

Léger

By Katharine Kuh, [catalogue of the exhibition organized by] the Art Institute of Chicago in collaboration with the Museum of Modern Art, New York [and] the San Francisco Museum of Art

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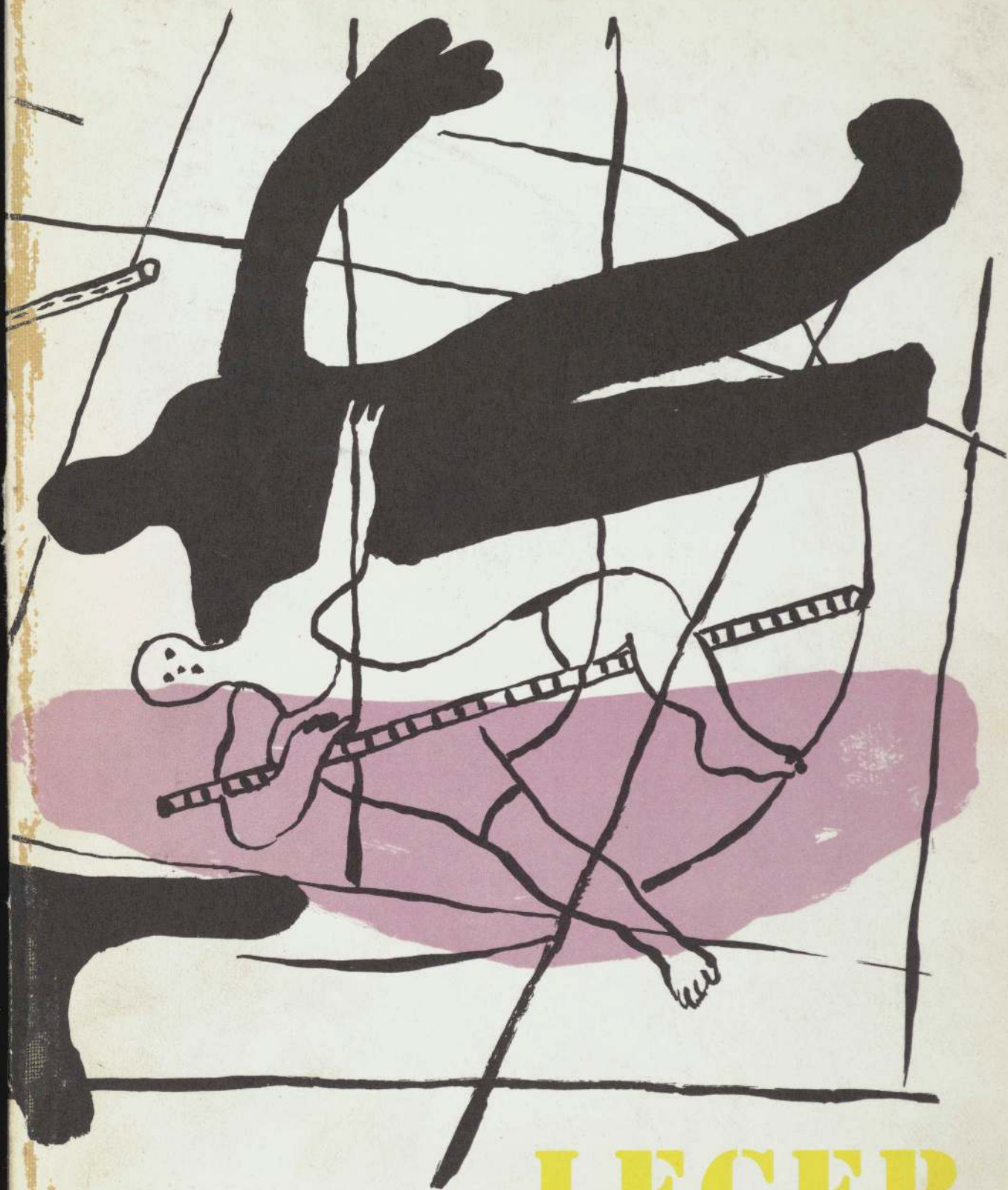
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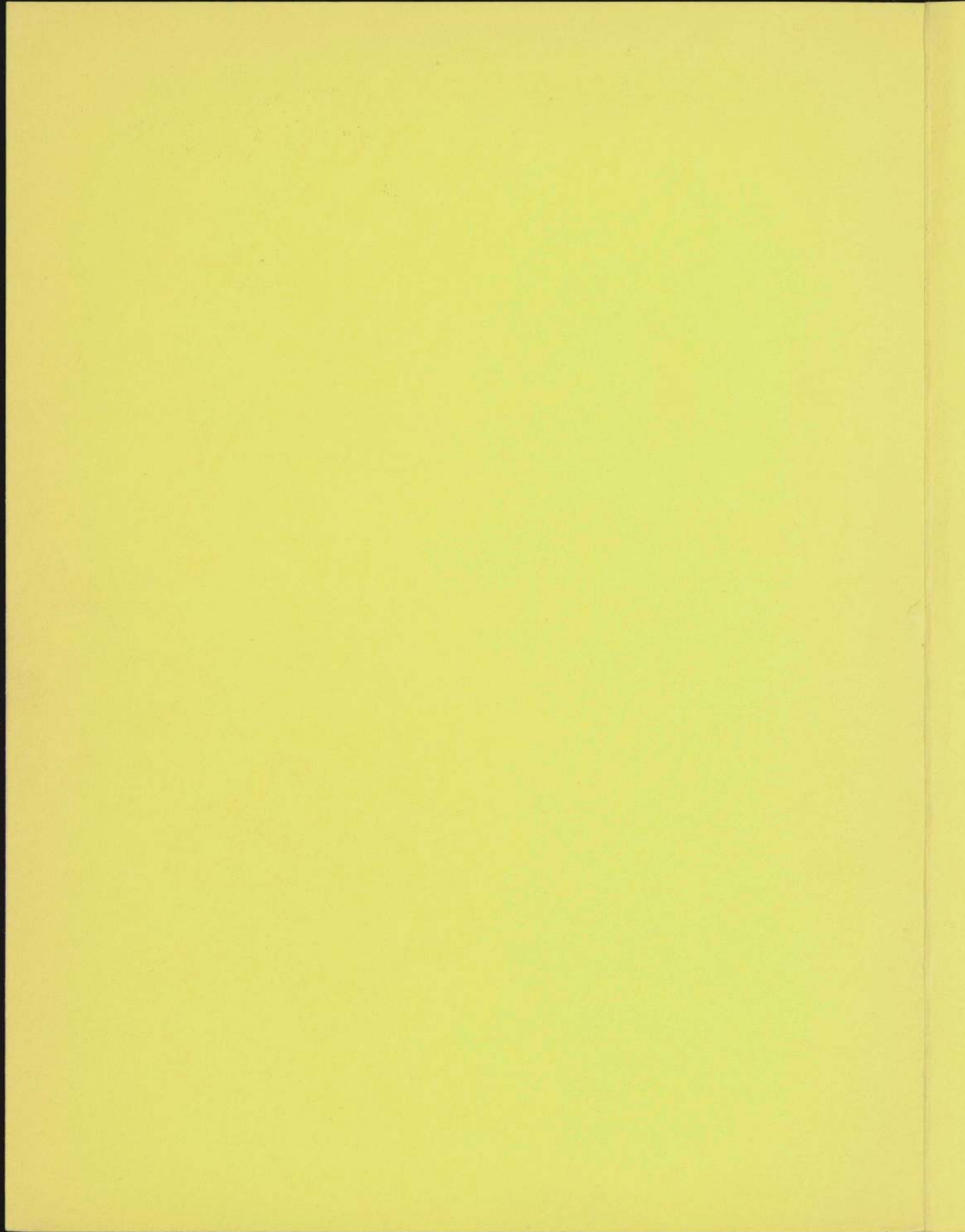
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LEGER

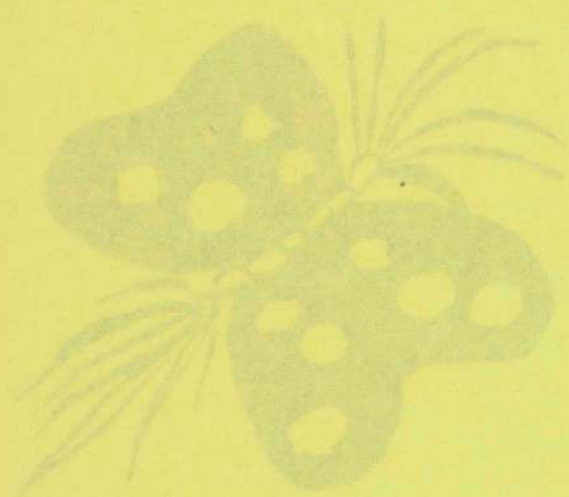


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by Katharine Kuh

LEGER

in collaboration with

The Museum of Modern Art, New York

The San Francisco Museum of Art

THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

Cover: Trapeze Artists from CIRQUE. 1950. The Art Institute of Chicago

Frontispiece: Photograph of Léger by Sanford H. Roth. 1952

On opposite page: Costume design for *La Création du Monde*. 1922

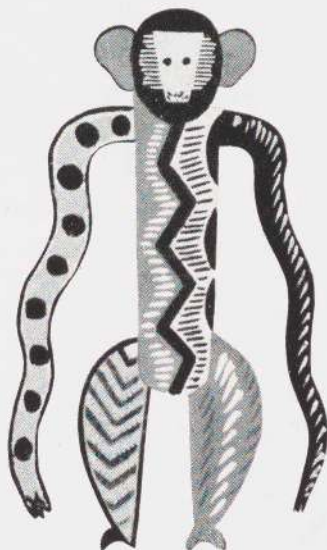
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FACE AND HANDS. 1952. Brush and ink drawing. 26 x 19 3/4
The Museum of Modern Art, N.Y., Mrs. Wendell T. Bush Fund

INTRODUCTION

No artist has ever grown out of his times more completely than Fernand Léger. He is unquestionably one of the great protagonists of twentieth century life, a man so steeped in the world around him that his art cannot be separated from contemporary vision. In a sense he is the folk artist of our scientific and mechanistic age but he does far more than report and reflect; he makes painting an integral part of the life it comes from. Though he is indebted, as are all artists, to the past, his true source material is drawn from his immediate surroundings. He has been influenced, from time to time, by Italian primitive art (particularly mosaics) by Poussin and David, by Cézanne and the Douanier Rousseau, but he is more than influenced by the machine age; he is immersed in it. Motion pictures, mass production, modern gadgets, stream-lined engines, stainless steel, jazz music, burlesque shows and hand painted neckties—these he understands and incorporates into his work.

When asked what wine he liked best, Léger said, "I prefer red to white, the red has more volume." And this is typical. His work has the virility and force of strong red wine. Throughout his life his main interest has been and still is centered on color (often flat, pure

and complementary) on the object (sometimes magnified, usually isolated and monumental) and on the most careful proportions. His paintings are apt to be large, objective and bold, for he feels that they should always be the most important "personages" in the room.

He tells a great deal about himself when he says, "New materials, free color, freedom to invent, can entirely transform the problem and invent new spaces." For him dense volume and three-dimensional form, both elements he deeply admires, are no more desirable than the space they inhabit. Aware of how artificial lights and modern methods of transportation can affect vision and suggest new kinds of space, he constantly experiments, hoping to express but not to reproduce on canvas the brilliance of present-day life. Léger rarely interprets; his symbols are visual comments more related to imaginative statements of fact than to moods, dreams or analyses. Nor does he criticize what he sees—he accepts, understands and enjoys.

Curiously attracted by both classical and primitive traditions, he strives to combine disciplined order with boundless vitality and directness of vision. Thus his work is never haphazard or amorphous, but possessed of a definition resulting from decisive line and strong color. Typical of the artist's direct approach is his preference for local color, particularly for the bright flat hues of modern mass produced objects. Once, when discussing color, he said, "Seurat's picture *La Grande Jatte* in the Art Institute of Chicago would, in my opinion, be infinitely more beautiful—would have more style and would, without doubt, stand as the greatest work of French art had it been painted in the technique of local color."

Because Léger is prolific and because he paints, as a rule, in series, repeating the same composition many times with only minor changes in design, color, scale and size, a study of his art presents certain difficulties. Since he follows no definite rules, the largest canvas in a group not necessarily being the last, the problem of dating his work is sometimes baffling. Undoubtedly the main purpose in his many variations on a theme is gradually to improve the original composition, though sometimes he becomes so interested that he makes multiple examples of a motif only for his own sheer pleasure, returning to the same subject even after he has finished the culminating painting of a series.

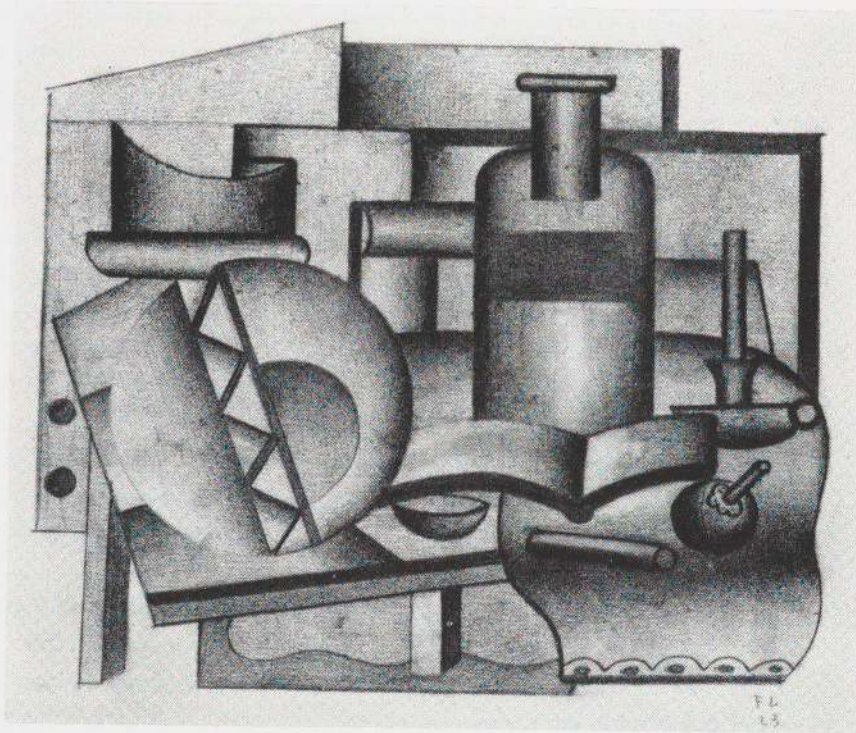
Public recognition of Léger has come slowly, possibly because he diligently refuses to accept romantic or "artistic" subjects, preferring to draw his material from the everyday world around him, a world so familiar and so immediate as to be rejected by the average person. He early realized the visual possibilities of twentieth century life and with courage and persistence helped others to find meaning in their own surroundings. Only a glance at the number of his recent one-man exhibitions, as compared to those of the past, indicates how complete public acceptance of his work has become.

In addition to teaching, Léger has spoken widely on art in both Europe and the United States. In 1939 he delivered a series of eight lectures at Yale on color in architecture and ten years earlier he was already associated with Ozenfant, teaching with him at the Modern Academy in Paris. Among other teaching assignments was a summer session at Mills

College in California and even today Léger still runs a large art school in Paris where students from all over the world come under his influence. Though amazingly articulate, Léger is far more artist than teacher. But the fact that he expresses himself so fluently—and always has—facilitates the understanding of his work, for he is better able than most artists to explain exactly what he is trying to do.

The following condensed survey borrows frequently from the artist's own words and wherever possible associates them with appropriate paintings. This is not to say that his quotations are always intended for the pictures which they accompany, but rather that apt phrases which Léger himself has used from time to time in letters, speeches, conversations and articles are here chosen to clarify his art.

This catalogue accompanies the first comprehensive showing of the artist's work in America, an exhibition organized by The Art Institute of Chicago in collaboration with the San Francisco Museum of Art and The Museum of Modern Art in New York. Following chronologically certain pivotal works, the exhibition is designed to trace, step by step, the development of Léger's art, a development distinguished by consistent and continuous growth.



STILL LIFE WITH BOTTLE. 1923. Pencil drawing. $9\frac{1}{4} \times 10\frac{1}{2}$ Collection Curt Valentin Gallery, N.Y.

BIOGRAPHICAL LISTING

- 1881 Born in Argentan, Normandy, France
- 1897-99 Apprenticed to architect in Caen
- 1900-02 Came to Paris. Worked as architect's draughtsman
- 1902-03 Military service in the engineer corps at Versailles
- 1903 Studied in free studios of Léon Gérome and Gabriel Féry in Paris
- 1903-05 Painted very little due to lack of money. Worked as architect's draughtsman and photograph retoucher
- 1905 Visited Corsica
- 1908 Met Henri Rousseau
- 1909 Met Robert Delaunay
- 1910 Through Kahnweiler Gallery came in contact with the Cubists, particularly Picasso and Braque
- 1912 Joined Kahnweiler Gallery
- 1914 Mobilized in World War I. Designed breech-blocks for guns. Served as stretcher bearer
- 1917 Gassed during the war and hospitalized
- 1921-22 Commissioned by the Swedish Ballet to design curtain, setting and costumes for Skating Rink, music by Honegger, and Creation of the World, music by Milhaud
- 1923-24 Collaborated with Dudley Murphy on Ballet Mécanique, an experimental film
- 1924 Visited Italy with Léonce Rosenberg
- 1925 First mural paintings executed for Le Corbusier's pavilion at the Arts Décoratifs Exhibition, Paris
- 1929 Taught at the Modern Academy in Paris with Amédée Ozenfant
- 1931 First visit to the United States
- 1933 Visited Greece
- 1935 Returned to the United States
- 1937 Designed costumes for David Triumphant, a ballet for the Paris Opera with music by Riéti
- 1938-39 Visited the United States
- 1940-46 Worked in the United States
- 1946 Returned to France after the war
- 1949 Mosaic for church at Assy
- 1951 Designed costumes and sets for Bolivar, an opera staged by the Paris Opera with music by Milhaud
- 1951 Stained glass windows which Léger designed for church at Audincourt installed

LEGER: a survey of his art

Two of Léger's earliest known paintings are *Portrait of the Artist's Uncle* and *Corsican Village: Sunset*, both small and both dated 1905. Neither gives the slightest indication of the power and exuberance soon to appear in his work, though the carefully rectangular construction of the Corsican village is perhaps a forewarning of Léger's later interest in Cubism. Both are low keyed gentle pictures where the influence of nineteenth century painting is

PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST'S UNCLE. 1905. 17¾ x 13 Collection Fernand Léger, Paris



evident, particularly in an almost Impressionist use of broken color to express light and atmosphere. More important is the obvious influence of Cézanne whose work Léger always admired. The attempt to model form in both the head of his uncle and the Corsican landscape shows how closely Léger had observed Cézanne's methods, how Cézanne's insistence on density and disciplined volume had impressed him.

The Portrait of the Artist's Uncle, a serious, honest and at once sympathetic study, is probably the only individualized likeness by Léger in existence. During the winter of 1905, while Léger was in Corsica, he was able for the first time to devote all his efforts to painting. In this small landscape, illuminated and cubed houses are contrasted with the rounder, darker forms of trees and mountain. For the next forty-eight years Léger is to use the idea of contrast with ever increasing variety—contrast of form, contrast of color, contrast of line, contrast of idea.

CORSICAN VILLAGE: SUNSET. 1905. 20 x 26 Collection Miss Margaret Bleuler, Zurich, Switzerland





NUDES IN THE FOREST. 1909–10. 47¼ x 67 Rijksmuseum Kröller-Müller, Otterlo, Holland

"I would like to talk of a new architectural order: the architecture of the mechanical."

During the four or five years between the Corsican picture and *Nudes in the Forest*, his first major canvas, the artist drew and painted continuously but, because he was dissatisfied, destroyed most of this work. Here where tree trunks look like pipes, where nude men wielding axes resemble figures in metal armor, mechanized forms are welded together in an overall pattern constructed with the rigidity of architecture. Léger's interest in architecture is not surprising since he originally studied this subject for two years, abandoning it only to devote himself to painting. In *Nudes in the Forest* forms are reduced to cylinders, cones and spheres, still recalling Cézanne but also suggesting the shapes of contemporary machinery. Though Léger's work of these years has been associated with the Cubism of Braque and Picasso, which was developing at the same time, the resemblance is only coincidental, coming as it does in part from the same source: Cézanne. For Léger's forms are not transparent, nor are all sides of the same object super-imposed on each other as in early Cubism. His approach is more direct, his emphasis is on construction rather than on disintegration and reconstruction.



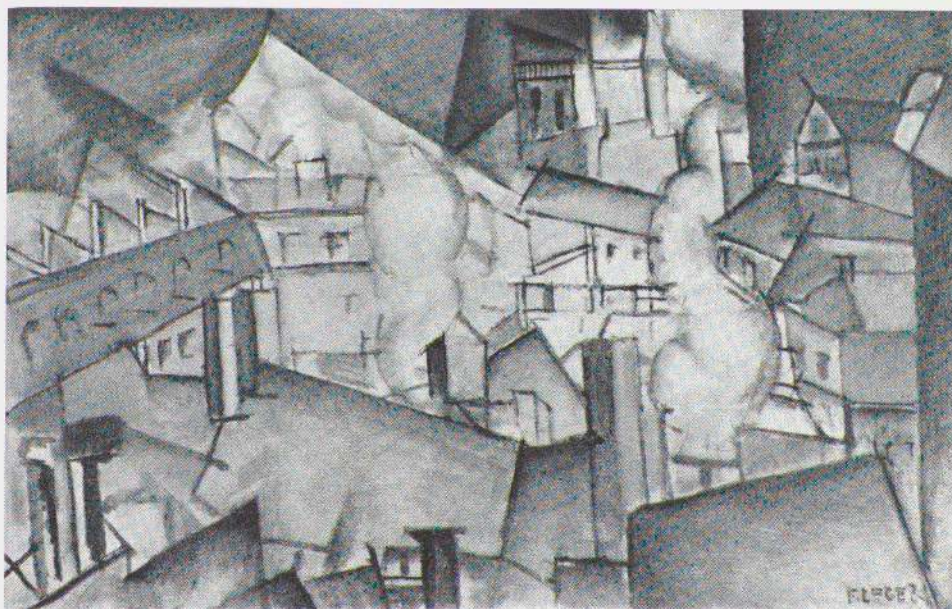
THREE FIGURES. 1910-11. (Sometimes called *Le Passage à Niveau*) 77 x 46 The Milwaukee Art Institute

THE WEDDING. 1910-11. 101¼ x 80¾ Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris, Alfred Flechtheim Bequest



The next milestone is *Three Figures*, undated but probably painted soon after *Nudes in the Forest*. Though exhibited in the New York Armory show of 1913, the picture remained unknown until recently discovered by The Milwaukee Art Institute. After cleaning, it emerges as a luminous composition with three mechanized figures set in a complex of solid cylinders and cones. The severe heads, seemingly carved from wood, contrast unexpectedly with the mysterious color and tenderly painted surface of the canvas. Shortly the artist is to repudiate the seductive brush-work of his early years for a method less sensuous and more adapted to the machine forms he so admires. Incidentally Léger insists that the heads, which might almost be portraits, are purely fictional.

The *Wedding*, far freer in form than *Three Figures*, is less contained and more concerned with movement, but the brilliant color soon to appear in his work is still absent. Here tender pastel tones suggest the emotions of a wedding while staccato figures, cut by the artist's familiar smoke-like areas, set the entire canvas pulsating upward. Like his Italian contemporary, the Futurist Severini, Léger uses a kaleidoscopic method to imply the busy "hubbub" of people at a party.

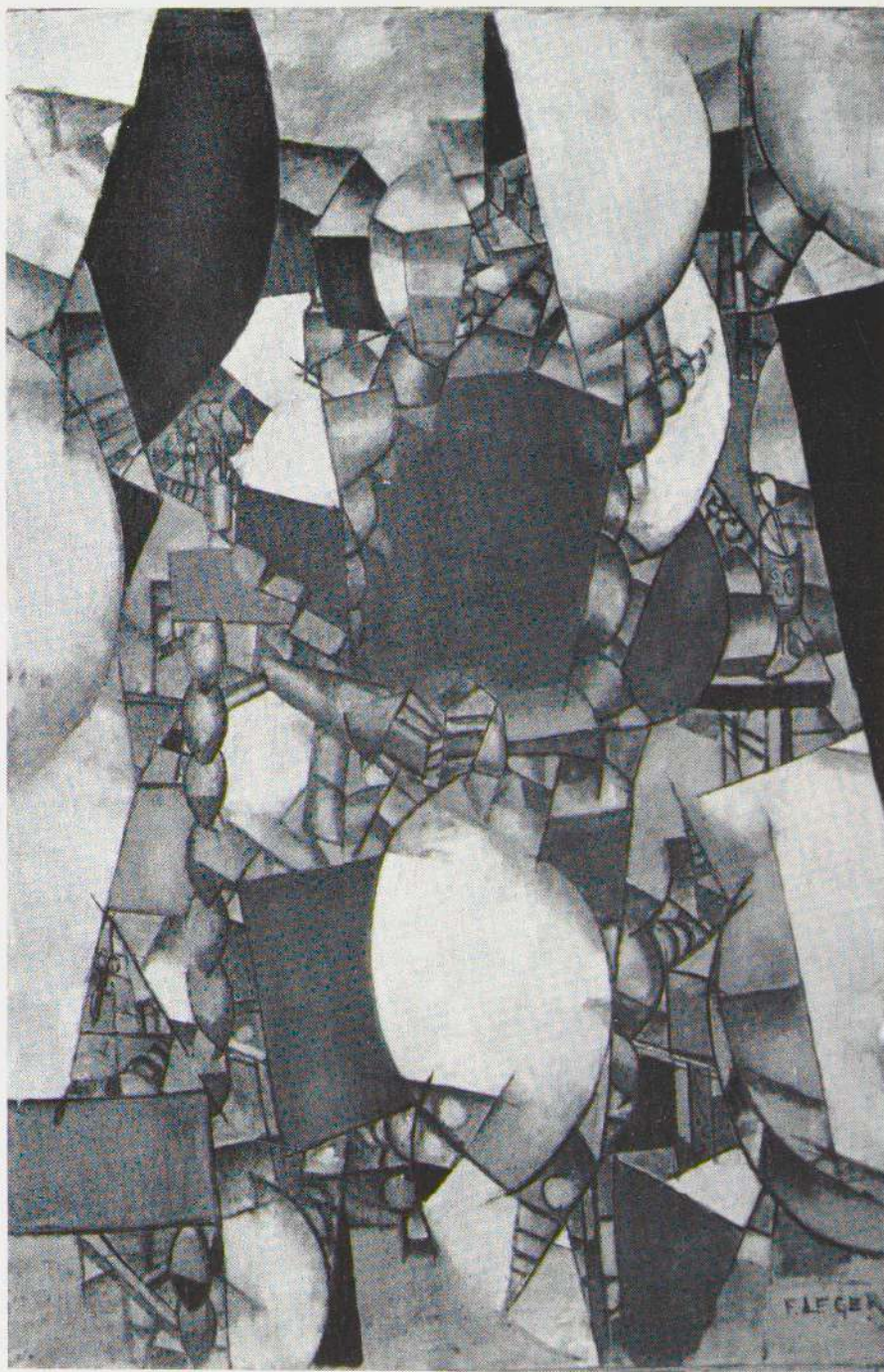


SMOKE OVER THE ROOFS. 1911. 23 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 37 $\frac{3}{4}$ Collection Putnam D. McMillan, Minneapolis

Smoke and clouds appear repeatedly in Léger's work. He gives even these ephemeral elements solid form and volume, using them as space devices to divide his canvas and to suggest motion. He particularly loved smoke because of its tubular shape and in *Smoke over the Roofs* contrasted curvilinear spirals with the angles of city architecture. Here and in many similar paintings the artist begins to explore the idea of space, making the contours of his smoke and architecture suggest the extension of distance in various directions.

The *Woman in Blue*, a canvas Léger considers one of his greatest, marks a turning point in his work since here for the first time he tried, in his own words, "to liberate pure color in space." Earlier he had been chiefly working with greys and subdued tones, but now he wanted to manipulate space not only by the use of curving smoke and angular lines but by the juxtaposition of pure color. To this same end he has applied himself intermittently until the present day. For Léger has always been interested in how color can create the illusion of forms moving up and down, back and forth within a canvas. This he does by carefully relating one color area to another, constantly varying intensity and size.

"I obtained rectangles of pure blue and pure red in the painting Woman in Blue, 1912."



THE WOMAN IN BLUE, 1912. 76x51¼ Kunstmuseum, Basel, Switzerland, Raoul La Roche Bequest

Borrowing elements from both Cubism and Futurism Léger often sets his geometric forms into motion, interlocking them in rotating spirals. In *Woman in an Armchair* he has reduced the figure to his usual tubes and cylinders, developing a circular movement with dashing highlights and accents of color and line. *Nude Model in the Studio* carries the process further. Traditional curves of a nude with upraised arms are played against the broken angles of a studio interior, but the subject is almost obscured in the complex interweaving of flat and round shapes.

WOMAN IN ARMCHAIR. 1912. 51¼ x 38¼ Collection
Mr. and Mrs. Harry Lewis Winston, Birmingham, Michigan



NUDE MODEL IN THE STUDIO. 1912. 49¼ x 37¼
The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York





THE STAIRWAY. 1913. 56¾ x 46½ Kunsthaus, Zurich, Switzerland

A boldness which is to characterize much of Léger's work now appears. The Stairway, like many of the Contrasts of Forms and stylized Landscapes painted at this time, is concerned with massive shapes and dazzling color. Limiting himself chiefly to reds, blues or greens, Léger sacrifices details and makes syncopated patterns by opposing broad patches of color to white highlights. The motif of a stairway recurs often in his paintings, possibly attracting him by its geometric design and suggestion of up and down movement. Here he flanks winding steps with two monumental robot-like figures, both so reduced to generalities as to be almost abstract.

WHILE Léger was in the army (he was mobilized in 1914) he stopped painting, though he sketched occasionally, using artillery, soldiers and the commonplaces of war for subjects. This experience was to have a deep influence on his work. The first searching beginnings were over, but certain early characteristics are to persist throughout his life. From the start his approach is direct and factual, never mysterious or philosophic. He always painted from nature, using what he saw. If his work sometimes seems abstract this is because he improvised, identifying objects and figures with the contemporary world he loved, a world of machinery, of light and space broken by speeding forms. The titles of his pictures are not esoteric; they tell exactly what he started from. Even his more ambitious subjects like *The Wedding* or *Nudes in the Forest* adhere strictly to their visual aspects. Double or inner meanings do not interest Léger for he feels that this is the province of literature. How different his contemporary Marcel Duchamp who also painted a staircase but who almost always imbued his work with psychological overtones.

An important contact of Léger's early years was Henri Rousseau whom he knew from 1908 until 1910 when the Douanier died. He admired extravagantly the older artist's simple acceptance of reality, his insistence on local color, realizing also that Rousseau's naiveté freed him to see less traditionally. He once said, "The whole question is there, one invents or one does not invent; the Renaissance copies, the avant-Renaissance invents, Rousseau invents." His admiration for invention is not surprising, coming as it does from an artist who transforms smoke and clouds into hard forms and reduces highlights to vibrating patterns.

"Three years of war without touching a brush, but contact with the most violent and crude reality."

"During war men and things are seen in all their intensity."

"Perhaps my experiences at the front and the daily contact with machines led to the change which marked my painting between 1914 and 1918."



SOLDIER WITH PIPE. 1916. 50 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 27 $\frac{3}{8}$ Collection Rolf de Maré, Stockholm, Sweden

Soldier with Pipe was painted in 1916 when Léger was on leave in Paris. It was the first important work to come out of his war experiences and was a preparation for the larger more complex canvas, The Card Players, which he finished the following year while recovering from having been gassed. During the war he designed breech-blocks for guns and served as a stretcher-bearer. The brutality, camaraderie and brilliance of mechanized

"... During those four war years I was abruptly thrust into a reality which was both blinding and new. I was dazzled by the breach of a 75 millimeter gun which was standing uncovered in the sunlight: the magic of light on white metal. This was enough to make me forget the abstract art of 1912-13. A complete revelation to me, both as a man and as a painter."



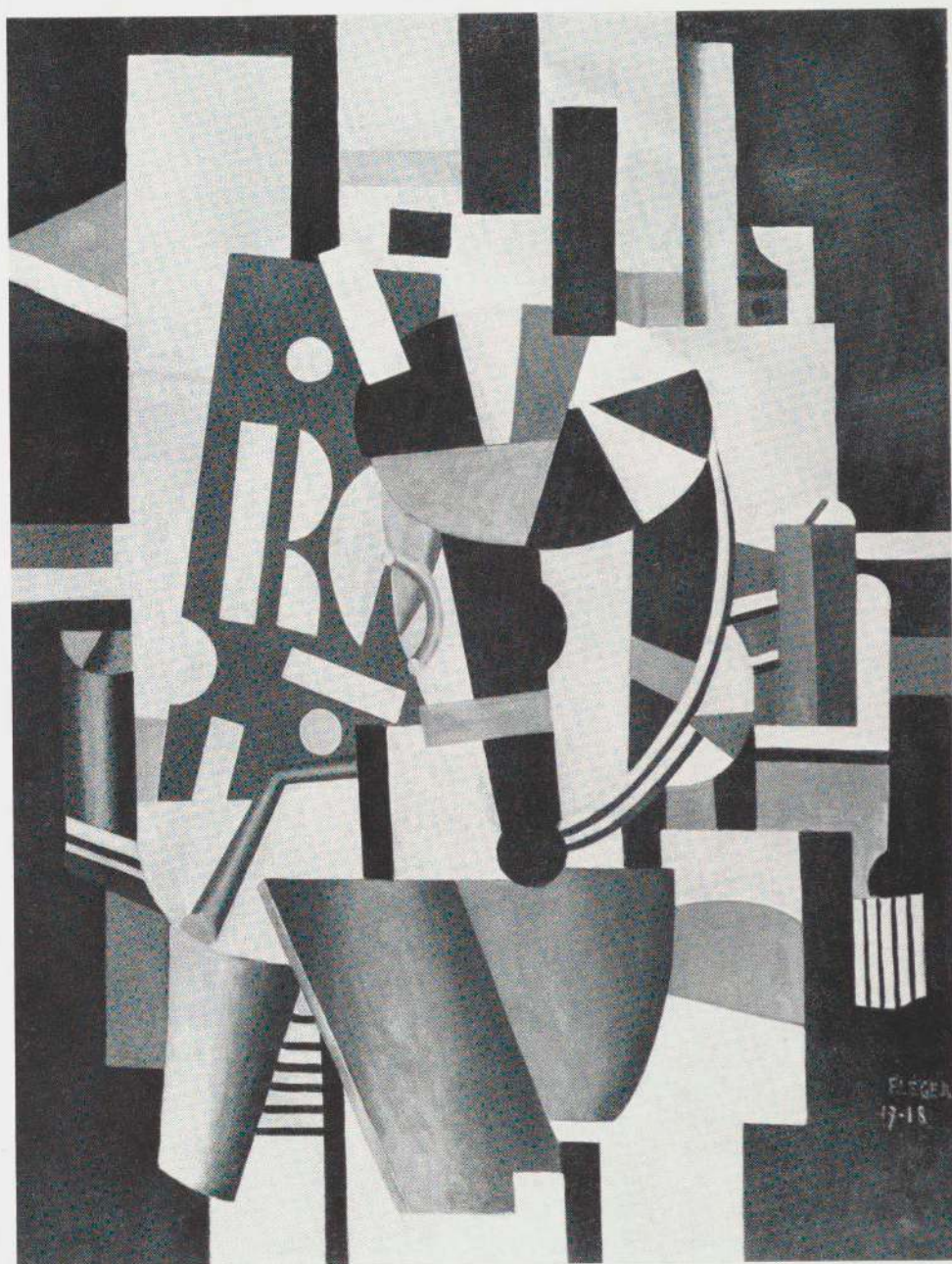
THE CARD PLAYERS. 1917. 50% x 76 Rijksmuseum Kröller-Müller, Otterlo, Holland

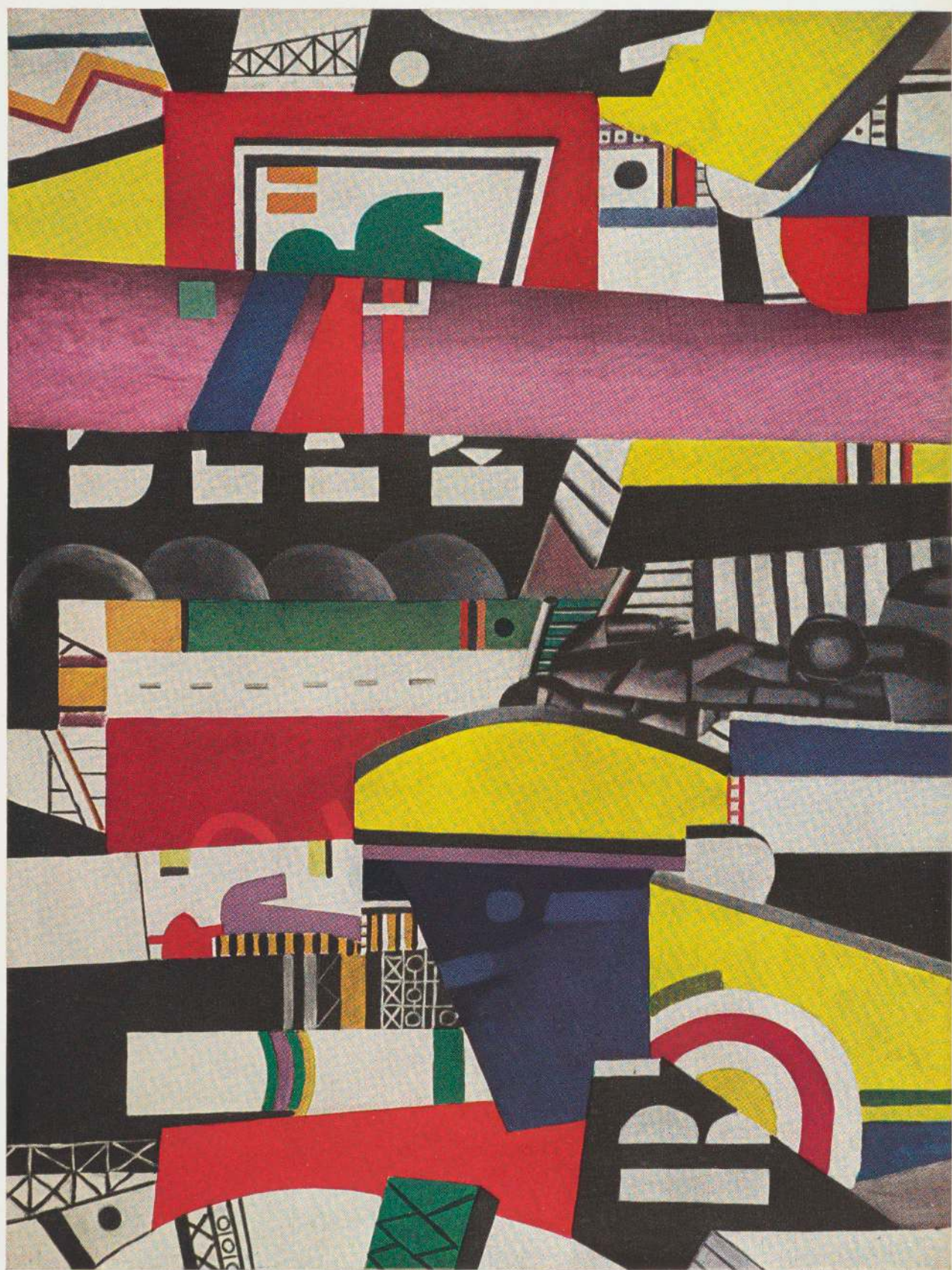
modern battle fascinated Léger and reinforced his original interest in hard forms and unrelenting surfaces. Gone are the vibrating colors he used in *The Stairway*, gone are his gentle palette and evocative textures. Here are only metallic soldiers articulated like engines of war in an overall pattern so perfectly integrated that it recalls the precision of architecture. Again he has returned to his cylindrical forms, modeling them for the last time with careful light and shadow, since very shortly he is to abolish tone for color.

"At that time (1918) we younger men were in violent reaction from Impressionism. And a return to local color, broader areas of unbroken color and larger forms was the character this revolt took in my painting."

Now comes a group of paintings, great in concept and great in size, the first of which was this heroic Composition where portions of machines, discs and advertising stencils are fitted into a rotating core moored against a rectangular background. Modeling in tone has almost disappeared and form begins to depend more on color. Characteristic are contrasts of solid and flat shapes, of motion and rest, of angle and curve, of dark and light. Perspective is suppressed because Léger dislikes the restrictions it imposes, preferring as a rule the greater freedom of shallow space and a semi-flat pattern.

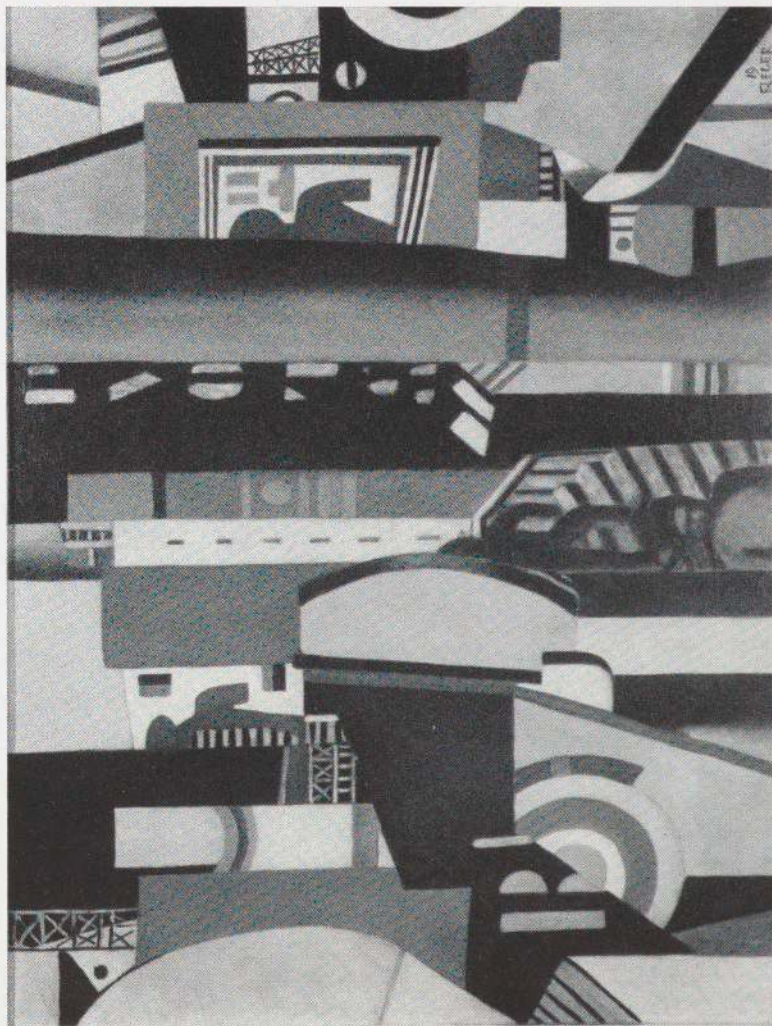
COMPOSITION, 1917-1918. 97 x 71½ Private Collection, New York





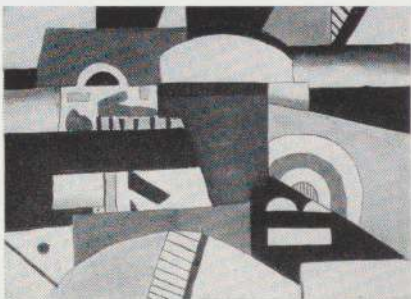
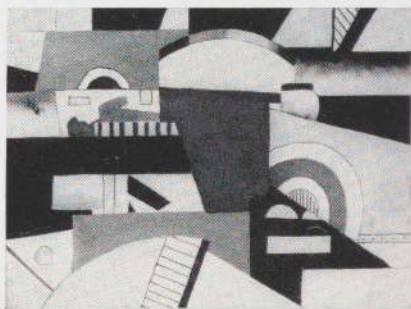
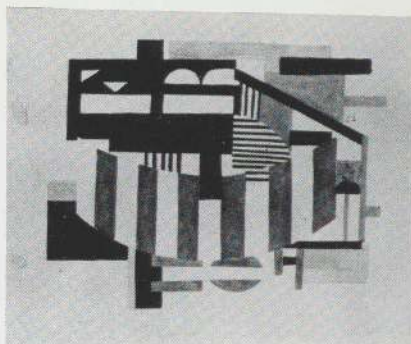
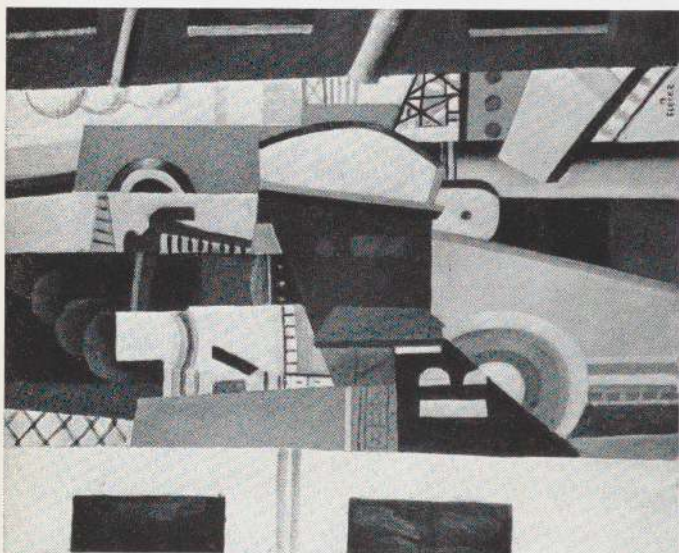
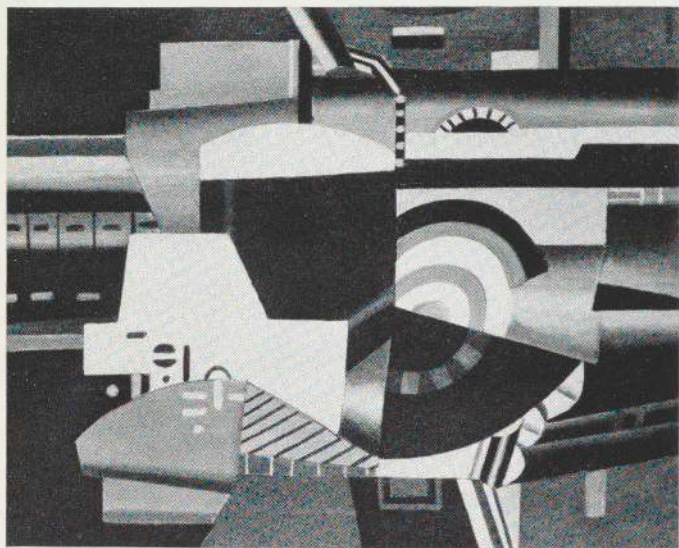
THE CITY. 1919. 91 x 117½ A. E. Gallatin Collection, Philadelphia Museum of Art

a THE CITY. 1919. 38 x 51 Collection Mr. and Mrs. Samuel A. Marx, Chicago



STUDY FOR THE CITY. 1919. 36¼ x 28¾ The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Purchase Fund

SKETCH FOR THE CITY. 1919. 31¾ x 25¾ Collection Mr. and Mrs. Armand Phillip Bartos, New York



b. SKETCH FOR THE CITY. 1919. Water color. 15¼ x 11
The Art Institute of Chicago, Olivia Shaler Swan Fund

c. STUDY FOR THE CITY. 1919. Water color. 15 x 11
Yale University Art Gallery, Collection of the Société
Anonyme

d. THE CITY. 1920. Water color. 12½ x 10½ Perls
Galleries, New York

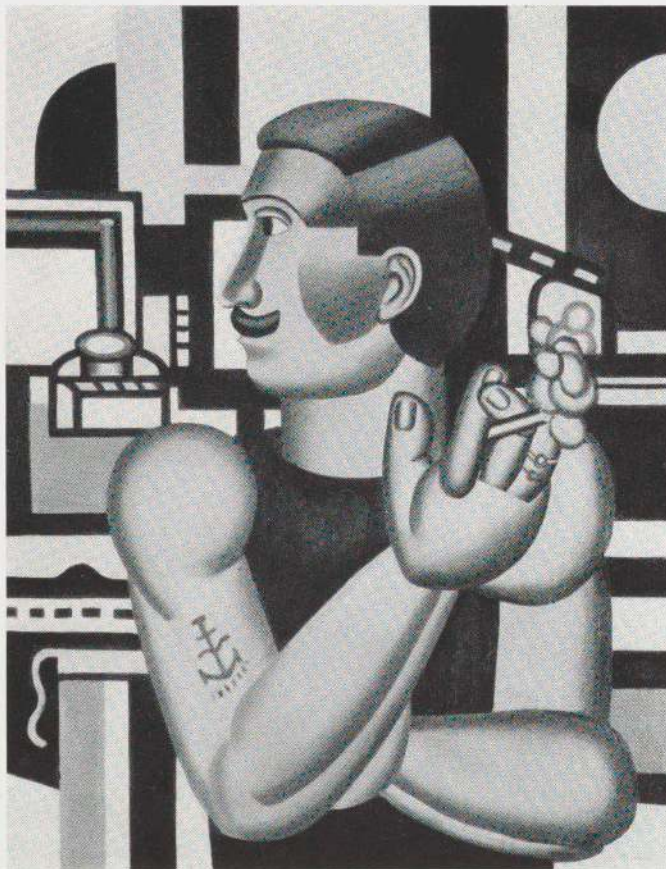
"In 1919, in *The City*, pure color incorporated into a geometric design was realized to the maximum; it could have been static or dynamic—the important thing was to have isolated color which had plastic activity of its own, without being bound to an object."

Almost all Léger's most significant works result from a long series of preliminary sketches, water color studies and oil paintings. Usually he labels the final picture *état définitif* and also indicates where others in the series belong. The earlier pictures are often much more than sketches; they are really works in progress. Here a culminating canvas, *The City*, is shown with six others of the same subject which were either preparations for it or derivations from it. There are undoubtedly many more. Though two water colors, (Figure b and Figure c) which incorporate only one area of the large painting, are almost identical, they differ minutely, showing how carefully the artist must have worked in order to consider such small variations. The same patience is evident when the smaller second-to-last version (Figure a) is compared with the final painting, for again only the slightest modifications have been made.

The *City* ranks high in Léger's work and moreover is unquestionably a landmark in twentieth century art. It is clear why an artist deeply in rapport with contemporary life should concern himself with this subject, for surely the modern city is a basic symbol and symptom of today. By means of fragmented objects associated with a metropolis Léger depicts the brilliance, the excitement and the unbounded vitality of a brightly lighted city. Instead of breaking up color prismatically like the Impressionists he breaks up visual continuity, again relying on a kaleidoscopic process. Selecting typical urban scenes, he divides and condenses them to suggest the cumulative impact of a city. Twelve years later when he first saw New York and wrote, "The beauty of New York at night results from its innumerable lights and the infinite play of moving electric signs," he might almost have been describing his own painting.

With majestic restraint Léger now embarks on a series of paintings devoted to men and women, but these figures are so impersonally handled, so classically devoid of emotion as to be almost denials of the human body. Rousseau's influence can be detected in *The Mechanic* where the magnified form (almost like a close-up from motion pictures, a field in which Léger is soon to experiment) recalls the bluntness and humor of folk art, while *Three Women* follows more in the established tradition of Poussin, father of French classicism and a painter greatly admired by Léger. The astute organization of this canvas, where every circle, rectangle and line functions for the entire composition, demonstrates how imperiously the artist transforms human anatomy at will. The painting is constructed like a heavy monument in which stylized hair, breasts and hands contribute to the whole. Though the figures themselves do not move, the forms within the canvas carry the observer's eye back and forth, up and down, by means of echoing repetitions and connecting lines and forms.

"The electrician in blue smock, modern god, emperor-king, chief of us and of all."



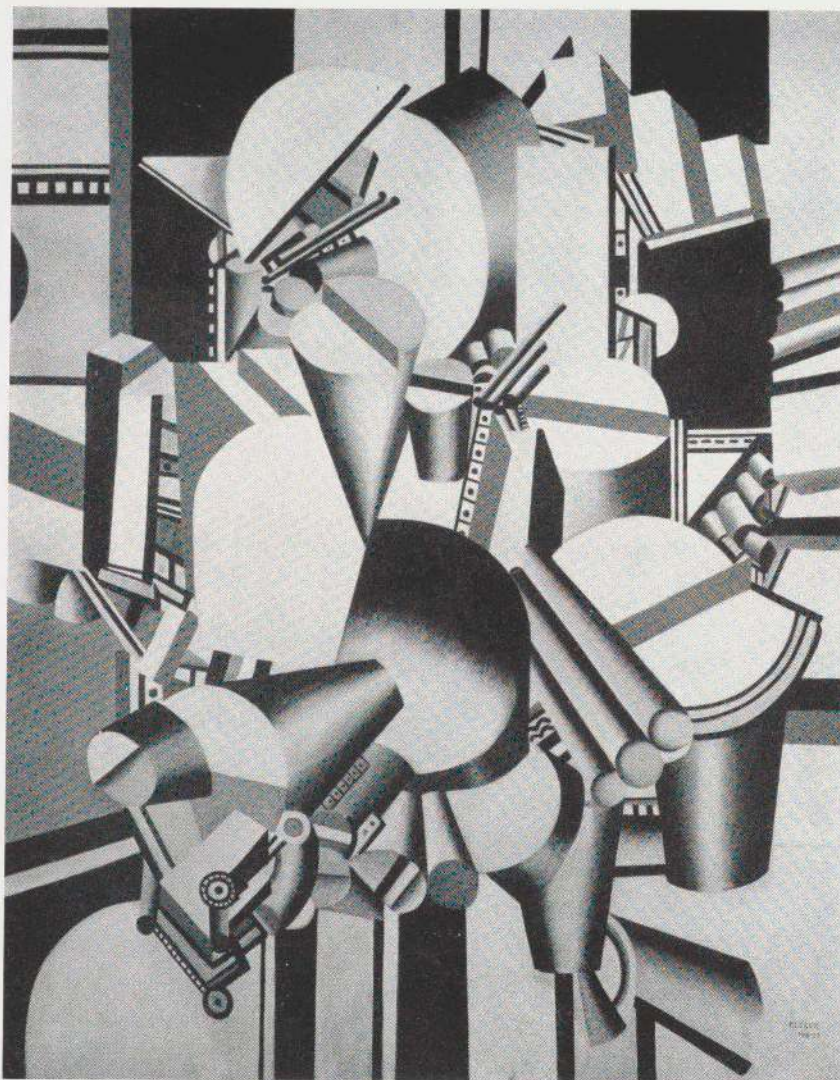
THE MECHANIC, 1920.
45 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 35
Galerie Louis Carré, Paris

"For me the human figure, the human body, has no more importance than keys or bicycles. It's true. These are for me objects of plastic value to be used as I wish."

"A painter should not try to reproduce a beautiful thing, but should make the painting itself a beautiful thing."

THREE WOMEN (Le grand déjeuner). 1921. 72¼ x 99 The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Mrs. Simon Guggenheim Fund





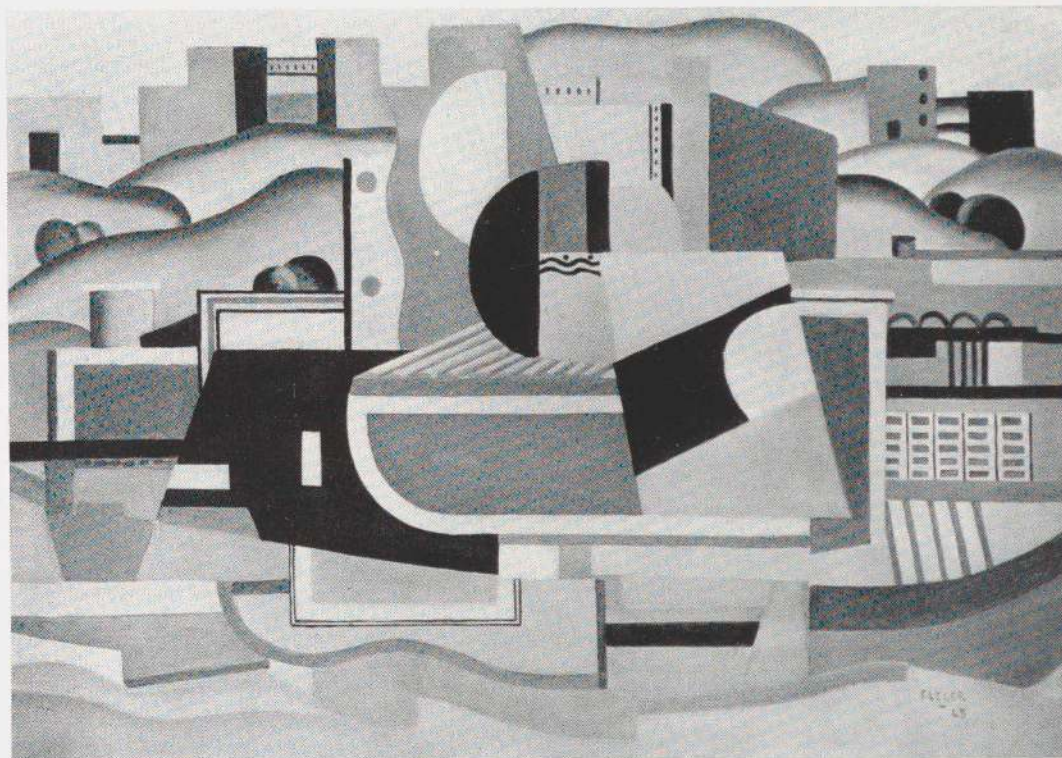
MECHANICAL ELEMENTS. 1918-23. 83 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 66 $\frac{1}{8}$ Private Collection, Paris

When history begins to evaluate the first half of the twentieth century the machine may well be both hero and heroine, for as a subject it became an obsessive symbol in the work of many contemporary artists. Witness Klee, Picabia, Duchamp, Matta, the Futurists and, of course, Léger. Curiously he and the Futurists were perhaps the only ones who refused to humanize the machine, though he was not averse to mechanizing human beings. Because he was disinterested in psychological symbolism he differed from these others, using his subject

"... I have used the machine as others have used the nude or the still life I was never interested in copying the machine. I invented images of machines"

"I try with mechanical elements to create a beautiful object."

"Nowadays a work of art must bear comparison with any manufactured object."



THE GREAT TUG, 1923. 49¼ x 74⅞ Collection Fernand Léger, Paris

as a visual experience, never as a reason for inner probings. Nor was it merely a model, for he was not so much interested in painting the machine as he was in making a perfectly synchronized machine out of his painting.

Responding to daily sights around him, Léger painted many versions of the tugboats which he saw traveling on the Seine. In this one, the largest, by means of simplification and opposition of planes, he allows the observer not only to see the tug moving, but also to feel himself on its deck watching the shore.

WOMAN WITH BOOK. 1923. 45½ x 32 Collection Nelson
A. Rockefeller, New York



"One may consider the human figure not for its sentimental value but only for its plastic value. That is why in the evolution of my work since 1905 until now the human figure has remained purposely inexpressive."

Léger made this statement in 1952. Repeatedly we find that though his method changes, his objective remains the same. Throughout the entire development of his work human figures appear impenetrable despite varying degrees of naturalism. Obviously *Woman with Book* is a preliminary study for *The Readers*. Painstaking adjustments have been made—hair has been replaced by shifting the flowers, the book has been purposely moved and the bent arm transferred, thus balancing by these alterations the additional reclining figure on the left. Though the surface of the canvas has been painted with tender luminosity, these women remain sexless. Their necks rise like columns and their hair has the hardness of metal reflecting light. If they seem less abstract than earlier figures, they still are more integrated parts of a composition than individualized personalities.

THE READERS. 1924. 44 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 57 $\frac{1}{2}$ Collection the Baroness Gourgaud, Yerres, France



IT would seem that Léger finds machines more vibrant than human beings. The latter he is apt to depict in repose and with noble detachment whereas for him mechanical elements are often in flux. More interested in contrast than harmony (he once said, "Real life is a state of war.") the artist emphasizes conflict but at the same time controls it.

The amazingly productive period from 1917 until 1923 is marked by a series of huge pictures: *Composition 1917-18*, *The City*, *The Discs*, *Three Women*, *Mechanical Elements*, to mention but a few of the most famous. Léger was always a mural painter at heart and surely a frustrated one during the years when no railroad station, factory or important public building provided walls for him to cover. That the final canvas of a series was usually extremely large is additional evidence that his emphasis was not restricted to easel painting. His early interest in architecture made him understand that murals presented their own problem and were not merely blown up easel designs, explaining in part why his smaller paintings sometimes fail, since his objective was often not a framed canvas. He is usually at his best when challenged by areas too large for normal coverage, too strong for discreet surroundings.

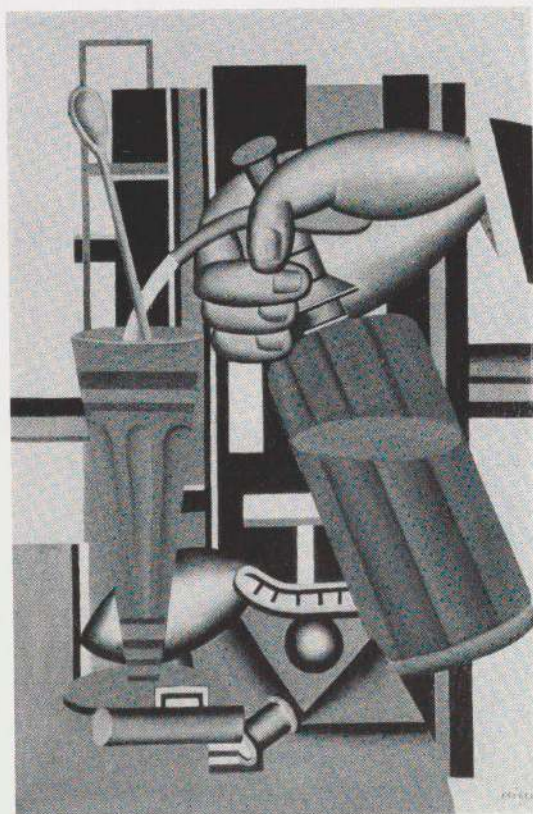
In 1919 Léger illustrated *La Fin du Monde* by Blaise Cendrars, also designing the typography. This was about the time he began to feature initials and printed letters in his work, but it is doubtful whether his experience as a typographer influenced him as much as the advertising signs he saw around him. In any case, he painted several canvases using a typographer for his theme. A few years later he did the curtain, setting and costumes for *Skating Rink* and for *Creation of the World*, both commissioned by the Swedish Ballet. Realizing that the dance was a special art he said, "For the ballet I am concerned only with the ornamental. With plain surfaces covered with flat color."

Two important events occurred in 1924: Léger made his first film and his first trip to Italy. The motion picture on which he collaborated with Dudley Murphy was characteristically named *Ballet Mécanique* and was the earliest abstract film to use regular cinema techniques, though all traditional methods were eliminated. In speaking of the film Léger said, "The *Ballet Mécanique* set out to prove that it was possible to find a new life on the screen without a scenario, through making use of simple objects, fragments of objects—of mechanical elements, of rhythmic repetitions copied from certain objects of commonplace nature and 'artistic' in the least possible degree. Montage is purposeful contrast through slow motion and speed-up. It aims to work out in the movies an interest in the isolated object on the screen, as well as in painting."

Discoveries made by the artist while experimenting with the cinema strongly influence his paintings of this period. The *Siphon* is typical. Here, as in a close-up, he personalizes the fragment, possibly recalling the words of Cézanne who said, "You think a sugar bowl has no soul? You are wrong. Objects never cease to live. They give off their own special feel-

ings." That Léger chose modern objects is to be expected since he always admired manufactured products, finding them more exciting than work from the past. Even so, he transforms his nuts and bolts, his siphon and glass into orderly forms recalling fluted columns and classical capitals.

THE SIPHON, 1924, 36 x 23½ Collection Mr. and Mrs. M. E. Culberg, Chicago



"I think I was the first modern French painter to use the objects of our time as artists of other centuries used theirs."

"Notice well: it isn't simply the question of painting these objects. . . . But the spirit of these objects dominates the period. . . ."

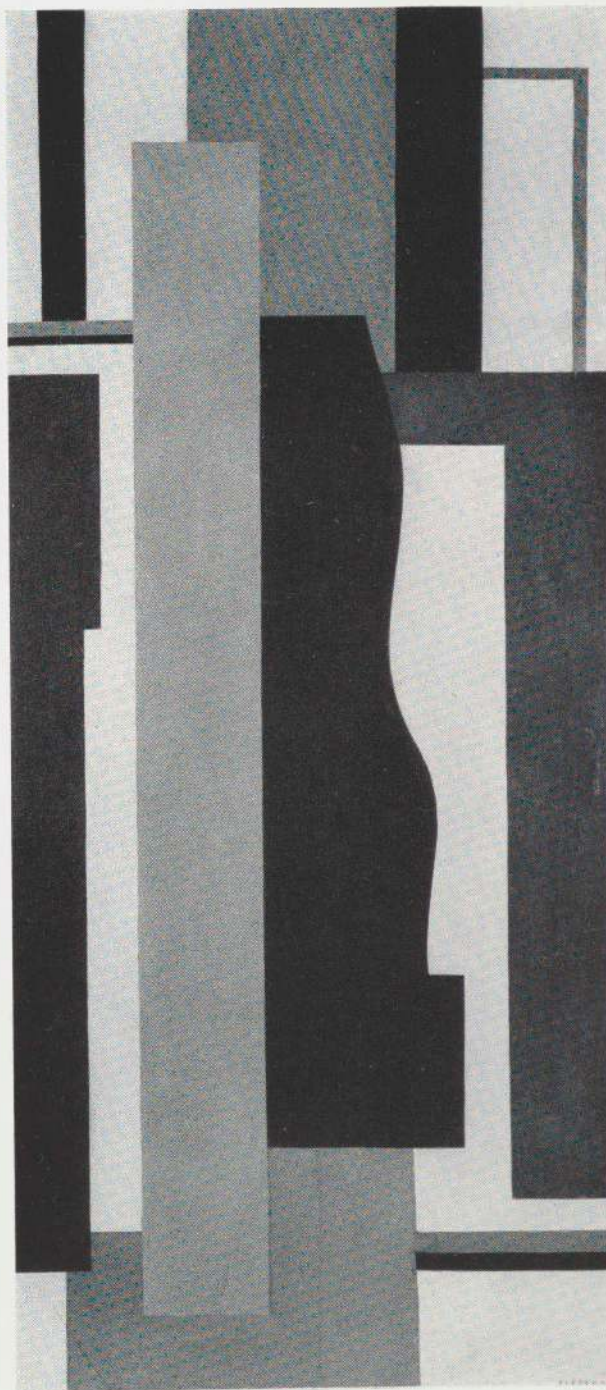
MURAL PAINTING. 1924. 70% x 31½ Collection Nelson A. Rockefeller, New York

"I consider mural painting as an abstract art, another form of architecture."

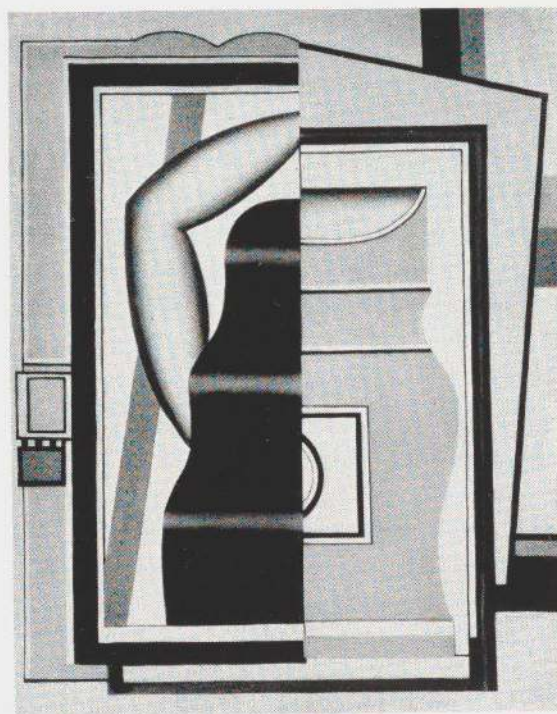
"The future of abstraction is in mural rather than easel paintings."

"Pure color, dynamically disposed, is capable of visually destroying a wall. Color is a formidable raw material, as indispensable to life as water or fire."

Totally different but equally resolved is the Mural Painting of the same year which depends for its meaning on tensely organized geometric areas of color arranged in an abstract design. Léger's trip to Italy, where he went with Léonce Rosenberg (who along with Daniel-Henri Kahnweiler was the first Paris art dealer to show his work) intensified the painter's interest in murals. Avoiding the lyrical and naturalistic art of the Italian Renaissance, he chose instead the hieratic mosaics of Ravenna, attracted by the majesty of these great wall decorations.

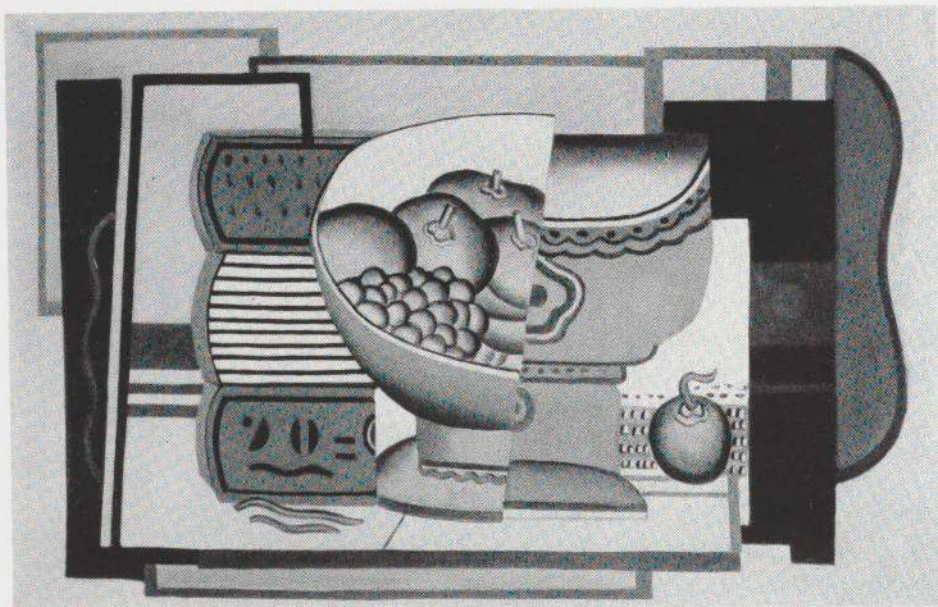


"Even a part of an object has its value. A whole new realism resides in the way one envisages either an object or one of its parts."



THE MIRROR. 1925. 51 x 39¼ Sidney Janis Gallery, New York

THE COMPOTE. 1925. 23½ x 36 Private Collection, New York

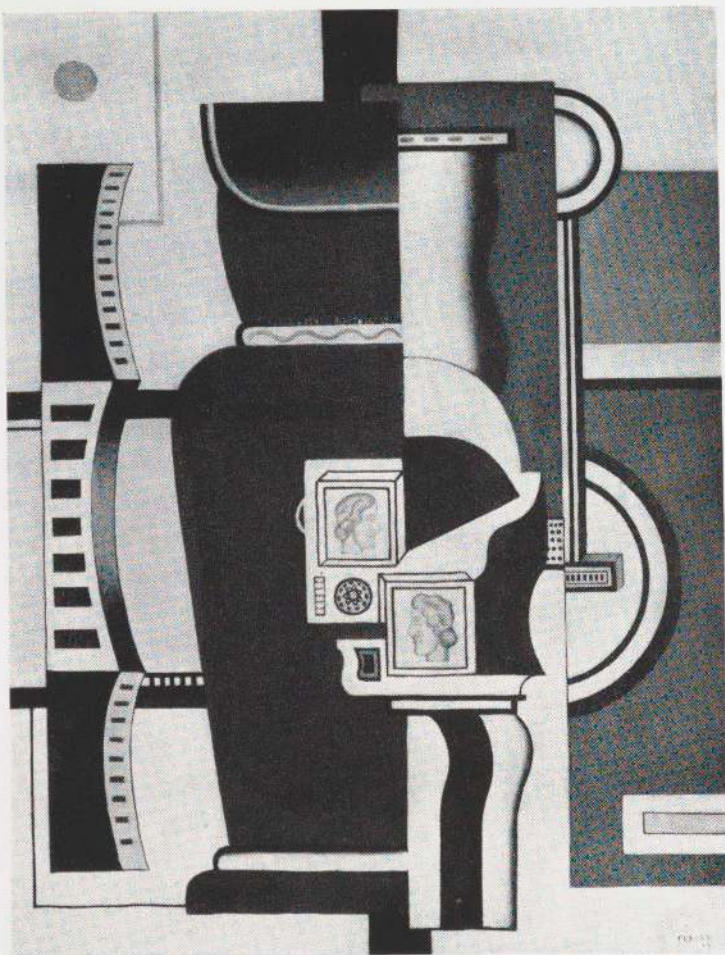


Probably his interest in motion picture techniques encouraged Léger at this time to break up his canvases into separate compartments not unlike a fast flickering film where after-image and image are almost joined. Completely abandoning Renaissance insistence on a center of interest, he divides his design and multiplies his composition so that each section becomes equally important. The same simultaneous devices he used in *The City*, though much simplified in *The Compote* and *The Mirror*, give a similar feeling of dislocated motion back and forth into space. This is not the Cubist idea of showing all sides of an object at one time, for these are often disconnected forms merely cut at will to shock the observer into seeing them in a new way. Nor are they broken for psychological reasons and arranged irrationally as in Surrealism, an art movement developing at the same time. This "new realism," as Léger calls it, is the direct result of the speed and overlay of modern life which permit the eye only time enough to see fragments rather than the whole.

Meanwhile cinematic influences are also evident in the more abstract *Composition* of the same year where strong opposition of light and dark stripes and circles suggest the staccato effects of electricity, intensified further by strange dancing wires in the lower right. Forms seem locked in a final design so perfectly planned that to change even one small area might necessitate readjustments throughout.



COMPOSITION, 1925. 50½ x 37½ The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York



THE VASE. 1927. 51 x 38 Collection Mr. and Mrs. Morton G. Neumann, Chicago

"There is more than man, animal and plant, there is also the object. Objects have a plastic power which nothing can disturb."

During 1926 and 1927 Léger reached the climax of a richly productive period highlighted by a serene classicism which is to reappear from time to time in his work. The Vase is an excellent example, depending as it does on proportion, placement and tension. Clear color confined by pure outline builds the formal compositions of these years into architectural designs of great nobility. Almost like variations on a motif, paintings of this time

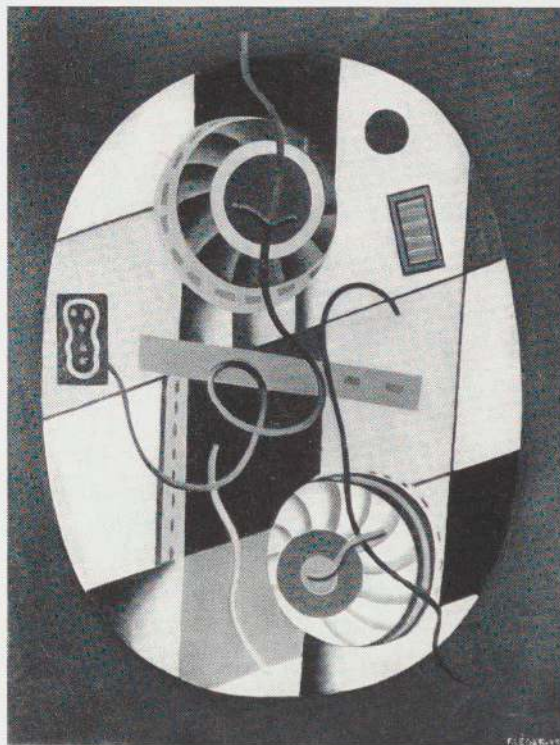
combine vase forms with small medallions, with unexpected machine parts or, as in this canvas, with sections of a film strip.

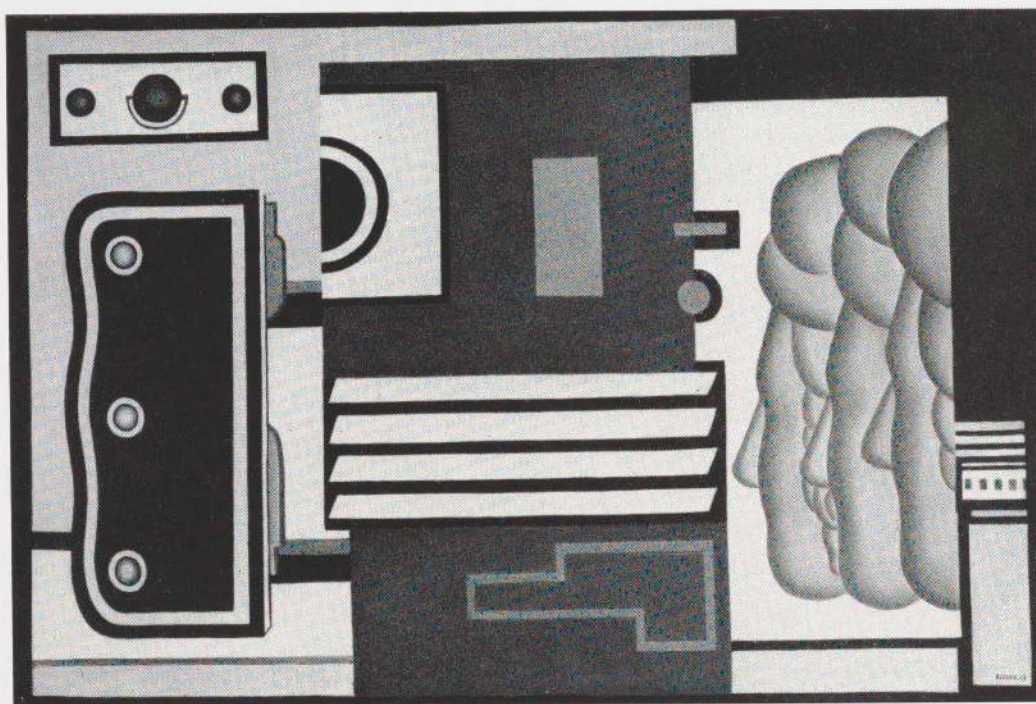
And now come the famous "objects in space," as Léger revealingly calls them. With his usual preference for present-day themes, he chooses casual contemporary objects like pipes, keys or the light reflectors in this painting, *Still Life with Lamps*. Stylizing their forms, he isolates and suspends them in space often relating them with stems or curving strings. Here magnified spheres float in an appropriately oval design, recalling celestial bodies more than commonplace light reflectors.

Though Léger's approach is different, he is not the first or the only twentieth century artist to become enamored of everyday objects. Duchamp had invented the ready-made many years earlier but instead of incorporating images of objects in his paintings as Léger did, he used real objects which, through slight alteration, were given psychological and even critical content. Likewise the *objet trouvé* of the Surrealists, also real and drawn either from nature or industry, was concerned chiefly with symbolic implications and with double meanings. On the other hand Léger merely selects themes from daily life and uses them solely for the purpose of visual and plastic invention.

STILL LIFE WITH LAMPS. 1928. 35 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 28 $\frac{5}{8}$ Collection Mr. and Mrs. Harold E. Strauss, Chicago

"Commonplace objects, objects turned out in a series, are often more beautiful in proportion than many things called beautiful and given a badge of honor."

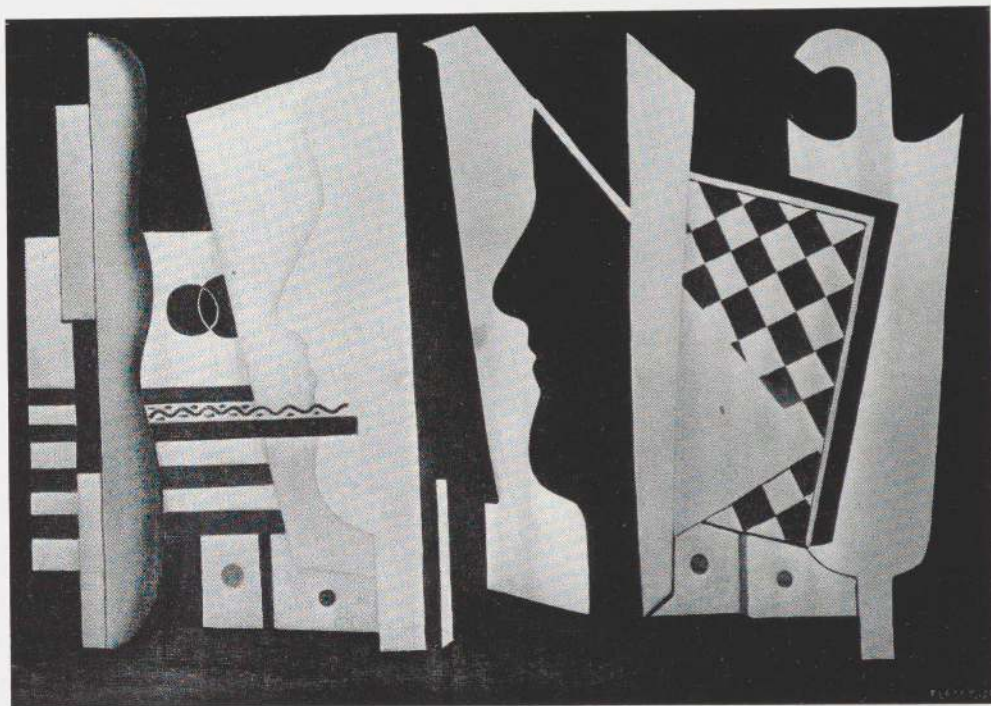




THREE FACES. 1926. 37 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 56 $\frac{3}{4}$ Private Collection, New York

"I make use of the law of contrasts which is the eternal means of producing the impression of activity, of life. . . . I strive to build up organized oppositions of contrary values, contrasting volumes and contrasting lines."

"There was never any question in plastic art, in poetry, in music, of *representing* anything. It is a matter of *making* something beautiful, moving or dramatic—this is by no means the same thing."



TWO PROFILES. 1928. 35 x 51 Private Collection, New York

In these two paintings human faces, always in profile (a favorite device of Léger's) are contrasted with geometric elements. *Three Faces* still leans heavily on the artist's interest in motion picture experiments, here probably incorporating aspects of a movie projector in the composition. Silhouettes are brilliantly exploited in *Two Profiles* where negative and positive forms reaffirm each other. Because he loved artificial light and because he saw how its instantaneous effects could change the appearance of people and objects, Léger often introduced both shadow and substance into his paintings. With great subtlety he suggests volume by its very absence.

IN looking back over the years before 1930 one realizes that Léger's development depends on both consistency and variety. He works out a problem and then moves on to the next, always incorporating what he has learned with new insight. His severely disciplined designs recall a classicism of the past while the subjects from which they derive are always contemporaneous and modern.

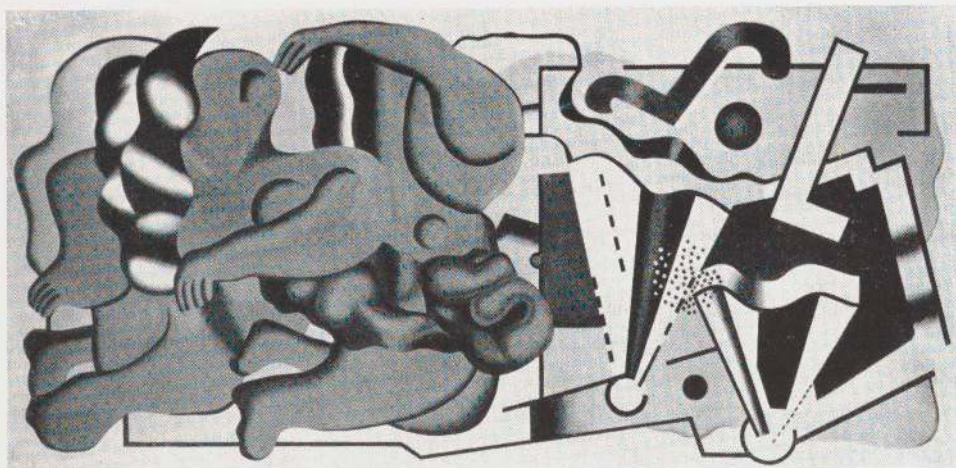
In addition to the motion picture camera, science and the microscope play their part in the work of these years. Léger's emphasis on isolated, magnified and divided objects recalls not only photographic close-ups but the microscopic lens which also can transform appearances by selection and exaggeration.

The artist's insistence on factual details combined with his choice of subject matter has undoubtedly influenced present-day advertising methods. A picture like *The Siphon* is basic source material for modern billboards and posters.

Always practical, Léger is one of the few living painters who is willing to take architectural problems into consideration when designing murals. This may be due to his early training and to his long friendship with Le Corbusier, with whom he sometimes collaborated. Because he knows that mural artists must consider the walls on which they paint, he advocates abstract designs where no concessions to subject matter are necessary and where pure color can be used with psychological effect, maintaining that fine proportions and functional color are important for happy living. In discussing early mosaics he once said, "They do not use the third dimension. And thus, instead of destroying the wall, they respect it." He particularly loved mosaics because, due to special limitations, they discouraged facility. Léger, always suspicious of good taste, avoids whatever seems easy, obvious and pretty.

During the thirties Léger was offered increasing opportunities to design wall paintings. In 1935 came a commission to execute a mural for the French pavilion of the International Exhibition at Brussels and in 1937 another for the Palais de la Découverte in Paris. The following year Nelson Rockefeller invited Léger to make a wall decoration for his New York apartment. But before any of these, he painted the mural-like *Composition* for Dr. G. F. Reber in 1930, a little known and rarely reproduced canvas where huge figures are propelled with unexpected speed. Characteristic is his unconventional breaking of the composition into two distinct parts, both of which have equal prominence. The human figures, less mechanized than usual, remain totally impersonal and recall with their voluminous curves the earlier smoke and cloud forms Léger painted so often. In *Adam and Eve*, a later work, the canvas is again divided into two sections, the artist here using clouds somewhat like his former "objects in space." The two figures, connected by their flowing arms, have a permanence and stability which contrast sharply with the floating clouds. There are several versions of *Adam and Eve* and in each Léger returns to his interest in folk art, to his nostalgia for the archaistic figures of the Douanier Rousseau. Both *Composition* and *Adam and Eve* are paintings which have the power and scale, the boldness and daring peculiar to the best of Léger's work.

COMPOSITION, 1930. 104¼ x 55⅞ Collection Dr. h. c. G. F. Reber, Lausanne-Chailly, Switzerland



ADAM AND EVE. 1935-39. 90 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 126 $\frac{3}{4}$ Private Collection, Milan, Italy



"I have a horror of discreet painting."

"Beauty is the negation of the pretty."

Now, with the gayest of color, the artist designs a series of paintings directly concerned with nature and landscape. Butterflies, flowers, trees, leaves all whirl and circulate in the free space he evokes so brilliantly. Conventionalized clouds suggest Léger's earlier works as do also mechanized shapes from nature, the first recalling pictures like *Smoke over the Roofs*, the other, *Nudes in the Forest*. But these later paintings are quite different, filled as they are with optimism and joy. One feels the brilliance of sunshine, the tang of strong winds blowing bright objects across land and sky. In *Maquette for a Mural* movement is circular and vertical as was so often the case with Léger's early paintings. He retains much from his own past, vitalizing it with constant innovation. His use of magnified details in the nature paintings is a familiar device, but new is the freedom with which they are disposed on the canvas. No rigid demarcation, no classic severity restrains this exuberance. The twisting, curving compositions are almost baroque, at least in their surface patterns, for Léger always prefers semi-flat designs, avoiding illusionistic depth.

"A work of art is a perfect balance between real and imaginary facts."



BUTTERFLY AND FLOWER. 1937. 35 x 51¼ Galerie Louis Carré, Paris

"For myself I cannot see nowadays any justification for murals setting forth the major religious, military or social issues; these can be so adequately dealt with by books, the cinema and radio."



MAQUETTE FOR A MURAL. 1938. 63¾ x 44⅞. Collection Jean Masurel, Mouvaux, France



DURING the years between 1931 and 1939 Léger visited the United States three times, traveling widely and responding vigorously, as might be expected, to the confusion, excitement and scope of the new world. After his first visit in 1931 he wrote to a friend describing New York as "the greatest spectacle on earth," and commenting rapturously on "its millions of lighted windows." In Chicago he fell in love with Negro jazz, going each night to the South Side where he was fascinated by the uninhibited audiences and blatant music. Perhaps some of the new freedom in his nature paintings results from these contacts with America. But also it must be remembered that he always refreshed himself by living and working intermittently at his family farm in Normandy, a place still close to his heart. There is no doubt that the earthy simplicity of farm life as contrasted with the sophistication of Paris was a continuing influence on both the man and the artist. For Léger, more than any other modern painter, seems securely rooted in his own way, devoted to the healthiest and most extroverted elements of present-day living. In line with his respect for farm and factory comes his conviction that a craftsman is as important as an artist, or possibly that a true craftsman is an artist.

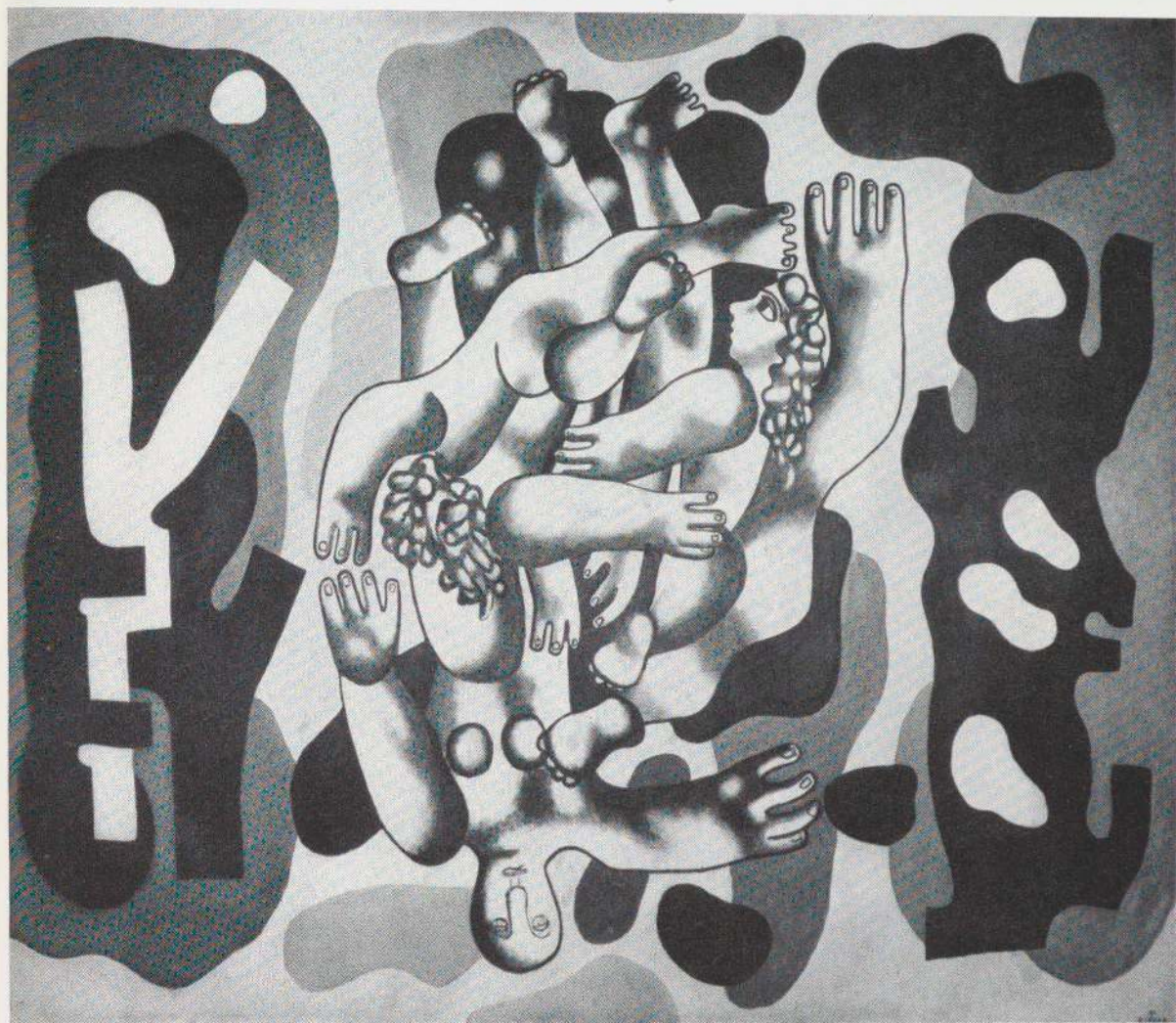
It is interesting to note that in 1933, between two of his American visits, he went to Greece, thus even in his travels maintaining a preference for new and untraditional vision combined with classic restraint.

In 1940 Léger embarked on his fourth visit to America where he remained until after the war, returning to France in 1946. From these years come some of his greatest paintings. The enormous vitality of the United States challenged him so intensely that, despite his typically Gallic background, he became one of America's most astute interpreters. By recognizing that the new world does not and need not resemble Europe he discovered its indigenous beauty, commenting that "there is poetry in the machine age of America."

Just before sailing for this country Léger was living in Marseilles where he started a group of paintings which grew out of the crowds he observed on the beach. Though this series, usually known as *The Plungers* or *The Divers*, was initiated in Europe, its development occupied much of the artist's first two years in America. Many of the paintings are large, characterized by strong color and the interweaving of heavy bodies. In the canvas of 1941, the plunging figures are modeled with light and shadow, but in the other version, which is only a year later, tone is eliminated and bright color (red, blue and green) controlled by black outlines forms a resolved flat pattern. Here synthesis has been carried very far, the suppression of details so complete that only the original concept remains. Between these two extremes a large group of water colors and oil paintings intervenes, each concerned with the same subject but with changing emphasis.

TWO PLUNGERS. 1942. 50 x 58 Private Collection, New York





DIVERS ON YELLOW BACKGROUND. 1941. 75¾ x 87½ The Art Institute of Chicago, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. M. E. Culberg

"What has come out most notably, however, in the work I have done in America is in my opinion a new energy—an increased movement within the composition—in paintings where the modeling was emphasized such as the Diver series, as well as in the flatter organizations such as the 1942 Divers, Acrobats, and Dancers."

"I was struck by the intensity of contrasts of movement. It's what I've tried to express in painting. . . . In America I painted in a much more realistic manner than before. I tried to translate the character of the human body evolving in space without any point of contact with the ground. I achieved it by studying the movements of swimmers diving into the water from very high. . . ."



ELEMENTS ON BLUE BACKGROUND. 1941. 68 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 39 $\frac{3}{4}$ Collection Philippe Dotremont, Uccle-Brussels, Belgium

"The future certainly cries out for the collaboration of the three major art-forms—architecture, painting, sculpture."



GREAT BLACK AND RED BRANCH. 1951. Ceramic sculpture (polychrome). 26 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 5 The Art Institute of Chicago, Edward E. Ayer Fund

Elements on a Blue Background continues Léger's interest in intertwined forms and is similar in design to the left side of the painting, Divers on a Yellow Background (see page 55) which comes from the same year. Limiting himself only to three colors, blue, black and red, the artist arrives at a self-contained composition, admirably adapted to either mural decoration or sculpture. Ten years later, with minor and necessary alterations, he incorporates the design of this painting in a polychrome ceramic sculpture, typical of a group he has recently been developing, many of which were conceived as models for public monuments. He has also made numerous glazed terra cotta plaques but, as might be expected, he is at his best when working with large free-standing forms which depend for their effect not on subtle surface modeling but on blazing color and rippling movement.



THE FOREST. 1942. 70 x 55 Collection Dr.
F. Heer, Zurich, Switzerland

"But during these years in America I do feel I have worked with a greater intensity and achieved more expression than in my previous work. In this country there is a definitely romantic atmosphere in the good sense of the word—an increased sense of movement and violence. This is a melodramatic country, for all its clear skies. Many American painters paint it illustratively from a subject-matter viewpoint—your 'American Scene' painters. In my opinion subject-matter treatment is more suited to cinema than to painting."

Again, as in earlier visits to the United States, Léger abandons all classicism and produces crowded, free moving compositions where color has the blinding clarity of American light. In *The Forest* burgeoning foliage and swooping birds become symbols for an entire landscape. The artist has traveled far from the dark mechanized world of over thirty years ago when he painted *Nudes in the Forest*. As if in preparation for his later sculpture he here introduces arbitrarily shaped openings which allow intervening space to become as positive as three-dimensional form. During the summer of 1941 Léger was invited to teach at Mills College, taking this opportunity to travel across the United States by bus. Perhaps the trip along with his stay in California, a land of gigantic trees and verdant forests, caused the artist to incorporate similar landscapes in several paintings of this period. *The Forest* is the most joyous of the entire group.

In *The Great Mask* Léger again shows how much American complexity interests him. Combining a pattern of seemingly disconnected objects with part of another painting from his diving series, he superimposes a large mask which looks like the conventionalized face of a clown. This canvas is identified with the cacophony and restlessness of American life, but whether the grinning mask has special or further meaning is doubtful.

"It's not a country—it's a world. . . . In America you are confronted with a power in movement, with force in reserve without end. An unbelievable vitality—a perpetual movement. One has the impression that there is too much of everything."

THE GREAT MASK, 1942. 29 x 36 Collection Mr. and Mrs. V. H. Pasternacki, Bloomfield Hills, Mich.



These two paintings and many other equally successful canvases come from three summers Léger spent at Rouses Point in New York, where he used an abandoned farm as the basis for his work. Though both pictures show how impressed he was by the American phenomenon of waste and growth, the moods evoked are very different. In *The Yellow Root* an unexpectedly tender surface implies a sadness usually not associated with Léger's work. Possibly he was touched by the implications of a forgotten wheel soon to decay among growing plants. *The Black Trellis* is bolder and, with its magnified posts and barbed wire, affirms a strength inherent even in discarded objects.

THE BLACK TRELLIS. 1943-44. 49½ x 43¾ The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, N.Y.





THE YELLOW ROOT. 1943-44. 26 x 36 Collection Thomas Bouchard, New York

"I prefer to see America through its contrasts—its vitality, its litter and its waste. Perhaps this is because I am most responsive to externals. Perhaps it is my old interest in the object."

"Near Lake Champlain where I spent the summers of 1943, 1944 and 1945, I was even more struck by the broken down farm-machines I would come across abandoned in the fields. For me it became a typical feature of the American landscape, this carelessness and waste and blind and ruthless disregard of anything worn or aged."

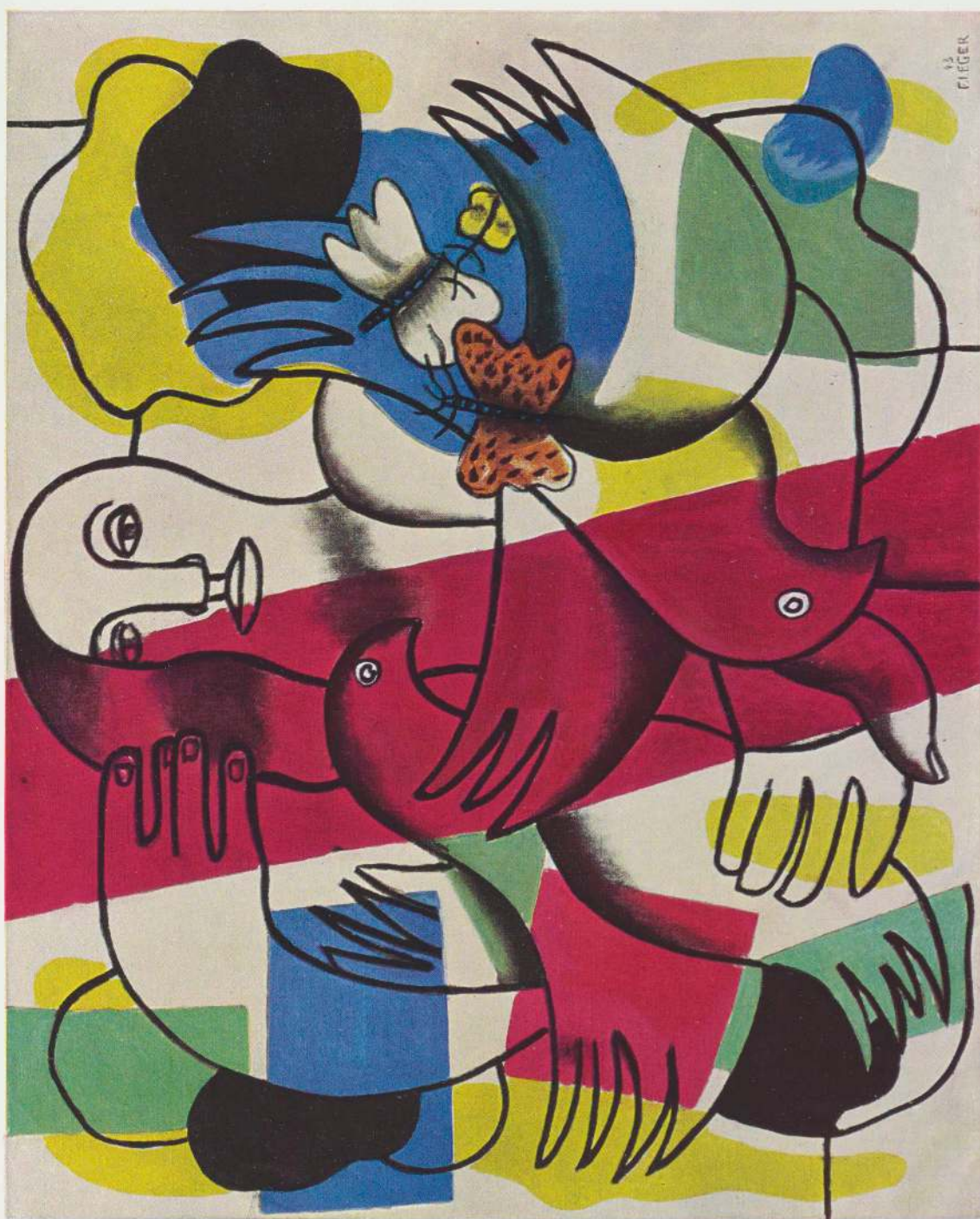
"I painted a group of American landscapes, being inspired by the contrast presented by an abandoned machine—become old scrap iron—and the vegetation which devours it."

"'Truth' in painting is color at its fullest: red, black, yellow, since pure tone in painting is reality."

"I've disassociated the color from the design. I've liberated the color from the form by disposing it over large areas without making it fit the contours of objects."

A free method of employing color without regard to forms or boundaries is frequent in Léger's American work and continues even after he returned to France. As long ago as 1912 he first experimented with juxtaposed areas of pure color in *The Woman in Blue* and later in *The City* he exploited the same idea much more boldly but still made his color conform to the outlines of objects. However, now color determines the composition and flashes over boundary lines and forms with a disregard reminiscent of neon lights going on and off, casting arbitrary and garish reflections on passing people and surroundings. In *Woman with Butterflies* patches of kinetic color emphasize the idea of flitting butterflies and birds, setting up a point-counterpoint activity between the central human figure and the circulating insects and birds. But Léger's chief preoccupation, together with many of his contemporaries like Picasso, Matisse and Braque, is to use color freely in order to explore and invent new kinds of space.

WOMAN WITH BUTTERFLIES. 1943. 28½ x 36. Saïdenberg Gallery, New York



"The Three Musicians is perhaps something apart. It was based on a drawing of 1925 which I had always hoped to expand into an oil, but only found the opportunity after my arrival here in America. But even in this canvas, for all its static character, there is strength which is new. It would have been less tense and colder had it been done in France."

Possibly the influence of American folk art, witty, direct and human, added to that of the Douanier Rousseau, partly accounts for this painting of three music hall figures, so solidly welded into a group that instruments, arms and heads resemble a single interrelated form. One feels that nothing should be added, nothing removed. Each necktie, hat and lapel plays a double role—first to characterize the musician, second to integrate the design. Léger has always been attracted by popular places of entertainment, finding excellent raw material for his paintings in burlesque shows, dance halls and circuses. In this connection he says, "I did not frequent popular dance halls and the people's quarter out of snobbism. I used to go there because I had a real liking for the fellows and the girls of the district. . . . The fifteen-cent burlesque shows of Chicago still offer material. It is only for the artist to select. . . ."



THREE MUSICIANS. 1925-44. 68 x 57 Collection Wright Ludington, Santa Barbara, California

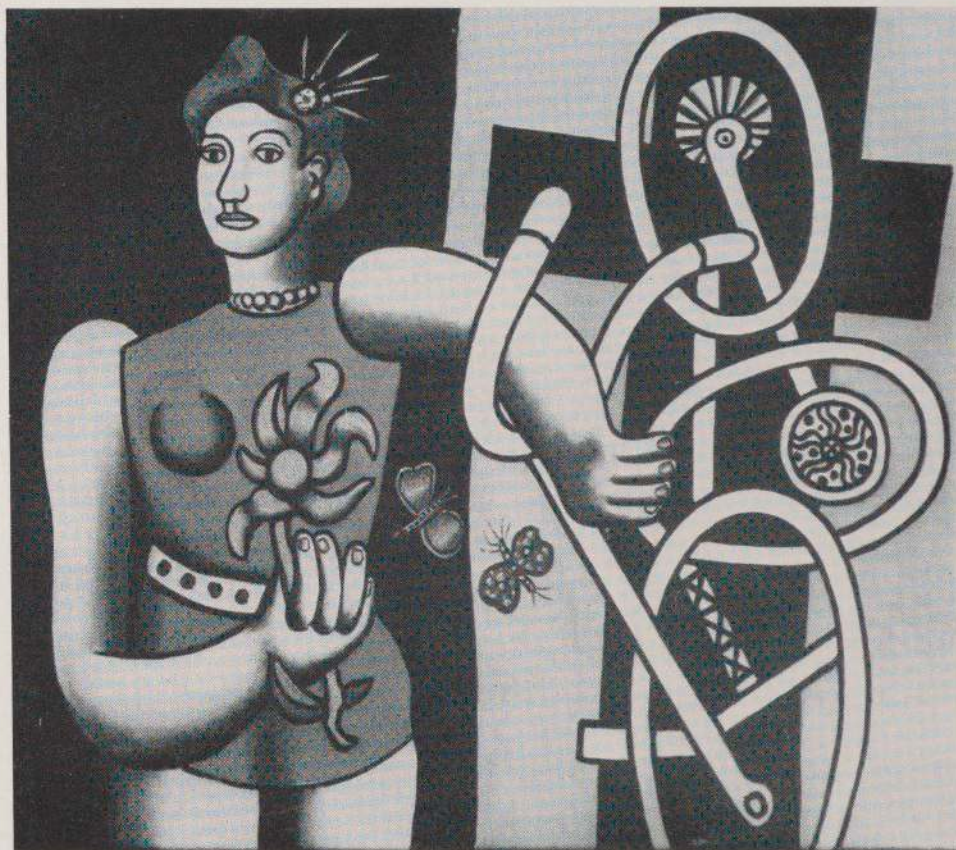
"The technique emphasized is to isolate the object or the fragment of an object and to present it on the screen in close-ups of the largest possible scale. Enormous enlargement of an object or a fragment gives it a personality it never had before and in this way it can become a vehicle of entirely new lyric and plastic power."

As culmination to the gay and positive American period come several paintings of bicycle and circus figures, often simplified and usually magnified. In 1950 after Léger returned to France, he introduced many of the same subjects into *Cirque*, an illustrated book devoted to the circus which was published by Tériade. Though he made his first film more than twenty years earlier, in 1945 he still transfers to canvas a cinematic close-up technique, often choosing a moment of activity to freeze his figures into the kind of pose frequently associated with motion picture "stills."

THE CHINESE JUGGLER. 1945. 26 x 36 Collection Mr. and Mrs. Otto L. Spaeth, New York



"... bad taste is also one of the valuable raw materials for this country. Bad taste, strong color—it is all here for the painter to organize and get the full use of its power. Girls in sweaters with brilliant colored skin; girls in shorts dressed more like acrobats in a circus than one would ever come across on a Paris street. If I had seen only girls dressed in 'good taste' here I would never have painted my Cyclist series, of which The Great Julie was the culmination."



THE GREAT JULIE. 1945. 44 x 50 1/2 The Museum of Modern Art, N. Y., acquired through Lillie P. Bliss Bequest

In *The Great Julie* he could not resist the butterflies and flower which characterize so many of his American paintings. Somehow the exuberance of nature in this land best known for its industry strongly affected him. Not to be overlooked in either painting is the artist's ingenious disposition of figures and shapes against contrasting backgrounds, which are always, as in the cross behind Julie's bicycle, purely visual and non-symbolic. Equally ingenious is his ability to recognize and exaggerate the design possibilities of commonplace objects, transforming the juggler's hoops and Julie's bicycle into bold interwoven ovals.

I PAINTED in America better than I had ever painted before," Léger said in 1949, three years after he returned to France. This extraordinarily prolific period (including about one hundred and twenty paintings) is marked by unbounded vigor and a retreat from classicism not surprising in such agitated and vehement surroundings. He responded to the power and hardness of the United States observing that, "In America all is rough and strong, like the climate." But he saw far more than the average visitor, traveling widely and not limiting himself to the usual large cities. With fresh insight he understood America, its complexity, humor and vulgarity, recognizing its beauty not in conventional terms but rather in such popular symbols as picture post cards, crowded store windows and mail order catalogues. Poetically he described New York, "If you look up you can see on the top of the roofs geometric fantasies—thousands of metallic structures are silhouetted in the sky and play with the light." The freedom of America finds expression even in his liberation of color, his desire to give it greater mobility by eliminating the restrictions of boundary lines.

Curiously Léger tends to humanize his American paintings, using people as subjects more often than in the past. Perhaps he found it difficult to divorce man from his surroundings in a country where hand painted neckties, mass produced objects and extravagant advertisements are woven into the very texture of life. More than any other European artist he was fitted by temperament to appreciate America, for even his earliest work depended on an understanding of mechanization and power.

Though *Leisure* was started in America, Léger did not finish this canvas until three years after he returned to France. The people, bicycles, birds and flowers on first view seem closely related to paintings done in the United States but, on further study, one discovers a classicism and restraint typical of the artist's work prior to his visit. Because the color is strong and the light brilliant, memories of America are still present, but the rushing movement and centrifugal compositions of those years have vanished and in their place appears a more serene design, quiet, resolved and non-explosive. That Léger was aware of his return to French classicism is evident by his semi-ironic inscription paying tribute to David. He might also have included the name of Henri Rousseau, for this painting seems dedicated, at least in spirit, to the French bourgeoisie which the Douanier understood so well. How far Léger has traveled from the more abstract art of his earlier years is underlined by the tendency to place human beings in their own surroundings rather than in arbitrary settings. *Leisure*, the first major painting to be produced by the artist after his return to France, is full of optimism and assurance, a fitting canvas to commemorate the coming of peace.



LEISURE. 1944-49. 61 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 72 $\frac{7}{8}$ Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris



"In my last works where figures are connected with subjects, perhaps one may find that the human figure has a tendency to become the major object. The future will tell whether this is better in the plastic sense or whether it is an error. In any case, the actual overall conception is always dominated by contrasting values which must justify this evolution."

"In *The Builders* I tried to achieve the most violent contrasts by opposing minutely realistic human figures with clouds and metallic structures."

Léger's most recent series of paintings grows out of European reconstruction after the war. Entranced by the hammering, welding and riveting which surrounded him wherever he traveled, he responded to this rebirth of hope and architecture with a group of drawings, water colors and paintings which he called *The Builders*. It was inevitable that he should be attracted by the beauty of unfinished steel structures and consistent that he should contrast these open geometric shapes with the same solid, anthropomorphic clouds which distinguish many of his early paintings. Still using familiar objects like ropes and ladders, he here introduces a new kind of human being endowed with individual expression. For the first time Léger has completely allowed people to be more than plastic parts of a composition.

Various sketches lead up to this, the largest and definitive painting of the group. Working as he did with *The City*, *The Tug*, *The Divers*, Léger drew and painted variations of his theme, altering and combining them at last into the culminating work.

In addition to contrasting human and geometric forms, a problem the artist has always enjoyed, he also is concerned here with implications of growth and suggestions of limitless space.



THE BUILDERS. 1950. 118 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 78 $\frac{3}{4}$ Collection Fernand Léger, Paris

Léger is still painting with the same drive that has marked his work from the beginning. But fortunately during the last few years his ability as a designer has been more fully recognized. As a result he has recently executed several commissions: a large mosaic for the church façade at Assy, a mural for the French section of the Triennale at Milan, an American war monument in Belgium, a magnificent group of stained glass windows for the church at Audincourt and the costumes and sets for Milhaud's opera, *Bolivar*. The most recent commission relates to two murals in the United Nations General Assembly building in New York, which were sketched by Léger in France and carried out on the walls by a former student. Unfortunately not having seen the hall and unable to supervise the work in person, Léger was here at a disadvantage, which perhaps accounts for the lack of architectural power usually found in his murals.

The artist's renewed interest in human beings is seen in a series of portrait heads started during 1947 where magnified faces and hands are covered with strips of free color, recalling many of the American paintings. Besides painting continuously and carrying out various design commissions, Léger, since his return to France, has also prepared an extensive series of one-man exhibitions which have been held all over Europe: in Paris, London, Berne, Venice, Antibes and Amsterdam. Though he is over seventy, his work goes on with the same energy and invention. He has never lost the probing curiosity which leads him to search for new meanings in the most familiar aspects of contemporary life.



Hats from CIRQUE. 1950

ONE-MAN EXHIBITIONS

- | | | | |
|------|---|------|--|
| 1912 | Galerie Kahnweiler, Paris | 1943 | Dominion Gallery, Montreal |
| 1919 | Galerie de l'Effort Moderne, Paris | 1944 | Valentine Gallery, New York
Jacques Seligmann Gallery, New York
Institute of Design, Chicago
Cincinnati Art Museum (Organized by the
Cincinnati Modern Art Society) |
| 1925 | Anderson Galleries, New York
(Organized by Société Anonyme) | 1945 | Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University,
Cambridge, Massachusetts
Galerie Louis Carré, Paris
Valentine Gallery, New York
Samuel M. Kootz Gallery, New York |
| 1926 | Galerie des Quatre Chemins, Paris | 1946 | Galerie Louis Carré, Paris |
| 1928 | Galerie Alfred Flechtheim, Berlin
Galerie de l'Effort Moderne, Paris | 1947 | Galerie Louis Carré, Paris
Nierendorf Galleries, New York
Svensk-Franska Konstgalleriet, Stockholm |
| 1930 | Galerie Paul Rosenberg, Paris | 1948 | Galerie Louis Carré, Paris
Sidney Janis Gallery, New York |
| 1931 | Durand-Ruel Galleries, New York
John Becker Gallery, New York | 1949 | Traveling exhibition, Germany
Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris |
| 1932 | Valentine Gallery, New York | 1950 | Tate Gallery, London (Arranged by the
Arts Council of Great Britain and the As-
sociation Française d'Action Artistique)
Buchholz Gallery, New York
Galerie Louis Carré, Paris |
| 1933 | Kunsthaus, Zurich | 1951 | Sidney Janis Gallery, New York
Louis Carré Gallery, New York
Maison de la Pensée Française, Paris
Galerie Louise Leiris, Paris |
| 1934 | Galerie Vignon, Paris | 1952 | Gemeente Musea, Amsterdam
Kunsthalle, Berne
Galerie Louis Carré, Paris
Musée, Antibes
Biennale, Venice
Sidney Janis Gallery, New York
Perls Galleries, New York
Galerie de Berri, Paris |
| 1935 | Beaux-Arts and Gazette des Beaux-Arts,
Paris
The Museum of Modern Art, New York
The Art Institute of Chicago (Organized
by the Renaissance Society of the Uni-
versity of Chicago) | 1953 | Galerie Louis Carré, Paris |
| 1937 | Galerie Paul Rosenberg, Paris
London Gallery, London | | |
| 1938 | Rosenberg and Helft Gallery, London
Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York (2 ex-
hibitions)
Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels
Mayor Gallery, London | | |
| 1940 | Nierendorf Galleries, New York
Galerie Mai, Paris
Katharine Kuh Gallery, Chicago | | |
| 1941 | Marie Harriman Gallery, New York
The Arts Club of Chicago
Mills College Art Gallery, Oakland, Cal. | | |
| 1942 | Paul Rosenberg Gallery, New York
Buchholz Gallery, New York | | |

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Butterfly from CIRQUE. 1950
(Also reproduced on end sheets)

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- 81 SWEENEY, JAMES JOHNSON. Léger and the cult of the close-up. *The Arts*, New York, v. 17, May 1931, p. 561-8, illus. Includes English translation of a lecture given by

Léger in Berlin in 1928. Sweeney's text, translated into French, appears in bibl. 41.

82 SYLVESTER, DAVID. Portrait of the artist: Fernand Léger. *Art News and Review*, London, v. 2, no. 2, Feb. 25, 1950, p. 1, 7, illus.

83 TÉRIADE, E. *Fernand Léger*, Paris, Édition Cahiers d'Art, 1928, xxvi p. plus 93 plates. (Les Grands peintres d'aujourd'hui)
Extracts reprinted in bibl. 78.

84 TÉRIADE, E. Oeuvres récentes de Léger. Les objets dans l'espace. *Cahiers d'Art*, Paris, v. 3, 1928, p. 145-52, illus.

85 WANDMALEREI VON FERNAND LÉGER IM FRANZÖSISCHEN PAVILLON, TRIENNALE, MILAN, 1951. *Werk*, Zurich, v. 38, Sept. 1951, p. 262, illus.
Reproduction only.

86 ZERVOS, CHRISTIAN. A propos des "Constructeurs" de Fernand Léger. *Cahiers d'Art*, Paris, v. 26, 1951, p. 190-202, illus.

87 ZERVOS, CHRISTIAN. De l'importance de l'objet dans la peinture d'aujourd'hui. *Cahiers d'Art*, Paris, v. 5, 1930, p. 343-54, illus.

88 ZERVOS, CHRISTIAN. Fernand Léger et le développement des objets dans l'espace. *Cahiers d'Art*, Paris, v. 4, 1929, p. 149-58, illus.

89 ZERVOS, CHRISTIAN. Fernand Léger et la poésie de l'objet. *Cahiers d'Art*, Paris, v. 9, no. 1-4, 1934, p. 99-108, illus.

90 ZERVOS, CHRISTIAN. *Fernand Léger: oeuvres de 1905 à 1952*, Paris, Éditions Cahiers d'Art, 1952, 93pp., illus. (some col.), port.
Text in French and English. Includes bibliographical notes.

91 ZERVOS, CHRISTIAN. Une nouvelle étape dans l'oeuvre de Fernand Léger: gouaches et dessins colorés: *Cahiers d'Art*, Paris, v. 7, no. 6-7, 1932, p. 264-9, illus.

92 ZERVOS, CHRISTIAN. Nouvelles peintures de Fernand Léger. *Cahiers d'Art*, Paris, v. 2, 1927, p. 96-107, illus.

EXHIBITION CATALOGUES AND REVIEWS

93 AMSTERDAM. GEMEENTE MUSEA. *Léger: de Bouwers*, Amsterdam, 1952, 14pp., illus.
Exhibited Jan. 1952. Includes statement by Léger reprinted from bibl. 25. Reviewed in *Kroniek van Kunst en Kultuur*, Amsterdam, v. 12, no. 3, Feb. 1952, p. 73.

94 BERNE. KUNSTHALLE. *Fernand Léger*, 10. April bis 25. Mai 1952, Bern 1952, 16pp., illus. (some col.).
Lists 118 works. Reviewed in *Werk*, Zurich, v. 39, no. 6, June 1952, sup. p. 80; and in *Art-Documents*, Genève, no. 20, May 1952, p. 10-11.

95 BRUSSELS. PALAIS DES BEAUX-ARTS. *Fernand Léger*, Bruxelles, 1938, 12pp., illus.
Lists 72 works. Preface by Léger.

96 CINCINNATI MODERN ART SOCIETY. *Exhibition of Paintings by Fernand Léger*, Cincinnati, 1944, 8pp., illus.
Text by Siegfried Giedion. Includes essay by Léger: "The Question of Truth" reprinted from *Architectural Forum*, New York, v. 70, Feb. 1939, p. 138-41.

97 FREIBURG. LANDESAMT FÜR MUSEEN, SAMMLUNGEN UND AUSSTELLUNGEN. *Fernand Léger*, Stuttgart und Calw, Gerd Hatje, 1949, 16pp., illus. (1 col.).
Lists 26 works. Text by Willi Baumeister reprinted in *Age Nouveau*, Paris, no. 42, 1949.

98 LONDON. TATE GALLERY. *Fernand Léger: an Exhibition of Paintings, Drawings, Lithographs and Book Illustration*, Feb. 17-March 19, 1950, London, 1950, 12pp., illus. (some col.).
Lists 76 works. Introduction by Douglas Cooper. Reviewed in *Architectural Review*, London, v. 107, Apr. 1950, p. 278-9; in *Apollo*, London, v. 51, Apr. 1950, p. 94; in *Art News*, New York, v. 49, Apr. 1950, p. 51; in *Country Life*, London, v. 107, Mar. 3, 1950, p. 607; in *Art News and Review*, London, v. 2, Feb. 25, 1950, p. 3; in *Emporium*, Bergamo, v. 112, July, 1950, p. 36-9. For article occasioned by this exhibition, see bibl. 51.

99 NEW YORK. BUCHHOLZ GALLERY, CURT VALENTIN. *Léger, Recent Paintings & Le Cirque*, Nov. 6–Dec. 2, 1950, New York, 1950, 8pp., illus. Lists 40 works. Reviewed in *Art Digest*, New York, v. 25, Nov. 15, 1950, p. 19; and in *Art News*, New York, v. 49, Nov. 1950, p. 47.

100 NEW YORK. LOUIS CARRÉ GALLERY. *Léger*, New York, 1951, 23pp., illus. Lists 17 works, exhibited Mar. 28–Apr. 21. Includes excerpts from several texts on Léger; also notes by M.-A. Couturier and Jerome Mellquist. Reviewed in *Art News*, New York, v. 50, Apr. 1951, p. 23.

101 NEW YORK. SIDNEY JANIS GALLERY. *Early Léger, Oil Paintings, 1911–25*, through Apr. 7, 1951, New York, 1951, 3pp. Lists 30 works. Reviewed in *Art News*, New York, v. 50, Apr. 1951, p. 23.

102 NEW YORK. SIDNEY JANIS GALLERY. *Paintings by Fernand Léger*, Sept. 15–Oct. 11, 1952. New York, 1952, folder, illus. Lists 25 works. Reviewed in *Art News*, New York, v. 51, Oct. 1952, p. 46; and in *Art Digest*, New York, v. 26, Sept. 1952, p. 15.

103 NEW YORK. PERLS GALLERIES. *Fernand Léger*, Oct. 27–Nov. 29, 1952, New York, 1952, 8pp., illus. Lists 19 works. Reviewed in *Art Digest*, New York, v. 27, Nov. 15, 1952, p. 16; and in *Art News*, New York, v. 51, Nov. 1952, p. 44.

104 NEW YORK. SAIDENBERG GALLERY. *Léger and Picasso*, Sept. 25–Nov. 1951. Announcement only. Reviewed in *Art News*, New York, v. 50, Nov. 1951, p. 50.

105 OSLO. KUNSTNERFORBUNDET. *Fernand Léger*, Mar. 1951, Oslo, 1951, 4pp., illus. Lists 48 works. Three of the paintings exhibited reproduced in *Kunsten Idag*, Oslo, v. 18–19, no. 2–3, 1951, p. 70.

106 PARIS. GALERIE LOUIS CARRÉ. *Deauville vu par Fernand Léger*. Nov. 8–Dec. 9, 1950. 17 water colors. No catalog published. Reviewed in *Arts*, Paris, no. 284, Nov. 10, 1950, p. 5, illus.;

and in *Arts de France*, Paris, no. 33, Dec. 1950, p. 52–3.

107 PARIS. GALERIE LOUIS CARRÉ. June 6–July 10, 1952.

For publication and catalog issued in connection with this exhibition, see bibl. 42; also 38.

108 PARIS. GALERIE LOUISE LEIRIS. *Sculptures, polychromes et lithographies: Fernand Léger*. Nov. 27–Dec. 15, 1951.

No catalog published. 68 works exhibited. Reviewed in *Art d'Aujourd'hui*, Boulogne, ser. 3, no. 2, Jan. 1952, p. 30; and in *Arts*, Paris, no. 336, Dec. 7, 1951, p. 4.

109 PARIS. MAISON DE LA PENSÉE FRANÇAISE. *Les Constructeurs*. June 1951.

Reviewed in *Arts*, Paris, no. 315, June 1951, p. 4. For publications occasioned by this exhibition, see, bibl. 56, 86. Also reviewed in *Emporium*, Bergamo v. 114, Sept. 1951, p. 107–9.

110 PARIS. MUSÉE NATIONAL D'ART MODERNE. *Fernand Léger: exposition rétrospective, 1905–1949*, Oct. 6–Nov. 12, Paris, 1949, 39pp., illus. (some col.)

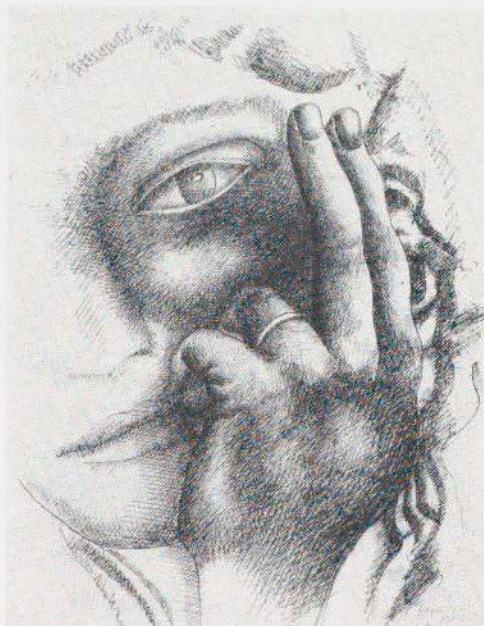
Lists 90 works. Includes reprints of texts by Apollinaire and Cendrars. Introduction by Jean Cassou. Reviewed in *Arts Plastiques*, Brussels, no. 9–10, Sept. 1949, p. 404–5; in *Numero*, Florence, v. 1, no. 2, Nov. 1949, p. 21; in *Ver y Estimar*, Buenos Aires, v. 4, no. 16, Mar. 1950, p. 49–52; in *Werk*, Zurich, v. 36, Dec. 1949, sup. p. 170; in *Kroniek van Kunst en Kultuur*, Amsterdam, v. 10, Dec. 1949, p. 406–7. For articles occasioned by this exhibition, see bibl. 36, 43.

111 ZURICH. GALERIE 16. July 1–28, 1950. *Léger's lithographs for "Le Cirque."* Reviewed in *Werk*, Zurich, v. 37, Aug. 1950, sup. p. 103.

112 ZURICH. KUNSTHAUS. *Juan Gris . . . Fernand Léger*, Paris, Éditions Cahiers d'Art, 1933, 134pp., illus.

150 works listed. Same text as bibl. 41 with a list of exhibited works and an essay by W. Wartmann.

CATALOGUE OF THE EXHIBITION



PORTRAIT. 1935. Ink drawing. $12\frac{3}{8} \times 9\frac{5}{8}$
Collection Mme. Marie Cuttoli, Paris

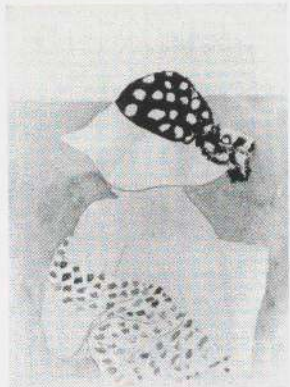
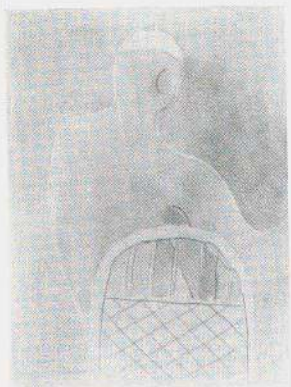
All dimensions are in inches, height preceding width.
Paintings are oil on canvas and water colors are
transparent unless otherwise noted.

PAINTINGS

- 1 PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST'S UNCLE. 1905. $17\frac{3}{4} \times 13$ Lent by the artist. Illustrated on page 10.
- 2 CORSICAN VILLAGE: SUNSET. 1905. 20×26 Lent by Miss Margaret Bleuler, Zurich, Switzerland. Illustrated on page 11.
- 3 NUDES IN THE FOREST. 1909-10. $47\frac{1}{4} \times 67$ Lent by Rijksmuseum Kröller-Müller, Otterlo, Holland. Illustrated on page 12.
- 4 THREE FIGURES (sometimes called *Le Passage à Niveau*). 1910-11. 77×46 Lent by The Milwaukee Art Institute. Illustrated on page 14.
- 5 THE WEDDING. 1910-11. $101\frac{1}{4} \times 80\frac{3}{4}$ Lent by the Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris, Alfred Flechtheim Bequest. Illustrated on page 15.
- 6 SMOKE OVER THE ROOFS. 1911. $23\frac{3}{4} \times 37\frac{3}{4}$ Lent by Putnam D. McMillan, Minneapolis. Illustrated on page 16.
- 7 THE WOMAN IN BLUE. 1912. $76 \times 51\frac{1}{4}$ Lent by Kunstmuseum, Basel, Switzerland, Raoul La Roche Bequest. Illustrated on page 17.
- 8 WOMAN IN ARMCHAIR. 1912. $51\frac{1}{4} \times 38\frac{1}{4}$ Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Harry Lewis Winston, Birmingham, Michigan. Illustrated on page 18.
- 9 NUDE MODEL IN THE STUDIO. 1912. $49\frac{3}{4} \times 37\frac{3}{4}$ Lent by The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York. Illustrated on page 18.

- 10 THE STAIRWAY. 1913. $56\frac{3}{4} \times 46\frac{1}{2}$ Lent by Kunsthaus, Zurich, Switzerland. Illustrated on page 19.
- 11 THE SEAMSTRESS. 1913. $67 \times 69\frac{1}{4}$ Lent by Galerie Rosengart, Lucerne, Switzerland.
- 12 SOLDIER WITH PIPE. 1916. $50\frac{3}{8} \times 27\frac{3}{8}$ Lent by Rolf de Maré, Stockholm, Sweden. Illustrated on page 22.
- 13 THE CARD PLAYERS. 1917. $50\frac{7}{8} \times 76$ Lent by Rijksmuseum Kröller-Müller, Otterlo, Holland. Illustrated on page 23.
- 14 COMPOSITION. 1917-18. $97 \times 71\frac{1}{2}$ Lent anonymously. Illustrated on page 25.
- 15 THE ACROBATS. 1918. $36 \times 23\frac{1}{2}$ Private Collection, New York.
- 16 STUDY FOR THE CITY. 1919. $36\frac{1}{4} \times 28\frac{3}{8}$ Owned by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Purchase Fund. Illustrated on page 28.
- 17 SKETCH FOR THE CITY. 1919. $31\frac{7}{8} \times 25\frac{5}{8}$ Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Armand Phillip Bartos, New York. Illustrated on page 28.
- 18 THE CITY. 1919. 38×51 Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Samuel A. Marx, Chicago. Illustrated on page 27.
- 19 THE CITY. 1919. $91 \times 117\frac{1}{2}$ Lent by A. E. Gallatin Collection, Philadelphia Museum of Art. Illustrated in color on page 26.
- 20 THE MECHANIC. 1920. $45\frac{5}{8} \times 35$ Lent by Galerie Louis Carré, Paris. Illustrated on page 30.
- 21 MAN WITH DOG. 1920. $36 \times 25\frac{1}{2}$ Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Morton G. Neumann, Chicago.
- 22 THREE WOMEN (Le grand déjeuner). 1921. $72\frac{1}{4} \times 99$ Owned by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Mrs. Simon Guggenheim Fund. Illustrated on page 31.
- 23 MECHANICAL ELEMENTS. 1918-1923. $83\frac{1}{8} \times 66\frac{1}{8}$ Private Collection, Paris. Illustrated on page 32.
- 24 THE GREAT TUG. 1923. $49\frac{2}{8} \times 74\frac{7}{8}$ Lent by the artist. Illustrated on page 33.
- 25 TWO NUDES ON RED BACKGROUND. 1923. $55\frac{7}{16} \times 37\frac{1}{16}$. Private Collection, Paris.
- 26 WOMAN WITH BOOK. 1923. $45\frac{1}{2} \times 32$ Lent by Nelson A. Rockefeller, New York. Illustrated on page 34.
- 27 THE READERS. 1924. $44\frac{7}{8} \times 57\frac{1}{2}$ Lent by the Baroness Gourgaud, Yerres, France. Illustrated on page 35.
- 28 THE SIPHON. 1924. $36 \times 23\frac{1}{2}$ Lent by Mr. and Mrs. M. E. Culberg, Chicago. Illustrated on page 38.
- 29 MURAL PAINTING. 1924. $70\frac{7}{8} \times 31\frac{1}{2}$ Lent by Nelson A. Rockefeller, New York. Illustrated on page 39.
- 30 THE COMPOTE. 1925. $23\frac{1}{2} \times 36$ Private Collection, New York. Illustrated on page 40.
- 31 THE MIRROR. 1925. $51 \times 39\frac{1}{4}$ Lent by Sidney Janis Gallery, New York. Illustrated on page 40.
- 32 COMPOSITION, 1925. $50\frac{1}{2} \times 37\frac{1}{2}$ Lent by The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York. Illustrated on page 41.
- 33 THE BALUSTER. 1925. $51 \times 38\frac{1}{4}$ Lent by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Purchase Fund.
- 34 THE CAMEOS. 1926. $50\frac{1}{4} \times 31\frac{1}{2}$ Lent anonymously.
- 35 THREE FACES. 1926. $37\frac{3}{4} \times 56\frac{3}{4}$ Lent anonymously. Illustrated on page 44.

- 36 COMPOSITION IN BLUE. 1921-27. $51\frac{1}{2} \times 39\frac{3}{8}$ Owned by The Art Institute of Chicago, Charles H. and Mary F. S. Worcester Collection.
- 37 STILL LIFE. 1927. $36 \times 25\frac{1}{2}$ Lent by the Baroness Gourgaud, Yerres, France.
- 38 THE VASE. 1927. 51×38 Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Morton G. Neumann, Chicago. Illustrated on page 42.
- 39 STILL LIFE WITH LAMPS. 1928. $35\frac{7}{8} \times 28\frac{5}{8}$ Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Harold E. Strauss, Chicago. Illustrated on page 43.
- 40 TWO PROFILES. 1928. 35×51 Private Collection, New York. Illustrated on page 45.
- 41 COMPOSITION, 1930. $104\frac{1}{4} \times 55\frac{1}{8}$ Lent by Dr. h. c. G. F. Reber, Lausanne-Chailly, Switzerland. Illustrated on page 48.
- 42 COMPOSITION WITH ALOES. 1935. $47 \times 57\frac{1}{2}$ Lent by The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York.
- 43 ADAM AND EVE. 1935-39. $90\frac{5}{8} \times 126\frac{5}{8}$ Private Collection, Milan, Italy. Illustrated on page 49.
- 44 BUTTERFLY AND FLOWER. 1937. $35 \times 51\frac{1}{4}$ Lent by Galerie Louis Carré, Paris. Illustrated on page 50.
- 45 MAQUETTE FOR A MURAL. 1938. $63\frac{5}{8} \times 44\frac{7}{8}$ Lent by Jean Masurel, Mouvaux, France. Illustrated on page 51.
- 46 DIVERS ON YELLOW BACKGROUND. 1941. $75\frac{3}{4} \times 87\frac{1}{2}$ Lent by Frederick William Bradley, New York. Illustrated on page 55.
- 47 ELEMENTS ON BLUE BACKGROUND. 1941. $68\frac{7}{8} \times 39\frac{3}{4}$ Lent by Philippe Dotremont, Uccle-Brussels, Belgium. Illustrated on page 56.
- 48 TWO PLUNGERS. 1942. 50×58 Lent anonymously. Illustrated on page 54.
- 49 THE FOREST. 1942. 70×55 Lent by Dr. F. Heer, Zurich, Switzerland. Illustrated on page 58.
- 50 THE GREAT MASK. 1942. 29×36 Lent by Mr. and Mrs. V. H. Pasternacki, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. Illustrated on page 59.
- 51 WOMAN WITH BUTTERFLIES. 1943. $28\frac{1}{2} \times 36$ Lent by Saidenberg Gallery, New York. Illustrated in color on page 63.
- 52 THE YELLOW ROOT. 1943-44. 26×36 Lent by Thomas Bouchard, New York. Illustrated on page 61.
- 53 THE BLACK TRELLIS. 1943-44. $49\frac{1}{2} \times 43\frac{3}{4}$ Lent by The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York. Illustrated on page 60.
- 54 MECHANICAL FRAGMENT. 1944. 50×44 Lent by Curt Valentin Gallery, New York.
- 55 THREE MUSICIANS. 1925-44. 68×57 Lent by Wright Ludington, Santa Barbara, California. Illustrated on page 65.
- 56 THE GREAT JULIE. 1945. $44 \times 50\frac{1}{8}$ Owned by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest. Illustrated on page 67.
- 57 THE CHINESE JUGGLER. 1945. 26×36 Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Otto L. Spaeth, New York. Illustrated on page 66.
- 58 LEISURE. 1944-49. $61\frac{7}{8} \times 72\frac{7}{8}$ Lent by the Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris. Illustrated on page 71.
- 59 THE BUILDERS. 1950. $118\frac{1}{8} \times 78\frac{5}{8}$ Lent by the artist. Illustrated on page 73.



The Sketch Book was made by Léger on a boat trip in 1934 when he was a guest of Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Murphy. "In 1934 we started from Antibes aboard our schooner the 'Weather Bird,' " writes Mr. Murphy. "Fernand and Jeanne were with us. During the first day out the sea was smooth and Fernand, who had never been aboard a sailing vessel, was fascinated with the rigging and all the contrivances on board. He had brought the notebook and a few water colors with him and he spent the entire day making sketches. He had never worked under such conditions and it stimulated him enormously. The second day out the weather turned bad as we encountered mistral. Very much to his surprise he did not feel the rough sea as he expected and persisted in his work. He made quite a joke of his being able to remain at his post while some of the rest of us were unable to do so. It was for this reason that he wrote on the cover of the notebook, 'A Sara et Gerald de leur mousse fidèle.' "

Water color sketches of Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Murphy. 1934. 12¾ x 9½ Collection Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Murphy, New York

WATER COLORS

- 60 SMOKE OVER THE ROOFTOPS, gouache. 1913. 25½ x 19½ Lent by Sidney Janis Gallery, New York.
- 61 STUDY FOR DESCENT ON THE STAIRS, gouache. 1913. 20 x 25½ Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Henry Clifford, Radnor, Pennsylvania.
- 62 STUDY FOR DISCS. 1918. 13⅝ x 10⅞ Lent by Yale University Art Gallery, Collection of the Société Anonyme.
- 63 SKETCH FOR THE CITY. 1919. 15¼ x 11 Owned by The Art Institute of Chicago, Olivia Shaler Swan Fund. Illustrated on page 28.
- 64 STUDY FOR THE CITY. 1919. 14⅝ x 10⅝ Lent by Douglas Cooper, Argilliers, France.
- 65 STUDY FOR THE CITY. 1919. 15 x 11 Lent by Yale University Art Gallery, Collection of the Société Anonyme. Illustrated on page 28.
- 66 THE CITY. 1920. 12½ x 10½ Lent by Perls Galleries, New York. Illustrated on page 28.
- 67 MAN WITH CANE. 1921. 12¼ x 8⅜ Lent by Norton Gallery of Art, West Palm Beach, Florida.
- 68 STILL LIFE. 1922. 11½ x 9 Lent by Mrs. George Henry Warren, New York.
- 69 THE LADDER. 1923. 9⅝ x 11⅜ Lent by Yale University Art Gallery, Collection of the Société Anonyme.
- 70 MAN WITH SWEATER. 1924. 8 x 11¼ Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Armand Phillip Bartos, New York.
- 71 STILL LIFE WITH GLASS. 1924. 12¾ x 10½ Lent by Curt Valentin Gallery, New York.
- 72 THE UMBRELLA. 11 x 8 Lent by Yale University Art Gallery, Collection of the Société Anonyme.
- 73 DESIGN FOR A MURAL, gouache. 1925. 15 x 5½ Lent by Mrs. Charles H. Russell, Jr., New York.
- 74 DESIGN FOR A MURAL, gouache. 1925. 15 x 5½ Lent by Mrs. Charles H. Russell, Jr., New York.

- 75 THE BOTTLE OF INK, gouache. 1927. 9 x 12½ Lent by Mrs. Charles H. Russell, Jr., New York.
- 76 THE COWS, gouache. 1932. 16¾ x 14¼ Lent anonymously.
- 77 ABSTRACTION, gouache. 1942. 18 x 22 Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Armand Phillip Bartos, New York.

DRAWINGS

- 78 NUDE, ink. 1911. 12¾ x 9¾ Lent by Curt Valentin Gallery, New York.
- 79 STILL LIFE, pencil. 1923. 12½ x 9¾ Lent by Curt Valentin Gallery, New York.
- 80 STILL LIFE WITH BOTTLE, pencil. 1923. 9¼ x 10½ Lent by Curt Valentin Gallery, New York. Illustrated on page 8.
- 81 WRESTLERS, pencil. 1923. 9⅝ x 12½ Lent by Perls Galleries, New York.
- 82 COMPOSITION, ink. 1933. 12¾ x 9¾ Owned by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Purchase Fund.
- 83 FOOT AND HANDS. 1933. (This pen and ink drawing and "Composition," No. 82, were mounted together by the artist.) 12¾ x 9¾ Owned by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Purchase Fund.
- 84 PORTRAIT, ink. 1935. 12⅝ x 9⅝ Lent by Mme. Marie Cuttoli, Paris. Illustrated on page 84.
- 85 HANDS, ink. 1943. 12⅝ x 9⅝ Lent anonymously.
- 86 SKETCH FOR THE BUILDERS. 1950. 25⅝ x 20⅝ Lent by the artist.
- 87 SKETCH FOR THE BUILDERS. 1950. 19⅝ x 25⅝ Lent by the artist.
- 88 SKETCH FOR THE BUILDERS. 1950. 17⅝ x 12⅝ Lent by the artist.
- 89 FACE AND HANDS, brush and ink. 1952. 26 x 19¾ Owned by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Mrs. Wendell T. Bush Fund. Illustrated on page 6.

MISCELLANEOUS

- 90 GREAT BLACK AND RED BRANCH, ceramic sculpture (polychrome). 1951. 26⅝ x 15¾ x 5 Owned by The Art Institute of Chicago, Edward E. Ayer Fund. Illustrated on page 57.
- 91-108 17 DESIGNS FOR STAINED GLASS WINDOWS IN THE CHURCH OF SACRED HEART AT AUDINCOURT, FRANCE, gouache. 1950. 15¾ x 39⅝ each Lent by the artist.
- 109 EXAMPLE OF STAINED GLASS. (Fragment of window from Church of Sacred Heart at Audincourt, France) 1950-51. Lent by the artist.
- 110-122 8 COSTUME DESIGNS FOR THE OPERA BOLIVAR and 4 COSTUME DESIGNS FOR THE BALLET OF THE OPERA BOLIVAR, water colors. 1951. Lent by the Bibliothèque Nationale de l'Opéra, Paris.
- 123 SKETCH BOOK (with 25 water colors). 1934. Inscribed by Léger "To Sara and Gerald from their faithful cabin boy." 12¾ x 9½ Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Murphy, New York. Illustrated on page 87.
- 124 CIRQUE. 1950. Lithographs from a book with text and illustrations by Léger. 16½ x 12¾ Owned by The Art Institute of Chicago, Gift of the Print and Drawing Club.
- 125 TAPESTRY. 1951. Lent by the artist.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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