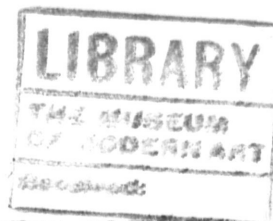


THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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PRESS PREVIEW



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CONCENTRATION CAMP CHILDREN'S ART FROM EUROPE TO BE COMPARED WITH WORK OF D.P. CHILDREN IN AMERICA

How does life in America affect the impressions of children from German concentration camps?

The Museum of Modern Art may provide an answer to this question in a special press preview on Tuesday, April 20, at 3 p.m. when 25 children from D.P. camps who have been in this country for a year and a half will compare their art work with that of children who had similar experiences, but who are still in Europe.

The paintings of the former concentration camp children who are still in Europe form a part of the Museum's forthcoming exhibition, "Art Work by Children of Other Countries," which opens on April 24, in conjunction with the Museum's Sixth Annual Conference on Art Education.

The comparison of this work with that of the children now in the United States was planned by the Museum in co-operation with the American Overseas Aid - United Nations Appeal for Children, whose forthcoming drive aims to benefit the children of 26 nations suffering from the war. The comparison will be accurate, even to the factor of the instruction provided for both groups.

The 25 children will bring their art work to the Museum directly following an hour's work under the supervision of Mrs. Marie Paneth. Mrs. Paneth also provided the instruction for the concentration camp children whose work will be on exhibition at the Museum.

Press photographers are invited to take pictures of the D.P. children while they are at work from 2 to 3 p.m. in the Museum War Veterans' Art Center on the second floor of 681 Fifth Avenue, and also to photograph the comparisons after the children arrive at the Museum.

Here is the description of that part of the Museum's exhibition devoted to the children released from German concentration camps. It has interesting psychological implications.

ART WORK BY YOUNG PEOPLE RELEASED FROM GERMAN CONCENTRATION CAMPS

The work shown in this section was done in a Reception Camp in Windermere, England, by young people between the ages of 16 and 20 years. They are lent through the courtesy of Mrs. Marie Paneth, who was in

charge of the art work there. 291

These young people, all Polish Jews, for the most part came from small towns and villages. Their formal education was interrupted when they were about 10 to 12 years old. Many were first restricted to ghettos, and all were later sent to concentration camps. All have endured the indescribable cruelties and sufferings of the war. Most of them are the sole surviving members of their families, with the occasional exception of a brother or sister. The remainder of the families were exterminated.

They all passed through Oswiecim, the extermination center, where the more physically fit were selected to work at hard labor. Many of the boys worked in quarries, built railroads and loaded trucks; while both boys and girls worked in munitions factories. They thought that freedom would cure their troubles and looked toward it with over-exuberance as a sort of heaven. When they were released, they sought their families in their former homes. Failing to find them, they wandered over Europe, following vain rumors that parents or relatives had been seen. When their quest failed, they came back to Teresienstadt, the last concentration camp where they had been held in captivity and the center from which they were liberated. Here they were finally organized by UNRRA and sent to Windermere, England.

The Windermere Reception Camp accommodated 300 young people, of whom 48 attempted art work from which they got much satisfaction. The studio was open to them every afternoon, and Mrs. Marie Paneth, who was in charge, made materials available in a congenial and friendly environment. Other studies were offered at the Center, and these young people, although usually restless and boisterous in their other classes, were quiet and spoke in whispers in the art studio. Eventually the subject matter of past experience, which seemed constantly to recur, brought back memories apparently too painful, and they ceased coming.

A few of the pictures depict the concentration camp, or symbolize the students' attitude toward life, but on the whole they chose subjects from fantasy or observation, such as pleasant landscapes or formal patterns. Twelve of the young people had become tuberculosis cases. A comparison of their work with that of the more healthy ones shows that they never drew on past experience, but made exclusive use of symbolic material which may be interpreted as directly relating to their illness.

All of these young people are still in England where they attend school or are gainfully employed.