Stuart Davis

By James Johnson Sweeney

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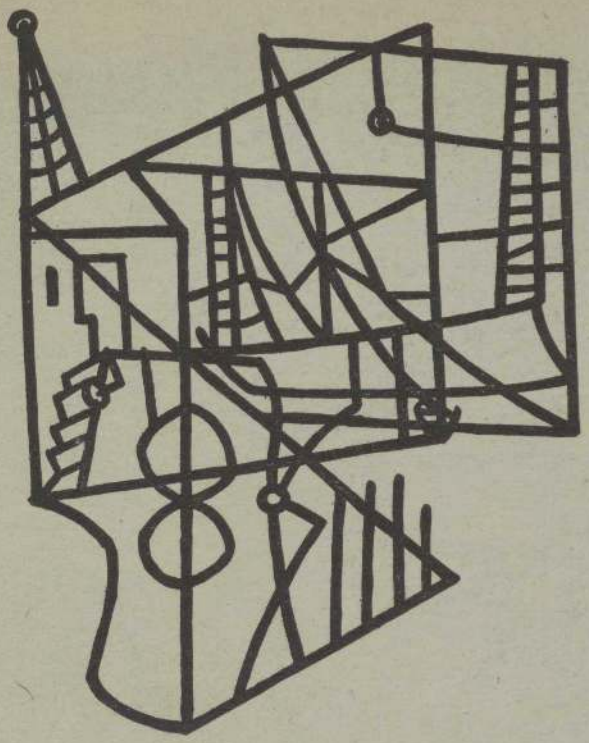

Stuart Davis

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48 pages; 31 plates **$2.50**

STUART DAVIS

By James Johnson Sweeney

For over twenty years Stuart Davis has waged an unyielding fight against isolationism in American painting. His ideas of what a picture should be do not greatly differ from those of his European contemporaries. Yet he paints as an American with keen enjoyment of special un-European features and qualities of the American Scene—the brilliant colors of our taxicabs, garages, chain-store fronts; colloquial things and objects such as gas tanks, sign-boards, five-and-ten cent store utensils; as well as the impersonal dynamics of New York City or the rhythmic precision of hot piano playing.

This monograph offers an informal account of Davis' career from its precocious beginning in the school of Robert Henri as a follower of *The Eight* through the impact of the Armory Show and the subsequent evolution of his work. The text is unique in that the artist, as far as possible, speaks for himself. James Johnson Sweeney has skillfully interwoven Davis' own terse and lively talk of pictures, places, people and esthetic theory with a running narrative and critical commentary.

Three color reproductions and twenty-eight half-tone plates illustrate the text. A detailed bibliography and other documentation complete this first full-length study of one of the most respected figures in modern American art.

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
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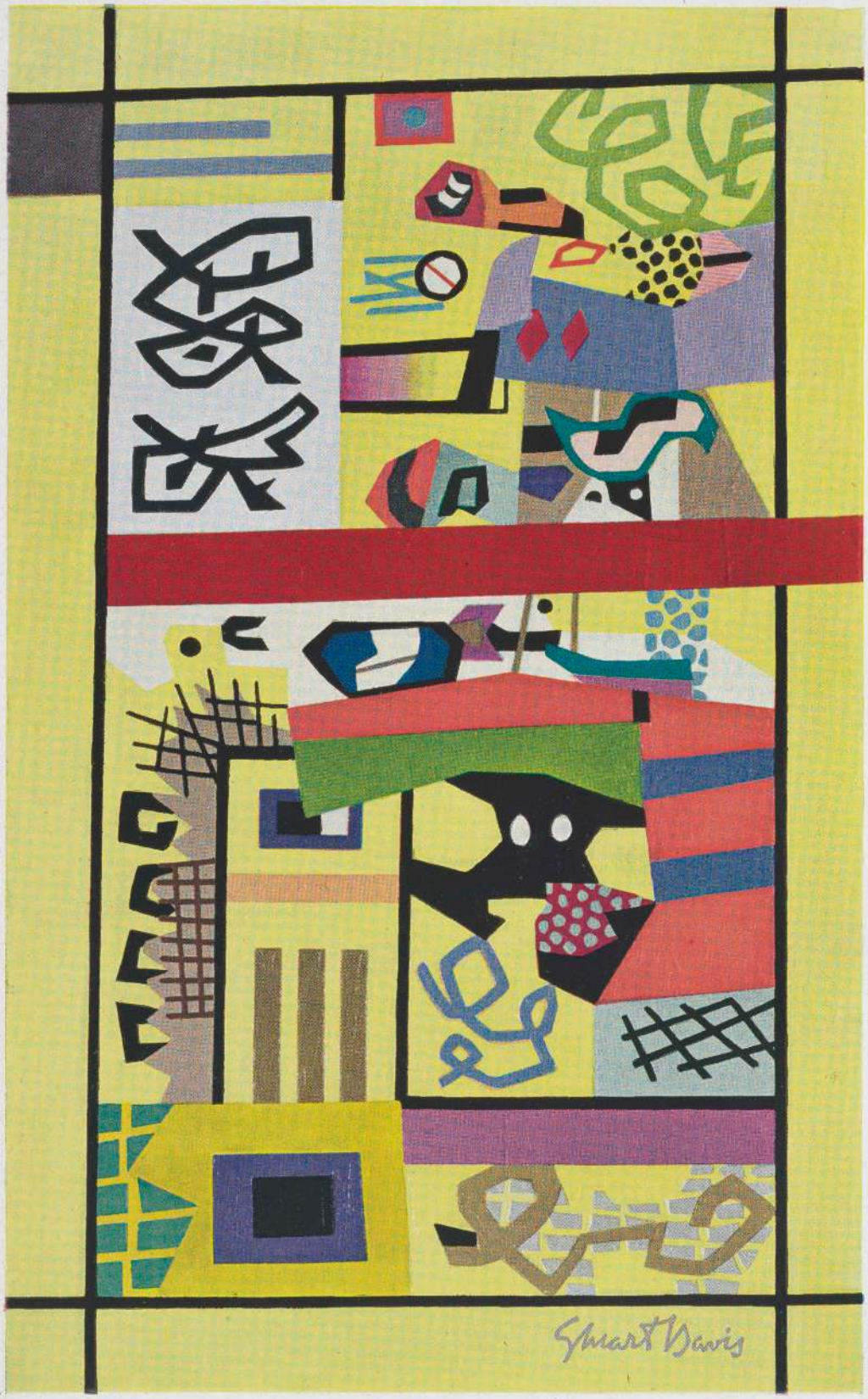
Stuart Davis

MUSEUM OF
MODERN ART

Stuart Davis

by

JAMES JOHNSON SWEENEY

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I am especially indebted to Mrs. Edith Gregor Halpert of the Downtown Gallery for her invaluable help and the use of her archives, and to Miss Margaret Miller for her assistance in preparing this book and the exhibition upon which it is based.

James Johnson Sweeney
Director of the Exhibition

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Contents

Chronology

1894 Born Philadelphia, December 7. Father art director of the *Philadelphia Press* to which Sloan, Glackens, Luks and Shinn contributed during the nineties.

1901 Moved to East Orange, New Jersey.

1909 Entered East Orange High School.

1910 Left school to study with Robert Henri in New York. Early association with Sloan, Coleman and Glintenkamp. Exhibited with Independents.

1913 Covers and drawings for *The Masses*. Cartoonist for *Harpers Weekly*. Five watercolors in Armory Show. Left Henri School. Summer, Provincetown.

1915 Summer, Gloucester, where he returned almost yearly until 1934.

1916 Exhibited with Independents. Left *The Masses*.

1917 First one-man exhibition, Sheridan Square Gallery, New York.

1918 One-man show, Ardsley Gallery, Brooklyn. Mapmaking for Army Intelligence Department. To Havana with Coleman.

1923 Summer, New Mexico.

1925 One-man show, Newark Museum.

1927 First one-man show, Downtown Gallery.

1928 *Eggbeater* pictures; end of May to Paris.

1929 Return to New York, late August; to Gloucester. One-man show, Whitney Studio Galleries.

1930 One-man show, Downtown Galleries.

1931 Began teaching at Art Students League.

1932 Participated in Museum of Modern Art mural exhibition. Mural for Radio City Music Hall. One-man show, Downtown Gallery.

1933 Enrolled in Federal Art Project, December.

1934-1939 Artists Congress activities: editor of the *Art Front,* 1935; national secretary, 1936; national chairman, 1938. W.P.A. murals. Mural for New York World's Fair.

1940 Resigned from Artists Congress. Began to teach at New School for Social Research.

1941 Retrospective exhibitions: Cincinnati Modern Art Society, and Indiana University.

1943 One-man show, Downtown Gallery.

1945 Retrospective exhibition, The Museum of Modern Art.

Stuart Davis

To many people a picture is a replica of a thing, or a story about some kind of situation. To an artist, on the other hand, it is an object which has been formed by an individual in response to emotional and intellectual needs. His purpose is never to counterfeit a subject but to develop a new subject. His purpose is also to live in giving importance to certain qualities in himself, which everyone presumably possesses, but which relatively few cultivate.

This is the core of Stuart Davis' artistic beliefs. This is the line along which he has worked since his student days under Robert Henri, through the lesson of The Armory Show of 1913, to the realization of one of the most individual American pictorial idioms of our period. Humor, a responsiveness to environment, and a clear-thinking realistic outlook, in addition to his native feeling for color and compositional relationships, are the qualities which Davis has most consistently cultivated. These are the qualities which form the backbone of his work, which give it its warmth, its bluntness, its infectious vitality.

*Paris School, abstraction, escapism? Nope, just color-space compositions celebrating the resolution in art of stresses set up by some aspects of the American scene.**

Stuart Davis was born in Philadelphia, December 7, 1894. His father and mother had both studied art at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts under Thomas Anschütz. At the time of Davis' birth his father, Edward Wyatt Davis, was art director of the *Philadelphia Press*. That Davis should adopt art as a profession was taken as a matter of course. *In writing autobiographical sketches it is not unusual for artists to dwell on the obstacles they had to overcome before gaining the opportunity to study. I am deprived of the profound satisfaction of recounting such a victory over stubborn opposition. I had no obstacles to overcome.*

His father originally intended to take up painting. *As a kid he traveled round the country as a sign painter. He worked for a paint company, hand lettering sign boards. As art director of the* Press *his work was mainly layout and arranging assignments for other artists. However, he frequently drew cartoons himself and was the first in Philadelphia to reproduce paintings in a newspaper directly from photographs.* Among the artists working in his department were John Sloan, George Luks, William Glackens

* In the following essay the artist as often as possible speaks for himself. Italicized text indicates statements made by the artist in interviews with the writer, excerpts from a forthcoming autobiography, articles by Davis or previously published interviews, sources of which are indicated on page 40. In all instances the quotations have been read and approved by the artist.

and Everett Shinn. These, with Robert Henri, were to form the nucleus of the group known as The Eight. Davis' father's closest friends were Sloan and Shinn. At one time he shared a studio with Shinn. Henri and Luks were also intimates of his. This was the time when Luks was doing his famous comic strip, *The Yellow Kid. Robert Henri had studied earlier at the Academy and had the means to continue his studies in Europe without interruption. On his return to Philadelphia he became, in a sense, the mentor of these artists whose painting ambitions, with the exception of Glackens', had been curtailed by the need to do newspaper illustrations and comic strips for a living.*

In the year 1901 Davis' father was appointed art editor and cartoonist on the *Newark Evening News.* The family moved from Philadelphia to East Orange, New Jersey. Shortly afterward Sloan moved to New York, followed one by one by the other members of the group. And in 1909 Henri, who had been teaching at William Chase's School in New York opened one there himself. That was Davis' first year in high school in East Orange. And before the year was over he had left and was attending Henri's classes in New York.

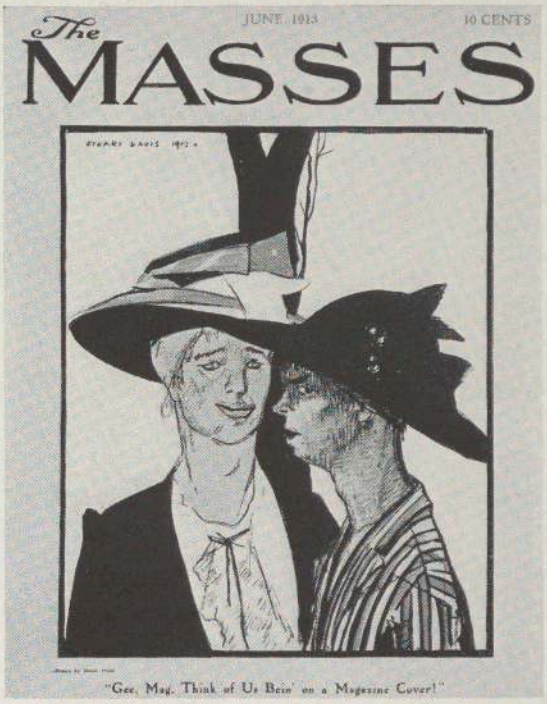
At Henri's School: New York, 1910-1913

The Henri School was regarded as radical and revolutionary in its methods, and it was. All the usual art school routine was repudiated. Individuality of expression was the keynote and Henri's broad point of view in his criticisms was very effective in evoking it. Art was not a matter of rules and techniques, or the search for an absolute ideal of beauty. . . . It was the expression of ideas and emotions about the life of the time. We were encouraged to make sketches of everyday life in the streets, the theatre, the restaurant and everywhere else. These were transformed into paintings in the school studios. On Saturday mornings they were all hung at the composition class. Henri talked about them, about music, about literature and life in general in a very stimulating and entertaining manner.

Two years earlier the group known as The Eight, made up principally of Davis' father's old associates on the *Philadelphia Press,* had held their first and only exhibition in the Macbeth Gallery in New York. In subject matter and to a certain degree in technique their work was a protest against the artificial "good taste" which threatened to kill any vigor in the art of the day. The group's predilection for common subjects from the world of saloons, alleyways, gutters, tramyards, night courts and the like had won them the title of the Ash Can School. But fundamentally their outlook was a reaffirmation of the strain of romantic American realism which in an earlier period and another environment had produced work like that of Mount, Bingham, Eastman Johnson and Winslow Homer.

Almost immediately on his arrival in New York, Davis had struck up an acquaintance with two slightly older painters, Henry Glintenkamp and Glenn O. Coleman. *Enthusiasm for running around and drawing things in the raw ran high. . . . Coleman, Henry Glintenkamp and myself toured extensively in metropolitan environs. Chinatown, the Bowery, the burlesque shows, the Brooklyn Bridge; McSorley's Saloon on East 7th Street; the Music Halls of Hoboken, Weehawken, Fort Lee; the Negro saloons, rides on canal boats under the Public Market and lengthy discussions with Gar Sparks, artist proprietor of a candy store—the latter all in Newark, N. J. Glintenkamp organized an art club or school in Hoboken for local Hobokenites. Hoboken at the time was still very German—very foreign due to its shipping—still unspoiled. Its saloons had all sorts of entertainment—even vaudeville. Coleman at the time was more or less my guide and counsellor. He was five years older than I was. He was not much interested in ideas—*

Negro Saloon. 1912. Watercolor, 15 x 11″.
Owned by the artist.



Cover for *The Masses*. 1913.

didn't give a whoop in hell about other people's paintings. He liked life in the streets—or at least in some streets. He liked jazz. He liked drawings of the life of common people along the lines of Hogarth. Coleman was a very good painter, very talented—had no problems or psychological obstacles. He did not wonder. He felt the way he painted was the right way without knowing what the right way was, just as I knew the Negro piano players we listened to together knew how to play the piano.

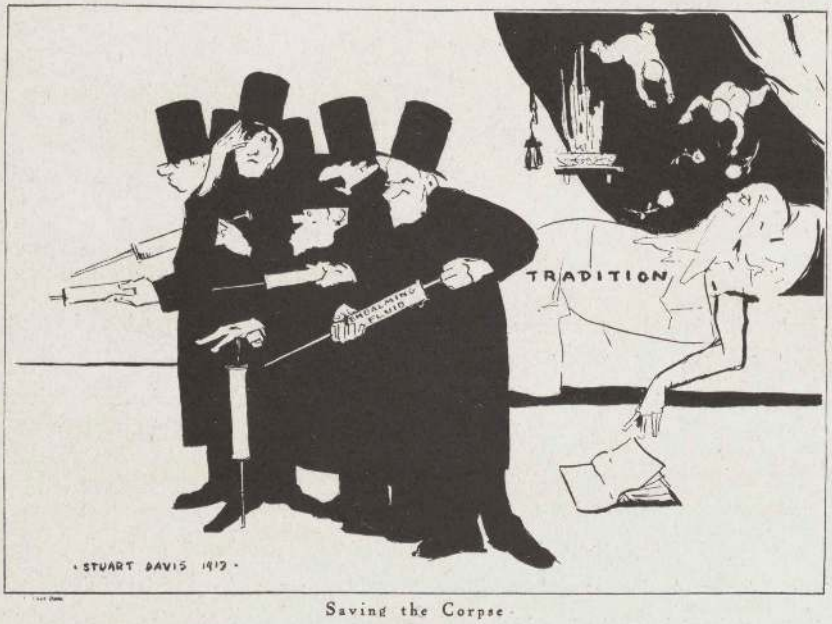
In this early period of riding, walking, and gadding about all over the place, it seems a great many drawings and paintings were made. . . . Coleman and I spent much of our time listening to the Negro piano players in Newark dives. These saloons catered to the poorest Negroes and, outside of beer, the favorite drink was a glass of gin with a cherry in it which sold for five cents. The pianists were unpaid, playing for the love of art alone, and many of them were very fine. In one place the piano was covered

on top and sides with barbed wire to discourage lounging on it and to give the performer more scope while at work. But the big point with us was that in all of these places you could hear a tin-pan alley tune turned into real music for the cost of a five cent beer.

Another "big point" was the influence of Henri's liberal viewpoint which had already begun to show in Davis' work, although Davis was barely sixteen. From 1910 to 1913 he continued to attend classes at Henri's school. But throughout the period he exhibited in various group shows: with the Independents in 1910; in February, 1911 at the Newark Free Public Library in a group which included Luks, Glackens, Sloan and Bellows; and in November, 1912 at the New York Water Color Club. At the same time he was designing covers for *The Masses*. With Sloan as art editor, *The Masses* had introduced a new realistic and satiric note related to the general outlook of The Eight. One of Davis' covers, that of the June, 1913 issue (p. 7), was singled out by Franklin P. Adams, then columnist of the *New York Evening Mail,* as "the best magazine cover of the year."

Henri, as Davis recalls, *was a good man at teaching.* One of Davis' *Masses* cartoons, *Saving the Corpse,* echoes clearly Henri's intransigeant attitude toward outworn tradition. *What you did not learn in Henri's School, was a useful methodology. But this had its virtues as well as its faults.*

Whatever the Henri School may have lacked in systematic discipline was more than made up for by other positive contributions. It took art off the academic pedestal and by affirming its origin in the life of the day developed a critical sense toward social values in the student. If there may have been a tendency toward anarchistic individualism, any preconceived ideas about racial, national, or class superiorities could not thrive in its atmosphere. By developing the student's confidence in his own perceptions it gave



Saving the Corpse

Saving the Corpse. 1913. Cartoon for *The Masses.*

his work a freshness and personality that was lacking in the student work of other schools. On the other hand the emphasis on "anti-artistic" subject matter, which was implicit in the whole Henri idea tended to give subject matter, as such, a more important place than it deserves in art. In repudiating academic rules of picture structure, new ones suitable to the purpose were insufficiently established. The borderline between descriptive and illustrative painting and art as an autonomous sensate object was never clarified. Because of this the general purpose of making works of art that were sufficient in themselves was often defeated. Reliance on the vitality of subject matter to carry the interest prevented an objective appraisal of the dynamics of the actual color-space relations on the canvas. I became vaguely aware of this on seeing the work at The Armory Show, but it took years to clarify the point.

The Armory Show

The *International Exhibition of Modern Art,* popularly known as The Armory Show was held in February, 1913 in the armory of the Sixty-ninth Infantry in New York City. It was America's first popular introduction to the work of the vanguard European painters and sculptors. Organized exclusively by artists, its purpose was clearly stated in the foreword to its catalog:

"The American artists exhibiting here consider the exhibition as of equal importance for themselves as for the public. The less they find their work showing signs of the developments indicated in the Europeans, the more reason they will have to consider whether or not painters or sculptors here have fallen behind through escaping the incidence through distance, and for other reasons, of the forces that have manifested themselves on the other side of the Atlantic. Art is a sign of life. There can be no life without change. To be afraid of what is different is to be afraid of life. . . . This exhibition is an indication that the Association of American Painters and Sculptors is against cowardice even when it takes the form of amiable self-satisfaction."*

The exhibition was a panorama of the progressive developments of European art during the three-quarters of a century previous to 1913. There was a large American section in which Davis was represented by five watercolors, similar to *Negro Saloon* (p. 7). But it is not so much the honor of being represented in this group that Davis looks back on with such satisfaction today as the new outlook on the world of painting the exhibition gave him. It brought him suddenly face to face with what he had been looking for ever since Henri had opened his eyes to the need for self-expression: an idiom free of academicism, through which he might work out a personal pictorial logic.

The Armory Show was the greatest shock to me—the greatest single influence I have experienced in my work. All my immediately subsequent efforts went toward incorporating Armory Show ideas into my work.

It is difficult today to visualize the impact of this gigantic exhibition. Only isolated examples of the modern movement had ever been seen over here. Here indeed was the vindication of the anti-academy position of the Henri School, with developments in undreamed of directions.

I was enormously stimulated by it although appreciation of the more abstract work came later. I

* F. J. Gregg. Preface to *International Exhibition of Modern Art.* Association of American Painters and Sculptors, Inc. New York. 1913.

responded particularly to Gauguin, van Gogh and Matisse, because broad generalization of form and non-imitative use of color were already in my own experience . . . I was interested in Gauguin's arbitrary use of color rather than his exotic subject matter. In the case of van Gogh the subject matter also interested me because it was fields and things I knew. My interest in van Gogh was not solely an interest in a work of art, but in a way of expressing something I saw about me. As a result I never had the feeling that van Gogh's painting was at all alien. Cézanne and the cubists came later. It was probably an intellectual approach: not only the thing you knew but a way of thinking about the things you knew. In Gauguin, van Gogh and Matisse . . . I sensed an objective order which was lacking in my own work and which was present here without relation to any particular subject matter. It gave me the same excitement I got from the numerical precision of the Negro piano players in the Newark saloons. I resolved that I would quite definitely have to become a "modern" artist. It took an awful long time. I soon learned to think of color more or less objectively so that I could paint a green tree red without batting an eye. Purple or green faces didn't bother me at all, and I even learned to sew buttons and glue excelsior on the canvas without feeling any sense of guilt. But the ability to think about positional relationships objectively in terms of what they were, instead of what they represented, took many years.

Nevertheless the old mould was broken. From now on he could no longer return wholeheartedly to the type of work he had been producing before The Armory Show. And almost at once he set about trying to work out a new language of forms in which to express himself.

Through the publication of my work in The Masses *I received an offer in 1913 to make a full page drawing each week for* Harper's Weekly, *then being revived by Norman Hapgood. With this steady employment I set sail for Provincetown, Massachusetts. The drawings as I recall were not too hot, and the "ideas" were questionable, but they fitted in with the desired "liberal" kick on which the magazine was oriented. Provincetown was a new experience for me and made me a continuing addict of the New England coast.*

At that time Provincetown retained a considerable vestige of its former commercial reason for being. . . . Romance of the sea filled my soul. Nothing much came of it in an immediate sense, but elements in the experience served me in realizing my compulsion to be a "modern" artist. On clear days the air and water had a brilliance of light greater than I had ever seen. While this tended to destroy local color, it stimulated the desire to invent high intensity color intervals. Although my efforts were somewhat tentative, the local subject matter suited my ambition. The presence of artists and writers, not too many, added intellectual stimulus to the natural charm of the place. I met Charles Demuth, and his superior knowledge of what it was all about was a great help to me. I returned again in the following year and left in the fall with considerable reluctance.

Sloan used to rave about Gloucester. In 1915 I went there on his recommendation. That was the place I had been looking for. It had the brilliant light of Provincetown, but with the important additions to topographical severity and the architectural beauties of the Gloucester schooner. The schooner is a very necessary element in coherent thinking about art. I do not refer to its own beauty of form, but to the fact that its masts define the often empty sky expanse. They function as a color-space coordinate between earth and sky. They make it possible for the novice landscape painter to evade the dangers of "taking off" into the void as soon as his eye hits the horizon. From the masts of schooners the artist eventually learns to invent his own coordinates, when for some unavoidable reason they are not present.

Gloucester Terrace. 1916. Oil on canvas, 38 x 30″. Owned by the artist.

In spite, however, of The Armory Show's revelation of the picture as a reality in itself, not merely a replica of a visual expression, Davis' illustrative work for *The Masses* continued to hold him more or less to the sociological realist approach of The Eight. And in the spring of 1915 we find him represented in the first *American Salon of Humorists* in the Folsom Gallery in New York.

But in February of the following year a split took place among the editors of *The Masses* on the issue of "art vs. ideas." Sloan, Glintenkamp, Coleman, Robert Carlton Brown and Davis took one side, and Max Eastman, Floyd Dell, John Reed and Art Young took the other. Eastman felt that many of the subscribers could not understand the art *The Masses* published unless it was explained by captions. Art

Yellow Hills. 1919. Oil on canvas, 23⅜ x 29¼". Downtown Gallery.

Young stated in a press interview at the time that "the five dissenting artists want to run pictures of ash cans and girls hitching up their skirts in Horatio Street—regardless of ideas—and without title. . . . On the other hand a group of us believe that such pictures belong better in exclusive art magazines. For my part I do not care to be connected with a publication that does not try to point the way out of a sordid materialistic world."*

The Eastman party won hands down. John Sloan and his friends resigned. As Davis remarks, *Apparently the battle between "pure art" and an "art of ideas" is not merely a contemporary manifestation.* Thanks to the seed planted by The Armory Show, Davis had already begun to feel that art had its own reason for existence—that it should never be content with a supporting role. The break with *The Masses* merely confirmed him in his resolve to pursue his search for free self-expression.

* New York Sun. April 8, 1916.

In a painting such as *Gloucester Terrace* of 1916 (p. 11) the new direction is apparent. The color is evidently inspired by the artist's mood or emotions at the time of painting rather than by visual experience; and his *Yellow Hills* is admittedly van Gogh applied to the Pennsylvania countryside.

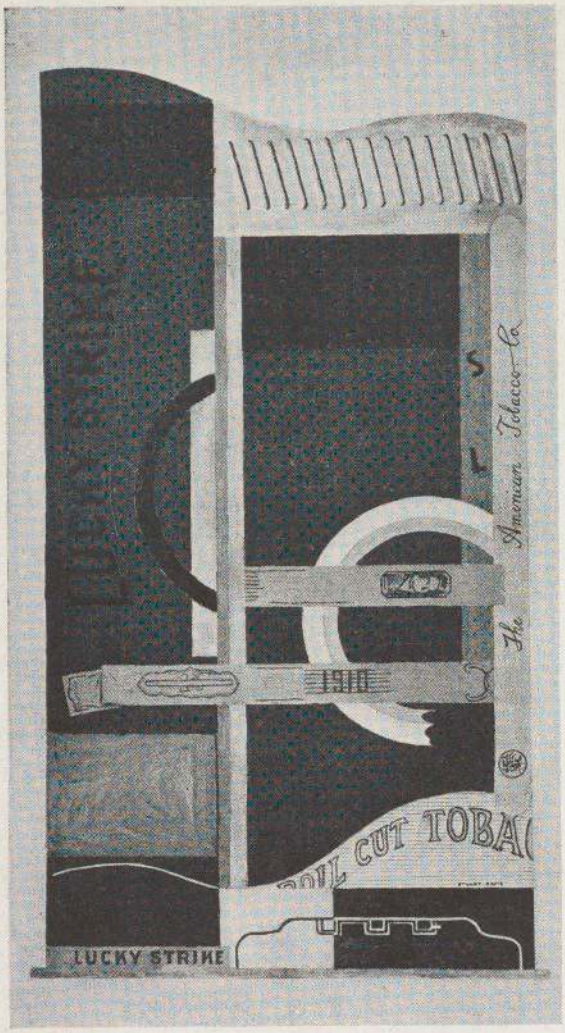
In December, 1917 Davis had his first one-man show at the Sheridan Square Gallery in New York; and in the spring of 1918 another was given him at the Ardsley Gallery in Brooklyn.

During the closing months of the last war, Davis served in a branch of the Army Intelligence Department. A special commission had been set up under Walter Lippmann to prepare materials for the peace conference. Davis' work was mainly drafting maps and graphs along ethnographic lines. In the Spanish influenza epidemic towards the close of 1918 he was severely stricken. To recuperate he went with Coleman to Havana. On his return he divided his time between Gloucester and New York until 1923. Ideas and points of view that were new to American painters in The Armory Show in 1913 had by this time become considerably more familiar. Alfred Stieglitz in his "291" exhibitions and Miss Katherine Dreier's *Société Anonyme* had done much to carry on the work initiated by Arthur B. Davies, Walt Kuhn, Walter Pach and their fellow members of the Association of American Painters and Sculptors. Since 1915 many important French artists such as Marcel Duchamp, Francis Picabia, Jacques Villon and others had settled in New York and had become familiar figures in the Lincoln Arcade next to which Davis and Glintenkamp had their studio at 1931 Broadway. Work such as Picabia's *Le Midi,* with its palm trees done in macaroni and feathers,* made it easier for Davis "to sew buttons and glue excelsior on the canvas without feeling any sense of guilt." Cubist *papiers collés,* or pasted paper compositions, had brought home the compositional value of large color areas after cubism's break-up of conventional forms. Through them the cubists had reasserted the two-dimensional character of the canvas and had called attention to the pictorial value of contrasted textures. Davis had picked up all these hints from his European exemplars. But when he followed them to the next stage—the simulation of *papiers collés* in oil—we find him imitating newstype and cigarette trademarks with a meticulous illusionism and precision of detail that is perhaps more native, in its resemblance to the work of the nineteenth-century American painter William Harnett, than it is cubist (p. 14).

Still there is already a hint of Léger's influence in Davis' work. In these compositions he was attempting to eliminate softness of tone, vagueness of contour, grayness in color and to organize his contrasts more dynamically than most of his American contemporaries were doing. A few years later definite similarities of conception are recognizable between his *Apple and Jug* of 1923 and Léger's work of the same period, such as *Le Siphon.* Léger in his feeling for austere simplicity had reacted from the soft grace of some of his cubist colleagues' work. Davis recognized in Léger's work interests similar to his own, a response to the age of things, speed, loud noises, black headlines. As he was to say later, "Léger is the most American painter painting today."

In the work of these years the elements of Davis' painting remained representational, but their organization became more and more obviously dictated by pictorial logic rather than by natural arrangement. At the same time his interest in the picture as a reflection of the natural world grew proportionately less.

* At present in the *Société Anonyme* Collection, Yale University.



Lucky Strike. 1921. Oil on canvas, 33⅛ x 18″. Owned by the artist.

Cigarette Papers. 1921. Watercolor on canvas, 19 x 14″. Owned by the artist.

Two Trees. 1925. Oil on canvas, 19 x 22″. Whitney Museum of American Art.

New Mexico; Gloucester and New York; 1923-1927

Just as John Sloan used to rave about Gloucester, and I went there on his recommendation, it was the same about New Mexico—but with a difference. I spent three or four months there in 1923—until late fall—but did not do much work because the place itself was so interesting. I don't think you could do much work there except in a literal way, because the place is always there in such a dominating way. You always have to look at it. Then there's the great dead population. You don't see them but you stumble over them. A piece of pottery here and there and everywhere. It's a place for an ethnologist not an artist. Not sufficient intellectual stimulus. Forms made to order, to imitate. Colors—but I never went there again.

As Davis turned away from an interest in imitating nature, a change began to take place even in his manner of working.

From New Mexico I went to Gloucester, then oscillated from New York to Gloucester during the next few years. My family had a place there. That meant I had a place to go and Gloucester itself pleased me very much. I still think it the best place on the Atlantic Coast. . . . I used to wander over the rocks with a sketching easel, large canvases and a pack on my back looking for things to paint. Things began to go a little better, and some things I produced gave me a certain amount of satisfaction. After a number of years the idea began to dawn on me that packing and unpacking all this junk, in addition to toting it all over the Cape, was irrelevant to my purpose. I became convinced that this was definitely doing things the hard way. Following this revelation my daily sorties were unencumbered except by a small sketch book

of the lightest design known and a specially constructed Duralumin fountain pen. There may have been a bit of backsliding by the inclusion of a box of colored crayons, but I soon put a stop to that. The decision was a good one. . . . It came to the point where I actually began to like the pictures I made following it. It seemed that in all this tramping around with full equipment I had actually learned something. All that was required to cash in on some of this information was to stop lifting things up and putting them down. I have scrupulously followed this discipline ever since. While I cannot recall the exact date of this revolutionary discovery, it didn't come a moment too soon.

In abandoning the weighty apparatus of the outdoor painter I did not abandon nature as subject matter. My studio pictures were all made from drawings made directly from nature. As I had learned in painting out-of-doors to use a conceptual instead of an optical perspective, so in my studio compositions I brought drawings of different places and of different things into a single focus. The necessity to select and define the spatial limits of these separate drawings, in relation to the unity of the whole picture, developed an objective attitude toward positional relations. Having already achieved this to a degree in relations of color, the two had to be integrated and thought about simultaneously. The abstract kick was on, and a different set of headaches made their appearance.

The Eggbeater Series, 1927-1928

Gradually Davis had been realizing his ambition, inspired by The Armory Show, to become a "modern" artist. From Gauguin's and van Gogh's arbitrary colors and running contour patterns he had turned to the structural simplifications of Cézanne and the post-cubist work of Léger and Picasso. In *Two Trees* of 1925 (p. 15) and *Super Table* of the same year we see an evident interest in space-organization through the ordering of the planes.

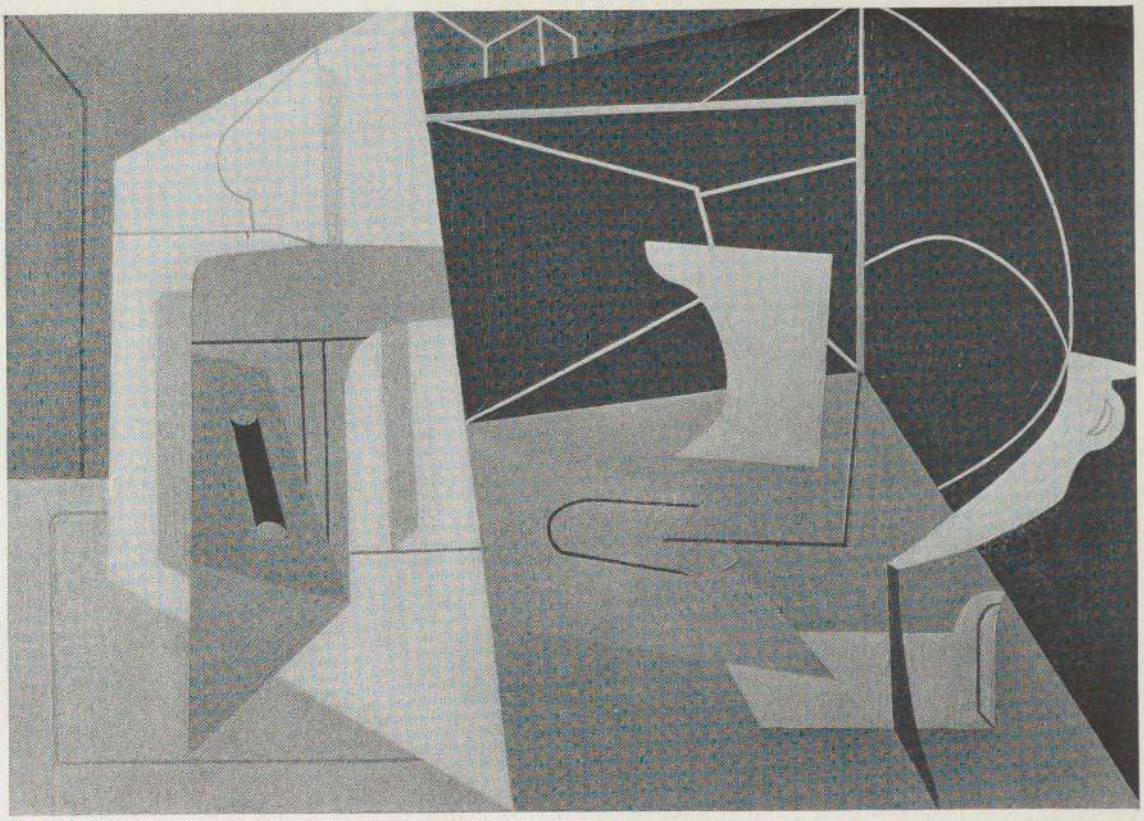
The first culmination of these efforts occurred in 1927 and 1928 when I nailed an electric fan, a rubber glove and an eggbeater to a table and used them as my exclusive subject matter for a year.

Sometimes a person gets tired of painting landscapes. Then he paints people. Sometimes he gets tired of painting people then he paints landscapes. And sometimes an uninteresting subject may be as stimulating as an interesting one. One day I set up an eggbeater in my studio and got so interested in it that I nailed it on a table and kept it there to paint. I called the pictures Eggbeater, number such and such, because it was from the eggbeater that the pictures took their impulse (p. 17).

The pictures themselves are not decorations. They are pictures. Their subject is an invented series of planes which was interesting to the artist. They were then drawn in perspective and light and shade in the same way another artist draws the planes of a human head or a landscape. They were a bit on the severe side, but the ideas involved in their construction have continued to serve me.

In fact this eggbeater series was very important for me because in this period I got away from naturalistic forms. I invented these geometrical elements. What led to it was probably my working on a single still life for a year, not wandering about the streets. Gradually through this concentration I focused on the logical elements. They became the foremost interest and the immediate and accidental aspects of the still life took second place.

The pictures that immediately preceded the eggbeater series, those of 1924 and 1925 were all based on the same idea; a generalization of form in which the subject was conceived as a series of planes and



Eggbeater #1. 1928. Oil on canvas, 27 x 38⅛". Phillips Memorial Gallery.

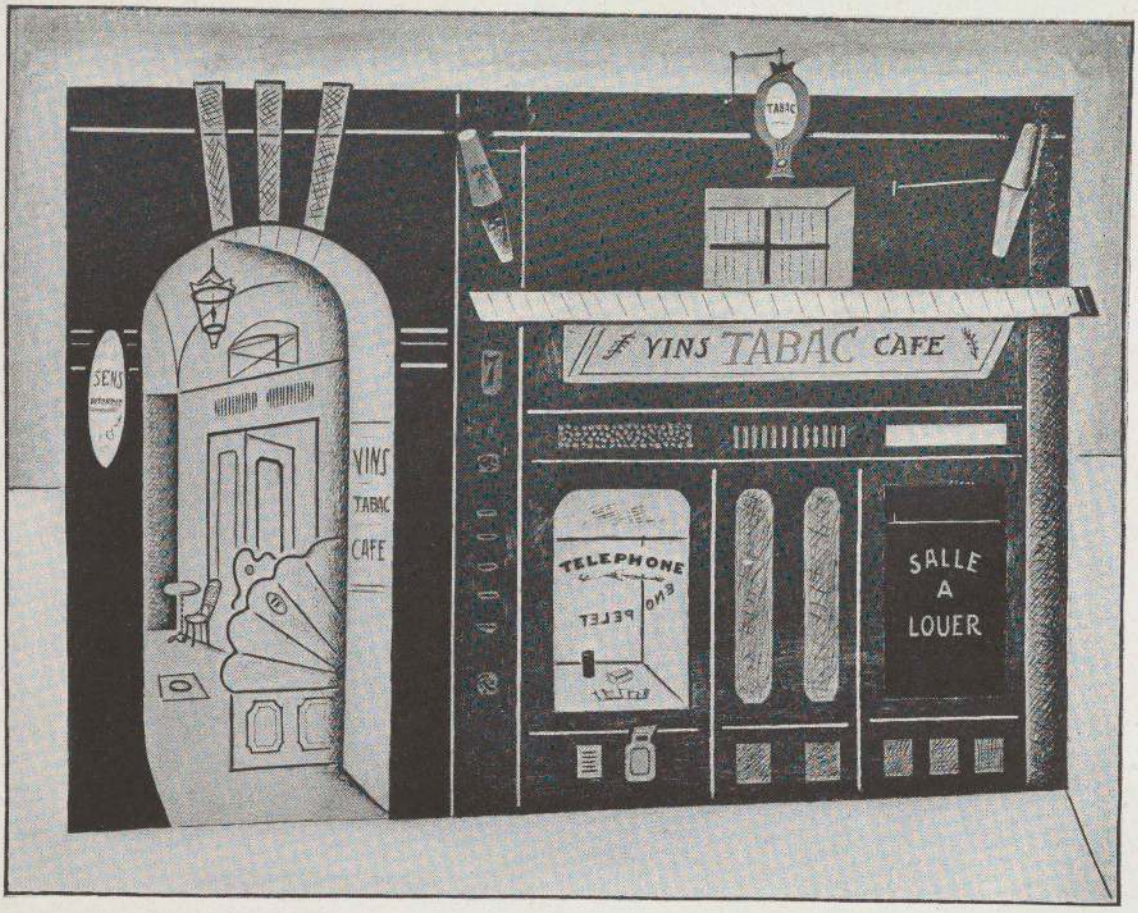
the planes as geometrical shapes—a valid view of the structure of any subject. I had come to feel that what was interesting in a subject or what had really caused our response to it could be best expressed in a picture if these geometrical planes were arranged in direct relationship to the canvas as a flat surface. I felt that a subject had its emotional reality fundamentally through our awareness of such planes and their spatial relationships. In paintings like Super Table *the major relationships—the larger generalizations—were established, but the minor features were still imitative. In the eggbeater series, on the other hand, I made an effort to use the same method throughout. This I felt would give the picture a more objective coherence. The result was the elimination of a number of particularized optical truths which I had formerly concerned myself with. In effecting this elimination, however, the subject was not repudiated in favor of some ideal order; but this approach was regarded as a more intense means of equating the sensible material one responds to in various subjects. My aim was not to establish a self-sufficient system to take the place of the immediate and the accidental, but . . . to strip a subject down to the real physical source of its stimulus.*

I did not regard it, however, as the future aspect of all my painting, but rather as a groping towards a structural concept. So when I went to Paris, a few months later, the same structural approach remained

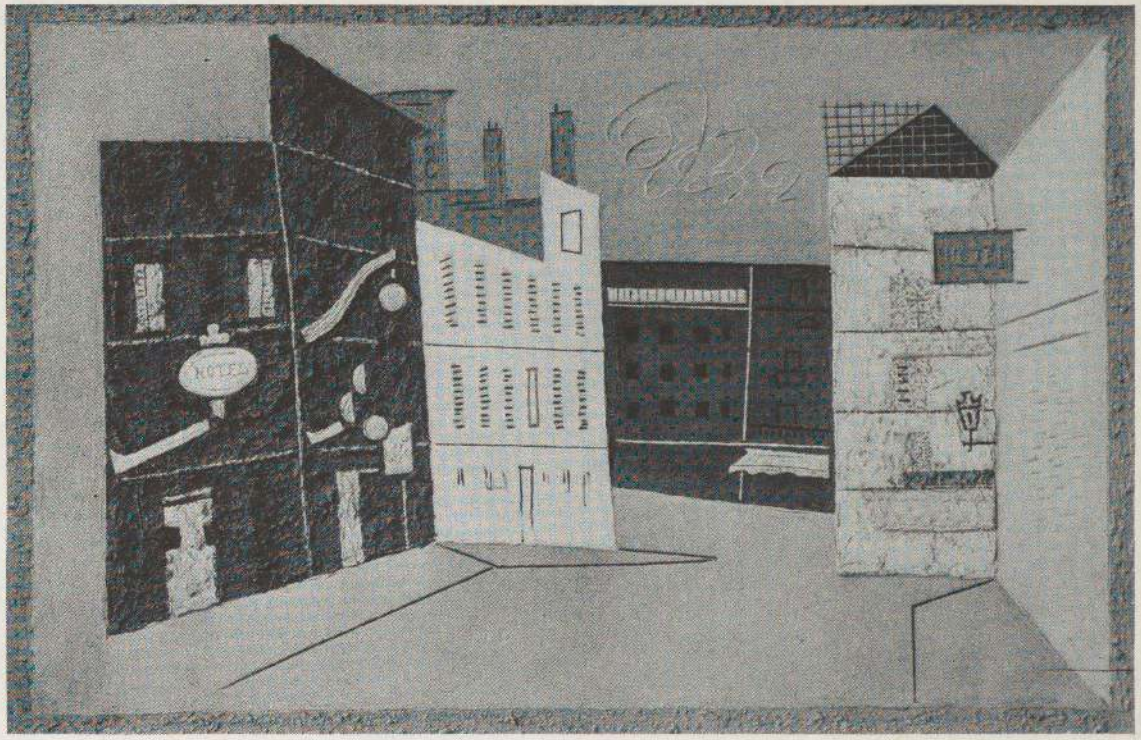
in paintings like the Rue des Rats *with more or less literal references, which to my mind did not conflict with the structural approach. In other words I did not think that particular truth eliminated general truth or general truth particular truth. I try to think of them as one thing. So you may say that everything I have done since has been based on that eggbeater idea. I have just tried to carry the idea into greater particularity without abandoning the general scope which interested me there.*

Paris, 1928-1929

In May, 1928 Mrs. Juliana R. Force of the then Whitney Studio Club bought several of my pictures. Having heard it rumored at one time or another that Paris was a good place to be, I lost no time in taking the hint. With one suitcase I hopped a boat and arrived in the center of art and culture in the middle of June. I also brought along a packing case containing my eggbeater paintings.



Café, Place des Vosges. 1929. Oil on canvas, 29 x 36¼". Collection Mrs. Edith Gregor Halpert.

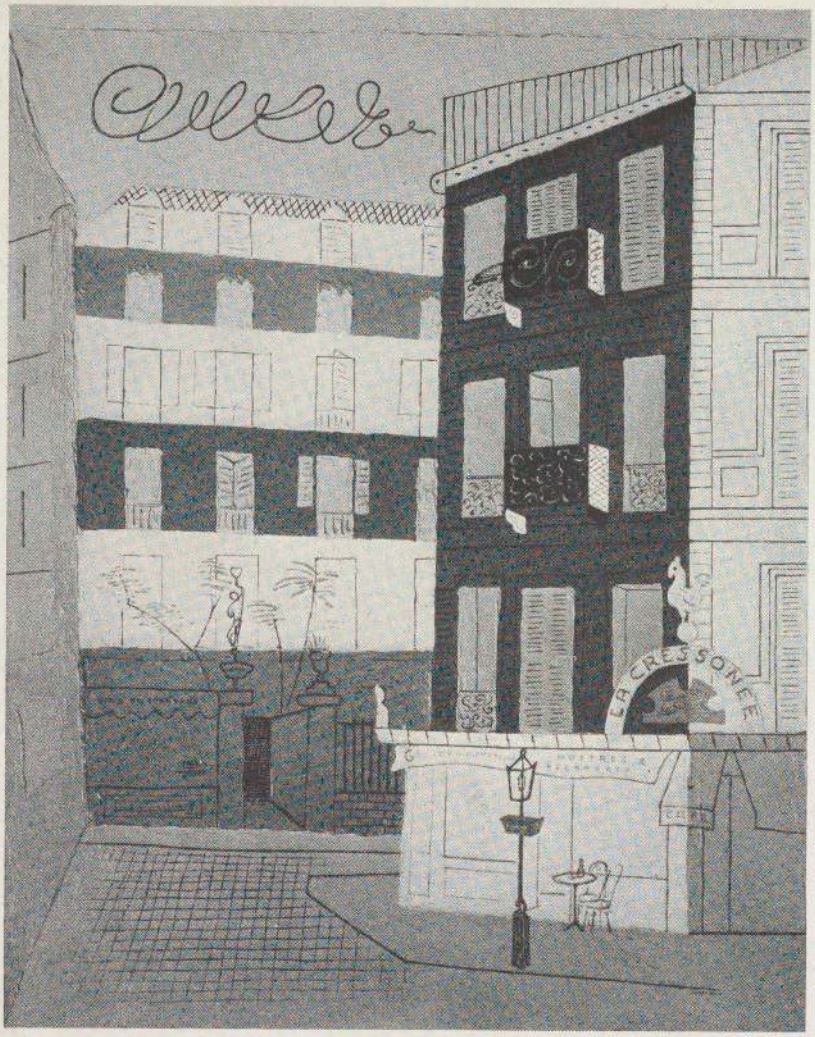


Rue de l'Echaudé. 1928. Oil on canvas, 23⅝ x 36¼". Collection Mr. and Mrs. Otto Spaeth.

The rumors were correct. Although I did not speak a word of French I felt immediately at home. The conviction was already established on the train from Le Havre that I had done the right thing in coming to this place.

Everything about the place struck me as being just about right. I had the feeling that this was the best place in the world for an artist to live and work; and at the time it was. The prevalence of the sidewalk café was an important factor. It provided easy access to one's friends and gave extra pleasure to long walks through various parts of the city. . . . It reminded me of Philadelphia. I remembered Philadelphia only as a child . . . an old fashioned place. Paris was old fashioned, but modern as well. That was the wonderful part of it. . . . There was so much of the past and the immediate present brought together on one plane that nothing seemed left to be desired. There was a timelessness about the place that was conducive to the kind of contemplation essential to art. And the scale of the architecture was human.

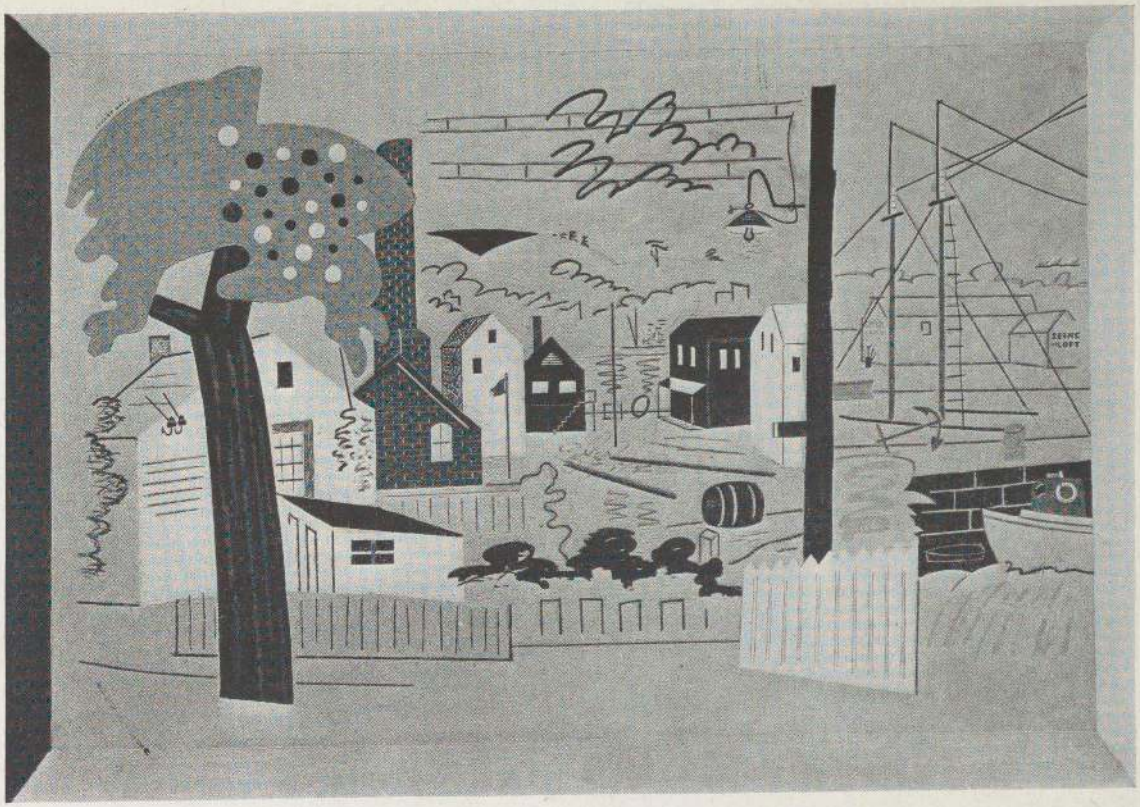
And there was no feeling of being isolated from America. At one time or another I met practically every one I had ever known. Bob and Rose Brown of The Masses *days arrived from Brazil via China with forty trunks. I immediately got in touch with Elliot Paul, a Gloucester writer friend. He had lived there for several years and gave me a personally conducted tour of the sights. Paul Gaulois, artist-*



Place Pasdeloup. 1928. Oil on canvas, 36⅛ x 28½″. Whitney Museum of American Art.

restauranteur, strolled the boulevards. Niles Spencer introduced me to Hilaire Hiler, who in turn played the first Earl Hines record I ever heard. These and a hundred other amiable associations made the absence of plumbing in my studio a matter of no importance. It was a primitive life: I cooked on an alcohol burner. But I worked a lot. . . .

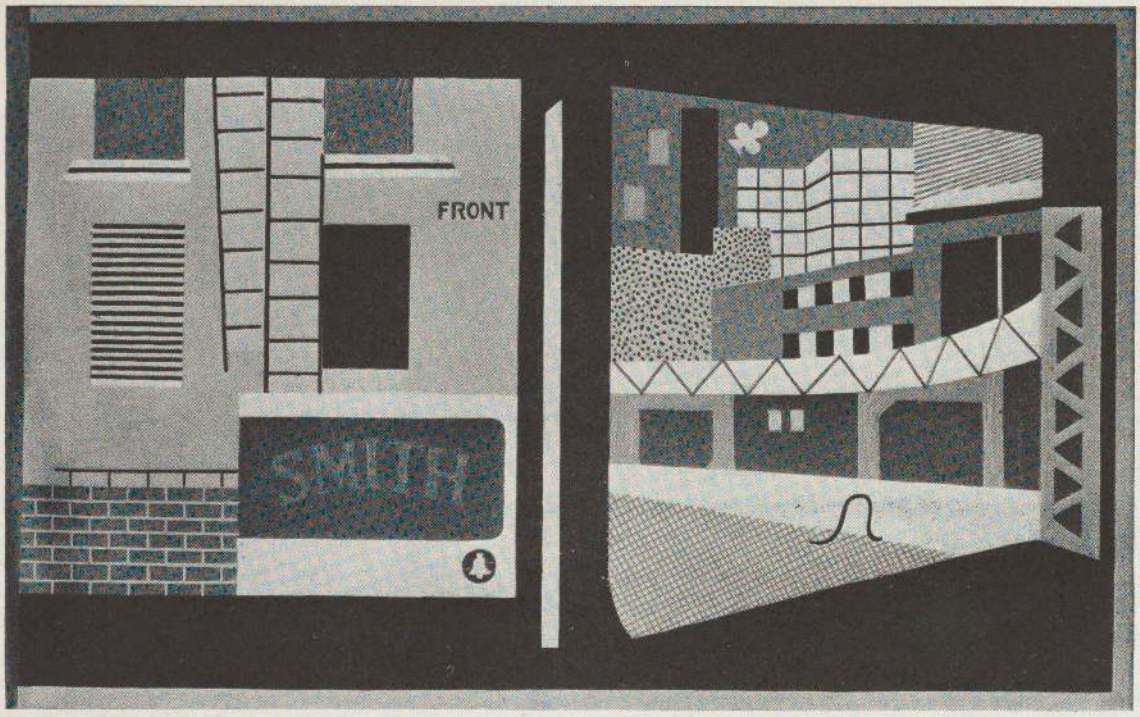
The year before, in New York, I had looked at my eggbeater so long that I finally had no interest in it. I stared at it until it became just a combination of planes. But over there, in Paris, the actuality was so interesting I found a desire to paint it just as it was. I had no idea, however, of wanting to stay over



Summer Landscape. 1930. Oil on canvas, 29 x 42″. Museum of Modern Art, Purchase Fund.

there. The very thing that made it interesting to me—the slowed-down tempo—made it monotonous. Having been born over here, with all this going on around you, you have a need for it. I didn't do anything there but paint and walk around the streets.

The anonymous forms in his eggbeater series of the year before had now given way to depictions of Paris streets that had a definite sentiment about them. They are distillations of the mood which he described Paris as having awakened in him. But they are this and something else. He had carried his eggbeater series with him to Paris in more ways than one. His Paris street scenes (pp. 18 and 19) have a structural sophistication under their lyric freshness which he could not have achieved before. His palette was clearly influenced by the Paris sunlight and the delicate tones and contrasting dark notes of the street façades of the city. But where the contrasts among the compositional elements were hard and crude in his American work of the early twenties, there is now a mellowness of surface even when he mixes sand with his paint or makes use of the broadest palette-knife modeling. The whole is drenched in light which unifies the composition. And the result is paintings such as *Place des Vosges* #2 or *Rue de l'Echaudé* (p. 19), mature personal expressions deeply rooted in the artist's emotional response to the Paris urban milieu.



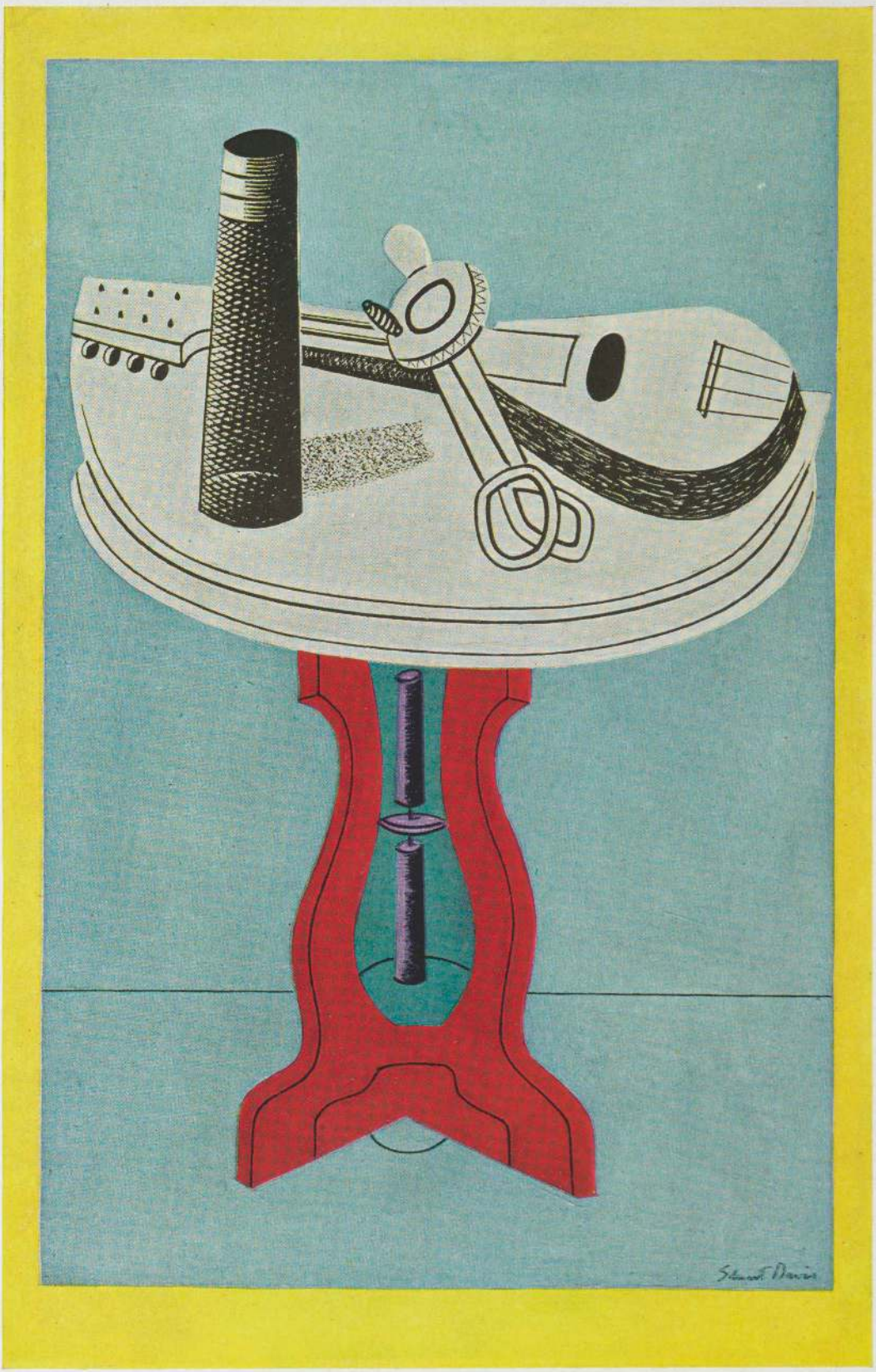
House and Street. 1931. Oil on canvas, 26 x 42¼". Whitney Museum of American Art.

Return from Europe, 1929

I came back to this country in August, 1929 on the maiden voyage of the Bremen. On my arrival in New York I was appalled and depressed by its giantism. Everything in Paris was human size, here everything was inhuman. It was difficult to think either of art or oneself as having any significance whatever in the face of this frenetic commercial engine. I thought "Hell, you can't do any painting here." It is partly true. But on the other hand as an American I had the need for the impersonal dynamics of New York City.

Once away from the insistence of the Paris environment, Davis felt free to return to his still-life explorations, and in *Eggbeater #5* (opposite), begun a few months after his return from Europe in 1929, we see an interest in the art of Paris as well as in the city itself. French painting had assuredly left its mark. But a personalization of this influence is also clear. In its black and white treatment and in the drawing of its forms it stands apart from the work of Picasso, Braque or Léger. At the same time if it is less seductive than *Place des Vosges #2* and *Place Pasdeloup* (p. 20), it gives the impression of greater assurance and makes a bolder use of tonal contrasts than even the most successful of his Paris work.

For Davis the art of contemporary Paris was the main life stream. It was not simply a regional expression, but the source to which all painters should go. Still the artist must never allow his roots to

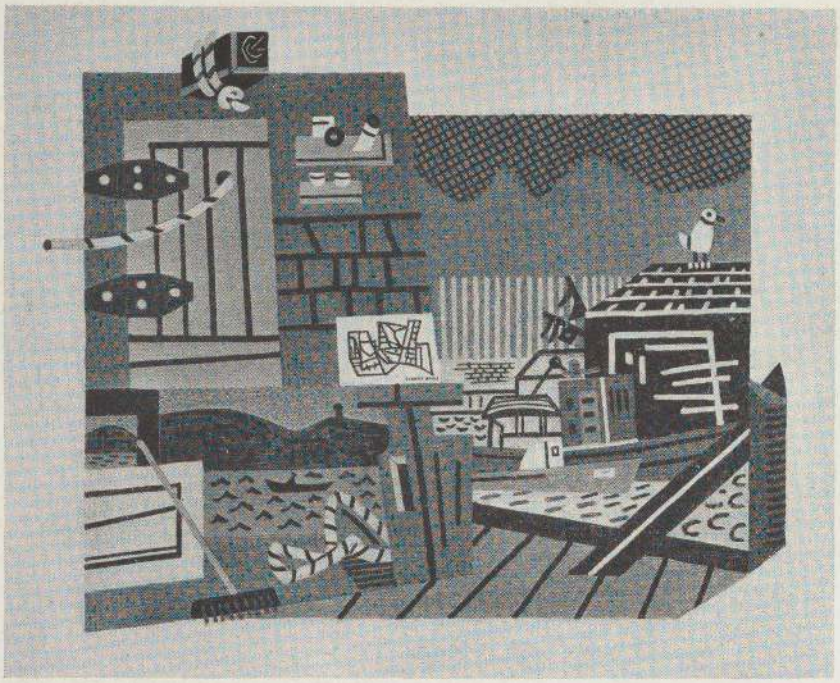


Eggbeater #5. 1930. Oil on canvas, 50⅛ x 32¼″. The Museum of Modern Art, Purchase Fund.

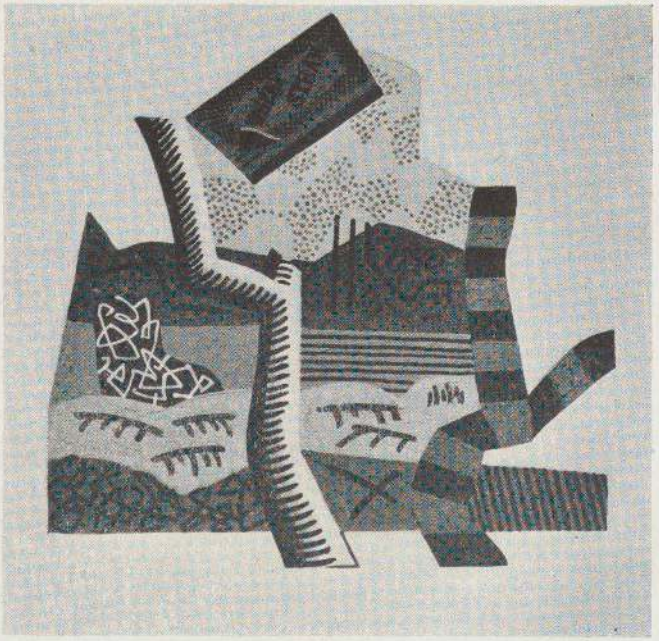
New York-Paris #1. 1931. Oil on canvas, 38¼ x 51". Downtown Gallery.

leave his native soil. His view is essentially that of T. S. Eliot, "neither in a complete uniformity, nor in an isolated self-sufficiency, can culture flourish, . . . a local and a general culture are so far from being in conflict that they are truly necessary to each other . . . uniformity means the obliteration of culture, and . . . self-sufficiency means death by starvation."* As Davis expresses it: *I am an American, born in Philadelphia of American stock. I studied art in America. I paint what I see in America, in other words, I paint the American scene. . . . I don't want people to copy Matisse or Picasso, although it is entirely proper to admit their influence. I don't make paintings like theirs. I make paintings like mine. I want to paint and do paint particular aspects of this country which interest me. But I use, as a great many others do, some of the methods of modern French painting which I consider to have universal validity. . . . Why should an American artist today be expected to be oblivious to European thought when Europe is a hundred times closer to us than it ever was before? If a Scotchman is working on television, do*

* T. S. Eliot. "The Man of Letters and the Future of Europe." *The Sewanee Review*, Summer, 1945, Vol. LIII, No. 3, pp. 336-337.



Sail Loft. 1930. Oil on canvas, 15¾ x 19¾". Collection Mr. and Mrs. O'Donnell Iselin.



Cigarette Papers. 1933. Oil on composition board, 12 x 12⅜". Collection Holger Cahill.

Salt Shaker. 1931. Oil on canvas, 49⅞ x 32″. Collection Mrs. Edith Gregor Halpert.

similarly interested American inventors avoid all information as to his methods? . . . I did not spring into the world fully equipped to paint the kind of pictures I want to paint. It was therefore necessary to ask people for advice. After leaving the direct influence of Mr. Henri I sought other sources of information and, as the artists whose work I admired were not personally available, I tried to find out what they were thinking about by looking at their pictures. Chief among those consulted were Aubrey Beardsley, Toulouse-Lautrec, Seurat, Fernand Léger and Picasso.

One striking difference, however, between Davis' work and that of the Parisian leaders is an increment of humor—a playfulness in which he is perhaps closer to artists of his own generation, such as the Catalan Joan Miro, or the American Alexander Calder, than to the older men whom he has studied and admired. Davis' humor is a muscular humor, not a drawing-room wit. It is a male humor with a strand of sentiment running through it. Paris was an esthetic interlude. New York and Gloucester were Davis' native pastures. They are the fields in which he is most at ease and expresses himself most gayly. And in

Cape Ann Landscape. 1938. Oil on canvas, 20 x 30¼". Collection Mr. and Mrs. Harry A. Solomon.

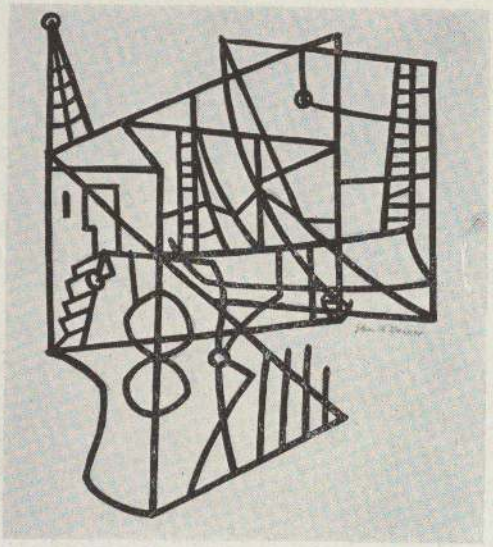
Swing Landscape. 1938. Oil on canvas, 7 x 14′. Indiana University, on extended loan from the Federal Art Project.

the summer following his return from abroad we see him going back to his American inspiration in *Summer Landscape* (p. 21), *Jefferson Market* and *House and Street* (p. 22).

In *Summer Landscape* there is an adaptation of the idiom of *Place Pasdeloup* to a Massachusetts seaport town. The technical approach is similar; though the emphasis on perpendiculars and the repetition of jagged angles convey an impression of activity and sharpness quite different from the easy serenity of his Paris scene. In the lower half of *Jefferson Market* and especially in *House and Street* there are evidences of Fernand Léger's contrasts of unmodeled areas of local color and an emphasis on the angular machine forms. Still, in both there is a sense of locale which is never or very rarely present in Léger's work. And the locale of Davis' painting is recognizably urban New York.

The transition, however, was not effected without definite nostalgic glances. And his *New York-Paris* compositions tell the story in their combination of associational motives related to both environments. For in spite of the seeming jumble of representational elements in Davis' paintings he feels that *a picture must tell a story.* But "story" in Davis' sense goes deeper than illustrational narrative. *This story can have pictorial existence only through the artist's concept of form.*

There are an infinite number of form concepts available. My own is very simple and is based on the assumption that space is continuous and matter is discontinuous. In my formal concept . . . I never ask the question: Does this picture have depth or is it flat? I consider such a question irrelevant. I consider form (matter) as existing in space in terms of linear direction. It follows then that the forms of the subject are analyzed in terms of angular variation from successive bases of directional radiation. The



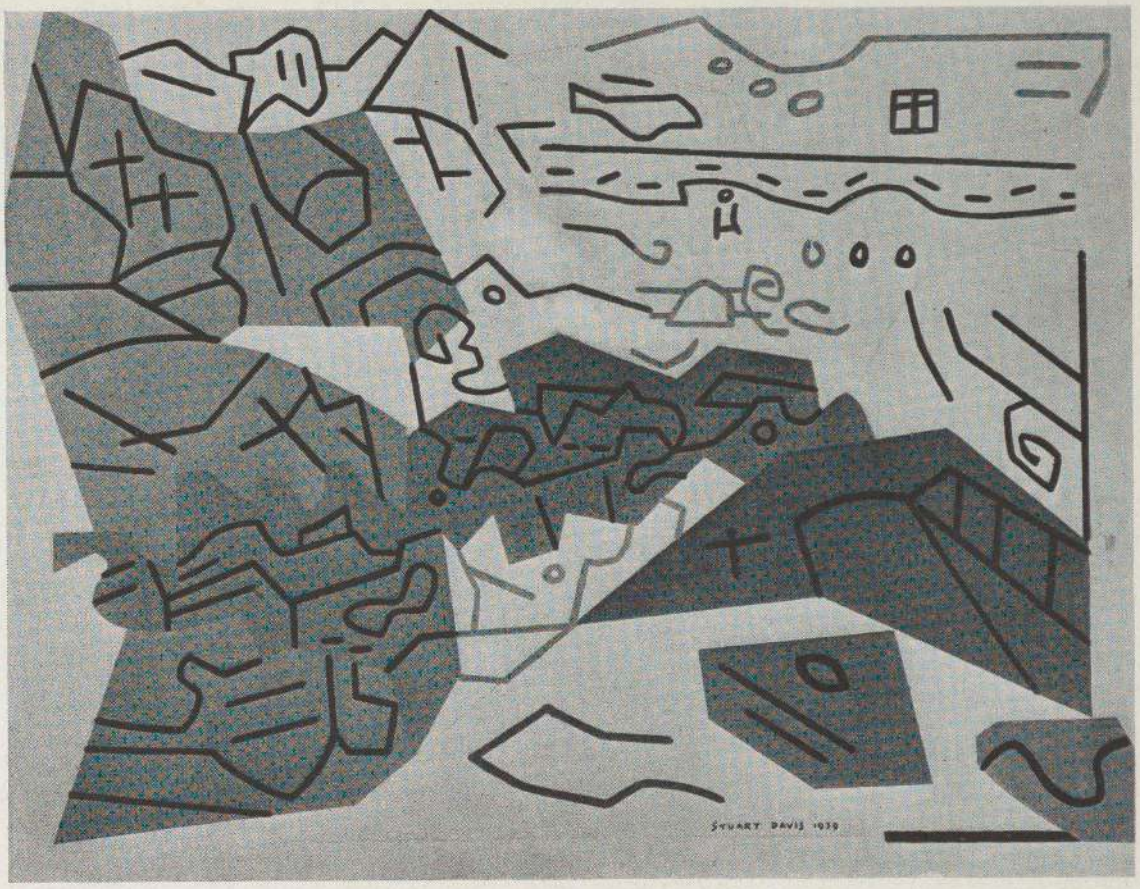
Landscape. 1932 and 1935. Oil on canvas, 25 x 22″. Owned by the artist.

Shapes of Landscape Space. 1939. Oil on canvas, 36 x 28″. Private collection.

phenomena of color, size, shape and texture are the result of such angular variation. And Davis' adaptation and personalization of Picasso's example on the basis of this point of view is especially well illustrated by his *Salt Shaker* (p. 25) of 1931.

1932-1939, W.P.A. and Artists Congress

In 1932 Davis went again to Gloucester. He painted his large mural *Men without Women* there for Radio City Music Hall in New York. But serious economic difficulties had begun to set in and, at the same time, illness. He came back to New York and went to a hospital. The following year he rented a room on 14th Street near 8th Avenue and took seven or eight pupils. Teaching mornings and afternoons, he had little free time for his own work.



Bass Rocks #1. 1939. Oil on canvas, 33 x 43". Wichita Art Museum, Murdock Collection.

In July he moved to Gloucester and remained there till December, painting several smaller pictures such as *Cigarette Papers* (p. 24). But as he recalls *Everything went to Hell. Came back to New York on Christmas Day. Made a bee-line for McSorley's Saloon. Found it closed—which made me feel very bad. Edward Bruce at the time was getting his Federal Art Project under way. I heard about it. And since I scarcely had a cent in my pockets and very slim prospects, a couple of days later I got on his payroll.*

In 1934 I became socially conscious as everyone else was doing in those days and became mixed up with the Artists Congress. This meant meetings, articles, picket lines, internal squabbles. Everything was hectic. Lots of work was done, but little painting.

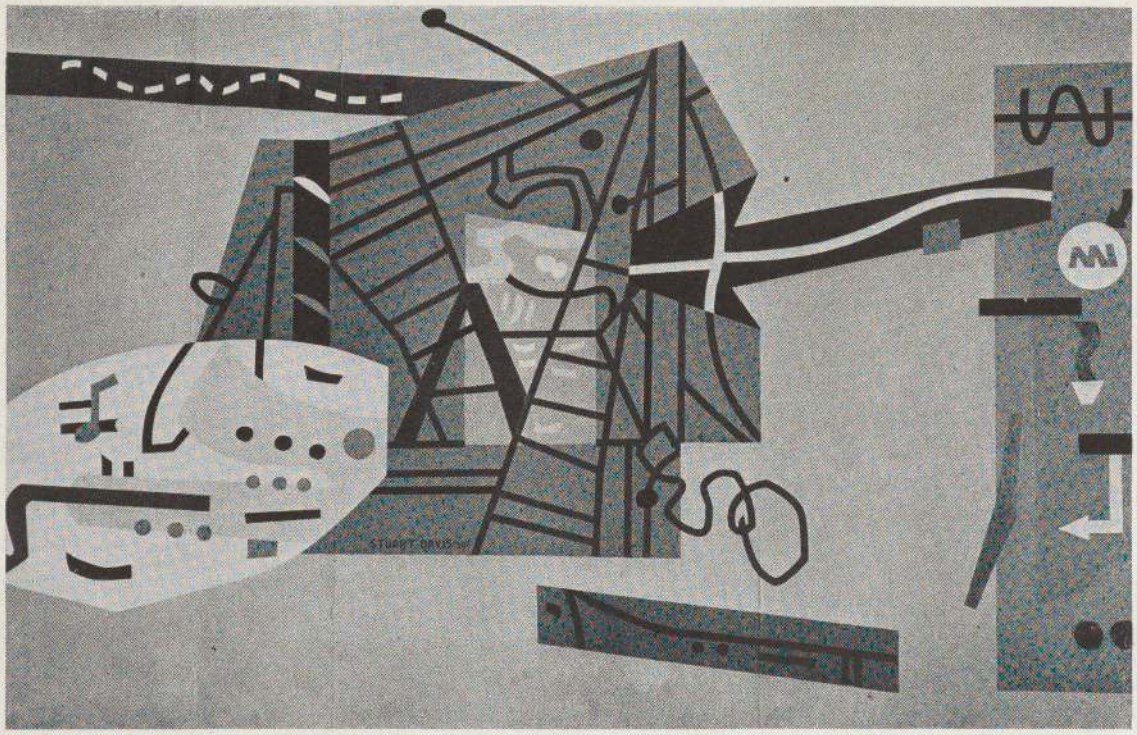
Meanwhile the first Art Project folded up. Then the W.P.A. project started. Cahill came in one hot night. He had been asked to take charge. We adjourned to the saloon across the way. I encouraged him to do it at once. And I told him I wanted to get on it at once.

The Artists Congress had been taking all my time and energy. People came tramping in day and night. Painting had been having little chance. The Art Project was a life-saver. I made some small pictures for them. And eventually two murals: Swing Landscape (p. 27) *now at the University of Indiana, and another for Studio B, WNYC.*

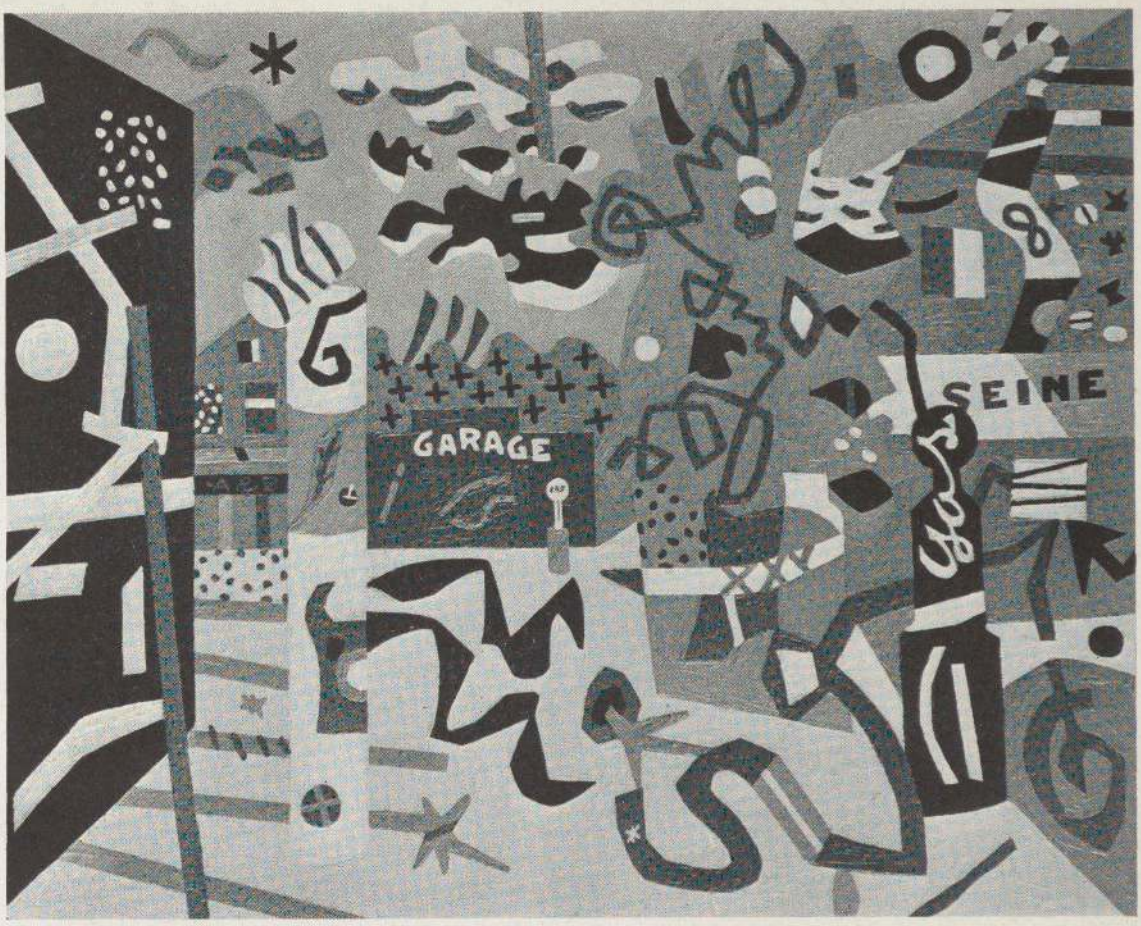
Return to Easel Painting, 1939

This business of the Artists Congress and the Art Project seemed to go on for years. My pauper status continued excellent. Then suddenly I was out without a cent. I was eliminated from the Project because my five years legal period of tenure had expired. Having no money I did the conventional thing—I hired myself a studio and devoted myself to painting. I felt it was "now or never." I made Bass Rocks. *And all my recent paintings have been done here in this same studio.*

In spite, however, of all the work Davis did during the six years for the Artists Congress and the five for the Federal Art Project and the W.P.A., he succeeded in producing several easel paintings which are important in his development, notably *Cape Ann Landscape* (p. 26) and *Gloucester Harbor*. And his style, which in 1932 still retained a marked interest in Léger's oppositions of flat areas of local tone, had in the interim achieved a much greater freedom.



Mural for Studio B, WNYC. 1939. Oil on canvas, 7 x 11′. Municipal Broadcasting System.



Report from Rockport. 1940. Oil on canvas, 24 x 30″. Collection Mr. and Mrs. Milton Lowenthal.

Bass Rocks *represents the color and space harmonies which I observed in a landscape subject. It is not a picture of every day visual aspects; it is a selection of certain relations of spatial order and logic which were actually present in the subject. Casual observation of the scene from which they were taken would not reveal the elements from which the picture was made. These harmonies only became apparent after careful study and contemplation of it* (p. 29).

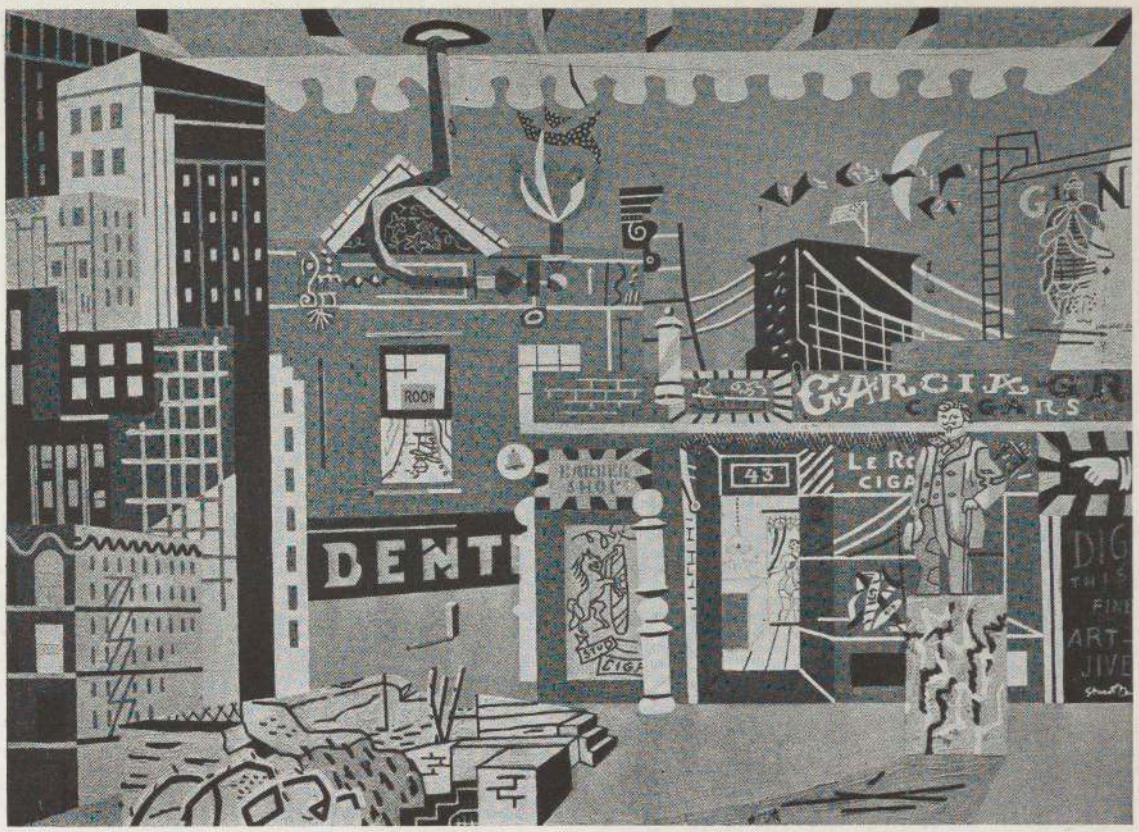
While Davis' pre-Art Project canvases, such as his New York-Paris series, were essentially compositions of simplified independent illustrative elements, related by contrasts of color and associational significance, in work like *Bass Rocks #1* forms were reduced to the barest linear indices and compositional unity was achieved through their interplay and an over-all color harmony.

Davis has a habit of returning to pictorial problems he had set himself in earlier stages of his development. This gives him an opportunity to test the effectiveness of the new means he has fashioned for himself as well as an opportunity for self-criticism. Already in his drawings of 1932 he had shown

an interest in broad linear emphases and simplified forms. Some of these he translated into oils such as *Landscape*. And if we compare this composition with *Shapes of Landscape Space* (p. 28) we can see how he had modified his earlier drawing style and was turning to broader harmonic color areas. The main step of breaking up the lines into the smaller motives of *Bass Rocks* is not yet evident. But in *New York under Gaslight* of 1941 (p. 33) there is already evidence of the new attention to minor representational details, or particularities of the composition, as he calls them, in contradistinction to the broad generalities that were to characterize his work following *Bass Rocks*.

In *Report from Rockport* (p. 31) there are as many representational source elements as in his *New York-Paris #1* (p. 23). But since 1931 he has become steadily more interested in bringing the minor details of his picture to the same degree of amplification as the major lines of the composition. Conse-

Hot Still-Scape for Six Colors. 1940. Oil on canvas, 36 x 45″. Collection Jan de Graaff.



New York under Gaslight. 1941. Oil on canvas, 32 x 45". Estate of Herman Shulman.

quently they now fuse into a more comprehensive unity. The original subject matter of this painting—a tree, buildings, a gas pump, a traffic beacon, clouds and words—is reduced, as he says, to its *common denominator of color-shape. Their simultaneous presentation in positional relationship creates a sense of dynamic space extension analogous to the pleasure we feel in brilliant scenes in nature.*

And this is the procedure which gives such subsequent paintings as *Hot Still-Scape for Six Colors* (opposite), *Arboretum by Flashbulb* (p. 34) and *For Internal Use Only* (frontispiece) their common character—"an emphasis on particulars." With this has come in Davis' recent work a new view of color. In his earlier work his palette was relatively limited to broad contrasts of pure tone. In his latest work he explores a considerably richer gamut of gradations. As he explains, *Today I have a concept of color which I never even thought of before. Now I think of it as another element like line and space. I think of color as an interval of space—not as red or blue. People used to think of color and form as two things. I think of them as the same thing, so far as the language of painting is concerned. Color in a painting represents different positions in space. In drawing with color up and across you have also drawn*

Arboretum by Flashbulb. 1942. Oil on canvas, 18 x 36". Collection Mr. and Mrs. Milton Lowenthal.

a certain distance in relation to the polar extremes of the constants of the color solid. Color conceived in this way becomes a space or length interval. If you have monotony in the length of these intervals you have monotony in color. I believe color relations are not merely personal but objectively true.

So on an objective level we see that Davis' point of view today reasserts what he has always held. *Art is not the recording of the impact of natural forms on the retina; it is a synthesis of all the perceptive faculties in emotional equilibrium, objectified in a language of form. Emotional response to nature does not create art except when it is integrated with an interest in imaginative construction for its own sake. The act of painting is not a duplication of experience, but the extension of experience on the plane of formal invention.*

In my own case I have enjoyed the dynamic American scene for many years, and all my pictures (including the ones I painted in Paris) are referential to it. They all have their originating impulse in the impact of contemporary American environment. Some of the things that have made me want to paint, outside of other paintings, are: American wood and iron work of the past; Civil War and skyscraper architecture; the brilliant colors on gasoline stations, chain-store fronts, and taxicabs; the music of Bach; synthetic chemistry; the poetry of Rimbaud; fast travel by train, auto and aeroplane which has brought new and multiple perspectives; electric signs; the landscape and boats of Gloucester, Massachusetts; 5 & 10 cent store kitchen utensils; movies and radio; Earl Hines' hot piano and Negro jazz music in general, etc. In one way or another, the quality of these things plays a role in determining the character of my painting; not in the sense of describing them in graphic images, but by pre-determining an analogous dynamics in the design which becomes a new part of the American environment.

Ursine Park. 1942. Oil on canvas, 20 x 40⅛″. Downtown Gallery.

Catalog of the Exhibition

In dimensions height precedes width. An asterisk (*) before the title indicates that the work is illustrated.

Self-portrait. 1912. Oil on canvas, 32 x 26⅛". Lent by the artist.

* Negro Saloon. 1912. Watercolor, 15 x 11". Lent by the artist. *Ill. p. 7.*

* Gloucester Terrace. 1916. Oil on canvas, 38 x 30". Lent by the artist. *Ill. p. 11.*

Rockport Beach. 1916. Oil on canvas, 30 x 24". Lent by the artist.

Gloucester Street. 1916. Oil on canvas, 24 x 30". Lent by the artist.

* Yellow Hills. 1919. Oil on canvas, 23⅜ x 29¼". Lent by the Downtown Gallery, New York. *Ill. p. 12.*

* Lucky Strike. 1921. Oil on canvas, 33⅛ x 18". Lent by the artist. *Ill. p. 14.*

* Cigarette Papers. 1921. Watercolor on canvas, 19 x 14". Lent by the artist. *Ill. p. 14.*

Bull Durham. 1921. Oil and watercolor on canvas, 30 x 15". Lent by the artist.

Apples and Jug. 1923. Oil on cardboard, 22 x 17⅞". Lent by the artist.

* Two Trees. 1925. Oil on canvas, 19 x 22". Lent by the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. *Ill. p. 15.*

Super Table. 1925. Oil on canvas, 48⅛ x 34⅛". Lent by the Downtown Gallery, New York.

* Eggbeater #1. 1928. Oil on canvas, 27 x 38⅛". Lent by the Phillips Memorial Gallery, Washington, D. C. *Ill. p. 17.*

Eggbeater #3. 1928. Oil on canvas, 25 x 39". Lent by the artist.

Place des Vosges #2. 1928. Oil on canvas, 25⅝ x 36¼". Lent by Major and Mrs. Milton L. Kramer, New York.

* Rue de l'Echaudé. 1928. Oil on canvas, 23⅝ x 36¼". Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Otto Spaeth, Dayton, Ohio. *Ill. p. 19.*

Blue Café. 1928. Oil on canvas, 18½ x 21⅝". Lent by the Phillips Memorial Gallery, Washington, D. C.

Rue des Rats #1. 1928. Oil on canvas, 23⅝ x 36¼". Lent by the Estate of Herman Shulman, New York.

* Place Pasdeloup. 1928. Oil on canvas, 36⅛ x 28½". Lent by the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. *Ill. p. 20.*

Hôtel de France. 1928. Oil on canvas, 28¾ x 23½". Lent by Martin C. Schwab and Katherine Boutet Scallan, Chicago.

* Café, Place des Vosges. 1929. Oil on canvas, 29 x 36¼". Lent by Mrs. Edith Gregor Halpert, New York. *Ill. p. 18.*

Arch-Hôtel. 1929. Oil on canvas, 28½ x 39¼". Lent by the artist.

Interior. 1930. Oil on canvas, 24⅛ x 20⅛". Lent by Dr. and Mrs. Michael Watter, Philadelphia.

* Sail Loft. 1930. Oil on canvas, 15¾ x 19¾". Lent by Mr. and Mrs. O'Donnell Iselin, New York. *Ill. p. 24.*

* Eggbeater #5. 1930. Oil on canvas, 50⅛ x 32¼". The Museum of Modern Art, Purchase Fund. *Color plate, opp. p. 22.*

* Summer Landscape. 1930. Oil on canvas, 29 x 42". The Museum of Modern Art, Purchase Fund. *Ill. p. 21.*

Still Life with Flowers. 1930. Oil on canvas, 40 x 32". Lent by the Downtown Gallery, New York.

Jefferson Market. 1930. Oil on canvas, 34 x 23". Lent by the Downtown Gallery, New York.

* New York-Paris #1. 1931. Oil on canvas, 38¼ x 51". Lent by the Downtown Gallery, New York. *Ill. p. 23.*

New York-Paris #2. 1931. Oil on canvas, 30 x 40". Lent by the Hamilton Easter Field Foundation, New York.

* House and Street. 1931. Oil on canvas, 26 x 42¼". Lent by the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. *Ill. p. 22.*

* Salt Shaker. 1931. Oil on canvas, 49⅞ x 32". Lent by Mrs. Edith Gregor Halpert, New York. *Ill. p. 25.*

Composition with Winch. 1931. Oil on canvas, 22¼ x 27". Lent by Dr. H. A. Blutman, New York.

The Red Cart. 1932. Oil on canvas, 32⅛ x 50". Lent by Miss Alice D. Laughlin, New York.

* Cigarette Papers. 1933. Oil on composition board, 12 x 12⅜". Lent by Holger Cahill, New York. *Ill. p. 24.*

* Landscape. 1932 and 1935. Oil on canvas, 25 x 22". Lent by the artist. *Ill. p. 28.*

Sunrise. 1933. Oil on canvas, 10 x 14". Lent by Holger Cahill, New York.

Composition #3. c. 1934. Ink drawing, 21¼ x 29¾". The Museum of Modern Art, gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

* Cape Ann Landscape. 1938. Oil on canvas, 20 x 30¼". Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Harry A. Solomon. Port Washington, N. Y. *Ill. p. 26.*

Gloucester Harbor. 1938. Oil on canvas, 23 x 30". Lent by Mr. and Mrs. John Hammond, New York.

* Swing Landscape. 1938. Oil on canvas, 7 x 14'. Lent by Indiana University, Bloomington, Ind. *Ill. p. 27.*

* Shapes of Landscape Space. 1939. Oil on canvas, 36 x 28". Lent anonymously. *Ill. p. 28*

* Bass Rocks ~~#2~~ #1. 1939. Oil on canvas, 33 x 43". Lent by the Wichita Art Museum, Murdock Collection, Wichita, Kansas. *Ill. p. 29.*

Radio Tube. c. 1939. Gouache, 22 x 14¾". Lent by Mrs. Juliana Force, New York.

* Mural for Studio B, WNYC. 1939. Oil on canvas, 7 x 11'. Lent by the Municipal Broadcasting System, New York. *Ill. p. 30.*

Study for Hot Still-Scape. 1940. Oil on canvas, 9 x 12". The Museum of Modern Art, given anonymously.

* Hot Still-Scape for Six Colors. 1940. Oil on canvas, 36 x 45". Lent by Jan de Graaff, Portland, Ore. *Ill. p. 32.*

* Report from Rockport. 1940. Oil on canvas, 24 x 30". Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Milton Lowenthal, New York. *Ill. p. 31.*

* New York under Gaslight. 1941. Oil on canvas, 32 x 45". Lent by the Estate of Herman Shulman, New York. *Ill. p. 33.*

* Ursine Park. 1942. Oil on canvas, 20 x 40⅛". Lent by the Downtown Gallery, New York. *Color plate, opp. p. 34.*

* Arboretum by Flashbulb. 1942. Oil on canvas, 18 x 36". Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Milton Lowenthal, New York. *Ill. p. 34.*

Flying Carpet. 1942. Wool rug, woven by V'Soske. 7' 1" x 10'. The Museum of Modern Art, Edgar J. Kaufmann, Jr. Fund.

* For Internal Use Only. 1945. Oil on canvas, 48 x 24". Lent by the Miller Company, Meriden, Conn. *Color frontispiece.*

Work by Davis in American Public Collections

BLOOMINGTON, IND. Indiana University
1 mural
Extended loan from the Federal Art Project.

BLOOMFIELD HILLS, MICH. Cranbrook Museum
1 oil

BUFFALO, N. Y. Albright Art Gallery
1 oil

HANOVER, N. H. Dartmouth College
1 gouache

LEXINGTON, KY. University of Kentucky
1 lithograph

LOS ANGELES, CALIF. Los Angeles Museum, Preston Harrison Collection
1 watercolor

MILWAUKEE, WIS. Milwaukee Art Institute
1 oil

NEWARK, N. J. Newark Museum
1 oil
3 watercolors

NEWARK, N. J. Newark Free Public Library
1 lithograph

NEW YORK, N. Y. Museum of Modern Art
3 oils
1 gouache
1 rug
2 drawings
7 lithographs

NEW YORK, N. Y. Whitney Museum of American Art
5 oils
3 gouaches
2 drawings

PHILADELPHIA, PENN. Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts
1 oil

PITTSBURGH, PENN. Carnegie Institute
1 lithograph

SAN DIEGO, CALIF. San Diego Museum
1 oil

TUCSON, ARIZ. University of Arizona.
1 oil

WASHINGTON, D. C. Library of Congress
lithographs

WASHINGTON, D. C. Phillips Memorial Gallery
5 oils

WICHITA, KANS. Wichita Art Museum
1 oil

Prints by Davis

LITHOGRAPHS ON STONE

Hôtel de France. 1928. 11½ x 14¾". 30 imprs.

Place des Vosges. 1928. 9⅝ x 13⅞". 10 imprs.

Adit. 1928. 10¼ x 11⅞". 10 imprs.

Rue de l'Echaudé. 1929. 9⅞ x 14¾". 30 imprs.

Arch. 1929. 9¾ x 13⅝". 30 imprs.

Arch #2. 1929. 10¼ x 13¾". 30 imprs.

*Au Bon Coin. 1929. 8⅜ x 10⅝". 30 imprs.

Hôtel-Café. 1929. 8⅜ x 10⅝". 30 imprs.

Place Pasdeloup #1. 1929. 11½ x 14⅜". 10 imprs.

*Place Pasdeloup #2. 1929. 11⅜ x 14⅜". 20 imprs.

Rue des Rats. 1929. 10½ x 15½". 30 imprs.

LITHOGRAPHS ON ZINC

*Two Heads. 1930. 10¾ x 13¼". 12 imprs.

*Barber Shop Chord. 1931. 14 x 19". 25 imprs.

*Composition. 1931. 9 x 10". 25 imprs.

*Sixth Avenue El. 1931. 12 x 17⅞". 25 imprs.

Sixth Avenue El #2. 1931. 11 x 15⅛". 25 imprs.

Theatre on the Beach. 1931. 11 x 15⅛". 25 imprs.

Landscape Space #4. 1939. 10 x 12¾". (4 colors.)

Titles marked by an asterisk indicate prints in the Collection of the Museum of Modern Art, gifts of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

Murals by Davis

New York, N. Y. Radio City Music Hall. Men's Lounge.
Men Without Women. 1932. Oil on canvas, 11 x 17'.

Bloomington, Ind. Indiana University.
Swing Landscape. 1938. Oil on canvas, 7 x 14'.
Originally designed for the Williamsburgh Housing Project under the W.P.A.

New York, N. Y. Municipal Broadcasting System. Station WNYC. Studio B.
Untitled. 1939. Oil on canvas, 7 x 11'.

Flushing, Long Island. New York World's Fair. Communications Building.
History of Communications. 1939. 140 x 45'.

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The arrangement is alphabetical, under the author's name, or under the title in the case of unsigned articles. Publications of museums are entered under the city in which the institution is located. Exhibition catalogs issued by private galleries and art organizations are listed under the name of the gallery or group. All material has been examined by the compiler, except item preceded by †.

ABBREVIATIONS Ag August, Ap April, bibl bibliography, D December, F February, il illustration(s), Ja January, Jy July, Mr March, My May, N November, no number, O October, p page(s), por portrait, S September, sec section, sup supplement(ary).

SAMPLE ENTRY for magazine article. RILEY, MAUDE. Stuart Davis exhibits his abstracted views. il Art Digest 17:7 F 1 1943.

EXPLANATION. An article by Maude Riley, entitled "Stuart Davis exhibits his abstracted views" is illustrated, and will be found in Art Digest, volume 17, page 7, the February 1, 1943 issue.

* Items so marked are in the Museum Library.

HANNAH B. MULLER

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Summation of points at issue in New York Times controversy between abstract and non-objectivist artists (bibl. 3, 67).

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Three thousand copies of this book have been printed in October, 1945, for the Trustees of the Museum of Modern Art by the Plantin Press, New York. The color inserts have been printed by William E. Rudge's Sons, New York.

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