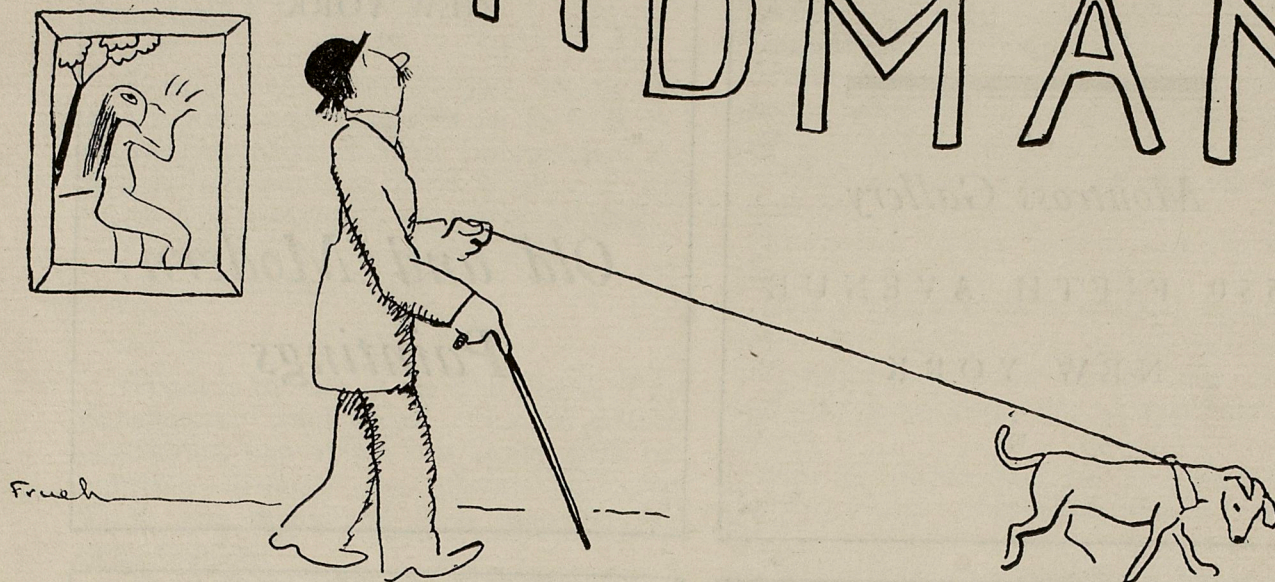


THE BLINDMAN



INDEPENDENTS' NUMBER

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The Blind Man
33 West 67th Street,
New York.

N. E. Montross

Works of Art

Montross Gallery

550 FIFTH AVENUE

NEW YORK

Bourgeois Galleries

668 FIFTH AVENUE

NEW YORK



*Old and Modern
Paintings*

E. Hodgkins

9 East Fifty-fourth Street

NEW YORK



Objets d'Art

Meubles

Tableaux et Dessins

Modern Gallery

500 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

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CEZANNE
LAUTREC
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PICASSO
BRANCUSI
PICABIA
DERAIN
MARIE LAURENCIN
MANOLO
BURTY
VLAMINCK
RIVERA
BRAQUE

Mexican Pre-Conquest Art
African Negro Sculpture

The Blind Man

I.

The Blind Man celebrates to-day the birth of the Independence of Art in America.

II.

A prominent New Yorker wrote us a few months ago: "You know as well as I do why an Exhibition of Independent Artists is impossible in New York..." And many others were of the same opinion.

The impossible has happened.
The Exhibition is on.

III.

"What is the use of an Exhibition of Independents," said some. "Under present conditions, new talent can easily gain recognition through the picture galleries. They are many and their managers are open-minded."

Let us quote from the programme:

"On one hand we have the frank statement of the established art societies that they cannot exhibit all the deserving work submitted to them because of lack of space. On the other hand such exhibitions as take place at private galleries must, by their nature, be formed from the ranks of artists who are already more or less known; moreover, no one exhibition at present gives an idea of contemporary American art in its ensemble, or permits comparison of the various directions it is taking, but shows only the work of one man or a homogeneous group of men. The great need, then, is for an exhibition, to be held at a given period each year, where artists of all schools can exhibit together—certain that whatever they send will be hung and that all will have an equal opportunity. For the public, this exhibition will make it possible to form an idea of the state of contemporary art..."

"Ingres said, over sixty years, ago: 'A jury, whatever be the means adopted for

its formation, will always work badly. The need of our time is for unlimited admission... I consider unjust and immoral any restriction tending to prevent a man from living from the product of his work.'

"The 'no jury' system, then, ensures a chance to exhibit to artists of every school, and, as a matter of fact, every school is represented at this salon, from the most conservative to the most radical."

The spirit of the Indeps will stimulate, shape and provoke new talent.

The hanging of all works in alphabetical order, for the first time in any exhibition, will result in the most unexpected contacts and will incite every one to understand the others.

It is as easy to see a one-man show as to have a chat in a drawing-room—it is generally quite safe.

Entering the chaos of the Indeps is entering a virgin forest, full of surprises and dangers. One is compelled to make a personal choice out of the multitude of paintings which assail one from all sides. It means strengthening your taste through ordeals and temptations; it means finding yourself, and it is a strain.

The hour has come. The big brotherhood is there, men who have felt the strange need of expressing a little of their soul and of their time with paint and brushes upon stretched canvases—madmen!

IV.

New York will catch the Indeps' fever. It will rush to see what its children are painting, to scold them, laugh at them—and laud them.

V.

New York, far ahead in so many ways, yet indifferent to art in the making, is going to learn to think for itself, and no longer accept, mechanically, the art reputations made abroad.

VI.

In Paris, in 1884, other Indeps were born, humble, hated, scoffed at, weak in body but great in spirit.

During many years, thousands of people came merely to laugh at the stupidities, and were very indignant at the exhibited "monstrosities."

There was, above all, Henri Rousseau, an employee of the custom house, a visionary, who had once been to Mexico and ever after persevered in painting from memory what he had seen there. As a boy I could not take my eyes away from his "ridiculous" pictures.

Today I know why; because they were beautiful, and lyrical, and something more than true.

No one laughs at them now, not even practical collectors, for those paintings which were worth from 20 to 100 francs then, are now worth from 2,000 to 5,000 dollars.

VII.

The French Independents have made of Paris the world market for modern painting, their retrospective exhibitions of Seurat, Van Gogh, Cezanne, have imbued the souls of the younger painters with profound truths which have revolutionized the art of the world.

The Independents became the first spring event of Paris—gay, frank, bold, fertile, surpassing itself every year—while the big jury exhibitions became more and more like grandmothers patiently repeating themselves.

Says the pamphlet:

"The Independents have done more for the advance of French art than any other institution of its period. A considerable number of the most prominent artists of the present generation and the preceding one established their reputations at its annual exhibitions. They have more members, sell more works and are on a firmer financial basis than any other of the four great salons."

VIII.

A principle, which reveals itself fully ripe and at the right time, is invincible. From today we will consider the annual ex-

hibition of the Indeps as one of the features of the season.

IX.

Many of New York's picture dealers give applause to the Indeps, while they really might be expected to oppose them. They realize the need of the public and the artists educating each other.

X.

The Blind Man will be the link between the pictures and the public—and even between the painters themselves.

He will give voice to the enlightening opinions that may spring up, and make them known to all, as impartially as he can, whatever be their tendencies, as long as they are interesting.

He will give to lovers of art the pleasure of thinking aloud and hearing others do likewise.

He will give to those who want to understand the explanations of those who think they understand.

XI.

The Blind Man's procedure shall be that of referendum.

He will publish the questions and answers sent to him.

He will print what the artists and the public have to say.

He is very keen to receive suggestions and criticisms.

So, don't spare him.

XII.

Here are his intentions:

He will publish reproductions of the most talked-of works.

He will give a chance to the leaders of any "school" to "explain" (provided they speak human).

He will print an annual Indeps for poetry, in a supplement open to all.

He will publish drawings, poems, and stories written and illustrated by children.

XIII.

Questions

1. Which is the work you prefer in the Exhibition? And why?
2. The one you most dislike?

3. The funniest?
4. The most absurd?

Guesses

5. What will be the total number of visitors?
6. The number of pictures sold?
7. The highest price paid for a single picture?
8. The lowest?
9. The total amount of money paid for all the works sold?

XIV

Suggestions

Write about the Indeeps, or about any special work in the Exhibition.

10. A dramatic story of less than one hundred words.
11. A comic story of less than one hundred words.
12. A dream story of less than one hundred words.
13. A quatrain, or a limerick.
14. A song (words and music).

XV.

To learn to "see" the new painting is easy. It is even inevitable, if you keep in touch with it. It is something like learning a new language, which seems an impossibility at first. Your eye, lazy at the start, gets curious, then interested, and progresses subconsciously.

In Paris the Blind Man has seen people go to exhibitions of advanced art (even cubist or futurist) with the intention of getting indignant about it, and who spend a couple of hours giving vent to their indignation. But on reaching home they realized that they did not like their old favorite paintings any more. That was the first step of their conversion. A year later he discovered in their home the very pictures which had so annoyed them.

XVI.

Among the "new" artists (as well as among the "old") there are a great many who might as well never have painted at all. But let us remember that among them are the half-dozen or so undiscovered

geniuses who will give us the style of the morrow.

XVII.

The Blind Man knows an artist who made a good income painting pictures in the "old" way, and who gladly gave it up and faced poverty to study the "new."

"Cubism," said he, "is at least an open door in the black wall of academism."

XVIII.

If a painter shows you a picture, you can make nothing out of, and calls you a fool, you may resent it.

But if a painter works passionately, patiently, and says, "I am making experiments which may, perhaps, bring nothing for many years," what can we have against him?

XIX.

There are fine collections in New York, there are people who understand modern and ancient painting as well as anywhere else in the world. They are few.

For the average New Yorker art is only a thing of the past.

The Indeeps insist that art is a thing of today.

XX.

American artists are not inferior to those of other countries.

So, why are they not recognized here?

Is New York afraid? Does New York not dare to take responsibilities in Art? Where Art is concerned is New York satisfied to be like a provincial town?

What chances have American artists who cannot afford to go abroad?

None.

Is that fair?

"No," says a voice. "But why are they artists? Why not something else? We are a young and a busy nation. We shall pay them well if they are willing to do some useful artistic work connected with our business."

"Your useful artistic work is rotten. You simply want them to serve the public taste instead of leading it."

XXI.

Russia needed a political revolution.
America needs an artistic one.

Your "little theatre" movement has come.
"291" and "The Soil" have come.

Every American who wishes to be aware
of America should read "The Soil."

XXII.

Never say of a man: "He is not sincere."
Nobody knows if he is or not. And nobody
is absolutely sincere or absolutely insincere.

Rather say: "I do not understand him."

The Blind Man takes it for granted that
all are sincere.

XXIII.

May the spirit of Walt Whitman guide
the Indeps.

Long live his memory, and long live the
Indeps!

HENRI PIERRE ROCHÉ.

Why I Come to the Independents

Frankly I come to the Independents to
be amused. I am hoping to see many por-
traits of beautiful young girls with sunlight
on the left, and also many gorgeous pictures
of tripled head ladies moving in and thro'
purple buildings. I expect to see wheels
and one-eyed monstrosities.

I want to see some one stand enraptured
before a certain soft bronze, then I want to
turn my head and watch the moving
shadows on the wall. May be I go to the
Indeps. more for a sense of superiority than
of Art.

After all, the painter for me is the man
who says "Damn," and goes ahead. BUT,
it is the most expressive word in the Eng-
lish language—delicious, bold and stupid.

Again I am not searching for soul-
yearnings—

"Pink Clouds in Gold Autumn."

"Niades Dancing in Silver Moonlight."

The emotions of a jeune fille can be ac-
quired at home. I am out for red blood.

I want to return to the ecstasy and wild
imaginings of childhood!

Therefore, I come to be amused, to
chuckle softly. . . .

If not,—why the Independents!

'To laugh is very serious. Of course, to
be able not to laugh is more serious still.

BEATRICE WOOD.

Work of a Picture Hanger

I have dragged pictures across the floor
for hours. I have heard hammers for hours,
and I have felt icy drafts for hours. And
this is the Independents the day before!
Bare walls with pale canvass lined at their
feet. Occasionally only are the faces to be
seen. Once I deliberately turned up a Sev-
erini and its warm pink tints seemed to
cheer me into promises of what might be.
Then the smell of wet glue! Mentally I
was not spelling art with a capital A. And
the mess of trying to remember the alpha-
bet correctly four hundred times! It was
fairly simple till we came to the Schmidts
—about eight in all. But we no sooner de-
cided they belonged one place than some
one placed them in another, and for an
hour every time we moved a picture it
turned into a Schmidt.

With a sigh I would drag heavy framed
canvases along the floor. When I stopped
I would look. If it was all right—"ca va"
—and away I would chase for another; if
not, well—imagine straining your back
over old maids' sentimentalities, or pictures
of blue-eyed girls caressing gold fish!

I did not rest long. I did not dare; too
many overalls. However, I played about
some children's canvases.

But as I left, eyes circled and dizzy, I
heard a voice; "Say, that Schmidt—doesn't
it look fine!"—and I ran.

B.W.

Dream of a Picture Hanger

I was walking in the Independents along
the row of the S's. I tried to walk to the
N's, but I fell over and into canvases, and
each time my foot broke one, I hid it be-

hind a picture marked Schmidt. I came to a doorway, and the doorway became obstructed with large canvases with heavy gold frames. I began to move them and I felt my back breaking, and each time I looked for the name of the artist I saw Schmidt. It made me so mad I took the whole pack, which I had with such difficulty moved, lightly on my head and began running. I ran in and on and over walls. Once I jumped into a picture and sat still, looking like a Chinese god while men passed. I am worth \$800 dollars, I thought and I laughed. And I was a piece of soap with nails in my back stuck on a canvas. A big flood came and swamped all the first floor, and the canvases began whirling on the ground . . . blue arms and green legs floated past, and I said to myself: those are the art-critics.

As I was a piece of soap, I, too, must melt, so I flung up my arms wide and I was on a high, high pedestal, looking deep down onto the destruction, and some tiny black man was climbing up to save himself, and as he reached my wing I bellowed, "Who are you," and he answered, "I am—but the rush of the waters drowned his voice, and I woke up.

In . . . Formation

I do not suppose the Independents "will educate the public"—the only trouble with the public is education.

The Artist is uneducated, is seeing IT for the first time; he can never see the same thing twice.

Education is the putting of spectacles on wholesome eyes. The public does not naturally care about these spectacles, the

cause of its quarrels with art. *The Public* likes to be jolly; *The Artist* is jolly and quite irresponsible. Art is *The Divine Joke*, and any *Public*, and any *Artist* can see a nice, easy, simple joke, such as the sun; but only artists and serious critics can look at a grayish stickiness on smooth canvas.

Education in recognizing something that has been seen before demands an art that is only acknowledgable by way of diluted comparisons . . . it is significant that the demand is half-hearted.

"Let us forget," is the cry of the educator; "the democratically simple beginnings of an art,"—so that we may talk of those things that have only middle and no end, and together wallow in gray stickiness.

The Public knows better than this, knowing such values as the under-inner curve of women's footgear, one factor of the art of our epoch . . . it is unconcerned with curved Faun's legs and maline twirled scarves of artistic imagining; or with allegories of Life with thorn-skewered eyes . . . it knew before the Futurists that Life is a jolly noise and a rush and sequence of ample reactions.

The Artist then says to *The Public*, "Poor pal; what has happened to you? . . . We were born so similar—and now look!" But the Public will not look; that is, look at *The Artist*—it has unnaturally acquired prejudice.

So *The Public* and *The Artist* can meet at every point except the—for *The Artist*—vital one, that of pure uneducated *seeing*. They like the same drinks, can fight in the same trenches, pretend to the same women; but never see the same thing *ONCE*.

You might, at least, keep quiet while I am talking.

MINA LOY.





DESTI CIGARETTE AMBRÉE
AT ALL RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS

IN PREPARATION

P · E · T