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	AHB	VI.A.19

Note:

"charts" in 1st sentence refers  
to Cubism and Abstract Art  
chart.

R. Rods  
7/27

art program. I trust you will hear directly from him concerning the possibility of an allocation.

It is gratifying to learn the appreciation for the wall size form of Mr. Barr's excellent chart. It was a privilege to have worked on its reproduction.

\*\*\*

You may be interested to know the excitement the Miro and Dali catalogs are causing. Before they arrived at the Public Library there was a reserve list. Among the painters in Des Moines, the common question is "Where are you on the reserve list for the Miro and Dali books?" Your prestige rises in ratio to your place on the list.

I am taking the liberty to enclose a copy of a script of an animated lecture I have prepared for the Des Moines art center. I incorporated a supposed telegram from the Museum of Modern Art to a member of the audience. Screens are erected and characters are drawn on large beaver-board, just the heads with a stick for carrying like a banner. The voices will remain behind these tetard banners, similar to a puppet technique. Seventy slides show relations between the art of primitive man, children's art and modern art. The opening slide is the Butcher Shop by 15 year old Novar owned by your museum.

Yours very truly,

*Harry Jones*  
Harry Donald Jones

426 1/2 Keosauqua Way.  
Des Moines, Iowa.

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4/29  
April 27, 1942

*MCS*  
Mr. Leslie Switzer  
Sec'y to Mr. Barr  
Museum of Modern Art  
New York City, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Switzer:

Your letter inquiring about the charts has been handed to my successor as State Director of the Iowa Art Program. I trust you will hear directly from him concerning the possibility of an allocation.

It is gratifying to learn the appreciation for the wall size form of Mr. Barr's excellent chart. It was a privilege to have worked on its reproduction.

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Des Moines, Iowa.

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*1940s*

*Art of Children*

Putting Lines Around Your Think

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PUTTING LINES AROUND YOUR THINK

A Surrealist Lecture in the Style of the American Chocolate Key

Characters:

Little Girl

Mr. Common Denominator

Professor Noun

Heavenly Voice

Vocational Engineer

Picasso in verb period

Australia

Bali

Salvador Dali

Raleigh

Western Union Messenger Boy

Dead End Kid

Slide Operator

Lee Ver Duft

Two picture commentators

(Projection screen in middle, logical wings on sides, easel, chairs,  
telegram and other apparatus as script suggests.)

(Enter Little Girl with rattle)

(Shakes rattle waking waiting audience)

(Little Girl leaves, CD Enters highly logically)

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PLAY  
-2-

GD. Once upon a time ----

Little Girl (Poking head around screen) --

What time once, Daddy?

GD. (Glances about for Professor Noun, whistles, then yells, imitating an urban hog call) OH P R O F E S S O R!  
(GD cups hand to ear--hears nothing, puts on mortar-board and takes Professor Noun's part.)

GD. (After hanging up mortar-board.) Professor Noun, we have a question already. The Little Girl wants to know, "What time once?"  
(GD. Glances at watch, reaches for mortar-board. -- Enter Professor Noun, late as usual, carrying umbrella, and a collection of butterflies, stamps, buttons or other collection of nouns.)

Professor Noun: Excuse me for being so late, Mr. Common Denominator, I was absorbed in a book on children's art.

GD. I'm glad you're here, Prof. Noun. The Little Girl just asked a question.

Professor Noun: Now, let's see what is the question again?

GD. "What time once"?

Prof. Noun: "What time once"? "Well, let me see". (Long pause)

(Clouds begin to rise)

GD. Well, it's clouding up, Professor, looks like rain.

Prof. Noun: So it does, so it does!

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PLAYT  
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(Lightning and thunder)

(In loud voice through lightning and thunder) What time once,  
Professor?

Professor: (When lightning stops) Heaven only knows:

(More thunder and lightning -- a paper in shape of an airplane flies  
over the wing into audience.)

GD. (After retrieving airplane) Ah, heaven is letting us know. (Reads  
paper airplane)

"The time once? Well, the once-time is the present-time, and all know  
that once was present when it was; and once it was, it no longer is  
referred to as present; but never-the-less, what-time-once is known to  
us in the present by the bibliography, limited and serene, standing at  
the rear, guarding like icicles the retreat of warm, lazy sleeps that  
sweat not from work. To my knowledge, the bibliography refers in terms  
of documentation, and once-first is that of Ricci, the Italian Historian  
published in 1887 in the form of a pamphlet on the art of the Bambino.  
Bologna, 1887. Before that once-upon-a-time, there were constantly re-  
curring onces; that, if preserved, would leave the grooves of ancient  
children scribbled and scratched with the face of all children in them.  
Oh, that were those once-upon-a-times encased in clouds of kodachrome."  
Signed, Heavenly Voice.

GD. Thank you Heavenly voice. Now, Little Girl, that should explain what-  
time-once there was a little girl. She was asked, Just how do you  
draw, Little Girl?"

Little Girl: (Poking head around corner of screen): How do I draw?

Oh, that's easy. I just have a think, then I put a line around it.

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PLAYT

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Prof. Noun: That Little Girl starts something going inside me.

(Alarm goes off)

(Little Girl enters singing "Putting Lines Around My Think"----- repeats song several times, takes place at side of stage and begins to lose herself in drawing at blackboard or on paper tacked to easel.)

Prof. Noun: That Little Girl starts something going inside everybody.

(Cups ear, but no alarm) Everybody will be awakened someday.

(Little Girl continues to sing "Putting Lines Around My Think")

Prof. Noun: Profound! Profound!

Heavenly Voice (From Heaven: "thou hast hid these things from the wise and the prudent and hath revealed them unto babes." Math. 11:25.

GD. How about these child prodigies, Professor?

Prof. Noun: Chopin performed at nine, Straus composed at four, William Betty acted Shakesperian roles at eleven.

GD. And how about painting -- child prodigy artists?

Prof. Noun: More frequent than musical prodigies, sir, profound artists, all -- from one to six.

Little Girl: What's the matter with me at six, Professor?

Prof. Noun: Well, my dear, nothing is the matter with you at six. It is entirely the matter with adults at sixty. We start to teach you to be grown up at about six years of age.

Vocational Engineer: (From behind screen) Supervision! Direction! Guidance! and all-l-l-l points backward. (Resembling Union Depot train caller)

Prof. Noun: The Chocolate tyrants!

GD.: Be careful Prof. Noun or you will be talking yourself out of a job.



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PLAY

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Prof. Noun: Oh pardon me. But quoting Dr. Brill: "We sell this artistic birthright for a ~~mass~~ of knowledge."

Little Girl (bregging and indicating age by holding up little fingers):

I started to scribble when I was one year old.

Prof. Noun (confidentially to audience): It was hardly more than a play activity wherein her little muscles normally reacted. The results are what we might consider as graphs of muscular movement and reflex action. They soon make circular scribbles as well as wavy, variegated, mass, angular, straight, oval, cross, spiral, loop, rectangular and zig-zag

GD.: You sure know your nouns, Professor!

Prof. Noun: Thank you.

Little Girl: I drew mama when I was one and a half (draws mama)

Prof. Noun: still Confidential: Tetards T E T A R D S tetards is the psychologist's name for these first representations. Ricci states, tetards are the first drawings 99 times out of a hundred. Our own image is first understood. These tetards are merely circular lines with two lines drawn downward to represent the whole apparatus of a person.

Little Girl: An' I drew the man-in-the-moon, too.

Professor: Let me explain, audience, three ~~ds~~ and a dash ---

GD. That's V for Victory.

Professor: Right. An ancient symbol actively in use today.

Little Girl: See, (draws man-in-the-moon). I can make a man-in-the-moon.

Professor Noun: Children seem to never tire of this creation. One child was known to sit for 60 consecutive drawings of this man in the moon.

Little Girl: I like to draw the sun and houses and trees and birds and dogs and my playmates and chimneys and windows.

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PLAYT  
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CD. (lovingly) You sure can draw, "purty" pictures, Little Girl.

Enter Picasso in verb period

Little Girl: Hello there Picasso: How goes it?

Picasso in verb period: Feuh!

Little Girl: Too bad.

Picasso in verb period: Did I hear you say, sun, houses, trees, birds, dogs, playmates, chimneys and windows?

Little Girl: Yep:

Picasso in verb period (thoughtfully): shinning, sitting, waving, chirping, barking, running, smoking, looking -----Oh well. (after long pause)

Little Girl, your suns and houses and trees are things. They are the last of your naive drawings. (turning to audience) She now becomes an imitator of grown ups.

Little Girl: Well, I do like to dress up like a mame.

Picasso in verb period: See what I mean. Imitation. She wants at the age of six to not only be like adults but to see like adults and that leads to the conventional, visual, representational, unoriginal and staid. Excuse me, I am beginning to talk like a noun factory.

CD. Well, Picasso, Just what is this adult vision you mention?

Mr. Common Denominator. You can answer that better than I can.

CD. Well, I don't know anything about art but I know what I like.

Picasso in verb period: Well, Mr. Common Denominator, "a painter paints, to unload himself of feelings and visions. Then people come along and seize upon painting to cover up their nakedness. They get what then can wherever they can. In the end, I don't believe they get anything at all. They've simply cut a coat to the measure of their own ignorance. That's why the picture hook is the ruination of a painting."

CD. Picasso, to be frank with you, I don't understand most of your paintings.

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PLAY

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Picasso: "Everyone wants to understand art. Why not try to understand the song of a bird. Why does one love the night, flowers, everything around one without trying to understand them?"

CD.: Well, you don't seem to have any rules on principles of beauty to your art.

Picasso: "Art is not the application of a canon of beauty, but what the instinct and the brain can conceive beyond any canon. When we love a woman, we don't start measuring her limbs."

CD.: I still don't understand.

Picasso: Alas, through the years it's the same few who understand. "With the exception of a few painters who are opening new horizons to painting, the painters law waste their energy absorbed in bringing the past back to life. The whole world lies open before us, everything waiting to be done, not just redone. Why cling desperately to everything that has already fulfilled its promise?"  
Yes, it's the same few who understand.

Little Girl (puzzled): What happens to me at six?

Australia: Australia calling, Australia calling.

CD.: Turn on the radio somebody, Australia is calling. Quick.

Picasso: Where's a radio.

Australia: Oh never mind. All I had to say was this. Flash. In Australia, a Francis Derham found the usual bad copying of flowers and needlework among children. They were under old fashioned drawing teachers. But, when she took crayons to the native children in the interior, she found the natural spontaneity of the child untouched by adult instruction.

Bali: Bali calling: Bali calling:

C.D.: Listen: Bali calling:

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PLATT  
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Bali: If you should ever try to get examples of native children's art in Bali as Jane Biddle did, look out: She gave Bali children crayons and no sooner did she turn her back than they ate the highly colored sticks.

Dali: Salvador Dali calling: Salvador Dali calling:

C.D.: Listen: Salvador Dali calling:

Bali: Si, I love the Art Nouveau and Gaudi's art so well, I want to eat them. Nothing strange about that. Nothing strange about eating colors. Forms should eat colors at every meal.

Professor Noun: What was that last number on the program?

Raleigh: Raleigh calling: Raleigh calling:

C.D.: Listen: Raleigh calling:

Raleigh: Smoke Raleigh cigarettes. The time is now exactly\_\_\_\_.(give time here)

C.D.: (excited) Shut off that Radio! Bali! Dali! Raleigh! My Golly!

Professor Noun: What time do I begin my talk on children's art?

C.D.: Why Professor, you are on the platform now!

Professor Noun: So I am, so I am.

(Exit Picasso in verb period and Little Girl. Little Girl leading)

Picasso in verb period: Tell me Little Girl how do you draw?

Little Girl: Well, first I have a think then ..... (fades)

Professor Noun: Ladies and Gentlemen: It is our purpose this afternoon to correlate the works of children, the works of primitive man and the works of modern artists; to ascertain just how the artist puts lines around his think as the Little Girl tells us.

C.D.: The Little Girl sure can draw, eh professor?

Professor Noun: Yes indeed, and we are learning that children all over the world are very good artists. In 1934, America saw an International Exhibition from 36 countries at Rockefeller Center.

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PLATT  
-3-

Little Girl (poking head out the side of the screen) Museums have put  
in galleries especially for us boys and girls. I sure like to  
go to 'em.

(Western Union boy enters, asks for Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_. Lecture halts.  
Boy delivers telegram to Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_ and has her sign for it.

Charge to the account of \_\_\_\_\_ \$

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Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_

Des Moines Art Center

ADULTS ADMITTED TO CHILDRENS GALLERY ONLY WHEN ACCOMPANIED BY CHILD

SIGNED

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART N. Y.

Professor Noun: As we were saying, America is waking up to its art in children.  
Social Welfare Groups and foundations have encouraged "Dead End Kids"  
to draw and paint.

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PLAYT  
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Dead End Kid: (very loud from behind screen): Bang Bang Bang, Maw:

I want some paints and brushes: Bang, Bang, Bang.

Professor Noun: I think I read somewhere that a foundation picks talented children for special weekly painting trips in New York City.

The Museum of Modern Art purchases children's paintings for its permanent collection.

Picasso in verb period: (Poking his head outside of screen) They tell me children meet and paint every Saturday in America. Isn't that right, Mrs. De Jong?

(Give Mrs. De Jong in audience time to reply)

Slide Operator: Yes sir, at 100 WPA art centers and scores of museums.

Professor Noun: It is estimated that half a million pictures a year are painted on Saturdays alone.

C.D.: Add all the week days and it would look like the bonus to a secretary of an airplane Engine starter Company.

Professor Noun: Psychologists claim mentally defective children can be diagnosed and helped through their art. And in Moscow, a special museum of 150,000 children's drawings are systematically arranged for study.

C.D.: Ho what's that (looks up at date appearing above screen.)

Professor Noun: Why thats the date of the discovery of the cave drawings in Spain and France.

C.D.: There's another.

Professor Noun: That's the date the Modern Artists became interested in Primitive Art.

C.D.: Look there's another one:

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PLAYT  
-11-

Professor Noun: Well, thats the date usually associated with the best  
Egyptian Art.

C.D.: And whats that date?

Professor Noun: That's the date of Ricci's pamphlet on children's art.

(Lecture date appears)

C.D.: That's today! Well what does that mean?

(Exit Professor Noun and Common Denominator, enter Lee Ver Duft, Prairie  
City poet and artist)

Lee Ver Duft: Hello everybody, I'm Lee Ver Duft, yeoman 3rd class, U. S.

Navy. Remember me? I'm not really here, this is just my spirit,  
and I speak for thousands more who are away for now. Away on iron  
wheels that dreams may walk at home --- walk freely too. By your  
side, not many days ago, I turned on the light with you as you  
are free to do tonight. That's what that date means ---- another  
day of freedom at home! That's today! That's now! This very  
moment! Take a deep breath, a good breath and then remember those  
away for now! Tonight, in a moment, the chocolate key will open  
a door and let you enjoy a few moments speculating on creative  
worlds --- worlds of past time, worlds of present time and worlds  
you and I want to see free for all time. Will the picture  
commentators please take a chair beside the screen. I must be  
going back to my ship. Operator turn the chocolate key!

First of 70 slides flashes on screen and commentators begin discussion  
rather impromptu and very conversational, encouraging audience to join  
in the comments.