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Calendar of Events January 1934

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COMMUNITY ART PROJECT

CALENDAR of ART EVENTS

January 1934
The theme of an exhibition built around a central subject frequently adds a general interest to the special distinctions of individual works. This should be especially true of the exhibition "THE DANCE IN MODERN ART" to be held in Faunce House Art Gallery, Brown University, January 2 to 20. The many modern artists who have followed the dance as a theme show in this exhibition how considerable a part of the effectiveness of the modern dance is of a pictorial and plastic kind. The exhibition is a representative one. Oils, watercolors, drawings, prints, and sculpture are included. Among the European artists participating are Degas, Toulouse-Lautrec, Georges Kolbe, Matisse, Picasso, and Segonzac. The balance weighs, however, to the American side, with works by such men as Arthur B. Davies, Robert Henri, Ernest Fiene, John Sloan, Pop Hart, and Maurice Sterne.

Washington's birthday in February calls attention to the three portraits of WASHINGTON BY GILBERT STUART in Rhode Island, Two, alike, were ordered in 1801, after the Rhode Island General Assembly had passed an act including the following statement: "The citizens of this State having on all proper occasions expressed their inviolate attachment to the person of the late General George Washington, and their entire approbation of his conduct in public and private life: the General Assembly . . . do resolve that two portraits of him, drawn at full length by some eminent artist with suitable frames be produced at the expense of the State and that one of them be placed in the Senate Chamber in each of the State houses in the Counties of Newport and Providence." One of these two hangs in the County Court House at Newport, the other in the Governor's reception room in the New State House in Providence. A third portrait, done for Stuart's friend and patron, Jonathan Mason, is in the collection of the Rhode Island School of Design.

TEN RHODE ISLAND ARTISTS will come under the C. W. A. appropriation. Emphasis is to be placed upon the utilization of competent talent for the decoration and enhancement of public buildings. According to the Rhode Island directors of the project, quality will dominate all work permitted to be done, for no commissions will be given for designs submitted, except upon the final approval of competent judges.

The Calendar of Art Events is published regularly by the Community Art Project. Each issue includes a calendar, notes on art events, and a brief illustrated commentary on an outstanding work of art in Rhode Island. Copies will be sent regularly without charge upon request to Miss Bauer, Stenographic Bureau, Brown University, Providence, R. I.

William Blake (1757-1827) was known in his lifetime as an eccentric engraver and died virtually unknown. A half century after his death, he was rediscovered; ever since his reputation has been steadily rising until it seems as though his permanent position might be at the very top, with Dante and Milton.

Gilchrist, his first biographer, called him the "unknown painter." Now he is anything but unknown. The first English painter to insist that the nude was the basis of art, he looked back to Michelangelo and forward to the Twentieth Century. His sense of pattern and cult of line (strengthened by his training as an engraver) made him the nearest approach to Oriental art that Europe has ever made, with the single exception of Botticelli. Even as I write, a newspaper photograph proves that Lee Lawrie has adopted the frontispiece of Blake's Europe for a doorway in Rockefeller Center, New York.

As a poet, Blake's reputation is perhaps higher. His early lyrics are in every anthology, while even his harshest critics admit that there are great lines and passages even in his chaotic Jerusalem. The greatest of Milton's disciples, he outdid his master in experimental verse, which today furnishes titles for modern poems and books of poetry in every land.

As a book-maker, Blake admitted has not been recognized since the Middle Ages. A great artist and great poet, he designed his own books, interweaving text and illustration; etched them by a process of his own invention: printed, colored, and sold them himself, thus being the only complete craftsman of modern times.

But Blake was perhaps greatest of all as a "prophet," as he called himself, or psychologist, as we would call him today. The mystery of what his books are about is dispelled when we learn that they are epics of the brain. Aware of most, if not all, of the discoveries of Freud and Jung, he devoted his life to recovering them. The modern scientific terms had not been invented: therefore, he used the only terms available in the vocabulary of religion in adding thereto many terms of his own invention. As we rediscover the truths he knew, we are discovering the meaning of his life work.

—S. Foster Damon

(The Blake drawing in the Museum of the Rhode Island School of Design, here reproduced, illustrates admirably Professor Damon's note. The moody lyricism of the work, with its naively simple, symmetrical composition, and its clearness of definition through line, revives romantically a classicism moribund in the hands of less poetic artists.)
EXHIBITIONS IN PROVIDENCE

Faunce House Art Gallery, Brown University
Jan. 2-Jan. 20—The Dance in Modern Art

John Hay Library, Brown University
Jan. 9-Jan. 23—Paintings of North American Birds by Rex Brasher under the auspices of the Audubon Society

Handicraft Club
Jan. 9-Jan. 13—Exhibition of art in inexpensive things

Maek-Murray Studios
Jan. 1-Jan. 31—Prints by Durer, Rembrandt, and Schongauer

Providence Art Club
Jan. 2-Jan. 14—Works of John Frazier
Jan. 16-Jan. 28—Loan exhibition of children’s portraits

Museum of the Rhode Island School of Design
Jan. 7-Jan. 28—Copies of Etruscan Tomb Paintings

School Gallery, Rhode Island School of Design
Jan. 15-Jan. 29—Exhibition of Designs for Esmond Mills
Jan. 29-Feb. 5—Exhibition from Buick Motors Corporation

Tilden-Thurber Gallery
Jan. 1-Jan. 31—Miniatures by Mrs. Eulabee Dix

Nathaniel M. Vose Gallery
Jan. 1-Jan. 22—Water-colors by Gordon Grant
Jan. 1-Jan. 22—Wood engravings by Mrs. Grace Albee

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