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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART BULLETIN, JAN. 1945, VOL. XII, NO. 3

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## PICASSO 1940-1944 — A digest with notes by Alfred H. Barr, Jr.

Reports from Paris—and these are now numerous enough to make a provisional consensus—suggest that while Picasso's art is meeting with some hostile prejudice in liberated France his position in the Resistance Movement is of unique importance. Though not a Frenchman he stayed in Paris when a good many leading French artists spent the war working quietly in the provinces, left the country entirely (for cogent reasons), or in a few shameful cases remained to "collaborate" with the Germans.

Picasso's presence must have disquieted the Germans for he was conspicuously anathema to Hitler. For many years he had been in Nazi eyes the most formidable master of "degenerate" art, *entartete Kunst*, *Kunstabwermung*—art which was moreover admired by the capitalist collectors, "bourgeois" intellectuals and liberal critics of the hated "pluto-democracies"; he was said to have Jewish blood; in his *Dreams and Lies of Franco* he had savagely lampooned Hitler's faithful Spanish ally; he had accepted an official appointment, the directorship of the Prado, from the Spanish Republican government, the first victim of the Axis; and he had painted *Guernica*. Yet he returned to Paris after the summer of 1940 and lived there for four precarious years under German rule without recantation or compromise and protected only by his greatness as an artist which the Nazis, to give the devils their due, were shrewd enough to respect even while they tried to defame him.

During those four years Picasso lived quietly in his left bank studio at 7 rue des Grands-Augustins. He was not allowed to exhibit publicly and he made no overt gestures but his very existence in Paris encouraged the Resistance artists, poets and intellectuals who gathered in his studio or about his café table. Gladys Delmas, a young American who lived through the occupation period in Paris, writes in the *Magazine of Art* (February 1945): "Picasso's presence here during the occupation became of tremendous occult importance . . . his work has become a sort of banner of the Resistance Movement."

The most famous anecdote of occupied Paris, Picasso's remark to Abetz, may be apocryphal but its bitter, pseudo-deferential mockery well illustrates how effectively the artists and intellectuals of Paris made fools of the Nazis. The story has been told many times in many versions, yet since some Bulletin readers may not have heard it, it is worth repeating. Not long after the conquest Otto Abetz, the infamous, though cultivated, German agent, called on Picasso to invoke his "collaboration." Picasso received him coldly, refused his offer of fuel and showed him the door. On his way out of the studio the embarrassed Nazi noticed a photograph of the *Guernica*. "Ah, M. Picasso," he said, adjusting his monocle, "so it was you who did that." "No," replied Picasso as he closed the door, "you did."

Since the liberation of Paris, Picasso has been very much in the news; and visits to his atelier have developed almost a standard pattern. Indeed Captain Philip W. Clafin, recently on leave in New York, reports that groups of G. I.'s are taken like tourists through Picasso's studio every Thursday morning.

The *San Francisco Chronicle* ran what was probably the first interview with Picasso published in this country. It was wired by Peter D. Whitney from Paris on September 1st, six days after the Liberation. Whitney reported Picasso "safe and in the best of health" though for "four years he has been . . . cold and ill-fed." Picasso showed him a book published under the Nazi rule, called *Decadent Art*, with a double page reproduction of *Guernica*:

"Decadence, eh," Picasso said softly. 'Do you know Hitler himself once did me the honor of naming me in one of his speeches as a wicked corrupter of youth. So for four years I have been personally forbidden to show or sell my works.'

"They let me alone mostly, and, of course, I have kept on working as you can see,' he said. 'The Gestapo has been here three or four times nosing around, but they found nothing, even though most of my friends are Resistance members. The last time was only a month ago.'

"You know Gertrude Stein is a very good friend of mine. It is believed she tried to escape when the Germans removed the Jewish population of Paris in 1942, but was captured near the Swiss border. But I've looked after her apartment down the road and her furniture in spite of the Gestapo. [Miss Stein recently returned to Paris to find her works of art safe in her apartment, though some of her furniture had been stolen. Ed.]

"I have not painted the war,' said Picasso quietly, 'because I am not the kind of a painter who goes out like a photographer for something to depict. But I have no doubt that the war is in these paintings I have done. Later on perhaps the historians will find them and show that my style has changed under the war's influence. Myself, I do not know.'

Whitney found Picasso in no forgiving mood toward the collaborators. He was glad that Abel Bonnard and Abel Hermant had just been suspended from the French Academy. "But what," Whitney asked, "of the rest of the collaborators?" Picasso then spoke bitterly of Vlaminck who had been one of his friends but who, he said, had denounced Picasso during the occupation as a "Jewish degenerate." (Picasso has stated that so far as he knew he had no Jewish blood, though he wished he had. Had he been even partly Jewish the Germans would scarcely have left him unmolested.)

When Whitney asked Picasso if he would ever visit America, the artist answered:

"My work has been here, and when I could afford it, I was always too busy but now I think I would like to go there. You know, I think many of us who have been content with living in Paris in the old days will suddenly start traveling. It is the natural reaction against these four years of oppression."

The artist John Groth was the first American newspaper man to see Picasso. That was on August 27th only two days after the German commander surrendered and while there was still fighting in many parts of Paris. A few days later on August 31 Groth found time to write his editor C. Philip Barber of *The Chicago Sun* an informal account of his visit to Picasso's studio. "Feeling like a high school science teacher visiting Albert Einstein" he climbed the stairs of the huge old house:

"Picasso was deep in conversation with Louis Carré, his dealer, Jaime Sabartés, friend of fifty years, and Jean Cocteau, poet and artist. . . . He embraced me and invited me to spend the



Coffee Pot, Candlestick and Cup, 24 x 15". This still life is one of a series of which several were exhibited in the "Liberation" Salon. Done in 1944, it is probably the latest Picasso to be published in America. None of the paintings in the *du Chêne* color portfolio recently exhibited in the Museum and previously reproduced in *Life*, the *New York Times*, etc., was painted later than 1942. Photo courtesy Galerie Louise Léiris.

morning with him and his friends . . . Paris was free again, the Germans gone—and an American 'war artist' in his studio."

A few minutes later Paul Eluard, the great surrealist poet and one of the leaders of the Resistance writers, came in to ask Picasso to do a drawing for a commemorative volume to be presented to de Gaulle who had just entered Paris. Groth has written for the Bulletin (page 10) an extraordinarily interesting description of Picasso at work on this drawing, which consumed most of his time while Groth

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Bicycle Seat. A construction made by Picasso from the seat and handlebars of a bicycle and exhibited in Picasso's one-man show in the "Liberation" Salon, October 1944. During the past five years Picasso has spent much time on sculpture and constructions. Photo courtesy of John Groth.

was in the studio. Picasso and his friends were so eager for news of America and their friends here in New York that Groth found it hard to get in a few questions himself.

"I asked about the Germans and their treatment of modern art. Also, what they thought of his work. For reply to that question he pulled out a book from under one of the piles of books of reproductions of his works. The title was *Decadent Art under the Reign of Democracy and Communism*—the author: John Hemming Fry. It was printed since the occupation and was distributed by the Germans. His *Young Lady with the Cock's Head* (Mme Carré Collection) was the frontispiece and the *Guernica* mural (lent to the Museum of Modern Art, New York) the center spread. He pointed out, in the book, reproductions of paintings by Madigiliani and Rouault, sculpture by Jacob Epstein and Carl Miles. Also several by Americans: Jack Levine, Ella Walters, and two Chicagoans, Raymond Breinin and Rainey Bennett. [To this list Mr. Groth later added Lehbruck, Duchamp and Georgia O'Keeffe.] He was amused in the architecture section

at the inclusion of the Museum of Modern Art, 'a temple of degenerate art,' and the R.C.A. Building of New York—and by the two facing pages of reproductions of paintings by Ingres and Cézanne—the Ingres, *La Source*, the good art [to the Germans], and Cézanne's *Nude Woman*, the degenerate art.

[Mr. Fry is also the author of *The Revolt Against Beauty*, written in 1934 (a copy is in the Museum's Library). In it he assaults "the stupid half-baked struggles of Van Gogh" and "the clumsy, incoherent, vulgar obscenity" of Cézanne's painting. He condemns Manet and Impressionism but lauds "such painters as Paul Baudry, Bastien-Lepage, Gérôme, Henner—the brilliant galaxy which made the period of the seventies and eighties one of the greatest in the history of art."

Mr. Fry was born in Indiana in 1860 and studied art in Paris under Boulanger in the mid-eighties. He served on the painting jury at the Chicago World's Fair in 1893. He is or was an Officier de la Légion d'Honneur, a Commendatore della Corona d'Italia, and a member of the Union League Club. It is wonderful to think that Mr. Fry (who must indeed have proved useful to the Nazis in their propaganda of Hitlerian esthetics) may still be living in 1945. Ed.]

"I asked him what he had been doing during the street fighting of a few days ago. As a graphic answer he showed me a series of studies of a boy's head done in the 'Blue' period manner. He said he had done them during the fighting—one each day.

"I asked him about the collaborationists among the painters. The only one he named was Derain. He grew very excited in telling of Derain's visit to Weimar to shake the hand of Hitler. He said he hoped that Derain would be punished—shot.

"Picasso then invited me to tour his studios with him. On the first floor is a huge grand-central-like studio in which he does his sculpture. With great delight he asked me what a particular piece of sculpture was. It was obviously meant to be the head of a deer or antelope. He took it apart and showed me that it was made of the seat and handle bars of an old bicycle. There were several other such pieces, one, a bird made of parts from a child's coaster.

"We spent some time in the painting studio, the walls lined with stacks of work done since the war . . . still lifes and series of small mosaic-like views of Paris. One in particular I remember well, a painting of *Nôtre Dame* through a window.

"In the adjacent printroom were the etching press and new prints everywhere. Then the bedroom with the large bed covered by a tan and white cowhide and the bearskin rug next to the bed for his old afghan hound, 'Kazbek,' to sleep on. And into the big modern bathroom with its double wash bowl and tremendous tub. Following us all the time was his friend, Sabartés, who kept shutting doors. Picasso is very sensitive to drafts."

There were other early reports which were published considerably later in magazines. In *Vogue* (October 15, 1944) Lee Miller, the talented American photographer-correspondent published photographs of Picasso in his studio with his sculptures or his friends or standing before the now famous tomato plant on the window sill (she ate one of the tomatoes). One of her photographs shows one of the frequently mentioned ideal heads of an "FFI boy" painted during the period of street fighting—one "of the beautiful faces of the insurgents of Paris" to use Picasso's own words. *Life* (November 13, 1944) reproduced a photograph by Robert Capa of Picasso perched on a high stool with his court about him—Paul Eluard and his wife Nusch, fragile and beautiful, and others of his friends. Emlen Etting, the American painter who wrote his

report for *Art News* (November 1–14), describes with enthusiasm a new portrait of Mme. Eluard by Picasso.

Less familiar to Americans will be John Pudney's report which appeared in the London *New Statesman and Nation* of September 16. Pudney is an R.A.F. Squadron-leader and the author of *Almanack of Hope*, a book of sonnets. A few days after the Liberation Pudney met Picasso at an apartment on the Ile St. Louis (?) overlooking the Seine and drove him to his old studio.

"It seemed funny," Pudney writes, "driving through Paris in a car with Picasso in the other seat. It seemed funny that the journey begun weeks ago in Bayeux and continued through so many battlefields should end upon the left bank with this eager little man pointing out the damage caused in the quarter by the last desperate Germans to fight in Paris. Picasso enjoyed the car ride; not many people were riding round in cars."



Allied Soldiers in Picasso's Studio. Groups of American G.I.'s, on Paris leave, now visit Picasso's studio every Thursday morning. Photo Robert Capa, courtesy Life.

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"In the studio after pointing out his two Matisses [Matisse and Picasso are now very friendly] and his Rousseau they looked at Picasso's own pictures," comparatively objective paintings of the Seine . . . drawings of a pot of growing tomatoes . . . four very exact likenesses of a boy . . . 'A more disciplined art, less unconstrained freedom, in a time like this is the artist's defense and guard,' Picasso said. 'Very likely for the poet it is a time to write sonnets. Most certainly it is not a time for the creative man to fail, to shrink, to stop working. Think of the great poets and painters of the Middle Ages.'

"We looked at larger canvases . . . There stood the big picture finished on August 19 when the fighting started. There were sketches dated day by day during the battle of Paris. On August 24 when Tiger tanks were fighting round the corner of the Boul Mich, when Germans and French Fascists were fortified in the Luxembourg, when the Prefecture just across the river on the Ile de la Cité was a strong point, Picasso glanced at the work by Poussin. As the windows rattled with the fighting he began copying Poussin's design. 'It was an exercise, a self discipline, a healthy fascination . . .' He worked at it throughout the loud, angry day of the liberation on August 25.

"Picasso has quietly collected the Nazi and collaborationist periodicals in which his work has been attacked. His quick remarkable hands turned over the pages which reproduced his work. *Picasso the Jew . . . the decadent Pablo Picasso . . . the obscene pornographer . . .* went the captions. 'And now, at least, that is at an end,' he said simply, allowing for one moment that relief which all intellectual Paris is expressing to show itself in his own face."

Picasso spoke too soon.

## THE "LIBERATION SALON"

On October 6 the *Salon d'Automne* opened. Ordinarily this is the most important of the big annual Paris exhibitions. But the *Salon d'Automne* of 1944 was uniquely significant. Held just six weeks after August 25th, it became the *Salon de la Libération*, the first great public manifestation of painting in France after four years of German domination. Though organized and controlled by French artists the place of honor was given to the Spaniard, Picasso, who alone had the privilege of a large one-man show—74 paintings and five pieces of sculpture, almost all of them done since the occupation of 1940. No greater tribute could be paid the artist who had been for so long a symbol of the Resistance.

Yet two days later, on October 8th, fifteen of Picasso's paintings were taken off the walls by a

crowd shouting "Expliquez! Expliquez!" and, it was reported, scoring the canvases or squirting fountain pen ink at them. Some concluded that the demonstration was a protest against Picasso's having openly affirmed his adherence to the French Communist Party because, as he explained, "the Communists are the bravest" and his friends, both writers and scientists, were already in the party. Others thought the affair was a sudden resurgence of reactionaries or collaborators; still others that artists who had been rejected by the *Salon* were taking their revenge. A very distinguished French writer who has just returned to this country reports that the rioters were actually young communists who did not like the paintings of the new party member no matter how famous.

The facts seem to be, on the surface at least, that a group of young art students, possibly from the *Ecole des Beaux-Arts*, were attacking the chief master of perpetual revolt against academism. In any case it turned out that the paintings had been carefully *décrochés* and no physical damage had been done.

Yet the incident was symptomatic. Four years of poison have had their effect. The Germans and the Pétainists agreed fundamentally about art. As in Germany in 1933, forgotten academicians plucked up courage under Nazi rule. Middle-aged artists like Derain and Vlaminck, whose brilliant early talents had dwindled, and the professional arch-chauvinists of the Camille Mauclair tradition also seem to have joined hands and voices.

"Never," writes the distinguished painter, teacher and defender of French classicism, André Lhote, in *Tricolor* (December 1944), "never was independent art, and especially that art called cubist, exposed to more idiotic annoyances or ridiculed in terms more absurd. Those who defended it saw themselves accused of perverting youth; indeed, they were practically offered hemlock. 'Into the ashcan with Matisse!' and 'To the booby hatch with Picasso!' were the fashionable cries. Rouault and Braque were no more successful; only Bonnard, for some unknown reason, was tolerated. More than ever, there was talk of French clarity, order, and moderation.

"Where did this ridiculous advice come from? What voice blighted the enthusiasm of youth and excommunicated those



The Picasso gallery in the *Salon d'Automne*, October 1944, probably the first view to be published in America. The large canvas *Two Women* was painted about 1942. The sculptured head though never exhibited before was modeled in the early 1930's; the bronze *Cat* at the left is recent. There were 74 paintings and 5 sculptures by Picasso in the "Liberation" Salon. The paintings are hung on triangles, hooks on rods, so that the rioters of October 8th would have found them easy to unhang. Photo Marc Vaux, courtesy Pfc. Jerome Seckler.

elders not yet senile? It was —O Delacroix!—the eternal voice of art criticism. Most of these censors had well learned the lesson (it had been explained to them, had it not?) that modern painting, from van Gogh to those young phalanxes revealed by the galleries of Drouin and France, is the work of madmen and degenerates, and that the health of an artist is measured by the most robust realism of his brush."

These voices of Vichy must have left their mark on many of the young who have come to maturity in the past four years, among them doubtless the students who rioted against the Picassos at the *Salon*. The French middle class public also had had its philistine tastes confirmed and sanctioned during the occupation years and must have resented the attention given Picasso, a modernist and foreigner, in a French exhibition. John Groth tells how he was greeted by whispering and nudging among the other visitors when he was going through the Picasso gallery. His interpreter (who herself did not like the

Picassos) explained to him that the crowd was watching his reaction in embarrassment for fear that he "an American journalist, might think that these paintings were representative of French art."

Picasso has also been attacked from the left, in spite of his politics. *P.M.*'s Paris correspondent (November 13), after praising the Liberation Salon for its paintings of war prisoners, underground meetings and so forth, damns the Picassos for their "sordid, leering faces . . . they did not evoke thrills of pride and sympathy which were the tributes of other pictures. Some people, apparently, did not think they presented France in any true form. On the third day of the exhibition 17 of the pictures were scratched up" etc., etc. And another American critic, an enthusiastic admirer of several communist painters, has written that the new Picassos are "designed with a kind of puerile obscenity."

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Head of Woman. This drawing shows the remarkable freedom and virtuosity of Picasso's recent variations on the "two-faced" head. Dated July 16, 1941 and just bought for the Museum from Pierre Loeb, Havana, it is probably the most recent Picasso in any American collection. Ink, 10 3/8 x 8 3/4".



Still Life with Sheep's Skull. Painted July 10, 1939, less than two months before France declared war. Since then Picasso has painted or modeled a number of skulls, animal and human. Photo Galerie Louise Léiris.

Should "puerile obscenity" happen to recall the phrase "incoherent obscenity" applied to Cézanne by the fascist-minded Mr. Fry one should remember that twenty-five years ago—long before Hitler—Lenin also denounced "the infantile disorders" of the Cubists and Futurists. Recently, when the New Masses published Picasso's communist declaration, it did not praise his new paintings. Artists and writers who are caviar to the public of their own generation can rarely be of much use to totalitarian dictators who usually prefer demagogically to flatter popular prejudices about art. Whatever his political beliefs, Picasso, to judge from his art of the past four years, is clearly unwilling to compromise with esthetic dogma of the right or the left or the democratic center.

#### PICASSO'S POSITION

With such fragmentary information Picasso's position may be summarized only tentatively. His prestige as a heroic symbol of the Resistance Movement is very high but his recent art has not been admired or understood by politicians, conservative or radical. Nor does it yet find favor with the people of Paris who even before the war were possibly less familiar with Picasso's art than were New Yorkers

and are now more retarded after four years of the Nazi-Vichy propaganda described by André Lhote. The collaborationist painters and critics may now be discredited but their campaigns cannot be so quickly neutralized. And conservative opinion will continue to appeal to legitimate national pride as well as to the popular tendency to reject what seems strange, foreign, modern, or "difficult" in art. Thus Bonnard who, in spite of himself was courted by Vichy, and Matisse are put forward as models for the younger generation. With Rouault, they are of course the magnificent old men of French art and, though they are both over seventy-five, they seem to have painted better during the occupation than at any time since they were fifty. Furthermore, their art is "French"—amiable, gay, charming, pretty—a ra-

diance in the darkness of Europe. So, whatever political, psychological or esthetic factors lie back of the nominations, the disparate trio, Picasso, Matisse and Bonnard, seems already elected for a post-Liberation term in the art of Paris. Picasso, as an artist, finds himself in excellent if rather venerable company when he said: "During the oppression and the insurrection I felt . . . that I had to fight not only with painting but with my whole being."

Since the liberation of Paris, Picasso has aroused even more discussion and controversy than before the war. Mr. Barr has assembled the above article in the course of preparing *Picasso: Fifty Years of his Art*, a book based on the exhibition catalog of 1939.



"As the windows rattled with the fighting Picasso began copying a Poussin design," writes John Pudney a week or so after the Liberation of Paris. The original Poussin is *The Triumph of Pan* in the collection of the late Paul Jamot. Photograph by Pfc. Francis Lee.

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## PICASSO AT WORK, AUGUST 1944

By John Groth

Fighting broke out in Paris on August 19th and culminated on the 25th when de Gaulle with French and American troops entered the city. On the same day the American correspondent, John Groth, drove into Paris in the first American jeep. Before evening he had filed the first account of the Liberation, a scoop which was published the next day on the front page of his paper, The Chicago Sun. After a fortnight in Paris he went north with the armies into Germany, sketching the war for Marshall Field Publications. Recently he returned to New York.

On the 27th of August, two days after his grand scoop, Groth went to see Picasso. A few minutes after he had been welcomed by the artist as the "first American," Paul Eluard, the poet, came in carrying a large book to be filled by the leading artists and writers of the Resistance for presentation to General de Gaulle.

Picasso set to work immediately, asking Groth if meanwhile he would like to look through stacks of canvases, his "personal collection," in the little room which he used for drawing. Groth looked at the paintings—but he also kept an eye on the painter.

Groth was present at a scene of historic and sentimental importance—the great artist of the Resistance paying homage to the patriot leader of reborn France. But Groth's description of Picasso at work is also of exceptional, perhaps unique interest in another way: for very few people have ever watched him work and none has given so vivid and detailed an account of that artist-dynamo in action.

A. H. B., Jr.

What impressed me most while watching Picasso was the intense and violent action with which he attacked his work. We were in a room measuring about 12 x 15 feet and, in the clear space before the bookkeeper-like desk on which he worked, Picasso moved about as if he were a bullfighter passing a bull. He would make a few lines on the drawing or lay in a few strokes of wash and step back to look. Sometimes he would place the book on the floor against one of the walls and squat before it or would stand and look down, sometimes edging close to the wall and cocking his head to see it upside down. At other times he would lay the book flat on the floor and walk around it viewing the drawing from all sides. At other times he propped the book against the shelf of the sloped window over the drawing board, and would step back four or five paces. Once he stood on a chair to look at the drawing from a height.

While he worked he smoked and kept putting his heavy, black, horned-rimmed glasses on and off; and he was holding things in his fingers—a cigarette and sometimes the glasses and a pen or brush—all this in his left hand while he worked with his right. On his board was a telephone which rang often while he worked. The phone did not seem to annoy him and he talked animatedly, usually studying the drawing while talking, sometimes adding a line. At intervals he would ask one or two of his friends who were in the large studio to come in and look at the drawing. He would ask their opinion as well as my own. All this time I was making sketches of him,



While Picasso was doing the drawing for de Gaulle, John Groth made sketches of him in lines and words. On these notes were based this drawing and the description which accompanies it.

and he, worrying whether I might be bored—as if that were possible—would point out fresh piles of canvases for me to examine.

Watching him work I had the feeling that I was in a small gymnasium. Picasso was dressed in a light blue shirt tucked into the widest pair of B.V.D. shorts a little man ever wore. Wool socks and sandals were on his feet. He was very brown and very clear-eyed and his hair, mostly on the back of his head, is white. His legs are powerful and he made me think of a six day bike rider who has kept in very good shape.

In working on the drawing he used pen and ink and black wash. At first he laid the drawing in lightly in line and proceeded to build the head in light washes and when these were dry, accent with heavier lines and heavier washes. When the blacks got too heavy he would rub away the dark lines and

washes down to the white of the paper. I feared at times that he would scratch through the paper. Happily he didn't. He handled the drawing or rather sculptured the drawing as if he were modeling it in papier-maché. The girl's head when completed had the monumental quality of the pictures of his classical period. Of course the drawing grew bigger and bigger while he worked and the washes of the background spread onto the opposite page of the book. He was very apologetic about this.

After Picasso had finished the drawing for de Gaulle, and Eluard and his other friends and I had gathered around to watch him sign it, I asked him if he had any message for the artists in America. He hesitated and seemed embarrassed as he walked up and down for a moment while we all waited on his words. "Tell them," he said finally, "to work hard—like me."

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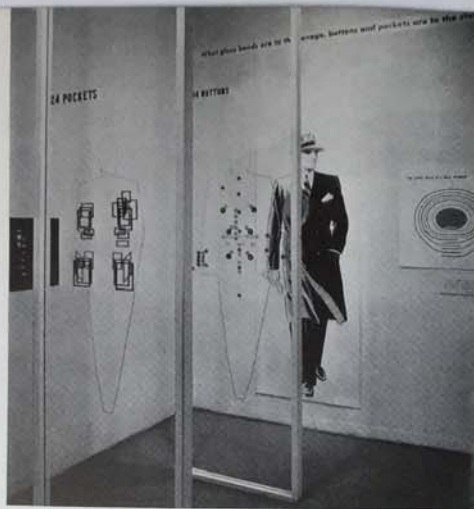
## ARE CLOTHES MODERN?

A Report on the Exhibition  
by Monroe Wheeler

There are very few of us who have not, at one time or another, felt that some of our conventions of dress were absurd or uncomfortable or ugly, and yet little has been done to correct these inadequacies. Most of us go about upon feet unnecessarily deformed by pointed shoes. Most of us wear suits that only approximately fit us—machine-made imitations of hand tailoring—material slashed into many pieces and sewed together again irrespective of the continuity of the design or pattern, difficult to clean, to press, to fold and to pack. And in the way we pad some portions of the body, and expose others, there is neither rhyme nor reason.

A man fully attired with overcoat, for example, has at least thirteen layers of material where his clothes overlap at the waist, and his knotted tie and collar and shirt make twelve layers at his throat, whereas, an inch lower, at his collar bone, there is only one layer of a thin shirt. Because of the impediment of high heels, women trip along out of step with their husbands, no matter how short their husbands may be. Decade after decade the loveliest of them turn from one deformation to another, be it the bustle, the hour-glass waist, the monobosom, or the bosomless concavity of the twenties.

A soldier may go anywhere in summer without the jacket of his uniform, because the Army has decreed that he may, but on the hottest day a civilian, likewise attired in shirt and trousers, will be refused admittance to the best hotels and restaurants. Man has a ludicrous superfluity of buttons—sixty-four of them when he wears an overcoat, and he also has built into his clothing twenty-four pockets which encourage him to complicate his life with their contents. Even the Army and Navy sometimes stoop to folly: in spite of wartime economy, the uniforms of both Wacs and Waves are embellished with fake pockets.



What glass beads are to the savage, buttons and pockets are to the civilized. 24 pockets, 64 buttons. At right: The seven veils of the male stomach (undershirt, drawers, shirt, trousers, vest, coat, overcoat).

These are but a few of the irrational, impractical and often unbeautiful habits of dress which prompted the Museum of Modern Art to undertake the exhibition "Are Clothes Modern?" Mr. Bernard Rudofsky, an architect and designer of international note\* was chosen to direct the exhibition because his fourteen years of research on the subject enabled him to analyze the superstitions and conventions by which we are unconsciously bound, and to clarify the fundamental principles which should govern clothing in a democratic age and country.

\*Bernard Rudofsky, born in Zouchtel, Moravia, in 1905, was graduated in 1928 as architect and engineer from the Polytechnic Academy (Technische Hochschule) of Vienna, and in 1931 received a doctor's degree from the same institution. He practiced architecture in Austria, Germany, Italy and Brazil.

Since 1922 he has traveled extensively in Europe, Asia Minor, North and South America, and has designed stage sets, exhibitions, furniture, shoes and clothing, with exhibitions of architectural photographs and paintings in Europe, North and South America.

A nine-month study trip brought him to the United States in 1935-36. He has been living in New York since 1941, when he took out citizenship papers in this country.

### FOOTWEAR WITHOUT TEARS

"The museum has performed an important role as analyst of modern functional architecture in America; now it aims to do the same thing for everyday garb—the field in which the greatest number of people manifest their esthetic sense, for better or worse. By throwing a glaring spotlight on our clothing customs, which are governed largely by ancient habits and subconscious sensibilities, the museum hopes to shock us into thinking about them." *Newsweek*.

The more helpless a woman, the more attractive she is supposed to be to man. To keep her from moving freely, he hampers her walk with anklets, stilts, hobbleskirts and heels.

"The exhibit obviously reflects one man's thinking and exploration, and it is because this man . . . is a designer, an architect, and an archaeologist who has set out to prove a point, that the exhibit is not only entertaining, but gives validity to his argument."

We don't know any better way of using fabric than cutting it to pieces. These pieces put together in the cabalistic art of the tailor become our clothes.

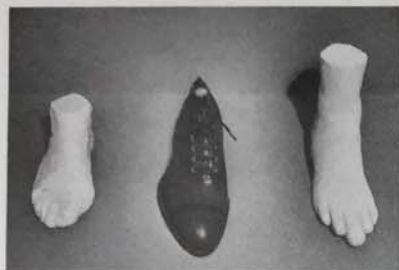
"The Museum of Modern Art does not pretend to solve the problems it raises—it leaves that to the designers—but it does give some pointers. It is these which may scare the lay public away from the whole idea; professionals, though amused at the exaggerations, say the show as a whole, like the weathervane of fashion, points toward the simple and the usable." *Newsweek*.

Period and folk dress have been interminably ransacked for ornamental detail. But their ingenuity and wisdom have yet to be understood.

"What the exhibit does is to supply a scientific basis for such a concept by analyzing the 'why' of clothing and its tremendous effect on our behavior. As such, the Museum's effort is an exciting presentation and a real contribution to the field of apparel design." *The Women's Reporter*.



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The ultimate triumph of contemporary clothing is the symmetrical shoe, our deepest regret is our inability to develop a symmetrical foot.

The exhibition, descriptive and analytical throughout, has no specific dress reform to expound or advocate. Dress is, after all, an aspect of human expression governed largely by ancient habits and subconscious sensibilities. It is the field of everyday choice in which the greatest number of people manifest their esthetic sense, for better or worse. Because of this universal concern, it seemed worth-while to illuminate some of the mysteries of illogical likes and dislikes so that the individual, with increased self-knowledge, may be encouraged to dress economically, sensibly and with esthetic satisfaction.

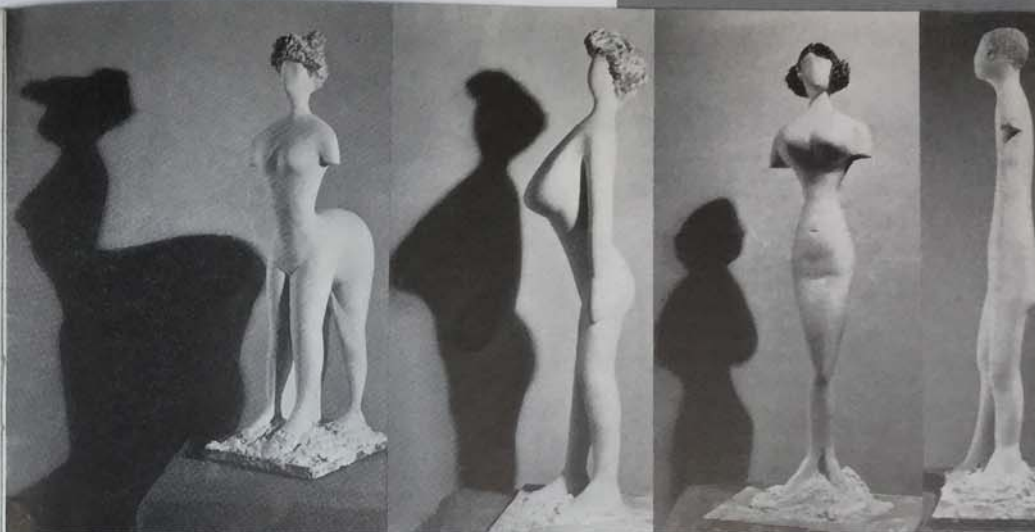
In his presentation, Mr. Rudofsky throws light upon a great number of mystifying, humorous or shocking habits. He shows the present overburdened by the past, a needless waste of materials, and an excess and obsolescence of detail as well as arbitrary or barbarous malformations. In all, it forms a maze of the irrational and the accidental—a maze from which it is time to escape.

The exhibition, installed by Mr. Rudofsky in the first floor galleries of the Museum, is arranged in ten sections which flow imperceptibly into one another: these are The Unfashionable Human Body; Excess and Superfluity; Trousers Versus Skirts; The Desire to Conform; Posture Causes and Effects; The Abuse of Materials; Wisdom in Period and Folk Dress; American Pioneers (Amelia Bloomer and Isadora Duncan); The Revival of the Rational; and The Domestic Background of Modern Clothing.

Four contemporary garments, designed and executed by Irene Schawinsky, are shown as examples of the material. Each of these garments demonstrates that beauty and simplicity of line and fabric transcend the dictates of any period style or fashion. A similar escape from the tyranny of fashion is revealed in a group of sandals and sandal-shoes designed and executed by Mr. Rudofsky himself to conform with the shape of the human foot.



Occident and Orient differ radically in their conceptions of modesty. Cartoon from "Le Rire."



If the female figure lived up to the changing ideals of beauty—(Figures modelled by Constantino Nivola) 1875 - 1904 - 1913 - 1928



Dress made of one rectangle, cut once. Designed and executed by Irene Schawinsky. Photograph by George Platt Lynes.

The exhibition concludes with specially built sections of rooms which suggest ways in which rational clothing might influence our mode of life and eventually our domestic architecture. According to Mr. Rudofsky many of the discomforts of our homes and our furnishings can be traced to obsolescences and inconveniences of our apparel which lag behind our modernism in other things. Why should we wear into our homes the shoes that we wear in unclean streets and roads? Why should we sit about in steam-heated and air-conditioned homes attired, as it were, for a blizzard or a mud-puddle? Is not the spoon of the convict a more practical utensil than the inherited battery of knives and forks? Why should sidewalks for sensitive feet be as hard as the pavement designed for trucks? Today we have resilient materials scarcely less durable than cement and far more comfortable. These and many other improvements are suggested, but tentatively, for Mr. Rudofsky realizes that there can be no progress by main force; it depends upon the imagination and enlightenment and energy of collective humanity. The Museum's purpose in presenting his ideas in this exhibition is to stimulate a fresh and fundamental approach to the problems of apparel.

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## FRENCH FILMS DURING THE OCCUPATION

by Lincoln Kirstein

Perhaps the art to make most progress during the difficult years was the film. In spite of the fact that certain essential necessities, lens, celluloid, camera, and other primary technical means were increasingly difficult to obtain, in spite of the fact that the Vichy-Berlin Propaganda Staffel was ubiquitous, despite the strict elimination of any themes remotely calculated to seem defiant or even resistant, a number of pictures emerged, made mostly in the center or south of France which not only maintained, but indeed enhanced the prestige of the national industry.

From an economic point of view, occupied France had slender means to defend itself, not only against the German films, with their superior technical facilities and distributive resources, but also against the Italian industry. Artistically, the Italian pictures were even poorer than the Nazi. They made some historical pictures with the lavish display of scenery, crowds and costume which has been their national tradition since *Theodora* and *Cabiria*. They had also magnificent natural landscapes, the unhindered use of the Mediterranean seacoast, and directors like Carmine Gallone and Augusto Tenina, who had worked for years in France, who knew French audiences well, and who used one of the best French actors, Michel Simon.

Financially, the smaller provincial film-circuits were always under pressure to use Axis films. American, Russian and British pictures were out of the question. Artistically, the most eminent directors had left France before the disaster, for Hollywood was then already host (although frequently an unsatisfactory one) to René Clair, Jacques Feyder, Jean Renoir, Duvivier, and Cavalcanti was in England. Almost the only well known director of talent was Marcel Carné. His new picture, *Les visiteurs du soir* was acclaimed as a masterpiece which consolidated his already ranking position.

But some new directors developed from the very restrictions that were set up. Perhaps the first interesting picture after 1941 was Louis Daquin's *Nous, les gosses* (We Kids). Jean Dellanoy's *Pontcarral*, starring the superb character-actor Pierre Blanchard (*Le courrier de Lyon*) was a double triumph, patriotic as well as cinematic. The story of an old grognard, a Napoleonic veteran who helped to found the French African empire, it was an insistent and dignified reminder of France's past and future. Other good pictures were *Le ciel est à vous* directed by Jean Gremillon and *Corbeau* (released as *Continental*) by G. H. Clouzot.

One of the new men most frequently praised is Jacques Becker whose *Goupi mains rouges* puts him in a class among the first French directors. *Le mariage de Chiffon* by Claude-Auguste Lara was an excellent picture by an artist who was already fairly well recognized. Marcel l'Herbier, creator of *L'Inhumaine* made one very good comedy, *La nuit fantastique* and while his *L'Honorable Catherine* had some poor parts to it, it was generally praised for its assimilation of an "American" style and timing. The French audiences have been starved for Hollywood. Mediocre pictures which we have forgotten four years ago are now having their debut in the cinemas of the *grands boulevards* and serve as the inexhaustible subjects for serious criticism in the voluminous weeklies which are almost as humorless about them as they were once about *Le Jazz Hot*. Indeed several old musicals are indiscriminately advertised as about to "introduce" *Le Jetterbug* (sic), *remplaceur du Swing*.

Jean Cocteau, the master of *Le sang d'un poète*, for many of us one of the most poignant emotional experiences of the thirties, a film of almost autobiographical tenderness, has made another ingenious dream-picture, *Le baron fantôme*. This, and most of the above mentioned work have, in spite of



*Pontcarral* with Pierre Blanchard and Annie Ducaux. Photo Pathé Cinema, courtesy of the French Motion Picture Division.

their great diversity of mood and subject, a curiously yet understandably close family relationship. With the possible exception of *Pontcarral*, they are escape-films, films of the unreal and fantastic, or the farcical. Since they were never permitted to make any comment upon the atmosphere of the tragedy in which they were created, they maintained the dignity of silence about it, and by their very insolent elegance kept a kind of national arrogance. As the Germans said of the hats and hair-dressing, after the Anglo-American landings, "We don't understand you. For four years we have stepped on your faces, and now you carry the *gueules* of champions."

The evasion of 'reality' in the recent French films was not cowardice but the sole means to keep a continually thwarted expression at least alive. And, as Paul Barbellion, the film critic of "Carrefour" wrote: "This evasion was not a suicide, but a renaissance."

There were, to be sure, some Pétainist propaganda films, which proclaimed the return to the soil, the family and the church which was the dictated program of Vichy. France would be content to be filmed as the cynically impotent comic country or small *pays de province*, so charmingly celebrated in what is now interpreted as the proto-Fascist *La femme du boulanger*, whose author indeed was an eminent if rather passive collaborator.

As for the German films actually shown in France, there is little to be said. The elaborate *Baron Münchhausen* was a demi-pornographic musical intended to display the fine legs of Ilse Werner. The anti-semitic *Jüd Suss* and the anti-British *Oom Paul* were naturally widely screened and widely attended, for a variety of reasons, ranging from a starvation for any kind of visual entertainment to a genuine curiosity to see whether the Germans could produce anything of interest, even in a purely propagandist line.

As for the whole dubious question of Collaboration, it is almost impossible to say much with any real authority. Sacha Guitry was very much compromised, imprisoned in the concentration camp de luxe at Drancy, and recently released due to his ill health. Pierre Fresnay is still there. Danielle Darrieux, and Suzy Prim, her confidante in *Mayerling*, both left with the Germans and are ostensibly enjoying the waters of Baden-Baden. Jean Geran who made propaganda films for the Germans, notably *Forces occultes*, *Le péril juif*, *Le corrupteur* and *Douze heures d'angoisse* which were intended to inform on the old devils, Bolshevism, Judaism and Freemasonry, received five years in prison. At his trial his defense was that he did everything to save his wife, a Jewess.

The Gestapo was less considerate of Harry Baur, one of the greatest European film artists. When his wife saw his body after the final interrogation, she went insane. Sylvain Litkine, a promising actor, was killed by the SS in Lyon. The Germans permitted newsreels to be shown, particularly if they showed swimming-meets, horse-races, boxing-matches or the laying of cornerstones. However after the landings, some pictures of the fighting in Normandy were released, in half-darkened houses, where any slight increase of interest on the part of the audience was a provocation for denunciation. In the town of Etain, near Verdun, some people sufficiently forgot themselves to cheer a line of American prisoners being marched through Paris. The first ten persons leaving the theatre were shot.

On the other hand, Saint-Exupéry, whose *Vol-de-nuit* (Night Flight) made such a good film, both in

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France and in Hollywood, has been unreported after a flight of some months ago. The popular *jeune premier*, Jean Pierre Aumont, is fighting in the French Army. The greatest contemporary artist of French fiction was reported as missing and then as dead. Fortunately he is alive. 'Le Colonel Berger,' is now a Commander of a Brigade, fighting in the Vosges, and Chief of the sectors of Lot, Correze and the Dordogne. The Colonel is André Malraux, who saw this war since its real inception, in China and in Spain. The creator of "Man's Hope" and of "Man's Fate" has made a film called *Sierra de Teruel*\* out of the key episode of *L'Espoir*. It is the rather simple episode of a single bombardment-mission over an enemy airport and its tragic conclusion. It opens with the violent outbreak of insurrection, in a small village, and shifts back and forth with a subtle shuttling of images of clouds, tilled strips of fields, the faces of Andalusian *dinameteros*, with the highly developed style of the new French lyric-realism, softer, more delicate, more subtle than the striking poster-like magnificence of the early Russian classics. It is more a poem than a documentary film.

Malraux recently announced his devotion to the great myths. In this picture he has attempted, in personal terms, to make a general tragedy, more immediate, less decorative than "Guernica." It may not seem entirely strange to our own complacent audiences that the same forces which ripped down Picasso's latest pictures at the *Salon d'Automne* have been successful in preventing any general distribution of Malraux's work, for fear of offending Franco.

The French are deeply interested in the future of their own films. Since our invasion, virtually not a camera has turned, but today every paper is full of new ideas and plans for projects and collaborations, many of which give every evidence of being impressive and successful. Marc Allegret, who worked with Gide on *La croisière noire*, took pictures of the actual liberation of the port of Le Havre, and is now preparing *La belle aventure* and *L'Histoire comique*, with the actor Claude Dauphin.

\* Shown in the Museum auditorium last November in the "Recent Acquisitions" Series.

Jean Paul Sarthe, one of the real talents of the younger generation of writers, composer of a magnificent epitaph on the Resistance, which first appeared in the initial 'open' number of the advance-guard review *Les Lettres Françaises* could not do better than to call one of his proposed films after that noble article, *La république du silence*. Sarthe is also a believer in the contemporary truth of myths, and his plays were actually successfully produced under the occupation, full of local and immediate reference, entirely hidden to the Germans.

Pierre Bost is planning a picture based on a working-class milieu but more lyrical, than purely documentary. *Les enfants du paradis* of Carné is impatiently awaited. It promises the fantastic atmosphere of the theatres of the *Boulevard du Crime*, the home of Deburau and the masters of pantomime. Jacques Becker's *Falbalas* will be a story of the world of *haute-couture*. Robert Bresson is directing *Les dames du Bois de Boulogne*, taken from an episode in Diderot's *Jacques le fataliste*. Jean Aurenche is preparing an adaptation of Stendhal's *Le rouge et le noir*, with Ivan Moskvine, the *Courrier du Czar* in the leading role.

There are several pictures, as there have been many books and plays, whose appearance or subsequent distribution was forbidden by either Pétain or von Stuepnel. *Tempête*, made in 1939, has von Stroheim, the unforgettable Rauffenstein of *Grand illusion* as an international crook of the epoch of 1900. It seems to be a purely commercial film, well done but without any particular interest. *Le chemin de l'honneur* of Jean-Paul Paulin, with Henri Garat is now being presented simultaneously at three Paris first-run houses, but I have not seen it.

M. Langlois, who for long supported "Le Cercle du Cinéma" a society similar to the British and American film circulating clubs, announced the resumption of documentary film-exhibitions of stills and scenarios. A large show will, in the spring, celebrate the tenth anniversary of the founding of the Cinémathèque Française. M. Langlois is responsible also for the safeguarding during the Occupation of an important archive of proscribed films which otherwise would have been lost.

The Russians have sent a large selection of their recent films through the Embassy, and they are receiving a lively response in the large cities. The difficulties of communication make any complete coverage of the provinces out of the question for the time being. It is perhaps economically significant to observe that the British newsreels were shown quicker than any other Allied pictures, including the French. Cavalcanti, the advance-guard director of twenty years ago, although born in São Paolo, has spent three quarters of his life in France, and is now directing a specifically English genre film, *Champagne Charley*, based on an original treatment by J. B. Priestley.

It is interesting to know the names of some of the artists and writers who are responsible for the general tone of the future of French films, apart from the very capable actors. The industry expects some aid from the Provisional Government, as well as private capital. The Syndicate of Scenario-Writers, affiliated with the CGT (*Comité Général des Tra-*

*vailleurs*) has named an Executive Committee. President, Henri Jeanson; Secretary General, Nino Frank; Treasurer, Pierre Bost; Administrative Secretaries, Sauvejean, Aurenche, Prevert, Viot. Seven supplementary administrators have also been named: Jean Cocteau, Pierre Laroche, Georges Neveux, Pierre Lestringuez, Claude-André Puget, Pierre Véry and Bernard Zimmer.

The Committee of National Liberation is making a picture honoring the entire Resistance movement, and particularly the contribution of the *Maquisards*. It is being directed by M. Rouhier, and in the collaboration one finds the names of René Lefèvre, Pierre Blanchard (who is serving as a kind of roving ambassador of the French film industry to England and America), and the actor Claude Dauphin. The receipts of the film will go to the victims of German barbarity.

Perhaps by now you have seen *Paris se libère*, the documentary actually shot under the noses of the SS, and in the midst of the early Parisian street



The F.F.I. in action, from *The Liberation of Paris*. Photo Liberation Committee of the French Cinema.

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fighting. We cannot pretend that these rather fragmentary sequences are in any way commensurate to the essential importance of the events they depict. The Soviets had the far-sightedness to turn over Leningrad to Eisenstein, and his reconstruction of the October Revolution became, for the eyes of the world, newsreel truth of the assumption of Soviet power. But the Paris films are important, they do depict it, some of it at least, and they have an enormous appeal to the political and patriotic sentiment of the entire nation, who sees in the fighting along the quais and boulevards, sights similar to those which occurred in their own town and village.

In Nancy, I happened to be the only American in the theatre for the first showing of *Paris se libère*. The theatre was opposite the Cathedral, and the audience had just come from the All Saints' Day Mass for those fallen in the Resistance. I was sitting next to a widow, with her little boy and girl, neither of whom remembered seeing Paris, although their mother had been born there. At the end of the hour, she was not by any means the only person in tears, but she turned to me, with an unforgettable mask of restrained and mastered suffering and asked, "Tell me, could you do that in Hollywood?"

A final word. The French are famously frank. Four years of individual hell have sharpened their irony and released their creative energies. Their attitude towards the films at the present is wonderfully fresh, interested, responsible and honest. They admit that Pétain, kissing thousands of clean little boyscouts was miraculously photogenic, and that Charles de Gaulle, no matter if he cared, which he certainly does not, cannot look well in front of a camera. And they applaud his impatient gesture, so amusingly caught by the newsreel, on the grand march down the *Champs Elysées* after a thousand bouquets had been tossed or thrust on him, he finally plumped a dozen limp roses (which someone stuck in his long arms) straight behind him, in a gesture which was indeed *peu gracieux*. The General looked as if he were on his way to work. So does the French film.

## MUSEUM NOTES

### APPOINTMENTS

James Johnson Sweeney, well-known writer and lecturer on modern art, has been made Director of the Museum's Department of Painting and Sculpture. Mr. Sweeney has long been associated with the Museum as a member of its Advisory Committee, and has directed and written the catalog for several exhibitions: *African Negro Art*, *Joan Miro and Alexander Calder: Sculpture and Constructions*.

In announcing the appointment John E. Abbott, Executive Vice-President of the Museum, said:

"It is gratifying to have so distinguished a scholar as Mr. Sweeney join the staff of the Museum of Modern Art. As Director of the Department of Painting and Sculpture he will be responsible for all the Museum's acquisitions in those fields as well as in the graphic arts. In a reorganization of the Department of Painting and Sculpture there has been a considerable revision of duties, making the Department head in the future fully responsible for the activities of the Department during his tenure of office."

### ALEXANDER CALDER: A Color Film

First of a series on noted contemporary artists, this ten minute 16mm color film explores the work of Alexander Calder. The spirited gaiety of his mobiles and his ingenious handling of abstract form and movement are admirably suited to the film medium. Commentary written by Agnes Rindge; musical background by Arthur Kleiner. Rental: \$5. per day, plus transportation. Inquire Circulation Director, Museum of Modern Art Film Library.

### NEW COLOR REPRODUCTIONS:

*Christ Mocked by Soldiers* by Georges Rouault, 50-color silk screen, 26½ x 21½" on format 33 x 26"; sale price \$20.00 unframed.

*Rue de Crimée* by Maurice Utrillo, 6-color colotype, 17 x 23" on format 23 x 27"; sale price \$5.50 unframed.

*The Starry Night* by Van Gogh, 6-color colotype, 18 x 23" on format 23 x 27"; sale price \$5.50 unframed.

Members will receive a 25% discount on the above reproductions.

### EXHIBITIONS:

*Power in the Pacific, Battle Photographs of our Navy in Action on the Sea and in the Sky*: Jan. 23-Mar. 18. Directed by Capt. Edward Steichen, U.S.N.R.

*Work from the Holiday Circus*: Jan. 16-Feb. 18, Young People's Gallery.

*Lesson of War Housing*: Jan. 16-Feb. 25. A circulating exhibition (see Nov. '44 Bulletin, pages 2-3) in the Auditorium Galleries.

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POSTSCRIPT TO "PICASSO 1940-44"

On the day the January 1945 Bulletin came off the press it was reported in New York that Picasso had accepted a commission as war artist with the rank of lieutenant in the French Army and would shortly leave for the front. The official account is not so dramatic but nonetheless interesting:

"The French Press and Information Service, An Agency of the Provisional Government of the French Republic. New York, February 10, 1945.  
For immediate release.

"FRENCH PAINTERS MOBILIZE FOR MILITARY ART DUTY - Louis also  
"A first-hand opportunity to record the dynamic themes of war is being offered to a number of French artists, who are to be commissioned as army lieutenants and sent to the front on temporary missions for this new branch of military service. This official department of war art was created at the instigation of General Charles de Gaulle. Picasso, to judge from his art of the past four years, is clearly willing to cooperate with exuberant joy.  
"The army painters, who will be under no obligation to furnish the state with any particular number of paintings or sketches, are to be permitted complete freedom of expression.

"A special committee, headed by Adrienou, widely-known architect, then and assisted by the famous Pablo Picasso, Pierre Dargnes and Georges Fautrier, has been entrusted with the task of choosing these artists."

The writer has received a letter from Virginia Shull, Managing Editor of the New Masses, which is herewith quoted in part:

"I should like to say that I was more than slightly annoyed by the conclusions you drew about New Masses' opinions of Picasso on Page 8 January Bulletin. You imply that because we published a statement by Picasso and did not at the same time accompany it by an express criticism of his exhibition in the Liberation Salon, that we did not approve his new paintings.

"A political statement is a political statement. A critique of an exhibition is quite another thing. It is only fair to us to wait for comment before you impute judgments on our part."

Picasso 1940-1944, published in the January Bulletin, was written some three months after the editors of the New Masses received his manifesto. Now it is five months later and still the New Masses has taken no editorial stand on Picasso's art. If the New Masses does actually approve Picasso's painting

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as exhibited in the Liberation Salon it would be interesting if they would come out and say so - though, one is informed, the New Masses does not ordinarily concern itself editorially with art criticism.

The passage to which Miss Shall refers occurs in paragraphs pointing out the generally hostile attitude toward Picasso's art on the part of critics both of the orthodox left and the right. With its immediate context the sentence reads:

"... twenty-five years ago - long before Hitler - Lenin also denounced 'the infantile disorders' of the Cubists and Futurists. Recently, when the New Masses published Picasso's communist declaration, it did not praise his new paintings. Artists and writers who are caviar to the public of their own generation can rarely be of much use to totalitarian dictators who usually prefer demagogically to flatter popular prejudices about art. Whatever his political beliefs, Picasso, to judge from his art of the past four years, is clearly unwilling to compromise with esthetic dogma ~~for~~ of the right or the left or the democratic center."

The New Masses, however, is to be congratulated on publishing Picasso Explains by Pfc. Jerome Seckler in its March issue. This seems to be a thorough, conscientious and objective report of two conversations with Picasso in which Mr. Seckler asked him at length about the relation between his art and his politics. It is perhaps the longest and most important interview with Picasso since Christian Zervos' excellent Conversation avec Picasso of 1935. We quote several sentences:

"I asked," writes Seckler, "why do you paint in such a way that your expression is so difficult for people to understand?"

"I paint this way," he replied, "because it's a result of my thought. I have worked for years to obtain this result . . . I can't use an ordinary manner just to have the satisfaction of being understood. I don't want to go down to a lower level.

"You're a painter," he continued, "you understand it's quite impossible to explain why you do this or that. I express myself through painting, and I can't explain myself through words. . . ."

And, further on:

"... if I were a shoemaker, Royalist or Communist or anything else, I would not necessarily hammer my shoes in a special way to show my politics."

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Alfred H. Barr, Jr.  
The Museum of Modern Art  
New York 19, N.Y.

Dear Alfred Barr:

I received the bulletin this morning and was delighted with the handling of the Picasso material. The cover, the pictures, the things said all make what I think is an important contribution to Picassoana.

Thank you for the things you said about me. Of course the Museum may have the photograph of the bicycle seat for its collection.

I am leaving for Paris and the war the first of April. If there is anything you would like me to do for you in Paris, or, for that matter, in Berlin, finding out about artists and other art news, I would be happy to do it for you.

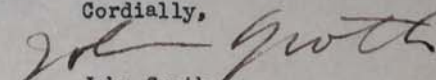
I have been busy during the last two months, drawing pictures and lecturing and am now finishing my book, "Artist in Paris" which Vanguard is publishing early this fall.

At present I am trying to arrange for exhibition of the two hundred drawings I made last summer in the campaign and which will be incorporated into the book. I would like to have them exhibited at the same time as the book is published.

I am going over this time for the Chicago Sun and the American Legion Magazine, also doing assignments for VOGUE, Glamour and FORTUNE. I will spend a good deal of time in my studio in the Rue Boissanadé, finishing up the sketches I will make in the field.

I hope that it will possible for us to get together before I leave.

Cordially,

  
John Groth

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cc: Marshall Field

January 4, 1945  
February 27, 1945

Dear John Groth:

Under another cover I am sending you five copies of our bulletin which includes not only your piece on Picasso but also a quotation from your letter and one of your photographs.

I want to thank you again for your trouble and courtesy in letting us publish the drawing and article. I know that our members will see them with great interest.

I am sending a copy especially to Marshall Field and enclose a carbon of my note to him.

May we keep the little photograph of the Bicycle Seat for our files?

Again many thanks.

Sincerely,

Mr. John Groth  
Parade Publications, Inc.  
400 Lexington Avenue  
New York 17, New York

Mr. John Groth  
61 East 57 Street  
New York 22, N. Y.

AHB:mc

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MURRAY HILL 2311

January 4, 1946

January 3, 1946

Mr. Alfred H. Barr, Jr.  
The Museum of Modern Art  
11 W. 53rd Street  
New York 19, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Groth:

Thank you for Yours of January 3 received. Would beg to  
which you are using in the Bulletin.

inform you that in my preface you are no longer young,  
You ask if there are any changes of suggestion might  
want to bold or lucky, neither are you blue-eyed, greying, or  
over the story. I think I am young, but it  
"young pre-balding. All that is left to the imagination.  
makes me feel different. At least

my secretary thinks so. She doesn't think I am young any  
more, and having behaved for the few years, she doesn't  
think I am bold. However, she does think I am lucky, so  
bowing to my immediate public, my secretary, maybe you can  
get a different word than young, such as Time-like; blue-  
eyed, bearded; greying, romantic; or pre-balding.

Sincerely,

Anyway Mr. John Groth a few anti-Groth suggestions by my  
secretary. I would do the same to her.

Mr. John Groth  
Parade Publication, Inc.  
405 Lexington Avenue  
New York 17, New York

The first page in the book.  
This is the only factual correction I can make.

AHB:bk

I look forward to seeing the Bulletin, and also to seeing  
you again.

Best regards,

*John Groth*

John Groth

30170

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# parade

PARADE PUBLICATION, Inc. • 405 LEXINGTON AVENUE • NEW YORK 17, N. Y.  
MURRAY HILL 6-8171

January 3, 1945

Mr. Alfred H. Barr, Jr.  
The Museum of Modern Art  
11 W. 53rd Street  
New York 19, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Barr:

Thank you for sending me the typewritten copy on my story which you are using in the Bulletin.

You ask me if there are any changes or suggestions I might want to make. There are none that occur to me in reading over the story; however, in the introduction you call me "young, bold and lucky". Maybe so - I hope so - but it makes me sound a little bit different than I am. At least my secretary thinks so. She doesn't think I am young any more, and having behaved for the last few years, she doesn't think I am bold. However, she does think I am lucky, so bowing to my immediate public, my secretary, maybe you can get a different word than young, such as Time-like: blue-eyed, bearded; greying, romantic; or pre-balding.

Anyway, these are just a few anti-Groth suggestions by my secretary. If I could type I would do the same to her.

Actually Picasso wasn't given the first page in the book. The first few pages had already been covered with verse. This is the only factual correction I can make.

I look forward to seeing the Bulletin, and also to seeing you again.

Best regards,

John Groth

JG:ro

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~~December~~  
January 2, 1945

Mr. John Groth  
61 East 57 Street  
New York 22, New York

Dear Mr. Groth:

I attach a copy of your description of Picasso as we plan to run it in our Bulletin.

We expect to make a double page spread with your drawing at the left. Underneath it in italics will be a short note I have written as a preface and then on the right-hand page will be your piece.

Won't you let me know if you want to make any revisions or changes. You'll see that at the top of page 3 of the typescript I interpolated some sentences from your previous letter. I also added a paragraph at the end which paraphrases your description. I hope these changes and additions will be satisfactory.

I am working on a sort of consensus and digest of half a dozen reports about Picasso, some in private letters, some published in English and American papers and magazines. In this I am quoting from your letter to your editor giving you and Parade full credit.

Let me thank you again for your trouble. I greatly enjoyed our conversations and I know that our Members will be very much interested in what you have written and drawn.

Sincerely,

P. S. Won't you please phone me or Miss King if you want any changes made.

P. P. S. I have spoken to Soby about your drawings.

AHB:bk

Encl.

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1.

Reports from Paris - and these are now numerous enough to make a fairly adequate consensus - suggest that while Picasso's art is meeting <sup>with</sup> ~~some hostile~~ ~~severe competition and concerted prejudice~~ in liberated France his position as a central figure of the resistance movement was of unique importance. Though not a Frenchman he stayed in Paris when many leading French artists spent the war quietly in the provinces, fled the country entirely, # or in a few infamous cases remained to "collaborate" with the Germans.

Picasso might easily have accepted invitations to come to this country or Mexico but instead, after the terrible summer of 1940, he returned to Paris. Such audacity must have amazed the Germans for Picasso was conspicuously anathema to Hitler. He was the greatest and most influential living master of "degenerate" art, of Kunstbolschewismus, <sup>his</sup> art which was moreover admired by capitalist collectors, "bourgeois" intellectuals and leftist <sup>painters</sup> ~~editors~~ throughout the hated pluto-democracies"; he was said to have Jewish blood; in his Dreams and Lies of Franco he had savagely lampooned Hitler's faithful Spanish ally; he had accepted an official <sup>appointment</sup> position under the Spanish republican government, the directorship of the Prado; and he had painted Guernica. Yet he returned to Paris and lived there for four interminable years under Nazi rule without recantation or compromise and protected only by his greatness as an artist, which the Germans to give the devils their due were shrewd enough to respect even while they tried to defame him.

During those four years Picasso lived quietly in his left bank studio on the Rue des Grands-Augustins. He was forbidden to exhibit publicly and he made no overt gestures but his very existence in Paris encouraged the Resistance artists and poets who gathered in his studio or about his cafe table. The most famous anecdote of occupied Paris, Picasso's remark to Otto Abetz, may be apocryphal but its bitter, pseudo-deferential mockery well

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illustrates how effectively the artists and intellectuals of Paris made fools of the Nazis. The story has been told many times in many versions yet since some Bulletin readers may not have heard it, it is worth repeating. Not long after the conquest Abetz, the infamous, though cultivated, German agent, called on Picasso to invoke his "collaboration." Picasso received him coldly and the embarrassed Abetz left very shortly. On his way out of the studio he noticed a photograph of the Guernica. "Ah, M. Picasso," he said, adjusting his monocle, "so it was you who did that." "No," replied Picasso as he closed the door, "you did."

Dealer, Jaime Sabartes, friend of fifty years, and Jean Cocteau, poet and artist. He embraced me and invited me to spend the morning with him and his friends. Paris was free again, the Germans gone - and an American 'war artist' in his studio. A few minutes later Paul Eluard, the great surrealist poet and one of the leaders of the resistance writers, came in to ask Picasso to do a drawing for a book to be presented to de Gaulle who had just entered Paris. Groth has written especially for the Bulletin (page ) an extraordinarily interesting description of Picasso at work on this drawing, which consumed most of his time while Groth was in the studio. Picasso and his friends were eager for news of America and their friends here in New York. With difficulty Groth was able to get in a few questions himself.

"I asked about the Germans and their treatment of modern art. Also, what they thought of his work. For reply to that question he pulled a book out from under one of the piles of books of reproductions of his works. The title was "Decadent art under the reign of democracy and communism" - the author: John Newling Fry. It was printed since the occupation and was distributed by the Germans. His "Young lady with the Cook's Head" (Mus. Garro collection) was the frontispiece and the Guernica mural (Museum of Modern Art, New York) the center spread. He pointed out, in the book, reproductions of paintings by Medigliani and Bonomi, and, two by Jacob Epstein and Carl

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1.

Since the liberation of Paris Picasso has been very much in the news. The artist, John Groth, was the first American newspaper man to see him. That was on August 27th only two days after the German commander surrendered and there was still fighting in many parts of Paris. A few days later on August 31 Groth found time to write his editor C. Philip Barber of The Chicago Sun an account of his visit to Picasso's studio. "Feeling like a high school science teacher visiting Albert Einstein" he found Picasso in his studio at 7 rue des Grands Augustins. "I saw 'The Old Woman' and 'the clumsy, incoherent, vulgar ~~obscure~~' He was deep in conversation with Louis Carré, his dealer, Jaime Sabartes, friend of fifty years, and Jean Cocteau, poet and artist. . . . He embraced me and invited me to spend the morning with him and his friends. . . . Paris was free again, the Germans gone - and an American 'war artist' in his studio." A few minutes later Paul Eluard, the great surrealist poet and one of the leaders of the resistance writers, came in to ask Picasso to do a drawing for a book to be presented to de Gaulle who had just entered Paris. Groth has written especially for the Bulletin (page ) an extraordinarily interesting description of Picasso at work on this drawing, which consumed most of his time while Groth was in the studio. Picasso and his friends were eager for news of America and their friends here in New York. With difficulty Groth was able to get in a few ~~questions~~ <sup>questions</sup> himself.

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la

Miller, also, several by Americans: Jack Levine, Ella Walters, and two Chicagoans: Raymond Bravin and Rainey Bennett. He was amused in the architecture section at the inclusion of the Museum of Modern Art and the E.C.A. building of New York. Also greatly amused by the two facing pages of reproductions of paintings by Ingres and Cézanne. The Ingres, "La  
 \* Mr. Fry is also the author of "The Revolt Against Beauty" written in 1934 (a copy is in the Museum's Library. In it he assaults "the stupid half-baked struggles of Van Gogh" and "the clumsy, incoherent, vulgar obscenity of Cézanne's painting. He condemns Manet and ~~the~~ Impressionism, but lauds "such painters as Paul Baudry, Bastien-Lepage, Gérôme, Henner - the brilliant galaxy which made the period of the seventies and eighties one of the greatest in the history of art." It is wonderful to think that Mr. Fry (who must indeed have proved useful in the Nazi propoganda of Hitlerian esthetics) may still be alive in 1945. He hoped that Derain would be punished - short.

Picasso then invited me to tour his studios with him. On the first floor is a huge grand-central-like studio in which he does his sculpture. With great delight he asked me what a particular piece of sculpture was. It was obviously meant to be the head of a deer or antelope. He took it apart and showed me that it was made of the seat and handle bars of an old bicycle. There were several other such pieces, one, a bird made of parts from a child's coaster.

We spent some time in the painting studio, the walls lined with stacks of work done since the war. . . still lifes and series of small mosaic-like views of Paris. One in particular I remember well, a painting of Notre Dame through a window.

In the adjacent printroom the etching press and new prints everywhere. Then the bedroom with the large bed covered by a tan and white quilt and the bearskin rug next to the bed for his old afghanhound, "Kashob."

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2.

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I asked him what he had been doing during the street fighting of a few days ago. As a graphic answer he showed me a series of studies of a boy's head done in the "Blue" period manner. He said he had done them during the fighting <sup>one</sup> each day of the fighting.

I asked him of the collaborationists among the painters. The only one he named was Derain. He grew very excited in telling of Derain's visit to Weimar to shape the hand of Hitler. He said he hoped that Derain would be punished - short.

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34.

sleeps. And into the big modern bathroom with its double wash bowl and tremendous tub. Following us all the time was his friend, Jaime, who kept shutting doors. Picasso is very sensitive to drafts. wired by its correspondent Peter D. Whitney from Paris on September 1 st. Whitney reported Picasso "safe and in the best of health" though for "four years he has been...cold and ill-fed." Picasso showed Whitney as he had Groth the book Decadent Art with its double page reproduction of Guernica.

"Decadence, eh?" Picasso said softly. "Do you know Hitler himself once did me the honor of naming me in one of his speeches as a wicked corrupter of youth? So for four years, I have been personally forbidden to show or sell my works."

"They let me alone mostly, and, of course, I have kept on working as you can see," he said. "The Gestapo has been here three or four times nosing around, but they found nothing, even though most of my friends are Resistance members. The last time was only a month ago."

"You know Gertrude Stein is a very good friend of mine. It is believed she tried to escape when the Germans removed the Jewish population of Paris in 1942, but was captured near the Swiss border. But I've looked after her apartment down the road and her furniture in spite of the Gestapo."

"I have not painted the war," said Picasso quietly, "because I am not the kind of a painter who goes out like a photographer for something to depict. But I have no doubt that the war is in these paintings I have done. Later on perhaps the historians will find them and show that my style has changed under the war's

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Influence. Myself The San Francisco Chronicle ran what was probably the first published interview with Picasso wired by its correspondent Peter D. Whitney from Paris on September 1 st. Whitney reported Picasso "safe and in the best of health" though for "four years he has been...cold and ill-fed." Picasso showed Whitney as he had Groth the book Decadent Art with its double page reproduction of Guernica.

" 'Decadence, eh?' Picasso said softly. 'Do you know Hitler himself once did me the honor of naming me in one of his speeches as a wicked corrupter of youth? So for four years, I have been personally forbidden to show or sell my works.' 'You know, I think 'They let me alone mostly, and, of course, I have kept on working as you can see,' he said. 'The Gestapo has been here three or four times nosing around, but they found nothing, even though most of my friends are Resistance members. The last time was only a month ago.' 'In Young (October 15, 1940) Look Miller the brilliant" ' You know Gertrude Stein is a very good friend of mine. It is believed she tried to escape when the Germans removed the Jewish population of Paris in 1942, but was captured near the Swiss border. But I've looked after her apartment down the road and her furniture in spite of the Gestapo.'

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influence. Myself, I do not know." (13, 1944) published a photograph by R. Whitney, also found Picasso in no unforgiving mood toward the collaborators. He was glad that Abel Bonnard and Abel Hermant had just been suspended from the French Academy. "But what," he asked, "of the rest of the collaborators?" He then spoke bitterly of Vlaminck who had been one of his friends but who, he said, had denounced Picasso during the occupation as a Jewish degenerate.

When Whitney asked Picasso if he would ever visit America, the artist answered: "I would like to go there."

"My work has been here, and when I could afford it, I was always too busy but now I think I would like to go there. You know, I think many of us who have been content with living in Paris in the old days will suddenly start traveling. It is the natural reaction against these four years of oppression."

There were other early reports which were published considerably later in magazines. In Vogue (October 15, 1944) Lee Miller the brilliant English photographer-correspondent published photographs of Picasso in his studio with his sculptures or his friends or standing before the now famous tomato plant on the window sill (she ate one of tomatoes). Emlin Etting the American painter wrote his story for Art News "...four very exact likenesses of a boy..."

"A more disciplined art, less unstrained freedom, in a time like this is the artist's defense and guard," Picasso said. "Very likely for the poet it is a time to write sonnets. Most certainly it is not a time for the creative man to fail, to shrink, to stop working. Think of the great poets and painters of the Middle Ages."

"We looked at larger canvases... There stood the big picture finished on August 19 when the fighting started."

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There were also. Later Life (November 13, 1944) published a photograph by Robert Capa of Picasso perched on a high stool with his court about him - Paul Eluard and his wife Nusch, fragile and beautiful, and other of his friends. Less familiar to Americans will be John Pudney's report which appeared in the London New Statesman and Nation of September 16. A few days after the Liberation Pudney met him at his new apartment on the Ile St. Louis (?) overlooking the Seine and drove him to his old studio. "It seemed funny," Pudney writes, "driving through Paris in a car with Picasso in the other seat. It seemed funny that the journey begun weeks ago in Bayeux and continued through so many battlefields should end upon the left bank with this eager little man pointing out the damage caused in the quarter by the last desperate Germans to fight in Paris. Picasso enjoyed the car ride; not many people were riding ~~about~~ round in cars." In the studio after pointing out his two Matisses and his Rousseau they looked at Picasso's own pictures, "comparatively objective paintings of the Seine... drawings of a pot of growing tomatoes...four very exact likenesses of a boy..." "A more disciplined art, less unconstrained freedom, in a time like this is the artist's defence and guard," Picasso said, "Very likely for the poet it is a time to write sonnets. Most certainly it is not a time for the creative man to fail, to shrink, to stop working. Think of the great poets and painters of the Middle Ages." "

"We looked at larger canvasses... There stood the big picture finished on August 19 when the fighting started.

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There were sketches dated day by day during the battle of Paris. On August 24 when Tiger tanks were fighting round the corner in the Boul Mich, when Germans and French Fascists were fortified in the Luxembourg, when the Prefecture just across the river on the Ile de la Cite was a strong point, Picasso glanced at a work by Poussin. As the windows rattled with the fighting he began copying Poussin's design. 'It was an exercise, a self discipline, a healthy fascination...' He worked at it throughout the loud, angry day of the liberation on August 25."

Picasso "has quietly collected the Nazi and collaborationist periodicals in which his work has been attacked. His quick remarkable hands turned over the pages which reproduced his work. Picasso the Jew...the decadent Pablo Picasso... the obscene pornographer... went the captions. 'And now, at least, that is at an end,' he said, simply allowing for one moment that relief which all intellectual Paris is expressing to show itself in his own face."

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The "Liberation Salon" incident was symptomatic. Four years of German occupation have had Picasso spoke too soon, and the Petainists agreed fundamentally. On October 6th the Salon d'Automne opened. Ordinarily, this is the most important big annual exhibition in Paris. But the Salon d'Automne of 1944 was uniquely important. Held just six weeks after August 25th it became the Salon de la Liberation the first great public manifestation of French painting after four years of German domination.

Though organized and controlled by French artists the place of honor was given to the Spaniard, Picasso, who alone had the privilege of a large one-man show -- 74 paintings and five pieces of sculpture, all of them done since the occupation of 1940. No greater tribute could be paid the artist who had been for four years a symbol of the Resistance. were the fashionable cries.

Result and Brawl Two days later on September 3th, fifteen of some of Picasso's paintings were taken off the walls by a crowd shouting "Expliquez! Expliquez!" and, some reported, scratching the canvases or squirting fountain pen ink at them. Some concluded that the demonstration was a protest against Picasso's having openly affirmed his adherence to the French Communist Party which had so often been the spearhead of the Resistance. Others thought it was a sudden resurgence of reactionaries or collaborators, others that artists who had been rejected by the Salon were taking their revenge. The facts seem to be, on the surface at least, that a group of young art students, probably from the Ecole des Beaux-Arts were attaching the chief master of the perpetual revolt against academism. In any case it turned out that the paintings had been carefully decroches and no physical damage had been done.

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the Salon. Yet the incident was symptomatic. Four years of poison have had their effect. The Germans and the Petainists agreed fundamentally about modern art, just as in Germany in 1933 senile academicians plucked up courage, middle aged artists like Derain and Vlaminck whose once modern talents had dwindled and the professional art-patriots of the Camille Mauclair tradition joined hands and voices. The American expatriate, John Hemming Fry, seems to have been one of the most rabid. "Never," writes Andre Lhote, "was independent art, and especially that art called cubist, exposed to more idiotic annoyances or ridiculed in terms more absurd. Those who defended it saw themselves accused of perverting youth; indeed, they were practically offered hemlock. 'Into the ashcan with Matisse!' and 'To the booby hatch with Picasso!' were the fashionable cries. Roualt and Braque were no more successful; only Bonnard, for some unknown reason, was tolerated. More than ever, there was talk of French clarity, order, and moderation.

"Where did this ridiculous advice come from? What voice blighted the enthusiasm of youth and excommunicated those elders not yet senile? It was - O Delacroix! - the eternal voice of art criticism. Most of these censors had well learned the lesson (it had been explained to them, had it not?) that modern painting, from Van Gogh to those young phalanxes revealed by the galleries of France and Drouin, is the work of madmen and degenerates, and that the health of an artist is measured by the robust realism of his brush." These voices of Vichy have left their mark on many of the young who have come to maturity in the past five years, who among them doubtless the students who rioted against the Picassos at

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When the Nazis published Picasso's communist declaration, it did not  
 the Salon. The French middle class public had also had its  
 philistine tastes flattered during the occupation years and must  
 have resented the attention given Picasso a modernist and  
 foreigner in a French exhibition.

Picasso's position may be summarized somewhat as follows. His prestige as a heroic symbol of the resistance  
 movement in art is very high but his art is not  
 followed by politicians, conservatives or radicals. He has  
 not found favor with the Parisian public which  
 was less familiar with Picasso's art than was the  
 public and is now even more retarded after four years of  
 Nazi propaganda.

John Groth tells how he was greeted by whispering  
 and nudging among the other visitors when he was going through the  
 Picasso gallery. His interpreter (who herself did not like the  
 Picassos) explained to him that the crowd was watching his reaction  
 in embarrassment for fear that he "an American journalist, might  
 think that these paintings were representative of French art."

Picasso has also been attacked from the left, in  
 spite of his politics. P.M.'s Paris correspondent (November 13)  
 after praising the Liberation Salon for its pictures of war  
 prisoners, underground meetings and so forth damns the Picassos  
 for their "sordid, leering faces...they did not evoke thrills of  
 pride and sympathy which were the tributes of other pictures.  
 Some people, apparently, did not think they presented France in  
 any true form. On the third day of the exhibition 17 of the  
 pictures were scratched up" etc. etc. And another American  
 communist critic, an enthusiastic admirer of the Mexican/painter Siqueiros,  
 has written that the new Picassos are "designed with a kind of  
 puerile obscenity."

Twentyfive years ago Lenin denounced "the infantile  
 disorders" of the "leftist" Cubists and Futurists in Russia.  
 A dozen years ago Stalinists were embarrassed by their surrealist  
 adherents. Vanguard artists and writers, caviar to their own  
 generation, can never be much use to totalitarian dictators who  
 must flatter, whenever possible, popular prejudices about art.

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When New Masses published Picasso's communist declaration, it did not praise his painting. Whatever his political beliefs, Picasso as an artist is clearly unwilling to compromise with totalitarian dictates whether from the right or the left.

Picasso's position may be summarized somewhat as follows. His prestige as a heroic symbol of the Resistance Movement in art is very high but his art is not admired or understood by politicians, conservatives or radicals. His recent art does not find favor with the Parisian public which even before the war was less familiar with Picasso's art than was the New York public and is now even more retarded after four years of German-Vichy propaganda.

Political or psychological factors lie back of the nominations, the trinity, Picasso, Matisse and Braque, seems already elected for the post-liberation period in the art of Paris. Picasso finds himself in excellent if rather venerable company.

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such as is described by Andre Lhote. The collaborationist painters and critics may now be discredited but their campaigns cannot be so quickly neutralized especially as the reactionaries, old and young, will continue to appeal to legitimate national pride as well as to the popular tendency to reject what seems strange, foreign or "difficult" in art. Thus Bonnard who, in spite of himself was courted by Vichy, and Matisse are put forward as models for the younger generation. With Rouault they are of course the magnificent old men of French art and, though they are both over 75, they seem to have painted better during the occupation than at any time since they were fifty. So, whatever political or psychological factors lie back of the nominations, the trinity, Picasso, Matisse and Bonnard, seems already elected for the post-Liberation period in the art of Paris. Picasso finds himself in excellent if rather venerable company.

ital  
8  
↓

to be filled by the leading artists and writers of the Resistance for presentation to General de Gaulle.

Picasso was given the floor, the place of honor, and sat to work immediately, asking Groth if meanwhile he would like to look through stacks of canvases, his "personal collection," in the little room which he used for drying. Groth looked at the paintings - but he also kept an eye on painter.

Groth was present at a scene of historic and sentimental importance - the great artist of the Resistance paying homage to the patriot leader of France. But the following description of Picasso at work is also of exceptional, perhaps unique interest. For very few people have ever watched

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1.

has work and more has given a vivid and detailed account of that artist -  
 PICASSO AT WORK, AUGUST 1944

or

PICASSO DRAWS FOR DE GAULLE *such while watching Picasso was the intense*  
~~written for the Bulletin by John Groth~~ *ed his work. The room in which I*

*Room 10*  
*etal*  
*8'*  
*↓*

*was about 12 x 18 feet and in the clear space before the*  
 Fighting broke out in Paris on August 19th <sup>and</sup> culminating on the 25th <sup>ed</sup>  
 when de Gaulle with French and American troops entered the city. On the  
 same day the American artist correspondent, John Groth, young, bold and  
lucky, drove into Paris in the first American jeep. Before evening he  
 had filed the first account of the Liberation, a scoop which was published  
 the next day on the front page of his paper, The Chicago Sun. After a  
 fortnight in Paris he went north with the armies into Germany, sketching  
 the war for Marshall Field Publications. Recently he returned to New York.

On the 27th of August, two days after his grand scoop, Groth went  
 to see Picasso. A few minutes after he had been welcomed by the artist  
 as the "first American," Paul Eluard, the poet, came in <sup>carrying</sup> with a large book  
 to be filled by the leading artists and writers of the Resistance for pre-  
 sentation to General de Gaulle. *and a pen or brush - all this in his*

Picasso ~~was given the first page, the place of honor, and~~ set to work  
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 of canvases, his "personal collection," in the little room which he used  
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 painter. *the large studio to come in and look at the drawing. He would ask*

Groth was present at a scene of historic and sentimental importance -  
 the great artist of the Resistance paying homage to the patriot leader of  
 reborn France. But <sup>Groth's</sup> the following description of Picasso at work is also  
 of exceptional, perhaps unique interest, <sup>in another way:</sup> for very few people have ever watched

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him work and none has given a vivid and detailed account of that artist-dynamo in action.

*Roman, 10*

What impressed me very much while watching Picasso was the intense and violent action with which he attacked his work. The room in which ~~we were~~ *we were* watched him measured about 12 x 15 feet and in the clear space before the bookkeeper-like desk on which he worked he moved about as if he were a bullfighter passing a bull. He would make a few lines on the drawing or lay in a few strokes of wash and step back to look. Sometimes he would place the book on the floor against one of the walls and squat before it or would stand and look down, sometimes edging close to the wall and cocking his head to see it upside down. At other times he would lay the book flat on the floor and walk around it viewing the drawing from all sides. At other times he propped the book against the shelf of the sloped window over the drawing board, and would step back four or five paces. Once he stood on a chair to look at the drawing from a height.

While he worked he smoked and kept putting his heavy, black, horned-rimmed glasses on and off; and he was holding things in his fingers - a cigarette and sometimes the glasses and a pen or brush - all this in his left hand while he worked with his right. On his board was a telephone which rang often while he worked. The phone did not seem to annoy him and he talked animatedly, usually studying the drawing while talking, sometimes adding a line. At intervals he would ask one or two of his friends who were in the large studio to come in and look at the drawing. He would ask their opinion as well as my own. All this time I was making sketches of him, and he, worrying whether I might be bored - as if that were possible - would point out fresh piles of canvases for me to examine.

Watching him work I had the feeling that I was in a small gymnasium.

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December 30, 1944

Picasso was dressed in a light blue shirt tucked into the widest pair of B.V.D. shorts a little man ever wore. Wool socks and sandals <sup>were</sup> on his feet. He was very brown and very clear-eyed and his hair, mostly on the back of his head, is white. His legs are powerful and he made me think of a six day bike rider who has kept in very good shape.

In working on the drawing he used pen and ink and black wash. At first he laid the drawing in lightly in line and proceeded to build <sup>the</sup> head in light washes and when these were dry, accent with heavier lines and heavier washes. When the blacks got too heavy he would rub away the dark lines and washes down to white of the paper. I feared at times that he would scratch through the paper. Happily he didn't. He handled the drawing or rather sculptured the drawing as if he were modeling it in paper-mache. The girl's head when completed had the monumental quality of the pictures of his classical period. Of course the drawing grew bigger and bigger while he worked and the washes of the background spread onto the opposite page of the book. He was very apologetic about this.

After Picasso had finished the drawing for de Gaulle, and Eluard and his other friends and I had gathered around to watch him sign it, I asked him if he had any message for the artists in America. He hesitated and seemed embarrassed as he walked up and down for a moment while his court waited on his words. "Tell them," he said finally, "to work hard - like me."

While he worked he smoked and kept putting his heavy, black, horned-rimmed glasses on and off and he was holding things in his left fingers - a cigarette, sometimes the glasses and a pen or wash - all this in his left hand while he worked with his right. On his board was a telephone which rang often while he worked. The phone did not seem to annoy him and he talked calmly, usually studying the drawing while talking, sometimes adding a line. At intervals he would ask one or two of his friends who were in the large studio to come in and look at the drawing. He would ask their opinion as well as my own. All this time I was making sketches of his work worrying whether I might be bored - as if that were possible - he would point out certain places which I would collect for me to examine. Watching his work I had the feeling that I was in

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Groth

December 20, 1944

Mr. Alfred Barr, Director  
Museum of Modern Art  
New York, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Barr:

Here are some of the notes on Picasso at work that you asked me to send you. In the manuscript I sent you recently I covered most of the action that took place in Picasso's studio. Some of this might duplicate but I think I will be able to drain my mind of the rest of my recollections.

I enjoyed having you to my studio and having lunch with you. I hope we can do so again soon.

Best regards,

John Groth

~~copy~~  
copy  
↓

What impressed me very much while watching Picasso work was the intense and violent action with which he attacked his work. The room in which I watched him at work measured about 12x15 feet and in the space that was clear before the bookkeeper-like desk on which he worked and which was ringed by stacks of canvases that he called his personal collection, he moved about as if he were a bullfighter passing a bull. He would make a few lines on the drawing or lay in a few strokes of wash and step back to look. Sometimes he would place the book on the floor against one of the walls and squat before it or would stand and look down, sometimes edging close to the wall and cocking his head to see it upside down. At other times he would lay the book flat on the floor and walk around it viewing the drawing from all sides. At other times he propped the book against the shelf of the sloped window over the drawing board, and would step back four or five paces. Once he stood on a chair to look at the drawing from a height. While he worked he smoked and kept putting his heavy, black, horned-rimmed glasses off and he was holding things in his fingers -- a cigarette and sometimes the glasses and a pen or brush -- all this in his left hand while he worked with his right. On his board was a telephone which rang often while he worked. The phone did not seem to annoy him and he talked animatedly, usually studying the drawing while talking, sometimes adding a line. At intervals he would ask one or two of his friends who were in the large studio to come in and look at the drawing. He would ask their opinion as well as my own. All this time I was making sketches of him, and he, ~~was~~ worrying whether I might be bored -- as if that were possible -- he would point out certain piles from his collection for me to examine. Watching him work I had the feeling that I was in

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of canvases

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a small gymnasium. In his costume of shirt and shorts he looked like a retired bullfighter.

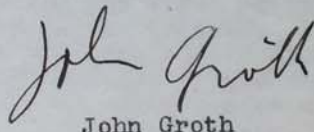
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In working on <sup>the</sup> drawing he used pen and ink and black wash. At first he laid the drawing in lightly in line and proceeded to build a head in light washes and when these were dry accent with heavier lines and heavier washes. When the blacks got too heavy he would ~~scratch~~ away <sup>rub</sup> the dark lines and washes down to white of the paper. I feared at times that he would scratch through the paper. Happily he didn't. He handled the drawing or rather sculptured the drawing as if he were modeling it in paper maché. The girl's head when completed had the monumental quality of the pictures of his classical period. Of course the drawing grew bigger and bigger while he worked and the washes of the background spread onto the <sup>opposite</sup> other page of the book. He was very apologetic about this.

Dear Mr. Barr:

I have a feeling on glancing over the above that it isn't as good as I would like to have made it, but it's just about all I can remember other than what was in the original script I sent you. I forgot to mention that he made a very fast line sketch of me but didn't offer to exchange sketches. I was too modest to suggest it. He asked to see the sketches I made of him and seemed to like them. He showed my sketch book to his friends. Before I left his workroom I asked him if he would sell me a small painting of a bullfight which I liked and wanted very much to own. The jubilation and happiness of the liberation of Paris didn't make him any less a business man. He gave me his dealer's card. I hope this will be enough material.

Best regards again,

  
John Groth

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The following material from a letter dated August 31, 1944 to Mr. C. Philip Barber, Managing Editor, Parade Publication, Inc. The date of the Picasso visit was August 27, 1944.

The emotions I felt as a reporter in being the first to reach Paris were equaled by the emotions I felt as an artist to be the first artist to come back to Paris and to be the first artist to return to the Montmartre and to the Montparnasse. To visit the galleries and the art shops and to meet the artists and, most of all, to greet Picasso and to be able to spend several hours with him. The war has moved past Paris, so I as an artist of the war must follow. The few days in liberated Paris were a happy interlude of a sort for me.

I found that the studios and galleries are full of new and exciting work and that a new and exciting group of new artists have come into being. The German occupation has not stifled the art of Picasso, Matisse and Bonnard anymore than the revolutions of 1830-1848 stifled the art of Daumier, Delacroix and Manet. The war and revolution of 1870 that of Courbet, Cezanne, and Monet; or the first World War that of Picasso, Modigliani, and Matisse. In fact, the German occupation helped - in a reverse manner - in that the hate of the artists for the Germans and their refusal to sit with Germans in the cafes kept them closer to their studios and their painting; the Germans came to Paris as the "Protectors" of French culture and did nothing to interfere with the artists, aside from the stopping of several exhibitions and the printing of anti "Degenerate" art pamphlets. At the Galerie De France in the Faubourg St-Honore I saw the work of the new group born since 1940. A resistance group - a sort of F.F.I. of the artists. Their spiritual leader is Bonnard. Their leader: Edouard Pignon, 34, his work having the Matisse-like pattern.

Imagine my feelings in being the first artist to visit Pablo Picasso (the most famous living artist). I felt like a high school science teacher visiting Albert Einstein. I found the sixty-three year old Spaniard in his studio in the Rue Des Augustins. He was deep in conversation with Louis Carre, his dealer (Gallery in Sherry Netherland, New York, 1939), Jaime Salabris, friend of fifty years and Jean Cocteau, poet, artist. I was presented to Picasso as the first American to "come back." He embraced me and invited me to spend the morning with him and his friends. I asked if I could interview him. He consented saying that ordinarily he didn't like interviews, but, today, was different - Paris free again - the Germans gone and the Americans in Paris and an American "artist of war" in his studio.

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I had been in the studio only a few moments when Paul Eluard, poet, leader of resistance poets came in with a large book, which he said was to be presented to General de Gaulle by the resistance writers, poets and artists. Wouldn't Picasso cover a page with a drawing? Picasso took the book and motioning me to follow took me into his "drawing" room where I was privileged to watch him make the painting and to go through the stacks of new canvases lining all of the walls. Picasso laid the book on a high table, like an old bookkeeper's desk, and proceeded to work. He worked standing and in the relaxed costume he was wearing (light blue shirt tucked into the widest pair of B.V.D. shorts a little man ever wore, they kept twisting into his anatomy. Wool socks and sandals on his feet. He was very brown and very clear eyed and the hair, mostly on the back of his head, is white. His legs are most powerful and watching him stepping back and forth quickly as he worked and looked at the drawing from different angles he reminded me most of a six day bike rider, from Europe, who has kept in very good shape. From time to time he stopped to let the glazes of black wash he was using (on the classical girl's head he was painting in the book for de Gaulle) to dry. His friends would then come into the room and we would talk. It seemed as if they were interviewing me as they were very eager for news of America and of artists they hadn't seen for four years and my guess as to when the war would end, etc. instead of me interviewing Picasso. However, I did get Picasso to talk of several things I think worth passing on. I asked about the Germans and their treatment of modern art. Also, what they thought of his work. For reply to that question he pulled a book out from under one of the piles of books of reproductions of his works. The title was "Decadent art under the reign of democracy and communism" - the author: John Hemming Fry. It was printed since the occupation and was distributed by the Germans. His "Young Lady with the Cock's Head" (Mad. Carré collection) was the frontispiece and the Guernica Mural (Museum of Modern Art, New York) the center spread. He pointed out, in the book, reproductions of paintings by Modigliani and Roualt, sculpture by Jacob Epstein and Carl Milles. Also, several of Americans: Jack Levine, Ella Walters, and two Chicagoans: Raymond Brignin and Rainy Bennett. He was amused in the architecture section at the inclusion of the Museum of Modern Art and the R.C.A. building of New York. Also greatly amused by the two facing pages of reproductions of paintings by Ingres and Cézanne. The Ingres, "La Source," the good art (to the Germans), and Cézanne's "Nude Woman," the degenerate art.

I asked him what he had been doing during the street fighting of a few days ago. In his, now-graphic, answer he showed me a series of studies of a boy's head done in the "Blue" period manner. He said he had done them during the fighting. ~~Done~~ one each day of the fighting.

I asked him what he had been doing during the street fighting of a few days ago. In his, now-graphic, answer he showed me a series of studies of a boy's head done in the "Blue" period manner. He said he had done them during the fighting. Done one each day of the fighting.

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I asked him of the collaborationists among the painters. The only one he named was Derain. He grew very excited in telling of Derain's visit to the Wilemar to shake the hand of Hitler. He said he hoped that Derain would be punished - shot.

Back in the "drawing" room again, the first washes were dry by now and Picasso began delineating with the pen and after that the wash again for "greater volume" in the head. Getting some of the parts of the head too black, he used his fingers to rub the page down to the white paper. Again the washes and then the pen. At last he finished and signed it with all of us standing about him. He apologized for the drawing spilling over onto the facing page. Also, for the wash that had trickled through the book. The drawing had all the monumental quality of Picasso's best classic period. If a photograph were made of the little painting you could imagine it many times its actual size.

Picasso then invited me to tour his studios with him. On his first floor (second floor of the 18th cent. house) a huge grand central like studio in which he does his sculpture. Several life size nudes and cases of negro sculpture. With great delight he asked me what a particular piece of sculpture was. It was obviously meant to be the head of a deer or antelope. He took it apart and showed me that it was made of the seat and handle bars of an old bicycle. There were several other such pieces, one, a bird made of parts from a child's coaster. Upstairs the painting studio. One wall, windows (south light), the other walls lined with more stacks of work done since the war.

We spent some time with these. Paintings of arrangements of still lifes and a series of small mosaic like views of Paris. One in particular I remember well. A painting of Notre Dame through a window. All these paintings have been done since 1939. In the adjacent print-room the etching press and new prints everywhere. Then the bedroom with the large bed covered by a tan and white cowhide and the bearskin rug next to the bed for his old afghan hound, "Kazbek," sleeps. And into the apartment size modern bathroom with its double bowl sink and tremendous tub. Following us all the time, his friend, Jaime, who kept shutting doors. Picasso is very sensitive to drafts.

We returned to the painting studio for our parting. I wanted to give Picasso some of the things from my musette bag. I was afraid, though, that he might be sensitive about being offered such things as cigarettes and candy, but he was especially delighted when I gave him a small can of "K" ration pork loaf. He was also delight with the roll of fruit flavored life savers I gave him.

I asked him for a message to the artists of America. He said, "Tell them to work hard - like me."

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I returned to Paris the first week in October on my way back to America. Attended the Salon. Passing through the rooms of hundred and hundreds of pictures I entered the large hall in which were hung the Picasso pictures. The room was crowded with people. On entering I noticed that people noticed me and that they were looking at me and that they were curious and there were whispers from those who were able to read my insignia, whispers of "journaliste de Guerre". As I walked counter-clockwise around the room looking at each painting in turn, they, the people, watched me and followed me and were making comments to one another. They were obviously watching my reactions and when I turned to look at them they were embarrassed. I asked the girl I was with what was "happening." She told me that they were terribly embarrassed that I, an American journalist, might think that these paintings were representative of French art.

This week's edition.

I am also enclosing photostats of my sketches of the fighting in Paris and some drawings of American G.I.'s in Paris which I did for Parade.

You may use any of this material for publication or for any other purpose.

I look forward to seeing you soon, and looking at the photographs you told me of.

Sincerely yours,

*John Girth*

John Girth

61 E. 57th

N.Y. 22

P.S. My personal adventures as the first artist in Paris, the Parade in the neighborhoods, and other, to me, great personal events are being printed in the A.G.A. Gallery monthly Bulletin. You may also have that material if you wish.

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December 1, 1944

Mr. Alfred Barr, Director  
Museum of Modern Art  
New York City, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Barr:

Here is the transcript from the letter which I wrote my company on the interview with Picasso and my impressions of artists and art in Paris the first week of the liberation. Also additional notes from my notebook, which I add to the transcript.

Parts of the letter are being published in Art Digest in this week's edition.

I am also enclosing photostats of my sketches of the fighting Paris and some drawings of American G.I.'s in Paris which I did for Parade.

You may use any of this material for publication or for any other purpose.

I look forward to seeing you soon, and looking at the photographs you told me of.

Sincerely yours,

*John Groth*

John Groth

61 E. 57th  
N.Y. 22

JG:ro

P.S. My personal adventures as the first artist in Paris, the Parade in the Montparnasse, and other, to me, great personal events are being printed in the A.C.A. Gallery monthly bulletin. You may also have that material if you wish.

*- other sketches Picasso at work?  
- more detailed description of Picasso?*