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INSANE

90-191. FIRENZE - Loggia dell'Orologio

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le 15 juillet
Cher ami
Je sais que vos d'années
Firenze et le
pensé à vos très
sauront ici —
J'espère vous revoir
bientôt et vous
pouvez de ne pas
l'oublier. ^{argentine} Totallement
Mariano Martini
sculpteur vera fotografia

VENIZIA PERBIA
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AEREA

POSTALITÀ ITALIANA
CINQUANTENARIO
LITRE
BENI E VENEZIA
LITRE
LITRE 30
POSTE ITALIANE

Mr
Alfred Barr
Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd Street
New York City
U. S. A.

Fotoazioni Brunner & L., Campo — Riproduzione vietata

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si vláda mám velkou
moc a však sám sobě
nemohu pomoci

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609
WATERCOLOR by Czechoslovakian peasant
in a state of exstasy.
Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Philip Trotter, The
Mutilated House, Maida Vale, London

Exhibition of Fantastic
Art, Dada and Surrealism
Dec. 9, 1936 to Jan. 17, 1937

The Museum of Modern Art
1 West 53 Street, New York

Painting

10K

3 ⁵/₈"

2 cols
page depth
2

Duplicate

E5908-13 MAR-9 1937
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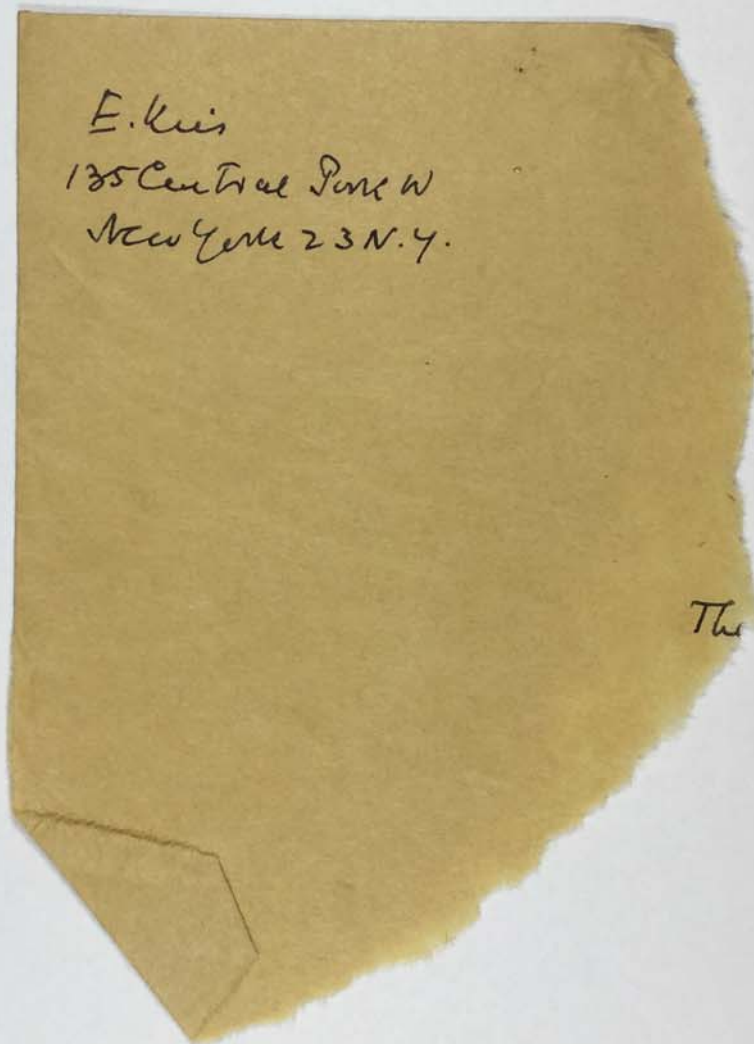
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SOICHI SUNAMI
PHOTOGRAPHER
ALGONQUIN 4-4643
27 W. 15TH ST. NEW YORK

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[Reprinted from THE PSYCHOANALYTIC QUARTERLY, Vol. XV, No. 1, January, 1946]

THE FUNCTION OF DRAWINGS AND THE MEANING OF THE 'CREATIVE SPELL' IN A SCHIZOPHRENIC ARTIST

BY ELSE PAPPENHEIM, M.D. AND ERNST KRIS, PH.D. (NEW YORK)

Psychiatric interest in the art of the insane dates back well over eighty years. Though many of the several hundred contributions listed in recent bibliographies¹ start from clinical material, most of them are explicitly or implicitly centered around a crucial problem: the relationship of genius and insanity. The problem is an ancient one in the world of learning and speculation. It was first and with remarkable wisdom posed by Plato. His distinction between the 'productive insanity' of the creative genius and the pathology of insanity itself approximates formulations suggested by contemporary psychoanalytic insight. In the psychiatry of the nineteenth century the problem was reintroduced by Lombroso. Under his ægis much time was spent in a search for insanity in the genius. Since 1920 a shift of position has occurred: under the influence of the expressionistic and surrealist movements in contemporary art there has been a search for the genius in the insane. This point of view dominates Prinzhorn's volume on the subject (1922), but there is reason to believe that his eloquent æsthetic partisanship during the last two decades has delayed rather than accelerated interest in the clinical problems with which the study of the productions of the insane confront us. When we speak here of the 'art' of the insane, we are not considering æsthetic values, but merely recognizing the fact that the productions are 'of the nature of art'.

Detailed clinical case histories and clearly formulated propositions are not plentiful in the literature. In most cases authors refer to the creative activity of psychotics for the sake of illus-

¹ Cf. Anastasi and Foley; also Lange-Eichbaum.

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typing THE TIMES piece in full, saying it "described the rot you call art" and ending with the cheerful phrase, "Silly asses."

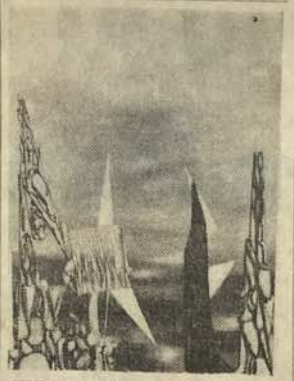
Confusion Abetted

The important fact, however, is that this article adds to the confusions and barriers which separate artist and public. The article does say, "Dr. Heinrich [conductor of the experiment] emphasized that she was attempting no evaluation of the paintings as art." But this remark was buried, and none of those who took comfort from the piece stressed the importance of this statement.

It is perfectly true that the art of the insane and much surrealist (and indeed also some other modern) art bear superficial resemblances to each other—so, of course, does that of Bosch and Goya and many other painters of the past. Especially in surrealist art the language of symbols is often alike. This is not surprising since the surrealist artist has chosen to paint not still-lives and the landscape of New England but dream-life and the landscape of the subconscious. And according to the surrealist manifesto, the elimination of conscious control is itself endorsed (a point to which we will return later).

Now to the layman who is concerned primarily with representational images, the superficial resemblances will be very strong. By the same token, I think he would have difficulty in distinguishing between fifteen figures painted

dogma, nevertheless the principle of "automatism" or "automatic



"Elle Viendra," by Tanguy, at Pierre Matisse's.

writing" and the importance of unconscious creation are admitted parts of their art.

These words lead to more confusion. There is, I believe, no unconscious creation which has not been conditioned by conscious ones. An artist like Masson or Hayter may work "unconsciously," but the spontaneous motion of their hands is conditioned by years of experience, by years of training and practicing, by a perceptive vision, by a mastered control over and knowledge of the possibilities of their tools and materials, by an awareness of consequence and effect.

And, conversely, it is hard to believe that in the process of painting a canvas Titian, for instance, did not move his brush "unconsciously" at certain times or capitalize on fortuitous effects or "accidental" strokes or merging of color. It would seem to me that in the perfect act of creation, the conscious and the unconscious meet almost equally, and that each has somehow been conditioned by the other.

and subtle sense of humor."

The third fault is that these doctors often discredit the art as such if there is evidence that the artist is "neurotic." A well-known analyst told me he believed "art had let civilization down" because we were responding to the expression of neurotic personalities instead of to perfectly adjusted (and presumably post-analytic) ones.

According to T. B. Hyslop, a partial list would show Molière, Petrarch and Handel were epileptics. Paganini, Mozart, Newton had epileptoid diseases. Dr. Johnson, Napoleon and Socrates suffered from spasmodic movements. Coleridge, Sheridan, Steele, Addison, Charles Lamb, Burns, Handel and Gluck were unduly addicted to alcohol or drugs. Shelley, Bunyan, Swedenborg had hallucinations. Giorgione, Tintoretto, Botticelli, Leonardo, Raphael, Dürer, Claude, Cellini, Van Dyck, Reynolds and Watteau suffered from some sort of nervous diseases. Romney was insane, Turner and William Blake highly eccentric.

Extraneous Factors

But how much poorer, how lean our lives without the creative expressions of these "neurotic personalities"! Why must my learned friend insist that art be savior and healer of souls? That is his job. Art seems to me to exist only for the sake of the man who created it—moved by emotion and love to express an image, a feeling or an idea in paint or stone or whatever and enabled by skill and genius to do so—and for the sake of the man who can respond to it, and thus become enriched.

Of course, it is a ridiculous and untrue over-simplification to say that art and neuroticism necessarily go hand in hand. They may or may not. What is important is the work of art itself. Its esthetic quality and the indefinable but undeniable presence of an artist's hand in its creation distinguish it from all else.

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IN BRIEF: EXHIBITIONS

Edith Blum—Ab and figures color

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Viennese Find No Differences in Art Works By Surrealists and Schizophrenic Patients

By JOHN MacCORMAC
Special to The New York Times

VIENNA, April 1—A comparison of surrealist and abstract poems and paintings with the products of mental patients suffering from schizophrenia, or split personality, made under the auspices of the Psychological Institute of Vienna University, indicates that to the lay public they are indistinguishable.

Thirty paintings, of which half represented the efforts of well-known surrealists or abstract painters and the other half were the products of mental patients, were submitted to an audience of 158 persons. They were asked to say which were which. Their answers were 50 per cent wrong—or right.

Before another audience of 105 persons—forty-six men and forty-nine women—a test was made with ten poems. Five of the poems were of surrealist origin, three had been written by schizophrenic patients while two were arbitrary sequences of single words or phrases. This audience also found itself hopelessly at sea, its answers being 50 per cent wrong. None of its members recognized the two "poems" faked from haphazard phrases.

The test was conducted by Dr. Eva Heinrich. To carry her investigation a step further she projected six surrealist pictures before another audience and asked it to say what each represented and what impression it produced. Only some 2 per cent could find a meaning for the pictures agreeing with what the artist himself had indicated was their intent.

Another Viennese doctor later announced that he had asked two surrealist artist friends what certain of their paintings meant and had received only vague answers. He had then put them in a state of half consciousness by injecting a drug used for the "narcoanalysis" of shell-shocked soldiers during the war and received from them in this state a logical explanation of their pictures.

Among the modern painters whose works were used in the experiments at Vienna University were Picasso, Jean Miro, Erico Donati, Max Ernst and one American, Yves Tanguy. Dr. Heinrich emphasized that she was attempting no evaluation of their paintings as art.

"I came to the personal conclusion that a large number of surrealists are schizoid," Dr. Heinrich said. "This does not mean that they will necessarily become schizophrenic. But the development of the mentally ill is downward. Surrealism is also on the descent and that, I think, is one of the chief reasons why it is not generally acknowledged as art."

DECREASE FROM MARCH, 1920, WAS about 16 per cent.

The Education Department said the decrease in the number of veterans attending college had been more than offset by nonveteran registrations.

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