

ART FLOURISHES AT GLOUCESTER AND OUT ON CAPE COD

VERSATILITY A PENNANT

It Snaps in the Unfailing Breeze of An Enthusiasm That Appears Ever on the Wax

By EDWARD ALDEN JEWELL.

HOWEVER somolent the Summer art season in town may be, down Gloucester way and out on Cape Cod at Provincetown these are busy days. Art thrives on salt air and the not exactly subtle aroma of fish and glue. You must watch your step for fear of getting your feet tangled in somebody's hopefully fixed outdoor easel. Where in the world do all these artists come from? They paint and paint, thousands of square yards of canvas annually, and by the time these yards of canvas are sufficiently dry the Summer exhibitions begin to open their doors. It is amazing. It is an industry, like fish and glue, though considerably sweeter. Art in America more than holds its own. Of course, the temptation to confuse quantity and quality, ever at one's elbow, must be withstood. Yet there is quality, too; here and there a flash of true originality also, which arrests and refreshes the eye.

Summer residents at Gloucester have two major exhibitions outspread for their enjoyment, not to mention the usual generous spattering of little shows in studio and shoppe. When it comes to the Gloucester Society of Artists, you have to keep tab on your schedule, for this society arranges no less than three exhibitions in the course of a season. The first of these drew to a conclusion a few days ago (just after the reviewer arrived on the scene); the second opened yesterday and remains until Aug. 14. Three days later comes the third, and the pictures are not taken down until Sept. 8.

EASILY the most striking picture in the first showing of the Gloucester Society of Artists was Margaret Fitzhugh Browne's "Self Expression," which we reproduce. It dominated the wall. It dominated the room, with its vigor of statement and its atmosphere of "new generation" romance. There was, however, some portrait competition. Eben F. Comlins' "Eileen," for instance, tawnily monochromatic, and the girl herself strangely interesting; yes, you might call her positively fascinating. And Millie Buhl Frederick's "Portrait of Mme. E. M.," and Alice F. Tilden's portrait of Mrs. Henry Jessop Stevenson, and Anna Waldbridge McWilliams' study of "Miss I"—above all, perhaps, Charles Allan Winter's admirable portrait of Joel P. Glass. Mrs. E. King Couper's painting, entitled simply "Portrait," carries very well but is not so successful at closer range because of a strident blue background, which invades, somewhat disconcertingly, the woman's dark hair. William Meyerowitz, using water-color, also turned out an effective "Arrangement," a woman with a lace mantilla.

The exhibitions held by this group are much smaller than those put on by the other Gloucester group. There is much less wall space in the gallery on Eastern Point Road than in the huge association building in East Gloucester Square. But by employing the repertoire of three attractions in one season, the Society of Gloucester Artists manages nearly to catch up in the course of a Summer. And each exhibition contains the customary variety of media. Among the water-colors in the show just closed was a strong piece called "Terrace Garden, San Remo," by Antino Beneduco. And there were two attractive sanguines by Roberta D. Ernst. Theresa Bernstein's "Gloucester Fishermen" revealed much of her power, though its design seemed a trifle confused. Arthur J. Hammond's "The New Fisherman" and Sara Gannett Houghton's "Winter Bushes" both scored, as did Alice Judson's small oil, "The Chapel." Dog days were honored in sculpture by Helen S. Davis. Perhaps sometime a daring Gloucester sculptor will essay the mosquito, which would certainly be sensational, and subjects of the lustiest and most virile physique abound down Gloucester way. They sit without having to be asked, though, of course, at a price.

REGULAR visitors to the exhibitions of the North Shore Arts Association will find the two vast floors of the harbor-shore gallery looking much as usual. It might almost be last year's show, though the pictures are all new ones, or conceivably it might even be next year's. The North Shore people can be depended upon for possibly the most sumptuous Summer exhibition in this part of the world. Those whose predilection is flora and still life are never disappointed. Some of the achievements are, seriously, dazzling. They expose expert workmanship (take the beautiful still life by Will Davis) and an unflinching appreciation of color values. One of the prizes this year went to Henrietta M. King for her brightly "modern" still life, and the prize was deserved, though were realism the criterion the laurel would have to be handed to Elizabeth Paxton, whose still life called "The Milk Pitcher" is almost uncanny. Another prize was given to Alice Worthington Ball for her excellent "Sudden Showers, Dufferin Terrace"—an event saddened by the death of the artist last Monday.

The North Shore Arts Association numbers among its members a great many very accomplished painters, far too many really good ones to be even mentioned in so brief a review. You feel a general competence of high order, which occasionally

climbs to climax in something of outstanding merit. Nor is special merit confined to one class of work. Versatility flies its pennant in a breeze steadier than any vouchsafed by the Weather Bureau. If the portraits, some of them at least, are expert, so also are several of the landscapes. Those by F. L. Stoddard, Marian P. Sloane, Anthony Thieme, Antonio P. Martino, Edith Briccoe Stevens, Charles P. Gruppe, Cornelia Whitehurst, Tom P. Barnet, Joseph P. Birren, Marguerite Neuhäuser are particularly good, from one standpoint or another. Pointillism, too, seems to be having a special vogue at Gloucester this year, sponsored by Isobel Kell Wurtele and Dorothy Haggood. The former's pointillist strokes are perhaps the neatest ever shown, while the latter's are not only very neat but also extremely large. Much remains to be said, but space dictates and newspaper columns won't stretch, no matter how worthy the cause, and we must hurry on to the Cape.

PROVINCETOWN goes "modern" for the first half of each Summer. It has been doing so for three years now. The radicals are at present in the saddle. Not that they are desperately radical any more. What is happening? Or are conservatives still appalled?

"Modernism" at Provincetown appears to have decided that art's true desideratum is pattern. Pattern is not quite comprehensive enough to include all of the fundamentals; rather it is the surface crochet that may or may not indicate the contours of a deeper plan involving balance, symmetry, complement, contrast. Few of the patterns at Provincetown, it may be argued, overwhelm one with a sense of what lies underneath. Still, the man who could not find pleasure in the often delightful weavings of color and shape would indeed be hard to please. Some say it with flowers, others with less fragile items of still life; some do their weaving with landscape and humanity; still others with plain abstraction. It really does not matter what you use if your aim be just pattern.

Nicolai Vasiliev shines in harmonious dissonance and two of his girls have come out of Chirico's basket of eggs. Flora Schofield outlines her fruit Braquishly, while Jack Tworokov, calling a fish, some grapes, a stove, a transparent spoon and a rose into conference, goes even the worthy Cézanne one better when it comes to the important business of distortion; that is to say, the fish, the stove, the spoon (though ghostly) and the rose behave properly enough; it is only the bottle that makes us realize how comparatively timid Cézanne was.

The two incontestably salient canvases are "Nudes, Florence," by E. Ambrose Webster (seen last year at the Corcoran in Washington), and "Still Life With Table," by Joseph Meierhans. Why "with table"? Why not with several hundred other objects, all of which conspire to make the composition big and cheerful and most competently insane?

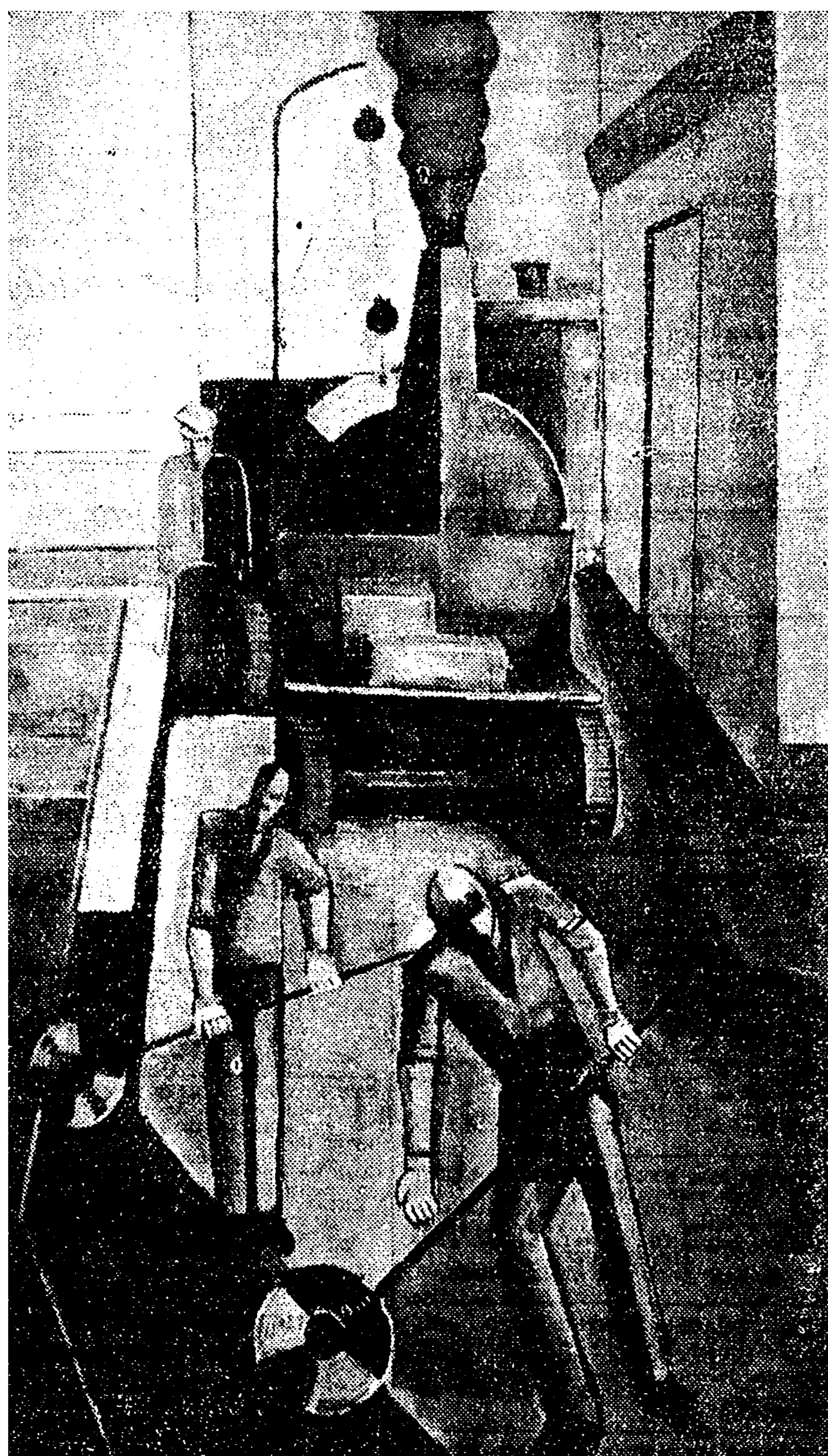
Rosalie M. Carey has painted "Lily May"; and are they donkeys that are with her, or are they rabbits, or what? The lady in Helen Alton Sawyer's "Opera" has a very wicked eye and A. Walkowitz's beach loungers have no eyes at all—have, for that matter, no faces; but this may be



"Self Expression," by Margaret Fitzhugh Browne. In the Gloucester Society of Artists' Show.

profoundly philosophical, making heads without faces, recalling as it does the celebrated grin without the cat. But what chiefly stands out in the scribbles up and down the

pages of the reviewer's catalogue is the letter P, which in hieroglyphic means pattern. Pattern is Provincetown's open sesame this season. And all in all it is a commendable show.



"Tar Boiler," by Jack Tworokov. In Provincetown Art Association Show.