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Calendar of Events November 1940

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CALENDAR
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ART EVENTS

NOVEMBER
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Number Two

RHODE ISLAND REPLICAS OF ANCIENT GREEK ART

by Adelaide M. Davidson

THE word IDEA is over 2,000 years old. To the Greeks it meant the heavenly and therefore perfect form of imperfect earthly objects and human thoughts. Even abstractions such as Justice, Truth, Virtue and Beauty had heavenly, perfect prototypes. This point of view underlies much of the classical art of the Greeks. They did not reproduce a beautiful object only because it was beautiful in itself; its beauty was but a visible form of the Idea of Beauty, an articulate description of the invisible reality. Variety was, therefore, at this stage, less important than perfection. For this reason, Greek art of the 5th and 4th centuries abounds in types, countless variations on the same theme, each one an attempt to find a new solution to an old problem.

At the climax of this development, just at the point where over-refinement threatens loss of vigor, stands the Apollo Belvedere (Fig. 1). The original statue, which was cast in bronze, was probably the work of Leochares of Athens who flourished about 380-320 B.C. It was subsequently copied in marble, perhaps several times. One of these ancient copies is now in the Vatican.

Apollo was the god of light which also implied physical health, moral goodness and mental clarity. "Know Thyself" read the inscription on his temple at Delphi. He was also the Far-darter whose arrows brought pestilence and disease to the wicked. As though momentarily endowed by the artist with divine sight, we see him pause, watching his arrow's swift, sure flight. The cape, or chlamys, was possibly added by the copyist. If so, he was a master in his own right, for he has moulded

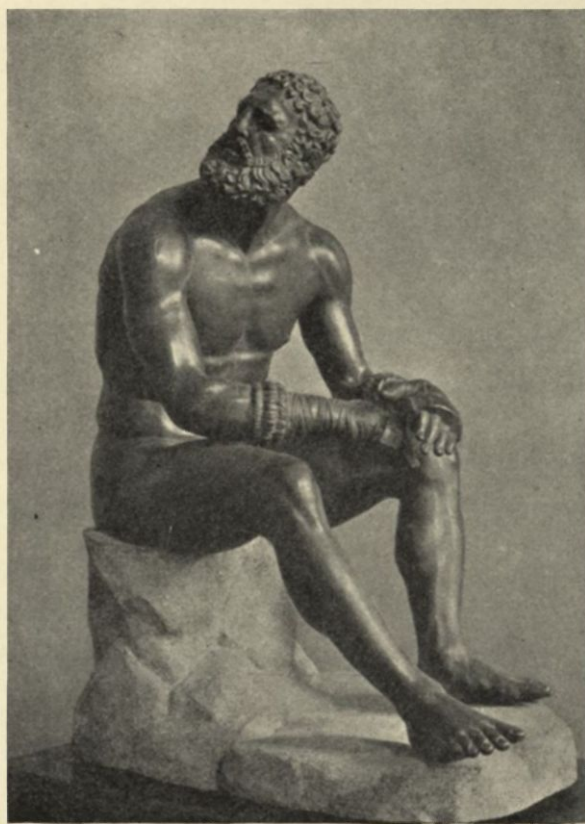


Fig. 3. BRONZE BOXER. Terme Museum, Rome
Replica at Roger Williams Park, Providence, R. I.

wind-blown chiton. Though Praxiteles' statue is lost, we know how the figure looked for it appears on coins from Anticyra, a health-resort in Phocis where a temple to Artemis and the image of the goddess stood. Leochares' Artemis was, like the Apollo, originally cast in bronze which admirably lends itself to the reproduction of fine-textured cloth. Her effortless, gliding motion is heightened by the criss-cross lines of forward direction and backward glance. The stag on which she rests her left hand has been incorrectly restored. In its place was probably a dog such as we see in the picture of Praxiteles' Artemis on the Anticyra coin.

Whereas the 4th century still follows the classical tradition of the 5th century in form and content, particularly in its preoccupation with the gods, after the conquests of Alexander the Great (336-323 B.C.) and as a consequence of the political and social upheaval which they caused, the importance of the city-state of Athens diminished so far that it ceased to be productive, and the center of activity shifted to Rhodes and Asia Minor. Now a new spirit animated sculpture, the desire to discover and exploit unique themes combined with a startling virtuosity of presentation. Two tendencies quickly developed, one of which eventually led to grandiose expression as in the baroque colossal Laocoon and Farnese Bull groups; the other to the idyllic and rococo, the charming world of "little people," of plump and dimpled children, dancing maenads, and mischievous satyrs, of flirtation and kisses and light-hearted laughter. In tune with the same spirit, the earlier narrative style in which the female form had been described was discarded in favor of one of emotional sensitivity wherein the smooth beauty of the body was brought into bright contrast against dull cloth draped with provocative subtlety. The Venus of Milo (about 150 B.C.—Colt Estate) is a splendid example of this new romanticism.

Increased knowledge of medicine in the Hellenistic age was promptly reflected in sculpture also. The Borghese Warrior by Agasias of Ephesos (about 100 B.C.—replicas in Roger Williams Park and at the Colt Estate) is not only a statue, it is a study of anatomy. The musculature is not modelled from the surface inward; the surface is an accident of the physiological structure. This type of realism carried to excess resulted in parodies and grotesques in which pathos and humor are masterfully mingled.

Greek realism modified by the characteristically Greek subordination of the personality to the type is at its best in the figure of a bronze boxer, the so-called Pancratiast which is now in the Terme Museum in Rome (Fig. 3—replica in Roger Williams Park). The iron strength of the muscles is emphasized by a certain degree of schematism which is thrown into high relief by the stylized curls and beard. Observe the cauliflower ear and squinting eyes, the peculiar twist of the head which cleverly emphasizes the crafty awareness of a face in which an expression of fleeting inquiry momentarily overcomes that of an inferior mentality worrying a thought. On the band of the murderous-looking left glove, just over the fingers, is a scarcely perceptible inscription which was detected for the first time within recent years. It reads, "Apollonios, son of Nestor, the Athenian, made it." On the basis of other evidence we know that Apollonios lived about 50 B.C. Even



Fig. 1. APOLLO BELVEDERE. Vatican
Bronze replica at the Colt Estate in Bristol, R. I.

the marble in rippling folds which deny its nature, while the deep shadows contrast sharply with the sun-god's gleaming body.

A companion-piece, perhaps part of an original group by the same master, is the Artemis of Versailles, sister of Apollo and goddess of the chase (Fig. 2). This work was strongly influenced by another and, in antiquity, still more famous Artemis by Praxiteles who represented her as a dainty figure dressed for hunting in a short,



Fig. 2. ARTEMIS OF VERSAILLES. Louvre
Replica at the Colt Estate, Bristol, R. I.

before his signature had been discovered, however, the statue had been assigned to this period because of its style and motif.

The names of Leochares of Athens, of Agasias of Ephesos, of Apollonios Nestoros are, perhaps, less familiar than the names of the great Phidias, Praxiteles and Scopas. Nevertheless, they are just as surely milestones in the evolutionary progress of ancient art as the works of their hands are landmarks in our local scene.

Adelaide M. Davidson

EXHIBITIONS OUTSIDE OF RHODE ISLAND

Andover, Mass., Addison Gallery, Phillips Academy

Oct.-Nov. 11—Retrospective Exhibition by Mahonri M. Young. Sculpture, Paintings, Drawings, and Prints.

Nov. 15-Dec. 30—Design in Architecture. A continuation of the exhibitions on design usually held in January.

Nov. 15-Dec. 30—Design in the Landscape. Prepared for Wesleyan University by the students of the Harvard Graduate School of Design, illustrated with photographs and diagrams.

Boston, Mass., Museum of Fine Arts

Oct.-Nov. 17—Three Centuries of American Prints. Special Exhibition Galleries.

Boston, Mass., The Guild of Boston Artists

Nov. 14-Nov. 16—Sculpture by Bashka Paeff.

Nov. 18-Nov. 30—Exhibition by members of the Guild.

Springfield, Mass., Springfield Museum of Fine Arts

Nov. 29-Dec. 26—"The Plan of a Painting" and interpretive study of the painting, "Manhattan Bridge Loop," by Edward Hopper. Loaned by the Addison Gallery of American Art.

Wellesley, Mass., Farnsworth Museum, Wellesley College

Oct.-Nov. 5—Paintings by Edwin W. Dickinson.

Oct.-Nov. 7—Wheaton College Art Centre drawings. Lent by Museum of Modern Art.

Nov. 10-Nov. 24—Water colors by Milliard Sheets.

Worcester, Mass., Worcester Art Museum

Oct.-Nov. 3—Selected Prints from the Permanent Collections of the Museum.

Oct. 24 (cont. indefinitely)—Two exhibitions: The Theodore J. and Mary G. Ellis Collection; "Ways of Seeing" arranged by Lee Simonson.

Nov. 5-Nov. 24—Two exhibitions: Books illustrated by George Cruikshank from the Woodward Collection. Etchings by A. H. Haig.

Hartford, Conn., Wordsworth Athenaeum

Oct.-Nov. 29—Models for stage settings. Costume sketches and designs made for the theatre and ballet. Held in the Avery Memorial Theatre.

Nov. 11-Dec. 2—The Ballet, its history, art and practice. An extensive collection of source material lent from the archives of the Museum of Modern Art.

New York, N. Y., The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Nov. 20—The Art of the Jeweler. Gallery D 6.

Nov. 25-Dec. 1—American Art Week and the Museum: Paintings and Prints by living American Artists. Galleries A 12, 23, B 13, 14.

Nov. 9-Nov. 17—Children's Book Week Exhibition. Room of Recent Accessions.

Nov. 16—Water colors by Edger W. Jenney: Interiors of Old Nantucket Houses. Assembly Room, American Wing.

Nov.—Carriage Designs. Continued. Gallery E 15.

Nov.—A Historical Exhibition of Woodcuts from the Museum Collection. Gallery A 23.

New York, N. Y., The Museum of Modern Art

Winter 1941—The Art of the American Indian. This exhibition, organized by the Indian Arts and Crafts Board of the United States Department of the Interior, with the cooperation of universities and museums throughout the country, will be the largest and most representative exhibition of its kind ever held. It will present contemporary Indian works of art against a background of their ancient traditions.

New Haven, Conn., Yale Gallery of Fine Arts, Yale University

Nov. 5-Dec. 8—Contemporary British Painting.

EXHIBITIONS IN RHODE ISLAND

Faunce House Gallery, Brown University

Nov. 8-Nov. 29—The Artist as Reporter. Lent by the Museum of Modern Art.

Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design

Oct.-Nov. 30—Contemporary American and British Painting.

Nov. 10-Nov. 17—Rhode Island Salon of Photography.

Nov. 17-Nov. 30—Exhibition for the 150th Anniversary of the Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island.

Nov.-Dec.—Hobby Show.

Providence Art Club

Nov. 2-Nov. 10—Oil Paintings by Benny Cohn.

Nov. 12-Nov. 24—Twelfth Members' Exhibition.

Nov. 26-Dec. 8—Work by John G. Hardy and Hannah Drury Clark.

Armour Gallery, The Arcade

Nov. 1-Nov. 30—Marrus Dauer, contemporary Dutch etcher. Exhibition of Oriental Prints.

Tilden Thurber Gallery

Nov. 25-Dec. 5—Landscapes and Marines in tempera by Col. H. Anthony Dyer.

CALENDAR OF ART EVENTS

Sunday, November 3

Piano concert by Rowland Sturges. Compositions by Bach, Mozart, Beethoven and Chopin. Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, 3:30 P. M.

Concert by the Rhode Island W.P.A. Symphony Orchestra. Soloist, Carl Thorpe, pianist, playing the Grieg concerto in A minor. Gilbert Stuart Junior High School, 8:15 P. M.

Monday, November 4

Basement Studio Group: Music hour by E. Gertrude Lawson. Dramatic reading of one act plays. Tea. 80 Benefit Street, 8:10 P. M.

Sunday, November 10

*Musical Art Quartet with Frank Sheridan and assisting artists. Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, 3:30 P. M.

Concert by the Rhode Island W.P.A. Symphony Orchestra. Symphony No. 1 by Shostakowitch. Edouard Caffier conducting. Gilbert Stuart Junior High School, 8:15 P. M.

*Admission charged.

Monday, November 11

*Aaron Richmond presents Kirsten Flagstad. Sponsored by the Brown Alumnae Club of Providence. Metropolitan Theatre, 8:15 P. M.

*Musical Art Quartet with Frank Sheridan and assisting artists. Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, 3:30 P. M.

*Sock and Buskin presents "Women Have Their Way" by the Spanish playwrights, the Quinteros. Faunce House Theatre, 8:30 P. M.

Basement Studio Group: Poetry readings by twelve members of the group. Tea. 80 Benefit Street, 8:10 P. M.

Tuesday, November 12

*Musical Art Quartet with Frank Sheridan and assisting artists. Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, 3:30 P. M.

*Sock and Buskin presents "Women Have Their Way" by the Quinteros. Faunce House Theatre, 8:30 P. M.

Wednesday, November 13

*The Community Art Project Wednesday Evening Talk. Mr. William Nelson, Council Executive for the New England American Youth Hostels, will speak on "Youth Hostelings in America." The talk will be accompanied by movies in color. Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, 8:15 P. M.

*Musical Art Quartet with Frank Sheridan and assisting artists. Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, 3:30 P. M.

Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, 3:30 P. M.

Sunday, November 17

*Concert by the Rhode Island W.P.A. Symphony Orchestra. Soloist, Alexandre Peloquin, pianist, will play the Rachmaninoff concerto No. 2 in C minor. Edouard Caffier conducting. Gilbert Stuart Junior High School, 8:15 P. M.

*Musical Art Quartet with Frank Sheridan and assisting artists. Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, 3:30 P. M.

Monday, November 18

Basement Studio Group: Dramatic reading of one act plays. Music hour by Lena Ambrosini. Tea. 80 Benefit Street, 8:10 P. M.

*Musical Art Quartet with Frank Sheridan and assisting artists. Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, 3:30 P. M.

Tuesday, November 19

*Musical Art Quartet with Frank Sheridan and assisting artists. Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, 3:30 P. M.

Wednesday, November 20

*Musical Art Quartet with Frank Sheridan and assisting artists. Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, 3:30 P. M.

Sunday, November 24

*Sock and Buskin presents "The Fall of the City" by Archibald MacLeish. Faunce House Theatre, 8:30 P. M.

Gallery Talk by Col. H. Anthony Dyer, "Lest We Forget" (The Romantic Days of Landscape Painting in the Barbizon School). Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, 3:30 P. M.

Monday, November 25

Basement Studio Group: Dramatic Reading of one act plays. Tea. 80 Benefit Street, 8:10 P. M.

Tuesday, November 26

*Concert by the Boston Symphony, Dr. Sergi Koussevitsky conducting. Metropolitan Theatre, 8:15 P. M.