

Paintings by Norman Daly

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Art

Paintings

By Norman D. Daly

There is a variety of style, mood and subject matter in the water-colors by Norman D. Daly which are now on view in the Music and Art Room of Willard Straight Hall—and the variety is spice and stimulation.

The earliest pictures in the show, "Nice" and "Nice, Harbor," were painted in 1937, the latest during the past winter. This partly explains the diversity, but even in the very latest pictures the artist has deliberately chosen to vary his handling to suit his aim.

Two Colorado scenes painted from material gathered last summer will illustrate this. In "Salida" the dilapidated grandstand of an abandoned ball park makes a gauky pattern against a background of mountains and an ominous sky. It is painted in gouache, that is, with white added to the watercolor to achieve opaque and semi-opaque effects, and the predominant tone is an acid, green yellow, subtly used to dramatize the desolation. It is what is called a realistic picture and the gloomiest aspects of the scene are stressed. But "Chalk Cliffs" is another story. Here the weird and eccentric shapes of the eroded cliffs are rendered in dripping wet, transparent washes and the detail drawn in with a tiny brush or quill while the washes are still wet. The result is a pattern, vaguely oriental perhaps, in sober tones of gray, violet and green which has an intriguing, mysterious, almost mystical air about it. To your correspondent, this is tops in the show. It is a mood and a technique which one hopes the artist will feel inclined to exploit in his future work.

But there are some who are so busy trying to find the greatest artists that they have no time to enjoy just plain, good, painting. A one-man show can lead the observer into the same pitfall.

It is possible to get involved in comparing these pictures and so forget that each of them strives to be complete in itself,—and usually succeed. The view of "East Ithaca" with its luminous, gray green sky is painted in the manner of "Salida" and is quite as worthy of mention. "Campus," "St. John's," "Delmar," and "Foothills," while they differ, prove that Daly is an expert with paint. One can, in fact, go back to "Nice, Harbor," one of the earliest pieces; it may seem immature and somewhat influenced in comparison with later works, but seen isolated, in a friend's living room, it would certainly impress with its charm.

JOHN HARTELL