

# The sculpture of Elie Nadelman

By Lincoln Kirstein

Author

Kirstein, Lincoln, 1907-1996

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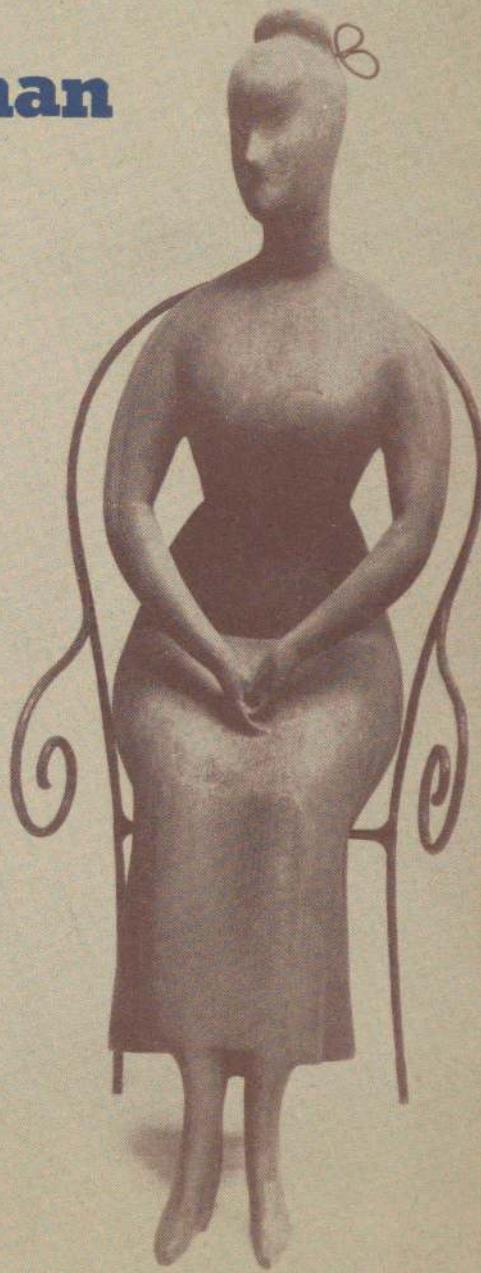
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*The Sculpture of*  
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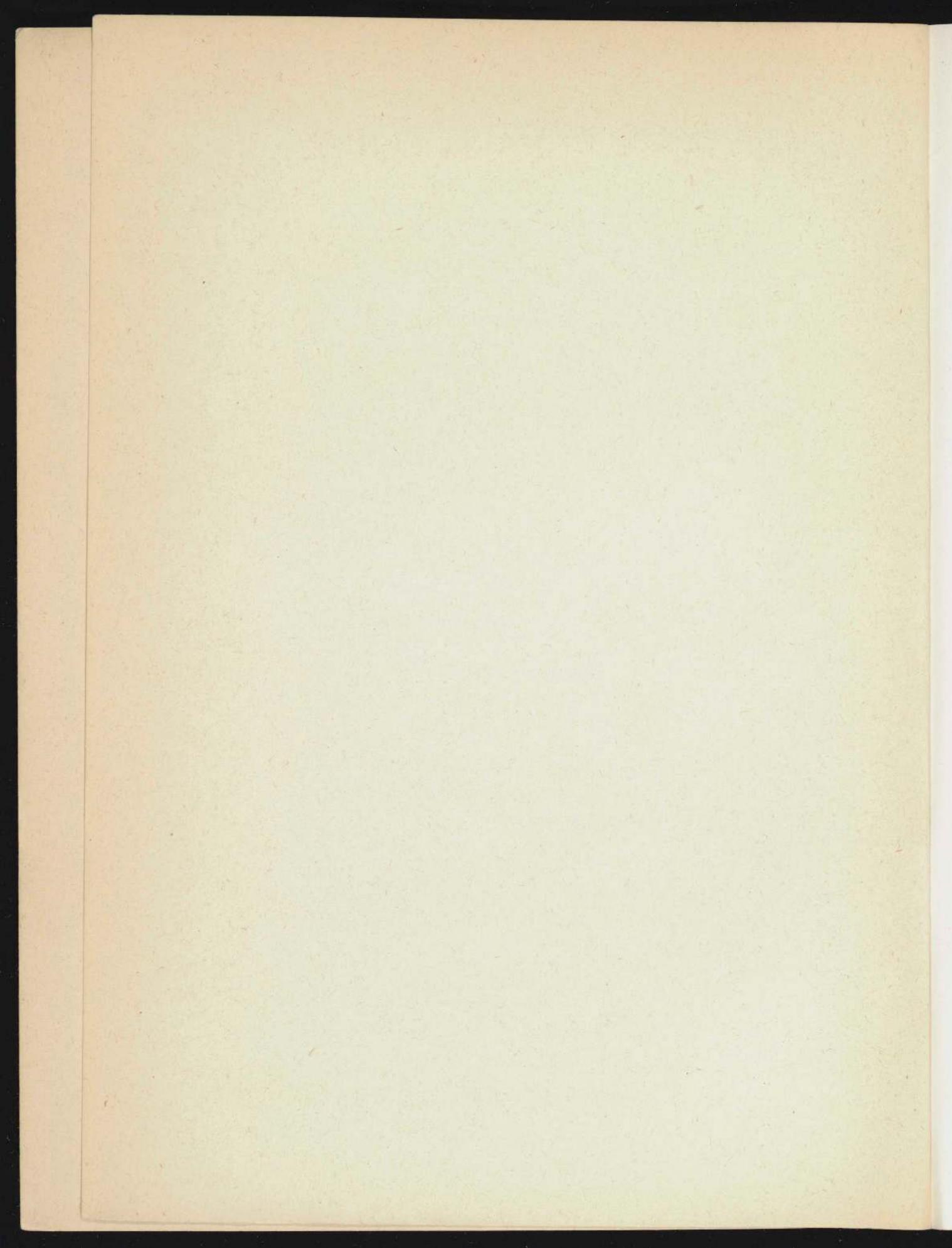


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Frontispiece: two circus women, c.1930. Papier-mâché, 61 $\frac{1}{4}$ " high



*The Sculpture of*

Elie Nadelman

The signature "Elie Nadelman" is written in a large, flowing cursive script. The name "Elie" is at the top left, with a small "lie" written vertically above the "i". The surname "Nadelman" follows, with a large, sweeping "N" that loops back over the "e" and "l". The "adelman" part is in a bold, sans-serif font.

**BY LINCOLN KIRSTEIN**

**THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART · NEW YORK**

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### **Acknowledgments**

Many people have been helpful in gathering information for this book. Without them, especially those in Paris, little would have been precise about Nadelman's early career. In particular, I wish to express appreciation for the unstinted labor of Mlle Liliane Yacoël who saw people who knew the sculptor in his Parisian period. Her detailed reports have been of the first importance, not only for this brief survey, but towards an eventual biography. Mrs. A. Stewart Walker, one of the sculptor's oldest American friends, was continually helpful with information and advice.

Special thanks are due to Mrs. Elie Nadelman for invaluable advice and assistance.

In addition, the author and The Museum of Modern Art wish to thank: Alexander Archipenko, Alfred H. Barr, Jr., George Baillie, Adolphe Basler, Clive Bell, Bernhard Berenson, Edward L. Bernays, Martin Birnbaum, Ernest Brummer, Mrs. Joseph Brummer, Dr. Ruth Cohn, Mrs. Henry T. Curtiss, Prof. Szczesny Detloff, Mrs. Muriel Draper, Donald C. Gallup (and the Collection of American Literature, Yale University), Philip L. Goodwin, Princess Gourielli-Tchkonia, The Misses Gutheridge, Philip C. Johnson, Miss Constance Lloyd, Henry McBride, Thadée Natanson, David Rosen, Meyer Schapiro, Mrs. Marie Sterner, Marek Swarcz, Virgil Thomson, Edward Titus, Roy Titus, Miss Alice B. Toklas, Carl Van Vechten, Glenway Wescott, Dr. Edgar Wind and Count Auguste Zamoyski.

LINCOLN KIRSTEIN

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### **Note**

All sculptures and drawings unless otherwise indicated are in the collection of Mrs. Elie Nadelman, Riverdale, New York.



Elie Nadelman. Paris, c.1909

Elie Nadelman was born February 20, 1882 in Warsaw, Russian-Poland, at Marszalkowski 143, a house destroyed in the Second World War. He was the seventh child of Hannah Arnstan and Philip Nadelman. His father was a jeweler of liberal opinions and extensive philosophical background. His mother's family numbered among them artists, writers and musicians. He was schooled at the Warsaw *Gymnasium* and High School of Liberal Arts. He spoke and wrote French, German, later English, besides his native Polish and Russian. His childhood seems to have been happy; although he left Poland at nineteen, never to return, he was devoted to his parents until their deaths. His nature was cheerful, energetic and extroverted; he had no conflict in his wish to be an artist. He was briefly sent to the Art Academy maintained in Warsaw. In 1900 he volunteered for the Imperial Russian Army, Poland then being a province of the Tzar. An enlisted man, he received preference owing to his volunteer status. He served a year; but most of the time was spent in teaching drawing to officers' children and decorating barracks with paintings which were almost his last.

After 1901 he studied again at the Warsaw Academy, and a year later went to Kracow to investigate the artistic atmosphere, in hopes it would be less provincial and academic than the capital. There, Konstantin Laszczka (b. 1865) taught a dilute Impressionism derived from Rodin. Nadelman found little to learn, and indeed discovered he was more advanced than either local masters or students; he returned to Warsaw. At this time, as had been the case for a century, Paris was the focus for all progressive Polish thought and art. To be a Polish patriot presupposed Parisian exile. A large and influential colony of Poles led a rich cultural

life in France. Count Anton Potocki, with the art critic Adolphe Basler, founded a luxurious art journal *Sztuka*. Published in Polish, at once nationalist and international, with lavish illustrations, it held annual competitions. The prize in 1902 went to young Nadelman for his project of a memorial to Frédéric Chopin. The drawing was recognized at once as the work of a sculptor.

Nadelman next reached Munich where he remained six months. Here the dominant artistic influences were the school of anecdotal Romanticism as practiced by Arnold Böcklin and Franz von Stuck. Nadelman was also affected by the piquant modernity of Aubrey Beardsley, whose drawings were very popular in Germany. Some of the characterization in Nadelman's early bronze heads, memories of Herod and Herodias from the illustrations to Oscar Wilde's *Salome*, echoed the perverse, ambiguous amplitude of Beardsley's snaky curls (page 17). Nadelman disliked the artistic climate of Munich, except for its music, theatre, circus and such popular satirical magazines as *Simplicissimus* and *Jugend*. But Munich also contained the Glyptothek with its unrivalled collection of fifth-century pediment figures from the temple of Aegina. This was Nadelman's first contact with the antique. All through his long, variable artistic development there would be continual anchorage to the mature Hellenic ideal, which he later studied more closely in the Louvre.

Lasting memories Nadelman owed Munich were of the wood, plastic and china-headed dolls of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. A great collection of these, with their accessories, furniture and animals, was housed at that time in the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum. These small serious images, made by grownups for children in Bavaria and Thuringia, remained equally in his mind, alongside the heroic simplicity of the archaic gods and warriors. For all his life, the antiquities of the Aegean, and the folk arts of Western Europe were the opposing poles of Nadelman's imagination, revolving around a central focus of the observation of the human body. But Munich was only a step on his path to Paris.

Here Nadelman found by himself, through study of models and museums, the basis for his education as thinker and artist. His father, the jeweler, had given him a sense of craft, together with a passion for luxurious material and rich surface. From the start, Nadelman felt at home manipulating metal, stone and wood — painted, stained or polished. Little is evident from 1903 to 1946 of improvisation or a tentative approach. Even his drawings or small plaster figures were seldom sketchy. Nadelman never worked at the Beaux Arts or with a master. Briefly around 1904, he drew from short poses at the Atelier Colarossi; there was no critique, attendance was merely an inexpensive method of sharing a living model. Here he perfected his ability to catch the salient characteristics of the body, although after 1913, except for portraits, he used no model.

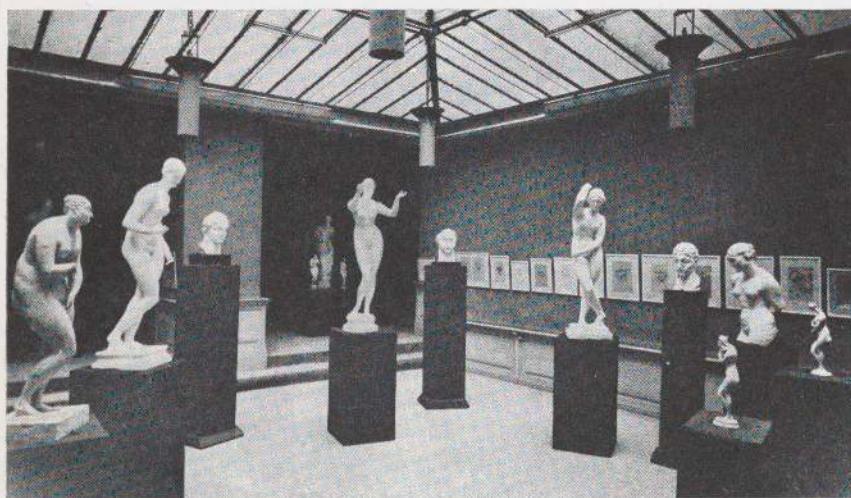
The most famous living artist was then Auguste Rodin, installed, at the end of a life still full of battles, in the state's Dépôt des Marbres on the rue de l'Université. Nadelman admired Rodin as the greatest modeler in bronze since the Renaissance. The bearded, benevolent satyr seemed,

as Guillaume Apollinaire wrote, a veritable God-the-Father-Eternal of world art. Rodin's influence on Nadelman is apparent in reproductions of two early plaster groups, now lost, which appeared in *Sztuka* for 1904, as well as in the fine portrait sketch of Thadée Natanson of 1909 (page 60). Later, Rodin's denial of the integrity of stone as a material, the textural softness of his marble cut by his *praticiens* and *metteurs au point* (roughers-out) oppressed Nadelman, who never failed in his admiration for *The Age of Bronze* or *Balzac*. Later, something of Rodin's looming suggestive vagueness may be found in Nadelman's heads in galvano plastique (plaster coated with copper) c. 1924 (page 37).

At the start Nadelman was poor, although aided by his parents, and then by the brothers Natanson (also Poles), founders of *La Revue Blanche* to which so many writers and artists contributed, from Octave Mirbeau and the young Gide, to Bonnard and Vuillard. Nadelman early exhibited a solitary temperament; he immured himself with his companion model, and up to the time of his first show was rarely seen in cafés. He was a creature of personal grace, physical magnetism and an amazingly facile talent. Success could have come easily: Apollinaire speaks of him as working *couronné de roses*.

Some time in 1905, after two months of introspection, he made his decision to devote himself entirely to the root problems of sculpture, which had not been faced seriously for years. He wished to find out, since no one could tell him, of what plastic form was composed: how volume could be described, filled and balanced. This devotion was not towards self-expression, but to researches comparable to an investigation of the nature of physical matter. By analytical drawings of the human nude and head, (page 14) and sculpture projected from these analyses, he sought the construction underlying form and volume. This was an intellectual

Exhibition of Nadelman's work, Galerie Druet, Paris, April 1909

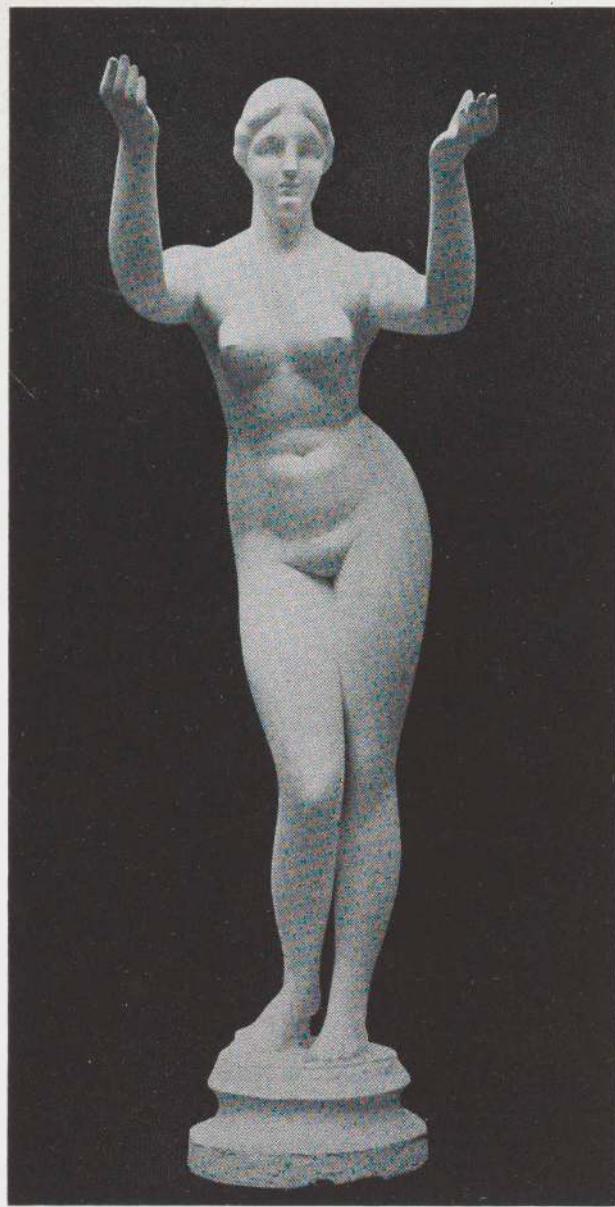




Sculpture in the artist's home, 1947.

rather than an emotional problem undertaken as a moral as much as a manual discipline. Hence he retired from café and salon; later retirement became an increasing compulsion. In his last twenty years it grew complete. Yet, three times within a decade he enjoyed international success. Now, for six years (1903-09) he lived frugally. Gertrude Stein, who met him around 1908, said he rarely quit his studio by daylight; she knew he meditated for hours on the Seine bank. André Gide called his studio a *tanière*, an animal's lair, when Alexandre Natanson took him there in the summer of the same year. At night, Nadelman went on lonely walks about the city of Verlaine, Rimbaud and Baudelaire, whose verses became his bible, and whose spirit could be fully illustrated by his sculpture and drawings.

His early analytical experiments are the key to Nadelman's entire *oeuvre*, which seems planned from the start as an organic unit, having less development or progression than sequential exhaustion of a number of ways of seeing, of stylistic expression, all of which were apparent in essence at his beginning. Commencing by the demarcation of big forms in the nude, he outlined them arbitrarily, or "abstractly" although his contours were always based on concrete observation. The outlines were suites of curves expressing a general direction of gesture of the limbs. After the gross shapes were blocked out, he made further decomposition towards analysis; descriptive arcs were bisected and trisected, reciprocals encompassed the interior masses; finally there was an enveloping unification. The only titles Nadelman gave his figures from 1905 through 1915 were *Research in Volume* or *Accord of Forms*.



Praying figure, c.1904. Plaster, 56" high

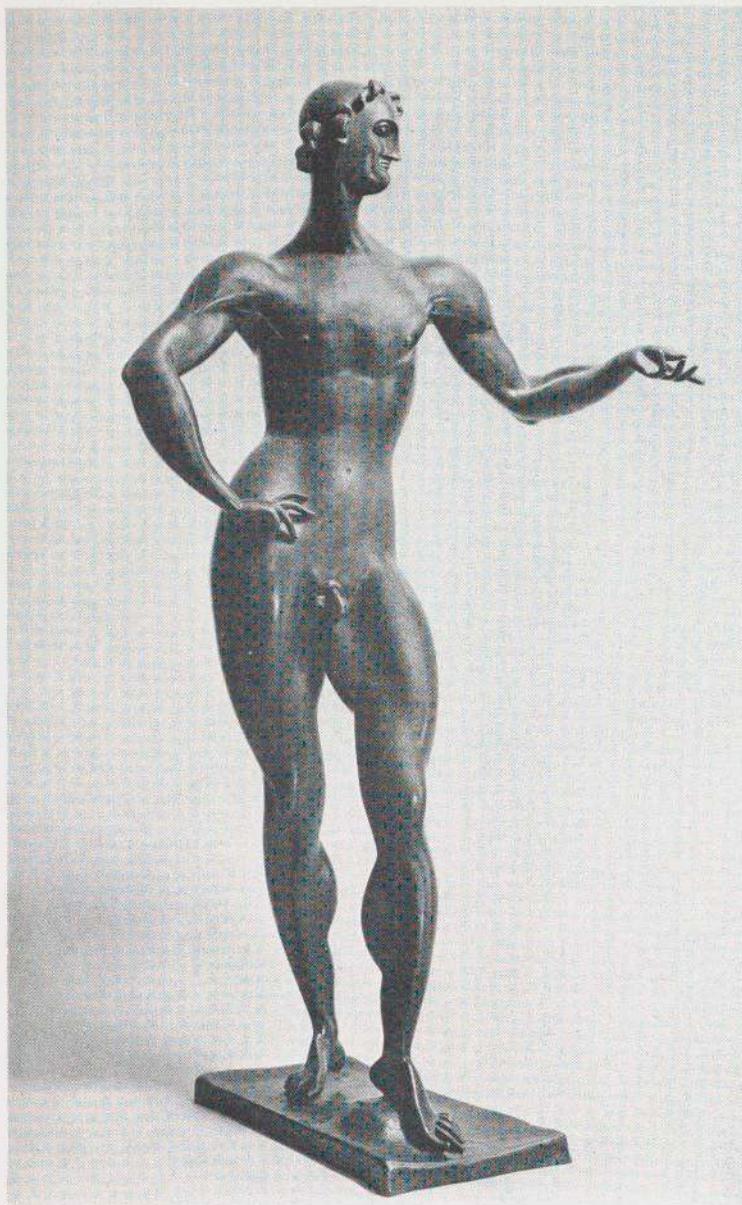
The American collector and critic, Leo Stein, Gertrude's brother, took his friend Picasso to Nadelman's studio in late summer of 1908, the critical year of the analytical movement that Apollinaire (with the phrase of Matisse) was to popularize as Cubism, and which is responsible, historically speaking, for one of the most influential esthetic tendencies of our century. Stein bought a number of Nadelman's early drawings, as well as a small plaster comment on the *Venus of Knidos*. They were placed with the early Picassos in their apartment on the rue de Fleurus, (page 60)



Standing female nude, c.1907. Bronze, 30" high

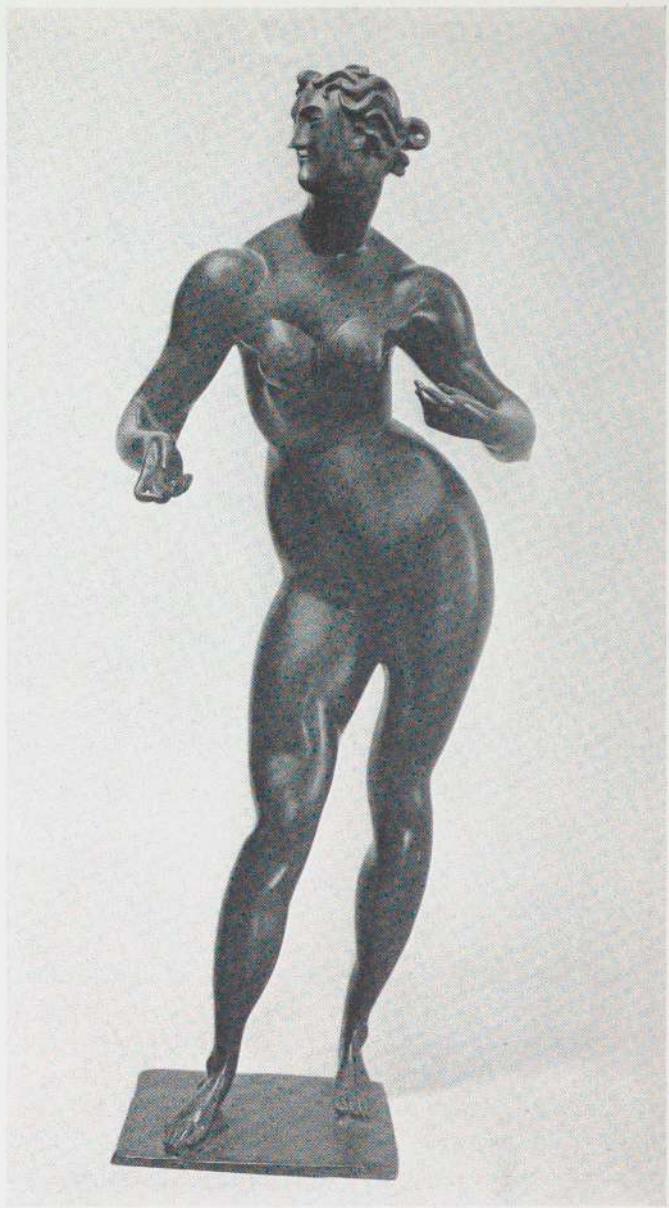
where they remained until the Steins split their ménage, Leo moving to Florence. Gertrude kept the plaster for twenty years, when it was cast in bronze (above). Most of the drawings were returned by Stein to Nadelman for reproduction in his portfolio *Vers l'unité plastique*, which was announced for 1913, but which did not appear until 1914.

Picasso saw in Nadelman's studio the head of a man in plaster (page 15), which he did not fully understand, but from which, as so often happened in his voracious career, he appropriated stylistic mannerisms. Nadelman's



Standing male nude, c.1909. Bronze, 25 $\frac{3}{4}$ " high

head was a fragmentation of curves with their logical echoes; he was not decomposing form as much as he was drily describing its anatomy. The head by Picasso (page 15), dated 1909, in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art, is close to Nadelman's, now lost, which in plaster was exposed at the Galerie Druet in April 1909. Comparison of the two illuminates the capital differences between Nadelman's personal research and Analytical Cubism of 1909. Nadelman's head, based on knowledge from his mirror, is a bold demonstration of emphatic planes and curved-edged



Standing female nude, c.1909. Bronze, 22" high

forms. The volumes repeat the normal anatomy of the skull; the distortion is neither accidental nor Expressionist, but accentuates the underlying geometry.

In 1921, Nadelman published through E. Weyhe of New York, at his own expense, the drawings issued in Paris in 1914, but with the title changed to *Vers la beauté plastique*. They bore the following inscription, reduced by Nadelman to a brief paragraph from several original and extant manuscript pages:



Two drawings, c.1906. Pen and ink

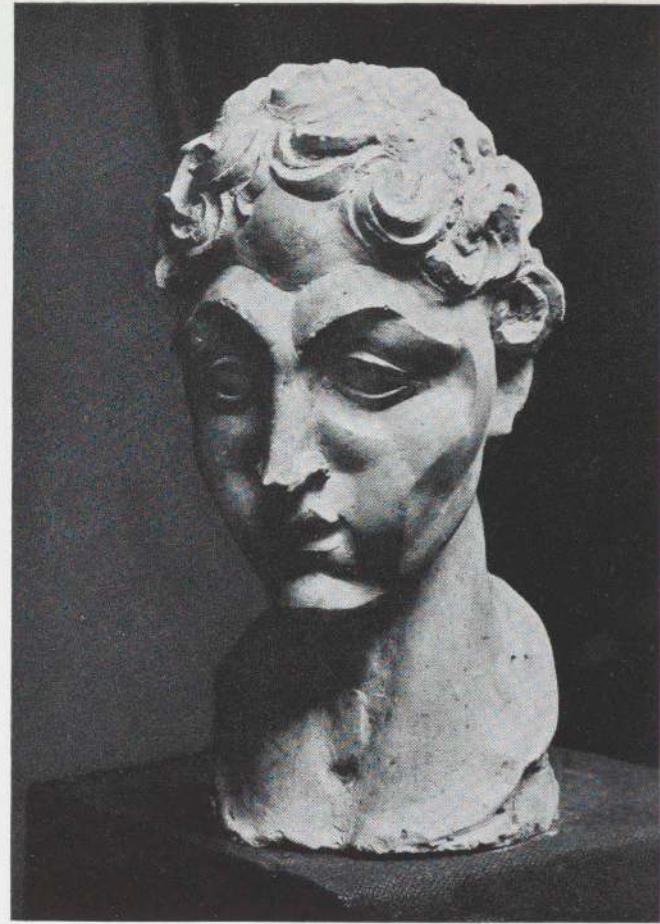
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These drawings, made sixteen years ago (1905), have completely revolutionized the art of our time. They introduced into painting and sculpture *abstract form*, until then wholly lacking. Cubism was only an imitation of the abstract form of these drawings and did not attain their plastic significance. Their influence will continue to be felt more profoundly in the art of the future.

When the American art historian, collector and painter Walter Pach together with Arthur B. Davies was collecting examples of advance-guard painting and sculpture for the Armory Show of 1913, they selected a dozen Nadelman drawings, plus the *Head of a Man* cited above as affecting Picasso. Oddly enough, the drawings had already been in the United States. Alfred Stieglitz had imported them, through Basler, in the summer of 1910, after the interest aroused by the Druet show of the year before. Stieglitz however never exhibited them, for Nadelman needed them for his London show of 1911. But Stieglitz printed Nadelman's statement intended as a preface, in *Camera Work* (No. 32; October 1910). In it, there is the first enunciation of "significant form," later to become one of the rally-cries of "modern art," through the evangelism of the English critic, Clive Bell. Nadelman wrote:

... But what is this true form of art? It is significant and abstract: i.e. composed of geometrical elements.

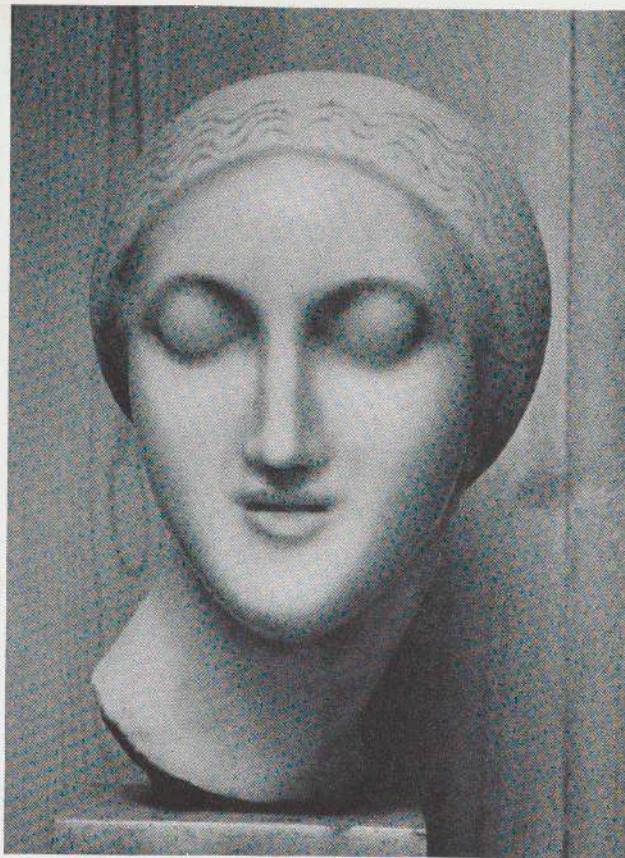
Here is how I realize it. I employ no other line than the curve, which possesses freshness and force. I compose these curves so as to bring them in accord



Head of a man, c.1907. Plaster. Destroyed



Picasso: Head, 1909. Bronze, 16 $\frac{1}{4}$ " high. The Museum of Modern Art



Head of a woman, c.1909. Marble, 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ " high. Collection  
Princess Helena Gourielli-Tchkhonia

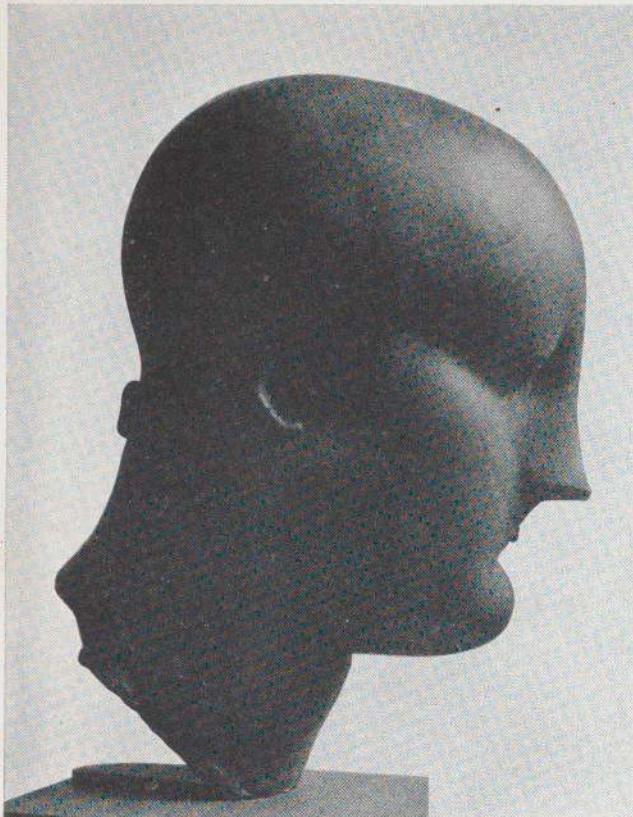
or opposition to one another. In that way I obtain the life of form, i.e. harmony. In that way I intend the life of the work should come from within itself. The subject of any work of art is for me nothing but a pretext for creating significant form, relations of forms which create a new life that has nothing to do with life in nature, a life from which art is born, and from which spring style and unity.

In later years, Nadelman always spoke of his responsibility for the insemination of Cubism. He is unmentioned in official histories. The few remarks in seldom read works of Leo and Gertrude Stein are unnoticed, Gide's *Journal*, with the two apposite entries (December 24, 1908; April 25, 1909), was only recently translated. At the start, Nadelman fought for his historic rights. Among his papers are many drafts of a letter written to Henry Goddard Leach, editor of *The Forum*, a magazine dedicated to controversy, for a symposium on "Is Cubism Pure Art?" in which Nadelman's letter was printed (July, 1925). Here Nadelman offered to debate with anyone, anywhere, any time, on his priority over Picasso. The challenge was ignored. His final word was scribbled on a scrap, a few years before his death: "Cubism . . . towards external (*rather than interior*) form . . . feverish changes while unsatisfied."



Head of a boy, c.1906. Bronze, 16 $\frac{3}{4}$ " high

It was already well known by 1909 that Nadelman was an important talent. Alexander Archipenko, who came to Paris a little later, relates that Nadelman was then the chief exponent of extreme Modernism. The brothers Natanson, arbiters of literary and artistic taste, owned examples of his work, and prevailed upon their associates, Octave Mirbeau, the playwright Romain Coolus, André Gide, and Frank Haviland to buy pieces. Joseph Brummer, later a great dealer, then a student of Rodin, told Philip Goodwin, architect of the Museum of Modern Art, that Matisse,



Head of a man, c.1909. Bronze. Whereabouts unknown

briefly maintaining an atelier on the Boulevard d'Orléans where he taught, posted a sign on the wall: *Défense de parler de Nadelman ici.*

André Gide, having been escorted by Alexandre Natanson to Nadelman's studio the winter before, feeling he had underestimated him since he had been so amused by Natanson's patronizing attitude, took care to describe the *vernissage* of Nadelman's one-man show at the Galerie Druet, April 25, 1909:

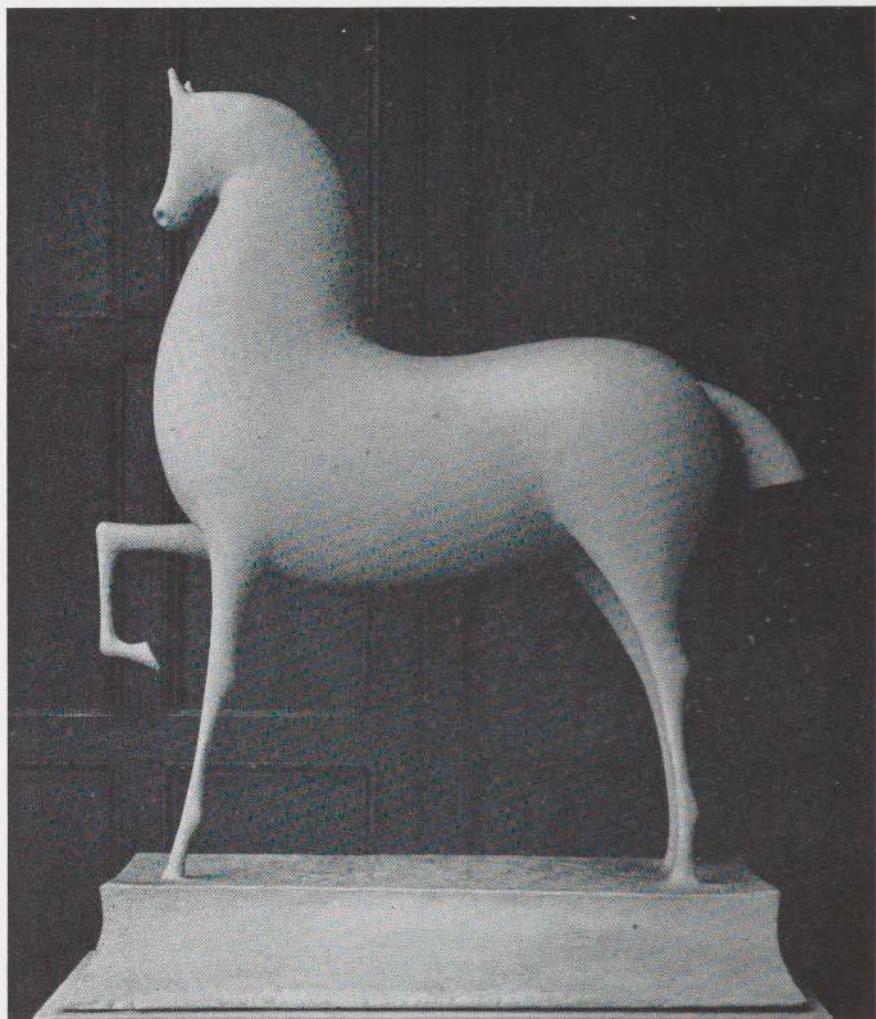
Nadelman draws with a compass and sculpts by assembling rhomboids. He has discovered that every curve of the human body is accompanied by a reciprocal curve, which opposes it and corresponds to it. The harmony which results from these balancings smacks of the theorem. The most astonishing thing, however, is that he works from the living model.

The Druet show was the marvel of the studios and bistros of Montparnasse. It created the greatest interest of a sculpture show since Rodin's retrospective at the International Exhibition of 1900. Gide wrote that Leo Stein bought two-thirds of the drawings; Brummer later obtained many from Stein, and Nadelman had them back from Brummer for their American publication in 1921. Bernhard Berenson, rediscoverer of Italian painting, wrote Stein from Settignano, April 1909:

I found Nadelman's work interesting and have sent influential people to see it. Of course it is hard to say what will become of a person who begins with such a pronounced and echoing manner.

Echoes of this manner, of this new method of analytical construction, of rendering plastically through abstract line and volume were later felt in such a diversity of talents as Brancusi (*La Tête de Madame Pogany*), Arthur B. Davies (the early Detroit murals), Joseph Bernard (*La Porteuse d'Eau*), Modigliani, Eugen Zak, Paul Thévenaz, Marie Laurencin, and many others. In 1928, twenty years after the Druet show, Basler wrote in *La Sculpture Moderne en France*:

The initial figures of the Pole, Nadelman, astonished the élite of Parisian art

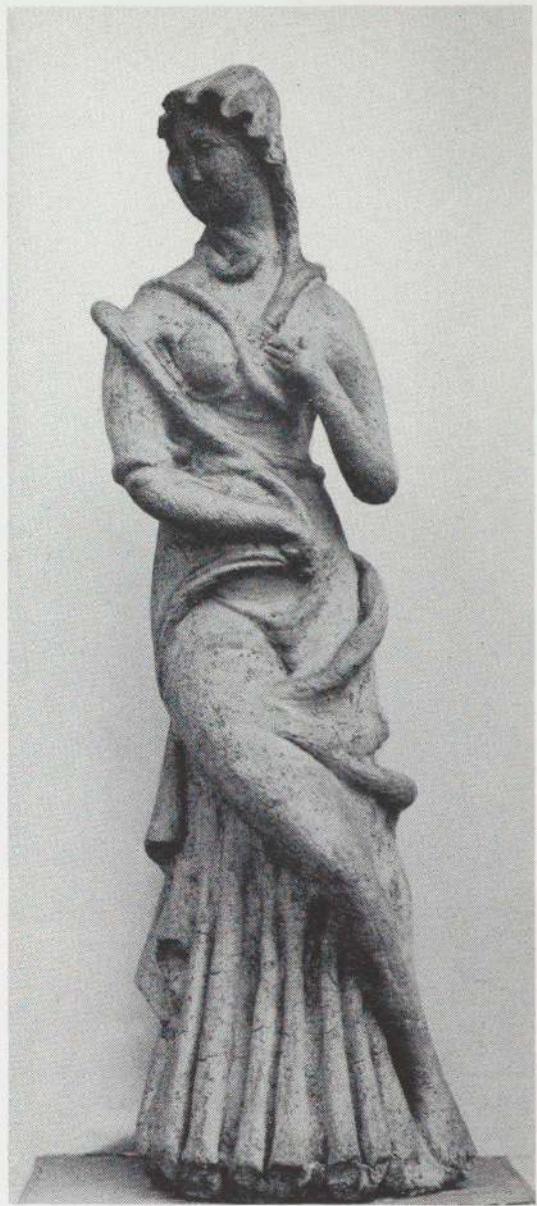


Horse, c.1914. Plaster, 36 $\frac{1}{4}$ " high. Collection Princess Helena Gourielli-Tchkonia. A smaller bronze version is owned by the polo champion, Winston Guest, and other versions by the Worcester Museum and Mr. J. B. Neumann.



Standing woman (Spring), c.1912. Terra cotta, 30 $\frac{3}{4}$ " high.  
Collection Princess Helena Gourielli-Tchkonia

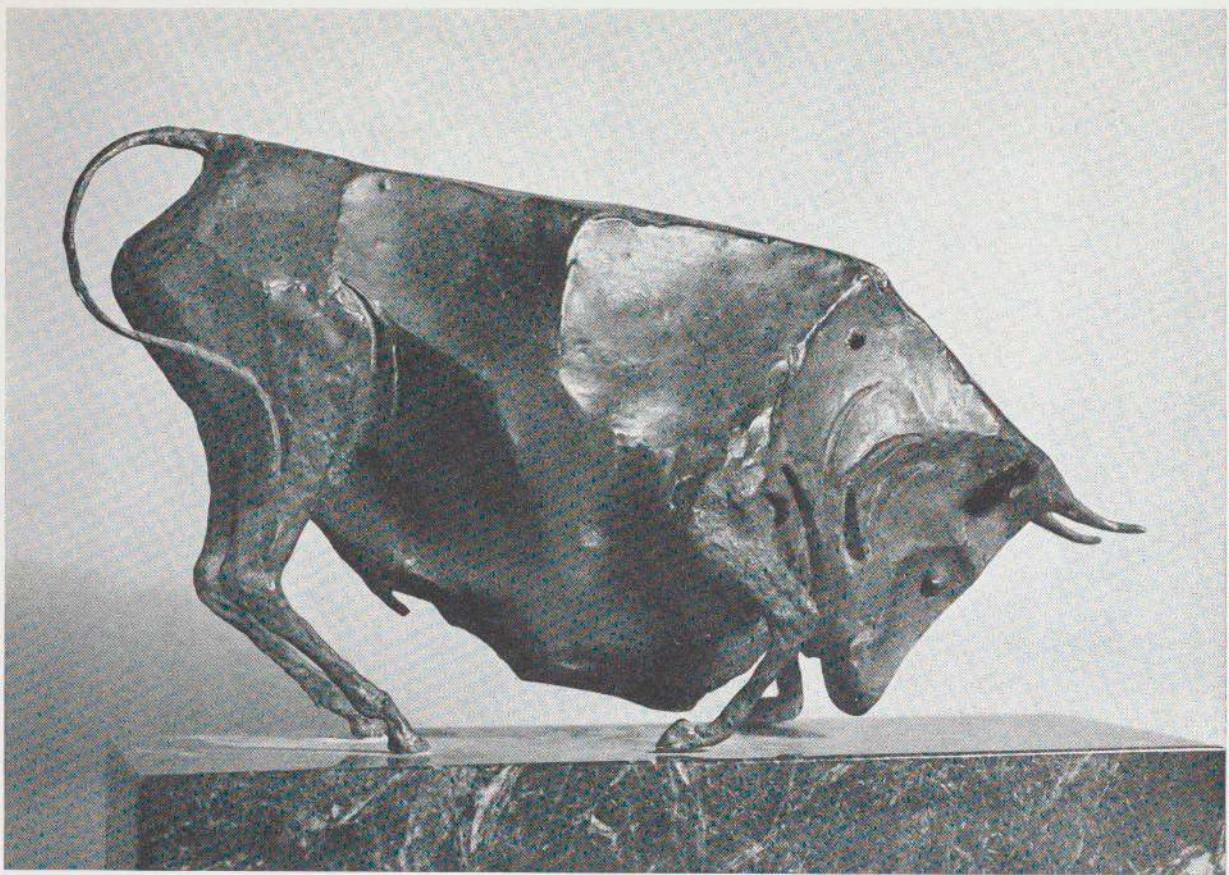
amateurs fifteen years ago. His researches had even the power of disturbing Picasso, that eternally nervous creature, who is rendered ill by any novelty. The principle of spherical decomposition in the drawings and sculptures of Nadelman preceded in effect, the inventions of the Cubists. But Nadelman not only pretended to have discovered the mechanics of Greek sculpture, but also to establish laws of plastic construction. An artist as able as he was intelligent, he had assimilated the Hellenistic formulae of the second century. In his



Standing woman (Winter), c.1912. Terra cotta, 31" high. Collection Princess Helena Gourielli-Tchkonia

bronzes, chiseled with the virtuosity of the Renaissance Florentines, and in his marbles polished as in antiquity, he united a rational science of proportion with a refined elegance of form.

Facing the range of Nadelman's forty years of productivity, we are moved both by its unity within diversity, and its superficial lack of connection between each style, material or period. This must have been even more true at the Druet show which contained only six years of work.



Wounded bull, 1915. Bronze, 11½" long. The Museum of Modern Art, New York

Here was concentrated labor which would have been remarkable for an entire workshop; from the hand of a single young man it was astonishing.

There was a series of standing nudes, deliberate comment on the antique with slight generalization (page 10); beside them, in almost the same pose, as if to prove a formal thesis, another series reducing the body to chartlike abstraction. Another series of small bronzes, had a swaggering finesse recalling, without direct reminiscence, the court ornaments of Giovanni da Bologna. There was a whole other family of tubular nudes expressing a suave continuum of flowing limbs, and a group of plaques (page 60), projections in low relief from pen-and-ink drawings, so closely derived it is impossible to tell which was first, the drawing or the relief.

Finally, there was a series of marble heads, recalling the antique, which was also his completest exposition of analysis (page 16). These white heads distress people today, since they are smooth, symmetrical, harmonious and complete. To eyes nourished on the accidental distortion and battered surface of Expressionism, they are cloying. But they differ from the antique in the massiveness of their grand rondure and heavy bosses;



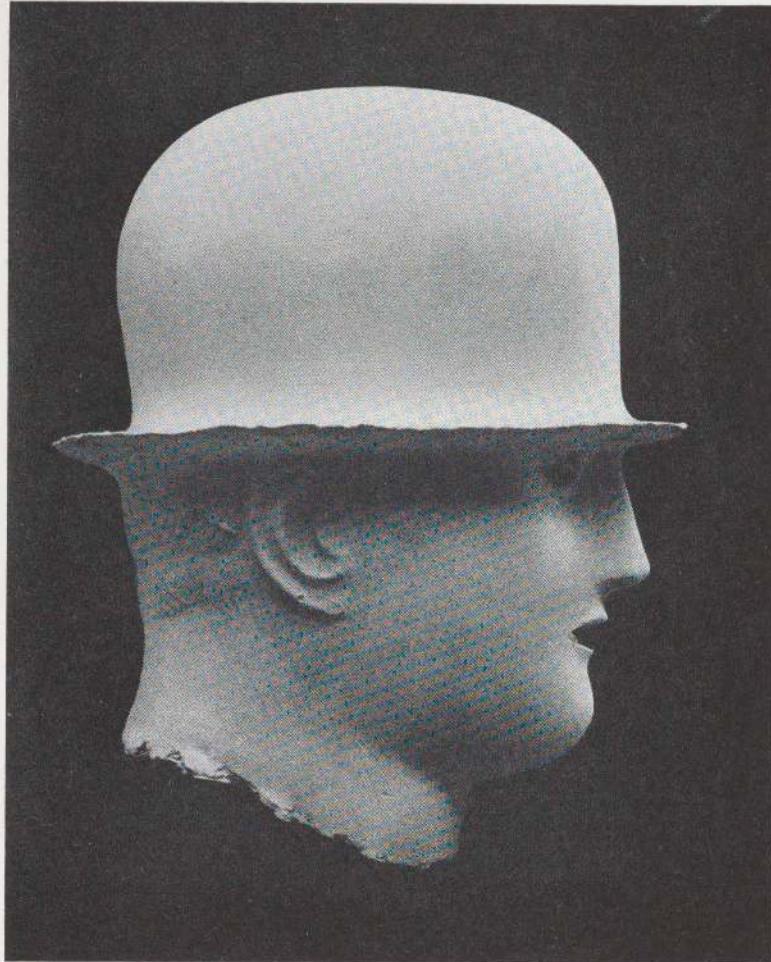
Standing bull, 1915. Bronze, 11½" long. The Museum of Modern Art, New York

they can best be understood in relation to drawings which support them. With their porcelain surfaces polished high to reject any speck of dust, they are living illustrations of Baudelaire's great sonnet:

... *J'unis un cœur de neige à la blancheur des cygnes;*  
*Je hais le mouvement qui déplace les lignes;*  
*Et jamais je ne pleure et jamais je ne ris . . .*

Their sentiment, of an immobile spirit that detests dislocation of linear boundaries (either from softness or imprecision), of lips that neither laugh nor weep; their bland, impersonal, seraphic smile of ambiguous consciousness is shared by all art with an esoteric base, whether Vedic, neo-Platonic or Christian. Its foundation in Nadelman was a religious belief in the principles of antiquity which produced works of unrepeated beauty, plus his confidence in a concrete canon of plane and solid Euclidean geometry.

The Druet show was an active lecture on the essence of sculpture whose nature had been taken for granted, or unquestioned since Rodin's first appearance. Nadelman served as a Socratic instructor: Do you want to see how this is done, of what mass is composed, how style is added to form



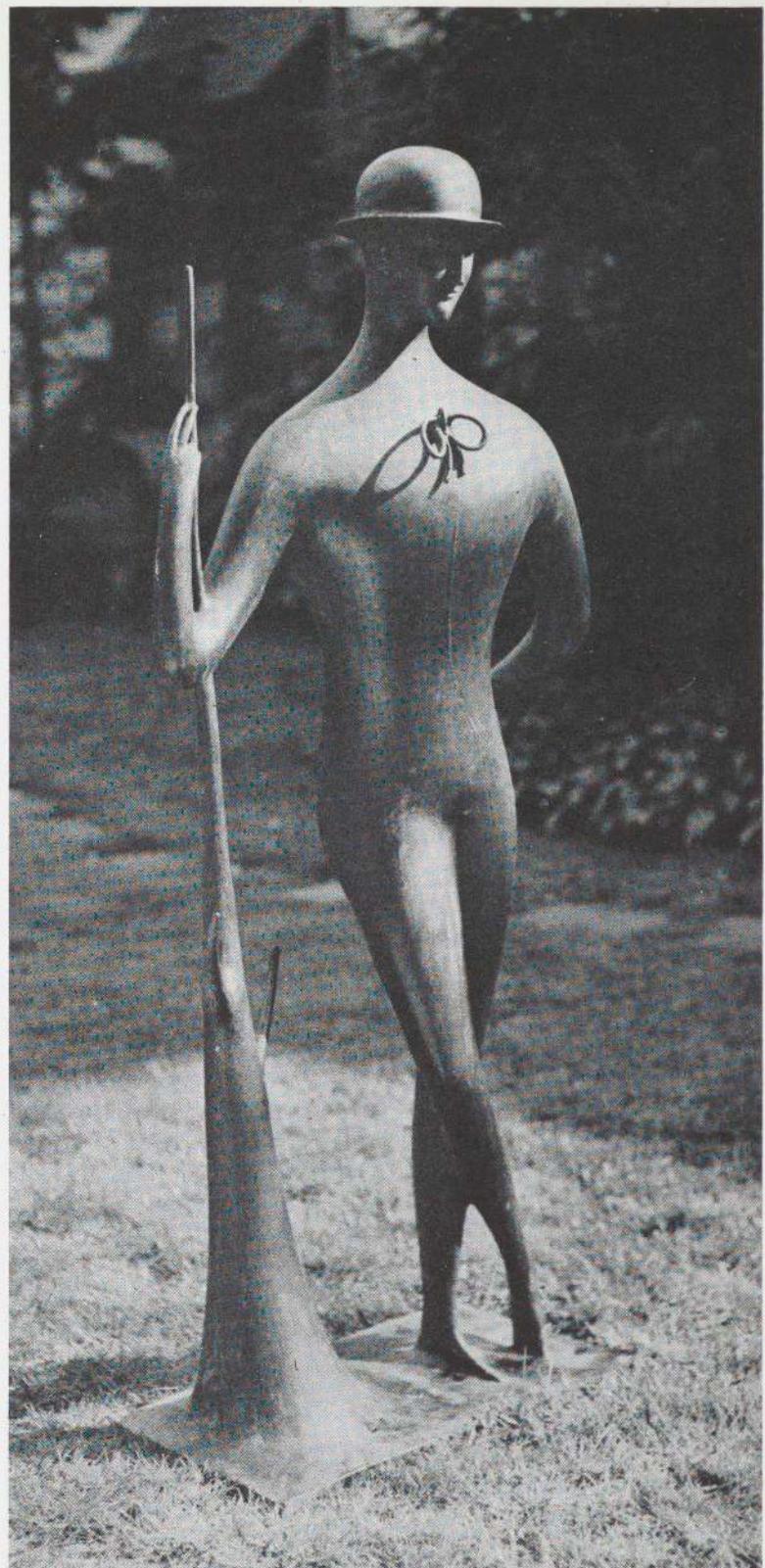
Man with a hat, c.1914. Plaster. Destroyed

or manner to volume? And he exposed all his means, but the smooth surfaces combining decomposition and construction were less experimental sketches than beautiful lessons.

After the close of the Druet show, Nadelman intended to join Leo Stein, who had sent him photographs of the Giottos in the Arena Chapel and at Assisi. Instead, he took a short vacation near Dieppe. On the way back, he sent Gertrude Stein a post card from Rouen of the church of Saint Maclou:

Here is a veritable museum of cathedrals; I have never seen such marvels. God must pardon me, but their great beauty astonishes me far more than the sea [which he had never seen before] . . .

The most vivid portrait of Nadelman at this time is in the unpublished notebooks, full of direct psychological analyses of friends, which Gertrude Stein kept as the groundwork for her "Making of Americans," now in the Yale University Library:



Man in the Open Air, c.1915. Bronze, 53 $\frac{3}{4}$ " high

Nadelman, like Pablo [Picasso] and Matisse have a maleness that belongs to genius . . . Nadelman attacks [as opposed to a list of people who resisted] . . . is very like Paderewski; he has that same kind of sensibility . . . Nadelman exalted . . . the light would be glad to bathe itself in his statues . . . a complete (rather than a split) thing. An artist, an exalted sensitive scientist like Goethe . . . really passionate, insight and realization of women, men and beauty . . . Pure passion concentrated to the point of vision . . . Nadelman, like Leonardo, when he is a scientist is not an artist . . . gives real sense of beauty directly, not derived (as in the case of X.) who has . . . emotion for beauty rather than direct realization of it . . . The magnetic pole, that queer paleness they all have, only Nadelman has the steady brilliant inside flame that gives his outer thing alive and moving . . .<sup>o</sup>

He returned to Paris to a larger studio in the impasse off the rue Campagne Première, and immured himself again in preparation for proposed shows in Berlin, Barcelona and London. However, over the next three years he was seen somewhat more often at those cafés, then tiny, now legendary — the Dome, Rotonde, and the bar of the Gare Montparnasse — with Picasso, Brancusi, later Modigliani (whom he met through his Polish dealer Zborowski), Zak, Kisling, Marcoussis, Halicka, Marie Laurencin, Hermine David, Pascin and Derain. Ernest Brummer, brother of Joseph, whom the Douanier Rousseau portrayed, recalls the young sculptor in his turtle-neck sweater, hair *blond-cendré*, so handsome he was known as Nadelman *Le Beau*, and because of his attachment to the Greeks, Praxitilman or Phidiasohn. "*Il faisait partie du décor de cette époque-là.*" An incisive, didactic talker, he carried himself erect with an elegance apparent under his work-clothes. Fierce to the point of arrogance when esthetics were involved, he was anti-Fauve and anti-Cubist. He was respected but not known intimately by other artists, who were rarely asked to his studio. Aside from Natanson, Gertrude and Leo Stein, and two or three women who posed for him, he had no close friends.

In 1911 Nadelman went to London for a comprehensive exhibition at Paterson's Gallery, Bond Street. Besides earlier pieces, there were shown fifteen highly polished white marble heads, less generalized than before, the amplitude more developed, the roundness more personal. There was also a charming horse in plaster, a handsome reclining polished bronze nude set on elaborate drapery and the quizzical head of Mercury, which might also have been a contemporary boy in a bowler hat.

Into Paterson's Gallery walked a compatriot of Nadelman's, Madame Helena Rubinstein, later Princess Gourielli-Tchkonia, a sympathetic collector. She did not acquire merely one or two heads; she purchased the entire exhibition outright. Her patronage of Nadelman, coming when it did, was the most influential of his career. Madame Rubinstein mounted his pieces in her handsome establishments in London, Paris, Boston, New York and Buenos Aires; they became her trademark-symbol for the scientific beautification of modern woman. Later, Nadelman executed in terra cotta large high-relief plaques for the billiard room of her house in Putney Park Lane. Through these decorations and *Four Seasons* (pages 20 and

<sup>o</sup> Quoted by permission of Carl Van Vechten, literary executor for Gertrude Stein.

21), in the same spirit, Nadelman affected a whole school of commercial art, almost to the same degree as the engraved models of Piranesi which served as guides for Directoire and Empire interior design. Nadelman was responsible for a style of rendering *l'art décoratif moderne*, taken over by fashion artists for Paul Poiret, and popularized in Madame Rubinstein's advertising, which became the next step in decorative art after *L'Art nouveau* of 1900, and which was powerful in world taste through the Paris Exposition of 1925.

In 1912, the Italian journalist Marinetti gave a lecture on his Futurist doctrine in the Galerie Bernheim-Jeune. There was excitement on the floor when Nadelman asserted "M. Marinetti declares he will demolish all the arts of the past. He shows he does not in the least comprehend the nature of the art of the past." Marinetti jumped from the podium, slapped Nadelman, and precipitated a free-for-all. Lights were switched off, and discussion adjourned to nearby cafés. Nadelman, who seemed at the Druet show a revolutionary now presented himself to the students of Montparnasse almost as a reactionary; they held his work *trop mou*, too soft; even worse, he spoke well of Rodin. The poet André Salmon, writing in 1914 of the superb *Balzac*, then refused by its sponsors, said "The *Balzac* is not a work; it is a demonstration. It is a plastic lecture, similar to those given by Elie Nadelman."

In 1911 Nadelman held a show in Barcelona together with the sculptor Manolo, another progressive artist of the period, later collected by John Quinn, but now almost forgotten. Nadelman was well received; he made drawings from bull fights, recalling the cave paintings of Les Eyzies in the Dordogne, which resulted in the fine pair of bronze bulls (1915) presented by his widow in 1947 to the Museum of Modern Art (pages 22 and 23). He also showed at a Non-jury Salon in Berlin in 1913, and was purchased by German collectors.

In June 1913, Nadelman held his second Paris exhibition at the Galerie Druet; it was smaller than that of 1909, and could not have been expected to repeat the same sensation. The supplement of the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* observed:

M. Elie Nadelman is clever in noting the essential in physiognomy, in endowing the female face with sweetness, and in combining his taste for the archaic with the trembling nervousness of nature. He stylizes his attitudes in order to express their roundness, dominated by his willful fantasy, in all human gesture . . .

The first full-length article devoted to Nadelman appeared in the semi-official *L'Art décoratif*, March 1914; it was by André Salmon, to whom Apollinaire had dedicated his charming *Marriage Ode*. The titles attached to the many reproductions of sculpture or drawings were always "Research in Form and Volume: Identification of Forms." The article was soberly sympathetic, a guarded introduction:

A great number of his admirers take him for a precious young master — almost Byzantine, although all of his work tends towards a unity, a great plastic whole. Neither, although it is often said of him, is he a sterile imitator of the Greeks. Nadelman is above all a theorist, a theorist in spite of himself . . . Let us not



Tango, c.1918. Painted wood, 33 $\frac{3}{4}$ " high

forget that Nadelman sacrificed everything to the relations of volumes a long time before the Cubists . . .

The illustrations included the witty study of a horse, which with others related to it, forms the basis of the spirited thoroughbred with tiny, pranc-

ing hooves (page 19). Nadelman admired the horses of Eugène Lami and Constantin Guys; one could have said of him as Baudelaire of Guys: "He not only understood the generalized horse, but also applied himself to the personal beauty of horses."

Nadelman owned Champfleury's *Histoire de la Caricature*. From 1914 on, he was preoccupied with the passing scene of fashion and high society. His drawings and free-standing figures in bronze and wood, clothed in simplifications of modern dress, would emerge as serious jokes, loving if ironic definitions of the mundane mask. They have important connections

Host, c.1917. Painted wood, 28½" high

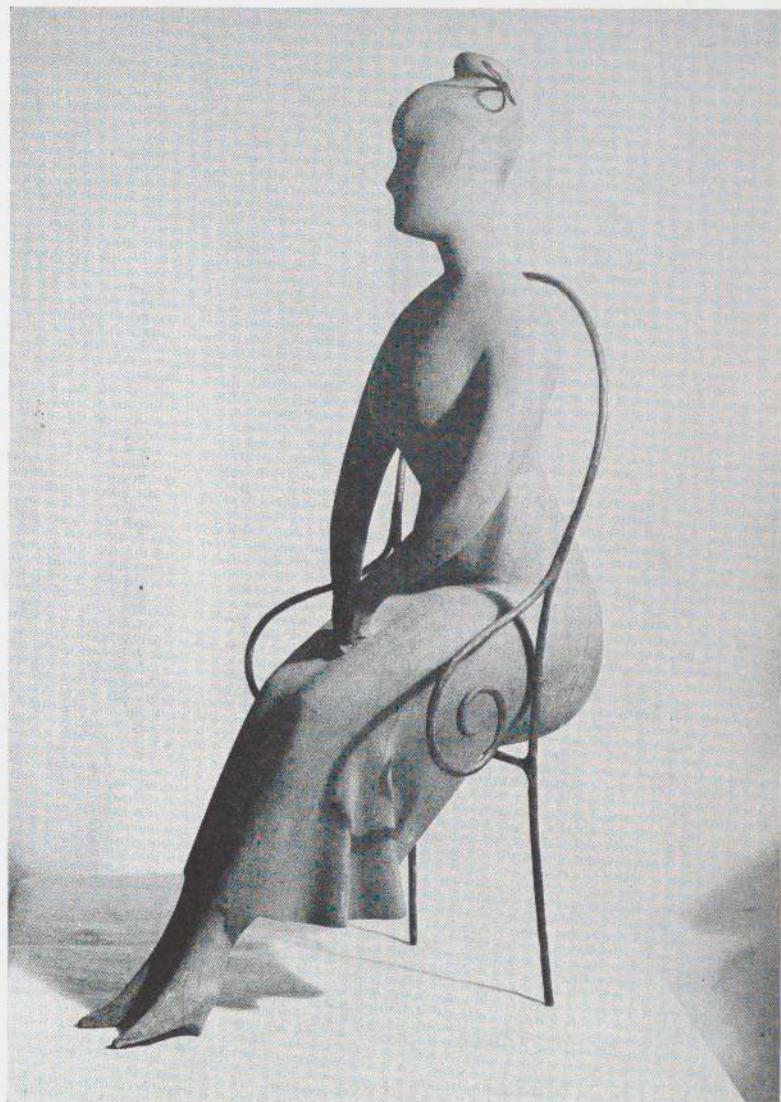




Woman at the Piano, c.1917. Painted wood, 36" high. Collection Philip L. Goodwin

with the vital, expressive profiles of Seurat; in the same number of *L'Art décoratif* which contained Salmon's article, Nadelman read Lucie Cousturier's appreciation of the charcoal sketches of Georges Seurat, all but unknown at this time. Nadelman tore out a reproduction of a woman in silhouette; it was among his cherished scraps found after his death.

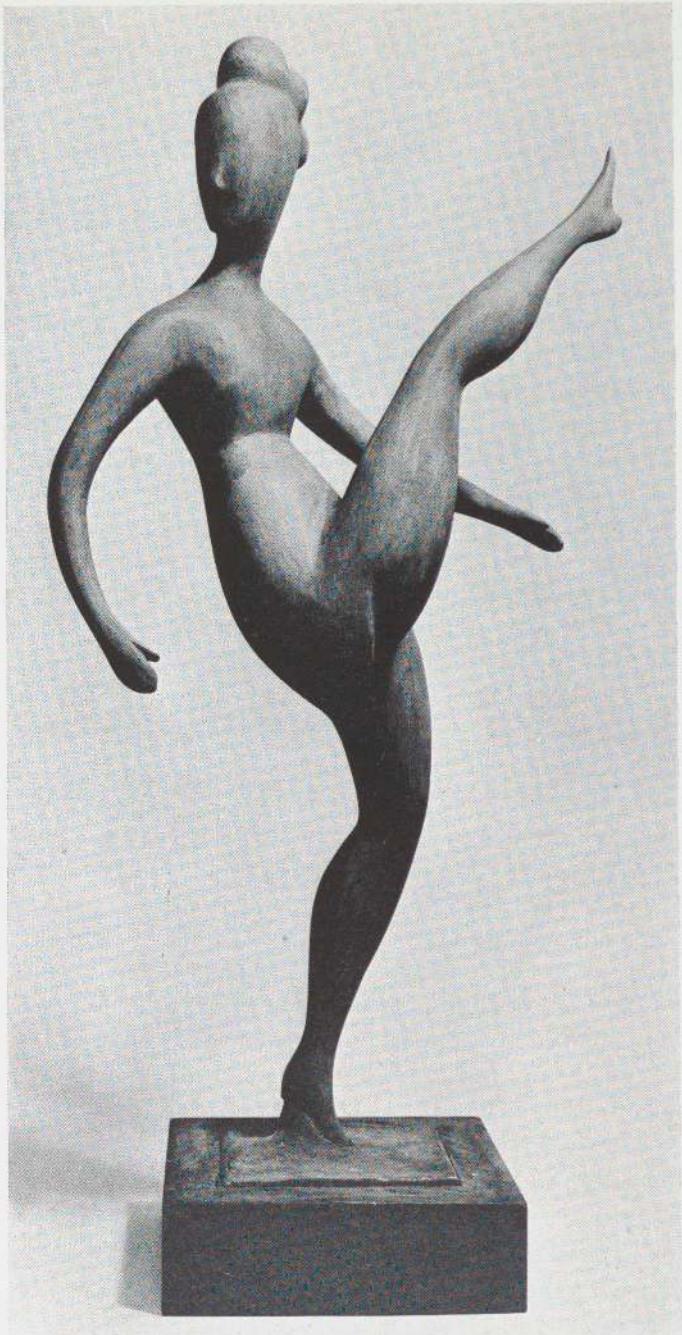
Nadelman spent the summer of 1914 near Ostend. He made sketches of his concierge, her daughter and their poodle for future use. The declaration of war caught him unaware. He went at once to Brussels and offered himself as reservist in the Russian army, but the consul told him it was useless to try to cross Europe. The Germans were already advancing on



Seated woman, c.1917. Wood, 31½" high



The Orchestra Conductor, c.1919. Painted wood, 37 $\frac{1}{4}$ " high



Dancer, c.1918. Wood, 28½" high. Dr. and Mrs. David M. Levy.

Liège. He reached England; through the generosity of Madame Rubinstein, he managed to obtain passage to New York, with most of the contents of his Paris studio. He sailed on the *Lusitania*, arriving October 31, 1914.

Madame Rubinstein put at his disposal her garage in Rye, New York, to

prepare his first New York show. Nadelman had already been in contact with Americans — Stieglitz, Davies, Pach, the painter Ann Goldthwaite and others. However, his first active aid in the United States was Martin Birnbaum, connoisseur and critic, who helped form the great collection of paintings, drawings and Chinese sculpture left by Grenville Winthrop to Harvard University.

Joining the firm of Scott & Fowles, art dealers, as junior partner, Birnbaum had heard of Nadelman in Paris from the Natanson brothers; and Adolphe Basler, who was then in New York, insisted he visit the walk-up studio on West 14th Street. To Birnbaum, the sculpture seemed a revelation. He made immediate arrangement for an important show, and prepared an article appearing in *The International Studio* for December 1915. He brought to the studio Mrs. Radeke of Providence, who presented a marble head to the Rhode Island School of Design, the first American museum to own a Nadelman, although in the next years he was to be included in the permanent collections of Brooklyn, Detroit, Cleveland, Worcester, the Corcoran and the Carnegie. Birnbaum introduced him to the influential Canadian collector, Sir William van Horne. In the meantime Nadelman had made arrangements for a small exhibition at Alfred Stieglitz' Photo-Secession Gallery, "291," for December 1915.

Here, Nadelman showed his *Man in the Open Air* (page 25), recently completed in plaster, a figure in a bowler hat, supported by a tree-trunk whose slim branch quite simply grew up through his left arm. The single adornment of its elegant attenuation was a small bow-tie in free relief, casting echoing shadows on its broad shirt-front. At once comic, supple and worldly, this was a culmination of a new development, a turn towards his full comment, as personal and precise as *Guys, on la vie moderne*. And yet the pose and its relationship to the supporting-tree stump were a kind of whispered echo of the *Apollo Sauroktonos*, the *Boy with the Lizard*, of classical antiquity. In France, Nadelman had made numerous drawings and plaques of match-limbed creatures, recalling both cave drawings and dolls. There had already been two heads of Mercury, in bronze and marble, on which, with a single line, or roll of form capping the skulls, he had indicated a cloche or derby hat.

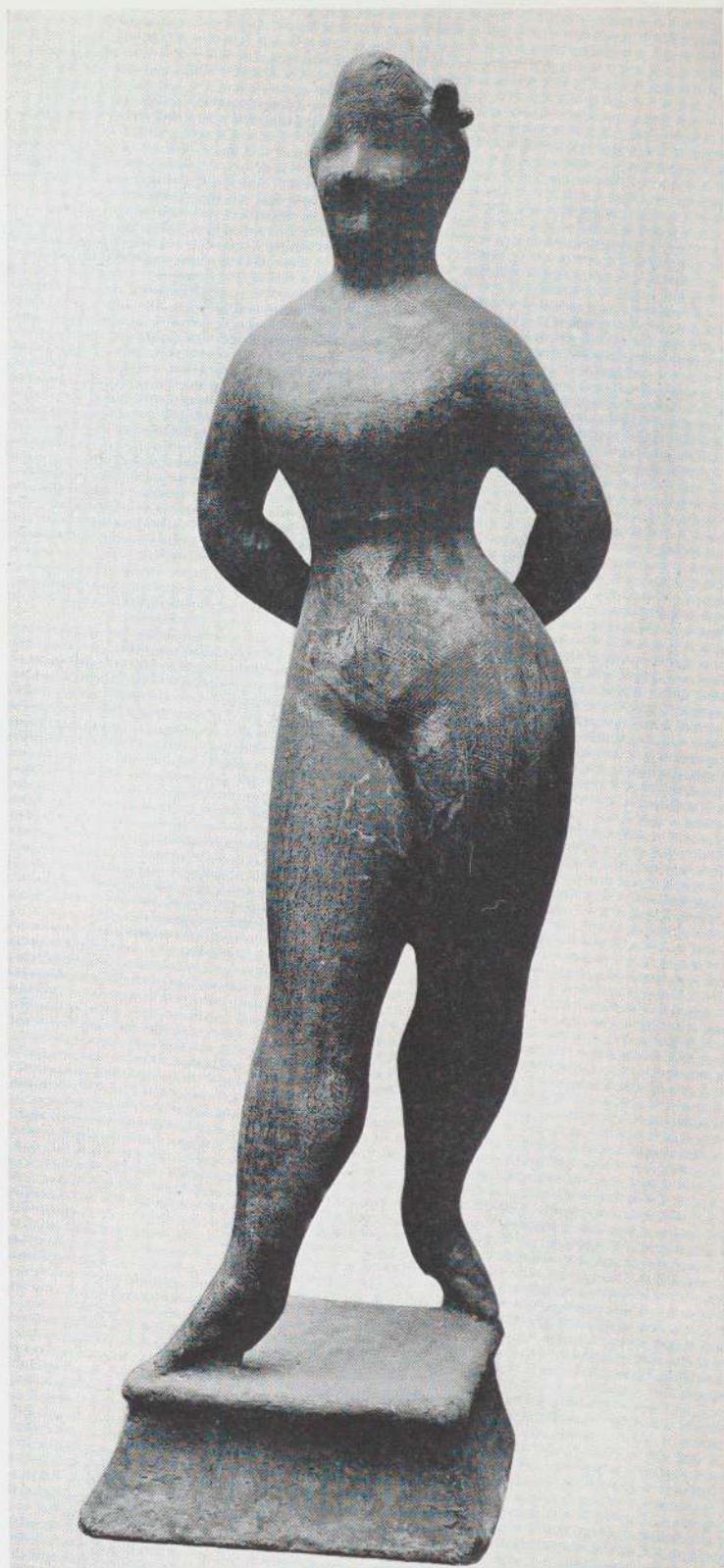
He now worked feverishly preparing his real American debut which was tastefully arranged in February 1917 at the handsome Fifth Avenue galleries of Scott & Fowles. Martin Birnbaum was a master of publicity; not only had he sold a number of important pieces before the opening; he printed an elaborate catalog, and his rooms were carefully lit in their succession of bronze and marbles with some in wood, besides plaques and drawings. The exhibition, one of the first so carefully installed in New York, was a vast success, and all but sold out; Nadelman was swamped with commissions for figures and portraits. He could have made a fortune a year on portraits alone, if he had cared to accept them. Using a formula of stylish verisimilitude in the line of Laurana and Houdon, cutting wood and marble with his perfect fluency, he created some fifty busts of men, women and children. Perhaps the most memorable of these are of Mrs.



Acrobat, c.1916. Bronze, 14 $\frac{7}{8}$ " high



Standing woman, c.1924. Galvano plastique, 61" high



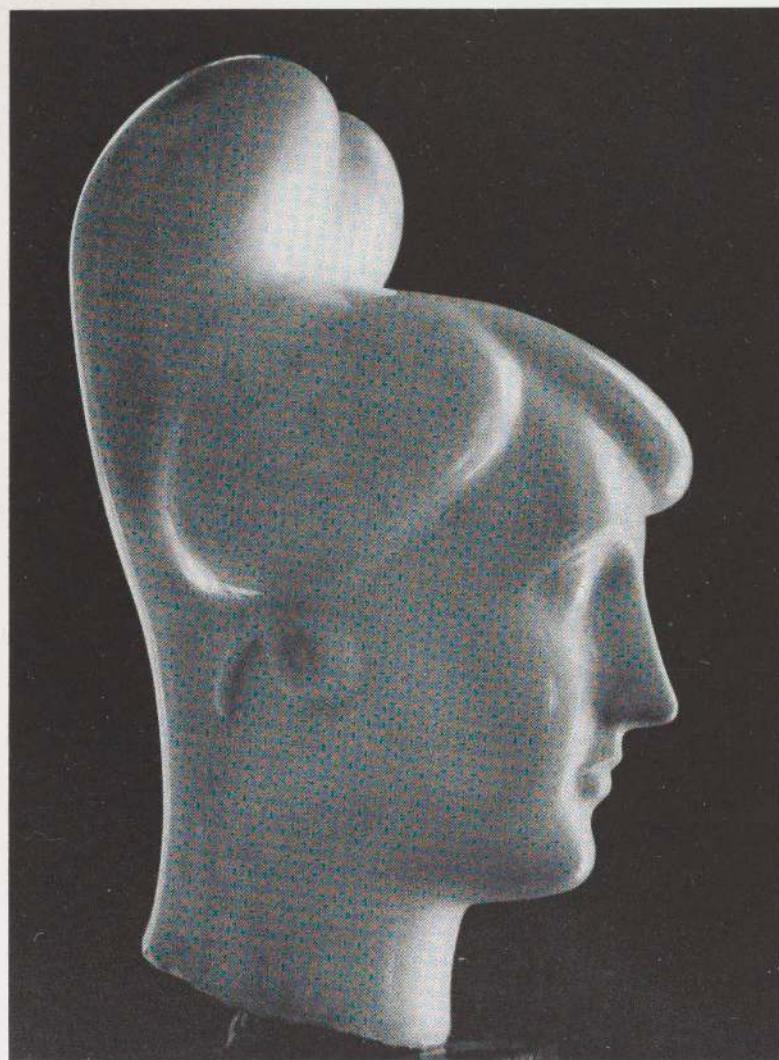
Standing woman, c.1924. Galvano plastique, 58 $\frac{3}{4}$ " high



Circus woman, c.1924. Galvano plastique, 49 $\frac{1}{4}$ " high



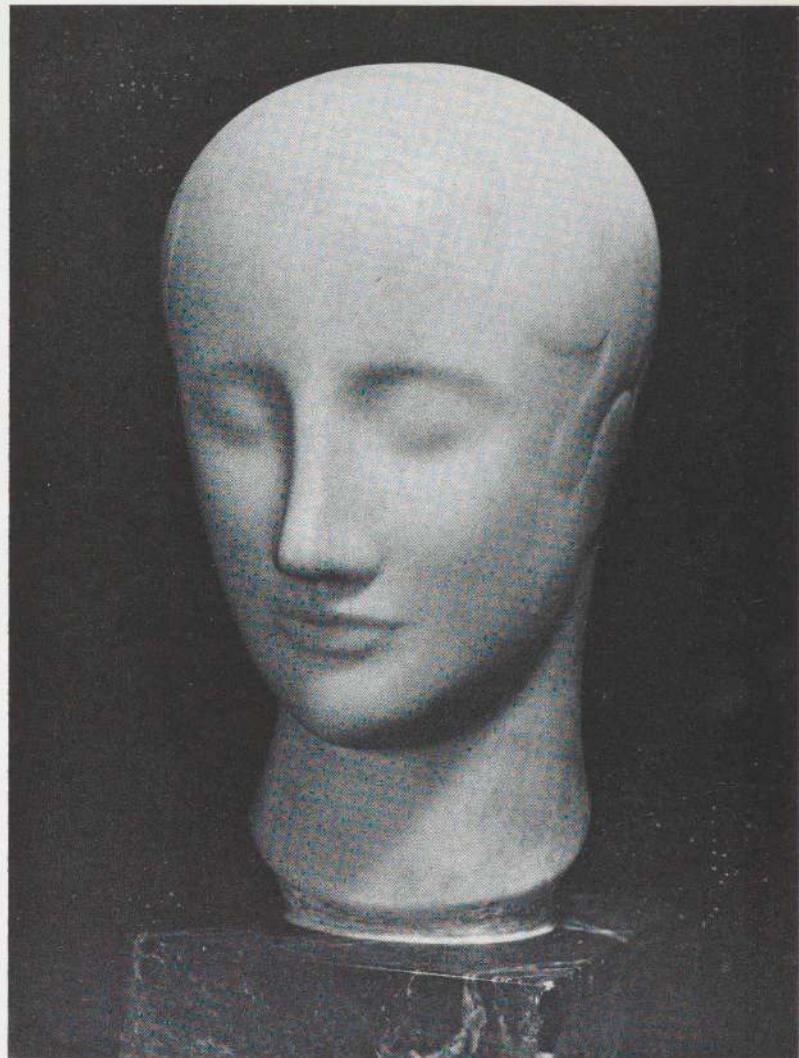
Two circus women, c.1924. Galvano plastique, left: 46½" high; right: 44¾" high



Head of a woman, c.1922. Polished marble, 18 $\frac{1}{4}$ " high

Templeton Crocker (now Mrs. Paul Fagan of San Mateo) (page 61), Mrs. Clarence Hay, Senator Carter Glass, the small son of the architect A. Stewart Walker, and the Garvan children.

Nadelman loved the great moral tapestries of Henry James; his library is full of first editions, which he bought from time to time. The people he portrayed with candid elegance, beyond cynicism, would not have been unfamiliar to characters in "The Wings of the Dove" or "The Ambassadors." Gide described him ten years before as a figure out of Balzac, the provincial who by his wits laid siege to the city. Now he seemed the epitome of the dandy, but essentially, Nadelman was a type of spiritual stoic less like George Brummel than Charles Baudelaire:



Head of a woman, c.1942. Rose marble, 15 $\frac{1}{4}$ " high

Dandyism is not even, as many unthinking people believe, an immoderate taste for the toilette or material elegance. These things are merely, for the perfect dandy, a symbol of the aristocratic superiority of the soul . . . Dandyism is, before anything else, the passionate need to create out of oneself an originality, contained in the external limits of convention . . . The nature of the beauty in the dandy consists above all in the cold manner which comes from the unshakeable resolution not to be moved; one might say of a latent fire which makes one guess its presence; which could, but which does not choose to, burn . . .

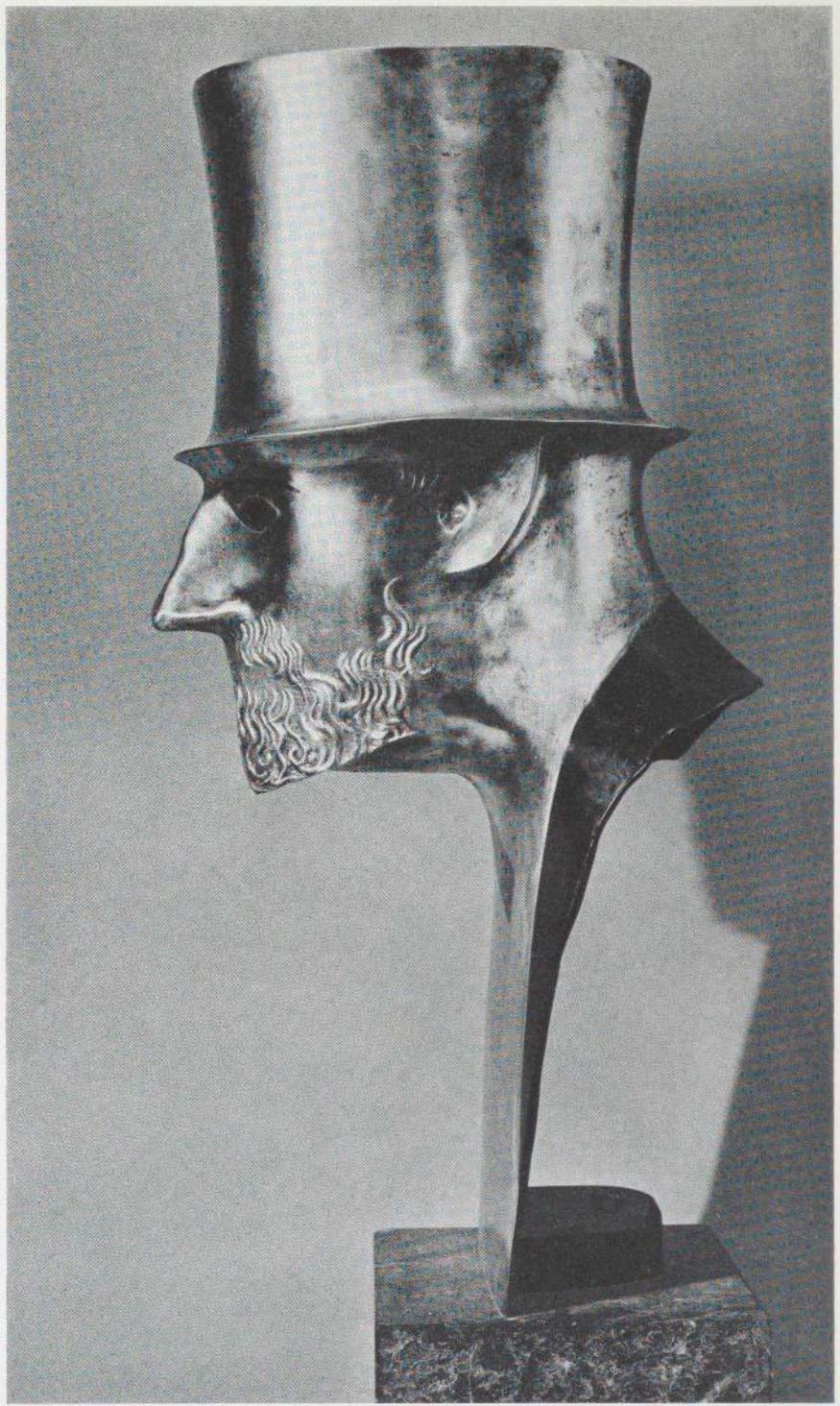
Nadelman now installed himself in a functioning studio-shop, in the line of a Rodin. He sent for Albert Boni, his faithful *praticien*, from Paris. At one time he employed three assistants; besides Boni, there were the Italians Ferdinand Terenzoni and Julius Gargani. Several replicas were



Bust of a woman, c.1927. Painted bronze, 23 $\frac{5}{8}$ " high

made of many figures, even in wood and stone. In his Riverdale studio, after his death, there were found dozens of roughed-out, unfinished blocks, versions of other works completely achieved in a different material. Nadelman chose blocks of perfectly clear stone; if on cutting he found a flaw or vein, he abandoned the block.

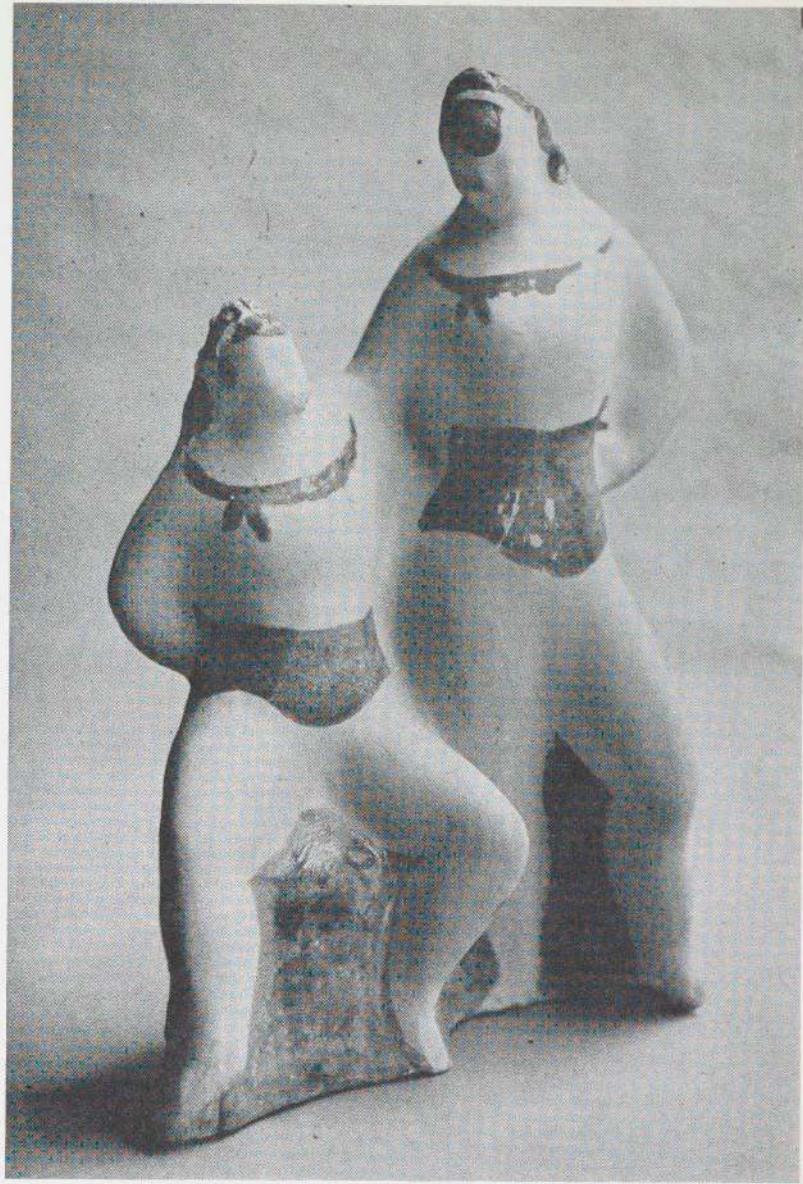
The press for the Scott & Fowles show established his local position as a leading figure. Henry McBride of *The New York Sun*, Nadelman's earliest and ever most loyal supporter among critics, had greatly praised the earlier Stieglitz show and now defined a general impression.



Man in Top Hat, c.1927. Painted bronze, 25 $\frac{3}{4}$ " high



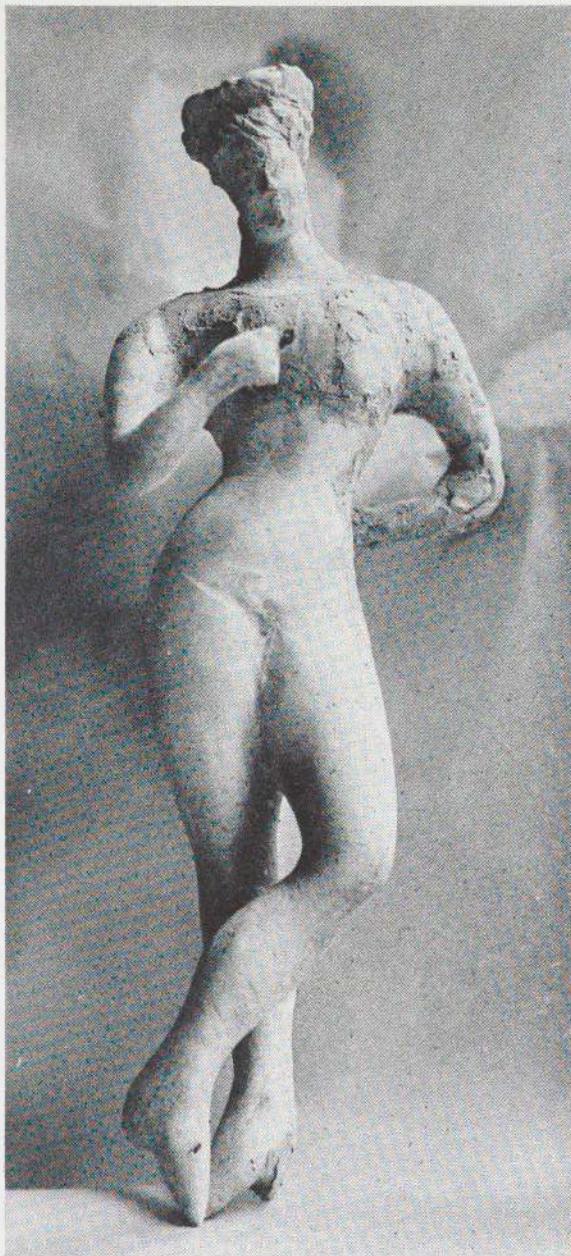
Two female nudes, c.1931. Papier-mâché, 59" high



Two women, c.1934. Terra cotta

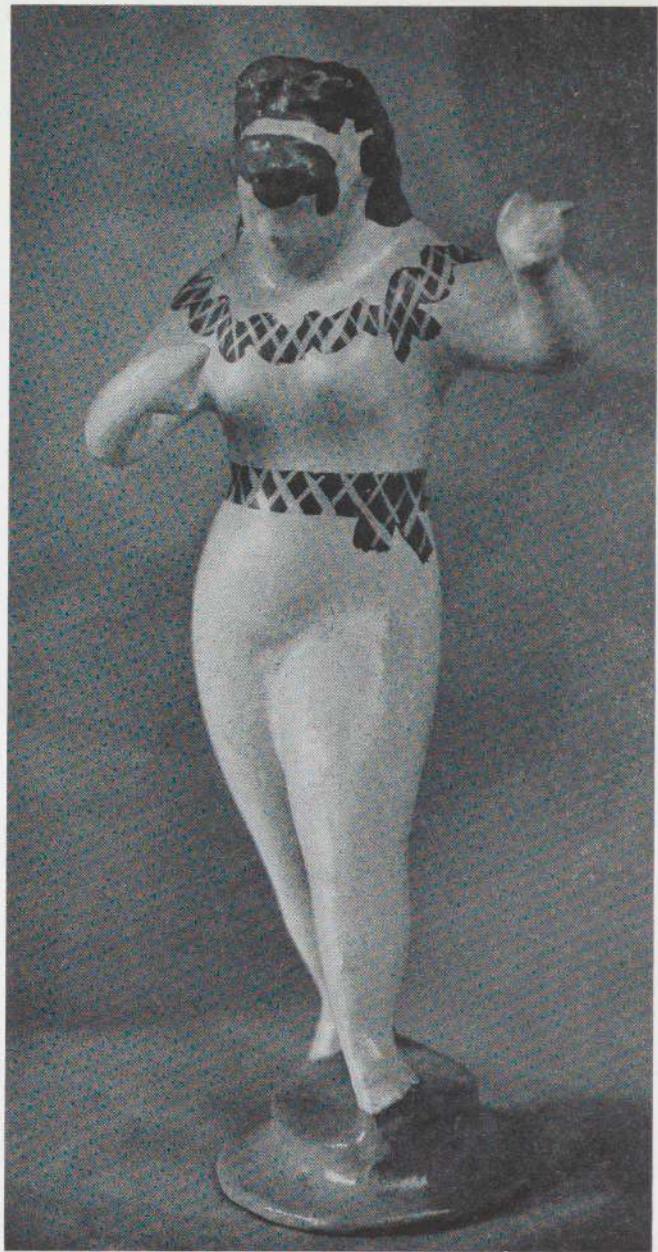
It is, in a word, refined. It is in the highest degree a before-the-war art. It is culture to the breaking point . . . It seems to breathe out all the rare essences that were brought by the wise men from all the corners of the earth to be fused by the Parisians . . . into the residuum called 'modern civilization,' which now, so many millions are dying for . . . In this sculpture, the past and present are blended almost cruelly.

By 1918 Nadelman was a force in the artistic life of New York, a prominent member of that "High Bohemia" so admirably depicted in the early novels of Carl Van Vechten. He was a member of the Penguin Club, whose annual banquet menus were etched by Jules Pascin; a friend of



Woman, c.1934. Terra cotta, 16 $\frac{1}{4}$ " high

George Bellows and Eugene Speicher (his sponsor when he became an American citizen), of Alfred Frueh, the cartoonist, of Gari Melchers, the painter. He had particular respect for sculptors whom he considered good craftsmen; so much the professional himself, he seldom questioned the quality of talent if skill were present. Particularly, he knew George Grey Barnard, with whom he shared a passion for the Gothic, Edward Mac-



Standing woman, c.1934. Painted papier-mâché, 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ " high

Cartan, Edmund Quinn, MacMonnies (who often asked his advice), Manship, Mahonri Young and Gertrude Whitney. He was active in artistic organizations and taught for a time at the Beaux Arts Institute of Design. He designed floats for the annual Beaux Arts Ball and participated in improvising an example of "indigenous sculpture" for an exhibition at Mrs. Whitney's Studio Club.

Kenneth Hayes Miller, respected master of many American painters, once said to him at the opening of an exhibition: "You know, Nadelman, we all go by what you do." There is not room here for a complete record of the immense influence Nadelman's fresh way of seeing had on our painters and sculptors. From 1915 on, he provided precedents for George Bellows, Guy Pène du Bois, Rockwell Kent, Hunt Diederich, Gaston Lachaise, to the caricaturists John Held, Jr. and Fish of *Vanity Fair*, just as he himself had been affected by Daumier, Gavarni and Constantin Guys. He provided a vision of New York society, not as an echo of a richer, more interesting Europe, but as a place which, almost for the first time, was feeling its own promise. There was an awakening in contemporary patronage, not from alien prestige but as American possibility. Muriel Draper was decorating the fabulous Villa Viscaya for Henry Deering in Palm Beach. Robert Chanler was painting his huge decorative screens of porcupines and giraffes. Christian Brinton was publicizing Léon Bakst, Russian folk art and Ignacio Zuloaga. Diaghilev's Ballet Russe was spending the war in America, backed by Otto Kahn.

In December 1917 a group of society women and conservative sculptresses arranged as a war charity an exhibition called "Allies of Sculpture," which was held on the Ritz-Carlton Roof. Nadelman showed his *Femme Assise*, in plaster, the small figure of a hostess or *saloneuse*, her hair indicated by pale Prussian blue. Magically witty, designed with a mature

Group of plaster figures, c.1944





Group of plaster figures, c.1944

enchantment, delicately balanced in her wrought-iron skeleton of a chair on her tiny sharp shoes, it is hard to see today why she caused a scandal. Perhaps because the organizing committee felt she was a proto-Hokinson caricature of their busy sponsoring, she was removed amid a welter of publicity. Gertrude Whitney spoke in her defense; Muriel Draper and Christian Brinton were photographed defending her right to be seen. Nadelman wrote to the *New York World*, December 19, 1917:

At the "Allies of Sculpture," where, as in all exhibitions of sculpture, the subject matter of almost all works represents nude men, nude women, and nude men having the bodies of nude women, I have exhibited some works whose subjects are dressed women as one sees them in everyday life.



Figure, c.1944. Plaster, 9" high

Well, the majority of the visitors on seeing the dressed women found them indecent and were so shocked that they removed them from their original place to a remote corner where they could not be seen. This fact is significant.

It proves the tenacity of habits and especially of bad habits. It proves that habit and not logic makes people accept or reject things; when the public does not find nude women in sculpture, they wonder whether the works are artistic or not . . .

For the next two years, Nadelman would be primarily devoted to creat-



Figure, c.1944. Plaster

ing a world derived from type figures of the society he daily observed. First he made drawings, of many sorts of people, from direct observation and from photographs in magazines and newspapers; only a few he felt suitable for projection into plaster. There was a further selection for those finally achieved in red-cherry, a grainless wood, grateful to carve, which the Biedermeier craftsmen particularly esteemed. This wood took gesso well; Nadelman made indications of features, dresses, boiled (and stuffed) shirts, hair and gloves. The feet were attached to the base with the

slightest support possible, to heighten the sense of the preposterously fashionable. His poses derived from two theatres, either the circus, vaudeville or concert hall, or the arena of the drawing room, whose ring-masters were *Host* (page 29) and *Hostess*. Nadelman had a genius for gesture, for approximating all the authority, expectancy, queenliness and self-satisfaction, not alone in posture but in the very forms of dress — alert, arrested or stolid — which clad their personal stance in the costume of 1918. He had always loved the circus as the apogee of the performing arts. In America, he found our vaudeville at its sunset glory, just before Hollywood killed it. It was the age of Vernon and Irene Castle, of Florence Walton and Maurice. Nadelman's *Tango* (page 28) shows an understanding of theatrical dancing such as no one had had since Seurat and Lautrec; like them, he knew how to extract from the rich gross ore of the music halls the pure ritual entrance and electrifying display. The *Host* (which might have been a portrait of Adolphe Basler), was enthroned in his arm-chair as a prince of permanent smugness. His *Hostess* had the hauteur of Goya's Duquesa de Alba with her two arms held at high tremble, as eager to insert darts as to extend her fingers. *Woman at the Piano* (page 30) by the very arch of her back and poised hand attracts the attention of an entire world to her single struck note. *The Orchestra Conductor* (page 32), a monolith of suave domination gloved in swallow-tails is the solemn doll which accompanies his orchestra like a virtuoso.

Late in 1919, Nadelman married Mrs. Joseph A. Flannery, a widow of considerable means. He was himself well off now, at the height of an expanding prestige. Since his wife was at this time unwell, they purchased Alderbrook, the old Percy Pyne estate at Riverdale-on-Hudson. Many assumed Nadelman had married rich and stopped working, or else it was rumored he had no further interest in sculpture since he was forming a huge collection of folk art. This collection, the finest assembled in America, was primarily started by Nadelman as an interest for his wife, who, before they met owned an important group of laces and embroideries. Nadelman was interested in our popular handicrafts as soon as he came here. There was then so little interest in local carving or Pennsylvania Dutch ceramics and calligraphy, that when he spoke of folk art it was assumed he meant Navajo weaving or pottery. He planned to demonstrate the entire gamut of popular crafts in the United States, together with prime examples of their European sources. Within a few years, the Nadelmans spent a fortune on their collection, later housed in a stone building on their property.\*

It has been suggested Nadelman's sorties into society and the energy spent in collecting impeded the development of his own gift. On the contrary, his art was nourished by both. He was so familiar from association with his subjects, that his cherry-wood figures are not symbols for stock characters, they are portraits of epitomes. The style he gave them

\* When the Nadelmans lost their money, the contents of the museum was distributed among the New York Historical Society (which shortly dispersed part of the collection), Colonial Williamsburg, the Museum of Modern Art (both through Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr.), the Brummer Galleries, Henry F. DuPont, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

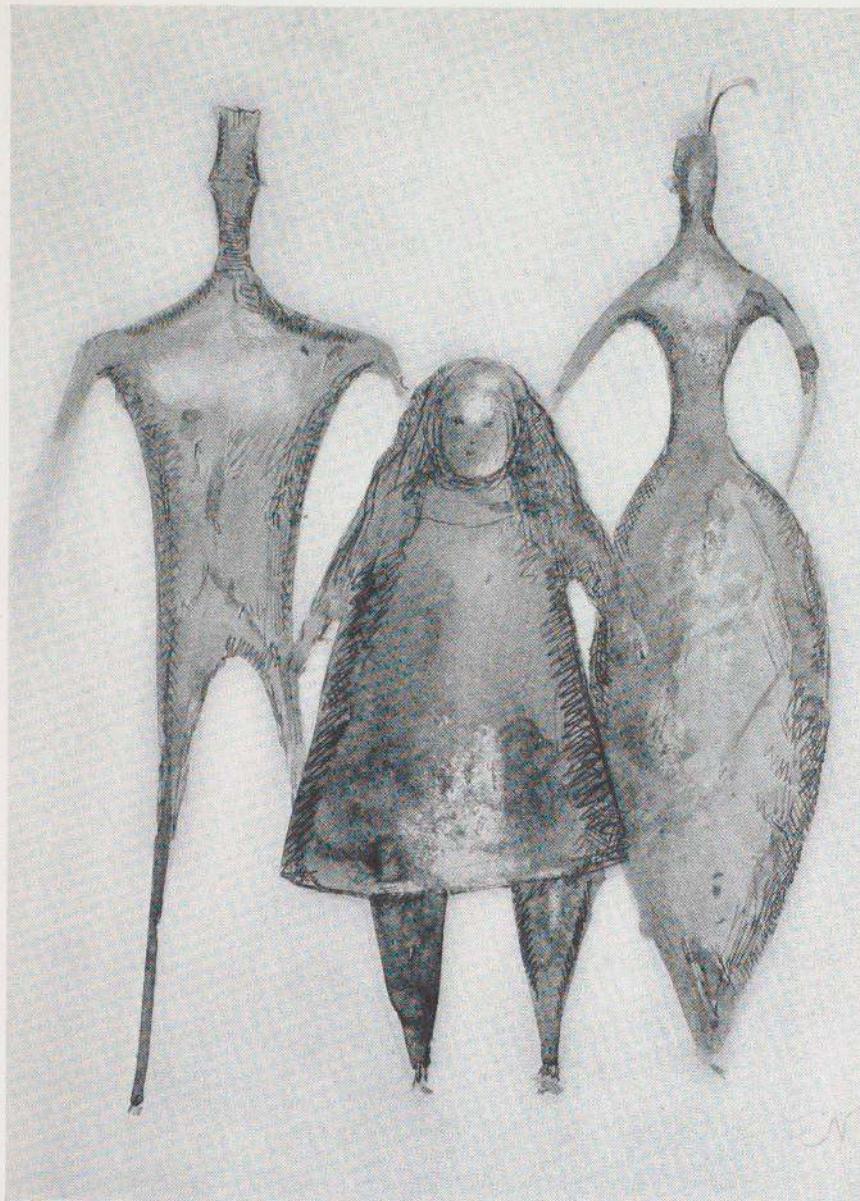


Figure, c.1944. Plaster, 9 $\frac{3}{8}$ " high

is no pastiche of naive expression, but a personal vision, so imbued with the entire fabric of popular art that they seem but the latest addition to a long traditional line.

In 1929, with the Stock Market Crash, their fortune, largely over-extended in real estate was all but wiped out. The town house was first rented, then lost through arrears. They retired to Alderbrook in Riverdale, which was also subsequently lost. However, before his death Nadelman managed to regain its title. The period of his final seclusion commenced.

Nadelman's last period is a complex problem, psychologically as well



Family, c.1914. Pen and ink wash, 10 x 7 $\frac{3}{8}$ "

as esthetically. There is no easy explanation for his absolute refusal to exhibit or sell in the face of his enormous productivity, or to discuss his work with colleagues when he was making so many experiments, or for his refusal to seek commissions when he needed them. Living in Riverdale, less than an hour from 57th Street, he was nevertheless removed from the heart of the world of art. When people came to call, as they often did, from friendship as well as curiosity, and asked Nadelman what he was doing, he would show them nothing but his fine white raspberries.



Tango, c.1917. Pen and ink wash,  $12\frac{1}{4} \times 8\frac{1}{4}$ "

His neighbors in Riverdale hardly knew he had been an artist. His single relaxation was playing bridge at the Cavendish Whist Club, a few times a week for low stakes.

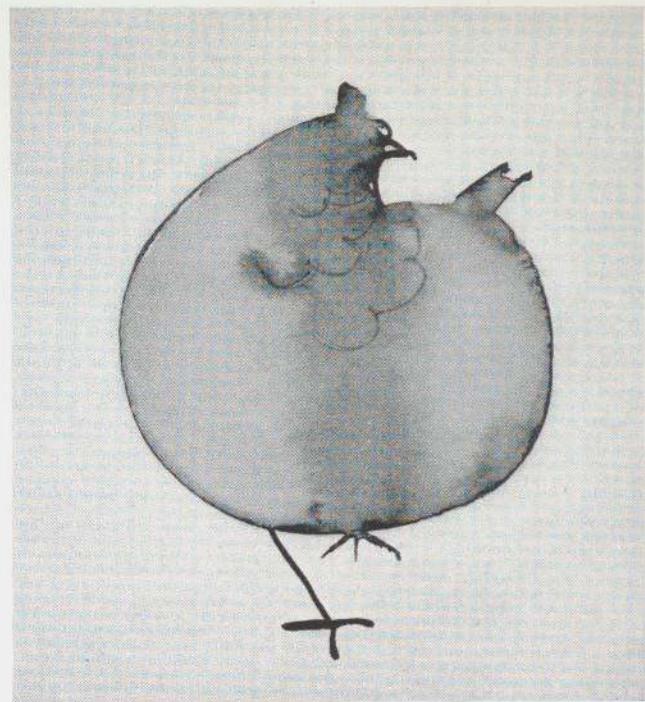
In 1935, after the loss of his large studio which had been made over from an old coach house, workmen, sent to remodel, destroyed many plaster figures, as well as some of his wooden carvings; a great deal of his work was irreparably hurt or lost. This was a grievous blow, one from which he never fully recovered, although he seldom referred to any period of his

past during his obscurity. Nadelman stuffed everything he could salvage of his work prior to 1935, just as it was, damaged or tarnished, in the attic or cellar of the Riverdale house where it remained disintegrating until its complete restoration in the year and a half following his death. No one visiting him in the last decade would have seen a single example of his work. Removed physically and mentally from participation in the currents of local artistic activity, it is slight wonder he began to be forgotten. In 1938, refusing the request of a loan to a group show, he wrote Alfred H. Barr, Jr., then Director of the Museum of Modern Art, indicating he was not yet ready for a retrospective exhibition, but when he should be, would like to have it held there. He was granted no work under P.W.A. or W.P.A., although for two years twenty W.P.A. workers were in the Riverdale house, rendering objects from his collection of folk art for the Index of American Design. No example of his own work was ever purchased by a New York City museum.

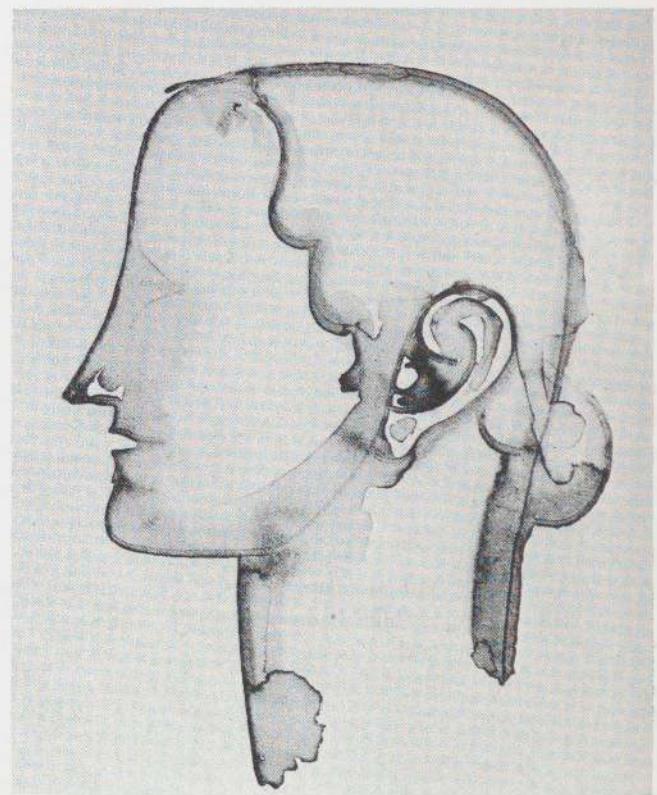
Through the firm of Walker and Gillette he obtained two large architectural jobs, the Fuller Building on East 57th Street, and the Bank of the Manhattan Company in Wall Street. Nadelman made use of everything that came his way. Society portraits were at the root of his sardonic, luxurious late heads in painted brass, with Prussian-blue coiffure, his final devastating mummification of his world of fashion (pages 42 and 43). From the clay model (entirely altered when transformed into stone) for the overdoor of the Fuller Building (page 61), we have in embryo the last fifteen years of Nadelman's achievement, at once the most fascinating and baffling of his life.

Nadelman was amused to work on a large scale, and performed with dispatch and facile thoroughness. He made a pair of elaborate stags for the gates of the Myron Taylor estate in two days; his huge reclining *Aquarius* for the Bank of Manhattan took less than three weeks. The figures of construction workers for the Fuller Building were the direct source of two huge groups in papier-mâché, impregnated with plaster, which inaugurate, like a Wagnerian fanfare, his final contribution.

These vast Amazonian pairs (frontispiece and page 44), impassive, benevolent as the huge Percheron mares they might have mounted, throned like circus queens, are as big in size as they are in scale, the physical and spiritual mothers of innumerable smaller figures he was to multiply until the end. Their size is certainly impressive, and never more so than when discovered, shrouded under quilts in the high attic of his all but deserted house, on a cold winter afternoon following his death. But Nadelman realized their dimensions would impede their chances of finding many permanent homes and the nature of their material would be considered not serious enough for museums. He was too enthusiastic about the possession of art by all the people to care any longer for important isolated purchases of his large sculptures. He had built his own kiln for experimental pottery, glazed and unglazed, and he worked towards producing inexpensive sculpture on a small scale in papier-mâché, terra cotta, plaster with an electrically deposited layer of bronze, etc. But he



Hen, c.1919. Pen and ink wash,  $6\frac{1}{2}$  x 5"



Head of a woman, c.1915. Pen and ink wash

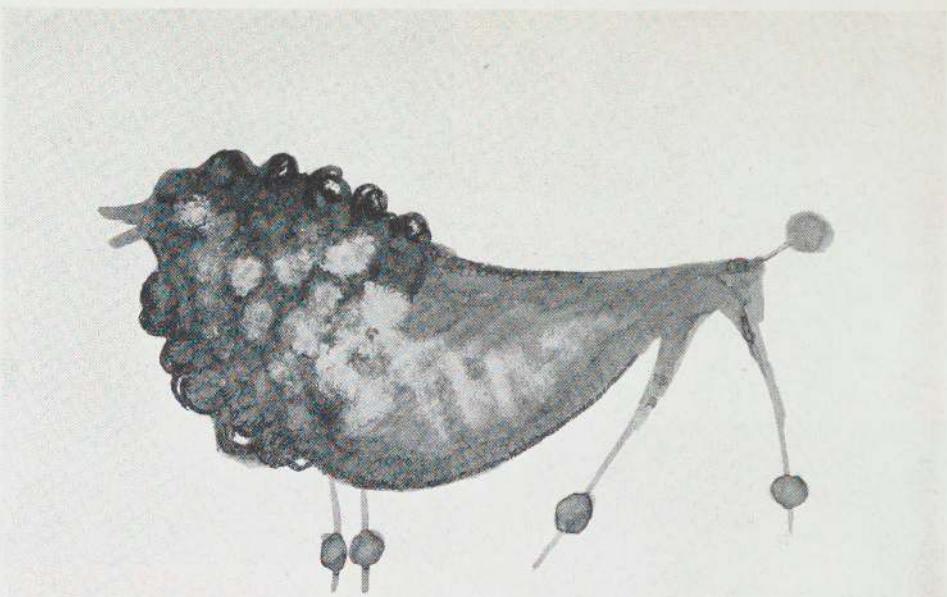
lost the kiln together with his studio, and henceforward worked only in plaster, although he cut a few exquisite small nudes in lovely marble, in the same spirit as the figurines. His last work diminished in size when he moved into a small studio almost secretly attached to his home.

On his work bench lay a collection of actual Tanagrine fragments; his large art library contained the best books on classical terra cottas in famous collections of Europe and America. He knew Greek sculpture as a conductor knows the symphonic repertory; and he was as familiar with the by-paths, the so-called minor arts, as with famous monuments. Nadelman's late figurines (pages 48 to 53), inspired by Hellenistic fired-earth objects are in the scale of chamber works. They are not easy to assimilate; they are a recapitulation of all he had learned, discovered and liked about fashion and form, texture and volume, gesture and ornament. Their miniature splendor seems at first hardly more than playful comment on the *Ares Ludovisi*, the *Diadoumenos*, *Demosthenes* adjusting his cape, the *Spinario* and *Idolino*, or on innumerable Myrinan or Tarentine statuettes. They contain a humane spirit echoed from antiquity, of a civilization past its primal innocence, but the forms are by no means identical with any earlier work. At once dolls, babies, men and women; goddesses, queens, burlesque dancers, they seem intended as ritual objects for some cult whose nature is as yet unknown. Entering his old studio, where the dozens of small bodies are laid out by families for reference and comparison, is like stumbling suddenly upon some important archeological discovery. It is a collective rather than an idiosyncratic art.

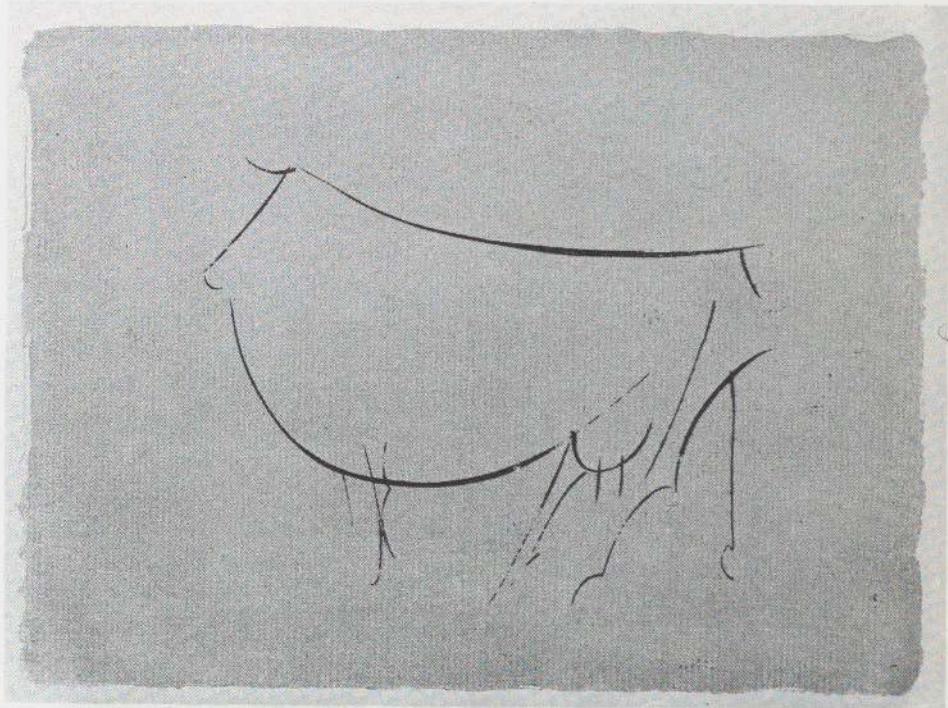
All his knowledge of anatomy, his sense of style and scale, instead of being shrunk by the confines of the small plasters, actually expanded, was glorified, became mature and final. A few days before his death he told his wife that he felt he had achieved the purpose to which he had devoted his life, a rediscovery of the principle of absolute formal harmony in sculpture.

Nadelman's last years were both tragic and heroic. He felt the war keenly; his son was fighting across France and Germany, and Nadelman followed him with the only series of letters he wrote. In February 1942, he enrolled in the local Air Warden Service and, in spite of a bad heart condition which he never mentioned, always took the late night or early morning watches. He volunteered for work in occupational therapy at the Bronx Veterans' Hospital, where he provided all the materials, supplying and working the kiln as well. He was devoted to his work with men suffering from shock which affected their hands, and he helped in some notable cures. After his death, December 28, 1946, the manager of the Veterans' Administration wrote his widow:

In bringing his highly developed skill in sculpture and ceramics to the disabled boys, twice weekly for two years, he brought much beauty and inspiration to their lives. His bright enthusiastic personality did much to combat their suffering and fatigue.



French poodle, c.1914. Watercolor, 7 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 10 $\frac{3}{8}$ "



Cow, c.1912. Pen and ink

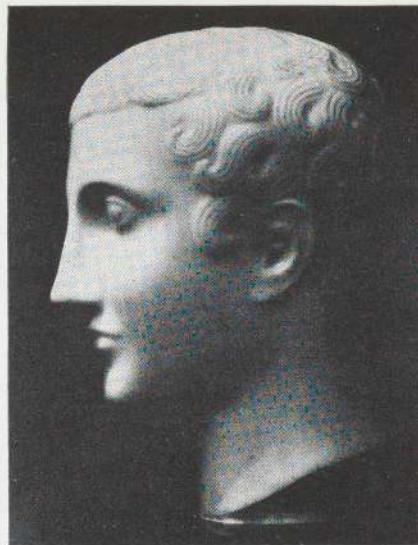


Above: Corner in the apartment of Leo and Gertrude Stein, rue de Fleurus, c. 1909. The plaster statuette is from the first Druet show. On the walls are paintings by Picasso and Matisse.

Left: Thadée Natanson, 1909. Bronze. Collection Thadée Natanson, Paris. Before the first Druet show, Natanson feared that the exhibits were "too exclusively abstract, . . . too uniformly theoretic"; he describes in *Peints à leur tour* (Paris, 1948) how Nadelman in two sittings modeled this realistic head, as a contrast to the other figures.

Below: Autumn, c. 1912. Bronze, 9 x 18". Collection Princess Helena Gourielli-Tchkonia. This style, evolved by drawing in the round with thin rolls of clay, was widely imitated for twenty years in decorative, commercial and fashion art, its source in Nadelman forgotten or ignored.

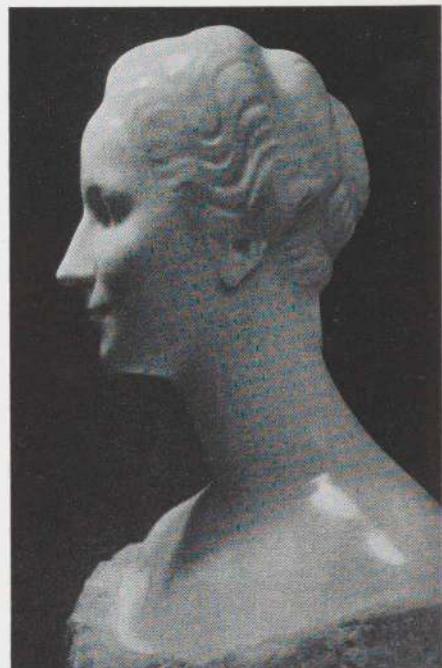




*Above:* Head of a boy, c. 1922. Polished marble, 14½" high. Nadelman's single ideal male head in stone; drawings explain it as an imaginative self portrait. A bronze variant exists.

*Right:* Mrs. Templeton Crocker, c. 1922. Marble. Perhaps the finest of Nadelman's stone salon heads which he executed between 1916 and 1925. His last important portrait was of Senator Carter Glass of Virginia (1933), now in Washington, D. C.

*Below:* Clay model for the overdoor of the Fuller Building in New York City, 1931. Through A. Stewart Walker of Walker and Gillette, Nadelman obtained two large architectural commissions. This composition for the corner of 57th Street and Madison Avenue was altered in execution. But the figures shown here are the first statement of his final period, corresponding to early papier-mâché figures and small late plasters.



## Exhibitions of Elie Nadelman

1905-08 *Salon des Indépendants; Salon d'Automne*  
Sculptures, shop of Mme Weill, rue Victor  
Massé, Paris

1909 Galerie Druet, Paris. First one-man show

1911 Barcelona (with Manolo)  
Paterson's Gallery, London. One-man show

1913 January: Non-jury Salon, Berlin  
February: The Armory Show, New York. Drawings and plaster head  
June: Galerie Druet, Paris. One-man show

1915 December: Photo-Secession Gallery ("291"),  
New York

1917 February: Scott & Fowles Gallery, New York  
December: "Allies of Sculpture" Exhibition,  
Ritz-Carlton Roof, New York

1919 October: M. Knoedler & Co., New York

1920 September: Galerie Bernheim-Jeune, Paris

1925 March: Scott & Fowles Gallery, New York  
May: The Arts Club of Chicago (at the Art Institute of Chicago)

1927 January: M. Knoedler & Co., New York  
May: Galerie Bernheim-Jeune, Paris

1932 April: early purchases of Mme Helena Rubinstein, Mrs. Marie Stern, New York

1938 May: Exhibition of American sculpture, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh (two marbles)  
May: Three Centuries of American Art, Jeu de Paume, Paris (horse)

1948 October: Memorial Exhibition, The Museum of Modern Art, New York

## Catalog of the Exhibition

### LENDERS

Philip L. Goodwin, New York; Princess Helena Gourielli-Tchkonia, New York; Dr. and Mrs. David M. Levy, New York; Mrs. Elie Nadelman, Riverdale, N. Y.; William S. Paley, New York; Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, 3rd, New York.

A star preceding the catalog number indicates that the work is illustrated. All works unless otherwise noted are in the collection of Mrs. Elie Nadelman.

- \* 1 Praying figure, c.1904. Bronze, 56" high. Plaster version *Ill. p. 10*
- \* 2 Head of a boy, c.1906. Painted bronze, 16½" high. *Ill. p. 17*
- \* 3 Head of a woman, c.1909. Marble, 12¾" high. Princess Helena Gourielli-Tchkonia, N. Y. *Ill. p. 16*
- \* 4 Standing female nude, c.1907. Bronze, 30" high. *Ill. p. 11*
- 5 Standing female nude, c.1908. Wood, 15" high
- 6 Seated female nude, c.1908. Bronze, 16" high
- \* 7 Standing male nude, c.1909. Bronze, 25¾" high. *Ill. p. 12*
- \* 8 Standing female nude, c.1909. Bronze, 22" high. *Ill. p. 13*
- 9 Standing woman, c.1912. Terra cotta, 30" high. Collection Princess Helena Gourielli-Tchkonia, New York
- \* 10 Horse, c.1914. Plaster, 36¼" high. Collection Princess Helena Gourielli-Tchkonia, New York. *Ill. p. 19*
- \* 11 Man in the Open Air, c.1915. Bronze, 53¾" high. *Ill. p. 25*
- \* 12 Standing bull, 1915. Bronze, 11¼" long. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. *Ill. p. 23*
- \* 13 Wounded bull, 1915. Bronze, 11½" long. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. *Ill. p. 22*
- \* 14 Acrobat, c.1916. Bronze, 14¾" high. *Ill. p. 35*
- \* 15 Tango, c.1918. Painted wood, 33¾" high. *Ill. p. 28*
- \* 16 Woman at the Piano, c.1917. Painted wood, 36" high. Collection Philip L. Goodwin, N. Y. *Ill. p. 30*
- \* 17 Seated woman, c.1917. Wood, 31½" high. *Ill. p. 31*
- \* 18 Host, c.1917. Painted wood, 28½" high. *Ill. p. 29*
- \* 19 Dancer, c.1918. Wood, 28¼" high. Collection Dr. and Mrs. David M. Levy, New York. *Ill. p. 33*
- \* 20 The Orchestra Conductor, c.1919. Painted wood, 37¼" high. *Ill. p. 32*
- 21 Circus woman, c.1919. Painted wood, 31¾" high
- 22 Female torso, c.1922. Marble. Collection William S. Paley, New York
- \* 23 Head of a woman, c.1922. Polished marble, 18¼" high. *Ill. p. 40*
- \* 24 Head of a boy, c.1922. Marble, 14½" high. *Ill. p. 61*
- \* 25 Standing woman, c.1924. Galvano plastique, 58¾" high. *Ill. p. 37*
- \* 26 Standing woman, c.1924. Galvano plastique, 61" high. *Ill. p. 36*
- \* 27 Circus woman, c.1924. Galvano plastique, 46½" high. *Ill. p. 39*
- \* 28 Circus woman, c.1924. Galvano plastique, 44¾" high. *Ill. p. 39*
- \* 29 Circus woman, c.1924. Galvano plastique, 49¼" high. *Ill. p. 38*
- 30 Bust of a girl, c.1925. Galvano plastique, 25¼"
- \* 31 Man in Top Hat, c.1927. Painted bronze, 25¾" high. *Ill. p. 43*
- \* 32 Bust of a woman, c.1927. Painted bronze, 23½" high. *Ill. p. 42*
- \* 33 Two female nudes, c.1931. Papier-mâché, 59" high. *Ill. p. 44*
- \* 34 Two circus women, c.1930. Papier-mâché, 61¼" high. *Frontispiece*
- 35 Two women c.1933. Terra cotta, 16" high
- 36 Two women, c.1934. Painted papier-mâché, 14¼"
- \* 37 Standing woman, c.1934. Painted papier-mâché, 11¾" high. *Ill. p. 47*
- 38 Woman with a poodle, c.1934. Terra cotta, 11½"
- 39 Seated woman, c.1934. Terra cotta, 14¾" high
- \* 40 Head of a woman, c.1942. Rose marble, 15¼" high. *Ill. p. 41*
- 41 Standing female nude, c.1942. Marble, 11½" high
- 42 Standing female nude, c.1942. Marble, 11¾" high
- 43 Seated female nude, c.1943. Orange marble, 14½" high. Collection Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, 3rd
- \* 44 A group of small plaster figures, c.1944. *Ill. pp. 48-53*
- \* 45 A group of drawings.

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The following material, with few exceptions, is in the Museum Library either in original or photostat. In addition, the reader is referred to Elie Nadelman's *Publicity Scrapbook*, also in the Library, which contains, besides much ephemera, the exhibition catalogs of the Arts Club Chicago (1925), Bernheim-Jeune Paris (1920 and 1927), Druet Paris (1913), International Gallery New York (1932), Knoedler New York (1919 and 1927), Photo-Secession Gallery New York (1915-16), and Scott & Fowles New York (1917). An extensive bibliography is noted in *The Index of Twentieth Century Artists* for March 1936.

BERNARD KARPEL

## THE WORK OF NADELMAN

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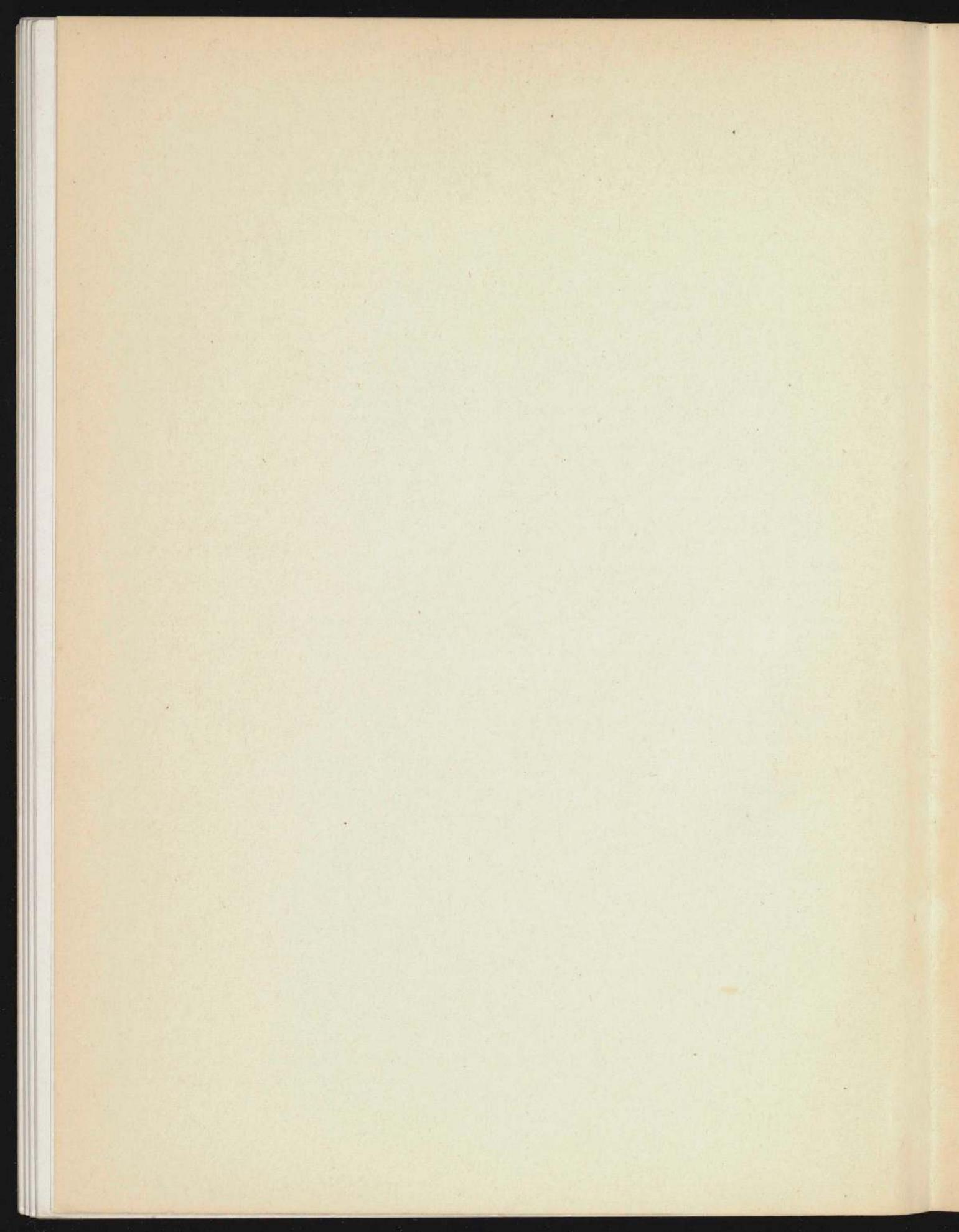
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