



Art in America

WINTER 1956-57

Editor: Jean Lipman

Business Manager: Everett H. Pond

Advertising: Beulah Allison

Subscriptions: Betty Riis

Design: Louise Vaccaro

Editorial Board: John I. H. Baur

Burton Cumming

Louisa Dresser

Lloyd Goodrich

Bartlett H. Hayes, Jr.

H. R. Hitchcock

Edgar Kaufmann, Jr.

Katharine Kuh

Nina Fletcher Little

Dorothy C. Miller

Earle W. Newton

Duncan Phillips

Edgar P. Richardson

James Thrall Soby

Gordon Washburn

Alice Winchester

Carl Zigrosser

Book Review Editor: Virgil Barker

Gallery Editor: Dorothy Gees Seckler

Address: Cannondale, Connecticut

Telephone: Wilton, Porter 2-7039

Subscription: \$4.00 a year. Foreign subscriptions 50 cents extra postage. \$1.00 the copy. Trial subscription \$3.50.

Single copies and back issues on sale in New York at George Wittenborn, 38 E. 57 St. and E. Weyhe, 794 Lexington Ave.

Complete contents indexed in *Art Index and Readers' Guide* available in libraries.

Unsolicited manuscripts should be accompanied by return postage. ART IN AMERICA assumes no responsibility for loss or damage of such material.

ART IN AMERICA, Winter, 1956-57, Vol. 44, No. 4, published quarterly. Copyright 1956 by Jean Lipman. Printed by The Pond-Ekberg Co., Springfield, Mass. Entered as second-class matter April 28, 1936, at Springfield, Mass. post office, under act of March 3, 1879.

Cover

The Big Ear by Alexander Calder, sheet steel, 1943.

Contemporary Sculptors

ALEXANDER CALDER: WORK AND PLAY 9
James Johnson Sweeney

SEYMOUR LIPTON 14
Andrew Carnduff Ritchie

DAVID HARE 18
Robert Goldwater

GROWTH OF A SCULPTOR, THEODORE ROSZAK 21
H. H. Arnason

ISAMU NOGUCHI, THE EVOLUTION OF A STYLE 24
Addison Franklin Page

HOW TO MAKE A SCULPTURE 27
Richard Lippold

DAVID SMITH 30
Clement Greenberg

HUGH TOWNLEY'S WOOD SCULPTURE 34
Frank Getlein

A YOUNG SCULPTOR IN METAL, KATHERINE NASH 38
Eugene Kingman with Duard Laging

The Roland P. Murdock Collection 40
Dwight Kirsch

Art and Industry
PAINTINGS FOR INTERNATIONAL NICKEL 48
A Picture Story presented by Eloise Spaeth

Portrait: Albert Dorne 52
Norman Rockwell

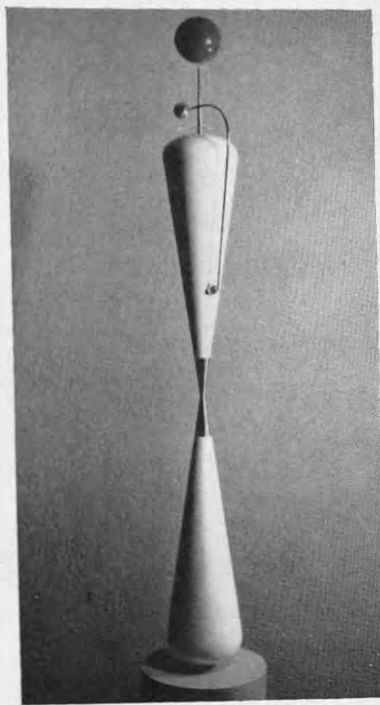
Decorative Arts
"ALL DRESSED UP LIKE A FIRE ENGINE" 54
Jerome Irving Smith

GALLERY NOTES 58
Dorothy Gees Seckler

WHO'S WHO IN THIS ISSUE 71



FISHERMAN'S BRIDE, oil, 1934. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.



BI-POLAR FORM, wood, brass and steel, 1940. Mrs. Aniel Lunetto, Chicago.



THORN BLOSSOM, steel brazed with nickel-silver, 1948. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

Growth of a Sculptor . . .

Theodore Roszak

The text of this article is excerpted from the author's longer essay in the catalogue for the current Roszak exhibition published by the Walker Art Center in collaboration with the Whitney Museum of American Art.

THE PRINCIPAL OUTLINES of Theodore Roszak's life and career to this date have appeared in many different publications and here need only be summarized briefly. He was born on May 1, 1907, in Poznan, Poland, one of seven children of Kaspar Roszak and Praxeda Swierczynska. The father was originally a farmer but after compulsory service in the German army he left the farm and, in 1909 before Theodore was two years old, moved his family to Chicago. The mother was an accomplished fashion designer employed in her youth in Berlin by the court of the Hohenzollerns. Although she did not pursue her career after coming to the United States, her interests manifested themselves in the home environment she created and the support she lent to her son's experiments in drawing and painting. Roszak recalls that his grandfather on his mother's side was a musician and mathematician, functioning

as town organist in Poznan and composing extensively for the organ. There was an uncle as well who was an artist specializing in historical illustrations.

Roszak himself had begun drawing by the age of seven and this he continued actively while attending the public schools of Chicago. In 1922, while at Carl Schurz High School, he enrolled in the evening session at the Art Institute of Chicago Professional School, beginning his formal training with Charles Schroeder and Wellington Reynolds. From his earliest recollections there never seems to have been any question in his mind concerning his vocation as an artist and in 1925 immediately after graduation from high school he entered the Art Institute school as a full-time day student. His career as an art student was highly successful if orthodox, and brought him awards in oil painting and lithography, his first specialties.

During this period Roszak was little aware of the modern movement in Europe or America. His passions were old masters such as Rembrandt whom

BY H. H. ARNASON



WHALER OF NANTUCKET, steel, 1952-53. *Art Institute of Chicago.*

he studied in frequent visits to the Art Institute and the contemporary American realists and romantics — George Luks, Bellows, Leon Kroll, and Eugene Speicher. When he visited avant-garde exhibits at the Chicago Arts Club he was interested but apparently somewhat puzzled and not overly impressed.

In 1926 the artist was drawn to New York and the National Academy of Design by the great reputation of Charles Hawthorne. Whatever the reason, this interlude does not seem to have been successful, and Roszak feels he learned most at this time from private lessons with George Luks and particularly from courses in philosophy which he took at Columbia University. These latter constituted perhaps his first introduction to a larger literate world and marked the beginning of a continuing process of self-education in the humanities and sciences.

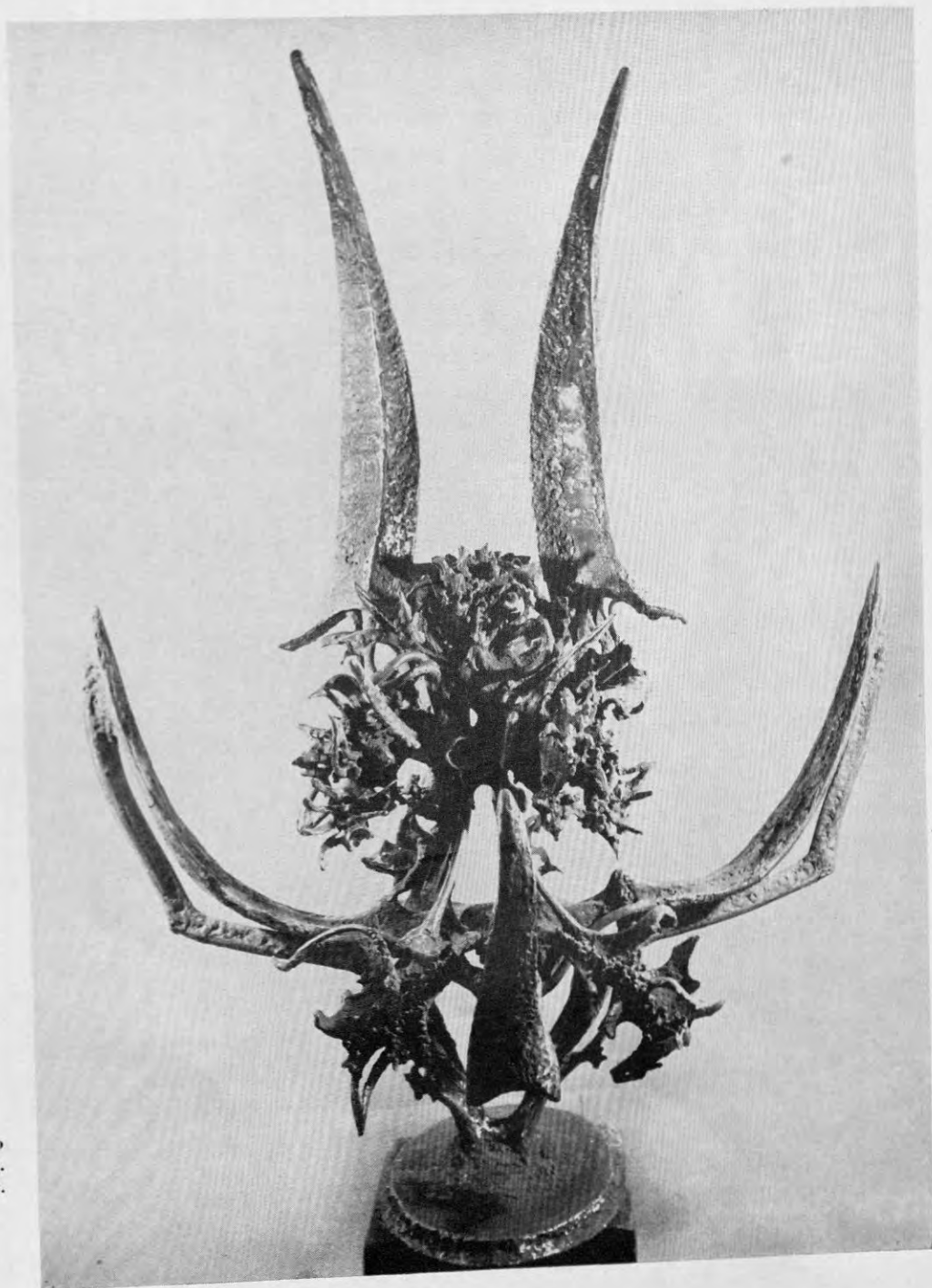
Between 1927 and 1929 Roszak resumed his studies of painting and lithography at the Art Institute of Chicago school, working with John Norton, Boris Anisfeld, and Charles F. Kelley. An American Traveling Fellowship in 1928 permitted him to visit eastern museums and to carry on experiments in lithography at Woodstock, New York. This in turn resulted in his first one-man exhibition of lithographs at the Allerton Galleries, Chicago, in 1928, as well as an appointment to teach drawing and lithography at the Art Institute school between 1928 and 1929.

The first major turning point in his career was unquestionably the Anna Louise Raymond Fellowship for European Study. This enabled him to spend the years 1929 to 1931 in Europe, years which brought about the full realization of contemporary experiments in painting and sculpture. Interestingly

enough it was not Paris which attracted him at first (although he spent six months there toward the end of his stay) but Czechoslovakia, where he was entranced by new developments in architecture and the sense of the artist as a functioning part of an industrial society. He established a studio in Prague, where he worked for nine months with frequent excursions to Austria, Italy, and Germany. There, while learning about cubism and other phases of abstract art, he was particularly drawn to purism and constructivism and the wing of surrealism that stemmed from de Chirico. De Chirico specifically provided a bond between the romantic realism of Roszak's earlier style and the new world of modern

art he was now discovering in Europe.

Back in the United States in 1931, a Tiffany Foundation Fellowship made it possible for him to marry Florence Sapir of New York and for the young couple to settle and work quietly in Staten Island for a period of two years. This period of uninterrupted work was also important in giving Roszak a chance to clarify his ideas and to find his personal direction. Before his trip to Europe he had maintained his own studio only during summers in an old Columbia Exposition building on the south side of Chicago. Virtually all his time had been spent working with instructors or in the environment of the art school. The reasons [*continued on page 61*]



THISTLE IN THE DREAM (To Louis Sullivan), steel, 1955-56.
Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York.

and its instrument, religion and the sacred object." This is to say that Hare has no use for an esthetic distance that will separate either himself or the viewer from the creature he has created. In "the water where the artist swims" (the sculptor's phrase), the spectator shall at least wade, and so be made to shiver with some of "the chills and fever which stimulate the imagination."

Hare has said that plastic art can avoid the symbol because it "deals directly with the emotional image. . . . If in the physical world we work with the object, which is to us the symbol of fear, love, desire, strength, etc., then in the emotional world we work directly with these concepts. Why retreat again into the presentation of the symbol in the form of the image? It is possible to present the emotion stripped of its symbols if one works directly with true meanings and targets the packaging."

What he and Sartre are talking about (however approximate the logic of this discourse), becomes evident in the works themselves. It is clear that these sculptures are neither abstract, nor stylized, nor representational. His figures of some years ago are full-bodied images that intensify, rather than reduce the natural form, much as do some Indian sculptures, but neither are they representational. They also have in them invented shapes that have nothing to do with organic form, and do not symbolize this form. However fragmentary and geometrically involved careful analysis proves them to be, they remain — or are finally, which is the same thing — "merely sensual female figures, grasping, and to be grasped." But it would occur to no one to call them women; hence they are neither representation nor symbol.

In the more recent landscapes, sunrises and sunsets, modelled forms, hollows, and protuberances (the "ronde-bosse" of Rodin) tend to be replaced by pleasure in line and mottled surface. Here, and in the series of figures given both intimacy and isolation by their accompanying windows (beings at once civilized and errant, who need a habitat but must carry it with them, living, as it were, out of an architectural suitcase) space and interval begin to play a much greater role. But however linear and hollowed out they are, they are recognizable presentations. Instead of the earlier richness and striking abundance, there is now a sort of stoical parsimony. Yet this is far from stylization in the ordinary sense. There is no feeling of portions of nature omitted, of a shorthand system we are called upon to reinflate, only now the abundance lies in sensitivity and subtlety, slight changes of texture and direction, gradation of interval, where emphasis is less upon the purely vital, as formerly, and more upon the poignant.

This change has been accompanied by, or has resulted in, a change in technique. Except for his beginnings, Hare has always been essentially a sculptor in metal. He has worked with other materials — clay, cement, wax — sometimes as a conscious preparatory stage, sometimes because they were cheaper, often because they lent themselves more readily to the facility and ease of his invention, and put less restraint upon his fertile imagination. But almost all his first works, though sometimes arrested on the way, were intended to be cast. It was only in 1951 that he began to work in welded metal, using a mixture of steel, lead, bronze and copper, and this is still the technique he uses for the landscapes and the sky-scapes, the figures set in window outlines, and the several large architectural decorations he has recently ex-

ecuted. But in the last few years he has again returned to the casting method, notably in a series of children's figures, none of them large, some of them of miniature size, and all of a fine and delicate naturalism. Hare has developed a method of using a blow torch to melt metal rods into a sand or rubber mold that produces a cast metal surface so thin that in spots it is pierced and transparent. The technical result, sometimes polished, sometimes left pitted or sparkling, is amazingly suited to the subject.

Hare's attitude toward craftsmanship is an essential component of his artistic personality. It is more important than either his facility, which is very great (for there are others as dextrous) or the particular techniques he uses (for basically he shares these with others). In his increasing use of welded metal he is employing one of the characteristic techniques of recent American sculpture. Because of Hare's inventiveness his workshop (which is part of his house) is a prime example of what this technique has done for the contemporary sculptor, freeing him from the expense and cumbersome slowness of the more traditional methods, with their dependence upon expert assistance, and giving him a freedom of experiment almost equal to that of the painter. More than most Hare has known how to put to his own purposes the small machines and the new materials of American technology, finding ways and means that industry had not thought of. He is a model of our tradition of native know-how. This applies to his casting too, for he has adapted sand and rubber molds to preserve this same kind of scope and flexibility. In this desire, as in his rough textures, his deliberate lack of finish, the open spaces within his figures, and the suggestion of space beyond, he is allied to sculptors much more abstract than he, and partakes in inescapable fashion of the general creative style of his artistic generation.

But peculiar to David Hare, characteristically his, and exceptional among American artists, is his delight in working. Far from looking upon his materials simply as a means to an end, and even further from fighting his materials, as do many of today's artists, Hare enjoys their manipulation. He is an artist of quick inventiveness and he needs materials that will respond to this invention. Hence he has called upon all possible contemporary techniques, and devised some of his own. He is an artist who likes to make things and who makes them with spontaneity and pleasure. And his sculpture transmits this feeling. In this he is opposed to the current picture of the dedicated artist whose vision is somehow separate from his materials and (to use Cézanne's phrase) outruns his power to "realize." David Hare likes making sculpture. His work conveys this continuing satisfaction.

Theodore Roszak continued from page 23

for this involved first that passion for learning and learning thoroughly which has characterized Roszak's entire career; then there was the simple economic factor. As a prize student and as a valued instructor the artist could be assured of a steady income at the school, something of considerable importance since he always had to earn his own way. Thus the European visit and the Tiffany Foundation colony interlude may be said to mark the emergence of the artist

from the student phase. While at Staten Island he began to experiment with modeling and constructing somewhat monolithic reliefs and, increasingly intrigued by the concept of the artist in the modern industrial world, he took courses in tool making and designing at an industrial school. From this time forward he had his own shop in which he gradually achieved that technical mastery of both hand and power tools as well as all sorts of materials which is implicit in his constructions and sculptures.

In 1932 Roszak who, aside from his earlier one-man show at Chicago, had exhibited in a number of national and international shows of paintings and prints, was invited to the First Biennial Exhibition of the Whitney Museum of American Art. From this time forward, although he is a slow and meticulous workman and does not seek exhibitions, he has been invited regularly to many national and international exhibitions, and has been given numerous one-man shows.

From 1934 (when he moved permanently to New York City) until the present day, Roszak's personal life settled into a quiet and harmonious routine which gives little indication of his problems and development as an artist. However, certain events are of particular importance. By 1936 he had begun working regularly on constructions while continuing his painting. His whole feeling for constructivism and for the artist as a potential molder of modern society was given focus when he was appointed to an instructorship in two- and three-dimensional design in the experimental workshop at the Design Laboratory in New York City. The Design Laboratory was an experiment established under the guidance of a very able group, with the financial support of the Fine Arts Project of the W.P.A. Like the Chicago Institute of Design, it was an attempt to transplant to the United States the principles and the methods of the Bauhaus. Roszak, a product of the great American city, had felt while in Czechoslovakia the potential affinity of constructivism and the Bauhaus idea to the American industrial scene, and it was this in part which had turned him almost unconsciously toward his experiments in construction and the exploration of form. Thus he entered into his work at the Design Laboratory with enthusiasm and during his period there he saturated himself with the constructivist point of view, the Bauhaus principles, and intensified through constant application his knowledge of tools and materials. The revived interest in teaching which this experience also involved led to his acceptance, in 1941, of an appointment to the faculty of Sarah Lawrence College, where he is now a senior member of the art department.

During the war years Roszak, an invaluable technician, built aircraft for the Brewster Aircraft Corporation and taught aircraft mechanics. He worked as well at the experimental towing tank at Stevens Institute of Technology.

By 1945 he was beginning to feel restive under the severe geometric limitations of constructivism and to experiment with freer sculptural shapes. The change was the result of a complex of factors, but a contributing element, as Roszak himself recognizes, was a technical by-product. A desire to achieve larger forms led to experimentation with welding, and the welding process led to the discovery of fascinating effects such as the fretted surface, the nodules and tactile variations of welded metal. The continued contemplation of these more or less accidental effects raised a whole world of associations in the artist's mind and brought into focus the problem which had been haunting him in relation to his geometric constructions: the problem of content in

its relation to form in contemporary sculpture. From the moment of understanding his personal aesthetic problem and the discovery of the formal and technical means to solve it may be said to date the emergence of Roszak's mature sculptural style, the style which has established him as one of the major sculptors of our country.

Today the Roszaks, with their daughter Sara-Jane who was born in 1947, continue to live quietly in lower west-side Manhattan in New York City. Summers are spent at Pigeon Cove, Massachusetts in drawing and reading and gaining perspective on the year's work. The artist's reputation continues to grow with each new work and each new exhibition.

Major sculptures by Roszak have been bought for the collections of many American museums and the Tate Gallery in London purchased his model for the *Monument to an Unknown Political Prisoner*. During the last three years he has been actively engaged in a major work of architectural sculpture, the bell tower for Eero Saarinen's chapel at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In this he has been able to utilize not only his most fundamental ideas concerning relations of content and form but his extensive technical and engineering background as well. In many ways this great and beautiful bell tower represents the summation of his experiences, knowledge, and ideas about the function of the artist today.

Theodore Roszak's paintings, drawings, constructions, and sculptures divide naturally into three chronological groups. The oil paintings, dating between 1929 and 1947, illustrate the discovery of the modern movement and the assimilation of different influences.

The second phase is illustrated by the constructions, dating between 1937 and 1943. Here we have the uncompromising concentration on geometric abstraction, the attempt at elimination of association, subject matter, or content other than that involved in the form itself, which marks the extreme constructivist position.

Finally we have the metal sculptures dating between 1946 and 1956 on which the artist's reputation principally rests. The drawings and gouaches which are included are of recent date and, although impressive works of art in themselves, they are in large part related to the sculptures.

The first impression of these three chronological groupings is perhaps astonishment at their seeming dissimilarity. The spectator, while admiring qualities in all three, may ask himself how a single artist without being merely an eclectic could produce the paintings, the constructions, and the sculptures. Yet if one looks beyond the surface, the subject matter or lack of subject matter, the influence or lack of influence of this or that master, to the qualities which make each of these paintings, constructions, and sculptures appealing and important as works of art, one may be even more astonished at their basic similarity — the unity of purpose, of idea and form which controls Roszak's work, whatever may be the stylistic variations and limitations he has set for the individual piece.

The paintings demonstrate the artist's feeling for organization and his constant exploration of the problems of form. All the canvases have a meticulous architecture, a harmonious blending of color, shapes, lines and space that suggest a passionate love of form for its own sake.

Rozzak's natural feeling for three-dimensional materials led him to experiment with relief constructions in the early thirties. His interest in and aptitude for tools and machines

were enhanced by training and constant application. Finally there was the opportunity and environment of the Design Workshop in 1938 and the specific stimulus of Moholy-Nagy, one of the most dedicated teachers of modern times.

By this time Roszak had reached something of an impasse in his painting. The problem of form and content could not be solved. The desire to explore further matters of form was momentarily uppermost and this could most easily be achieved in a medium where subject matter in the ordinary sense did not exist. Constructivism to Roszak was a sort of catharsis, a necessary stage of transition and preparation for his emergence as a major sculptor.

By 1945, Roszak was in every way prepared for the development of a new sculptural approach. His reading and his thinking about individual and world problems and conflicts had given him a deep mine of material for expression which he was impatient to explore. His constructivist experiments had provided intensive training in sculptural problems of mass and space as well as clarified his thinking of questions of abstract organization. His extensive experience with tools and machines, most recently with welding and brazing, had suggested a means of expression that could combine structural control of basic shapes with an infinite variety of associative suggestion in the pitted and varicolored textural surfaces. Naturally all these elements came to synthesis extremely gradually, so that while we may date the beginning of his productive sculptural period from 1945, we must remember that he was already experimenting with this approach as early as 1943.

Rozzak's treatment of subject matter, his integration of form and content in essentially abstract expression, is the core of his sculptural contribution and may best be studied by the examination of a few individual pieces.

The *Thorn Blossom* at the Whitney Museum (1948) was made on the eve of the birth of the artist's daughter, Sara-Jane, and involves a highly personal emotion. The delicate and lovely flower which in order to survive must throw up a shield of thorns becomes a symbol of those many children whom war and destruction never permitted to develop. In this piece, as well as in the *Spectre of Kitty Hawk* and *Recollection of the Southwest*, we see in the crescent a favorite recurring shape of Roszak's sculpture, usually established in dynamic tension against an opposing mass of jagged projections.

In a talk at the Art Institute of Chicago, Roszak gave a highly detailed and fascinating account of the genesis of the sculpture *Whaler of Nantucket* (1952-53). The tremendous impact upon him of Melville's "Moby Dick" finally crystallized in the concept of the pursuer and the pursued who ultimately become one. An anvil in his forge seen in half darkness suggested the shape that this concept must take and out of these elements emerged one of his most moving, suggestive, and forceful sculptures.

These descriptions of two of Roszak's subjects, which are necessarily in large part simply paraphrases of the artist's words, are intended to suggest a sampling of the kinds of ideas and symbols which he is concerned with and out of which his sculptural forms arise. It is his achievement to have been able to translate philosophical or literary concepts into visual images which have a complete existence and reality of their own and yet which, when related to the original concept, can give to it a new and powerful dimension.

There is no question that Theodore Roszak is now making

contemporary paintings STABLE GALLERY

924 7th Ave. (at 58th St.) New York, N. Y. CI 6-3323

MOSKIN GALLERY 4 East 88 St., N. Y.

Colored Drawings (1937-56)

MATTA

JAN. 15 thru FEB. 9

Mon.-Sat. 1-6 p. m.

THE ART QUARTERLY

The American magazine of the connoisseurship of art, addressed to the collector and the student.

A new feature is the checklist of important acquisitions in American and Canadian museums.

Editors: W. R. Valentiner; E. P. Richardson
Associate Editor: Paul L. Grigaut

Price: \$6.00 per year; \$1.50 per copy

5200 Woodward Avenue, Detroit 2, Michigan

BETTY PARSONS

GALLERY • 15 E. 57 St., N. Y.

Coming Exhibitions:

JOSE GUERRERO
CALVERT COGGESHALL
HEDDA STERNE

KANDINSKY

JANUARY

KLEEMANN GALLERIES

11 E. 68, N. Y. C.

TR 9-6950

SAIDENBERG GALLERY

10 EAST 77th ST.

NEW YORK

CONTEMPORARY EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN PAINTERS

MODERN AMERICAN & EUROPEAN

- Paintings
- Sculpture
- Drawings
- Gouaches

AFRO • BECKMANN • BIROLI • CARLYLE BROWN
CREMONINI • DAVIE • GLASCO • MIRKO • MINGUZZI
PERLIN • PIRANDELLO • ROLLO • ROSENTHAL • SAGE
LANYON • SCIALOJA • MORLOTTI • FRANCESCONI • VEDOVA

catherine viviano

42 EAST 57 STREET

NEW YORK 22, N. Y.

one of the major and original contributions to the sculpture of our time. His achievement is already considerable although he is still a young man on the threshold of his career.

Isamu Noguchi continued from page 26

such a piece as the head of the Mexican painter Orozco, or the lively textural modeling and the exquisite apprehension of physical structure in the portrait of Anna Marie Merkel, transmit an emotional intensity and material beauty that transcends their obvious relationship to Rodin. One would unhesitatingly choose these last as examples of his best use of form and materials if the requirement is effective representation and esthetic satisfaction.

The 1930's was an era of general social conscience with all artists, and Noguchi moved with the era, perhaps with the usual feeling that this was a way of infusing human meaning into his works, of integrating them with society. *Death*, the nickel-bronze figure which he did in 1933, represents a lynched negro, contorted in agony, the figure literally strung up by the neck. As we review it now, it seems almost embarrassing. Its sleek finish and forced stylization represent a purpose so much in conflict with the subject as to rob it of the shock he intended it to have. It has the elements of a daring idea in design, but it strengthens the suspicion that a daring idea in form is seldom the best vehicle of communication for social conscience: the form becomes more intriguing — or annoying — than the subject.

During the 1930's, too, Noguchi worked in Japan and, equally significant, in China. His study of Chinese calligraphy has been recognized as a firm step towards the working out of his own special idiom. In the varied weight and density and rhythm that are obvious qualities of calligraphy Noguchi perceived a new application to sculpture. He saw, too, the power of the calligraphic symbol as the embodiment of meaning and intrinsic beauty. In estimating the many values with which Noguchi has dealt in his development, this perception seems of great importance, for through it he began at last to formulate an articulate language of form.

In many ways, line is more evocative of the expansiveness and inclusiveness of space than are mass and volume. It defines and includes space without displacing it. By the time he came to grips with calligraphy Noguchi was already intent on the exploitation of space. By 1940 he had made constructions in driftwood and string, and from that time on he laid emphasis on building sculpture with separate members, enclosing and penetrating space in the design as in any other building project. Constructivist sculpture in general — and Noguchi's sculpture can be related to constructivism in only the most general way — has from its beginning had more to do with spatial relationships than with volumes, and more with linear values than with mass.

One more step needs to be mentioned in Noguchi's advancing concepts. Martha Graham commissioned him, in 1945, to do settings for *Herodiade*, *Appalachian Spring* and other dance compositions. The success of the designs varied on the basis of their contribution to a total stage plan but they provided an inestimable opportunity to compare the "movement" in the sculptor's static medium with real projected movement, and to establish the character of the limited space of a sculptural design as opposed to the extended space of human activity.