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A PERSONAL ARTISTIC PHILOSOPHY.

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. PERSONAL SYMBOLISM	2
II. ARTISTIC HONESTY	8
III. EVIL IN THE ARTS	10
IV. A PAINTER'S ATTITUDE TO HIS PUBLIC	13
V. UGLINESS IN ART	17
VI. BEAUTY	19

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BALTIMORE, MD. — GREENSBORO, N. C.

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PERSONAL SYMBOLISM

My paintings are made up of images, to some extent abstracted but for the most part recognizable. Even large areas of canvas which may seem vacant are objects or part of objects. A blue and white checked area is not merely decoration, but a sheet hung on a line, or a bright table cloth. A large textured area (textured through the use of color) is a wall, sky or the ground. I believe in the depiction of objects as I see them. There is, therefore, no reason to totally abstract my impressions, feelings, or the objects I am in contact with. Objects offer me a value of their own which is great enough to allow them to remain intact. The amount of abstraction that I feel necessary results as a personal interpretation of such objects. It does not change them, but presents them in a new light.

This is of course abstraction, a process inevitable from the start, for how else can a three dimensional surface be transferred to the two dimensional without abstraction? My painting is not realistic, for in reality edges do not fade away. Leaves are never this color. Light does not fall this way. I am accused of painting in a mystic direction, but I am not in agreement, at least, not in the conventional sense. I would interpret "mystic" to include an intimate knowledge of saints, the supernatural and unknowable, all of which is brought forth from an intense religious feeling, none of which is mine.

Perhaps I might be forward enough to state that my goal in painting is to make it magic. "Mystic" is more definitely pertaining to a cult or definite ancient mysteries, especially esoteric or

religious mysteries. "Magic" differs radically. This is the art which claims to produce effects by the assistance of supernatural forces, especially in nature. When I say that I want my art to be magic, I mean an art that will come about as a result of unknowable forces to take the viewer into a supernatural world. By supernatural I mean these forces that we are not entirely free to choose, that, instead, choose to make artists. They are forces whose endowment is not controlled.

As the viewer is employed, I would have him receive something other than wonder at a creative effort that he might not be capable of...also something other than a literal viewing of the work. He must feel two kinds of magic, the magic forces and impulses that I feel in the painting of a work, and the magic that the picture speaks of directly.

I feel a magic (naive as this word is I am unable to replace it) in painting that is exhilarating and able to block out any considerations other than that of my work. Once again we are faced with the undefinable, for who can really formulate the love and intimate knowledge that goes into a painting? I do not know the reasons for concentration, the push and excitement in working. The idea of my trypsic acid increasing sounds scientifically impressive, but hardly adequate as a detailed reason.

I do feel that love must be mixed with all of the other factors that produce a painting. This is the love of objects depicted, love of paint and its possibilities, and perhaps a jealous love of one's abilities to state those elements which

make up a painting. I can not paint objects that I do not know well and that have no special meaning for me. The final product, too, should be loved by the artist, but loved in a different way. There must be more severity in viewing the finished work and no such passion as went into the rendering. The painting must stand the test that every artist should indulge in...living with the painting...and it is not surprising that paintings under the artist's honest eye are often repainted or thrown away.

There are concrete reasons as to why the artist should be thoroughly familiar with the subject matter he chooses to depict. With familiarity, objects reveal a personality, an inner quality. My flowerpots aim to be intensely flower pots, my avocado trees hope to say a great deal about how very avocadoish they are. They, and my other subjects have a real reason for being which compels me to depict them. And they are often present before me with just enough daily change to make them interesting. If the avocado on my kitchen table puts out a new leaf it always says "I'm very, very avocado", and this intensity is worth relating.

My subject matter is often repeated in various pictures. This is because of the necessary familiarity which I must experience. As a generality, buildings and man-made objects are of little consequence to me. The facade of a modern world does not enter my paintings; although I am moved by science and its repercussions, its spirit is not the magic one. The spirit of change and great causes somehow lacks delicacy, and I do not feel the need to relate this reality in paint. Perhaps this is because the great movements

underfoot are open for interpretation from all and are not quite so secret, so precious, or so available for me to exploit as are the smaller, more secret spirits that lurk in leaves, under chairs or inside flowerpots.

I will attempt to explain how my personal symbolism originated, a difficult task since the symbols seem to have originated before the explanation. This seems to me to be the right way around, for symbols today do not serve the same function as in the past. For example, the early Renaissance painter had no choice other than blue for the color of Mary's cloak. Her dress was always red, the infant always lay in a manger or some remnant of a Greek sarcophagus. There must be a star, shepherds and angels. There is a goblet shaped wash bowl and so forth. A pictorial and literal tradition had shaped itself, and even the great painters of the Renaissance with their new innovations did not completely crack the wall of tradition. The early 19th century saw a general widening of the power of the symbol as it increased in personal artistic meaning. As the need for a literal story and instruction decreased, the enigma of the symbol arose. Traditionally, the symbol was easily understood if present. There was a wealth of meaning implicit in its presentation, for example, even the shade of a color was important—a yellow light could signify light and purity, a dirty yellow might mean treachery. In recent times the symbol first functioned as both symbol and compositional element, such as Picasso's bulls; it then became the painting itself. Rothko's colored, floating rectangles are surely personal symbols. Kelly's canvas filling shapes are a single symbol.

A symbol of what? Highly esoteric symbols have become valued for other than their meaning; their value no longer lies in their ability to evoke in the viewer some reaction similar to the artist's at the time of painting. The canvas is now recognized by its color qualities, interplay of values and textures, composition or line, but it is without a communicable, artist directed meaning.

If the painting or art work says the opposite to what the artist felt as a force strong enough to evoke a painting, is the work still valid? As a decoration, yes. As a means to awaken some vagary of imagination in the viewer, yes. As a means of stating the artist's point of view, no. The work should convey some new idea, some fresh view on the subject. If the painting does not function in this way the whole point of its existence is lost. If I paint iris leaves my intent is to let the viewer know intensely what iris leaves are about. I don't want him to think of the verbena leaves growing in his back yard.

My symbols have evolved as pictures of things because I understand objects this way. There are humans and animals to represent life in an environment, and there is also the environment. Chairs, plants and flowerpots are provided with space to live in. Small objects seem to me a foil against the larger importance of humans or spirits. Also, small objects are less complex and easier to know intimately. Most mysterious are Nature's offerings, and although undefinable, the smaller plants, animals, birds and flowers are somehow less difficult to know. One leaf is understandable even though an entire tree is not, yet the leaf has all of the

spiritual being endowed upon a tree.

I am not consciously concerned with color as a symbolic force. I have no single color which means anything particular except as it functions within a certain painting. My colors are usually light in a happy way, although I have observed that a dull hue or dark area becomes rather sinister in comparison with such light, and does not leave my paintings entirely innocent.

ARTISTIC HONESTY

Painting honestly is part of the responsibility accepted without question by the true artist. It is not even a responsibility to his mind, for such honesty is intimately tied up with the creative process and does not exist as a separate issue. Therefore, by indicating the intimacy of honesty with painting the question of who are the artists is reduced. Interior decorators, hobby clubs, therapeutic users of art and most artist leagues are devoid of any obligation to honesty.

Because honesty is a prime requisite for a true work of art, the finished product is often confused with the spirit in which it was done. Honesty does not automatically mean a good work of art; no matter how sincere the effort, well meaning but inferior painters are not artists.

This leads us to an even more concise definition of honesty in intent. It is painting after a thorough searching, inwardly, of the meaning that objects, ideas or situations hold for one. This necessitates an intimate knowledge with the object or situation and with oneself. Selfknowledge often allows a reaction with a new situation to the point of creating. In this way abstract works result as a highly personal interpretation of a situation. That the artist is often unwilling or unable to explain such works is due to the fact that although he knows himself, perhaps he does not know his prompting environment... not a negative situation at all, but a positive one in that human interpretation without scientific analysis is going on.

The artist who is unthinkingly honest will no doubt be

open to ridicule, blame (or, perhaps worse, the indiscriminating praise of those who think that all modern art is good.) Yet, he need not be honest for his public's sake, but for his own. This helps to explain the over loading of adult painters against student painters. Although the average art student in college today has had a great deal of technical training, his style is frequently floundering or belonging to somebody else. Floundering does not allow a statement to be honestly presented; somebody else's style is plagiarism. Also, the student is thoroughly familiar with only a limited number of experiences, and almost never more than acquainted with his emotional reactions. I do believe in a certain amount of "living" to make a competent painter, for living is a means of deepening character, self-understanding and of positive or negative feelings towards an environment

EVIL IN THE ARTS

There seem to be two kinds of evil present in the art world. Both are difficult to interpret, or even identify. There is the evil of dishonesty and the moral evils identified with pornography.

The evil of dishonesty is tied up with intent, but painters who are simply not up to their task can not be labeled as dishonest. I think that this even applies to the inferior painter who is liable to plagiarize by copying other styles, for although he has chosen a dishonest method of arriving at a statement, the statement is not his and therefore discredited from further consideration. Inferior, he may also be dishonest, but he is not responsible as an artist for an artistic statement.

The real artist with capabilities who is at the same time dishonest is more difficult to discover, and also to dismiss. In fact, he can not be dismissed, for in his vagaries from the true path he indicates a sort of dishonesty that pervades the world today. There is an underlying force which demands a certain conformity, a certain shifting of artistic views towards an acceptance by the public, and although the average artist would violently deny such thinking on his part, such directions are often arranged for him subconsciously. I believe that such thinking is responsible for major artists never changing their style; can Kline really say something different with each rendition of black lines on white? Is abstraction today the driving force that it was five years ago? How many painters are abstractionists because their public expects it...just as, how many painters are traditional

because they are sure of a market? None of these questions can even be considered to be of importance to the true working artist.

The trend to abstraction is a good point to depart from for questioning an honest intent. Many factors must be taken into consideration, including that touchy field concerning the "reflection of the times". It is true that the artist is affected by the age in which he lives, even if only by the process of assimilation. A certain cognizance of the world we live in is inevitable, for the artist must reflect those ideas and circumstances in which he lives according to his personal visions and ideas. He can not honestly paint about the court days of Louis IV if he is a 20th century American. To do so is "evil" because of its dishonesty. A greater evil occurs when the painter is capable of seeing his surroundings and stating something about them, but instead ignores them on purpose. Obviously his intent is then forced, and he is neither honest or painting. All of the statements made in connection with honesty of intent which turned out to be "dishonest", constitute an evil value in art.

Much discussion on a high level has centered around the moral values presented in various art forms. Supreme courts have argued lengthily over the importing of books and paintings which have, perchance, an unsavory moral character. The battle rages as to which is worse...French photographs for sale under the counter or a Medigliani nude...between Mickey Spillane or Lawrence... between Bergman's "Virgin Spring" and home movies of the nudist colony.

Notwithstanding legal positions and maneuvers, moral good seems to be determined by intent, the artist being the only one who can ever know exactly what that intent is. My guess is that the French photographer, the author of Mickey Spillane and the movie man at the nudist colony have an intent vastly different from that of the artist. As intent is different, so is the finished product, but the dividing lines between what is necessary and what is not are extremely difficult to determine. This is a field which the artist should worry about as a spectator. As a real artist his intentions are not to excite the spectator to "crimes" or those attitudes which today are considered as such. Even if his work appears erotic and suggestive its concern is still with the truth of the subject, not exclusively its erotic qualities. For example, a real truth about the naked body is stated in many beautiful Indian carvings. If a nude does not arouse passion in the spectator, many critics feel that it has completely failed.

A PAINTER'S ATTITUDE TO HIS PUBLIC

A highly personal decision is made when the painter decides what will be his ideal relationship to the public. I discredit those opinions which dismiss all thought of public acceptance on the part of the artist; the most esoteric painters are given to loud moans about a general uninterest and apathy on the part of the public, yet, these same painters are often unwilling to make even a verbal explanation to "enlighten" those that they consider forever ignorant.

The painter must decide between either being content to have his work appreciated only by himself and his initiates, or he must make some compromise. (This statement excludes those people whose work leaves no puzzling gaps or enigmas to be solved.)

"Compromise" is an unpleasant word for an artist, and in most cases it is synonymous with "dishonest". I would never advocate a dishonest approach, and mean instead a crystalizing of ideas, forms and the means of presentation. This is the compromise that the painter must make...the compromise that forces him into something better and more meaningful. This is not necessarily a focusing towards narrative qualities, but towards a sharpening of personal statements to the point where they are no longer subconscious rumblings but a clear comment. This is a "compromise" which might change an idea to make it understandable to a greater audience. Such a change will also prove to an artist whether or not his work will stand up under such a demand-whether or not his statements are real or illusion.

It proves whether or not his abilities are great enough to translate into a core personality.

Even the ability of artists to shake down to a hard statement their ideas and convictions has not necessarily resulted in understanding. At the turn of the nineteenth century, France produced the greatest crop of artists ever seen in any one time during her history, and almost without exception they were laughed at and ridiculed. Their "compromise" consisted of finding an essence and developing it. They were aware of both the public and their obligations to themselves, but they were not understood because the public itself made no compromise whatsoever towards them.

Viewed in this light, how does contemporary acceptance compare with the past? There is the logical conclusion that, at least ratio wise, there is probably a percentage of artists today comparable to that of one hundred years ago, or from any chosen historical period. Out of ratio is the number of painters- today everybody paints. It is a pastime made popular by more money, the five day week and number sets. It has produced an astonishing number of bad painters, many of whom are accepted, coddled and bought. Such bad painters never crystalize their ideas. They paint as a therapy, except that these group painters do not recognize their activities as such. Where are the ideas, the force, the individual expressions? Work from a certain period should not bear an identical hallmark, yet most of today's new paintings are amazingly alike- amazingly nonsensical. Their message is one

of conformity, or chaos and resentment, of misunderstanding. It is true that the world is in a state of high confusion, but such confusion should not be imitated. It should be interpreted, and some aspect of it related to the painter.

I do not believe that all of the rules of painting can be ignored. Confusion without interpretation is only that. It must be translated to become form and idea. It does not seem necessary that such a translation be beautiful, but there must be some basic concept. There are painters who will never be artists in the future when the indiscriminate row over creative persons dies down. (I disagree that all of today's fanfare goes to the scientist; the creative arts have recently received their greatest push since the patron system in over a hundred years, and it is not always with the best results). Of course, there are excellent painters within the two or three generations working today, but these are the artists of whom no civilization can produce many. These are the innovators and inventors who can retain a personal identity and a real need for painting.

As for acceptance, today's painters are left the same chances of haphazard public approval as they have always been. No doubt those with new statements are the last to be accepted, for what public likes to change its ways or have something unpleasant told them? The acceptance is indeed chancy, for as there are more painters, so there must be more judges. How admirably suited are womens' clubs, the Junior league, flower arrangers and self-styled art clubs. So, the artist can be recognized... (with the result that

almost no one who is an artist and almost everyone who isn't is acclaimed.) Thus recognition is at an all time high.

My personal attitude towards a possible public is one in which I discredit their existence while painting, but hope that they find some kinship with my statements in subsequent viewing. My work is not slanted in any direction but my own, but when has a painter not wanted to share his convictions?

UGLINESS IN ART

Art, in fulfilling its obligation to represent an uncluttered, totally relevant truth is often obligated to eliminate the "sugar coating" and present a real statement. Therefore, not all painting is beautiful, and some is really ugly. This happens either through the subject matter itself or the artist's approach. Many of today's paintings are muddy, disturbed, and speak of confusion, hatred, fear and the like. Yet, they are acclaimed art, for the formal requirements of a painting are lax and in a state of flux, and that which relays the artist's feelings is often art through its communicative powers rather than its elements. Lack of communication, I feel, is ugliness since without meaning the picture is only a decoration and does not hold the abstract beauty of truth. Therefore, although an art work which merely copies is not necessarily ugly, it does not stand as art, for there must be the elements of interpretation plus communication. From the Greeks on down, the importance of the spirit over imitation has been recognized.

I do not feel that beauty is necessarily goodness (unless goodness is interpreted as something that people ought to have whether they like it or not), "good" being that which pleases the appetite, and "beauty" being something pleasant to apprehend. (Saint Thomas) The painter can not always present that which his audience might like; he might have some views very unpleasant to them, and certainly he presents objects unpleasant to apprehend. Perhaps Saint Thomas felt that beauty was good, pleasing and pleasant to apprehend because the mind, contemplating a beautiful

work, would, according to him, find itself therein. I believe that our minds are in complete control of our lives in every way. I also find them far from perfect, and lacking in beauty. Perhaps this new cult which allows extreme ugliness in painting is finally an honest way of showing man's ideas and creations. Art should not be a relief from such facts, but a crystallization of them. The artist faces his world; he does not make up stories about it. This, in turn, gives two levels of appreciation to a painting as it becomes a source of clarified truth and a source for esthetic emotion. A true painting contains both, perhaps in varying degree. Probably the two levels are not apprehended together, but result from separate searches. This double tracking understandably increases an understanding audience, but for all viewers there should be a real similarity in truths although the depths of the esthetic experience will probably vary with each individual.

I am seldom criticized for an "ugly" painting, probably because my average viewer goes as far as my predominately pastel shades and stops. For the most part my subjects are happy... a thoughtpleasing to a general public. Yet, I myself feel that not all of my spirits are kind, some of my leaves are dark on the underside, and not all of my woods are innocent. I try not to become ugly through dishonesty, art's ugliest element. I find my inability to paint as well as I wish and my frustration with such inability to be my ugliest elements.

BEAUTY

Beauty, and some of its basic characteristics, is partly describable and partly left up to the beholder. I am interested in the part that can be verbally expounded, and the rest is left up to art objects, not words.

The beauty in art must come from making, not imitating. This classifies art as a man made object, for natural landscapes, flower arrangements and beautiful people are not art objects. It also eliminates a painting that has no personal, individual artistic thought manifested within it. The artist must change reality to give us a different viewpoint from that of the existing natural object, and his changed, chosen forms must include both the essence of the object and his own personal symbolism. If a bowl of fruit is completely abstracted I believe that the essence of this object should remain in the artist's effort to say to the viewer something of his sensations at the time of painting, and include within the abstract form a personal symbolism which indicates a bowl of fruit. The abstract painting which starts out without either idea or subject I question as art, for it is necessarily a formless, confusing mass, lacking objectified, communicative powers. Without form and some sense of proportion there does not seem to be a real goal in the artist's mind, and certainly one for the spectator will either never evolve, or have the wrong meaning if it does. By the "wrong" meaning, I mean a conclusion not intended which could be gained by other methods. Too much work today is labeled as art although it

exists without form, through accident and without consequences other than standing as a memorial to the confusion of our time.

According to Saint Thomas, beauty includes three conditions; perfection, proportion or harmony and brightness or clarity. His ancient definitions have stood for many centuries, and with modification seem to me to withstand criticism. Saint Thomas concludes that these three conditions lead to a perfect art work, one which must spare the mind its usual muddle of sorting and extricating the facts. This conclusion is not valid for much of today's painting. Rather, the art work of today demands a certain intellectual knowledge and some practice in appreciating paintings completely alien to what is found in actuality.

(If work is not actually alien, critics often offer such illuminating theories that the work is soon beyond the average viewer. For example, there have been repeated attempts to prove the theory that Jackson Pollock and the microscopically magnified cold virus are related, complete with illustrations, but the connection is not founded because Pollock was not interested in depicting virus. There is a similarity, however, in that both virus and Pollock take some practice in looking for real comprehension.)

Today's painters work with a series of obscure, highly personal symbols which demand knowledge on the part of the viewer. Even so, such symbols are almost never the same to any two people, and even when fixed in paint change their meaning for the artist. I strongly believe in the necessity for intellectual considerations on both the viewer's and the painter's part.

This includes some idea or subject rather than form alone. Some intellectual content calls into play all of the senses whereas pure color or form without an underlying spirit or essence is mere decoration. I must here take cognizance of that theory which claims that all signs of recognition are preceded by the esthetic reaction. In this way the senses are called into play and then the mind calls up a connection. My objection to such an order is the exclusion of new thoughts as presented by the painter. The viewer makes up his own ideas and then fits the painting around them. Still of some value, this job could be performed equally well with the family photograph album. I do not mean, however, to eliminate any of the spontaneity from either painting or its appreciation. The painter must be spontaneous to the point where he is often unaware of the full impact of his work. I believe that great artists are geniuses in a way that defies complete explanation. They are endowed with a new vision plus a new talent. Their spontaneity is in a fresh statement.

Believing that the intellect is a necessary force in the appreciation and creation of an art work, I would not have intellectual considerations take the place of pleasure in the arts, but only heighten the enjoyment. The painter's pleasure varies from that of his audience; the painter works under a real compulsion while the viewer is never under the same sort of pressure to look. The painter's interest is more real, but more terrible.

Pleasure as perceived by the observer is a quality which

results from his approval, an approval which goes beyond mere recognition. There are values which are created for their own sake in the art work. The painter must find some way to state such values in a way that will evoke a similar value in the viewer. I hold to the theory that in art beauty should be a communicable value. This involves the value being put into the two dimensional form to become a tangible force between the intangible value appreciations of painter and viewer. In other words, painter plus values equals canvas as a value, equals viewer plus new values. The viewer's values should end up akin to what the artist has to say because of the stress I lay on communication. There should be a spiritual continuity to which the values of instruction, intellect or social teaching are secondary.

Some of the values of a less personal kind may be form, line, color or style. I think of form as shape. A painting is composed of a multitude of shapes, and the existence of each is completely dependent upon those others that appear with it in the picture area. The excellence of form depends upon its necessity, and the elimination of casual elements. Art, in an effort to present an essence of being - a real spiritual core - must eliminate all that is superficial in presenting such a viewpoint. This point is easier to discover in architecture, for here the opinion of the artist is shaped to some extent by the use that other people will give his creation, while the painter does not strive to give his work a utilitarian meaning. It is

easier to see the difference in form between the Victoria and Albert Hall, London and the Hollywood Bowl than it is to recognize formal stylistic differences, yet the comparisons are similar. Both structures are made for listening, but here the comparison ends. The reason for further dissimilarities is obviously due to the fashion of the times and a concern with acoustics; the Bowl was built for listening whereas the Victoria and Albert was interested in showing off penniless dukes in red velvet boxes. Again, as an example, I have tried to find among living things a creature whose shape did not fit his function. In painting, form must be equally natural and necessary. A comparison of Fragonard and Cezanne reveals that great understanding of a few necessary forms and the ability to present them economically is a valuable artistic endowment.

Line is a force determined by, or enclosing form, and its demands are as great as that form which it either makes or depends upon. Line is that margin which encloses and releases form.

Color is the most abstract and nebulous quality of all. It has hue, value, chroma and brightness to be considered by the working artist. Color is an element which takes first choice in the viewer's eye, and its attention getting qualities are often deceptively free of its basic support of line, form and mass. That is why, I think, so much bad contemporary painting is immediately accepted; the color qualities are awe-inspiring and enormously presented, and they blot out other more basic deficiencies. Color in a work results when two or more pigments are pitched against each other. A colored line drawing is not, to me, color, for the

single pigment has form and line as its function, not gradations of light, value or hue. As a single line it has none of the sensual qualities of pitched values. Color, to fulfill its possibilities, must be laid down in a mass with spatial boundaries as determined by the form the pigment makes and the line that ends its wanderings. Objects occupy space, and the color mass is no exception, but its other qualities are most peculiar and demanding.

The forces of mass, line and color are used by all painters, yet there is no doubt of the difference between a Botticelli and a Picasso. A remaining abstract quality that is almost undefinable constitutes style, and there are as many styles as there are artists, for although the artist is conditioned to some extent by the place and time he occupies in history, he makes individual statements that are his alone.

Style is a result of the qualities just discussed used in such a way as to formulate a constant, either for an individual or a certain group. Style results as differences manifest themselves - differences between cultures or persons. So, style is difference, including varying uses of all the formal elements plus different preferences and views of subject matter, technique in executing and the purpose for which the painting was intended. Then all of these elements are composed in a unique way which gives a "map" to archeologists, historians, critics and psychologists. It is a development of new ways of seeing. A style is not, then, a truly realistic outlook. A style breaks down reality to substitute a factor manufactured either in the artist's mind or the minds of

a prescribing group or society at large. Therefore we have today's self guiding painters, the art of Egypt as prescribed by a small group and the Victorian art as desired by a populace.

There are a number of reasons as to why I feel that my work has taken on a "style". Partly, my background; I was brought up in Europe where folk-lore is common knowledge. In war time when toys seemed a luxury the garden became a large play-pen; beyond the garden the local woods housed anti-aircraft guns and occasional falling bombs...(my evil spirits are invariably connected with trees.) Here was a garden of plants to be known by name and inhabitant, for of course they all belonged to an invisible spirit. This background is no doubt some basis for my figures and spirits, although it is not consciously remembered while painting. This is as far as I am able to explain my heritage in connection with subject matter apart from what I have included on personal symbolism.

My technique of presenting ideas which are important to me is formed by how I feel about atmospheric relations between objects and air in real life. I include figures and forms recognizable from "reality". In paint they are more real to me. I want to tell a story in such a way that it will be understood. The story differs which each work, but there are constants. My color is within a certain range, generally excluding dull values, darkness and the lower wave lengths on the color chart. My style is to pick out little objects and point them out for recognition. I want my depicted forms to fade and ebb with the atmosphere. I abstract what is not terribly important so as to emphasize my real subject.

I am not able to analyze my own personality to the point that I can decide how it affects my work, yet, of all the determining forces of style this is one of the most important. It must be personality which makes the difference between any two painters or paintings. Personality decides every part of a work, for the artist asserts himself over reality in such a way that his viewpoint is the correct one, and, temporarily at least, correct for the spectator. The artist is free to choose his view, although he is not free to choose what influences him in such a choice. This is because he lives in a period during an age and is buffeted unconsciously by his surroundings. He is bound to show something of his feelings towards the times and of his place in the world. Every factor of his existence is held in reserve to mirror in paint.

The culminating role of beauty is to draw the spectator to the esthetic experience. As a painter and spectator, this experience interests me in two obvious ways. This is a sensation open to highly personal interpretation, for the esthetic doubtless hangs to communication via association. It is an attitude towards an art work, or rather, the spiritual qualities above pure craftsmanship. Thus the definition that names art as an object existing for pleasure without utilitarian value comes about in part through the spiritual (non-useful) quality of art.

Above communication and association, beautiful workmanship or functions such as teaching, there is a stage unconnected. For myself, this is a totally passive height. I do not think at the moment in which I become one with the art object. I have no

associations; I am without recognition. It seems to me that such a state is easier to reach if done through some intellectual knowledge of the work contemplated as a means towards personal association which further facilitates a spiritual joining. But all of this is not absolutely necessary, and may be so slight that a person will simply realize a unified state with the art object which has come about with barely a stir of that hidden knowledge which, I believe, is ultimately responsible for the esthetic experience. A profound truth is then recognized from previous but perhaps forgotten experience.

I will go no further in stating what I personally feel to be the esthetic experience. I feel the need for an associative value in art plus the other values I have mentioned. Others may need a predominately intellectual, sensual, social or "wishing" art. I think that just below this esthetic height, theories dealing with the different aspects of creativity are in reality esthetic theories, always personal and always changing.