

# ART NEWS

FOUNDED 1902

**John Maxwell** [Internationale; to Feb. 3] reminisces about Italian architecture or the dunes of Provincetown in delicate paintings which add, in collage, bits of memorabilia. J.C.

**Harry McCormick** [A.C.A.; to Feb. 17] is a Magic Realist working within the seemingly inexhaustible repertoire of asymmetrical composition in household circumstances, with everyday objects peeking out of corners, or haunted by peculiar lights. *The Kitchen Sink* is splendid. M.P.

**Pier Antonio Mellara** [Radich] constructs a rectangular volume with transparent plastic planes in parallel series, as though he were mapping the space in glass-box architecture. Another geometric shape lives within as a series of colored sections clinging onto the primary series of plane. In the simpler orders, a benign volume such as a square hangs within the rectangular exterior one. N.E.

**Ursula Meyer's** [Sachs] work is continual and potential; it is locked in space or stopped in time. Each work is a flexible system, two to four modules, of steel or plywood, with an arrangement potential which is not visually pre-conceivable. Modules can be arranged and rearranged and rearranged and rearranged, etc. The work is never final. There is no "is" to it, but there is always a "now" to it. The parts are not singularly interesting, although they do look vaguely useful. The possibilities they embrace are limited, but they are various enough to be useless as machines. There is no fixed size or shape to these works. The mind is out, machines are washed up, critics are no longer demonstrators or repairmen. The absence of shape and dimension intensifies the voluptuousness of matter. "The medium is the message" is an asinine statement. The truth of the matter is, the matter is the message. Miss Meyer is a medium for matter. Matter is the poetry of the eye. Ursula Meyer's work is one of those very rare activities, like arranging 144 modules of a metal or making something out of aluminum pipe and the ether. She is one of a small handful of people who are doing something which has not been done before. The world will look different than it seems to be now when this stuff spreads to life. A.B.

**Jean Miles's** [Grand Central Moderns; Feb. 3-23] previous concerns as a Purist painter are now translated into geometric paintings based on the triangle and all its ancient connotations. Difficult and expensive materials—platinum and gold leaf, sometimes glazed with orange or blue—give these works a sense of devotional objects. She also shows polyester spheres, cast clear or with embedded crystals, and polyester eggs coupled with Cambrian fossils. L.H.S.

**Gabriel Morera\*** [Kipsbay] shows cubicles of illusion, using precious geometric shapes of plastic, Surrealist objects and concave mirrors in boxes through which the present appears as a memory. M.Z.

**Jennie Novik** [Internationale] used deliberately garish greens, sharp patterns and grotesquely exaggerated forms in a primitive manner to depict the idylls of, for example, Central Park. These urban pastorales have a bit of bite. J.C.

**Jules Olitski** [Poindexter] was seen in small acrylics on paper which looked both like cut-out sections of his large paintings and miniature versions of those paintings in entirety. The atmospheric effects work just as well in this small-scale, intimate mode. S.B.

**John Opie, Paul Shimon, Rene Shapshak** [Capricorn] showed under the title "Fantasy and the Artist." Shimon's semi-abstract subjects were subsumed into a fine colorful abstract haze. John Opie painted a large shoe walking through the corner of his canvas, and lets crazy objects accumulate into a graceful design. Shapshak's three-dimensional kinetic sculptures range from graceful static constructions turning on bases to a robot that talks. E.M.

**Barbro Ostlihn** [de Nagy; to Feb. 15] continues to make flat, sharply designed paintings whose images are abstracted from architectural details—doors, moldings, roofs. The execution is streamlined. At times her hard-edged Surrealism, as in *Via Garibaldi* with its frontal portals, reminds one of Maxfield Parrish, of all people. S.B.

**Picabia and Friends** [Stein; to Feb. 3] includes Dali and Breton in a look back at some Dada-inspired gestures. Most relevant today are Picabia's 1917 ink drawings, diagrams of mechanical systems of wheels, and a document that includes his diagrammatic sketch for a large oil—its colors written in by name, its composition outdoing Lichtenstein's 1930s moderne. K.L.L.

**Picasso's** [Saidenberg] recent drawings in various mediums—chalk, bistre, wash, colored crayon, etc.—made a familiar, delightful exhibition highlighted by several heavily worked and explosively compacted compositions such as *Plutist with Nude*. On the other hand, there is such a predominance of playful "instant Picassos" that it all becomes, for the moment, partially invisible. E.C.B.

**Georges Polus** [Internationale; Feb. 6-17] chisels angular figures with ramp-like planes. J.C.

**Anne Poor** [Jas. Graham; Feb. 10-March 2] recently made a trip to Russia, and exhibits a series of tiny sketches made on the spot, with large studio watercolors derived from them; all are done in a breezy, descriptive style, making Russian city life look jolly and out of date: colorful military uniforms and signs of motherhood dominate the open squares and parks. Some large studio oils, which have nothing to do with the trip, are dashing essays in informal portraiture verging on caricature, in which the eye focuses on illustrative details and the broad sweep of "snapshot" pose. These are lightly worked in oil stains with a subdued palette in a manner closer to drawing than painting, with large expanses of brown linen left bare. R.D.

**Fairfield Porter** [Shepherd] recently gave a fine informal display of drawings and watercolors in which all his most positive qualities were clearly revealed: a tender, true regard for the variations in seashore and bay; trees in autumn foliage; people in relaxed pose; interiors; tables by lamp-light—all captured with domesticated line and perfectly pitched tonalities. R.P.