfect picture after the other, linked together by action.

Would this not be an art equally as beautiful as the painting of to-day—while more intricate, and more in harmony with our present life’s philosophy!

Sadakichi Hartmann.
THE illustrations in this number of Camera Work are devoted to the work of Mrs. Annie W. Brigman, of California, and of Mr. Karl F. Struss, of New York. Mrs. Brigman is no newcomer to the readers of Camera Work, for a series of her pictures appeared in Camera Work No. XXV. The photogravures in this number, like those in the former, are direct enlargements from the original 3 1/2 x 4 1/2 inch film negatives. The pictures speak for themselves. We might add that as Mrs. Brigman works in the open air under great difficulties she finds a certain amount of manipulation on the negatives some times necessary to secure the result she has in mind. The direct photogravure process does not hide this manipulation as do Mrs. Brigman’s prints on bromide paper, which process she uses with such understanding.

In Mr. Struss we present one of the younger photographers whose work we have watched with interest for some years. He first attracted public attention in the Open Section of the Albright Gallery Exhibition in Buffalo, in November, 1910, where his prints marked him as possessing a vision of his own. The gravures were made directly from his original 4 x 5 negatives, and although they adequately convey the spirit of his prints, some of the delightful print-quality so characteristic of Struss’s work is unfortunately lost. This is due to the fact that a certain delicacy of the platinum process cannot be attained by photogravure. Of course on the other hand the photogravure process brings out qualities which cannot be attained by the platinum.
PLATES

KARL F. STRUSS

I. Ducks, Lake Como
II. Sunday Morning Chester, Nova Scotia
III. The Outlook, Villa Carlotta
IV. On the East River, New York
BROKEN MELODIES

IT was at one of Stéphane Mallarmé’s “Tuesday Evenings,” in the early nineties, that I met Debussy, then entirely unknown to fame even in France. Mallarmé had published a poem, set in type of different sizes and with blank spaces placed occasionally in the midst of a verse, instead of the customary periods and dashes. We discussed the merits of this rather whimsical innovation, and Debussy wondered whether these “white interludes” could not be carried out more effectively in music. Silence furnishes a direct contrast to sounds and in a way is the background to all sound. In literature it is little more than a separator of ideas.

All who are familiar with modern music know that melody in the classic sense, best compared perhaps to the long, sweeping curve of Harunobu, has been replaced by melodious phrasing which closely resembles the broken, uneven line of Hokusai, that bends abruptly and proceeds in zigzag fashion before it has a chance to expand itself in one direction. The sweeping curve obeys an emotional aesthetic force. In the broken line its natural flow is interrupted and controlled by thought. The huge shadow of Wagner hovers over the French music of our time and among these haters of tonic triads and relative tonalities, Debussy has probably come nearer to inventing a style than either Bruneau Dukas D'Indy or Pierné. His iconoclasm has been constructive. He is the delineator of pictorial emotional moods. His music is by no means free of the old-time, sugary sweetness of French melody, but he has translated it into an idiom of his own; just as Whistler’s nocturnes represent the transference of pictorial sentimentalism—not so very remote from story telling—into tonal suggestiveness. They both use white interludes silences Whistler by flatness of tone spread over large areas, Debussy by actual silence.

One of the most effective applications of silence occurs in Strauss’ “Salome,” after the headsman has descended into the well. The clamor of the basses suddenly ceases. Silence reigns supreme, but an uneasy silence, one of suspense and confusion. After that three plaintive wails of a single violin, increasing in length and the expression of agony and despair. THEN AGAIN THE FULL ORCHESTRA, indicative of the emotional tumult in the mind of Salome—a sensuous, grief-swayed figure bending over the well’s edge. These silences occur constantly in Debussy’s music, for instance, in his “Pelleas and Melisande.” They are, however, not used as dramatically, rather in a Gallicized manner, more abruptly, for minor purposes of effect.

What interests me in this fragmentary-picture making is largely its aesthetic significance.

Whistler, with his abstinence of form, using naught but blurred shapes and the balance of closely selected color tones to express the poetry of existence, almost rang the death knell of pictorial representation. Debussy
in his medium did not venture quite so far. He uses music to paint delicious little Stimmungsbilder mood pictures: mere broken fragments, but he utilizes stagecraft and calcium light, dramatic action and literary thought to emphasize the aural illusion. And of what does the essence, the principal charm of fragmentary representation, consist?

A melody is complete in itself. Produced by instinct, it also controls the instinct of the listener. It is fluid, sensuous and hypnotic. We are carried away, as on the rush of strange musical waters. A broken melody, ending abruptly in silence or in sounds unrelated to the melody, starts us up from our "mystic musings." It is subtler, irritating, it makes us think. Conclusions are not positive. The object or idea of representation becomes less real. The effects are more uncertain. The result is half-fancied. It is like struggling in the breakers. It is more true to life and disdains all elements of popularity.

Would not the Venus of Milo, restored, be deprived of its most intrinsic charm? Why do we dream of the ideal human form, an invisible wonderland, as we gaze at the torso of the Vatican? And why do the mutilated figures of the British Museum make us dream of physical perfection by the very elimination of facts wrought by time and accident? This may explain our fondness for fragmentary expression. For are we not all eager to pick out a few favorite sentences from a long and otherwise wearisome poem and to store them as cherished treasures in our memory? Of how many paintings do we remember naught but a fortunate combination of brush strokes or an accidental passage of beautiful texture! And of the impersonations of some famous actor—what do we recall but single gestures or a facial expression! For it is usually not the totality of the effect which produces the after-flavor in our enjoyment of art, it is more frequently the result of individualized moments, individualized by our personal relation to the production. The average mind has to absorb too many superficial interests, it is taxed too heavily by the effects of memorizing and classifying eclectic in formation, to give works of art a long and intricate consideration. And perhaps we have grown more mental, so that we want to be convinced by repetition of argument even in art. All the rudimentary difficulties of art have long been overcome. The mechanical processes no longer represent a search for expression. The care and intelligence in every touch—the great charm of primitive art—had to be replaced by a pretense of ignorance and lack of skill. FLUENCY OF EXPRESSION CRUMPLED UP BY THOUGHT, produces a semblance of spontaneity. Music drifts unbidden into our physical consciousness and stirs our emotion as we never fully comprehend its meaning. It is wrapt in mystery. It is a language of unique sort, like some ideal Volapuk which you labor to learn. A reproduction of form, on the other hand, whether in the round or in plane representation, can acquire this feeling—as if of floating impressions—only by becoming fragmentary. The artist of the older schools tried to produce in one idealization all the beauty he had ever fancied or seen in the particular object or event of his selection. He did not acquaint us with the process
of idealization or typification, the long flight of experiences that were stored up in his memory. The classic composers worked very much the same way. Now they seem to have reversed the method. The modern composers in their minutely wrought art (I now speak of music forms) seem to use these experiences for a sequence of pictures within pictures, that only in their totality produce an effect, similar to the one produced formerly by a profound leading theme, worked out with mathematical precision.

And the final appreciation of these broken melodies lingers more vaguely in our mind; it is not necessarily transformed into clear thought. This style is less suitable for pictorial representation. Only minor artists indulge in the delineation of personal moods or snapshot observations. Whistler, broadly speaking, could not work any differently than Rembrandt or Praxiteles. Whistler endeavored to give in the identity of one night the whole range of his experience as an observer of color, tone and atmosphere.

Painting, capable only of one permanent expression, all paint-forms being palpable and limited, is dependent on a concentration of impressions, of real and fresh impressions, no matter of what import or how curiously obtained, that reset themselves and amalgamate in the finished work. This is merely a difference in technique.

The true fragmentary spirit—controlled at will—of leaving certain things unsaid, of appealing to the imagination to solve the problem, is denied to the painter and sculptor as little as to the composer. It may be expressed in painting by a wilful archaism, by analysis of form to its fundamental shapes, by atmospheric suggestiveness, by dissonance of color and contrast, and by manifold touches of unreality which open up purely visionary places latent with those unseen forces that control all visible facts and outward qualities. It is a new view of the beauty of life, or a new view point of regarding it.

SADAKICHI HARTMANN.
PHOTO-SECESSION NOTES

EXHIBITION OF PAINTINGS BY MARSDEN HARTLEY

From February seventh to February twenty-sixth the rooms of the Little Galleries at 291 Fifth Avenue were devoted to an exhibition of paintings by Marsden Hartley, this being the second occasion on which the public was invited to view a one-man show of this young artist. The first exhibition, held in connection with the work of other American artists, was reviewed in CAMER A WORK, Number XX. Comparison of the work shown at an interval of two years shows that without aping the style of any of the modern men whose work has been shown at “291” he has been stimulated into following a new line of endeavor, and his work has gained much in the way of construction and solidity. Hartley is planning to spend a year in Paris, and his friends will watch with interest the effect on his work of his association with the pioneers of modern art.

EXHIBITION OF PASTELS BY ARTHUR G. DOVE

From February twenty-seventh to March twelfth, following the exhibition of paintings by Hartley, experiments in pastel of decorative designs by Arthur Dove were hung on the wall at “291.” Mr. Dove, who has made an enviable reputation for himself as an illustrator, has given all of his time in the last few years to less remunerative experiments in decorative designs based on pure line, form, and color. Although Mr. Dove’s experiments have not as yet been carried far enough to enable us to judge of the full possibilities of the field he is working out, he is working along very personal and independent lines and may reveal himself as an innovator of no little value in decorative designs.

SCULPTURES BY HENRI MATISSE

For three weeks following the exhibition of pastels by Arthur G. Dove, sculptures and recent drawings by Henri Matisse were shown at the Little Galleries. When Matisse was first introduced to America in March, 1908, with an exhibition of water-colors, drawings and lithographs, and one oil-painting, a full review was published in CAMER A WORK Number XXII. An exhibition of Matisse drawings was also held in the Little Galleries in 1910 and reviewed in CAMER A WORK Number XXX. The sculptures forming the present collection were selected by Matisse, assisted by Eduard J. Steichen, for the Photo- Secession. Although few in number, they are carefully chosen and typical examples of the principal steps of Matisse’s evolution as a sculptor.

The same care was taken in the selection of the drawings by Pablo Picasso shown last spring, when Messrs. Marius de Zayas, Frank Haviland and Eduard J. Steichen co-operated with Picasso in so choosing the limited number of drawings which could be accommodated in the Little Galleries that they should adequately represent the different stages leading to his latest productions. Indeed we may here state that this method of presentation and its underlying purpose is characteristic of all the Little Galleries’ Exhibitions. They are essentially demonstrations of development, rather than either exhibitions of final accomplishment or “shows” in the popular sense.
By giving an exhibition of drawings and an exhibition of sculptures by Matisse, in both cases picked examples of the artist's work, the Photo-Secession has given the New York public a chance to judge fairly the merits of one of the most potent influences among the young generation of artists. The value of his influence and his importance as compared to other artistic pioneers could only be judged by comparison with equally picked examples of the works of Cézanne, Gauguin, Van Gogh, Picasso and others, and we hope that opportunity for such comparison may soon be given us.

Incidentally we might add that the little fifteen foot square room was visited by more than 4,000 people during the Matisse exhibition.

**Paul B. Haviland.**

As is our custom, we reprint for the sake of record some of the newspaper notices which appeared on the exhibitions held in the Photo-Secession Gallery during the season of 1911-1912:

**David Lloyd in the “Evening Post”:**
The Photo-Secession, No. 291 Fifth Avenue, introduces variety into its recent programme by dipping lightly into photography. When we say photography, we refer to pictures taken with a camera and elaborated with the assistance of various chemical processes in the production of negatives, positives, and incidentally an occasional superlative. At the Photo-Secession, the word has a more philosophical meaning. Possibly it might be said that in this generalized sense, photography is there understood as the reproduction on the flat of what we see. Just at present, we may be pardoned if we neglect to dip, even lightly, into philosophy. We have had at the “Little Galleries”—and they are almost fantastically little for the purpose—a series of exhibitions in the past season showing work by Henri Rousseau, Manet, Toulouse-Lautree, John Marin, Cézanne, and Picasso, in the case of the last two, the first exhibitions of their work in this country. At the opening of this season, we have had Gelett Burgess. None of these used the camera. Baron Ad. De Meyer, thirty of whose works have now been selected and hung, does. It will hardly be disputed that he uses it adroitly. He presents studio subjects and a number of portraits. The attractive Aida maid of Tangier heads a series of Turkish pictures. Mrs. Young of Glebe Place and Mrs. Wiggins of Belgrave Square represent another type of human character. There are, in addition, a number of deftly handled studies in still life, such as the bowl of waterlilies, the Punch and Judy, the Nymphenburg figure. De Meyer shows a pleasing taste in conventional composition. His lighting is expressive. In elimination of detail where it is superfluous and in explicit delineation where it is appropriate, he is equally at ease. He seizes character in his heads with the utmost skill. This interesting exhibition remains visible through the fifteenth of the month.

**J. Edgar Chamberlin in the “N. Y. Mail”:**
Photography is certainly a fine art in the hands of Baron Ad. de Meyer, of London, whose photographs are now on exhibition at the Photo-Secession gallery.

An absolutely lovely and certain use of light and shadow, and a delicate sense of beauty of form and posture, make such pictures as “The Silver Skirt,” “Glass and Shadows,” “Waterlilies” and others a veritable joy. And what photography can do in the way of understanding and vital portraiture is instanced not only by the portraits of Miss J. Ranken, Marchesa Casati and others, but by the striking photographs of London slum women.

Baron de Meyer’s work should certainly be a joy to those who believe that photography has long since taken its place among the arts which are capable of illumining the world and express the highest emotions.

**J. Nilsen Laurvik in the “Boston Transcript”:**
Once more the Photo-Secession has reverted to its old love and in the exhibition of Baron
de Meyer of London we have presented to us one of the most interesting collections of photographs that have been seen in these little galleries in a long time. From time to time the New York public has had occasional glimpses of single examples of the art of this gifted and sensitive photographer, and three years ago his remarkable series of still-life studies in the new Lumière autochrome process astonished and delighted the most blasé frequenter of the Photo-Secession exhibitions, but the present collection affords the first opportunity of adequately studying his prints together. It comprises some thirty of his most representative figure and still-life studies, ranging from the beautiful and now well-known “Waterlilies,” to the delicately modulated portrait of “Mrs. Brown-Potter,” which is the finest print in the exhibition. Between these two swing the pendulum of his art. In the “Waterlilies” we have the De Meyer of a few years ago, when he surprised the photographic world as a newcomer who had “arrived” even the moment that he appeared. Nothing better of its kind has been done by anyone, nor has he himself surpassed the work of this period, which established his particular quality. To be sure, he has varied his practice and made many interesting experiments since then as is amply indicated by the delightfully arranged Dresden figurines in “Glass and Porcelain” and in “The Dresden China Fan,” in which a quaint and subtle humor is discernible. These are treated with a skill and taste that is unique in contemporary photography. No one has presented still life through the medium of photography with quite the same revivifying touch.

His various experiments in lighting would seem to have reached their end in the absolutely flat effect achieved in the delicate gray print called “Glass and Shadows.” It is a remarkable example of the only half-suspected resources of photography. Among his portraits the standing figure of a lady in “The Silver Skirt” is by far the most brilliant technically as well as pictorially, while the fascinating head of the “Marchesa Casati,” whose strong hands look as though they could throttle as well as caress, is the most unforgettable. Several studies of Chelsea and Belgravia “types” stand out conspicuously among the elite of West End and point the way in which his work is tending. It is the new world that lies awaiting him.

To go from the above to the Montross Gallery where Willard L. Metcalf is showing his most recent output of pictures is to be strongly impressed with the superiority of photography over certain kinds of art. In these fourteen canvases there is little or nothing that Kuhn, Hennenberg, Steichen or Steiglitz could not have done as well or better with the camera and some autochrome plates. The point of view in all of these pictures is frankly photographic. There has been very little elimination and very little composition other than a judicious selection of a particular viewpoint which is exactly what the discerning photographer does in the presence of nature. Metcalf has planted his easel in front of his subject much the same as the photographer would plant his tripod, and with great care and considerable skill he has produced a topographical likeness of the place depicted which may arouse the sentimental interest of locality, but fails of stirring the finer sensibilities aroused only by the message of great art. It is well made, uninspired work, that lacks the fine passion of great landscape painting, and as such it fills a niche.

Something of this passion for nature finds untrammeled expression in the work of Ernest Lawson, now on view in the Madison Art Gallery. This, too, is what may be termed topographical art, but with this difference: it is topographical art plus a very decided personality that enkindles and gives life to what it touches. He is neither overawed nor confused by reality, and he discovers beauty in all sorts of unexpected places. His strong color sense and his feeling for the simple, powerful design inherent in commonplace subjects lift them out of the ordinary and give artistic validity to the most unpromising matter. His “Harlem River,” seen in the green light of early morning, with its melancholy stretch of flats broken by low, scraggly shrubbery and the tortuous intertwining freight tracks, is painted as only he can who is on the watch at all hours of the day and night. In it he has captured some of the sombre poetry of reality which Whitman celebrated and Whistler glorified and you do not think of photography nor of Lawson—you think only of the beauty and the majesty of ugly things when their true character has been revealed. “St. John’s Cathedral” seen in the fading light of evening is in this same category.

In mood and treatment it is almost a pendant for the “Harlem River,” while the boys bathing on a “Gray Day” in summer has a lyrical quality whose note is repeated in the festive
summer scene "Near Spuyten Duyvil," a magnificent piece of realism which his power of emphasis has endowed with unusual pictorial interest. Some day this man will be generally recognized as one of the greatest landscape painters produced in this country and no collection will be complete without a Lawson, as to-day the indifferent of yesterday vie with one another for the possession of a Twachtman or a Theodore Robinson.

Arthur Hoeber in the "N. Y. Globe":

Alfred Stieglitz, who will be known to future generations as "the Master of the Photo-Secession galleries," is at it again. There are few moments when Mr. Stieglitz is not at it. This time he is aided and abetted by Mr. Gelett Burgess, who, when he is not writing plays or dissecting himself with "Gollywogs," runs, it seems, to essays in "subjective symbolism." The last four words should by rights be capitalized, but we refrain. You might not suspect it, but these symbols are in water color, though they are not half as interesting as the catalogue, which in its way is a decided literary masterwork. They relate (in the catalogue only, for without it you can make absolutely nothing out of the pictures save that a gollywog on horseback in every picture is riding madly where no gollywog could possibly ride) to such pleasing subjects as Fancy, Imagination, Adventure, Realism, Regret, and kindred themes, as well as themes by no means kindred, though that does not matter in the least, and Mr. Stieglitz has hung them about the room for the inspection of the faithful.

Thus in "Poetry" we learn—always from the catalogue—that "Poetry is the adventure of the emotions, and is independent of their strength or importance, regarding them only aesthetically. Poetically, the leaf of the tree has its feeling as urgent as that of the forest." Which sounds very highbrowish, as it were, though its meaning is vague, but which, when you look at the water color, resolves itself into the same old gollywog horseman, with a most insecure seat, galumphing from mountain top, or castle turret, or over the moon, perhaps upside down, and being at his best but mildly humorous. It might be well for Mr. Stieglitz to take a little while off for some quiet introspection, and to recall that the charter of his society—if it ever had one—was for photography. At photography Mr. Stieglitz is a wonder, and for it he has done yeoman work. There is a dignity about that and some one is needed continually to advance its cause. Photography should be glory and honor enough for one man. Mr. Burgess adds to the gayety of nations unmistakably. He is a bright man, and the land would be much more stupid without him.

J. Edgar Chamberlin in the "Evening Mail":

Gelett Burgess puts forth his water colors, now on exhibition at the Photo-Secession, 291 Fifth Avenue, as an attempt at "some picturesque analogy to the action of the mind under the dominance of the emotions." They are "essays in subjective symbolism"—very definite and circumscribed symbolism. Here is "Fancy," for instance, as differentiated from "Imagination"; here is "Drama" as distinguished from "Tragedy," and "Poetry" quite apart from "Lyric Love." Consequently all these studies are distinctly "literary"—and Mr. Burgess adopts the word, and confesses them literature instead of art.

They are, nevertheless, good pictures, just as pictures. Several of them are such good pictures—so much better than the others—that they make the others look weak. The best of all is the symbolic representation of "Passion"—a great blue, crested, rolling wave, plunging the little pathetic "soul" whither it will, but the little soul (though you would scarcely be aware of that) "remains always at the boundary where the spiritual beautifies and the physical delights." "Average" is a fine picture—the "Soul" split up into an infinite number of evil acts, following each other as cause and effect, in the form of a cataract. "Horror," "Imagination," "Lyric Love"—all are admirable flights of a fancy which is not the less pictorial for being literary.

Mr. Burgess's well-known humor comes in his manner of depicting the soul. Besides being the inventor of the sulphitic theory, Mr. Burgess is the inventor of the "goop," which is
something like a sort of accidental portrait of a human being made by a blot of ink between sheets of paper. He portrays the soul, in these pictures, as a little pink "goop," sitting astride a white horse who is Pegasus, on Pegasus’s foal. On the horse the goop-soul flies over sea and land and up to heaven and down to hell. Sometimes it is funny, and sometimes it is sad, and generally it is both—like life. Mr. Burgess’s humor permeates the whole thing—except in the representation of Passion. There is no humor here.

In his color, which is quite delicious, Mr. Burgess is conventional. No Hindoo mysticism. Pink is joyous, crimson is vicious, blue vast and heavenly, yellow intensely emotional, and so on. This color is always agreeable.

Some one has suggested an analogy between Burgess and William Blake. There is none. Blake had no humor. His humor is generally subtly playful. Sometimes it is merely grim—as when he pictures “Renunciation.” Renunciation leaves a blood-stained trail all over the world and never gets anywhere; he has more heights ahead that must be scaled, though emotion has ceased. We laugh at Renunciation.

But these highly imaginative pictures must be seen to be appreciated. They are sure to be understood, because Mr. Burgess has explained them all in the catalogue. They will remain at the Photo-Secession until December 8.

Henry Tyrrell in the “N. Y. World”:

As for the wild, weird things disclosed by Alfred Stieglitz at his Photo-Secession loft over No. 291 Fifth Avenue—well, they represent the turkey trot, the grizzly bear and bunny hug of pictorial art. This is no place for the placid, home-loving citizen who swears by Bouguereau and the Barbizon landscapes, and whose favorite American genre painter is J. G. Brown.

Mr. Stieglitz has just put over the Arthur B. Carles show without police interference, and will now defy the elements with Marsden Hartley. There are excuses for both these men. Carles is a Philadelphian, so can you blame him if he is a bit rabid in his revolt against Quaker-drab conventionality? Poor Hartley has but recently escaped from the abandoned farms of New England, and has to be humored in his mad, pessimistic moods of seeing things. No doubt something might be said in extenuation of the various other extreme post-impressionists and incorrigible cubists, such as De Zayas, Max Weber, Maurer, Marin, Manigault, Steichen and Picasso, if we knew as much about them as Mr. Stieglitz does.

But he won’t tell. If these fellows were understood they would become commercialized, and then all bets would be off. Some one might even begin buying their pictures—and Alfred is taking no chances on that.

J. Edgar Chamberlin in the “N. Y. Mail”:

Mr. Stieglitz has at his Photo-Secession gallery the work of a man of much power—a post-impressionist, naturally, and, somewhat less naturally, a Philadelphian. His name is Arthur B. Carles, and we understand that he is a young man. Concerning his landscapes, his fruit studies and certain of his more post-impressionist figure studies, we have nothing to say, because they are beyond ordinary comprehension. But there are two or three compositions which have upon them the mark of understandable thought, and of that quality of insight that, when it moves us sufficiently, we call inspiration.

The biggest of these things is a figure which the catalogue simply calls “Nude.” When it left Mr. Carles’s hands we believe it bore another name. What that name was may be gathered, perhaps, from these lines of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, which came swiftly to mind when we looked at the picture:

“And the still features thus descried
As Jenny’s long throat droops aside—
The shadows where the cheeks are thin,
And pure wide curve from ear to chin—
With Raphael’s, Leonardo’s hand
To show them to men’s souls might stand,
Whole ages long, the whole world through,
For preachings of what God can do.
What has man done here? How alone, 
Great God, for this which man has done? 
And for the body and soul which by 
Man's pitiless doom must now comply 
With lifelong hell, what lullaby 
Of sweet forgetful second birth 
Remains? All dark. No sign on earth 
What measure of God's rest endows 
The many mansions of his house!

This face and figure are repellent, and yet strangely appealing is the story that they tell of the sad degradation of human beauty. The shadows are deep and dismal; tints and tones are lurid; there is a sort of gloom of desperation about this strange work which we imagine no ordinary painting method could have conveyed so well. It is a picture that will haunt. It is fiercely, powerfully subterhuman.

But there is quite another and a really joyous soap bubble sentiment about another picture of Mr. Carles—the "Girl in Bathtub." And in all his pictures there is an employment of color which continually fascinates.

Whether or not Mr. Carles has struck his regular gait we do not know, but we hardly think so. We shall not be surprised if he gets hold of the world later on.

The Carles exhibition will continue until February 3. Mr. Stieglitz will next challenge public sentiment with pictures by Mr. Hartley.

Arthur Hoeber in the "N. Y. Globe":

Arthur B. Carles of Philadelphia is the last comer at the galleries of the Photo-Secession, 291 Fifth Avenue, to be struck with the new tendencies which, for want of a more definite name, they call "Post-Impressionism." Mr. Carles, however, differs from the rest of the group in that he has not yet abandoned all semblance of the human form and his color is yet within the limits of reasonableness. How much he will depart later we may not, of course, say, but at present he seems a capable, well-trained artist, who is looking into this new method to see if there really is anything in it worth the while. And so, in many instances his figures really do suggest the humanity seen by the normal eye; he obtains agreeable tones and his drawing is lucid to a far greater extent than the men he follows. Here is a portrait of "Mrs. C." that discloses a really handsome young woman, despite the painter's eccentricities, and here is a nude woman in a bathtub that gives the spectator a real notion of the undraped model. We may not say as much for "Mrs. F." in purple, and we may only hope the lady does not look as the artist has limned her. We are sure she does not. There is another nude, alas, whose flesh has surely undergone mortification, and is of sad steel grays and browns, the like of which only the post-impressionist sees.

Yet Mr. Carles is far more logical than the rest of this school, with lapses, of course, for there are fruit bits here that have dabs of pure vermilion jabbed in the background and violent purples and incomprehensible blues, and since when was vermilion pure and simple regarded as a thing of color beauty? Primarily it is obvious the man can draw. When he does not adhere to known forms, it is simply because it pleases him not to do so and he is apparently searching—we believe vainly—for novelty. A "Nude—White Clouds and Yellow Valley" is certainly entertaining, by no means true, or of any possible relation to the nature generally seen; yet it is entertaining and so well rendered that you give it a second look in spite of yourself, always regretting that the painter chooses to render things thus. It is as if one chose to paint the orb of the setting sun a pure Paris green. No one—that is, no one outside of this group—ever saw the orb of the sun Paris green; but then no one could possibly see brilliant chrome yellow in a landscape as in this picture. Perhaps—we approach the movement in all awe and respect—perhaps, we are prepared to admit, something will come of this effort on the part of the men. No man may prognosticate failure of any seriously considered movement, but up to date, the present reviewer is quite unable to see a reasonable excuse for the liberty these men take with the nature before them and with the human form. But certainly Mr. Carles is the most sane and interesting of the group and his efforts to disguise a sound academic training are—Heaven be praised—thus far—futile!
David Lloyd in the “Evening Post”:
In the same camp with Mr. Weber, Marsden Hartley pitches his tent at the Photo-Secession, No. 291 Fifth Avenue. There are drawings here in black and white and landscapes, but one carries away from the exhibition more distinctly a vision of the still life, the blue water jugs, the gleaming colored fruits, the livid cucumber, and the rather dull and dreary plantain. Mr. Hartley should hang a bunch of fat plantains in his studio. They would tempt his brush to do them better justice. What the more incandescent fruits were—apples, oranges, peaches—we cannot for the life of us recall, which, perhaps, is a tribute to his handiwork, and may show that he was able to invite our soul forth to the pleasures of seeing rather than the homely cares of marketing. The still life, at any rate, stands in the first order of color. The whole group is seen in recollection flooded with its candid vigor, with the result that one is as much enlivened here as depressed by most of the Weber paintings.

Here again form and perspective, if not sacrificed, are minimized, for mass and tint. Flower-pots surmounted by the usual circular flange and rim must take on the appearance of the complicated curves of the brim of a top hat. The must is mandatory. In ordinary work, basely patterned after the draughting of conic sections, the ellipses must suggest the mouth of a flower-pot. In painting of this sort, never; the flower-pot, without ceasing to carry the notion of a flower-pot, must have a little the air of a hat. This is no matter of faulty drawing incurred by reason of a greater interest in color, it has every appearance of deliberate convention. We mistrust its worth and its ultimate persistence. But we take off our hat—we would take off our flower-pot if we were privileged to wear one—to the color Mr. Hartley gives us.

Joseph Edgar Chamberlin in the “N. Y. Mail”:
At the Photo-Secession we find the work of another of our “fauxes”—Marsden Hartley, the gentle painter of superheated still life and rainbow landscapes.
We are unable to go all the way with Mr. Hartley, but there is no reason why those who delight in unconditional surrender to an artistic impulse should not take pleasure in several of these canvases. Their color is deep and often spiritual; no man can put more of the esoteric into a cucumber than Mr. Hartley. And they breathe sincerity in every line and tint.

James Huneker in the “N. Y. Sun”:
At the gallery of the Photo-Secession Marsden Hartley is showing his recent work, of which we liked best the still life, the fruit and flowers. The portrait, a full length of a prominent academian, is one of the best things in the room and a remarkable psychological presentation of a wooden pinhead. Paintings and drawings by Max Weber are on view at the Murray Hill Gallery. Like Mr. Hartley, Mr. Weber is advanced in theory and practice of his art. His landscapes are familiar and there is no mistaking the veracity—that is from the Weberian viewpoint. The still life reveals tactile values; the research for volume, for the third dimension, in the figures is often rewarded. But no need here to expect sleek surfaces or even everyday resemblance to mundane life. All is a symbol and aims at only rhythmical life. Certain to be received with laughter or execration, Mr. Weber is brave enough to stick to his guns. With Picasso, Weber and Hartley have gone back to the Egyptians for formal hints and tints. Where it will all lead to no one may predict, but if this be madness then there is method in it. Too much method. Nevertheless for purposes of courtship we prefer the Childe Hassam girls to the wooden jointed dolls of Weber. But the latter may secure the vote some day; the former never. We admired the interesting copy of “Las Meninas,” by Velasquez; rather the free paraphrase by the talented Weber.

Elizabeth L. Carey in the “N. Y. Times”:
We suppose Marsden Hartley would be called a Post-Impressionist. He is holding an exhibition at the Photo-Secession Galleries, in which still life predominates, and his studies of fruit in dishes of royal color are delicious. We use the word advisedly, for the painter has so perfectly realized the lusciousness of flesh in a ripe peach and the exotic creamy texture of a banana that has begun to turn a trifle black at the edges, that one loses track of his sensations and believes himself at a succulent feast, indeed. This, we suppose, is the aim of the school, to paint the juiciness of a juice and the leatheriness of leather while preserving a deco-
narrative pattern with a big black line as in medieval glass work. It may be a wrong theory, but we wish he had made that pastel drawing of pears against a shock of green leaves. It is a splendid bit of form and color.

Hutchins Hapgood on “Hospitality in Art” in the “N. Y. Globe”:

Three art exhibitions which are off the beaten track in one way or another, either geographically or mentally or esthetically, are that of Max Weber’s work at the Murray Hill Gallery, 274 Madison Ave.; that of Marsden Hartley at the Photo-Secession Gallery, 291 Fifth Ave., and that of a number of painters’ exhibition work, partly of East Side subjects, at Madison House, 216 Madison Street, on the lower East Side.

My friend Arthur Hoeber, the experienced critic of The Globe, frankly admits that he cannot understand the work of Max Weber. I imagine that Mr. Hoeber would say the same of the Post-Impressionists in general, of the work of men like Picasso, to take the great example. Now I know that I like much of the work of these men and that a great deal of the work of Picasso seems to me beautiful. But I am not a painter as Mr. Hoeber is, nor an art critic, as he is. It is for that reason, perhaps, that I plead for a larger hospitality—for greater freedom in experiment esthetically and mentally. We have a background of support now on politics and sociology for the insurgent and the unconventional. It is time that we should have some respectable and official recognition of the art that is unacademic, untraditional, personal. We need hospitable circles where such art may develop; such salons, for instance, as that of Alfred Stieglitz, called the Photo-Secession, where for several years the voice of freedom has been quietly shouting in the wilderness, where art could stand on its head if it wants to, provided it is animated with a sincere desire to see straight, to feel beauty and form directly, without an undue regard for convention, tradition, and authority.

Max Weber’s large exhibition at the Murray Hill Gallery is excessively interesting; that is true, no matter what else may be true of it. The first impression, and one that remains, is the splendor of the color as a whole. Then, as you look at the paintings in detail, you notice that this man is a serious thinker, that he is struggling with the problems of form. It is a strenuous thing to which you are introduced. You feel a striving for a deeper form, and, I may say, for more form in color, than the traditions furnish. We are at the opposite pole from the now old impressionism. Instead of concentrating on the atmosphere, there is a concentration on the form. There is an attempt to render plastic the inner constitution of objects. Hence, cubes, crystals, etc.

Hence, also, the neglect of actuality. There is something practical about every object. A chair is made to sit on, a woman to marry, among other functions. Post-impressionist art tries to rid the eye and the mind of this deeper sentimentality—the habit of seeing things in reference to their practical functions. This art seeks only the plastic, in form and color, so that its forms often have little relation to what is actual in space. It might almost be said to be metaphysical—the metaphysical made sensuous and visible—the deeper forms of perceived life put on canvas.

This ambitious striving is felt in Weber’s work. To say that he has not succeeded is to say something almost obvious. I do not feel that he has arrived, but I do feel that he is on a definite track, and an important one. In his more ambitious pictures the method is crudely apparent. By means of his cubes, crystals, etc., he does not so well succeed in securing that intense and beautiful expressiveness attained so wonderfully at times by Picasso. The more ambitious Weber’s work is, the more imitative it is. He brilliantly uses other men’s ideas, and moreover, he has a personality of his own, in the expression of which, however, he is not yet successful, though I think he is on the track of it. He is often really successful, and charming, and beautiful in his woodland pictures and still life. This seems comparatively easy and natural and realized. The general impression of his work results in the conclusion that this artist deserves serious attention; that he is an unusually gifted personality.

Marsden Hartley’s work at the Photo-Secession is far less brilliant than that of Weber; but there is something so simple and serious and sweet—in the real sense—about it, that it appeals to me. Weber’s work is intensely sophisticated; its suggestions of primitive forms are only subtleties, refinements of a civilized art. In Hartley’s case there is more apparent
sincerity. One feels in his work a personal temperament of genuine charm, which, if he can
develop his form to an adequate degree, will result in something wholly lovely.

The East Side exhibition is a mixture, as far as art tendencies and schools and tempera­ments go. Weber has several canvases there, also. Samuel Halpert’s pictures, especially that
called “Street in New York,” definitely suggests the post-impressionist tendency—an intense
preoccupation with form in color and line and a neglect of the vaguely impressionistic. Weber
and Halpert are the only two painters at the exhibition who represent the post-impressionist
school. Jo Davidson, the sculptor, has a few busts generally attaching to the spirit of this
tendency—though Davidson’s felicitous and personal temperament does not strike me as
strenuous. He is more artistically gifted than he is intellectually serious.
A. Walkowitz, who reminds me in his honesty and his subjects of the East Side lads
who fifteen years ago were passionately occupied in rendering on canvas the East Side life
and types, has a number of sincere and personal paintings and drawings. The work of H. A.
Mathes shows that he is a clever and accomplished painter of the now old impressionist school.
Victor D. Brenner has some exquisitely worked medallions. The well-known artists, George
Luks and Jerome Myers, on whom I do not need to comment, are represented at this East Side
exhibition. Last, but not least, in the order of mention, is Bernard Gussow. He has made, of
recent years, great technical advance, and he shows strongly classical tendencies. His work is
conventional, but not on that account to be neglected. I feel doubtful, however, whether as
yet he has attained anything very personal to himself or his viewpoint.

J. Edgar Chamberlin in the “Evening Mail”:
Mr. Stieglitz has something new at the Photo-Secession, 291 Fifth Avenue, in the paint­nings of Arthur G. Dove. Mr. Dove, who has been an illustrator along somewhat conventional
lines, is another of the young American artists who have seen a new and strange light, and
have come out with something absolutely original and quite incomprehensible. But whether
Mr. Dove is comprehensible or not, there is an extraordinary fascination about some of these
decorative squares which he calls paintings. In color they are beautiful and strange, and the
eye returns to them again and again as if with delight in finding something which it is not
required to understand at all, but which is intrinsically agreeable.
Mr. Dove paints in patterns, but he does not scorn to borrow his patterns from nature.
This picture consists in a design of boats’ sails; that one of steep roofs seen out of a window;
that one, of the fronds of lilies, or agaves; and so on. And all are combined in a charming
decorative way. Here is a strange picture which seems to have, at the right, a large blue
comma; on the left is a great purple comma; and then some upward-pointed horns of light
blue, dark blue and other colors. What is it all about? No one can tell—and yet the result
is singularly agreeable. It makes us feel as we felt when we were six years old, and gazed
through a kaleidoscope—turning it slowly around and around and delighting by the hour in
the formation of glittering shapes that were unlike anything on earth or in the sky or under
the earth—the weirder and more unreal the better.
We should not be surprised if it turned out that Mr. Dove has developed a valuable
decorative hint in these pictures.

Arthur Hoeber in the “N. Y. Globe”:
One has to be at it these days in order to keep pace with the men of the new artistic
movements. What with the followers of Matisse, the Picassos, the Cubists, the Futurists, and
others, one is lost in speculation as to where it will all end. Now comes forward a man with
still new notions as to what are the things to put on canvas, and this last to arrive on the scene
is Mr. Arthur Dove, who in his time was one of the leading illustrators, with a charming notion
of the humorous, a rational view of humanity, and an altogether delightful draughtsman who
previously depicted the follies of present-day men and women. Alas, he has now entered the
lists as one of the new movementors, and weird and astonishing are the results of his researches.
One thing, however, is to his credit. He does not travesty humanity, the landscape, or still
life; on the contrary, he seeks to present patterns, and offers a scheme of color with these that,
while not appealing to the present reviewer, is at least less objectionable than that of his con-
freres in these departures. What it is all about we cannot for the life of us tell, nor does it interest us. There is much talk of emotion, sensation, harmony, impression, feeling. Heaven knows what nor, and the talk seems more or less reasonable until one sees the results. Then comes the question of sanity, and we are asked to accept impossible designs and crude color as full of significance. They may be, but frankly they quite elude us. The work is at the Photo-Secession Gallery, 291 Fifth Avenue, and Mr. Stieglitz stands sponsor for it. It adds one more to the list of Mr. Stieglitz's responsibilities, though little, very little, to the gayety of the art season.

Arthur Hoeber in the "N. Y. Globe":

The things that the Frenchman, Henri Matisse, has done in painting and drawing—and he has, curious to relate, a substantial number of followers—are as nothing to the concrete form his sculpture takes on, a display of which is now on view at the little galleries of the Photo-Secession, 291 Fifth Avenue, which Alfred Stieglitz has arranged for the delectation of the cult, a cult, too, that is growing daily. Some of them, to put it very mildly, seem like the work of a madman, and it is hard to be patient with these impossible travesties on the human form. There are attenuated figures representing women seriously offered here which makes one grieve that men should be found who can by any chance regard them with other than feelings of horrible repulsion, and their significance is quite beyond the ken of those not inoculated with the virus of post-impressionism. Indeed, it is unbelievable that sane men can justify these on any possible grounds. Yet, so seriously minded a man as Roger Fry, lately connected with the Metropolitan Museum of Art, takes this same Matisse seriously, and has so expressed himself in black and white under his own signature.

We are told vaguely of the research for certain emotions in this work, of a desire to express a sense of this or that, certainly most commendable in any form of art, but why should it be necessary to get away absolutely from all proportion, from all recognized construction, to ignore the human figure as the good Lord has made it and as men know it, we cannot for the life of us comprehend. Would not this same expression be that much the more effective if it were given with a sense of human shape? Here is a bronze of a squatty man, out of all relation to everything we know of man's form, and we are gravely told he is expressive of the struggle of the ages. Here are three heads of what is said to be a woman, but there is no suggestion of the characteristics of sex, and they are "three states of the portrait of a young girl"! We have never before seen such a travesty on humanity, while the meaning is entirely beyond the present reviewer. It all seems decadent, unhealthy, certainly unreal, like some dreadful nightmare, and it is depressing to a degree.

James Huneker in the "N. Y. Sun":

After Rodin—what? Surely not Henri Matisse. We can see the power and individuality of Matisse as a painter, particularly as a draughtsman, but in modelling he produces gooseflesh. At the Gallery of the Photo-Secession there are a few specimens of his sculptures and recent drawings. The bronze torso of a man heavily accented and the back of a nude, a drawing, are the best things to be seen at Mr. Stieglitz's.

David Lloyd in the "N. Y. Evening Post":

Sculpture by Henry Matisse and some recent drawings are to be seen at the Photo-Secession No. 291 Fifth Avenue. Of the sculpture there are half a dozen small bronzes, in which an ability to emphasize expressive traits in form seems to mingle with too self-conscious an effort after salient elements. There are also some plaster casts, including three states of a portrait of a young girl. The sculptor goes after the gargoyle in human nature, but then apparently realities begin to cramp him, and as in the parable, the last state is worse than the first. The exhibition continues to April 6.

J. Edgar Chamberlin in the "Evening Mail":

Several bronzes, plaster casts, a terra cotta and a number of drawings by Henri Matisse are exhibited at the Photo-Secession Gallery, where they will remain until April 6. Students and connoisseurs should see these strong things—the general public will hardly care for them. Matisse is certainly not working for prettiness, but manifestly for such expression of his own
fancies and visions as he can make nature stand for. He delights to produce a figure—of a woman, for example—which possesses a weird and unearthly sort of grace down to the waist, but whose legs are shortened and roughened into a faun-like animalism.

The large bronze figure called “The Serf” makes no pretense of beauty anywhere: it is a knotty figure horribly roughened by toil and bent with the weight of many more centuries than Millet’s “Man With the Hoe” ever dreamed of. It is tremendously strong and graphic, and a work of genius.

In the “three states of a portrait of a young girl,” the first state is evidently the only one which bears any resemblance to nature. One of the others is manifestly a caricature; the third is a conceit of plastic cubisme, and frightfully, masterfully ugly. “Serpentine” is a grotesque design based upon a sinuous female figure. The drawings are extremely clever and expressive.

Mr. Harrington in the “N. Y. Herald”:

Sculptures by Matisse, the representations in solid form of the artistic ideas of the French post-impressionist, are now on exhibition in the “Little Gallery” of the Photo-Secession, at No. 291 Fifth Avenue, and under the chaperonage of Mr. Alfred Stieglitz.

The centre of the tiny place of display is given to the knotted and substantial figure in bronze entitled “The Serf,” which to the uninitiated looks like a Virginia outlaw who has just recalled a judge. The figure, however, is devoid of arms, those members having been omitted when the foundryman inadvertently broke the model. The sculptor sawed them off square, and the impression produced is interesting and bizarre. One of the most uncanny figures is that of a snakelike woman entitled “Serpentine.” By studying it for a while steadily under a top light the observer may convince himself that he is greatly stirred.

Judged by the ordinary standards of sculpture the collection is made up of monstrosities; considered from the point of view of the ultra modern school it is relatively conservative. Since these things were made the cubists and the futurists have arrived in the filed and have succeeded in getting much attention. The exhibition is being viewed by many persons who are in quest of new impressions.

Charles De Kay on “Matisse—Sculptor?—‘Mazette’!” in the “American Art News”:

How can art-lovers with jaded appetites be sufficiently thankful to Mr. Alfred Stieglitz for the artistic absinthe cocktails which he offers us from time to time in the little galleries of the Photo-Secession? Now it is a series of colored discords by a neo-impressionist, now a collection of contortions of the human figure by a post-impressionist, or again the work of a deep philosopher who expresses passion by the simplest means through the medium of squares, triangles and profound blots—one who has studied, like the wide-eyed child he is, that fascinating toy, the kaleidoscope, and in its ever-changing field has caught the secret how to express the inexpressible out of his native temperamental emotion.

It is these masters of true temperament that Mr. Stieglitz shows to the elect, the cognoscenti, the picture-weary.

And here he comes again with a fresh aperitif in the way of sculpture by Monsieur Henri Matisse of Paris. Oh, there’s nothing sugary or timid about this sculpture, no no! It goes the limit—and beyond.

Perhaps you think that Auguste Rodin and Monsieur Bourdelle have said the last word in impressionist sculpture? Why, they are little orphan children to Monsieur Matisse. They are mere hacks, and cobs and coach horses to this mazette.

I understand that there has been some squabbling in Paris as to the right to the new title of Futuristes among those by whom Post-impressionism and Cubism are felt to be already behind the times. I boldly claim the name for Monsieur Matisse, and this is why:

He takes, let us say, a female figure and models it as well as he can. But it’s too commonplace; too human. So he cuts away the flesh and some of the ribs from the torso, slaps enormous calves on the legs, draws out the neck, slams down the forehead, pulls out the ears, gives a twist to the whole figure and calls it “Serpentine.” But where, you ask, does the futurist come in? Why, that’s the way the poor girl may look after she has gone the way of all flesh or perhaps been mangled by wolves.
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