

HISTORY OF THE FORT WORTH ART ASSOCIATION

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A THESIS

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We hereby recommend that the thesis prepared under our supervision by Resa C. Oglesby entitled HISTORY OF THE FORT WORTH ART ASSOCIATION

be accepted as fulfilling this part of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts.

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## PREFACE

The writer is grateful to the Fort Worth Art Association for freedom to examine the correspondence and other private papers kept in files. Special thanks are due the Secretary of the Art Association, Miss Sallie Gillespie, for encouragement in a long task, for assistance in research and for much actual information. Thanks are also due many individuals. Mr. J. S. Ibbotson, Librarian of the Fort Worth Public Library, gave preliminary advice. Mrs. Randolph Kinney, Mrs. Tim Lawrence, Mr. Lirl Treuter, and others of the Library staff assisted in research, as did Miss Beverly Bonnelli and Miss Ida Belle Hicks. Acknowledgment is here made to many other Fort Worth citizens who aided in assembling facts for this writing. Kindness of Miss Carlotta Corporan and Mr. Kenneth B. Loomis of the directing committee is appreciated. Particular mention is reserved for the director of the thesis, Dr. Mabel E. Maxcy.

This history will doubtless contain errors, omissions, and misconceptions. It is hoped that it will not be considered by the Art Association as complete, but only as a basis for further study. Missing links in the history should be completed by others with access to more information.

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## CHAPTER I

### THE YEARS BEFORE 1910

Fort Worth, like many another pioneer town, has a history both unique and colorful. Long known to outsiders as "Cowtown," it has received much publicity for its distinctive western flavor. Few, however, know that a curious and persistent thread of culture can be traced through its development.

The beginning of the city is now well known to all who participated in the Centennial Celebration of 1949. This vividly recounted how Major Ripley A. Arnold was ordered by General Jenkins Worth to establish a garrison for the protection of the settlers from the Indians. When this was accomplished in June, 1849, the new encampment was called Camp Worth. Among the personnel of the camp was Sergeant-major Abe Harris of the Company F, Eighth Infantry, who arrived in August of that same year. In his advanced years, he recounted much of the history to Mrs. Moore Murdock, who quoted him in an article entitled "Birthday of Fort Worth."

Major Harris declares that the herds of buffalo across the river sometimes consumed days passing a given point going from one feeding point to another. Herds of antelope fed placidly on the plains, or sped like the wind from animal or human foes. Bands of sullen Indians appeared and disappeared in the distance. And this amid



the glorious diversity of the landscape and the monotony and wonderful excitements of a frontier garrison, the months rolled on and Fort Worth became the objective point of sturdy pioneer citizens, roving adventurers and desperadoes.<sup>1</sup>

In the records of this pioneer fort there is little reference to raids by the Indians, but Major K. M. Van Zandt, pioneer citizen of the city, told of an attempted raid in a speech at the Ad Men's Club dinner in 1910. He said, "The Indians did not make their last raid in this community until June, 1868, when they were discovered approaching the city along the West Fork, just south of Rosen Heights."<sup>2</sup> Van Zandt reported that the Indians retreated without making any raid.

Hardly had the wild tribes ceased to trouble the settlers when the cultural activities of the community began in earnest. In 1881 a charter was granted to Texas Wesleyan College.<sup>3</sup> Women's Clubs were organized, among them the 1881 Club, the '93 Club, and the Kooking Klub. Other groups also were forming, with such subjects for study as literature, music, and the improvement of the town. One of the later groups was the Bohemian Club, founded in 1898, with the purposes of studying Southern Literature and doing creative

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<sup>1</sup>Fort Worth Record, May 8, 1904.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., November 30, 1910.

<sup>3</sup>Not the fore-runner of the present college of the same name.

writing. Some organizations began discussing the need for a library and even such an unheard of possibility as an art gallery. Meeting at the home of Mrs. Charles S. Scheuber,<sup>1</sup> on April 2, 1892, twenty women decided to establish in Fort Worth not only a library, but an art gallery as well. Surely those who dared to dream so fantastically could never accomplish such dreams.

It was on April 25, 1892, that the charter of the Fort Worth Library Association was granted, and in June, the deed to the ground was obtained. Entertainments, concerts, and a subscription list secured revenue for a building fund. As a climax to the continued efforts of these determined women, it was announced that on June 30, 1899, Andrew Carnegie had offered to contribute a maximum of fifty thousand dollars toward a library building, provided the city would support the library with an annual budget of four thousand dollars.

Finally, the dreams became a reality, and at 10:00 A. M., on October 17, 1901, the public library was opened to the citizens of Fort Worth. Mrs. Charles S. Scheuber was librarian. In fulfillment of the charter granted in 1892, the library contained a large room to be used as an art gallery. It is believed that this was

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<sup>1</sup>Mrs. Scheuber became the first librarian, and served from 1901 through 1938.



the first art gallery set aside in a tax-supported public institution in Texas.

When the doors of the library were opened, the building and the books could be admired, but there were no fine pictures to hang on the walls of the new art gallery. In fact, there was only a vacant room on the west side of the second floor. The room was admirable in size, being about thirty by sixty feet in floor dimensions, and fifteen feet high; yet the top sky lights were the only indication that the room might be used for an art gallery. Called the art room, it was leased to the Woman's Wednesday Club for three years. The annual rent was three hundred dollars, but fifty dollars was deducted from the rent the first year in exchange for some improvements which the club made in the room. Other clubs also paid for the use of the art room, revenues thus obtained aiding in the library work.

The interest of Fort Worth citizens in art has paralleled the growth of the public reading center. In 1902 the Anna Tichnor Library Association of Boston presented one hundred two volumes of art and seven thousand photographs to the Fort Worth Library. This material became useful at once to classes, clubs, and groups for art study, and was so reported by the librarian in her



next annual report to the trustees. Since that initial gift, the art department of the library has gradually acquired many worthwhile volumes, and is today a rich source of material for art study.

While the art gallery was rented to the women's clubs, its real purpose was not forgotten. Thoughts of a museum and a future collection were always uppermost, and the first gifts came in 1902. Strangely, these first items were not paintings, but sculpture casts, a large figure of Athene Guistiana and a bust of Hermes by Praxiteles.

The Art League, donor of the Hermes cast, might well be considered the forerunner of the Art Association, since the active members of the Art League were among the organizers of the later association. The story of this first league is best told in an article on "Art in Fort Worth," written by Mrs. Scheuber:

The first gift of an art object which came to the new library and art museum was a cast of the bust of Hermes by Praxiteles, the gift of an association organized in Fort Worth in 1899 by a group of men and women. The Association was an outgrowth of a course of lectures on art given by Mrs. John Sherwood of Chicago, under the auspices of the Women's Clubs of the city. The organization was short-lived. Mrs. James W. Swayne, who had been the secretary and treasurer suggested that the money which had been paid in as dues should be used to purchase a cast for the Art Museum.<sup>1</sup>

Doubtless, many of those active in the Art League continued their interest in other art projects, as progress

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<sup>1</sup>Critic-Camp Bowie Texahoma Bugler (Fort Worth),  
March 9, 1918.



was marked by reports of the year 1904. The traveling art collection of the Texas Federated Women's Clubs was brought to the Fort Worth library for a second annual show. The '93 Club began a course of art study under the teaching of Rose Howard. Women's clubs continued their activities. Some mentioned in the newspapers of the day are the Harmony Club, Current Literature Club, Monday Book Club, the New Century Club, the Sorosis, the Daughters of the Republic [of Texas], Daughters of the Confederacy, and Woman's Wednesday Club.

In public affairs, it is worth mentioning that Main Street had been paved with brick. Reckless drivers provoked the city to pass a law limiting the speed of automobiles to ten miles per hour, and requiring them to carry bells, horns, lamps, etc. A boating party at Lake Erie, Handley, and a Jolly Hayride were reported as social events. Mention was made of the Crescent Bowling Club. The baseball team was called the "Panthers."

Amid all these activities of a city which had so soon outgrown its beginnings, there was one voice raised annually for the beginning of an art collection. In March, 1903, and again in 1904, the librarian recommended to the trustees that "We should commence . . . to form an art collection."<sup>1</sup> Her diligence was soon to bear fruit.

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<sup>1</sup>Mrs. Charles S. Scheuber, Annual Report of the Librarian to the Board of Trustees for the Year Ending March 1, 1903.

Early in 1904, friends of the Library decided to hold a loan exhibit to benefit the book fund. Opening on April 12 at the Library, the exhibit brought to light many objects of historic and artistic interest, some dating back to 1696, and 1793. A cannon ball from the battle of Waterloo attracted much attention. Captain M. B. Loyd permitted his collection of guns and Sam Houston relics to be kept at the library after the close of the exhibit.<sup>1</sup> R. E. Montgomery allowed his bronze by Cellini and "Head of Christ" by Murillo to remain. Frank Reaugh,<sup>2</sup> of Dallas, permitted the library to continue exhibiting three of his landscapes.

In addition to material borrowed from persons in the locality, one painting came from a dealer in Boston, a landscape called "The Approaching Storm," by the painter, George Inness, whose recent death in 1894 had only added to the value of his work. Beginning then, in 1904, with the use of an important name in art, Fort Worth art groups continued for many years to use this method of attracting public attention. At any rate, whether in admiration of the fame of the artist or the beauty of the painting,

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<sup>1</sup>The firearms remained as the nucleus of a collection that increased until the building was razed in 1938.

<sup>2</sup>Infra, pp. 198, 207.



ambition stirred in the minds of some Fort Worth persons, and the idea of keeping the "Approaching Storm" took hold.

A few days before the Loan Exhibition started, Henry O. Williams, the Boston dealer who had lent the painting, wrote a letter to Mrs. Scheuber,<sup>1</sup> giving some interesting facts about the picture. The firm of Williams and Everett Company, Incorporated, had handled almost all of Inness' early work, and this painting, though small, was a favorite of the artist. It had been painted in New Hampshire, near Conway, on the Jackson Road. Inness had painted in this locality two summers. [The painting is dated 1875.] The father of Henry Williams had sold the painting to a Boston customer, who kept it in his home until his death, when the heir returned it to the original dealer, the Williams and Everett Company.

Another letter, from Hetty Williams in 1908, after her brother's death, stated that in Inness' later years, he had painted in a

. . . . broader almost impressionistic way. . . . There has been a feeling that some of the unfinished canvases

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<sup>1</sup>Henry O. Williams, Personal letter to Mrs. Charles S. Scheuber, April 7, 1904. He mentioned that when the painting was returned from Texas, the frame needed repairs. He also said that he had quoted Mr. Church a price of one thousand dollars. Evidently the painting had been sent to the Dallas Art Association for exhibition just previously, as Clifton Church was connected with the Dallas Association. Infra, p. 17.

were touched up after his death by his son, George Inness. But that may be only talk. I do not know anything about it only there has been some trouble about the later works . . . . than with the Medfield and Italian periods.<sup>1</sup>

The painting was bought with funds collected from the public, and art patrons today can be grateful to those who made a subscription list and collected the contributions. It was priced at \$1,000, but records show that only \$700 was paid. Twenty-nine persons paid \$10 each, fifteen paid \$5, and others, smaller amounts. The '93 Club collected \$45, and the Woman's Wednesday Club, \$313. Thus, Fort Worth, at the turn of the century, lately the habitat of wild Indians, soldiers, and adventurers, but now a growing city with a paved street, an opera house, and electric lights, took its place among more metropolitan centers as a collector of art.

Surely, the name of the painting, "The Approaching Storm," was accepted as most appropriate by those who studied this painting, but in the light of later events, the name had another significance. A storm of disapproval gathered over the heads of those who dared to spend money for a painting.

It was reported that a writer of one of the daily papers criticized the Library for purchasing the Inness

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter to Mrs. Charles S. Scheuber, August 1, 1908.



painting.<sup>1</sup> Before many weeks passed, the Record carried a long article in defense of the library and its work.

The writer began:

There has been some heedless and no doubt repented criticism of the Carnegie Library management, and especially of the recent gift of a landscape painting of Inness, the renowned artist. On account of this, and as tending to enlighten the public somewhat in detail, it is well to consider just what the library was organized for, and just what it is doing.<sup>2</sup>

Following this, the writer quoted from the charter granted to the Library in 1892:

We, the undersigned ladies . . . . realizing the need of a free public circulating library, and desiring to encourage learning and fine arts in our city, do associate ourselves together for the purpose of establishing a public library and art gallery, and adopt the following articles of the association: First, the name of this association shall be the Fort Worth Public Library Association. Second, the object and purpose of the association is to procure a lot in the city of Fort Worth and erect thereon a library building and an art gallery, and the accumulation of paintings and artistic works of every character for the enjoyment and cultivation of our people, etc. . . .<sup>3</sup>

Earlier criticism of the Library was reviewed:

When the gift of \$50,000 came from Mr. Carnegie, the library was planned with an art gallery. When . . . . the trustees were confronted with the problem how to manage a library on an annual appropriation of four thousand dollars, they decided to rent the Art room. Thereupon came a protest from some persons demanding to know how the board dared to deprive the people of the use of the entire building and especially

<sup>1</sup>Examination of daily papers failed to locate this article.

<sup>2</sup>Fort Worth Record, May 22, 1904.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

of the Art room. They had lost sight of the fact that the board was receiving a rental from the room to assist in maintaining the library and that there was not anything to put into the room. . . . The subscribers to the Inness picture are the people who have done most for the library, and have contributed most generously to the book fund.<sup>1</sup>

In conclusion, there was a lengthy discussion of the financial arrangements of the library. Mrs. Scheuber persisted in her efforts to establish an art association and an art collection, as evidenced in her annual reports to the trustees of the library:

It was confidently believed at the end of the loan exhibition that the direct outcome of it would be the formation of an art association--an association that everyone realizes Fort Worth needs. The pressure of other work has compelled those interested to hold it in abeyance, but it is hoped that before another year Fort Worth will have a flourishing art association, which will be a great stimulus to the acquisition of an art collection and the carrying out of one of the objects of the Library Association.<sup>2</sup>

The core of "those interested" was no doubt Mrs. Scheuber, and the "other work" was the management of a new and growing library. This dynamo of energy who constantly spurred herself and others into activity kept working for the art interests of Fort Worth, and when the Art Association was finally organized in 1910, it had been eighteen years since that first meeting at her home in 1892.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Mrs. Charles S. Scheuber, Annual Report of the Librarian to the Board of Trustees for the Year Ending March 1, 1905.



The including of plans for an art gallery in the charter to the Library Association<sup>1</sup> was undoubtedly the first step in the artistic development of Fort Worth. These charter rights were the backbone of the Art Association which was to come later. Without a primary right, the Association and the gallery would no doubt have been required to move from the overcrowded library, and no one could have blamed the harassed trustees if such a request had been made.

The second step, the empty art gallery on the second floor of the library, was concrete evidence of a public pledge, and the remembrance of that pledge must have been a constant challenge.<sup>2</sup> The third step was taken when public subscriptions purchased the Inness painting. The die had been cast. The first gifts had been received in 1902,<sup>3</sup> and the first purchase made in 1904. These, with the borrowed paintings and historical relics, enabled the library to begin a free exhibition which the patrons have enjoyed without interruption since 1904. So close has been the connection between "Art" and "Library"

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, p. 3; infra, p. 20.

<sup>2</sup>The first recorded effort to secure an art exhibition was discovered in a letter from Holmes Smith, President of the Western Artists Guild, February 9, 1903, who said that the season schedule for 1902-03 was concluded. He inquired about Fort Worth facilities for having exhibitions, and experience in handling pictures. He also asked if there was a regularly organized Art Association in Fort Worth.

<sup>3</sup>Supra, p. 5.

in the minds of long-time Fort Worth residents that the terms seem synonymous, and the presence of one without the other would indeed seem strange.

In May, 1907, the city of Fort Worth adopted a new charter, and a special tax was then placed on all property for the support of the library. Although rent from the Art Room was no longer a necessity, clubs were allowed to use the room as before. The librarian continued to plan for an art organization to use the gallery, as shown in her annual reports. In 1908 she recommended, "An effort should be made to form an art association for Fort Worth. All the towns in the state have made a beginning of an art collection. Fort Worth alone lags in the background."<sup>1</sup>

Again, in 1909, the annual report stated:

In October, the clubs of the city will vacate their rooms in the library. . . . This places the art room at our disposal. A movement should be inaugurated at once, either through a separate organization or by a committee of the Board, to establish an art collection in Fort Worth. At least two loan exhibitions should be held during the year. In the effort to arouse an interest in the movement, we are arranging a series of free talks on art to be held in the art room during the fall and winter.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Mrs. Charles S. Scheuber, Annual Report of the Librarian to the Board of Trustees for the Year Ending March 1, 1908.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 1909.



Mrs. Scheuber and her friends were probably aware that the American Federation of Arts had been founded in May, 1909, and were eager for any help which the Federation might offer in establishing an art center in Fort Worth. It is not known on exactly what day in 1909 the group first wrote to the Federation for an exhibit, but there is evidence that this source was not the only one investigated for art shows.

On October 4, 1909, Mrs. Scheuber wrote to the City Art Museum, St. Louis, in an effort to secure the American Water Color Society Exhibition, and was promptly informed that she was too late to be included in the circuit for the year 1909-1910; it had been closed in March. Halsey C. Ives, director, suggested in his letter and in others following that such an unimportant place as Fort Worth had little business with art exhibits:

The truth is the whole central West is alive to the work that may be done in this direction and those that come in and share in the benefit must of necessity be compelled to act promptly and at an early date.

The towns that are definitely fixed for the collection are: St. Louis, Buffalo, Columbia, Toledo, Indianapolis, Grand Rapids, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Cincinnati, and Chicago.

You will see from this that it would require a much longer time if such an arrangement as you suggest for five towns in Texas could be made; and then, too, you should keep in mind the fact that the primary cause that the artists have in lending their works for such circuits is the hope that they will be sold. For this reason any town that is given a place on the circuit must of necessity arrange to show

their appreciation for the kindness of the artists in exhibiting by purchasing some of their works.<sup>1</sup>

Ives was perhaps giving Mrs. Scheuber her first lessons in conducting exhibitions: to be prompt in forming a circuit, and to provide an outlet for the artists' works. She learned the lessons well, and through the years that followed, never failed to make conscientious efforts in these directions.

After failing to secure the Water Color Exhibition, Mrs. Scheuber wrote to the new American Federation of Arts, and requested an exhibit from them. This was the first request which the new organization had received, and plans were made immediately to send to Fort Worth a part of an exhibition at the City Art Museum, St. Louis. Mrs. Scheuber and Ives again corresponded concerning shipping the paintings, etc. In concluding one of his letters, he said:

I have tried to answer at length all of your questions, which you have expressed so tersely in your recent communication. You should not forget in this connection that I have been doing the work, that you are just starting upon, since the year 1878 with the point of departure here in St. Louis, in a well-established museum, which has been in existence for that length of time; so that I am not entirely ignorant of what is right and proper on the part of the artist, the purchaser, and the general visitor to the exhibitions.<sup>2</sup>

Ives was near the end of a long career of managing exhibitions, and Mrs. Scheuber at the beginning of one which

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter to Mrs. Charles Scheuber, October, 1909.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., November 19, 1910.



was almost to equal his. It was fitting that, in passing, he should salute a younger traveler.

There was great excitement over the coming exhibition. The Library Association asked the women's clubs to release the art gallery. George W. Steere, Secretary of the Association, sent letters to various groups, asking them to send committees to meet in the art room to establish a museum. The coming exhibition was mentioned. It was not until later, after the exhibition, that the organization of an art association was effected.

The debut of Fort Worth into the art world required much preparation. Those interested were taking no chances on a small attendance, and arranged for the exhibition to be sponsored by various social, fraternal, and religious groups of the city, each to be responsible for one day. The following list was taken from an article in the Record: the Atelier, Council of Jewish Women, Monday Book Club, Aid Societies of the Baptist Churches, Order of the Eastern Star, Aid Societies of the Methodist Churches, Shakespeare Club, Ninety-three Club, Cadmean; Sorosis, Aid Societies of the Christian Science Churches, Bohemian Club, Daughters of the American Revolution, Daughters of the Confederacy, Auxiliary of the Railway Mail Service.<sup>1</sup> There

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<sup>1</sup>Fort Worth Record, December 12, 1909.

were many others indicated. Other free publicity, as well as paid advertisements, appeared in the Record, showing much preparation.

In spite of the warm reception planned by the art lovers for the exhibition, the weather became most disagreeable. Even while the exhibit was being hung on the walls, trains from the north were arriving late. On Sunday, all of Texas was gripped by the worst blizzard of years, and there was a heavy snowfall. There were accounts of northers, snow, sleet, sleet after rains, etc. A boy was found frozen to death on the North Side. The Atelier Club opened the exhibition at nine o'clock, Monday morning, December 20, 1909.

However, the cold moderated, and pleasant weather was reported early in January. On the twelfth of January, the Record carried an article about the exhibition:

The trustees of the Carnegie Library are very much elated over the success of the art exhibition. The attendance has increased rapidly since the holidays and, as there was some sunshine yesterday, the art gallery was comfortably filled all afternoon. One particularly pleasant feature of Tuesday's opening was the visit of a number of visitors of the Dallas Art Association who appeared shortly after noon and remained until the early evening interurban cars left for Dallas.<sup>1</sup>

One of the visitors from Dallas was Clifton Church, of Boston, who was quoted as saying, in part, "There is only one way to make these things a success and place them on

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., January 12, 1910.



a permanent basis and that is to arrange a circuit. . . .  
 Fort Worth and Dallas in the northern part of Texas. . . ."<sup>1</sup>  
 The "only way" proved to be partly true; the idea of a  
 circuit to save express was found to be practical, but  
 Fort Worth alone remained the northern point.

During the next forty years, many of the master-  
 pieces of American contemporary art graced the walls of  
 the modest gallery on Ninth Street, yet none of the shows  
 which followed this first one was to excel it in importance.  
 Viewed from the vantage point of forty years later, the  
 list of painters in that first 1909 exhibition gives a  
 cross section of American art of that day. In the tradi-  
 tion of the French Impressionists were the painters William  
 J. Silva, Louis Betts, Leonard Ochtman, and Childe Hassam.  
 The technique of William Chase, follower of the Munich  
 school, was a high spot in the show. Abbott Thayer's ideal-  
 istic art made Fort Worth wish for his work in coming exhi-  
 bitions. Robert Henri represented the school of Realism,  
 and Irving Couse represented the art of the Southwest.

When the first exhibition closed on January 20, 1910,  
 and Paul Dougherty's "Manana Point" had been bought by popu-  
 lar subscription, there was a financial deficit, the first  
 of many to follow such adventures. But something great had  
 happened to this western town, for which it was to receive

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

national art acclaim. Fort Worth had been the first to request the new Federation of Arts to assemble an exhibition of oil paintings; it had been the first to receive one; and it was unspeakable not to plan another. The mark of the new endeavor was not one which Fort Worth desired to lose; it was this that gave impetus to the formation of an art organization which might operate more or less independently of the Library Association. Financially, independence was to become less, and not more; for leadership, the new group was to lean all too heavily upon the resources of the library. The need for a new organization, however, was great, and the first American exhibition exposed the necessity for action. Three weeks later, a constitution was signed by thirty members, and the Fort Worth Art Association was a reality.

## CHAPTER II

### THE FIRST YEAR, 1910

The Fort Worth Art Association, the culmination of hopes, determination, and labor, was in Fort Worth to stay. Mrs. James W. Swayne, the chairman of the art committee of the Public Library, met the group in the art gallery of the library on February 12, 1910. The constitution and by-laws of the Fort Worth Art Association were adopted, and regular officers were elected. Mrs. M. P. Bewley was elected president, an office which she held until her death in 1930. T. O. Bateman became first vice-president, and Anna Shelton, second vice-president. The treasurer was W. G. Newby, and auditor, A. W. Grant. A board of managers, empowered to transact the business of the Association, was to consist of "the president, vice-presidents, secretary, and three members elected by the Association, together with the chairman of the Art Committee of the Board of Trustees of the Carnegie Public Library."<sup>1</sup> The three members elected to this board were Royston Nave, Mrs. John G. Waples, and Mrs. M. A. Spoons.

There were to be four classes of membership: Active, Associate, Life, and Honorary. Any resident of

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<sup>1</sup>Mrs. Charles S. Scheuber, Secretary, Minutes of Meeting of the Fort Worth Art Association, February 12, 1910.



Tarrant County was allowed to become a member upon the payment of the annual fee of two dollars.

Names of the charter members as they appear in the minutes of that first meeting are:

Mrs. M. P. Bewley	Miss Olive Peak
Mrs. James W. Swayne	Mr. T. O. Bateman
Mrs. A. Simon	Mr. Royston Nave
Miss Mattie Melton	Mr. H. O. Ledgerwood
Mr. A. W. Grant	Mrs. S. B. Burnett
Mr. G. Palmer Graves	Miss Helen Johnson
Mr. Roy E. White	Mrs. J. Taylor Johnson
Mrs. Willard Burton	Miss Christina McLean
Mrs. B. C. Rhome	Mrs. Minnie Wright
Mrs. Charles Scheuber	Mrs. Marshall Spoons
Miss Margaret Littlejohn	Mrs. William Orr
Mrs. S. W. Ray	Mrs. Herbert Walker
Mrs. M. A. Spoons	Mrs. Clifford Sharon
Mr. Francis Scheuber	Miss Anna Shelton
Mr. Marshall Spoons	Mrs. John G. Waples <sup>1</sup>

It seems appropriate at this time to quote from the constitution in regard to the object of the Association:

The object shall be the establishment of a free public art museum for Fort Worth and the promotion of a knowledge and interest in art by means of exhibitions, lectures, classes in art, etc. To hold each year one or more representative exhibitions. To create a fund by popular subscription or other means for the purchase each year of one or more objects of art for the museum. All collections formed or properties acquired by the Association to be deposited in the Art Gallery of the Carnegie Public Library, the title to same to be vested in the Trustees of the Carnegie Public Library until such time as the Association may be able to acquire and maintain a separate museum of art for Fort Worth.<sup>2</sup>

The next clause outlined one of the primary advantages with which the Association was favored:

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.



for and in consideration of which the Trustees of the Carnegie Public Library to agree to permit the Association to use for its purposes the art gallery of the library free of charge furnishing heat, light, and janitor service.<sup>1</sup>

The first year, 1910, was a year of policy-making. What may have seemed ordinary business at a meeting of the Board of Managers on March 9, 1910, appears today as extraordinarily good judgment. The members voted to align with the American Federation of Arts, to purchase one good picture each year, and immediately to purchase a painting by Gilbert Stuart from a Fort Worth owner; they appointed committees, including a Jury Committee. In the matter of exhibitions, they agreed to hold not only a showing of art produced in this locality each year, but a representative American exhibition. If the word "American" appears often in the reports of their activities, it must be assumed that the cult of "Americana" had a strong place in the hearts of these workers, as was evident by later events.

The next months were packed with action for the committees, which were called Picture Fund, Exhibitions, Installation, Jury, Advertising, and Printing; and by the end of the first year, the Fort Worth Art Association was looking back over months of activities.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

The first public purchase of a painting has already been described, the acquisition in 1904 of George Inness' "Approaching Storm," surely a painting to be treasured. The good fortune of a beginner again fell to the Fort Worth Association when the decision was made to purchase Gilbert Stuart's painting, "Miss Clementina Beach," from Mrs. Emmons Rolfe.<sup>1</sup> This painting had been shown in the library for the first time in 1904, when it was loaned for one day only during the Loan Exhibit.<sup>2</sup> It was exhibited again during the first American Exhibition of 1909,<sup>3</sup> and Mrs. Rolfe agreed to sell it for \$1,200. With more eagerness than money, the Board voted to buy the painting, provided the owner would accept a partial payment, and allow the balance to be paid later. The deal was closed, payments were made, and a note was signed. Insurance was taken in the amount of the debt, more payments were made, and within sixteen months, full ownership passed into the hands of the Association. The four affidavits of identity which the picture fund committee had requested were furnished by Mrs. Rolfe, and reported at a meeting on June 24, 1911, when the debt was absolved.

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, p. 22.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, p. 7.

<sup>3</sup>Supra, pp. 17-18.



Further proof of identity was reported to be in Mason's book, The Life and Letters of Gilbert Stuart.<sup>1</sup> Had the members of the Association shuddered over the insecurity of installment buying, they might have saved themselves the burden of paying this first debt, and their successors, the burden of similar debts for the next thirty years. But they did acquire the painting by assuming the debt, and Fort Worth gallery habitues today often speculate on the good fortune which they have inherited.

Mrs. Rolfe, who sold the painting, wrote much interesting information about it and about Miss Beach,<sup>2</sup> who was a cousin of Mrs. Rolfe's grandfather. She conducted a school, and was evidently much interested in art. Having had her portrait painted by Gilbert Stuart, she proceeded to make a copy of it. Both the original and the copy were willed to her niece, Mrs. Loring, and the two paintings passed from niece to niece until they fell

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<sup>1</sup>George C. Mason, The Life and Letters of Gilbert Stuart (New York: Scribners, 1879), p. 136.

<sup>2</sup>An interesting addition to the lore of Miss Beach has come to light since the stories and affidavits were furnished by Mrs. Rolfe in 1909. In February, 1920, the Art Association held another Loan Exhibition similar to that first one in 1904. A painstaking list of exhibitors with all their entries is found in one of the many notebooks left by Mrs. Scheuber. Exhibitor number 114 was Mrs. Emmons Rolfe, who entered three miniatures. First listed was "Miss Clementina Beach," painted about 1780; others were "Harris Fudger" and "Amelia Beach Fudger," evidently a sister of Clementina. Name of the artist was not mentioned.

into the hands of Mrs. Rolfe, who, according to her own accounts, destroyed the copy, and later sold the Stuart portrait to the Fort Worth Association. Many stories of the sale state that the deal was consummated in December, 1909, but it is probable that the actual sale awaited the formation of the Art Association in February, 1910.

The first year, 1910, has been mentioned as a year of activity. All needed committees were arranging for the first show of Texas art in the Fort Worth gallery. There were letters of invitation to the artists, tickets to be printed and sold, and arrangements for a tea to be held for the members of the Dallas Art Association. Then came the show, with the title "Exhibition by Dallas and Fort Worth Artists."<sup>1</sup> Twenty paintings from Dallas were shown with those of Fort Worth artists and one San Antonio artist. Also works of Murray P. Bewley<sup>2</sup> were exhibited, as were paintings from George R. Barse, who was spending the winter in San Antonio. At the close, an attendance of 1,026 was reported. With the success of this undertaking,

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<sup>1</sup>In the second year, the designation "Texas Artists" was substituted. The catalogue of the last of Mrs. Scheuber's exhibits in 1937 was entitled, Twenty-seventh Annual Exhibition by Texas Artists. Place was always mentioned as "Fort Worth Museum of Art."

<sup>2</sup>Infra, pp. 197-208.



the Association entered into a long career of promoting creative art in Fort Worth and the wider locality of the state.<sup>1</sup>

The exhibitions of that first year were concluded with a summer loan exhibition from May to October. It consisted of forty-two oils, twelve water colors, and fifty black and white works, with the now familiar collection of guns<sup>2</sup> and china.<sup>3</sup>

One of the accomplishments claimed in the first annual report of the Association was the preparation of the gallery after it was taken from the women's clubs.<sup>4</sup> Actually, installation of reflectors for lighting the gallery had been done in December, 1909, before the first American Exhibition,<sup>5</sup> and other work was done in September, 1910. Advice was sought from the leading art centers of the nation. There was no bungling, no acceptance of unsatisfactory makeshifts until a better day; the very best under the circumstances was obtained, and a very pleasing gallery resulted. The fittings were indeed so satisfactory that they were used until the library was razed in 1938,

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<sup>1</sup>Infra, pp. 119-222; 197-208.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, p. 7, n. 1.

<sup>3</sup>The china was lent by Mrs. S. B. Burnett.

<sup>4</sup>Supra, p. 16.

<sup>5</sup>Supra, pp. 16-18.

and there are many who remember with pleasure the cozy atmosphere of that first gallery. Mrs. Scheuber, in her passion for perfection, her reliance upon sources above criticism, did the citizens of Fort Worth a great favor, and it was due to her that the small gallery was equipped in a style that was as good as the best in the nation.

In a letter to F. W. Southwick, President of the Tacoma Art League, in answer to an inquiry from him in April, 1913, she described at length the work done.

The walls were furred eight feet high with soft pine boards and hung with olive gray burlaps, the upper third of the plastered wall was painted a lighter gray to harmonize with the burlaps. The ceiling was painted with white in which enough of the color of the side wall had been mixed to give the feeling of the color. The oak settles, wood-work, and floor were stained a dull dark flemish color to harmonize with the walls. The line was established by a dado  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet high. The walls were furred with horizontals 2x2 fastened to the walls by expansion bolts and on the horizontals soft pine boards 6 inches wide and 2 inches thick were placed vertically and carefully matched. This enables us to place picture books at any point and we can also use the picture molding at the ceiling.<sup>1</sup>

Mrs. Scheuber was careful to give the source of guidance which the local group had obtained in all these plans:

The suggestions for this furring were sent to us by the Director of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, who procured them from Mr. Walter McCormack, an architect who had supervised much of the practical details of the New Boston Museum. I am enclosing a copy of the sketch sent us by Mr. McCormack. The color of the burlaps we procured from the Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, and it is the color used in the art galleries of the Institute and we

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter to F. W. Southwick, April 21, 1913.



have found it most satisfactory. We procured the burlaps from the Richter Manufacturing Co., Tenafly, N. J., who colored it especially for us. Our settles we had made here from a design made for the late Prof. Halsey Ives which we procured from the Art Institute, Chicago.<sup>1</sup>

Continuing her complete outline of the furnishing of the gallery, she further wrote:

As we were hampered by lack of sufficient money we adopted the old fashioned plan for the artificial lights of suspending by chains at the proper height a continuous tin reflector, fitted with electric lights. The tin and the chains were painted the same color as the upper third of the wall and therefore they are not conspicuous. The lighting is very satisfactory. If we had it to do again I would have the furring ten feet high.<sup>2</sup>

After describing the purchases of the Association<sup>3</sup> and the collection of fire-arms and china<sup>4</sup> which had already accumulated in the three years of the organization, Mrs. Scheuber concluded her letter to the Tacoma League with words that now seem like a prophecy:

So we feel that we have made quite a little beginning toward an art museum. As you will see our experience has been that of every other art gallery in the country. Any town can start an art museum if the few people interested will get together, commence work and begin to accumulate property. The histories of the older museums show that after you have made a beginning the movement is carried forward by its own impetus. We are encouraged to hope that our experience will repeat theirs

<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Supra, p. 9, 18, 23.

<sup>4</sup>Supra, p. 7, n. 1; p. 26.

and that this little beginning will result in a museum that will be a vital force in the life of the community.<sup>1</sup>

This hope of Mrs. Scheuber that the art gallery established in the first year of the Association would be a "vital force" in the life of Fort Worth has continued to be the hope of those who since her day have been entrusted with the responsibilities of its influence.

In addition to the preparations in the gallery for the forthcoming winter exhibition of American paintings, there was much other work to be done in the year 1910. The secretary was instructed by the Association to arrange a circuit for the exhibition. The story of her successes and failures in this year and in the ones to follow is a record of the developing art interest in Texas, since the necessity for an organization to handle the exhibition became a force in promoting the art movement of the state. As such, the story is related in other chapters.<sup>2</sup>

In all of these duties, Mrs. Scheuber acted as the unpaid secretary of the Association, but it must not be supposed that she objected to the imposition on her time. Arranging for the printing of tickets and catalogues, as well as advertising, were left to her. Leila Mechlin wrote the foreword to the catalogue, which was printed in

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter to F. W. Southwick, April 21, 1913.

<sup>2</sup>Infra, pp. 183-193.



Fort Worth for all cities in the circuit, with but a change of covers. Cards advertising the show were sent to merchants for display both in Fort Worth and in Dallas. A Dallas firm wrote saying, "We will take pleasure in placing them either in our elevators or in some conspicuous part of the store."<sup>1</sup>

On November twentieth, the exhibition opened, and members of the Association now took over many duties. Promoting the sale of tickets was one of the most needed activities. Newspaper articles written by the members kept the exhibition before the public. Royston Nave was one enthusiastic member who wrote an article appearing in the Record:

In the November Century, the fortieth anniversary number of the magazine, there appeared an article on the awakening of art in the West, and among the towns that were mentioned Fort Worth was pre-eminent. Considering such an article in a commercial light, the city has received much in advertisement from the work of the Fort Worth Art Association, and educationally the benefit has been beyond estimate. If that much and more was gained from the first exhibition held under the auspices of the Association, the second one should prove even more beneficial and should be patronized accordingly. . . . If the leading magazines are to comment on our attendance at art exhibitions, civic pride should prompt citizens to crowd the gallery.<sup>2</sup>

A long, humorous discussion of the exhibition was written by A. W. Grant, a professional newspaper man who was also a charter member of the Association. Clippings

<sup>1</sup>Titche-Goettinger Company, Dallas, letter to Mrs. Charles S. Scheuber, December 2, 1910.

<sup>2</sup>Fort Worth Record, December 9, 1910.

of his writing were evidently mailed to other cities in the state and to Leila Mechlin, for many letters came asking for more copies of the criticism. Heading his remarks "Simplicity Key in Best Pictures Now," Grant noted the trends of various artists. Of a portrait by Cecelia Beaux, he wrote, "It is almost a portrait in two colors with the variations accomplished by gradations of tones," and ended with, "Simplicity is the key nowadays in pictures. Wonder when it will invade the musical comedies?"<sup>1</sup>

That Grant's criticism was excellent was indicated by Miss Mechlin's request for five copies of the paper. She thought his remarks not subtle, but sincere and genuine. "Far from thinking the Texas newspaper reporters poor art critics, we have all been interested in the notices given of the exhibition," she wrote. "They have been frank and honest, not merely a matter of words."<sup>2</sup> Miss Mechlin also wrote that she had read Grant's review of the Fort Worth exhibition at the annual convention [1911] of the American Federation of Arts.

With the art exhibition in Fort Worth attracting attention in the East, it was not surprising to find comment of them in the Washington, D. C., Evening Star. Among

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<sup>1</sup>Fort Worth Star-Telegram, December 11, 1910.

<sup>2</sup>Leila Mechlin, Personal letter, February 21, 1911.



other things, this statement was made: "There is more vital interest shown in art and proportionately more pictures bought in Texas today than in many of the eastern states."<sup>1</sup> There was also an interesting note about a connection that is still in effect in Fort Worth, but which many other cities have outgrown since the article was written in 1913:

The public libraries have been a great factor in the upbuilding of art appreciation, and to many of these the Federation's exhibitions have gone. Many of the libraries have exhibition halls, well-proportioned and appointed. Such is the case in Denver, Minneapolis, Nashville and many other cities.<sup>2</sup>

When the winter exhibition of American art closed in Fort Worth on January 3, 1911, a deficit of \$125 was noted, although San Antonio and Houston both reported a profit. Yet it was felt that the enterprise had been a great success, and plans were immediately announced for the next venture. Henry Turner Bailey was to be brought to Fort Worth for two lectures in April.

The first year closed March 4, 1911, when the Art Association met and made an annual report. Membership had grown from thirty to 132. The art gallery had been equipped for its purpose. A Texas circuit had been formed for the Federation exhibitions. Three successful exhibitions had

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<sup>1</sup>The Washington, D. C., Evening Star, February 1, 1913.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

been held, and \$550 had been subscribed for the purchase of pictures, leaving a balance of forty dollars in the treasury.

Thus ended the first year, but there were other results aside from those mentioned in the formal reports. There was the exhilaration of accomplishment; there was the skill that comes with experience; there was the honor, the prestige, the respect, that came to the Fort Worth Association in its position as a leader; and above all, there was a great confidence of purpose.



CHAPTER III  
THE YEARS 1910-1920

Mention has been made that the Fort Worth Art Association has offered a continuous show to the public since the Inness painting was purchased in 1904. This painting, with the two sculptural works acquired by gift from the Art League in 1902,<sup>1</sup> became the nucleus of the permanent collection. As years passed, various friends lent their paintings to the Library, and after the opening of the gallery in 1909, the practice continued. The character of the loan exhibition changed slightly as some paintings were recalled by owners and others were lent to the Association. Among those who lent paintings in 1913 and 1915 were Mrs. M. P. Bewley, Mrs. S. B. Burnett, Mrs. M. A. Spoons, S. M. Gaines, Mrs. Marshall Spoons, Edwin Hoadley, Mrs. T. A. Tidball, and W. J. Bryan. Gifts came regularly from those interested in the Association,<sup>2</sup> and these gifts, with the purchases made, increased the permanent collection in 1915 to eighteen paintings and ten sketches.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup>Infra, pp. 131-152, Chapter VII.

<sup>3</sup>The sketches were presumably quickly-painted oils on small canvases, by W. P. Silva.

During the ten year period from 1910 to 1920, the Association offered several lectures to the public. At first, A. W. Grant<sup>1</sup> and other members read lectures prepared by the American Federation of Arts. Lantern slides, also sent by the Federation, usually accompanied the lectures. Lanterns were borrowed from various churches of the city. "American Painting," "Civic Art," and "Whistler's Etchings," were some of the subjects discussed. The lectures by Henry Turner Bailey have been mentioned.<sup>2</sup> Frank Alvah Parsons was presented in 1913 and 1914. Lorado Taft came in 1915 and in 1916.

The ideal of the Fort Worth Association was to reach the public by education, and this aim was frequently voiced by Mrs. Scheuber in her letters. In 1915, she wrote to Leila Mechlin of the Federation:

We are deeply interested in the education of the people in art. We must do this work through people and associations that are handicapped by lack of money and who are only half convinced themselves that the work is worth while.<sup>3</sup>

Again, to Miss Mechlin, she commented, "If we are going to develop art in our country we must make it for all the people and free."<sup>4</sup> "You know I believe art is for all

<sup>1</sup>Supra, p. 31.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, p. 32.

<sup>3</sup>Personal letter to Leila Mechlin, November 20, 1915.

<sup>4</sup>Personal letter to Leila Mechlin, November 24, 1919.



the people."<sup>1</sup> And, concerning another feature of the educational work, she wrote to the Austin art group, "Our hope in all this work is the children."<sup>2</sup>

One of the first evidences of interest in children was an announcement immediately after the close of the first American exhibition in January, 1910. A free art class was offered every Saturday afternoon for the children of the city. Teachers were three charter members, Royston Nave,<sup>3</sup> Talbot Batemen, and Mrs. H. O. Ledgerwood.<sup>4</sup>

Early inquiries from other cities and states lead one to believe that the interest of the Fort Worth Association in the art education of children was more than a routine one. As early as 1911, Mrs. Scheuber had corresponded with the American Federation about the work done by the Washington Art League in decorating the Public Schools. She received advice about the coloring of walls, etc. She also corresponded with New York authorities about the same subject in 1911. Evidently a summary of the findings was compiled and distributed, for in the files is a letter of thanks from a Dallas school official, mentioning a paper on "Art Suggestions" for public schools.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, December 9, 1919.

<sup>2</sup>Personal letter, March 5, 1914.

<sup>3</sup>Supra, p. 20, 30. Infra, pp. 202-203.

<sup>4</sup>Supra, p. 21. Infra, p. 61.

<sup>5</sup>Personal letter, December 9, 1912.

In 1914, Mrs. Scheuber ordered reproductions of famous paintings for use in the public schools of Fort Worth. These were imported and billed free of duty, as they were marked for educational purposes. Some of the artists represented were Millet, Landseer, and Breton. Whether they were to be paid for by the schools, or given or lent by the Art Association or the Library, is not clear.

In attempting to interest children in the winter exhibitions, the Association offered free admission to all children accompanied by parents or teachers. This concession did not bring desired results, and in 1913, Mrs. Scheuber wrote to Leila Mechlin that "Parents and teachers seem so lackadaisical that next year we are going to make the Exhibit free to children."<sup>1</sup> The change in policy brought a genuine response that so pleased the Art Association it has continued in effect from 1914 to the present time, 1950. In the first year of the new policy Mrs. Scheuber wrote a long account of the children's interest to Miss Mechlin, who was so pleased that she published it in the Federation's official magazine. An excerpt follows:

It is very interesting to see the children going about in groups or singly looking at the pictures. The attendant supplies them with catalogues for gallery use, shows them how to look at the pictures, and then gravely requests each child to look at the pictures carefully and to report to her the picture he prefers. The children are

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, March 3, 1913.



immediately interested and examine the pictures very carefully and always report their choice. Some of them have become very much interested in their favorite and endeavor to influence their friends to choose the same picture.<sup>1</sup>

Attendance records of the spring exhibition of Texas artists in that same year, 1914, show that 601 children attended, while 788 adults came. The 1919 spring show was visited by 857 children, but by only 594 adults.

Various methods have been used by the Art Association to hold the interest of children in the activities of the gallery.<sup>2</sup> One of the longest sustained efforts was essay writing, which extended from 1916 to about 1930. Prizes were awarded for first, second and third places in various levels, such as secondary, elementary, and primary grades. Teachers in the schools received complimentary tickets from the Association, and they brought the children of Fort Worth to the gallery by the hundreds. Subjects for the essays were an estimation of a single painting or of the exhibition as a whole. The contest was conducted in connection with the winter exhibitions from the American Federation of Art. In one year, 1919, the estimates were received on Children's Day, when twenty children spoke, telling in three minutes why they preferred certain paintings. There is in the files of the Association one letter

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<sup>1</sup>Anonymous, "Notes," Art and Progress, Vol. 5, No. 5 (March, 1914), p. 181.

<sup>2</sup>Infra, pp. 66-67; 103-106.

from a boy in the second grade who showed his appreciation for the award which he had received:

Dear Mrs. Scheuber: I am so pleased that I won the prize awarded by the Fort Worth Art Association. I liked the pictures so much that am enclosing the check, which you sent me, to help buy some more pictures with. Yours very truly, John Hollingsworth Kenyon.<sup>1</sup>

Not only did the children of the city respond to the offer of free admission to the special exhibitions in the gallery, but the general public seemed to show a fondness for visiting on Sunday afternoon, when the gallery was open from two until six o'clock, with admission free. Although only 2,700 came to see the winter exhibition in 1913, 570 of these came in one Sunday afternoon. In 1914, 680 took advantage of the visiting hours on one Sunday.

One of the pleasures in collecting information about the activities of the Art Association is discovering that since the first exhibition, this small and relatively unimportant gallery has always been able to conduct any exhibition in a dignified manner.<sup>2</sup> No doubt this was primarily due to the correct fittings described heretofore.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, March 15, 1917.

<sup>2</sup>When, on one occasion, the Federation complained of the white gummed stickers which exhibitors in some cities had placed on the paintings for numbering, Mrs. Scheuber explained that she had always numbered by the use of small gold cardboards placed near the paintings. Many of these are in the files of the Association. Later, brass numbering tags were bought and lent to other cities in Texas.

<sup>3</sup>Supra, pp. 26, 27.



From time to time, comment on the quality of the exhibiting came from the outside.<sup>1</sup> It is always pleasing to read such a commendation, as this one from Leila Mechlin, Secretary of the American Federation of Arts:

One of our vice-presidents, F. A. Delano, chanced to be in Fort Worth for a couple of hours in January and to while away the time stepped into your Library and saw the exhibition not knowing until he got there that it was one we sent out. He tells me that it was very pleasingly shown and that he was much gratified by the character of the exhibit and the manner of presentation.<sup>2</sup>

Before any exhibition was hung, careful charts were made to show the exact placing of each painting, the number of inches above the line, and the spacing between the pictures. These were first sketched in pencil, showing the one door of the gallery, and then carefully done again in ink; the type of lettering and numbering done shows every evidence of being the handwork of those who worked in the library. When Mrs. Scheuber was managing the Texas circuit for the American Federation of Arts, she sent copies of these charts to the other cities who needed them.

In addition to the purely educational efforts of the Art Association, there was much social activity in the early days.<sup>3</sup> The first of the midwinter shows sent by the Federation had opened on a cold Monday morning in December,

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<sup>1</sup>Infra, pp. 205-207.

<sup>2</sup>Personal letter, February 15, 1922.

<sup>3</sup>Supra, p. 17.

1909.<sup>1</sup> After a few years, the openings were conducted more formally. A private view with a musical program for members and their friends was held in the evenings. Reservations were necessary, since refreshments were served, and a charge of twenty-five cents was made for guests. A list of food consumed at one of these openings indicates an entertaining evening. Evening apparel, food, music, and art were a combination to produce some memorable occasions.

During the exhibitions, various clubs in the city met in the gallery in the afternoons, and teas were held. This practice continued throughout the life of the old gallery. Doubtless, the annual donations from the clubs toward the purchase fund of the Association were made in payment for their days in the gallery. Often a timid gallery visitor unacquainted with the schedule of the clubs was dismayed to find himself in the midst of a tea party when he only desired to look at the paintings. Serving warm food at these parties must have been a problem. There is on file a receipt from a furniture store, showing that fifteen dollars was paid for the first three months of 1920. The payment was for rent of folding chairs, oil stoves, and coffee boilers. A two-burner oil stove, a

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.



three-burner, and a four-burner were used at different times.

The work of developing the art interest of the city in these midwinter exhibits<sup>1</sup> had many obstacles. First, was the public apathy concerning art. Second, was the matter of expense. The fee to the Federation, which gradually increased in amount, express charges, the cost of printing tickets and catalogues, and other items had to be paid. Public subscriptions were used only to purchase paintings. Occasional epidemics of disease interfered with public attendance at the shows: in 1912, the meningitis epidemic caused a poor attendance, and in 1918, it was the influenza that kept the public away. Often, severe winter weather interfered with the January shows.

Financing its activities was the problem of the Art Association from the time of its organization in 1910 through the decades that followed until the city of Fort Worth began a partial support in 1944.<sup>2</sup> Meeting and solving this continuous problem of finances while at the same conducting a program of art education for the benefit of the public has been a heavy responsibility. Membership fees furnished only a meager sum until a much later date.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The Texas Exhibitions held in the spring, will be discussed in another chapter. Infra, pp. 197-208.

<sup>2</sup>Infra, p. 106.

<sup>3</sup>Fee for Active Membership is now [1950] three dollars.

It was necessary to charge admission to the two principal exhibitions, the winter show of American art, and spring exhibition by Texas artists. Season tickets to the first winter shows sold for one dollar; single tickets, twenty-five cents. Later, the price of the season ticket was reduced to fifty cents. However, as Sundays and the last days of the exhibitions were free days,<sup>1</sup> the income from these admissions was always insufficient to cover expenses. The deficits left by these exhibitions were paid by the Library Board.<sup>2</sup> This fact makes it necessary to admit that, long before the public was aware of its generosity, tax money was partly supporting the activities of the art gallery. If there are those who begrudge the comparatively small expenditure of public funds, let them compare the returns of this investment with that of other disbursements, and remember the long hours of gratuitous service and donations of funds which countless workers have contributed during the past forty years.

In order to finance the work of the library and the Art Association, there have been sporadic attempts to raise money by benefit performances, with admission charges. The first of these were the entertainments and concerts for the

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, p. 39.

<sup>2</sup>The deficit ranged from about \$100 in the first years to \$500 or more in the later years of the 1930's.



building fund in the 1890's.<sup>1</sup> The Loan Exhibition was held in 1904.<sup>2</sup> Other events of like nature were to follow later in 1920<sup>3</sup> and in 1949.<sup>4</sup> But none were more interesting than the "Dramatic Performances" given in 1911 and 1912. Three one-act plays interspersed with music were given at the Byers Opera House in the spring of 1911, netting \$495. Will S. Horn received the thanks of the Association for his star performance and agreed to become a charter member of a dramatic department, which was to be under the direction of the Art Association, but with a separate organization. In April, 1912, another play, "The Importance of Being Earnest," by Oscar Wilde, was produced, and again the Byers Opera House was the scene. Costumes, wigs, and other paraphernalia were rented from theatrical houses in Baltimore. Much effort had gone into the production, and it was pronounced a great artistic success. Financially, it left only a profit of \$150, which was badly needed to pay on the picture, "December," by Ochtman.

One of the policies voted upon at the historic meeting of the Board of Managers March 9, 1910, was to purchase a painting each year. To carry out this policy,

<sup>1</sup>Supra, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, p. 7.

<sup>3</sup>Supra, p. 24, n. 2.

<sup>4</sup>Infra, p. 110.

eleven paintings were purchased in the first ten years, all being the works of contemporary American painters except the Gilbert Stuart bought in 1910.<sup>1</sup> The artists whose works were bought in this period, in the order named, were: Paul Dougherty, William P. Silva, William Ritschel, Leonard Ochtman, Robert Reid, Gardner Symons, Bruce Crane, Irving Couse, Albert Groll, and Hayley-Lever.

It seems appropriate here to mention methods by which members secured funds for the purchases. One was the "Dramatic Performances."<sup>2</sup> Another 1912 event which eased the load of debt was a gift of \$250,<sup>3</sup> one of the few money gifts received by the Association. The usual method was to solicit donations, as was described by Mrs. Scheuber in a letter to Margaret Burroughs of the Austin Art League:

We purchase our picture by public subscription. The members of the Board of Managers apportion between a few members of the Association and themselves a list of the names of those people who they think can afford to give ten dollars towards the purchase of a picture. Each member of the committee solicits her list over the telephone and as a rule we secure the necessary money. We also solicit contributions from the different Women's Clubs of the city. We can always depend upon two of the clubs for twenty-five dollars each, most of the other clubs give ten dollars. Sometimes they only give five dollars, but we endeavor to have each club in the city contribute to each picture. In addition we have two members that we can always depend on for twenty-five

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, p. 44.

<sup>3</sup>Infra, pp. 131-132.



dollars and we usually have one other twenty-five dollar subscription. But we only ask for ten dollars. We never ask people to contribute who are not able to.<sup>1</sup>

In connection with the solicitation for funds, there are many untold stories of committees and their meetings, of telephone conversations, personal solicitations, visits, of eloquent blank spaces after names solicited, of letters, more letters, of reminders to pay, all for the benefit of the picture fund. Although this method required much effort on the part of the Association members, and much patience and generosity on the part of the Fort Worth public, it seemed to be the only way of purchasing pictures. In Fort Worth there were no public funds set aside for the establishment or the maintenance of art. There was nothing but a handful of interested women and a few men to see that the beginnings of art should take root and flourish, and it is to their credit that they did it in spite of all difficulties.

The method used by the Fort Worth Association in selecting a painting for purchase was explained in a letter to Mrs. Harry Bickler of Austin. Mrs. Scheuber said:

The half dozen persons that know most about pictures in the Association study the collection carefully. Then they select as many pictures out of it as they would be willing to add to the collection and then steer the public to them. . . . It would be hopeless to form a collection selected by popular selection.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, February, 1914.

<sup>2</sup>Personal letter, March 30, 1914.

Her advise was tempered with a very human assurance of infallibility, as may be understood from further remarks:

In forming an art collection for the public you are taking a grave responsibility; you should recognize it and be willing to assume it to the fullest degree for if you do not, in a few years when your public is better educated in art, the very persons who clamored for a mediocre picture which appealed to them at that time and at their stage of art culture will be the very ones to revile your Association for its lack of discrimination. They will take their old catalogues and say, "Now if the members of the Art Association had used judgment they could have purchased this picture by \_\_\_\_\_, which is worth thousands of dollars instead of the hopeless thing which they bought." You must lead your public instead of permitting it to lead you. You can lead it successfully if you will only use a little tact.<sup>1</sup>

It is interesting to note that while these opinions were prevalent, the pictures selected for purchase by the Association did not include works by Robert Henri, William Glackens, Ernest Lawson, George Bellows, Leon Kroll, Mary Cassat, Kenyon Cox, Cecelia Beaux, Frederick Carl Frieseke, Lillian Genth, or a host of other important figures who exhibited regularly in the collections sent by the American Federation of Arts.

In the ten-year period under consideration, prices of the paintings varied greatly. The asking price of most of the paintings was below \$1,000; a few were priced from \$2,000 to \$3,500. In this latter group the Fort Worth Association usually made a choice, but habitually offered

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.



the artist an amount far below the price he asked. As collecting the subscription money was very difficult, payments to the artists were distressingly slow. This unexpected delay must have caused considerable consternation and disappointment each year to the artist who so willingly accepted the Association's low offer for his painting.

Leonard Ochtman was one of the artists who waited patiently for his money. When he agreed early in 1912 to sell "December" to the Fort Worth Art Association, Ochtman doubtless did not dream that it actually would be December of that year before he was to receive any of his money, and then only one-half of it. It was in November, 1913, that he received the last payment due him. The delay in meeting this obligation is cited as typical of many other purchases. It is also typical in that the artist did actually receive all of the money due him, with interest.

It would be a pleasure to relate that the annual choice for a purchase was one which has steadily grown in art and monetary values. But changing opinions have placed an estimate of "Valuable" upon many works of art which came to Fort Worth begging in vain for buyers during the many years of the American contemporary exhibitions, while some of the paintings purchased have declined in value.

It might be of interest to review the names of the artists who permitted their work to circulate so far from the centers of art. In addition to those already mentioned

appeared the names of William Chase, E. A. Abbey, and Daniel Garber. Others who followed them were Maxfield Parrish, who made only one appearance in the circuit; Frank Benson, Emil Carlsen, Randall Davey, Leon Dabo, and Charles W. Hawthorne. It would be impossible to list all the painters, but more will bear mentioning because of the fact that their canvases appeared repeatedly, not only in this period, but in the 1920's, and some in the 1930's. Albert L. Groll, Bruce Crane, Irving Couse, Edward Dufner, Leonard Ochtman, Chauncey Ryder, William Ritschel, Gardner Symons, William H. Singer and Edward Redfield exhibited in both the 1910 and the 1920 periods. Among those whose paintings came to Fort Worth through the first three decades of the exhibitions were E. L. Blumenschein, John Carlson, Frederick Carl Frieseke, Leon Kroll, H. Bolton Jones, Hayley Lever, Luis Mora, Ivan Olinsky, Leopold Seyffert, Eugene Higgins, and Charles C. Curran.

Most of these paintings came to Fort Worth directly from the December exhibition of the National Academy of Design. The history of these exhibitions is the history of American art, and as such, is beyond the scope of this paper; yet one more item remains to be mentioned, and that is the source of the many "extra" paintings which Fort Worth so regularly requested for its own exhibitions.



Macbeth galleries lent paintings time after time. J. J. Albright Gallery, Buffalo Fine Arts Academy, and the Detroit Art Museum were among the first to offer loans of paintings. Montrose Gallery in New York and Phillips Gallery in Washington were generous. William K. Bixby, St. Louis; and V. G. Fischer of Washington were early friends, as was Radcliffe College. The National Arts Club of New York lent paintings to the Texas circuit in 1914.

In reviewing the history of the Art Association, one cannot but marvel over the fact that a few persons were able to do so much for Fort Worth through long years of financial strain. Without the benefit of any huge gate receipts, without any endowment, without any rich patronage, with only a great deal of determination, the infinite patience of the Library Board, and the repeated assistance of the women's clubs and other groups, it was possible for the Association to maintain a long unbroken record of exhibiting and purchasing.

CHAPTER IV  
THE YEARS 1920-1930

The first five years of the decade from 1920 to 1930 were years of slow growth, with little activity except the repeated struggles to maintain the two principal exhibitions, the winter show of American paintings sent out by the American Federation of Arts, and the spring exhibition by Texas artists.<sup>1</sup> Securing funds by public subscription became extremely difficult until an organization known as the Friends of Arts began financing the purchases in 1925. These purchases, with a shower of gifts reflecting public confidence, gave the organization its greatest period of acquisitions. Nevertheless, it was in this era that the public subscription method of securing funds reached a peak and declined. The educational program with children was further promoted. In addition, the Association began the development of speakers and writers to influence public opinion. As a whole, this decade was the greatest of its first thirty years.

In 1920, a period of adjustment followed the close of World War I. Reports of the Association to the American Federation told of an oil boom in Fort Worth, with much

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<sup>1</sup>The Exhibitions by Texas artists will be discussed in Chapter IX, 197-208.



sudden wealth. The large heavy museum paintings of former years were not so much to be desired as smaller works, suitable for homes. Yet, in 1921, the prosperity seemed to have vanished, for no sales were reported, and the secretary complained that Texas was suffering from hard times. However, newspaper publicity favored the winter show, and over 7,000 visitors came. Early in the year, the city officials refused to appropriate funds for the maintenance of the Library, and Mrs. Scheuber, the Librarian, was faced with the possibility of asking for public subscriptions to keep the Library open. During the months of unrest before municipal appropriations were restored, it was felt unwise to ask for funds to purchase a painting, and no exhibitions were held after the close of the winter show.

In addition to asking the women's clubs of the city for continued support,<sup>1</sup> the Association began more boldly to ask for support from the men's clubs. There had always been active men members of the Association, and business men often contributed to the picture fund. In 1920, to acquaint public spirited men with the need for art funds, the Association served a luncheon to 150 members of the Rotary Club, and then invited them to the gallery to attend the Exhibition. Two years later, during the thirteenth annual exhibition in January, the Association sent letters to

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, pp 9, 41, 45.

various men's clubs,<sup>1</sup> outlining the twelve year struggle to maintain an art museum and buy paintings. Mention was made of the national publicity which Fort Worth had received through the activities of the Association. Each club was asked to contribute twenty-five dollars to the purchase fund for "The Forest Pool" by John Carlson, and was asked to set aside a stated sum in its budget each year for the picture fund. After investigation, the Kiwanis Club sent a check for fifty dollars to be applied on the purchase. The Association members were probably disappointed in receiving only one contribution, but their campaign of publicity proved to be the groundwork of a more successful attempt later in 1925.<sup>2</sup>

Paying for the Carlson painting was so difficult that it remained the major purchase between 1920 and 1925. The American Federation of Arts could not understand why the Fort Worth Association was tardy in its payments, and Mrs. Scheuber explained that just as the Association was preparing to ask for subscriptions for the picture fund, a campaign for another civic purpose was begun and conducted successfully. She mentioned some of the public campaigns for money that were being conducted in Fort Worth at that

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<sup>1</sup>Letters were sent to the Advertising Club, Kiwanis Club, Civitan Club, Lions Club, and Rotary Club.

<sup>2</sup>Infra, pp. 58-64.



time: a new building for the Young Men's Christian Association, Salvation Army, Methodist Hospital, Red Cross, Near East Relief, and the Texas Children's Aid Society.

At this time, Fort Worth was in a period of rapid expansion. While the conscience of the growing city was awakening to the necessity of public responsibility in many social matters, financial difficulties of the Art Association were increasing. In 1923 Mrs. Scheuber explained her troubles to Leila Mechlin of the Federation:

We have had a Community Chest drive for two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. The Directors have been beseeching the people not to ask for any subscriptions until they secure their full quota, therefore we have all desisted. In the interval I have been so busy organizing the County Library and superintending the building of a twenty-five thousand dollar addition to the Baby Hospital I . . . . could not have done anything about securing the money. . . . . I am sorry that not any sales were made this season. We felt that the Art Association could not go any further in debt until someone took the matter in hand of securing the money to pay our obligations.<sup>1</sup>

Miss Mechlin's response was:

The list of drives for charitable purposes is quite horrifying. There is something the matter with our present day civilization or such would not be necessary. We ought not to have to be driven to support humanitarian work. Also, where is art coming in? If we put all of our effort on ministering to the body, what is going to become of the spirit? . . . . Life is extremely sweet and valuable, but just life does not mean very much . . . . if we go on in this direction it means that civilization is stepping down.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, October 10, 1923.

<sup>2</sup>Personal letter, October 22, 1923.

In spite of all difficulties, considerable increases of attendance marked the decade, particularly the five years between 1925 and 1930. Total attendance of the year 1920 was reported to be 8,271. By 1930, the number had grown to 20,524. There is little doubt of the accuracy of the count. Checking was done by an attendant; counting was marked in tallies of five, in small, pocket-sized notebooks, carefully filled.

Between 1920 and 1924 there were only two special shows, a group of French etchings and the paintings of a French artist, Boucart. Beginning with the works of W. P. Silva and F. Ballard Williams in 1924, one man shows became popular. Following these, there was an exhibition of the Gruppe Thumb Box Prints, and through the remainder of the decade came shows by Herbert Dunton, Eliot Clark, Carle Blenner, and Frank Tenney Johnson. Some of the artists had two exhibitions of their work in this time: Bernhardt Wall, W. P. Silva, and Power O'Malley. Robert Vomoh, who was painting portraits in this area, showed his paintings in three different years in the Fort Worth gallery. Small soap sculptures, circulated by the manufacturer, came regularly beginning in 1927. Paintings in the 1927 and 1928 Wildflower Competitions at San Antonio were shown in Fort Worth those two years.



There was one interesting event of 1922 in connection with the Exhibition of American paintings, which was held in January as usual. The paintings had been sent to San Antonio and from there were to go to Austin. The Fort Worth secretary persuaded both places to make their exhibitions short, and return the show to Fort Worth. She explained in a letter to Ethel Drought of San Antonio:

You know the Fat Stock Show is expanding into an exposition. The Art Association urged the managers to establish an art department with a strong exhibition. The managers have finally consented but the time is too short to assemble a new exhibition.<sup>1</sup>

Mrs. Scheuber's description of the adventure is typical of her accuracy:

The museum managed the first annual exhibition by the Exposition. The walls of the mule barn were hung with natural colored burlap and the discolored cement floor was covered with six inches of sawdust, harmonious oak benches were installed. The gallery was lighted with a string of white electric lights hung about four feet from the wall. The effect was satisfactory . . . . Painters Club members were hosts each afternoon.<sup>2</sup>

The Exposition was held in March, 1922. Five thousand visitors had been reported when the show was hung in the art gallery in January, and 10,000 were numbered while the show was hung in the mule barn at 100 East Exchange Avenue, North Fort Worth. One painting was sold in each place.

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, February 22, 1922.

<sup>2</sup>Mrs. Charles S. Scheuber, Annual Report of the Librarian to the Board of Trustees for the Year Ending March, 1922.

Certainly, in having a first class art exhibit at the Fat Stock Show and Exposition,<sup>1</sup> the managers were merely following the example set by the Dallas Fair and the Waco Cotton Palace, but, undoubtedly, Fort Worth was the first city to hold an art exhibit in a mule barn.

Continued reports of the financial difficulties of the Art Association may leave the impression that few were in sympathy with the work of this organization. The opposite is true, particularly in the period of the 1920's. The Association at this time was rich in friends and there was much admiration for the continued efforts to maintain a gallery, or museum, as it was called. As in the first decade so in the 1920's, recognition continued to come from the outside in the form of gifts from artists and institutions who respected the efforts of the Association. The Ranger Foundation<sup>2</sup> deposited paintings by Ernest L. Blumenschein and Henry W. Ranger. Henry Wellington Wack of New York,<sup>3</sup> becoming interested in Fort Worth, sent several paintings, none more popular than "The Sea," by Leon Dabo, who, in turn, presented a painting by Wack. At home, the Woman's Club gave the popular portrait of the president, Mrs. M. P. Bewley, painted by her son, Murray P. Bewley.

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<sup>1</sup>Infra, p. 119.

<sup>2</sup>Infra, pp. 139-140.

<sup>3</sup>Infra, pp. 140-141, 145-147, 151.



Mrs. Bewley made the Association a gift of Luis Mora's "New Americans." Mrs. John G. Waples and Mrs. Bewley were the usual financial backers of the Association in its needs. Another true friend was F. T. G. Schermerhorn, who gave a painting by Vonnoh and one by Potthast.

Schermerhorn wrote letters to Mrs. Scheuber from far away places, describing his travels, his visits to art galleries, always mentioning his fondness for the work of the Association. It is in a letter from Mrs. Scheuber to him that the first mention is made of "friends of art," a term which was to become a by-word in the Association. In 1924 she wrote him:

We are trying to raise enough money among the friends of art . . . . to enable the Fort Worth Art Association to pay its debts and acquire the beautiful picture "Mother and Children" by Charles W. Hawthorne . . . . I am writing to ask if you will not contribute fifty dollars to the fund.<sup>1</sup>

Later, Mrs. Scheuber wrote as usual of her plans to her advisor in all matters of art, Miss Mechlin, and from Miss Mechlin's advice came the names for two organizations that operated for a period of approximately five years as auxiliaries of the Art Association. Miss Mechlin's letter of 1925 reflects her sound thinking:

I am exceedingly interested in what you tell me of the fund to provide a rotating art collection of the best reproductions in color of great masterpieces for the

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, March 22, 1924.

public schools in Fort Worth, and the purpose of organizing the Friends of Art for this object. Why not frankly call it the Public School Art Society, as they do in Chicago? The Friends of Art ought to do more than this; they ought to help you with your museum; it would be more in keeping if they did and better to reserve that title for such an organization.<sup>1</sup>

The first goal was achieved when the "Public School Art Society" was organized. Its work will be discussed later.<sup>2</sup> That the second suggestion was followed is shown by accounts of the organization of the "Friends of Art" in 1925, with membership roll variously reported as ranging from thirty-seven to forty members. It was the intention of the organizers to secure a \$50 contribution annually from each "Friend," but judging from the letters of resignation that followed each year at collection time, it must be supposed that this plan was not clearly understood. Nevertheless, this new affiliation became without a doubt the highlight of the decade. New life came to the Association. With the increased revenue it was possible within the next two years to settle old debts amounting to \$2,000 and to acquire several canvases. With the gradual decrease of the \$50 contributions, obligations again accumulated, and the Association sank into a state of chronic indebtedness from which it was not to recover until its reorganization at a later date.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, June 10, 1925.

<sup>2</sup>Infra, p. 69.

<sup>3</sup>The last debts owed for paintings were paid after the reorganization in 1939, infra, p. 60, n. 2.



Among the first acquisitions of the Friends of Art was a portrait of Bertha Beckwith painted by her husband, Carol Beckwith.<sup>1</sup> She had deposited it with the Fort Worth gallery in 1919 after her husband's death and had never requested any payment for it. Other works acquired during the next few years were by Joseph De Camp, William M. Chase, William H. Singer, Robert Vonnoh, Power O'Malley, and Frank Duveneck.<sup>2</sup>

The most important investment of the Friends was the purchase of a canvas by Eakins. An advertisement appeared in an art magazine, offering to sell a number of paintings by the artist, Thomas Eakins. Request was made for photographs and prices, and when these arrived in Fort Worth, the matter of purchasing was seriously considered. Acquiring a painting for its own recognizable merit was a new type of adventure for the Fort Worth Association, long accustomed to keeping one very careful eye on the acquisitions reported by the larger museums.

Photographs of the paintings were studied carefully. Among those consulted about the prospective purchase were

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<sup>1</sup>At the close of the winter exhibition, no purchase had been made. The Association offered Redfield \$900, but the artist rejected the offer, since he was asking \$3,500 for his painting.

<sup>2</sup>The Duveneck painting was bought from S. M. Gaines, Vice-President of the Association, who received only a first payment in 1926, and the final payment on February 26, 1940. His letter of March 18, 1926, stated that he had had the painting examined by a pupil of Duveneck and another expert, and neither would guarantee it as the work of the artist.

S. P. Ziegler and Mrs. H. O. Ledgerwood. Mrs. Scheuber also wrote to her friend, Miss Mechlin, for advice and received this reply:

I should think that a painting by Thomas Eakins if it were a characteristic, typical work, would be a very excellent acquisition for your Fort Worth collection. I am not familiar, however, with the painting to which you refer--"The Swimming Hole." Eakins was better known as a figure painter than as a painter of landscape or outdoor pictures.<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless, the group in Fort Worth admired the photograph of "The Swimming Hole." The figures in the Eakins painting seemed to display a rare understanding of anatomy, and the knowledge that Eakins was "a painter's painter" only seemed to add value to the prospect. All in the advisory group agreed that an offer of \$700 was a low one, but decided to make it. The offer was accepted.

For once, the Fort Worth Association had the money in hand to close the deal, and the canvas was acquired. This accomplishment pushed Fort Worth into the national limelight and unwittingly started art collectors on a wave of interest in the unsold paintings left by Thomas Eakins. The paintings were sold by Clarence W. Cranmer, of Philadelphia and Jenkinstown, Pennsylvania. The interesting letters which Cranmer wrote to Fort Worth for many years tell the story of the sale to Fort Worth and reenact the

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, July 6, 1925.



drama of the landslide that followed. Excerpts from these letters might be illuminating. This one was dated two years after the sale:

Yesterday in talking with Mrs. Eakins, she asked me if I had ever felt sorry for parting with the "Swimming Hole" at such a small figure, and I explained to her--with which she agreed--that it was your vision that made such an appeal to me in making the sale. I further feel sure that at no far distant date many will visit your museum to see this masterpiece. . . . The movement is now gaining impetus here to try and arrange to purchase the entire collection for our New Art Museum, if consummated will make it nearly impossible to obtain an Eakins at any price.<sup>1</sup>

Another, written in 1936:

Today while listening to the radio broadcast of your wonderful Centennial celebration, my thoughts drifted back to my first sale of an Eakins painting, the well-known "Swimming Hole" purchased by you.

This carried me on, and since that time the artist's fame has carried far, until finally the acceptance by the Louvre ("Clara") . . . .

I feel but for Fort Worth, I would have given up further effort--that was the turning point. Then came sales to Met. Museum of twelve water colors, one india ink, three oils; Cleveland Museum, Boston Museum, Worcester, Detroit and so all along the line, interspersed with additions to the list of the country's most prominent collectors.

If possible this Fall, Mrs. Eakins wants to hold a show here, of both her husbands work and her own. She is now doing very fine work (both still life and figures) despite the fact that she is eighty-five years young.<sup>2</sup>

He continued writing to Mrs. Scheuber about the sale.

This letter came late in December, 1941:

Your most thoughtful Xmas card. It carried me back . . . . when I disposed of my first Eakins after two years hard work when I was most discouraged, along came

<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, November 10, 1927.

<sup>2</sup>Personal letter, June 6, 1936.

your letter, with the result that Fort Worth can now be proud of owning "The Swimming Hole." . . . .

Most all the leading Museums and collectors have at least one Eakins. The Metropolitan Museum owns about twenty, including water colors. Our art museum [Philadelphia] about fifty. Boston, three, Cleveland, two so they are pretty well spread about.

Few are in the West--Los Angeles, a small study; Portland, a study; and San Diego a large portrait.

So, after twenty odd years of effort my old friend's fame is pretty secure.<sup>1</sup>

This one came to the Fort Worth Museum of Art,

1944:

Many years have passed since I selected it for purchase by dear Mrs. Scheuber. When Eakins finally came into his own, the New York critics sadly deplored the fact that this fine example was so far away.

It is interesting to note that the sale was my first, since then I have many fine Eakins passed through my hands, but none finer.<sup>2</sup>

Many places have borrowed the Eakins painting since it was bought by the Fort Worth Association. Among these are:

1926	Baltimore Museum of Fine Arts
1936	Detroit Museum of Fine Arts
1939	Metropolitan Museum, 300 Years of Life in America
1940	San Francisco Golden Gate Exposition
1944	Knoedler Gallery, New York
1944	Boston Museum of Fine Arts
1944	Philadelphia Museum of Fine Arts
1945	Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Conn.
1947	Munson, Proctor, and Williams, Utica, New York
1947	Slater Memorial Museum, Norwich, Conn.
1948	San Diego Museum of Fine Arts
1949	El Paso International Museum

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, December 27, 1941.

<sup>2</sup>Personal letter, June 1, 1944.



Surely the year 1925 should stand out as one of the great years in the history of the Fort Worth Art Association. Two departures from the customs of the Association mark the occasion of the Eakins purchase. First, it dared to acquire the work of an artist not on the popularity list. Second, it had the cash in hand, due to the Friends of Art. Those who joined this group and inspired the spirit of bravado have, for the past twenty-five years, had every reason to congratulate themselves that their purchase was a sound financial investment.

While Fort Worth citizens and art lovers may rejoice over the ownership of the "Swimming Hole," there are some who do not share this view. Walter Pach, the art critic, felt that the painting was lost to the art world. In his book, Ananias, he wrote:

In many of the largest galleries there is not a single work by him, and his picture of "The Swimming Hole," where some of the splendid nudes have a quality of drawing like that of a great Florentine, was permitted to go to Fort Worth, Texas. While sincerely congratulating the authorities of the museum there on its acquisition, a person living far from their city cannot help wishing this work, so important in the history of American Art, were more accessible.<sup>1</sup>

Although several of the paintings bought in this time were not clear of indebtedness, the Association felt

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<sup>1</sup>Walter Pach, Ananias, or the False Artist (New York: Harper Brothers, 1928), pp. 249-50.

emboldened by its success in acquisitions, and decided to print its first catalogue in 1928. Entitled The Fort Worth Museum of Art, Catalogue of Paintings in the Permanent Collection, the booklet has twenty-nine illustrations with estimates by Mrs. H. O. Ledgerwood. Seventy-one paintings are listed in the permanent collection, with borrowed paintings numbering seventeen; two pieces of sculpture and twenty-one casts were mentioned. An impressive introduction contained a brief history of the Association, written by Mrs. Scheuber. For publication of the catalogue, acknowledgment was made to the Board of Trustees of the Library. Following this publication, mimeographed Addenda appeared from time to time. A small catalogue of Recent Acquisitions was published by the Association in 1947.

Mrs. Scheuber's vision for the Art Association was far ahead of her time. However, though her efforts were often circumscribed by physical and financial limitations, she worked intensively and neglected few possibilities for service. Her attitude in such matters was expressed when she wrote in 1915:

You know I am an optimist and believe that not any effort is wasted and that though pioneering is discouraging, in the end it always brings an abundant harvest though I will have to admit not often to the pioneer.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Mrs. Charles S. Scheuber to Miss Leila Mechlin, Personal letter, April 5, 1915.



Many of her plans for the Art Association not only did not mature in her time; they have not yet matured.<sup>1</sup> Concerning the work with children, which had actually begun in 1910,<sup>2</sup> she wrote to the artist, Charles C. Curran:

One of our dreams is that we shall be able in time to found an art school in connection with the museum in which our many talented young people would secure the proper elementary training in art.<sup>3</sup>

However, it was possible to continue bringing the children to the gallery,<sup>4</sup> and the essay writing brought thousands of students to study the American paintings in the winter exhibition. In 1925 prize-winning estimates by the school children were published in the daily paper for the first time. A report of the winter exhibition of 1923 to the American Federation of Arts included the information, "The children almost swamped the exhibition; over 3,200 estimates of pictures were sent in and fully 5,000 children wrote on the exhibition. Many of the papers were excellent."<sup>5</sup> The same number of essays was reported in 1924. Interest continued, although the number of those

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<sup>1</sup>Infra, pp. 156, 191.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, p. 37.

<sup>3</sup>Personal letter, n. d.

<sup>4</sup>Supra, pp. 37-38.

<sup>5</sup>Mrs. Charles S. Scheuber to Miss Leila Mechlin, personal letter, April 21, 1923.

who participated in the contest decreased in 1925. Such a major project required great cooperation from the public schools, as schedules for school trips were arranged, and the visits usually lasted about an hour, with teachers accompanying the students.<sup>1</sup> An idea of the work entailed by the judging of the essays may be gained from a letter which Rebecca W. Smith,<sup>2</sup> Chairman of the committee in 1925, wrote:

The task of reading these papers is a heavy one; there were more than sixteen hundred of them submitted to the committee this year. Yet the committee feels that it is a real privilege to cooperate with the Art Association in encouraging art appreciation among the school children and no member begrudges the hours of work it entailed. . . . Each paper was given earnest consideration and many of them were read six and eight times in the final decisions.<sup>3</sup>

The writing contests continued until about 1931, and in the last years of this feature, prizes were also given for schools with the largest percentage of attendance.

During the winter exhibitions of American art, Mrs. Scheuber usually wrote to each artist whose work was in the Fort Worth gallery, thanking him for his courtesy in lending a painting. In a letter to Edward Dufner, there is also an interesting comment about the reaction of another well-known painter to the Association's program for children:

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<sup>1</sup>The program was followed in the era of the 1940's by a similar one. Infra, pp. 103-106.

<sup>2</sup>Member of faculty, Texas Christian University.

<sup>3</sup>Personal letter, March 10, 1925.



Mr. and Mrs. Luis Mora spent yesterday afternoon in the gallery. Mr. Mora said the most impressive thing in this gallery and the thing that promises most for American art is those children gathered about the pictures studying them. Mrs. Mora said she had visited art galleries all over the world but she had come to Fort Worth to see a new thing, children seated on the floor before a picture writing about it.<sup>1</sup>

Copies of the essays written by the children were frequently sent to the artists, and they, in turn, sometimes wrote to the children. One letter which the busy Librarian wrote to Lillian Genth typifies her unflinching interest in a child's reaction to art:

Several months ago I laid aside to send you this delicious estimate of your charming painting . . . . written by a little boy in the second grade. Some way I failed to send it. I feel that it is too good to be lost so I am sending it to you at this late date.<sup>2</sup>

Not only was the Art Association interested in bringing the children to the art gallery for study of the exhibitions, but it had always been active in taking art to the children. Mrs. Scheuber's "Suggestions" for art in the schools had been distributed as early as 1911.<sup>3</sup> Reproductions for school use had been imported.<sup>4</sup> Planning continued, and in 1925, following the suggestions of Miss Leila Mechlin of the American Federation of Arts,<sup>5</sup> the

<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, February 8, 1924.

<sup>2</sup>Personal letter, June 16, 1923.

<sup>3</sup>Supra, pp. 36-37.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Supra, pp. 58-59.

Public School Art Society was organized to provide a collection of reproductions in color of the masterpieces of art. The Society was active for about the same length of time as the Friends of Art, from 1925 to 1931. Membership fees varied from one to \$10 per year; as chapters of the Society were formed in each school, a small fee was collected from each junior member; approximately \$3,500 was collected and spent for pictures and frames. One hundred reproductions, three oil paintings,<sup>1</sup> and fifteen prints were bought, framed, and distributed. Rotation of the works was conducted under the management of the Public Schools. At first, the entire collection was moved each six weeks; later, the moving was done each semester; and then, each year. Handling the heavy glas-covered pictures became a burden, and as most of the schools began buying other art works, it was no longer necessary to continue moving the properties of the Society. They are now scattered among the older schools over the entire city. The service performed by the Public School Art Society was extremely useful in the development of art in the schools and in Fort Worth.

In 1928, during the period of rapid accumulation of art, when the Association was at the height of its

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<sup>1</sup>The Society paid \$600 to Berninghaus for the painting, "October-Taos." Another oil was a gift: Portrait of Charles Lindberg, by Murray P. Bewley.



popularity and prosperity, friends of Mrs. Scheuber commissioned the artist, Robert Vonnoh, to paint her portrait. It was presented to the Art Association at a special reception in June. Short talks eulogizing Mrs. Scheuber were made, and she was presented with a silver loving cup, a scroll, and a bouquet. The Symphony Orchestra furnished music for the occasion. Two years previous to this, in 1926, the women's clubs of the city had presented Murray P. Bewley's portrait of his mother, Mrs. M. P. Bewley, to the Art Association. The two portraits, frequently hung in proximity, are a reminder of the esteem in which Fort Worth held these two women, one a woman of leisure, and the other, a busy employee of the city. Both made enormous contributions to the cultural life of the community.

In the late 1920's, the affairs of the Art Association were flourishing. Five paintings were sold from an exhibition of the work of Carl K. Blenner. Frank Tenny Johnson sold three of his paintings in a Fort Worth show. Visitors were coming to the gallery more freely and more regularly. The winter exhibition of oil paintings was conceded to be the best in years, clubs continued the afternoon teas, and gallery talks were frequently given by the artists of the city. Several able speakers had developed, and their lectures were an educational opportunity free to all. Names of speakers mentioned in this

era were Mrs. W. B. Gregory, Mrs. Sallie Blythe Mummert, Mrs. H. O. Ledgerwood, S. P. Ziegler, Mrs. E. B. Fritz, and Miss Sallie Gillespie.

One of Mrs. Scheuber's dreams for the development of art in Fort Worth was more publicity in the newspapers. She mentioned it in letters to various correspondents. One of these was Henry Wellington Wack, who was the donor of several paintings to the Art Association.<sup>1</sup> He evidently promised to aid Mrs. Scheuber in her efforts, as it appears in a letter which she wrote him in 1929:

I have arranged for our weekly column on art in the Fort Worth Star Telegram. The editors, Mr. James North and Mr. Record, were delighted at your offer to send a semi-monthly contribution to it. They decided at once to establish a weekly column devoted to art. Mrs. Naylor is on the tip-toe of anticipation at having your contributions. If you will let me know when you can send your first article they will announce the new department at once. We have been endeavoring for several years to induce the paper to agree to establish the column, but there has always been some insurmountable reason why it would have to be delayed. . . . We do not believe that we could have induced the editors to undertake it if it had not been for your generous offer.<sup>2</sup>

There is no further correspondence to show why the proposed articles did not appear, but a series by Pauline Naylor did appear in the Star-Telegram and in the Record during the summer and fall of that year, 1929. Other articles appeared intermittently during the 1930's, some by Sallie Gillespie, and many by Sallie Blyth Mummert.

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<sup>1</sup>Infra, p. 141.

<sup>2</sup>Personal letter, January 9, 1929.



Much of the favorable attitude towards art that was developing may be attributed to the writing and lecturing done by these and other able critics. As a result of the efforts of all, a regular art column by Ida Belle Hicks began to appear in the Sunday issues of the Fort Worth Star-Telegram in 1938. Following this, in 1948, Nedra Jenkins became the art critic. Today, those of us who reach for the Sunday art column, knowing that it will be there, scarcely give a thought to the time when it was considered unnecessary.

CHAPTER V  
THE YEARS 1930-1938

The last years of activities in the old gallery before the opening of the new Library in 1939 might be termed a period of transition between the old Art Association and the new Association. With the advent of the financial depression, dependence upon the resources of the Library increased. Default of membership dues was common, and some of the best friends of the Association asked to have their names removed from the roll. In 1938, only \$68 in membership fees were collected. Each year the Secretary's report suggested a membership drive. The Friends of Art ceased to exist, and the failure of this source of revenue left debts which had been made in the prospect of funds. Indebtedness in 1933 amounted to \$1,668, representing the amounts due on five different paintings. However, payments were made at intervals, and debts left by the Association in 1938 were not excessive. There were few acquisitions.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The painters whose works were acquired by the Friends of Art in the period of the 1930's were Carle Blenner, Joseph Fleck, Frank Tenny Johnson, Roger Donoho, Millard Sheets, Lucien Simon. The three paintings purchased by popular subscription were Stanley Woodward's "Coast Line," Herbert Meyer's "Apples and Eggplant," and Dines Carlsen's "Mandarin Coat."



During this period there was a continued effort on the part of the friends and Trustees of the Library to secure a new building. The rapid expansion of Fort Worth in the 1920's had caused the Library built in 1901 to outgrow its quarters, and long before 1929 the Trustees had deplored the need for more room. Yet the voters disapproved the sale of bonds for a Library in 1929, and again in April, 1935. In September of that year, however, with the promise of outright gifts from the Federal government, the public voted for the construction of many public buildings, including a library. When the federal funds became available in 1938, preparations were made for the new building.

It was the wish of Mrs. Scheuber to maintain the old building as an art museum. She had been mentioning this hope in her letters of the past ten years. Many friends, including Miss Mechlin, had advised her that perhaps the old building was not suitable for an art museum, but she clung to her dream and became bewildered at the increasing opposition to her ideas. When the decision was made to raze the old building and erect the new one on the site, her hopes were shattered.

In spite of limited sales during the depression years, this period witnessed an unusual growth in the production of art, both in Fort Worth and in the vicinity.

Art work from the Southern States Art League and the Texas Fine Arts Society appeared frequently in the gallery. Each year saw an expansion of the Texas Exhibition conducted by the Art Association. This latter exhibition was the only one in which the artists of Fort Worth were ordinarily allowed to show their work in the gallery, although attempts were made to encourage them by outside activities. One of the most popular of these was a series of open-air, nonjury shows held for the five years, beginning in 1933. These were gala affairs, lasting two days, from four o'clock in the afternoon until late in the evening. Streets surrounding the Library were blocked off. There were long rows of booths built for the displays. The lumber, labor, lighting and other items were lent or donated by local merchants and hotels. In the attending crowds were many who had never visited the gallery. Altogether, there was an atmosphere of pleasure and excitement which was considerably heightened by the artists' success in making sales. During the first show over \$674 was paid for art work. It became necessary to move the outdoor shows from the Library and the surrounding parks to Arlington Heights, when Ninth Street was designated a fire lane. Another activity sponsored by the Art Association was the celebration of Art Week in 1937, when original works by Fort Worth artists were shown in store windows.



In spite of these somewhat limited opportunities offered the Fort Worth adult artists, the Association began sponsoring exhibitions of work done in the public schools. The Junior and Senior High School Exhibitions, which were conducted annually for three or four years in the mid-thirties were in the nature of eliminations for the National High School Scholastic contests. Essay writing by children was discontinued in the early years of this era.

Gallery attendance was showing a gradual increase during this time. Over 25,600 visitors were counted in 1931, and this figure remained typical of the next few years.

In exhibitions, greater variety was presented to the visitors. While in the beginning years only two exhibitions had been held annually, the number had gradually increased so that now eleven, fourteen, and even seventeen shows crowded the permanent collection from the gallery. Most of the exhibitions were inexpensive to transport, and many were simply matted, with no frames, no glasses. However, a summary shows that there was much educational opportunity. All kinds of prints were popularized. Small soap sculptures continued in annual circulation. Photographs, water colors, and illuminated manuscripts were exhibited. Painted wall hangings, wall paper, miniatures, wood sculpture, and an Exhibit of Silver kept the public coming to

visit. Tibetan Banners and the Russian Ikons made one exhibition, while Egyptian and Peruvian Textiles were shown at another time. An exhibition of American Genre paintings was received from New York. The paintings of Albert P. Ryder and Arthur B. Davies were in the gallery for a joint show. In March, 1935, the Junior League conducted a ten day showing of Old Masters, at the conclusion of which a gift of \$100 was presented to the Art Association. Paintings by Goya, Van Dyck, Rembrandt, and others of their time had another showing in 1937. Fort Worth joined with other cities to show a rotating exhibition of one picture at a time sent out by the Metropolitan Museum.

One or two one-man shows were held each year. In connection with them, it was noted that very few Texans were allowed to exhibit in the Fort Worth gallery except during the special Texas Exhibition in the spring.<sup>1</sup> Texans writing for an opportunity to show their work were reminded of the Texas exhibit. Exceptions noted to this rule were Frank Reaugh, Mary Bonner, and Boyer Gonzales. A tea was given in honor of Frank Reaugh.

Another interesting sidelight on the one-man shows during the depression years was found in a letter from a New Mexico artist who was expected to exhibit in the Fort Worth gallery in 1934. The letter, written by his wife,

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<sup>1</sup>Infra, pp. 197-208.



explained that he was detained by an unexpected continuation of the Public Works of Art Project. He had expected to bring his paintings with him in the car, thus avoiding the high cost of shipping. "As you know," she wrote, "there is no probability of a sale of any kind unless an exhibition is accompanied by the artist, and at this time we cannot risk any outlay of funds."<sup>1</sup>

Other shows featured such names as Millard Sheets, Bernhardt Wall, Joseph Fleck, and Eliot Clark. The latter, a lecturer on the staff of the Grand Central Galleries and the Roerich Museum, proved so popular that he was allowed a repeat show another year, when he gave a series of lectures. Thomas Hart Benton also was a lecturer for whom the museum directors of Texas arranged a circuit.

The annual winter shows of oil paintings continued, but as the National Academy of Design occasionally failed to have its December show, the Federation sometimes did not send an exhibition to the South, and other sources supplied the paintings. The College Art Association was one of these.

Canvases were smaller than those in the early exhibitions, and prices decreased, also. By the year 1935, most of the paintings carried a price in the range from \$500 to \$1,000. The tone, too, had changed from the

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<sup>1</sup>Mrs. Joseph A. Fleck to Mrs. Charles S. Scheuber, March 7, 1934.

dignified and impressive museum pieces of the twenties to a more sprightly and spirited style.

Several items made the winter show of oil paintings the most expensive one each year. In addition to those already mentioned,<sup>1</sup> were the salary of an attendant and the cost of a catalogue, considered a dignified necessity. Costs of these booklets always exceeded the return from sales, as they were printed on excellent paper, and were illustrated. The foreword of these catalogues is well worth reading. The collector who has the catalogues of the winter shows from 1909 to 1937 is fortunate, for herein is found a timely review of art progress in the nation, the state, and the city. The main historical events are outlined in simple, concise language.

In 1934, when the Federation first failed to send an exhibition to Texas, Fort Worth was fortunate to be able to exhibit a group of twenty-five paintings which Dr. John S. Ankeney of the Dallas Public Art Gallery had secured from the Whitney Museum. It represented a cross section of the work of certain contemporary American artists whose work had not been shown before in Fort Worth. Some of the artists represented in that show were Arnold Blanch, Stuart Davis, Alexander Brook, John Steuart Curry,

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, p. 42.



Charles Demuth, Preston Dickinson, Guy Pene Du Bois, Ernest Fiene, Karl Free, Rockwell Kent, Leon Kroll, Yasuo Kuniyoshi, Henry Lee McFee, Henry E. Schnakenberg, Charles Sheeler, Eugene Speicher, and Niles Spencer.

It was later reported that the show had pleased some and displeased others. Long accustomed to conservative art offered by the Fort Worth Art Association, the public was on the whole unprepared for the Whitney exhibition.

As a protest, during the exhibition, the following letter was received, signed, Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_, Past Member:

I am returning all but one ticket to the Annual "Art" exhibit which I sold before I saw the exhibit. I returned the money for this as I did not have the nerve to ask anybody to go to see such a mess much less to pay for it. I consider it an insult to be asked to look at a thing of that kind and call it "art."<sup>1</sup>

Into the shows formerly sent out by the Federation, there had gradually crept a repetition of artists' names. Now, the work of other painters enlivened the exhibitions. Some of these were already well known, but not to local gallery visitors. In 1933, Miss Mechlin borrowed from the Phillips Memorial Gallery four paintings for Fort Worth: George Luks' "Telling Your Fortune," John Sloan's "Old Clown Making Up," Gifford Beal's "Morning Riders,"

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<sup>1</sup>Name of writer withheld. Personal letter to the Fort Worth Art Association, February 24, 1934.

and Rockwell Kent's "Azapardo River." Some of the other new exhibitors in this era were Paul Trebilcock, Ogden Pleisner, Hilda Belcher, Jerry Farnsworth, and Robert Phillip.

The last of Mrs. Scheuber's oil shows came in 1937. The Federation sent to Fort Worth a collection of twenty-six contemporary American and European paintings from the Phillips Memorial Gallery, intended to show the center of the recent art movement rather than the extreme right or left. As was usual, Mrs. Scheuber requested some special works to draw the crowds. She wondered, then in 1937, if the Federation could not borrow canvases by Homer, Cassat, and Thayer. A look backward in the files reveals that these three were among some names that she had requested in 1913.<sup>1</sup> Instead, canvases borrowed especially for Fort Worth were a group called the "Trio," which had already been shown in the Museum of Modern Art and in other places, including Sweden. They were Bernard Karfiol's "Portrait of a Boy," Preston Dickinson's "Old Quarter, Quebec," and Max Weber's "Three Jugs."

The exhibitions of American art had been held regularly in the Fort Worth gallery since 1909. The Association had worked long and diligently for the establishment of its gallery early in the century, and had conducted all

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<sup>1</sup>Infra, p. 163.



exhibits in a style that befitted the showing of art anywhere. Yet it received from some unexplained source a slight that was very displeasing. When the S. H. Kress collection of Italian paintings was being shown in Dallas in 1933, Mrs. Scheuber attempted to have the exhibition in Fort Worth. It proved impossible, but in the attempt, many letters were written to Mr. Kress, who answered them fully and courteously. On February twentieth, he wrote:

When, last spring, I completed the dates for the exhibition in various cities I endeavored to find out whether Fort Worth had sufficiently advanced in its collection of works of art to warrant taking it up regarding this collection of paintings and was informed that the plans there had not yet sufficiently developed and as a consequence did not bring the matter officially to your attention. Naturally I am very sorry if I did not obtain the right information for I would have been very pleased to have sent the collection to Fort Worth.<sup>1</sup>

"I can, at this time," he stated in another letter, "only say that I hope that something will come up in the future that will enable me to send some of my collection of paintings for exhibition in Fort Worth."<sup>2</sup>

Four years later the Kress Foundation recognized "Fort Worth Museum" as Mrs. Scheuber so fondly called the gallery. "Portrait of a Young Man" by Francesco Salviati, was formally presented to the Art Association February 2, 1937.

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, February 20, 1933.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., March 3, 1933.

It will be remembered that the outstanding national trends of art in the thirties were the development of regionalism and the sensational entrance of the Federal government, for the first time in history, into the field of art.<sup>1</sup> While the artists of Texas as a whole participated only slightly in the regional movement, the state partook freely of Federal aid by accepting murals and other work for tax-supported institutions. Perhaps many in Fort Worth wondered why the art work done locally did not include such murals as were done in Dallas, San Antonio, and other centers of the state. The answer is found in the correspondence of the Art Association. John Ankerney of Dallas was in charge of the work to be done in this region, and in correspondence with him and others Mrs. Scheuber explained her attitude.

I do not know how you feel about it but it fills me with grave concern to think that the walls of our public buildings, especially our schools, should be covered with poor murals. I am deeply concerned about their effect on the artistic taste of the pupils. For, as you know, mural painting is a most difficult art. One could almost count the successful mural painters of the world on the fingers of one's hands. It is too much to hope that Texas can develop them without training. However, if painting of murals are the only means of employment, I feel sure that our artists can make as good a stagger at them as the majority of the artists of Texas.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The Public Works of Art Project.

<sup>2</sup>Personal letter, January 4, 1934.



She explained further in a letter to Miss Mechlin:

I am glad to report that I was able to divert the mediums from murals to paintings on canvas of historical and other subjects. To my mind, having our public buildings filled with poor murals or paintings is hardly a way to cultivate an appreciation of art among our people.<sup>1</sup>

She also mentioned in the same letter that a five day exhibit of the completed work had been held in the gallery.

On the whole, I was agreeably surprised. They did very much better than I expected, but I am glad to say that we are not going to have any of it in the library. . . . The busts are really very good.<sup>2</sup>

Mrs. Scheuber continued to explain the causes of Fort Worth's failure to obtain the murals.

I think I did a little good by calling a meeting of our local artists and insisting that all paintings be put on canvas instead of on the walls. I felt that on canvas, as the art knowledge of our people increased the paintings could be quietly relegated to basements or attics, but on the wall, not any group would ever have the courage to suggest that they be painted out, and so Fort Worth's buildings have been spared. . . .<sup>3</sup>

Continuing, she related further:

There were many amusing things in connection with it . . . . Dallas has had many of her buildings decorated, real murals on the walls. I have only seen one of them and it did not cause me to regret my stand in the matter. We generously let the schools have all the paintings. When Dr. Ankeney was over he said, "The Library is a public building and is eligible for some of the PWAP canvases."

<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, March 10, 1934.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., May 16, 1934.

I replied, "Yes, I know, but as you know we did not make application for any of them." Dr. Ankeney replied by shaking his fist at me.<sup>1</sup>

After a period of Federal aid, the financial strain of the depression began to lift, and Texas prepared to celebrate the anniversary of its independence from Mexico. The Texas Centennial Committee arranged for the 1936 celebration in Dallas, and that city began planning the historical showing of art in its new museum. Fort Worth also arranged a Centennial show, and decided to give space to an art exhibit. The unpaid task of arranging for the collecting of paintings fell to Mrs. Scheuber, as it did the following year when the name of the celebration was changed to Frontier Fiesta. In 1936, the show consisted of paintings and bronzes of the North American Indian, from George Catlin to the contemporary painters. Paintings were lent by several galleries: Robert C. Vose Galleries, Erich-Newhouse Galleries, Henry W. Ranger Foundation, National Gallery, Smithsonian Institute, Harry Stone Galleries, and William MacBeth. Mrs. Herbert Dunton and Mrs. Joseph Fleck lent paintings. Mahonri Young lent bronzes. And there were others. All were generous, but a change was noticed in the attitude of the artists. For the first time, they were asking a rental fee for showing their work. Several of them had joined the "Society of Painters, Sculptors, and Gravers," and only those who had agreed to send

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.



work to Fort Worth before they joined were allowed to do so without pay. A letter from Emil Bisstram of Taos gave the view of the artists:

The artist is facing an economic problem that will eventually break him and successfully kill off all creative effort except those sponsored by commercial interests. . . . It is now a question of making the public share in the economic problems of the artist.<sup>1</sup>

Since the Centennial management expected to pay only transportation and insurance, Mrs. Scheuber was forced to alter her original plans.

For the summer showing at the 1937 Fiesta, the Newhouse Galleries borrowed works from many galleries and sent a collection to Fort Worth. The showing this year was of Indian, Cowboy, and Pioneer Life. After the gallery at the Fiesta had been open a month, during July, the management decided to change the celebration to amusement only, and the exhibition closed. All the heavy works were returned to New York. The Art Association had no responsibility in the matter except that Mrs. Scheuber gave much of her time to the enterprise.

As the year 1937 came to a close, it became necessary to vacate the old Library building, occupied since its auspicious opening in 1901. It was a busy time for the Library staff. Temporary quarters were to be in a store building on lower Main street. Most of the permanent

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, May 4, 1936.

collection of art was sent to storage, with only a few pieces taken with the Library furnishings. It was out of the question to consider any shows for the coming year.

Yet, the American Federation was trying to set the schedule for the coming winter's exhibition of oil paintings, and its representative, Helen Cambell, could not understand Mrs. Scheuber's silence. It was feared that something had happened to Mrs. Scheuber. Not in twenty-eight years had she failed to rally to the prospect of a strong exhibition. Finally Mrs. Scheuber wrote, "We will not be able to take the Exhibition in January. We are moving the Library."<sup>1</sup>

During 1938, there were only two exhibits, a group of old Chinese prints, and a display of etchings. It was the end of Mrs. Scheuber's long years of service to the Art Association, and to the Library, as she retired early in 1939. She had labored diligently since 1892, when the women of Fort Worth had gathered at her home and decided to work for a library and an art gallery. Her active brain had planned many of the civic projects which are the pride of Fort Worth today. A born executive, her boundless energy and keen intellect had sustained her through long and fruitful years. The force of her personality will not soon be forgotten; it is impossible to

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, December 7, 1937.



erase the imprint of her efforts in the civic affairs of Fort Worth.

It is to be regretted that Mrs. Scheuber did not spend her last years in recording her memories of the Library and the Art Association. What a brisk, witty, and pungent writing it would have been!

At this time, it seems appropriate to mention the officers who served with Mrs. Scheuber, and other friends of the Association. After the death of Mrs. Bewley in 1930, there was no president until 1933, when Olive Peak was elected; she served throughout the trying era of the 1930's. S. M. Gaines, art collector who had lent many paintings for the exhibitions, continued as vice-president, with Anna Shelton, who served as second vice-president. W. G. Newby and Elmer Renfro were the early treasurers. Among the faithful benefactors were Mrs. John G. Waples and her daughter, Mrs. Lloyd A. McKee. Mrs. Ida L. Turner was most active in promoting the affairs of the Art Association. No one worked harder for the establishment of art in Fort Worth than Mrs. James W. Swayne, who had spent much time in this work since 1899. "Among the true friends of the Art Association was W. B. Paddock, chairman of the Board of Trustees of the old Library Association, whose influence was ever on the side of leniency toward the affairs of art."<sup>1</sup> There are doubtless many others to whom

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<sup>1</sup>Mrs. H. O. Ledgerwood, Interview, July, 1949.

the Association owes a debt of gratitude, and it is hoped that the omission of their names will not be considered neglect. One of the missing links in the files of the Association is the history of the individual efforts of its many friends in the early days. Assembling information of the founders and builders should be a separate project.

Before leaving the era of the 1930's, it is well to consider art activities of Fort Worth outside of the Art Association. There had always been in Fort Worth a group of artists and art teachers; and a whole story might be written about these early teachers, from the time of Rose Howard, Mrs. Key, Mrs. Clifford Sharon, Miss Mattie Melton, and Miss Christina MacLean of the first decades of the century to the days of Mrs. G. W. Greathouse, Mrs. E. W. Cockrell, and a host of others, including S. P. Ziegler, who is still teaching. Each teacher and artist had gathered about him or her concentric circles of influence that overlapped in the 1930's, and there were many who desired fulfillment of their efforts, exhibitions with opportunity for sales.

The long continued endeavor of the Art Association to educate the public and encourage creative effort was bearing strange fruit. In spite of its avowed purposes of encouraging the artists of the city, a strict policy



of thumbs down was displayed towards their work, and none of them were allowed to show their work in the gallery except in the Texas show in the spring. They could and did participate in the carnival-like, open-air, nonjury shows,<sup>1</sup> but serious recognition was denied them. High school shows were allowed,<sup>2</sup> but not the work of local artists. Yet their services were needed and accepted for lecturing, writing, payment of dues and general support. Both conservative and modern groups received the same treatment.

In 1931 three artists of the city, Blanche McVeigh, Evaline Sellors, and Sallie Gillespie banded themselves together in an endeavor to teach and promote modern art. A year later, Miss Gillespie withdrew from the group to pursue private teaching, and the others, with Wade Jolly, a young artist of Philadelphia, organized the Texas School of Art, teaching the graphic arts, painting, prints, and ceramics. The modern movement in Fort Worth may be directly traced to the activities of this school with its small galleries on Tucker Street. As the teachers and students of this group matured in their art expression, the results became astonishing to the city and the state. Yet the

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, p. 75.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, p. 76.

school was never on firm financial ground, and after a few years it was discontinued, with the workers proceeding individually in their art careers.

By this time, in the mid-thirties, small exhibition galleries had been opened by the art stores of the city. Clubs for the promotion of art work and sales were springing up among many groups of Fort Worth. The most influential of all these groups was one of about twenty-five serious artists known as the Fort Worth Artists' Guild. Some of these were the teachers and students of the discontinued school; others brought influences from outside. This organization, too, was short-lived, but in the time of closest unity, the group set up a gallery and a salesroom; the members exhibited their own work and established themselves in the eyes of the public as serious artists of the modern school, as they are now known. Admission of this group into the activities of the Art Association was to cause the swinging of the pendulum in the next decade, and to bring new life to the era of the forties.



CHAPTER VI  
THE YEARS 1939-1950

The first few months of 1939, while the Library Board was awaiting the opening of the new building, was a period of complete reorganization of the Art Association. In December, 1938, E. E. Bewley had been elected president, filling the vacancy created by the resignation of Olive Peak the preceding April. At the annual business meeting in March, 1939, Bewley was again elected to the presidency, with other officers as follows:

Vice-President . . . . .	James R. Record
Second Vice-President. . . . .	Mrs. Will F. Collins
Treasurer . . . . .	Elmer Renfro

First business of the new association included a contract with the Library Board, a new charter, the appointment of committees, and a membership drive.

The new library building, like the old one, had been planned with a gallery on the second floor, but arrangements with the new Art Association were to be entirely different. The Library Board, for once and all, made it clear that, as the custodian of public funds voted for the maintenance of a library only, it would permit no further imposition on its finances. There seemed to be no feeling of animosity, but a firm intention, and a willingness to

cooperate.<sup>1</sup> Under the new agreement accepted by the Board of Directors of the Art Association, the Association was to be financially independent of the Library. No electricity would be furnished free; it was necessary for the Art Association to install at its own expense a separate light meter. General janitor service was to be furnished, but no special services.<sup>2</sup> No work was to be done by the library staff for the Art Association, except that the advisory services of Helen Toombs<sup>3</sup> might be used in her working hours, any other work done by her to be a private arrangement. Paintings were to be installed in the gallery only, not in the foyer or the corridors.<sup>4</sup> The Art Association was permitted to use the permanent lecture hall and also a small exhibition room.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>I. H. Burney, President of the Board of Trustees of the Library, to the Art Association, personal letter, February 9, 1939.

<sup>2</sup>During the years from 1945 to 1950, cost of the special janitor services for hanging exhibits, packing, etc. has averaged \$70 monthly; electricity, \$45; in addition, monthly rent of \$12.50 has been paid to the Library.

<sup>3</sup>Assistant librarian. She is now Mrs. Randolph Kinney.

<sup>4</sup>The Library Board has since modified its position, and at this time there exists a most amicable feeling between the Library and the Art Association. Paintings from the Kimbell Art Foundation were loaned to the Association and have been hanging in the foyer since 1942. Units of the permanent collection are to be found throughout the building.

<sup>5</sup>The room has since been converted to a reference room.



Although there was general rejoicing over the moving into new quarters, the Art Association, feeling unwanted, had an urge to seek other quarters and appointed a committee to search for a suitable place. At a meeting of the Board of Directors in October, 1941, the committee reported that no favorable location had yet been found. A search through the minutes of later meetings revealed no further reports of this committee.

With a new charter granted by the state, the new Art Association underwent a testing period in 1939. Early in the year, and continuing through the following months, every effort was being made by the membership committee and all workers to secure sufficient membership funds to maintain an art program. In order to increase membership, business and professional men and women enlisted; they made personal calls and telephone calls. This type of service by men and women heretofore not connected with the Association was significant of the importance of an art program to the life of Fort Worth. J. R. Pelich, Hubert H. Crane, J. W. Herbert, Sam Cantey III, Mrs. Edwin Phillips, and others served as chairmen or members of important committees, not only in 1939, but in the next four years. Other active committee heads were Mrs. Flossie Kysar, Mrs. William Holden, W. F. Collins, Zeno Ross, Mrs. C. O. Moore, and Mary Witherspoon. As there was no regular

gallery attendant, the maintenance of the gallery and its program depended upon the quiet but persistent efforts of these and many other faithful workers who arranged the program, the exhibitions, and attended to all other business.

Art clubs also rallied to the support of the Association. In 1939, the Artists Guild<sup>1</sup> closed its gallery, and in so doing, notified the Art Association that its purpose had been accomplished, that the members were now willing to assist in the activities of the Association, and had no desire to conduct a counter program.<sup>2</sup> The notice stated that the members desired individual memberships in the Art Association, and also a club membership, and desired to assist in the expense of bringing to Fort Worth a first class show of contemporary art, or some other exhibit. The Allied Arts Club also took out a sustaining membership and offered suggestions<sup>3</sup> to the new reorganized Association. Other clubs followed, and dues from them and from the large number of individual sustaining members provided the necessary financial standing of the first years of the 1940's.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, p. 91.

<sup>2</sup>Blanche McVeigh, Chairman, Arrangements Committee, Artists Guild, to the Fort Worth Art Association, May 26, 1939.

<sup>3</sup>Two of the suggestions were: that public forums be held, and that membership in the Board of Directors be rotated to include new members with fresh interests.

<sup>4</sup>In 1949 there were only fifteen members paying \$100 for sustaining memberships.



Nevertheless, the question of finances continued to be a persistent one. Sam Cantey, President of the Association in 1942, was eager to see the Association self-supporting. In this year a public relations counsel was engaged to reach different groups in Fort Worth, members to be elected to membership. Another plan for securing financial aid was brought to the attention of the Association by Blanche McVeigh on March 2, 1943, at a regular meeting, when she moved that the City Council be approached for financial aid.<sup>1</sup>

Membership in all classes increased steadily during the 1940's. Reports of the membership committee in 1947 listed 644 active members paying \$3 each; fifty-one individual sustaining members paying from \$25 to \$100; and twenty-four organizations paying for sustaining memberships with fees ranging from \$10 to \$100. At the close of the decade, in 1949, the total number of members was approximately 900.

One result of the reorganization of the Association is the fact that since 1939 there are minutes of the meetings of the Board of Directors; and minutes of the annual meetings of the Association. Another evidence is the reports of the committees. Much real activity is indicated with democratic participation by many persons in the business of the Association. The treasurer and the secretary

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<sup>1</sup>Infra, p. 106.

also make comprehensive reports. Standing committees in 1949 included Nominating, Acquisition, Membership, Exhibitions, Program, and Building Committees.

For many months after the reorganization in 1939, the work of the committees was personally directed by the new president, E. E. Bewley.<sup>1</sup> He had assumed leadership in the most critical time in the history of the Art Association, when the activities of the year were to decide whether or not the new organization could stand on its own feet. Correspondence, attendance at meetings, and the many duties of the executive officer of the Association also became his responsibility. After some months, it became apparent that a permanent employee was necessary to take charge of the gallery. However, finances of the Association did not permit such an expenditure for salary until 1940, when Mary Ellen Davis was employed for six months. She was succeeded by Mary Lake, who served until 1945. At that time, Sallie Gillespie,<sup>2</sup> one of the diligent artists who had given freely of her time to the Art Association, was engaged as secretary and became, in fact, the

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<sup>1</sup>Son of the first president, Mrs. M. P. Bewley, supra, p. 20.

<sup>2</sup>Bachelor of Design Degree, Sophie Newcomb College; Post graduate work, Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, and Chicago University; one year's study in France and Italy. Formerly head of Art department, Texas Wesleyan College; private teacher; exhibiting artist.



executive secretary and director of the gallery. With the end of her tenure on July 1, 1950, another era of the Art Association came to a close.

In the years before 1939, one heard a great deal of the Fort Worth Museum of Art,<sup>1</sup> although there was only an unpretentious gallery with few museum activities. Under the newer regime, there is yet only a gallery, with the use of a storage room in the basement of the Library. However, the ever widening range of activities in the years of the 1940's suggested that the Art Association actually gave to the citizens of Fort Worth and the surrounding territory the services of a museum. Without waiting for an adequate building, the organization offered a wide range of activities, including exhibitions, classes, demonstrations, forums, and lectures of a high order. The extension of these services by exhibitions and lectures into the territory of West Texas was one of the new developments of the Association program.<sup>2</sup>

Lectures, given in the lecture hall of the Library or in the gallery, were one of the regular and popular features of the 1940's. Members of the faculty of the University of Texas gave lectures during the winter of

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<sup>1</sup>Catalogues, stationery, and all printed materials referred to the gallery as the Fort Worth Museum of Art.

<sup>2</sup>Infra, pp. 100, 121.

1940-1941; and Gibson Danes, also of the University, lectured the following winter. Nine local artists gave a series of lectures during the season 1943-44; for all of these there was a slight charge to nonmembers. Local artists also gave many free lectures on current exhibitions. In March, 1943, Dr. Cora Stafford gave a translated lecture by Carlos Merida, with Merida present and answering questions. Paul Manship was featured in a lecture and demonstration in 1946, using Doel Read as his model.

All gallery activities, including free lectures by local artists, increased after 1944, when the city of Fort Worth began its public support of the Art Association.<sup>1</sup> Sallie Gillespie continued to give lectures on current exhibitions as she had been doing for a decade. In the winter of 1946-47, in addition to customary gallery talks, she appeared before twelve organized groups in the city. Four slide lectures on the history of art and numerous gallery lectures were given by her in 1947-48. Kelly Fearing and Bror Utter, artists, assisted in the gallery lectures in 1947. During the season of 1948-49, a series of twenty-three lectures on the history of music was sponsored jointly by the Art Association and the Public Library, the series being given by Howard Griffin, local writer and

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<sup>1</sup>Infra, p. 106.



musician. One popular attraction at the gallery during the spring of 1949 was a joint demonstration of fresco painting by Howard Joiner and gouache painting by Bror Utter. During the Centennial Exhibition of 1949,<sup>1</sup> ninety-three lectures were recorded, many of them given by Sallie Gillespie, though a total of nine other speakers participated.

A sign of the increasing influence of the Fort Worth Art Association is the extension lectures to the surrounding towns; at the close of the season of 1948-49, the director of the gallery had lectured in Graham, Brownwood, Jacksboro, Temple, Bowie, Abilene, and Dallas.

Judged by the size of the crowds attending in the evenings when the Association announced an open forum, this feature of the 1940's was by far the most popular of the services offered to the public. Begun in 1942, when the Allied Arts sponsored four forums in the gallery,<sup>2</sup> there were forums on current exhibitions, including one-man shows, and even forums by elementary children during the annual exhibitions of their work.<sup>3</sup> The program for the 1948-49 season included nine forums. In selecting members for the discussion, the Association had a policy

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<sup>1</sup>Infra, pp. 125-127.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, p. 95.

<sup>3</sup>Infra, p. 105.

of choosing one person from each of five different fields: a layman; a conservative; a specialist in some other field, as music, literature, or teaching; a practicing artist; and a collector or other informed person. Because many of the shows brought to Fort Worth during the decade of the 1940's were the subject of controversy,<sup>1</sup> the forums were stimulating. Audience participation was invited and expected. When members of the forum disagreed, the audience was more likely to participate in a wholesome, democratic questioning and general complaining. There were many verbal battles in the public forums of the Association, yet there was no doubt that public appreciation and public interest in art grew steadily during this era.

Classes were another integral part of the art program. Immediately after the reorganization of the Art Association an offer was received from the Art Education Association, composed of public school art teachers, to teach children's summer classes in art appreciation in the gallery, at no cost to the Art Association. The offer was accepted, and the classes were taught for two summers. There were two weekly classes, one for advanced students, and one for the primary and elementary ages. Much publicity was given to the project by the Fort Worth Star-Telegram. In 1941, the procedure was altered somewhat. Mary Lake,

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<sup>1</sup>Infra, pp. 124-125.



secretary of the Association, gave the lectures and local artists conducted the sketching classes. Upon request, the term of six weeks was extended to twelve weeks. Attendance at these classes sometimes numbered 300. As before, all outside services were voluntary. After 1944, teachers of these summer courses were paid for their services, and classes in the gallery and lecture hall were abandoned in favor of outdoor meetings in the parks. In the later summers of the 1940's, classes were held in the basement of the library and consisted of clay modeling for the younger children, with painting and drawing for the older students. The number in each class was restricted by the requirement that each of the six weekly lessons be attended regularly.

While summer classes for children were the first serious venture into the teaching field by the Association, regular winter classes with paid instructors became a customary part of the program. For two years prior to the 1948 season, there were three classes, two for young students and one evening class for adults. Evaline Sellors taught the class in clay modeling for elementary students, and Bror Utter, the painting class for junior and senior high school students. In both instances, students were selected by the schools which they represented. The evening class in drawing was taught by Dick Reeder and Sallie Gillespie.

This instructional program was expanded by two additional weekly classes in the winter of 1948: a ceramics class for adults, open to the public, taught by Miss Sellors, and a special ceramics class for the art section of the Junior Woman's Club, members of the class also being members of the Art Association. Mrs. Theo Cromer was the instructor of the latter class.

As soon as there is room for expansion, there is sufficient interest for other classes. The only classroom is the basement storage room which the Library allotted to the Art Association. Paintings from the permanent collection filled over half the room for years, until most of them were sent to outside storage in 1948. An assortment of tables, chairs, easels, shelves, and similar equipment fill the room to capacity. With such meagre space and equipment, the fullest possible program of instruction has been conducted.

Although the techniques employed seemed to follow a pattern used in other museums, there was one feature of the educational program that was not standardized, but unique. Initiated in 1941 by the art committee of the Junior League, a project of bringing the sixth grade students of the city to the Art Gallery became established in the programs of both the League and the Art Association. Under the plan, each sixth-grade student came to the gallery



at least once a year. Previous to the visit, the class and teacher received invitations from the Association. The students visited the Children's Department of the Library, and then went to the gallery where a trained member of the Junior League talked on the current exhibition. At times, a Fort Worth artist gave a demonstration. For the first few years, the League bore all expenses of the program, including transportation from the school and returning, but later, the students paid for their own transportation, which was by special bus. Mrs. Flossie Kysar, Consultant in Art for the public schools, acted as coordinator in making arrangements for the weekly visits. In the season of 1948-49, over 3,000 students were included in the Wednesday programs. At the beginning of each season, the members of the Junior League Art Committee who were to give the lectures to the children reported to the gallery for a week of intensive training by Sallie Gillespie. With each change of exhibit, they reported for another lecture and training period. The average attendance in the class was fifteen. Through the continued cooperation of the Art Association and the League, each student in Fort Worth entered the Junior High School with an awareness of the cultural facilities of his city.

In addition to this program of gallery visits by the sixth grade pupils and the special winter and summer

classes for children,<sup>1</sup> the Art Association annually conducted exhibitions of art work by primary and elementary children of the Fort Worth Public Schools. An annual improvement in the quality of the exhibition reflected credit to the Association, the schools, and the young artists themselves. During the children's show of 1949, a former Fort Worth artist, Clinton King,<sup>2</sup> visited the gallery and showed his pleasure in the exhibition by purchasing seven paintings from the children.

Only once in this period did the Association revert to the earlier policy of conducting essay writing contests in connection with the exhibitions.<sup>3</sup> In 1944, students of three levels, junior high school, senior high school, and college were encouraged to write criticisms of the local art show. Money prizes were presented to the winners.

As a reward for its long years of encouraging children to create and understand art, the Association finally realized a rich harvest when it began receiving financial aid from the city of Fort Worth. The City Council had probably received previous requests for aid,<sup>4</sup> but an unusual incident brought about a change of policy toward the

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<sup>1</sup>Work done in these classes was exhibited in the gallery.

<sup>2</sup>Infra, pp. 118, 148, 203.

<sup>3</sup>Supra, pp. 38, 66-67, 68, infra, p. 141.

<sup>4</sup>Supra, p. 96.



activities in the art gallery. The story was told by Sallie Gillespie:

One one of the days when the children were visiting the gallery, Mr. Rinehart Rouer, city attorney of Fort Worth, happened to be on the second floor of the Library and inquired what was happening in the gallery. Over 100 children were seated on the floor listening to a speaker.<sup>1</sup> When informed of the activities of the Association and its slender financial budget, he declared that such efforts merited the support of the city. With this suggestion, Mr. O. P. Newberry and others in the Association presented the case of the Art Association to the City Council and obtained financial aid. The Association receives \$500 monthly from the city, the money to be used for administrative purposes only.<sup>2</sup> For the first time in its history, the gallery operates on a dependable, if limited, basis.<sup>3</sup>

Although the lectures, forums, and classes were the principal features of the art program in the last decade, there were a few adventures outside of this routine. In March, 1946, the French film, La Karmesse Heroique, was shown in the lecture room under the joint auspices of the Library and the Art Association. After the showing of the film, an independent group was organized to continue bringing foreign films to Fort Worth.

Another unusual even in March, 1949, was a piano concert given by Mrs. Katherine Lege for the benefit of the Association. Tickets to the affair, given at the

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, p. 68.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, p. 93.

<sup>3</sup>Sallie Gillespie, Interview, July, 1949.

Rivercrest Country Club, were sold at \$5. Net proceeds to the Art Association were \$1400.<sup>1</sup>

In the field of exhibitions, the new Association made its first break with tradition when the new Library and art gallery were opened in May, 1939. Unlike the opening of the first library in 1901,<sup>2</sup> there was an art exhibition on the walls of the gallery; and the exhibition itself, unlike any that had hung on the walls before, was a showing of purely local art.<sup>3</sup> It was followed by a summer exhibition of selections from the permanent collection. Brought to light after being in storage over eighteen months, this exhibitions drew over 100 visitors daily.

Without a paid secretary or a regular gallery attendant, it was not an easy task to maintain a schedule of exhibitions for the first winter season. Yet the volunteer workers held a full schedule, which follows:

October . . . .	Loan Exhibition
November . . . .	Works of Speicher-Lucioni-Norfeltd
December . . . .	West Texas Art Show-Sculpture from the Robinson Galleries
January . . . .	Masters of American Paintings
February . . . .	Exhibition from Midtown Galleries
March . . . . .	Southern States Art League Exhibit
April . . . . .	Local Show
May . . . . .	Worcester Children's Exhibition
June . . . . .	Permanent Collection

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, pp. 3-4.

<sup>3</sup>Infra, p. 111, n. 2.



The October, 1939, Loan Exhibition, consisting of paintings borrowed from Fort Worth homes, was the first of its kind. However, others followed during the next decade. Committee members went to the homes, measured paintings, and selected those suitable for a group showing. In later years, the paintings were assembled in the gallery and arranged there.<sup>1</sup>

Following closely the exhibition pattern of former years, the January show of Masters of American Painting was assembled and sent by the American Federation of Arts. A strange comment on the exhibition is that in this, the first comprehensive exhibition of the new regime, the list of "Masters"<sup>2</sup> included names that Mrs. Scheuber, Secretary of the old Association, had requested regularly for thirty years.<sup>3</sup>

An indication of the whole-hearted support which was being given to the new Art Association in its first years was the energy of the Artists' Guild<sup>4</sup> in sponsoring shows of contemporary art. The first one in 1940 was

<sup>1</sup>Infra, p. 110.

<sup>2</sup>Blakelock, Cassat, Chase, Davies, Dearth, Duveneck, Eakins, Fuller, Hassam, Hawthorne, Henri, LaFarge, Luks, Homer Martin, Pendergrast, Theodore Robinson, A. P. Ryder, Sargent, Thayer, Twachtman, Vedder, Weir, Wyant, and others. This was the first time on record that an Eakins had been shown in the gallery, except the Fort Worth purchase of 1925.

<sup>3</sup>Infra, p. 163.

<sup>4</sup>Supra, p. 91.

sent by the Midtown Galleries,<sup>1</sup> and the second, in 1941,<sup>2</sup> was assembled from six New York galleries. The evening programs and lively discussions promoted by the Guild in connection with its exhibitions were the harbingers of the many such activities later conducted by the Association.<sup>3</sup>

After a season of exhibitions, the Association not only had passed a period of test, but had launched into revolutionary exhibition practices which it was to follow until the present time, 1950. Some of these innovations were: exhibition of art owned locally; promotion of local creative art by exhibitions of the work of both children and adults; encouragement of artists in adjoining areas, particularly in West Texas, by exhibitions of their work; removal of the gallery from its previous position of isolation by exhibiting contemporary modern, and often controversial, art; use of juries with power to select and reject. An additional custom, inviting the one-man shows, came into being within the next year. These practices merit special attention.

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<sup>1</sup>Artists included Paul Cadmus, Margit Varga, Isaac Soyer, Frederick Taubes, Miron Sokole, Jacob Getlar Smith, Zoltan Sepeshy, Doris Rosenthal, Waldo Pierce, William Palmer.

<sup>2</sup>Included were John Sloan, Lucille Blanch, Morris Kantor, Henry Mattson, Reginald Marsh, Russell Cowles, Yasou Kuniyoshi, and others, with some repetitions of 1940.

<sup>3</sup>Supra, p. 101.



The Loan Exhibitions<sup>1</sup> held by the Association during the first ten years of its reorganization not only measured an increase in the numbers of real art patrons, but also indicated the changing tastes of those patrons. The first ones held in 1939 and 1940 included the names of painters recognized as conservative. Some were reminiscent of the traveling exhibitions sent out by the American Federation of Arts.<sup>2</sup> Prints owned locally were shown in repeated exhibits, with an increasing number of collectors and print makers reflecting a discriminating taste. The 1947 Loan Exhibition of Contemporary Art was labeled as the finest showing of such locally owned art that has yet been exhibited. Names of artists included Marin, Weber, Picasso, Kollwitz, Dali, Braque, Roesch, Zerbe, DuBois, Rivera, Maillol, Toulouse Latrec, and others. Another indication of an increasing energy and interest among the patrons of art in Fort Worth was that the purchases had been made individually from the galleries and artists.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, pp. 7; 24, n. 2.

<sup>2</sup>Rosamond Smith, Frederick C. Frieseke, Joseph H. Sharp, Jonas Lie, Frank Tenny Johnson, Carl Brenner, Albert Groll, Frederick J. Mulhaupt, Robert Vonnoh, Eliot Clark. Also Sir William Beechy, Sir Thomas Lawrence, Adolph Schreyer, and others.

<sup>3</sup>Two of the present art collections in Fort Worth, however, have not been built around modern art. The Kay Kimbell Art Foundation is made up primarily of English and French paintings of the eighteenth century. Another collection, that of the Amon G. Carter Foundation, contains most of the important works of Frederic Remington and Charles Russell, with paintings and bronzes by both artists.

The most revolutionary departure from the practices of the past was the promotion of local artists, an adventure, which in return, brought renown to the Association. Only in the Texas Exhibitions<sup>1</sup> had the old Association allowed Fort Worth artists to show their work.<sup>2</sup> The first local show was held in connection with the opening of the new building in 1939. Artists were invited to submit their work to a jury composed of Ronald Williams of the North Texas State College, Howard Joiner of the North Texas Agricultural College, and Olin Travis of the Dallas Art Institute. Selections consisted of eighty-eight works, including ten pieces of sculpture. Although no plans had been made for prizes, the jury suggested that at least a first prize of \$50 be awarded, and donated its expense account to the prize fund. Frank Fisher<sup>3</sup> was awarded the first prize for his still life painting. It is worth noting that this is

<sup>1</sup>Infra, pp. 197-293.

<sup>2</sup>In the year 1911, an exhibition was held of works by three local artists: Ella Ray Ledgerwood, Mrs. George L. McMillan, and Margaret Littlejohn. In 1920, sculpture by Joseph Lorkowski was shown in the gallery. Supra, p. 148, 201.

<sup>3</sup>The following story about the winner was found: "Twenty years ago a small boy, seated on the floor of the art gallery in the old Library building . . . listened attentively to a gallery talk about artists and pictures. Other children were there--all of the fourth grade at the Alexander Hogg School. . . . When the awards were made for the best essay . . . the first prize went to Frank Fisher." (Fort Worth Star-Telegram, June 11, 1939).



the first time an actual, not a mythical, jury was used to select works for exhibition in the gallery of the Art Association.<sup>1</sup>

Following that first recognition of the creative efforts of Fort Worth artists, the Association has since continued to honor the local artists by an annual exhibition. A policy of using qualified juries<sup>2</sup> with the absolute power has been a determining factor in the high quality of the Fort Worth local shows. Many of the entries have been rejected, with the natural result of leaving aspirants disappointed and sometimes displeased. Juries, for their part, have praised the work entered. An estimate of the show was voiced by a member of the jury, Ralph Pearson, when he remarked that the show represented Texas art at its upper level of achievement. In 1946, the entire local show was invited to the Dallas Museum of Fine Arts for a month. In 1949, the show was invited by the Texas Fine Arts Association for a showing in Austin.

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<sup>1</sup>Invitations to the Texas Exhibitions, stated that a jury would select works. Probably members of the Association served as jurors. Infra, pp. 197-203.

<sup>2</sup>Jurors in the era of the 1940's included Ruth Uhler and Robert Straus of Houston; Otis Dozier, Ivan Johnson, and Octavio Medellin of Dallas; Everett Spruce, William Lester, Seymour Fogel, Ralph Pearson, and Henry Rasmusen of Austin; Ronald Williams and Wilfred Higgins of Denton.

In the local shows previous to the 1950 exhibition, the first prize was a purchase prize, the work of art becoming an acquisition of the Art Association. Prizes were donated by an increasing number of well wishers, with the names of the donors varying from one year to another. The following list of prizes offered in 1948 was typical:<sup>1</sup>

Leonard Brothers Purchase prize, best painting . . .	\$250
Bertram Newhouse prize, best oil painting . . . . .	150
Mrs. O. L. Burnett, second prize . . . . .	50
Mrs. C. O. Moore, third prize . . . . .	25
Bertram Newhouse prize, best sculpture . . . . .	50
Bertram Newhouse prize, best drawing . . . . .	25
Bertram Newhouse prize, best print . . . . .	25
Fort Worth Art Association prize, best print . . .	25
Collins Art Association prize, best watercolor . .	25
Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce prize, popular vote	25

In addition to the annual jury selected shows of local art, the Association offers additional incentive to those who are achieving on a high creative level. An invitation to hold a one man show in the gallery of the Fort Worth Art Association is a recognition of honors already won. The artist invited must call Fort Worth his home, must have practiced art in this city. He may have been a prize winner in a local show. He must have arrived at some distinction away from home, such as exhibiting in a national show or having a one man show in a city larger than Fort Worth. In no case has the Association been disappointed in the works presented by the artists to the public.

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<sup>1</sup>Since 1948, some of the prizes have doubled, and all have increased in value.



Rather, each show is anticipated with considerable excitement, and on opening nights the gallery is crowded. Six hundred persons attended the opening of Bill Bomar's show. The sincerity and individuality of the artists have given to each show a unity and drama impossible in other types of exhibitions. From each show, the Association makes a purchase, thus indicating its confidence in the artist.

One man shows have been held by the following artists:<sup>1</sup>

Blanche McVeigh . . . . .	1942
Veronica Helfensteller . . . . .	1943
Dick Reeder . . . . .	1944
Bror Utter . . . . .	1945
Emily Guthrie Smith . . . . .	1946
Bill Bomar . . . . .	1947
Evaline Sellors . . . . .	1948
Marjorie Johnson . . . . .	1949

Cynthia Brants, winner of two first prizes in the 1950 show of local artists, has been invited for the exhibition in 1950.

The sudden flourishing of creative art in Fort Worth after its recognition by the Art Association was like the maturing of some unknown plant with blooming long delayed by unnatural forces. There is no doubt that the groundwork, the teaching and preparation for this flourishing, was done by the Fort Worth School of Fine Arts and the Artists' Guild, workers in both organizations later

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<sup>1</sup>All have been painters except Blanche McVeigh, print-maker, and Evaline Sellors, sculptor and ceramist.

transferring their zeal to the larger and more unified sphere of the Art Association.<sup>1</sup> For several years, the solidarity or oneness with which these artists worked caused some to say that Fort Worth was the only city in the state to have a distinct school of painting. The unity was merely one of friendship, with seriousness and determination to work for recognition; there was little similarity in the techniques, for each was an individualist. "Fort Worth," said one writer in the Dallas Morning News, "is the only city with what might be called a 'school' of artists, a homogenous group representing a definitely advanced esthetic and a high average of quality in practicing it."<sup>2</sup>

The energy and talent of the Fort Worth artists won honors for them in exhibitions away from home, not only in Texas, but in places farther away. Space does not permit recounting the impressive individual records of exhibitions, individual shows, and prizes in which these artists have participated, nor the collections in which they are represented. Such records fill pages. However, to show the extent of their entries in exhibitions, a few places may be listed:

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, pp. 90-91.

<sup>2</sup>John Rosenfield, "Notes on the Passing Show," The Dallas Morning News, September 18, 1948.



Artists for Victory Show in the Metropolitan Museum  
 Six Texas Painters at the Weyhe Gallery, New York  
 Library of Congress  
 National Academy of Design Show, New York  
 Artists West of the Mississippi, Denver  
 Wichita Art Association, Kansas  
 Connecticut Fine Arts Association  
 American Water Color Society  
 American Society of Etchers  
 California Print Society  
 Whitney Museum  
 Pennsylvania Academy  
 Springfield Art League, Massachusetts  
 Corcoran Gallery  
 Philbrook Museum, Tulsa  
 Southern States Art League  
 Texas General Show  
Caller-Times Show, Corpus Christi  
 Arts and Crafts Club, New Orleans

In 1944, after winning awards in local shows and in other exhibitions over the nation, several Fort Worth artists were invited to exhibit at the Weyhe Gallery in New York. The entire group consisted of Donal Vogel of Dallas and five Fort Worth painters, Bill Bomar, Flora Blanc, Dick Reeder, Bror Utter, and Veronica Helfensteller. The show attracted favorable comment, as may be noticed:

The Texans are to remain on view through October 7 and constitute one of the most interesting group shows on the New York calendar at this time. There is no doubt these young painters will be increasingly in evidence in national shows. . . . They are thinking and painting in modern terms and will eventually and inevitably outlive group affiliation.<sup>1</sup>

One of the group, Bill Bomar, has had two individual shows at the Weyhe Gallery, with increasing interest

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<sup>1</sup>Maude Riley, "Art Digest Editor Says Work of Six Texans Is Interesting and in No Sense Regional," Fort Worth Star-Telegram, September 24, 1944.

being given to him. In 1946, Edward Alden Jewell wrote of Bomar's work:

The paintings are simple and unaffected by isms of any kind and they carry conviction. There are explicit tenderness and a serenity and assurance in the work, even a strange patience that makes itself felt. In "Death of a Bird" . . . Bomar introduces an almost mystical touch reminiscent of some of Blake's verse. . . . It is a very interesting first show.<sup>1</sup>

There are many artists of all ages at work in Fort Worth today, and recognition is given their work not only by the Art Association, but by the smaller galleries in art stores. In addition to those already mentioned are George Grammer, Reilly Nail, Josephine Mahaffey, Lia Guilty, Jacques Burdick, Lirl Treuter, Nina Magers, and Dorcas Howard.<sup>2</sup> Of the large group remaining, about twenty-four are doing work of considerable merit. Any list of artists must be flexible. New names should be added each year as individuals move upward in the scale of performance.

Not only has the Art Association raised the standard of local art work by the annual jury show and the selected one man shows; it has promoted local art in other ways. A show of fifty-three portraits of local persons by local artists was given in 1942. For six years, beginning in 1945, the advertising artists of the city were given space for an annual exhibition. A nonjury Christmas

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<sup>1</sup>New York Times, September 29, 1946.

<sup>2</sup>Kelly Fearing, another painter who won prizes at the local shows, is now teaching at the University of Texas.



sale show of works by Fort Worth artists was held by the Association for four years, with the public encouraged to buy without paying any commission. Two former Fort Worth artists residing elsewhere were presented in one man shows; they were the painter, Clinton King, in 1946, and the sculptor, Electra Waggoner Biggs, in 1950. A joint exhibition honored two new college art department heads in 1948: McKie Trotter and Kenneth Bradley Loomis.<sup>1</sup>

While the pride of the Art Association of the 1940's was this hearty promotion of creative efforts within its own immediate environment, it did not fail to assist in the development of art in the wider sphere of the state,<sup>2</sup> thus continuing the tradition begun by Mrs. Scheuber and the Association of earlier years.<sup>3</sup> The following is a partial list of those exhibitions concerning Texas artists:

Exhibit of faculty members of Texas colleges  
 Exhibit from the Texas Fine Arts Association  
 College students' show, from five Texas schools  
 Student shows from the Texas State College for Women  
 Exhibition of paintings and sculpture by Dallas artists

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<sup>1</sup>Texas Wesleyan College, Fort Worth, and Texas State College for Women, Denton, respectively.

<sup>2</sup>The Texas General Show was organized early in the decade, during the period when the newly reorganized Fort Worth Association was struggling to maintain its balance, without the aid of a full-time, art trained director. Lack of space, one cause of the local Association's failure to join in the beginning, still prohibits such an exhibit in Fort Worth. Cities cooperating are Dallas, San Antonio, and Houston.

<sup>3</sup>Infra, pp. 197-203.

Small sculpture by Texas sculptors  
 Drawings by Richard M. Beasley of San Diego, Texas  
 Exhibitions of the Texas Printmakers Guild  
 Works of five soldier artists of Camp Barkeley  
 Paintings of Otis Dozier  
 Paintings of Edmund Kinsinger, Baylor University  
 faculty  
 Paintings of Carlos Merida  
 Water colors of Hayes Lyon, University of Texas  
 faculty

Other West Texas arts were presented in a special show in 1950.<sup>1</sup>

Particularly, in the broad locality known as West Texas, the Fort Worth Art Association has done much to encourage the artists. Annual exhibitions of paintings by West Texas artists have been presented in Fort Worth with mutual benefit to the artists and the Association. Exhibitors, stimulated by the use of juries and awards, have gradually raised the level of painting in the western section of the state. As a reward for its efforts, the Fort Worth Art Association is considered a leader in the art affairs of West Texas.

The first two West Texas shows were held in December, closing the years 1939 and 1940; after the second show, the time was changed to coincide with the dates of the Southwestern Exposition and Fat Stock Show, which is held early in the calendar year. As hundreds of West Texans come to Fort Worth for the Exposition, the timing of this art event seems most appropriate. It was not until

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<sup>1</sup>Infra, p. 122.



1950 that the place of this exhibition was changed from the downtown gallery in the Library to the foyer of the Will Rogers Auditorium, easily accessible from the adjacent Exposition grounds. Attendance records naturally exceeded all others for this show.

West Texas artists who wished to enter the first show in Fort Worth in 1939 were required to submit entries to regional heads for selection or elimination, and when the works arrived in Fort Worth, a jury awarded prizes. A later method of selection was adopted: artists were invited to submit one major entry directly to Fort Worth, where a jury selected entries and named award winners.

The jury of the first West Texas show was composed of Richard Foster Howard of the Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, Stella La Monde of Southern Methodist University, and S. P. Ziegler of Texas Christian University. Edmund Kinzinger of Waco received the first prize of \$100; Coreen Mary Spellman of Denton was awarded the second prize of \$50; and third prize of \$25 was awarded to Edith Brisac, another Denton artist. The People's Choice prize of \$25 was received by Lewis W. Teel of El Paso. In later years, prize-winners have originated in towns more truly "western" than the homes of those first winners. The value of prizes has remained somewhat the same as those of the first year; the Southwestern Exposition and the West Texas Chamber of

Commerce have been regular donors of awards, with two of the prizes subsidized by interested individuals.

For the first exhibition, sixty entries came from twenty-one towns, including Brownwood, Abilene, Stamford, Wichita Falls, Sweetwater, Midland, Big Spring, Amarillo, El Paso, Canyon, Sudan, Pecos, Clarendon, Alpine, Marfa, Merkel, and San Angelo. Other towns represented were nearer the center of Texas. H. D. Bugbee, Xavier Gonzales, H. E. Trantham, and other names familiar in the history of Texas art appeared in the first exposition. On the opening night of the first West Texas Show, the artists who submitted the sixty entries were invited to be the guests of the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce and the Art Association at a buffet supper.

As a climax to the ten years of West Texas shows held by the Art Association, there developed in the season of 1949-50 two new phases of cooperation and mutual benefit. First, the El Paso Art Association borrowed six American paintings from the permanent collection of the Fort Worth Association, the works being received singly, at intervals, during the season. Paintings included in the group were:

"The Swimming Hole" . . . . . by Thomas Eakins  
 "Mother and Child" . . . . . by Charles Hawthorne  
 "The Approaching Storm"<sup>1</sup> . . . . . by George Inness

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<sup>1</sup>First borrowed by Fort Worth from Boston.



"Manhattan II" . . . . . by Lionel Feininger  
 "The Kite Flyers" . . . . . by Kelly Fearing  
 "Still Life with Chair" . . . . . by Abraham Rattner

Several years had elapsed since that first eloquent letter from El Paso in 1912, making inquiry about a source from which a painting might be borrowed.<sup>1</sup> In 1949, Fort Worth was in considerably better position to furnish a painting, and El Paso much surer of what it wanted.

Another evidence of the reciprocal interest of Fort Worth and West Texas in the field of art was the invitation given by the Fort Worth Association to selected artists<sup>2</sup> in three western towns, Abilene, Brownwood, and Jacksboro, to exhibit in the spring of 1950. Since each of the artists had passed a jury of state wide importance and had previously shown in the West Texas shows, no jury was used.

Aside from its efforts in promoting creative art in Fort Worth and the surrounding area, the Association, in the years from 1939 to 1950, has kept before the public those two necessary types of art required of a well rounded program, the art of the "old Masters" of Europe, and the contemporary art of the American scene. At intervals, some fine shows of the European art of an earlier day have

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<sup>1</sup>Infra, pp. 191, 192.

<sup>2</sup>The first show consisted of works by Abilene artists, Juanita Tittle, Lloyd Blanks, Harrell Trantham, Thelma Kendall, and Marian McKennon. The second show presented Robert Ellis of Jacksboro, with Winona Young Stovall, Maurine Stewart, and John Browning of Brownwood.

been presented in the gallery. Works of Franz Hals, Velasquez, Lucas Cranach the Elder, Jacob Ruisdael, and many others were shown in 1940. An exhibition assembled by the Cincinnati Art Museum, consisting of paintings, prints, sculpture, and machines, was shown in 1943. Jan Van Eyck, Leonardo de Vinci, Poussin, Ghirlandaio, Fra Angelico, Botticelli, Jan Vermeer, Hans Holbein, El Greco, and dozens of other artists were represented.<sup>1</sup> The George Calvert Collection was presented in 1944. European painting was not featured again until the Centennial Show of 1949, and the Italian Show of 1950.<sup>2</sup>

For the most part, exhibitions of the last half of the decade were concerned with aspects of life in the contemporary civilization and the art produced in this age. Variety came with subject matter: textiles, photography, architectural problems, interior decoration designs, advertising art, drawings, sculpture, prints, serigraphs, water colors, and oils. Much of the contemporary art shown in the gallery in the period of the 1940's was of national importance. Separately, shows were presented of the works of Anne Goldthwaite, Arthur Syzk, Rubin, John Sloan, and

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<sup>1</sup>There were 283 pieces in this exhibit, brought to Fort Worth by the Junior League.

<sup>2</sup>Infra, pp. 125-128.



Lyonel Feininger. A combined exhibition was held of the works of the Mexican artists Orozco, Rivera, Tamayo, and the sculptor, Medellin. Another show featured Jon Corbino, Otis Dozier, Maybelle Stampher, Eugene Berman, Kurt Roesch, and Emanuel Romano. An exhibit from the Associated American Artists in 1945 brought paintings and sculpture from fifty-six painters and four sculptors. Twentieth Century Drawings from the Museum of Modern Art was the title of a 1946 show.

While all of the exhibitions mentioned brought Fort Worth into contact with the vital, stimulating art being produced throughout the nation, much of it produced controversy.<sup>1</sup> Yet the general effect was beneficial, and public interest in art reached a high peak during this period. The first show that produced shock and excitement was a 1942 exhibition called Contemporary Figure Painting. Many of the paintings were of nudes. Attendance, particularly by persons who had never been in the gallery before, increased noticeably during this exhibition. In 1945, an exhibition of nonobjective art from the Guggenheim Foundation caused a great furor among those who cared for no enlightenment on the subject. Letters of protest came to the Association, and many appeared in the local press;

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, p. 101.

some were signed, and some unsigned. The following will serve as typical:

I consider the "art" we are given . . . . an insult to our intelligence. . . . After these caricatures are labelled and "explained," you can't tell what they are, for they are like nothing seen by mortal man on land or sea. The artists seem not to try to "paint what they see; they paint what 'aint' there."<sup>1</sup>

In spite of such public criticism, the Association continued with its exhibitions of the best contemporary art as heretofore mentioned,<sup>2</sup> and closed the era with many friends.

A strange note on the conclusion of this era of modern art is that a comparative showing of French and American art of the nineteenth century was the most popular exhibition in the history of the Art Association. Called the Centennial Show of 1949, it was a contribution to the city's celebration of its first hundred years. The exhibition was insured for an amount over one million dollars, and required special police protection for twenty-four hours each day.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Fort Worth Star-Telegram, May 8, 1945.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, pp. 123, 124.

<sup>3</sup>This, the most expensive show ever held in the Fort Worth gallery, could not have been conducted without a substantial contribution of funds by an executive of the Association. Such a change in attitude toward the program of the Association indicates that in the future, the Association may have more financial support.



Actual borrowing of the famous works of art was done by Knoedler Galleries of New York, under the direction of William F. Davidson, who also supervised the hanging and lighting arrangements in the gallery. Numerous individuals in the leading art galleries of the Eastern and Midwestern cities assisted.<sup>1</sup> Works were sent directly to Fort Worth and returned to owners at the close of the exhibition. The collection consisted of twenty-six paintings and one piece of sculpture, with Cezanne, Corot, Courbet, Degas, Delacroix, Gauguin, Manet, Millet, Renoir, and Van Gogh representing the French art, and Thomas Eakins, Winslow Homer, George Inness, and Albert P. Ryder representing the art of America. An impressive catalogue,<sup>2</sup> the first issued by the Fort Worth Art Association since 1928, was presented gratis to those 1000 visitors who attended the opening, and was sold during the show for one dollar.

For the opening of the show, which was televised, the foyer of the Library's second floor was enhanced with

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<sup>1</sup>The exhibit was made possible by owners and collectors: Art Institute of Chicago; Baltimore Museum; Brooklyn Museum; City Art Museum, St. Louis; Mrs. William M. Elkins; Trustees of the John G. Johnson Collection; Philadelphia Museum of Art; Mr. Charles G. Lang; Metropolitan Museum of Art; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C.; RKO Theatres, Inc.; Waters Art Gallery, Baltimore; Miss Edith Wetmore; and others.

<sup>2</sup>Miss Elizabeth V. Clare of Knoedler Galleries prepared the catalogue.

huge floral arrangements, with a trellis of greenery around the entrance to the gallery. Other similar trellis forms decorated the exhibition room, which was darkened, with special lighting thrown directly on each work. In the center of the room Degas' "Dancer" was placed on a pedestal, with palms surrounding the base. These special efforts to maintain a suitable setting added no little to the excitement of the show. Highlight of the opening was the presence of David Finley, Director of the National Gallery of Art, who came from Washington for the occasion. Before opening the doors to the gallery, he made an address, mentioning that he and others in the East were not ignorant of the long struggle which the Fort Worth Art Association had undergone, and had known for many years of the work which Mrs. Scheuber<sup>1</sup> and her friends had done in Fort Worth. His presence was like a benediction on the exhibition.

Attendance reports of the Centennial Show indicate that it attracted over 32,600 persons from forty-three Texas towns, seventeen states, and three foreign countries. Classes and clubs of many kinds arrived daily between March the eleventh to April the fifteenth. All art students from the Fort Worth public schools, from the sixth grade through the twelfth, went for special discussions. Lectures were given daily and in the evenings, there were several forums.

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, Chapters I, II, III, IV, and V.



Much publicity was furnished by the local press. Altogether, it was the most significant exhibition in the history of Fort Worth, and a most fitting tribute to the pioneer spirit of a city which was founded at a time when the artists themselves were beginning to pioneer in art.

Another comparable exhibition was the Italian Show of February, 1950. Rare early Vienesese paintings, with a valuable work by Bellini, were shown in the gallery. A catalogue was issued, similar to that of the Centennial show. The Knoedler Galleries of New York bore most of the expense of this show, and assumed all of the responsibility for the exhibition.

The final exhibition of the season was of Modern Church Art, sent by the Museum of Modern Art. Selected from a larger show at the Museum, the collection consisted of tapestries, sculpture, paintings, drawings, photograph, and one stained glass section. These items were contemporary designs for two modern European churches, the St. Matthews Church in England and a chapel in Assy, France. Not only did this challenging exhibition close a season; it ended an era lasting from 1939 to mid-year, 1950.

The glory of the era was the recognition of modern art and the promotion of local artists. Public confidence now places great responsibility on the Art Association.

The exhibitions brought to Fort Worth must challenge the thinking and imagination of those who come with open minds; they must be of a quality to extend the horizons of appreciation already reached. In doing so, the Association will follow the advice which Mrs. Scheuber gave in 1914: "You must lead your public instead of permitting it to lead you."<sup>1</sup>

Acquisitions in the period of the 1940's varied in nature, consisting of oil paintings, water colors, drawings, prints, and some small sculptures. As a parallel to the policy of exhibiting the creative art of the locality, the practice of purchasing from such exhibitions enlarged the permanent collection considerably. Either by purchase or by gift, the Association acquired works from the one man, invited exhibitions, from the annual shows of local art, from the Texas General Show, and occasionally from the West Texas Show. In addition, several works of national importance were purchased. Included in this group were the oil paintings "Manhattan II" by Lyonel Feininger, "On the Beach" by George Grosz, "The Rodeo" by Doris Lee, and "Still Life with Chair" by Abraham Rattner. One painting, "Still Life with Flower, " by Max Weber was purchased in memory of E. E. Bewley.<sup>2</sup> Among the drawings

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup>Gifts will be mentioned in another chapter, p. 131.



purchased, two were by Kaethe Kollwitz and Paul Klee. Prints by Auguste Renoir and Abraham Rattner, as well as some by lesser known artists were purchased.

In concluding the era of the 1940's, one may say that more perspective is needed to evaluate properly the importance of activities of this period. Nevertheless, it seems to have been the richest of all periods from the standpoint of service to the public, and public responses. Tangible evidences of the new spirit are: a steady increase of the membership roll; the awakening generosity of a few persons of means; the beginning of financial assistance by the city of Fort Worth; and the voting of bonds for building an art museum.<sup>1</sup> In 1950, it is the hope of the Art Association to be housed in a separate building, to perform the natural functions of a museum, and to render more vital services to the community.

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<sup>1</sup>The citizens voted in October, 1945, to sell bonds for many public improvements, including the erection of an art museum.

## CHAPTER VII

### GIFTS TO THE ASSOCIATION

In addition to the annual purchases of the Fort Worth Art Association, there were gifts of various classes to increase the permanent collection. Paintings, sculpture, and prints were more freely given than money, but there were some gifts of this nature.

During the years when public subscriptions were taken to purchase paintings, careful records were kept of all donors; there is today in the files of the Association an alphabetical list of all subscribers since 1904. Few donations exceeded \$25. The first and largest of the early subscriptions was the \$313 which the Woman's Wednesday Club presented for the purchase of the Inness painting in 1904.<sup>1</sup> First considerable gift from an individual came from a Fort Worth artist living in Paris, France. It was sent by Murray P. Bewley and presented to the Association by his brother, E. E. Bewley,<sup>2</sup> in 1912. The amount was the fee received from the portrait painter's first Fort Worth commission. No doubt, Bewley was well informed by his mother, Mrs. M. P. Bewley,<sup>3</sup> of the financial strain of the Association. Mrs. Scheuber's letter of thanks expressed well the feeling of many members:

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, pp. 92, 97.

<sup>3</sup>Supra, p. 20.



Permit me . . . . to thank you for your generous gift of \$250. The members of the Association are not only rejoiced at the gift but are especially rejoiced that this their first gift of any magnitude should come from you, because it shows that you who are so capable of judging approve of the work which they are trying to do for the community and believe it is worth while.<sup>1</sup>

The only other gift of size was one from Mrs. Mary Coutts Burnett, who gave \$100 to the Association. One of the faithful friends who contributed generously to the picture fund each year, F. T. B. Schermerhorn, frequently wrote Mrs. Scheuber concerning the purchases and advised her that when she was ready for another \$50 to pay on a painting to let "Miss Bessie"<sup>2</sup> know. With the organization of the "Friends of Art"<sup>3</sup> in 1925, there were enough payments of \$50 to create a pleasing cash balance for the first time. Comparable to the funds received from the Friends are the amounts received from the sustaining memberships<sup>4</sup> at the present time, 1950. A lone gift of \$100 was received in 1935 from the Junior League. Latest gift to the Association was an anonymous one of \$2,500 received in February, 1950.

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, January 8, 1913.

<sup>2</sup>Miss Bessie Jackson, of the Fair Department Store, owned by Schermerhorn.

<sup>3</sup>Supra, pp. 58-64.

<sup>4</sup>Supra, p. 96.

In addition to these tokens of friendship from living friends, the Association also received a few bequests. The first came when Miss Anna Shelton, former vice-president of the Association, died in 1939, leaving two paintings<sup>1</sup> and the sum of \$250 to the Association. Another such bequest was received from the estate of Mrs. W. N. Ewing, who, in 1949, left \$10,000 in memory of her sister, Miss Beulah Hall.<sup>2</sup> This fund, yet unspent, is for the purchase of one or two paintings.

In addition to gifts of money, other tokens of esteem, varying in significance, came to the Association through the years.

When the first loan exhibition was held in 1904, a collection of fire-arms and dishes were kept for display,<sup>3</sup> and they became the nucleus of an ever increasing exhibit. Gifts added to the collection. Glass cases were installed, and then more cases; objects filled the halls until there was hardly room for passage. In those last years before the old Carnegie Library was razed in 1938, the building was indeed crowded. As a visitor entered, he met a life-sized and life-like figure of a

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<sup>1</sup>Infra, p. 144.

<sup>2</sup>Miss Hall was a public school art teacher of Fort Worth, and Mrs. Ewing a public school teacher, also.

<sup>3</sup>Supra, p. 7.



Japanese pulling a jinrickisha;<sup>1</sup> once inside, he was confronted with Mammoth tusks on huge stands dominating the first floor.<sup>2</sup> On the second floor, crowded upon the balcony circling the open well were hundreds of curios and historical objects all neatly labelled. Hours could be spent there and much could be learned. Visitors to the Children's Room on the east side of the second floor seldom failed to take advantage of the balcony attractions. Some of the objects were loans and some were gifts to the Library or to the Museum, without distinction, for, in the minds of many Fort Worth citizens, the two were one organization. Many of the objects were sent to Mrs. Scheuber with confidence that their historical value would be appreciated.<sup>3</sup> An example of the type of objects collected may be noted by a gift which came from the Honorable Alexander Terrell of Austin in 1903; it was an antique water jug found on the site of Justinian's Court in Constantinople. The largest gift section of the collection

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<sup>1</sup>Gift of Fakes and Company, 1908.

<sup>2</sup>The tusks were unearthed from a gravel pit about five miles south of Fort Worth, ca. 1915.

<sup>3</sup>The Children's Museum was organized after the change of the Library into the new building, and received some of the historical items. Some of the scientific items were reported given to the science department of Texas Christian University. Undoubtedly, much of the collection was lost while in storage.

was called the Virginia Reilly Collection of Historical Relics, numbering over 100 pieces.<sup>1</sup>

Adjoining this crowded exhibit in the old Library was the Art Gallery on the west side of the second floor. One step across the threshold, and the visitor was removed into a quiet room where decorum marked the showing of art. Before the opening of the gallery, gifts of painting and sculpture had come in anticipation of that event;<sup>2</sup> and since the opening in 1910, friends have continued to assist the Association in forming its permanent collection. Some of these gifts are merely listed, with little notation to indicate the occasion of the gift or the concern of the giver. Other gifts are accompanied by anecdotes of origin; in some cases, information may be gathered from correspondence of later dates.

After the Association became affiliated with the American Federation of Arts in 1910, frequent gifts came to Fort Worth through this relationship. Of these, the first came in 1911, upon the recommendation of Francis D. Millett, Secretary of the Federation. It was a collection

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<sup>1</sup>During the 1920's and later, the collection grew by frequent gifts from Mrs. Minnie Reilly Maltby, who was buying them in New York and nearby places. She frequently wrote that the items shipped were like those in the Metropolitan collection. In November, 1927, she sent a pink lustre plate, a silver lustre bowl, a Chinese plate, and a flax spinning wheel.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, pp. 5, 7-9.



of 911 photographs of painting, sculpture, and architecture of the Renaissance, sent by the Metropolitan Museum.<sup>1</sup> These were duplicates in a large collection given to the Metropolitan by D. Cady Eaton, Professor Emeritus of Art at Yale University. The photographs became useful immediately to classes and clubs.

Another gift which came to Fort Worth through the interest of the American Federation of Arts was a painting called "Music" by Samuel Isham. It was presented by William Bailey Faxon, Treasurer of the American Fine Arts Society, in 1914. Florence Levy, however, selected the painting for Fort Worth. Her letter explaining the choice was interesting:

Although you stated in your telegram that you had room for a large picture it seemed to me that Mr. Isham's work, while good, is not of the highest rank and that in a comparatively small museum it was not wise to have a very large canvas by him. I therefore selected for you "Music" which has rich color and is well painted although there are slight faults in drawing such as appear in nearly all his work.

Samuel Isham will be remembered chiefly for History of American Painting and his active interest in the Society of American Artists of which he was Treasurer for a number of years. He exhibited only occasionally and I was surprised in this memorial exhibition to find his painting of as high a character as it is. You will, I hope, have as much pleasure from his picture as I had enjoyment in selecting it.<sup>2</sup>

There is a report about the identity of the subject of this painting:

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<sup>1</sup>Infra, p. 180.

<sup>2</sup>Personal letter, December 1, 1914.

Mr. Isham's model was Mrs. Fawcett, nee Anne Crossman, daughter of Major Crossman of the U. S. Army and sister of Henrietta Crossman, celebrated actress. Major Crossman was for many years stationed in Texas, where Anne was born and spent her youth.<sup>1</sup>

Of all gifts received by the Association, none is more mysterious, and none is known to have changed hands more dramatically than one called "Albertus Magnus," which came to Fort Worth in 1916. Measuring 38 x 48 inches, the canvas is evidently hand-woven, with paint decomposing badly. It had been cut from its frame and brought from South America in a trunk. The painting is a three-quarter portrait of a man dressed in the garb of a bishop, a flowing white robe with full sleeves. He wears a black cape, and a bishop's mitre rests on his head. Above him in white letters is printed S. ALBERTUS MAGNUS.

It was given to the Fort Worth Association by Louis Anderson,<sup>2</sup> a civil engineer, formerly of Fort Worth, but then living in Quito, Ecuador. The painting had been given to Anderson by the Danish Minister to Ecuador, the Honorable Ludovig Soderstrom, an art connoisseur and naturalist, who had lived in Ecuador for twenty-five years.

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<sup>1</sup>Mrs. Charles S. Scheuber, Report of the Librarian to the Board of Trustees for the Year Ending December 1, 1914.

<sup>2</sup>Other gifts from Mr. Anderson were two Inca vases and four modern clay figurines, modeled by natives of Ecuador. Eighteen stuffed South American humming birds were also sent by him.



Anderson had given Soderstrom some rare orchids from the interior of Ecuador, and, in gratitude, Soderstrom had given Anderson the painting. The Danish minister had received it with another as a gift from one of the former presidents of Ecuador, who was compelled to flee Quito during a revolution. Soderstrom presented the companion painting to the President of Argentina.

Whatever the later history of the painting, its origin has been lost. Was Albertus Magnus an Italian Churchman? Could there be any connection with King Magnus of Norway? Of what nationality was the painter, and of what period? The mystery could be solved by an expert.

The generosity of F. T. B. Schermerhorn in contributing to the subscription funds is mentioned elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> While in England, Schermerhorn was much impressed with the custom of presenting paintings to the public as memorials to the dead. How much better, he wrote, to have a beautiful memorial in a gallery than to place a cold slab of marble in a cemetery. The two paintings which he presented to the Art Association were memorials to his friends, Mrs. Florence Peak, pioneer of Fort Worth, and her daughter, Mrs. Clara Peak Walden.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, p. 58.

<sup>2</sup>Infra, p. 147.

One interesting painting has been in the collection of the Fort Worth Association so long that its origin has been forgotten. It is Ernest Blumenschein's "The Gift." This work was purchased from the artist by the Ranger Fund and deposited in Fort Worth after the Association signed an agreement with the Council of the National Academy of Design in June, 1923. The painting was borrowed from Fort Worth for exhibitions at the Corcoran Gallery, the Pennsylvania Academy, and the Carnegie Institute during the winter of 1923-24. It was borrowed by the National Gallery in 1930.

Members of the Association may be interested in the Ranger Fund. Henry W. Ranger was an American artist, a member of the National Academy of Design, who left a fund to purchase American art. Extracts from his will explain:

The income of the estate of Henry W. Ranger to be spent by the Council of the National Academy of Design in purchasing paintings produced by American artists, at least two-thirds of such income to be spent in the purchase of works by artists who are forty-five years of age or over . . . . All pictures so purchased are to be given by the Council to Art Institutions in America . . . . all such gifts to be upon the express condition that the National Gallery at Washington . . . . shall have the option and right, without cost, to take, reclaim and own any picture for their collection, provided they exercise such option and right at any time during the five year period beginning ten years after the artist's death and ending fifteen years after his death, and, if such option and right is not exercised during such period, the picture



shall remain and be the property of the institution to which it was first given.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to the Blumenschein painting deposited in Fort Worth, there is also listed in the Catalogue of Paintings<sup>2</sup> a small canvas by Henry W. Ranger, with the source noted as "Deposited by the Trustees of the H. W. Ranger Foundation."<sup>3</sup> However, concerning the paintings by Ranger, a letter from Charles C. Curran<sup>4</sup> stated that the paintings by this artist could not be deposited, but were to be sold, and the funds thus acquired used to increase the Ranger Fund. No account of the purchase of such a painting can be found.

One of the many outsiders in the East to become interested in the work of the Fort Worth art group was Henry Wellington Wack. Information about him described him as an author, editor, traveler, explorer, lecturer, artist, philanthropist, and naturalist.<sup>5</sup> He had given a

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<sup>1</sup>Extract from the Last Will and Testament of Henry W. Ranger, a printed copy sent by the National Academy of Design, May 22, 1925.

<sup>2</sup>The Fort Worth Museum of Art, Catalogue of Paintings (Fort Worth: Museum Press, 1928), pp. 1-50.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 50.

<sup>4</sup>Personal letter, May 22, 1925.

<sup>5</sup>Founder and first editor of Field and Stream, New York; he was associate editor in 1947.

large collection of art to the Newark, New Jersey, Museum because he believed that institution was performing the true duties of a museum to the community. It was also his belief that very fine work was being accomplished in Fort Worth, and he desired to assist in building up a collection of choice paintings. His first gift was "The Sea," by one of his own teachers, Leon Dabo.<sup>1</sup> He sent the painting in 1926. Soon afterwards, when Fort Worth school children were visiting the gallery and writing essays,<sup>2</sup> the Fort Worth Secretary sent Dabo an estimate of "The Sea," written by a little negro boy. Wack wrote that both he and Dabo were quoting the estimate and telling the story of Fort Worth art in their many lectures and talks about art. In the following year Dabo presented a painting by Wack to the Fort Worth Association.<sup>3</sup> The continued interest of Wack in the Fort Worth activities<sup>4</sup> was registered by other gifts.<sup>5</sup>

One of the most needed gifts ever received by the Fort Worth Association was a service extended in 1933 by

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, p. 145.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, pp. 38, 66, 67, 68; 111, n. 3.

<sup>3</sup>Supra, p. 147.

<sup>4</sup>Supra, p. 71.

<sup>5</sup>Infra, pp. 145, 146, 147.



Bertram Newhouse. He had the Gilbert Stuart painting of "Clementina Beach"<sup>1</sup> cleaned and varnished, and designed a new frame to be built around the old one. The cost of the new frame, of cleaning and refinishing the old one, and the insurance were paid by the Association. When all work was completed and the painting was returned to the gallery, the real beauty of this painting was seen for the first time. While the canvas was in New York, Newhouse wrote:

I never saw such a change in a picture and I know that you and all connected with the Art Association, in fact, all in Fort Worth, will be greatly pleased. It is a new picture really and a magnificent one. I congratulate you on its ownership.<sup>2</sup>

Another New York art dealer, Robert Macbeth, who was friendly to the art activities in Fort Worth, sent an important gift while the permanent collection was in storage in 1938. From an anonymous donor, it was a collection of drawings by Edward W. Deming, of whom Macbeth wrote:

One of the very few authentic historians in painting that we have left. He has made a close study of the development of the Southwest, and these studies should be of great historical value to Texans generally.<sup>3</sup>

Mrs. Ida Norvelle gave an interesting painting to the Art Association. It was called "Market Day, Cathedral

<sup>1</sup>Supra, pp. 23, 24, 25.

<sup>2</sup>Personal letter, July 24, 1933.

<sup>3</sup>Personal letter, February 8, 1938.

Square, Brussels." In 1937, the painting was sent to the Newhouse Galleries for expert opinion. From there it was sent to W. R. Valentiner, Director of the Detroit Institute of Art, who rendered the opinion that the painting was done about 1600 in Antwerp, by a follower of Pieter Bruegel. He stated that the painting needed cleaning and relining. There is no record that the painting received either improvement.

There have been many other gifts to the Association, and for the sake of brevity, all, including those already mentioned, will be named in a list to follow. As most of the objects are in storage, all of them have not been examined. Also, gifts offered, but not accepted by the Acquisition Committee, are not included. Nor is it claimed that all of the items mentioned are now in possession of the Association. A more documentary compilation of data should be made by the Association. The list was formed from correspondence, from the Catalogue of Paintings,<sup>1</sup> from various addenda pasted in the back of catalogues, from lists found in the files, and from the annual Report of the Librarian to the Board of Trustees.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Fort Worth Museum of Art, Catalogue of Paintings, (Fort Worth: Museum Press) 1928).

<sup>2</sup>Mrs. Charles S. Scheuber, Report of the Librarian to the Board of Trustees, 1902-1938.



Gifts of Paintings before 1939

John White Alexander, "Portrait of Jefferson Davis McLean"  
 Gift of the McLean Memorial Association, 1912.  
 McLean was a young county attorney killed while  
 discharging his duties in 1907. After unsuccess-  
 ful attempts to secure the artist Cecelia Beaux,  
 John W. Alexander was commissioned for \$2,000.  
 The portrait was presented to the Art Association  
 in a public ceremony on the first floor of the  
 Library.

Martin Baer, "Still Life"  
 Gift of Bertram Newhouse, 1937. An exhibition of  
 Baer paintings was scheduled for Fort Worth, but  
 cancelled on account of depletion by sales in  
 former shows.

Murray P. Bewley, "Buds"  
 Gift of Mrs. M. P. Bewley, 1911.  
 "Portrait of Mrs. Percy Pennybacker"  
 Gift of Mrs. M. P. Bewley, 1913.  
 "Portrait of My Mother"  
 Gift of the Women's Clubs of Fort Worth, 1926.

Ernest L. Blumenschein, "The Gift"  
 Deposited by the Ranger Fund, 1923.<sup>1</sup>

H. Bolton-Jones, "Cloud Shadows"  
 Bequest of Anna Shelton, 1939.

Gaston Boucart, "Le Port de Mornac"  
 Gift of Colonel Michael Friedsam, through the  
 Committee,<sup>2</sup> 1922.

Henri Callott, "Sardiniers au sec" (water color)  
 Gift of Colonel Michael Friedsam, through the  
 Committee,<sup>3</sup> 1924.

Eliot Clark, "Cold Spring Harbor, Long Island"  
 Bequest of Anna Shelton, 1939.

<sup>1</sup>Supra, p. 139.

<sup>2</sup>Committee for Diffusion of Modern French Art  
 among the Museums of the United States and Canada.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

- Walter Clark, "Long Ago"  
Gift of the artist's son, Eliot Clark, 1931.
- Alexander Compera, "Late Afternoon" (water color)  
Gift of the Woman's Wednesday Club, 1904. This painting was given at the time of subscribing for the Inness canvas, "The Approaching Storm." The Club had been exhibiting paintings sent to Fort Worth by Compera, who lived in Denver.
- Charles C. Curran, "The Carnelian Necklace"  
Gift of Mrs. M. M. Barnes, 1925, as a memorial to the Kooking Klub, a group active from the years 1887 to 1891.<sup>1</sup>
- Leon Dabo, "The Sea"  
Gift of Henry Wellington Wack,<sup>2</sup> 1926.
- Edward Dufner, "Youth"  
Gift of the artist, 1924.
- Eggleston, Benjamin, "Autumn"  
Gift of Henry Wellington Wack,<sup>3</sup> 1926.
- Flemish School, "Market Day"<sup>4</sup>  
Gift of Mrs. Ida Norvelle, n. d.
- Alexander Grassin, "La Maison au Faur"  
Gift of Otto Kahn through the Committee,<sup>5</sup> 1922.  
"Les Pommes," "Temps gris-Bretagne"  
Gifts of Colonel Michael Friedsam, President of B. Altman and Company, New York, through the Committee,<sup>6</sup> 1924. A letter from Louis Thomas, who distributed the French paintings, stated that "Grassin is a pupil of Cezanne. He lost the use of his right arm during the war and has been obliged to paint with his left hand. The Museum of Brooklyn and the French Institute of New York possess his works."<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Supra, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, pp. 140-141.

<sup>3</sup>Supra, pp. 140-141.

<sup>4</sup>Supra, pp. 142-143.

<sup>5</sup>Committee for Diffusion of Modern French Art among the Museums of the United States and Canada.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Personal letter, January 9, 1924.



- Bernard Guinhald, "Saint Michel de Maurienne"  
Gift of Otto Kahn through the Committee,<sup>1</sup> 1922.
- Samuel Isham, "Music"<sup>2</sup>  
Gift of the heirs of the artist, 1914.
- Eugene Arthur Jones, "A Quiet Night"  
Gift of Henry Wellington Wack,<sup>3</sup> 1928.
- Nell Choate Jones, "Where the Blue Begins"  
Gift of Henry Wellington Wack,<sup>4</sup> 1928.
- Jousset, "Fillette" (pastel)  
Gift of Otto Kahn through the Committee,<sup>5</sup> 1922.
- F. Luis Mora,<sup>6</sup> "The New Americans"  
Gift of Mrs. M. P. Bewley, 1928.
- Muller Mela, "Figure of a Young Woman"  
Bequest of Mrs. Caroline A. Shoemaker,
- J. Paul, "Ready for the Morning Canter"  
Gift of Mrs. Ida L. Turner, 1927. "Jeremiah Paul was a little known painter who worked in Philadelphia from 1791 to 1820. There is one of his portraits in the Worcester Art Museum, Worcester, Massachusetts."<sup>7</sup>
- Pausas, "Portrait of Mrs. Gillian Stevens Harrison"  
Gift of the sitter in honor of her father and mother, Dr. and Mrs. H. C. Stevens of Handley. It was reported that Sorolla drew in the portrait, started the painting, and turned it over to his pupil, Pausas. The canvas was shown at the Knoedler Galleries.

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<sup>1</sup>Committee for Diffusion of Modern French Art among the Museums of the United States and Canada.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, pp. 136-137.

<sup>3</sup>Supra, pp. 140-141.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>See n. 1 above.

<sup>6</sup>Supra, p. 68.

<sup>7</sup>Josephine M. Lansing, Assistant in the Department of Painting, Metropolitan Museum, personal letter, April 12, 1927.

- Bernard Pothast, "Her First Lesson"  
Gift of F. T. B. Schermerhorn, 1925.<sup>1</sup>
- Henry W. Ranger, "Early May"  
Probably deposited by the Ranger Fund.<sup>2</sup>
- W. Richards, "Marine"  
Gift of Mrs. M. A. Spoonts, who first thought it  
to be the work of William T. Richards.
- Francesco Salviatti, "Portrait of a Young Man"  
Gift of S. H. Kress, 1936.<sup>3</sup>
- Walter Shirlaw, "Clam Digging, Annisquam" (water color),  
"Near Ellenville, New York" (water color),  
"Uncoaling, Coast of Brittany,"  
"After the Bath"  
Gifts of Mrs. Walter Shirlaw, 1913.
- William Edgar Spader, "For the Feast"  
Gift of Henry Wellington Wack,<sup>4</sup> 1927.
- Herbert Tallant, "In Colorado"  
Gift of Mrs. S. C. McCabe.
- Robert Vonnoh, "Sand Man's A'Comin'"  
Gift of F. T. B. Schermerhorn, 1925.<sup>5</sup>
- Unknown artist, "S. Albertus Magnus"  
Gift of Louis Anderson, 1916.<sup>6</sup>
- Henry Wellington Wack, "Spring in Alaska"  
Gift of Leon Dabo, 1927. The artist stated that  
he was fond of the colors in Alaskan scenery.  
He was much surprised to learn that Dabo was  
giving the painting to Fort Worth.

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, p. 138.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, p. 140.

<sup>3</sup>Supra, p. 82.

<sup>4</sup>Supra, pp. 140-141.

<sup>5</sup>Supra, p. 138.

<sup>6</sup>Supra, pp. 137-138.



## Gifts of Paintings since 1939

Bill Bomar, "Persistence above Dark Waters"  
Gift of three friends, 1947.

George Grosz, "On the Beach" (oil on paper)  
Anonymous gift, 1941.

Celia Jamison, "The Merry-Go-Round" (gouache)  
Gift of Mrs. Allan Roos, 1945. The painting won  
first prize in the West Texas Exhibition of that  
year.

Mervin Jules, "Wounded"  
Gift of the citizens of Fort Worth. Received  
from the United States Treasury Department in  
exchange for the purchase of war bonds, 1944.

William Kienbusch, "Blue Spruce" (water color)  
Anonymous gift, n. d.

Clinton King, "Bistro"  
Gift of Bertram Newhouse, 1946.

Donald Vogel, "Day Lilies and Other Flowers"  
Gift of the Artists' Guild,<sup>1</sup> 1949.

Gifts of Sculpture before 1939<sup>2</sup>

Margueritte Brunswig, "Bust of Jake Zeittlin"  
Gift of the sculptor, 1938. From Los Angeles.

Joseph Lorkowski Boulton,<sup>3</sup> "Indian on Horseback," "Pioneer,"  
"Head of a Young Girl," "Kathleen" (bas relief)  
Gifts of the sculptor, ca. 1920.  
"Portrait of Dura Louise Cockrell"  
Gift of Mrs. E. R. Cockrell, ca. 1935.

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<sup>1</sup>Evidently the Artists Guild of 1939, but reorgan-  
ized. Supra, pp. 91, 95.

<sup>2</sup>Sixteen medals issued by the Society of Medalists  
from 1930 to 1937 are not included, as they were secured  
by membership in the Society. One, however, of the Indiana  
Centennial, was a gift of the Indiana Historical Commission  
1917.

<sup>3</sup>Supra, p. 111; infra, p. 201.

- J. C. Dreyer, "Life Drift"  
 Gift of Roy White,<sup>1</sup> 1908. "Mr. Dreyer is a struggling young Norwegian sculptor of real genius, I believe, a graduate of the Royal Academy of Norway. The figure represents the despair of genius over the unattainable."<sup>2</sup>
- Elizabeth Chase Geisbuhler, "Woman Reclining"  
 Gift of Mrs. Charles S. Scheuber, ca. 1935.
- Anna Hyatt Huntington, "Fawns Playing" (bronze)  
 Gift of the sculptor, 1937, through Leila Mechlin, formerly of the American Federation of Arts.<sup>3</sup>  
 Miss Mechlin was arranging exhibits, including the works of the sculptor.
- Houdin,<sup>4</sup> "Saint Bruno"  
 Donor of gift not named, 1919.
- Hermon McNeil, "Intellectual Force," "Physical Force"  
 Gifts of the sculptor, ca. 1920.
- Royston Nave,<sup>5</sup> "Bust of Alexander Hogg"  
 Gift of the sculptor, ca. 1928.
- Elizabeth Ney, "Head of Christ" (marble)  
 Gift of Varner Linn Brown, in memory of her mother, Rosa Maddox Brown, 1915.  
 "Garibaldi" (marble)  
 Gift of Varner Brown Moore, in memory of her father, Tom Brown, 1922.<sup>6</sup>
- Praxitiles, "Bust of Hermes"  
 Gift of Art League, 1902.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Charter member of the Association. Supra, p. 21.

<sup>2</sup>Mrs. Charles S. Scheuber, personal letter, March 23, 1912.

<sup>3</sup>See Chapter VIII. Infra, pp. 153-176.

<sup>4</sup>Possibly Houdon, French portrait sculptor, 1741-1828.

<sup>5</sup>Charter member of the Association. Supra, p. 21.

<sup>6</sup>Tom Moore was a self-taught artist who exhibited in the early Texas exhibitions. His painting "Grey Day" was purchased by the Art Association in 1922.

<sup>7</sup>Supra, p. 5.



Unknown sculptor, "Minerva Guistiniana" (cast)  
Gift of Art League, 1902.<sup>1</sup>

A. Zeitlin, "Head of John the Baptist"  
Gift of Mrs. Alice Underwood Fitch of Paris,  
France, n. d.

Gifts of Sculpture since 1939

Doris Ceasar, Bronze figure  
Gift of the sculptor, through the Weyhe Gallery,  
ca. 1947.

Chinese Figure  
Gift of Mrs. Nannetta Burton Carter, 1949.

Gifts of Prints and Drawings before 1939

Mary Bonner, "Bucking Horse"  
Gift of the Southern States Art League, 1933.

John Costigan, Title of print unknown  
Gift of the United States Treasury Department,  
1934.

Edward W. Deming,<sup>2</sup> "Drawings of the Southwest"  
Gift of Robert Macbeth, 1938.

Mabel Dwight, Title of print unknown  
Gift of the United States Treasury Department,  
1934.

Don Freeman, Title of print unknown  
Gift of the United States Treasury Department,  
n. d.

Lester Hornsby, "La Port de Valois Palais Royal"  
Gift of the American Federation of Arts, 1922.

Louis Orr, "Rheims Cathedral"  
Anonymous gift, given through Yale University, 1933.

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, p. 142.

Millard Sheets, "Landscape with Horses" (lithograph in six colors)  
Gift of United States Treasury Department, 1934.

Clara Skinner, Title of print unknown  
Gift of United States Treasury Department, 1934.

Wilson Silsby, Three etchings, titles unknown  
Gift of Genevieve Childer, 1934.

Prentiss Taylor, Title of print unknown  
Gift of United States Treasury Department, 1934.

Henry Wellington Wack,<sup>1</sup> "The Mountain Cabin of John Burroughs" (wood engraving)  
Gift of the artist, 1929.

Gifts of Prints and Drawings since 1939

Marc Chagall, "Arabian Nights" (colored lithographs)  
Twelve illustrations, being set number 67 of 111 sets. Gift of Sheila and J. Lee Johnson IV, 1949.

Lorene David, "Homestead" (lithograph)  
Gift of the Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, 1941.

Paul Klee, "Murder with a Sun Umbrella, a Scherzo" (ink and water color drawing)  
Anonymous gift, 1947.

Blanche McVeigh, "A Break in the Clouds" (aquatint)  
Anonymous gift, 1945, in memory of Lucy Stripling Ryan.

"Waiting for Pappa" (aquatint)  
Gift of Charlotte O. Moore, 1944.  
"Court House, Decatur, Texas"  
Gift of the artist, 1945.

S. Moy, "The Little Act on Horseback" (colored woodcut)  
Gift of the Artists' Guild, 1949.

Toulouse-Latrec, "Eva Lavalliere" (lithograph)  
Anonymous gift, 1949.

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, pp. 140-141.



Errol Utter, "Cells" (etching and soft ground)  
 Anonymous gift, 1946.  
 "Vanity"  
 Gift of Mrs. Allan Roos, 1946.

#### Miscellaneous Gifts before 1939

No attempt is made here to list the hundreds of historical items presented before 1939. A complete inventory may be found in the files of the Association.

#### Ikon,

Gift of Mrs. Helena Chase, ca. 1924. No information was found concerning this gift.

#### Letters,

Signed letters from leading artists and others. Gift of Leila Mechlin, 1936. In addition to this collection, the Art Association could assemble from its files an astonishing and enlightening display of personal letters, from Alexander Compera in 1902 to Lyonel Feininger in 1947.

#### Miscellaneous Gifts since 1939

#### Cartoons,

A collection of originals  
 Gift of Owen Day, Jr., 1948.

#### Ceramics,

Two glazed bowls by Gertrude and Otto Natzler.  
 Gift of Contemporary House, 1949.

CHAPTER VIII  
RELATIONSHIP WITH THE AMERICAN  
FEDERATION OF ARTS

The American Federation of Arts was founded in May, 1909, and the Fort Worth Art Association in February, 1910. But this does not mean that the art group in Fort Worth was not active until 1910, nor does it signify that the relationship between the two was not a close one until that date. There is evidence that, before the organization of the larger group, a plea for an art exhibit from this Southwestern town caused considerable thinking among groups in the East, and the need for a national organization to answer just such pleas became apparent. Later, in 1914, Florence N. Levy, editor of the American Art Annual, wrote to Mrs. Scheuber:

In a way I think that your persistence in asking years ago for an exhibition had much to do with the foundation of the American Federation of Arts. I brought up your letter at every meeting for nearly three years and in the end Fort Worth was the first city to have one of the traveling exhibitions. So you see we continue our interest in Fort Worth.<sup>1</sup>

It is clear that the art-minded people of Fort Worth were not satisfied with admiring their initial purchases of 1902<sup>2</sup> and 1904.<sup>3</sup> And their first view of

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, December 7, 1914.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, pp. 5-6.

<sup>3</sup>Supra, pp. 8-9.



American contemporary art, Inness's painting, was not enough. They wanted to look at the wider horizon, to bring it closer to Fort Worth; the way was not to isolate themselves, but to reach out to all sources, and that is what they did.

Their efforts in 1909 to secure the traveling exhibit of the American Water Color Society had failed,<sup>1</sup> but they were not discouraged, and appealed to the newly formed American Federation of Arts for an exhibit, which was assembled in St. Louis and sent to Fort Worth and New Orleans. Fort Worth prepared its art gallery for the event, and the exhibition opened on December 20, 1909.<sup>2</sup> New Orleans had no gallery for its exhibit.

Among the first acts of the Fort Worth Association in 1910 was affiliation by membership with the American Federation, which was then not yet one year old, and thus began a union which continues to the present time. This connection proved to be of mutual benefit. The local Association was strengthened and dignified by its continuous contacts with a national source; the national organization depended upon the Fort Worth group and its secretary, Mrs. Charles S. Scheuber, for the spread of its efforts throughout Texas and the surrounding territory.

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, pp. 14-15.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, p. 17.

In October, 1910, the Fort Worth group contributed \$25 to the Federation and received the thanks of the secretary, F. D. Millett, who said the Federation hoped to be self-supporting in a very short while.

Mrs. Scheuber's efforts to have the exhibitions of American paintings shown in other Texas cities, as well as in out-of-state locations, is discussed elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> It is fitting only to mention here some of the inquiries which she received. One came from Atlanta, Georgia, in 1911, with the comment that Miss Mechlin of the American Federation of Arts had reported Mrs. Scheuber as the organizer of all the art in Texas. Another, in the same year, from Columbus, Mississippi, stated that Mrs. Scheuber was Vice-President of the Federation, and manager for Texas. Mrs. Scheuber had been elected a vice-president of the Federation in 1910, and was reelected in 1913, and in 1916.

There are in the files of the Association many letters showing the interdependence of the local chapter and the national organization. In 1911 Miss Mechlin wrote to Mrs. Scheuber:

I am much interested to know if there is a possibility of San Antonio initiating a movement for an art gallery. The March number of Art and Progress<sup>2</sup> has a

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<sup>1</sup>Infra, pp. 179-195.

<sup>2</sup>First of three official publications of the American Federation of Arts, started November, 1909. Bound copies are in the stacks of the Fort Worth Library. Art and Progress (Washington, D. C., 1909-1915); American Magazine of Art (Washington, D. C., 1916-1936); Magazine of Art (Washington, D. C., 1937- ).



notice of the success of such a movement in Minneapolis. If you will tell me to whom to send it, I will mail a copy as a further incentive.<sup>1</sup>

Inquirers in Texas towns who wished information about lectures, exhibits, etc., were referred to Mrs. Scheuber by the Federation. In return, Miss Mechlin consoled Mrs. Scheuber when she complained about poor attendance at the exhibitions, and advised of possible choices for purchases.

The officers of the Federation felt strongly that Fort Worth had done especially well, not only in organizing a chapter of the Federation in Fort Worth, but also in directing the Texas circuit for the exhibitions of paintings. The warmth of their friendship was shown repeatedly in the favors which they granted the Fort Worth chapter for many years. When the Federation was called upon to select art museums over the country to receive gifts, Fort Worth became the recipient of many unsolicited awards.<sup>2</sup>

It was no doubt in recognition of this friendly feeling that Mrs. Scheuber wrote to the Federation in 1914, "We will have to have the Federation meet in Fort Worth when we dedicate an Art Building. I wonder how far in the future that is. I fear I shall not be here."<sup>3</sup> Such prophetic

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, February 21, 1911.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, 135-137.

<sup>3</sup>Personal letter, January 14, 1914.

words often appear in those letters which Mrs. Scheuber dictated to her friends in Washington.

When the secretary of the Fort Worth Association was called upon to submit the name of some one who could furnish information about art activities in Fort Worth and Texas for the American Art Annual, she declined to name a correspondent.

I do not know anyone whom I could recommend to represent the American Federation of Arts. I shall be glad at any time to furnish either the Federation or Miss Levy such data as I can procure relative to the Art Organizations of Fort Worth and vicinity. Of course you understand that I do not want any compensation for any services which I may render.<sup>1</sup>

Thereafter Mrs. Scheuber received and distributed blanks to secure information for the Annual. It was she who decided which artists and organizations were worthy of receiving the blanks.

The brilliance of Mrs. Scheuber's mind for organization and for system did not pass unnoticed by the art group in charge of the Federation. In June, 1911, they welcomed her criticism:

Your letter to Mr. Millett with reference to practical service on the part of the Federation to the smaller art museums in various parts of the country, was read at the Directors' Meeting. That as an outcome a committee has been formed to secure short articles on museum management, etc., for publication in Art and

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, March 20, 1914.



then possibly as reprints for general distribution. This committee will hold itself in readiness to render the services you suggested.<sup>1</sup>

Praise came repeatedly from the Federation to Mrs. Scheuber. In May, 1911, she read:

You certainly have done splendidly in collecting those amounts from the express companies and also in the management of the exhibitions, and in my paper on Traveling Exhibitions at the convention I tried to give expression to our appreciation of what you have done, explaining that it was the appeal from the Fort Worth Library that had really initiated the work and that the success of the exhibition in Texas was quite due to your capable management.<sup>2</sup>

From these practical experiences, Mrs. Scheuber gained wisdom that she was eager to share with others. Writing a long letter to the Federation on June 11, 1912, she begged for better shipping preparations. Smaller cases, containing fewer pictures, were requested; and stronger cases, with tops fitted. It would be more desirable to have the pictures fastened into the cases with screws instead of nails. The very troublesome glasses accompanying many of the paintings could be dispensed with, in many cases. Two years later, in 1914, Miss Florence Levy wrote, "Your instructions regarding packing and shipping will be attended to."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Miss Leila Mechlin to Mrs. Charles S. Scheuber, June 9, 1911.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., May 20, 1911.

<sup>3</sup>Personal letter, December 11, 1914.

In the same letter, Miss Levy acknowledged Mrs. Scheuber's suggestions for the betterment of the Art Annual.

Some time ago you told me of the need for some way of helping those who wished to send art work to exhibitions. Acting on your suggestion I have included in the index of Volume XI of the Art Annual a heading which reads, "Exhibitions with juries, to which any work may be submitted."<sup>1</sup>

The high esteem which the Federation had for the abilities of the Fort Worth secretary was evidenced by an answer which Mrs. Scheuber wrote to Miss Mechlin in 1912. Miss Mechlin was being promoted from assistant secretary to secretary, the post left vacant when F. D. Millett was lost on the Titanic.

I am quite overwhelmed at your estimate of my capacity . . . . I am sure I could never fill your place. I should love the work and possibly if it goes on some day if my ship comes in, I have a number at sea, I might consider being an assistant to you. Though I am afraid my place is here and will be to the end of the chapter.<sup>2</sup>

In spite of all friendly feelings there arose in 1915 a considerable difference of opinion between Mrs. Scheuber and Miss Mechlin, the result being a severe blow to the aspirations of all Texas painters who wished recognition by the American Federation of Arts. A Texas artist had submitted four or five paintings to the selecting committee in New York and had paid all expenses of shipping

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Personal letter, March 2, 1912.



them from Texas, and the cost of returning the rejected ones; one had been accepted, and, at the artist's request, it was placed in the exhibition for the Texas circuit. On receiving notice, Mrs. Scheuber objected at once, in writing, to Miss Mechlin. "Including the picture would cause endless complications with our other ambitious artists to the detriment of future exhibitions."<sup>1</sup> Also included in the objections was the possibility that the artist was trying to use the exhibition to advertise herself. The letter continued:

How the picture could have passed the jury of the Federation is more than I can understand unless the members looked with lenient eyes upon it because they thought we would be pleased to have the work of a Texas artist included in the exhibition.<sup>2</sup>

Miss Mechlin did not agree with such reasoning:

A principle is involved. . . . The Federation holds that its exhibitions must be of the highest standard, but it also maintains that any artist has the privilege of submitting work to our committee. . . . The Federation must be the judge of what pictures are sent out . . . the pictures which we sent must be shown, otherwise we would very soon be unable to secure the loan of pictures from the artists. . . . The painting was accepted in New York, it was not solicited in Texas nor delivered in Texas, we are entirely responsible for it.<sup>3</sup>

Mrs. Scheuber continued her objections, and finally after the painting had been shown at the Waco Cotton Palace

<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, August 20, 1915.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Personal letter, September 14, 1915.

and was with the exhibit showing at the University of Oklahoma, Miss Mechlin's resistance broke and she wrote:

I have no objection to your attempting to settle the embarrassing matter of the artist's painting . . . . providing you take the whole responsibility for doing so . . . . . If the artist will consent to the transfer to one of the other circuits, I will notify you where it is to be sent.<sup>1</sup>

In December, Mrs. Scheuber wrote to the artist:

As we have an exhibition of Texas paintings each season we feel it is not best to include a painting by a Texas artist in the exhibition of American paintings, therefore, I have suggested to Miss Mechlin that your painting be included in one of the other exhibitions which are being shown under the auspices of the American Federation of Arts. . . . . Our exhibition which opens with a private view on Tuesday evening, January fourth, promised to be of unusual interest this season. I should be so glad if you and any friend you wish to bring will attend the private view as my guests.<sup>2</sup>

No record is found that the artist in question attended the opening of the Fort Worth show. It is to be regretted that almost all Texas artists were condemned by this one decision, and were thereafter denied the privilege of having their work accepted by the committee of the Federation. Such is the tone of a letter which Miss Mechlin wrote the following year:

Do you know the writer of the enclosed note? If so . . . . explain to her . . . . that the works by Texas artists may be invited by any place where the

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<sup>1</sup>Personal Letter, November 30, 1915.

<sup>2</sup>Personal letter, December 18, 1915.



exhibition is shown, but that it would be exceedingly difficult to have them submitted to our jury in New York for selection.<sup>1</sup>

Technically, the jury committee of the American Federation of Arts selected the paintings to be sent out to the Texas circuit, yet Mrs. Scheuber had as much control over the selections as was possible. As early as June, 1911, Miss Mechlin wrote her: "I shall send you before long a catalogue of the pictures which are now in Buffalo, in order that you may look it over and see if a satisfactory selection cannot be again made in the same way."<sup>2</sup>

Reports also came to Fort Worth of the reception given the paintings in other cities. Before the 1913 show, this notice came from Miss Mechlin:

I consider this one of the best exhibitions we have ever sent out, but I must tell you that the New Orleans people are not satisfied with it. I am afraid that they have become somewhat "advanced" in New Orleans and want things that are somewhat startling. It is the spirit of the time, a rather unfortunate one I consider. We have so many sensations today that we are not satisfied with quiet enjoyment.<sup>3</sup>

After the close of that 1913 exhibition in Fort Worth, Mrs. Scheuber pled with the Federation for more important names in the next midwinter exhibit; her plea became a theme to which she held consistently until the

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, October 31, 1916.

<sup>2</sup>Personal letter, June 1, 1911.

<sup>3</sup>Personal letter, January 14, 1913.

last of her winter exhibitions closed in 1938.<sup>1</sup> In addition to the regular show, she wanted paintings borrowed from the museums. She felt that "at the present stage of art culture in Texas [1913] we should endeavor each year to have two strong pictures,"<sup>2</sup> and she wanted such names as Sargent, Inness, Whistler, Winslow Homer, DeForest Brush, Abbot Thayer, Tarbell, Cassatt, Dewing, Wyant, or Twachtman.<sup>3</sup> In 1914 Mrs. Scheuber reported to Miss Mechlin that in spite of a large attendance and much interest, the general opinion was that the exhibition was not so good as the previous one. She stated, "We must devise some plan by which we can have a few notable pictures each year."<sup>4</sup>

To which Miss Mechlin replied that she realized fully the value of having a notable picture in each display, but added, "I think too there is something to be said on the side of not getting the people into the habit of requiring sensation."<sup>5</sup>

She also took pains to discuss in detail some of the paintings in the exhibit at the time in Fort Worth:

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, pp. 87-88.

<sup>2</sup>Personal letter, December 1, 1913.

<sup>3</sup>Supra, p. 81.

<sup>4</sup>Personal letter, January 9, 1914.

<sup>5</sup>Personal letter, January 13, 1914.



I am sorry that you do not find the collection as interesting as in the previous years. Curiously enough it is the first collection we have sent to New Orleans with which they have been satisfied; about this collection they are enthusiastic. I know almost all the pictures and I think I am inclined in this case to agree with New Orleans. They are good painters and their works are representative. It may be that they are not the type of pictures you care for or your public cares for; but they are types and they are representative of the best contemporary work.<sup>1</sup>

Miss Mechlin seemed to be very open minded in judging the works of the various artists, and tried to justify the works to Mrs. Scheuber. Among other criticisms, she said, "We may not like George Bellow's 'Beach at Coney' but it does represent a modern movement in art at its best."<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Scheuber agreed that the average of the entire exhibit was higher than that of previous exhibitions, but insisted that the weakness lay in not having one canvas that would "take hold of one."<sup>3</sup> She still wanted pictures "big enough to impress the layman as well as the connoisseur."<sup>4</sup>

In assembling paintings for the next Texas circuit [1915], care was taken to assemble the very types that Mrs. Scheuber had called for. A painting by E. A. Abbey, "Spring," was to be borrowed from the National Gallery.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Personal letter, January 21, 1914.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

Also, in trying to please the taste of Mrs. Scheuber, Miss Mechlin had selected a group of excellent, moderately sized and moderately priced paintings by well-known artists. But when the list was sent to Mrs. Scheuber, she condemned the lot of them before looking at the pictures.

I have gone carefully over the list of the pictures and I am greatly disappointed. In suggesting that you add a group of eight or ten small canvases by good artists which we might be able to sell I did not mean that they should be sent in lieu of the more important pictures. . . . Seventeen of the forty-one pictures listed are priced at five hundred dollars or less. Isn't there any way of borrowing either from collectors, dealers, or galleries something worth while? There was general dissatisfaction in all the towns of the circuit last year with the exhibition and I believe that is the reason that New Orleans dropped out of the circuit. . . . Judging entirely from the list I believe this is the poorest exhibit that has been assembled for the Southern circuit.<sup>1</sup>

Miss Mechlin had tried very hard to please the critical taste of the Fort Worth manager, and expressed her unhappiness over the reception of her efforts:

I must confess that both Mr. Jones and I were considerably shocked to think that you did not think the exhibition promised well. We had prided ourselves on the fact that we were sending you the most interesting exhibition you had yet received. . . . I have looked over the catalogues of your past exhibitions with great care and I am inclined to think that the quality has not deteriorated. The first always has a glamour that subsequent efforts cannot rival. In fact I have one or two letters written to me by you after collections had been received saying that you think that particular collection the best that had yet come your way. . . . The pictures while not so expensive this year, are, I think

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, November 18, 1914.



you will find, just as good as ever, but the fact that they are of a size to be taken into ones home and of the price to suit the average well-to-do person's pocketbook ought to, it would seem, increase their merit.<sup>1</sup>

Although some members of the local Art Association acted as a committee to select a painting for the annual purchase from the exhibition sent out by the American Federation,<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Scheuber repeatedly wrote to Miss Mechlin for her advice in the matter, and received suggestions. However, in January, 1916, Miss Mechlin answered, "It is rather hard for me to advise you with regard to the purchase of a painting for your permanent collection."<sup>3</sup> Again, in January, 1917, she refused to give any advice, "You see I am really of the opinion that all of the pictures are worth while."<sup>4</sup>

Complaints from the Fort Worth Association about the quality of the exhibitions from the Federation continued. When, in the fall of 1916, the list of paintings was received in Fort Worth, the secretary immediately reported:

The exhibition should be strengthened by a least fifteen strong paintings. We hope you will be able to include several pictures by foreign artists. . . . It would be splendid if you could send us a Sorolla.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, November 30, 1914.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, pp. 46-47.

<sup>3</sup>Personal letter, January 19, 1916.

<sup>4</sup>Personal letter, January 20, 1917.

<sup>5</sup>Personal letter, November 18, 1916.

The power of Mrs. Scheuber's wishes must have been very great with the Federation, for on December 11, she received assurance from Miss Mechlin, "Mr. Francis C. Jones, Mr. Volk and Mr. Johansen are busy at present collecting the additional paintings for you in New York and will do their best to include . . . two or three by foreign artists.<sup>1</sup> When the exhibition opened in Fort Worth, a report went to the Federation that the canvases were average. Still the complaint was that each exhibition should include two strong pictures that public would respect. The continued dissatisfaction about the quality of the exhibitions must have been a trial to those who had selected the paintings with so much care, for Miss Mechlin wrote in 1917:

I am more sorry than I can say that you are not satisfied with the exhibition. I think under the circumstances it would be best for us not to send you another, as we were of the opinion that each painting was representative and that we were sending the exhibition to you at very moderate expense.<sup>2</sup>

When the 1917 Texas circuit of the Federation Exhibition closed in San Antonio, the paintings were not shipped by fast freight to New York as Miss Mechlin had instructed, but were sent by water over the Mallory Line. The Federation knew nothing about the water route being

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, December 11, 1916.

<sup>2</sup>Personal letter, January 20, 1917.



used until the pictures arrived in New York on May 22. Miss Mechlin was much upset and wrote to Fort Worth that the insurance taken out by the Federation did not cover water routes under "present conditions,"<sup>1</sup> and the insurance company had an additional charge of \$150, which was a very serious matter. She closed her letter with distress, "I was going to write you within a day or so about an exhibition for next season, but I feel that this is not a propitious time to talk about next year."<sup>2</sup>

Mrs. Scheuber also was astonished and answered:

It fills me with horror to think of the pictures being somewhere between Galveston and New York from April 7 to May 22 without any insurance. . . . I am afraid our circuit for next year is all to pieces. We will want an exhibition in Fort Worth.<sup>3</sup>

At that time, in 1917, all the towns in the Texas circuit were having difficulty in paying the expenses of the annual exhibitions from the Federation; in Fort Worth it was exceedingly hard to maintain the additional burden of purchasing a painting each year. Other towns began asking for cheaper exhibitions; change was in the air; the world was at war; but Fort Worth wanted another exhibition of oil paintings and insisted on a "strong exhibition."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, June 14, 1917.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Personal letter, June 25, 1917.

<sup>4</sup>Supra, pp. 163-166.

Miss Mechlin was alive to the need of a change, and expressed herself in plain words in her communication of August, 1917, "Would you not be willing for this once if the others would join in, to change the character of your exhibitions? Please note that I do not say the standard."<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless, the winter exhibitions of oil paintings from the Federation continued. The 1920 exhibit consisted of about thirty paintings furnished to the Federation by the Metropolitan Museum, with a supplementary group of ten sent to Fort Worth by the Macbeth Galleries. The shipment arrived late from Richmond, Virginia, and further delay was caused by the discovery of considerable damage in transit. The boxes were not opened until the express company's representative inspected them, and then temporary repairs to the frames were necessary before the exhibition could open.<sup>2</sup> Owing to the lateness in opening and closing the Fort Worth show, Galveston was forced to wait for its exhibition. Such disruption was not pleasing to the Federation, but Mrs. Scheuber wrote:

It is almost impossible to get the express company to send for anything. I do not think any organization

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, August 7, 1917.

<sup>2</sup>No attempt was made to repair the canvases. Mrs. Scheuber spent months trying to collect suitable damages. The Federation finally turned the matter over to the insurance company for a settlement.



could be so unreasonable as to complain at the delay in this day of the complete breakdown of our entire transportation system. The Federation must be brave indeed if it promises to deliver anything on schedule at this time. I should like to take you through the railroad yards of Fort Worth and show you cars that have been marooned at one end for weeks. Yes, even cars loaded with coal, and with a shortage of gas, and people freezing in their homes and willing to pay any price for coal. You know we burn natural gas in Fort Worth and owing to the shortage of materials the lines were not run into the new gas fields and consequently we are suffering for heat. All the large companies are shipping materials to the oil fields by express. Engines are being shipped by express which of course defeats the purpose.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to the confusion caused by the delays in transportation, there were other troubles with the exhibition of 1920. Previously, the Texas towns had paid only the cost of the express one way, but for the first time, Galveston and Fort Worth were expected to pay for the two long hauls from Richmond and back to Savannah. Misunderstandings caused the Federation unexpected expense for insurance, packing, and express. Catalogues, printed in Washington for the local exhibition, cost \$86 instead of the estimated \$40. Fees to the Federation for assembling, etc., amounted this year to \$200; in addition, there were local expenses to be met. Correspondence about the differences mounted. In a long letter, Miss Mechlin surveyed the causes of the dissension:

There are exhibitions to be had at less cost--very good and educational collections--but you have always

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, February 4, 1920.

said that you did not want these. Furthermore, you have always insisted that your exhibit must come to you at a particular time, the first of January, and therefore it has been impossible frequently to fit Fort Worth into a circuit. When you have exhibitions especially arranged for you at a particular time you would certainly expect to pay for them.<sup>1</sup>

In other messages, Miss Mechlin continued to berate Fort Worth and Galveston for failure to make satisfactory settlement of the exhibition expenses, and threatened to withhold any future exhibitions; by July of that year, 1920, she was willing to adjust the expense on a basis more in accord with the ideas of the Fort Worth secretary. The proposition offered seemed reasonable, and Mrs. Scheuber replied:

I thought you understood we had a continuous order for an exhibit each year. We want the strongest exhibition you can send us, as you suggest, made up of paintings by contemporary American artists, supplemented by a group of canvases lent by collectors.<sup>2</sup>

Fort Worth was also willing to modify its demand for the next January date, as evidenced in the same letter:

We prefer having the collection Tuesday, January 4 to February fourth. We could arrange for it from February 4 to March 4, if the latter date would fit in the circuit better. While we want to cooperate in the work in every way and will be glad to do anything you want us to I believe it will be best for you to manage the Texas circuit from your office. You know in the beginning when we managed it entirely there was not any confusion, but as soon as a portion of the arrangements was made from Washington and the other from Fort Worth there was some

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, March 29, 1920.

<sup>2</sup>Personal letter, July 31, 1920.



confusion. On the whole, I believe it is best for each association to come directly in contact with the main office.<sup>1</sup>

For years Mrs. Scheuber in Fort Worth and Miss Mechlin in Washington continued to disagree over the quality of the exhibitions sent by the Federation. Each seemed to have the highest regard for the other's ability, and frequently expressed in writing a real friendship for the other. Nevertheless, they battled like veterans and each seemed to enjoy a worthy opponent. In preparation for the exhibition of 1924, Mrs. Scheuber sent the following telegram to Miss Mechlin in December, 1923:

The exhibition outlined is entirely too weak. Unless it can be strengthened by the addition of at least six notable pictures by our best artists, pictures to be returned to owners at close of our exhibition, we will not want it.<sup>2</sup>

The answer, which came by wire the following day, was equally clear, "You misjudge quality proposed exhibition all fine strong paintings more desirable new artists. If you prefer names rather than good works wire and we will not send collection."<sup>3</sup> Again on December the twenty-seventh, Miss Mechlin sent a telegram, "Have been able to secure four important paintings collection shipped from New York today!"<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Telegram, December 17, 1923.

<sup>3</sup>Telegram, December 18, 1923.

<sup>4</sup>Telegram, December 27, 1923.

The continued complaints from Fort Worth that no important names were represented in the exhibitions no doubt gave Miss Mechlin an opportunity to wonder about the quality of reception that Fort Worth gave the works of art sent out by the Federation. In 1926, she wrote of the exhibit in Houston:

On the opening day there were 12,000 visitors, and on the second Sunday 17,000. About sixty important paintings and bronzes were sold in about ten days totaling over \$50,000.00. Why can't we approximate this in Fort Worth?<sup>1</sup>

A membership campaign conducted by the American Federation of Arts in 1922 was used by the Fort Worth Art Association to draw the attention of the public to all forms of art activities, and particularly to the permanent collection owned by the local group. In a southern territory of twelve states, Fort Worth won second place, securing 118 members to the Federation. As each member was to receive the official publication, the American Magazine of Art, it was felt that the Fort Worth Art Association had taken a decided step forward. Mrs. James W. Swayne, charter member of the Association, led the membership drive. In opening the campaign, the editors of both the Fort Worth Record and the Fort Worth Star-Telegram broadcast ten minute radio messages announcing the campaign and its objects. Much favorable newspaper publicity aided

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, January 25, 1926.



the enterprise. Using the activity as a measuring stick of public interest in art, the Association was very pleased with results. Two years later, in 1924, when the Federation was planning another membership drive, the Fort Worth secretary asked that any such effort be delayed, as the Fort Worth Art Association was planning a membership campaign during the winter exhibition. Mrs. Scheuber also mentioned in her letter to the Federation in December, 1924, that Fort Worth had been feeling the rebound from the oil boom of the previous year, and that drives of various kinds were meeting with doubtful success.

During the years when the American Federation of Arts was sending the winter exhibitions to Fort Worth, the business of making arrangements for them was the main topic of correspondence between the two organizations. Yet there was in those letters much of interest about art in general, with its development in Fort Worth a specific concern. Her position as librarian and the wide scope of her activities in civic life brought Mrs. Scheuber into contact with both the business element and the society life of Fort Worth. Her letters through the years are a history of the social and economic life of her times. Continually in her letters runs the thread of comment of the activities at the Library. "I could not attend the

reception. Saturday is a busy day at the Library."<sup>1</sup> "We have been simply inundated with work."<sup>2</sup> Each year, when urged to attend the convention of the American Federation of Arts, she replied that it would be impossible for her to attend. As early as 1912, she had been invited to appear as speaker, and was invited again and again. In 1919, Miss Mechlin sent letter after letter urging the Fort Worth secretary to attend the meeting at the Metropolitan Museum:

Surely by now you have a sabbatical year! Furthermore, now is the time that you can render very tangible and real assistance.

Now we want your help; we want the benefit of your experience. We want you to come to us and speak at the Convention on the morning of the second day when the subject will be the work of the Federation. We want your suggestions and criticisms.<sup>3</sup>

Although Mrs. Scheuber did not attend the conventions, the Fort Worth Art Association was represented at various times by other members. Mrs. Ida L. Turner, Mrs. M. P. Bewley, and Mrs. J. D. Collett were among those attending the conventions.

After many years of correspondence with Miss Mechlin and Miss Helen Cambell, as well as others of the Federation, Mrs. Scheuber finally made a personal visit to the offices in Washington in 1928. The officers were

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, April 14, 1913.

<sup>2</sup>Personal letter, December 2, 1912.

<sup>3</sup>Personal letter, March 4, 1919.



were delighted with her. It was about this time that Miss Mechlin was contemplating a visit to Texas, but each time the trip was on her schedule, something prevented her coming. At last, in 1931, the long deferred visit took place. Mrs. Scheuber worked for weeks arranging a Texas circuit for Miss Mechlin's lectures. This person or that place could not be slighted. A dinner and a reception was tendered her while she was in Fort Worth, and in return she gave two lectures. The bond of friendship between the two women grew firmer, and continued until the death of Mrs. Scheuber in 1944.

With the opening of the new Fort Worth gallery in 1939, Mrs. Scheuber had already resigned as Secretary of the Association, and Miss Mechlin had left the Federation in 1933.<sup>1</sup> Somehow the glory departed from the relationship between the Fort Worth Art Association and American Federation of Arts when these two strong women left the organizations which they had built; and the purely business basis of the present relationship lacks the personal feeling of those first years. However, Miss Helen Cambell and Miss Florence Berryman, both of the Federation offices, have been friends of the Fort Worth Association, and can recall many stories told them about Fort Worth by Miss Mechlin.

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<sup>1</sup>Miss Leila Mechlin was arranging exhibitions in 1937. She died in 1949.

CHAPTER IX  
INFLUENCE OF THE ASSOCIATION

Three policies of the Fort Worth Association which were initiated in the first year of its existence acted not only as a pattern for activities in the next forty years but served to inspire groups in Texas and other states. In bringing contemporary American art to Texas, in purchasing works from the shows, and in offering exhibition space to Texas artists, a great many services were performed for the public and the producing artists. One of the results was the growing influence of the Fort Worth Art Association, which was beginning to be recognized as the center of the art movement in Texas.

The story of art activities in Fort Worth was much publicized in newspapers and magazines. Already mentioned were notices in the Fort Worth Record,<sup>1</sup> the Century Magazine,<sup>2</sup> and the Washington, D. C., Evening Star.<sup>3</sup> The greatest amount of national publicity came from the offices of the American Federation of Arts, in letters to various art organizations over the nation, and in its new publication,

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, pp. 16, 17.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, p. 30.

<sup>3</sup>Supra, p. 32.



Art and Progress. The magazine first mentioned Fort Worth in its second issue, dated December, 1909,<sup>1</sup> when the first exhibition of American art was being shown in the gallery. In the following year, four articles appeared mentioning the activities of the Fort Worth gallery. The long account of activities connected with children's visits to the gallery has already been mentioned.<sup>2</sup> Other articles appeared from time to time in the publications of the American Federation of Arts, one entitled "Fort Worth as a Background for Art,"<sup>3</sup> written by Miss Mechlin in 1931, after her visit to Fort Worth.<sup>4</sup>

Authors of books about famous paintings began writing for information about some of the best-known works in the Fort Worth collection. Photographs of four paintings were furnished the author of a book, What Pictures to See in America, published in 1916.<sup>5</sup> Following the distribution of the book, requests came frequently, with money enclosed, for colored post cards of the paintings.

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43. <sup>1</sup>Anonymous, "Notes," Art and Progress, I (1909),

<sup>2</sup>Supra, pp. 37-38.

<sup>3</sup>Anonymous, "Fort Worth as a Background for Art," American Magazine of Art, IV (1931), 65.

<sup>4</sup>Supra, p. 176.

<sup>5</sup>Lorinda Munson Bryant, What Pictures to See in America (New York: John Lane Company, 1915), pp. 1-79.

No such reproductions have ever been issued by the Fort Worth Association. Lawrence Park was another writer who requested information for his publication.<sup>1</sup> Fort Worth was mentioned by Lloyd Goodrich in his book about Eakins.<sup>2</sup> Walter Pach mentioned Fort Worth as the owner of "The Swimming Hole" in his book, Ananias, or the False Artist.<sup>3</sup>

No little of the prestige which came to the early Art Association was due to the title "Fort Worth Museum of Art" which was used in the years before 1938 to designate the Fort Worth gallery. The idea being firmly planted abroad that Fort Worth had a museum, art galleries and museums over the nation began regular requests for catalogues and publications. Omaha, Cincinnati, and Buffalo were among those requesting this service in 1911 and 1912; a climax was reached with the deluge of inquiries during the Centennial Show of 1949.<sup>4</sup> Requests in 1950 came from the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the Brooklyn Museum, and others of similar importance.

Perhaps the first notice of the art activity in Fort Worth came from New Orleans. The Art Association

<sup>1</sup>Lawrence Park, Gilbert Stuart (New York: W. E. Rudge, 1926).

<sup>2</sup>Lloyd Goodrich, Thomas Eakins, His Life and Work (New York: Whitney Museum of America, 1933).

<sup>3</sup>Walter Pach, Ananias, or the False Artist (New York: Harper Brothers, 1928). Supra, p. 64.

<sup>4</sup>Supra, pp. 125-128.



was eagerly awaiting the first Exhibition of American Paintings after the close of the initial showing in Fort Worth in 1909-10. William Woodward, Chairman of the Exhibit Committee, wrote concerning the shipping arrangements and other matters. He concluded his letter by saying, "We are delighted to think that another art center has arisen to help us bring good art collections South. We expect to cooperate with you often."<sup>1</sup>

Soon after the publication of stories of the Fort Worth activities in art, appeals for assistance came from cities over the continent. A long letter about the furnishings of the new gallery was written to the Tacoma Art League in 1913.<sup>2</sup> With only a short experience in exhibiting, furnishing a gallery, and routing circuits, the Fort Worth Association was in a position to offer advice to many other ambitious associations.

An interesting letter of congratulation and inquiry came from Mrs. Cyrus E. Perkins when the Grand Rapids Art Association learned of a gift of photographs which the Metropolitan Museum had recently made to Fort Worth.<sup>3</sup> She said, in part:

I want to tell you that some of the young Art Associations of Michigan, and especially this one at

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, January 21, 1910.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, pp. 27, 28, 29.

<sup>3</sup>Supra, pp. 135, 136.

Grand Rapids, are very envious of the gift received by you from the Metropolitan Museum. I wrote to Miss Mechlin for the reason for your Association being so favored. She replied that they considered that you had accomplished more for Art, not only in your city, but also in your state than any other Society. Now that is high praise, and personally I wish to congratulate you for the work you have done . . . .<sup>1</sup>

After describing the work of the Grand Rapids Association, the letter continued:

Can you extend your good work way up North, and tell us what more we can do? How shall we interest the two extremes of society? So far the middle class, if I may put it that way, are the ones who have responded. Will you please send your Constitution and advice?<sup>2</sup>

A similar letter came from Norfolk, Virginia, signed, Mrs. Lucien Stark:

I feel . . . . perfectly unable to express my appreciation of your interest and labor. Your letter is replete with just the things I wanted to know and has given me more courage in the work I have undertaken in bringing the "Fellowship Exhibition" to Norfolk than anything else. It is a very expensive job but I believe from what you say we will do it successfully. . . . I am eagerly awaiting the catalogue you promised me. I am lost in admiration of what your gallery has accomplished and keen to see what we can do. I think you may be repaid a little for your trouble by the knowledge that you have encouraged and stimulated our committee.<sup>3</sup>

The Spokane Art Association had evidently received much helpful advice, as will be noted in this communication from Mrs. T. M. Hodgman, in 1925:

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, February 13, 1912.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Personal letter, February 18, 1915.



Your very helpful letter was received in time to give us many suggestions for the conduct of the exhibition which you had in your Museum last January. . . . We followed your plan as to admission charges and were very well satisfied with it. . . . We were fortunate in having Vachel Lindsay, the poet and artist, as a lecturer on two occasions and the Gallery was crowded both times. . . . It will be a long time before we have reached the place which you have attained but we feel that a good start has been made. I shall keep your letter for reference, there are so many helpful suggestions in it.<sup>1</sup>

Another request came from Spokane on May 31, 1931, asking for advise about reorganizing the Art Association.

Closer to Fort Worth geographically, other towns in Texas desired to participate with Fort Worth in conducting the Federation exhibitions. Lack of organized groups did not mean a lack of interest; rather, the interest acted as a spur to the organization of special art groups. In each place, as in Fort Worth, there was more eagerness than money. The first hardship of the other towns was the lack of a gallery or even a fire-proof building for the exhibitions. Another matter for concern was the financial responsibility for the show and the purchase of a painting.

When the secretary reported to the Fort Worth Association in June, 1910, that the American Federation was ready to arrange another exhibition, she was instructed to accept it, and to attempt the formation of a Texas circuit. San Antonio and Houston joined in forming the circuit,

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, October 23, 1925.

and thus lowered the cost. El Paso was eager, but not ready to undertake such an expense. Austin joined in the third year, and Waco came later to secure the show for the Cotton Palace. After some years, Denton, Huntsville, and Haskell presented the exhibitions.

The circuit was not maintained as an unbroken unit over a period of years. For various reasons some of the cities dropped out at times, but Fort Worth continued to hold the exhibitions through 1937.<sup>1</sup> In connection with the circuit, there are many interesting letters in the files. They tell the story of the art development of each town in a graphic way.

The San Antonio Woman's Club had read of the first Fort Worth exhibition in Art and Progress;<sup>2</sup> in August, 1910, they thought they might want it; later, they were certain, and arranged for an exhibition date early in 1911. While making preparations in November, 1910, Mrs. M. J. Bleim, President of the Woman's Club, wrote, "Our

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<sup>1</sup>During all those years the winter exhibition of oil paintings was sent by the American Federation of Arts, except in 1934. In that year the National Academy of Design, source of most of the paintings, failed to hold its winter exhibit. Fort Worth, with other Texas cities, joined a circuit arranged by the Whitney Museum.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, p. 178.



people are very much interested in the Exhibit. We have never had anything like it in San Antonio before."<sup>1</sup>

The place for the exhibition was to be the auditorium of the Library. An inquiry came from the Librarian, Benjamin Wyche, about the hanging of the pictures. He drew a chart of the room, showing the location of seats to be removed, and asked for assistance. Mrs. Scheuber sent him a detailed chart, showing a proposed location in inches for each picture to be hung. Later, she received thanks for the diagram, with the statement that it was not difficult to hang them correctly. In concluding the business after the exhibition, Mrs. Ida Schasse of the Woman's Club, wrote to Mrs. Scheuber several times expressing the encouragement felt for the formation of an "Art League." She also wrote, "I wish to thank you in the name of the Woman's Club for your kindness in manifold ways assisting us in the Exhibition of American Paintings. We are deeply sensible of your thoughtfulness."<sup>2</sup>

Planning for another year, Mrs. Bleim corresponded with Mrs. Scheuber:

There is some discussion as to whether the Woman's Club shall give it in conjunction with the Carnegie Library

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, November 31, 1910.

<sup>2</sup>Personal letter, January 29, 1911.

as last year, or whether we shall form an Art Association and let them bring it. In any case, the Carnegie Library will have to cooperate, as that is the only place in which to have the exhibition. Will you be kind enough to send me any data you may have regarding the formation of an Art Association? I would much appreciate anything along that line and especially how you conduct your work in the Fort Worth Art Association, dues, and so on.<sup>1</sup>

It is apparent from the San Antonio letters that an art organization was effected, and that the troubles of that group were similar to those encountered elsewhere. Mrs. Ethel Drought, evidently President of the Art League, told of the developments in a 1916 letter:

We owe R. J. Onderdonk over two hundred dollars on a picture. We are going to do what we think is very unbecoming for an Art League to do, give a big card party with lots of prizes. How much space would the exhibit require? For we must find a place to put it. Our library auditorium has the chairs fastened to the floor and it is some expense to remove and replace them.<sup>2</sup>

Mrs. Drought continued her report on December thirteenth:

It is very uphill work. We may try having the exhibition free and begging some on the outside . . . . . We were not able to make enough at the card party to pay for all of it.<sup>3</sup>

Seven years later there came a discouraging note:

We will not be able to take the Federation pictures this year. The Carnegie Hall where we have always shown them has been turned into a reference room with book shelves along the walls. I have tried other places but none will do. I am hoping that another year we will have some kind of a gallery but until then we can do nothing.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, September 5, 1911.

<sup>2</sup>Personal letter, October 10, 1916.

<sup>3</sup>Personal letter, December 13, 1916.

<sup>4</sup>Personal letter, October 1, 1923.



Houston joined Fort Worth in the second winter of the Federation. Miss Julia Ideson, librarian, was the first person in that city to be interested in having such an exhibition. At the time of the first show she had wanted all practical information about express costs, tickets, etc. "The Library," she wrote, "has not a suitable room, and a very unsuitable income."<sup>1</sup> She regretted her inability to undertake the exhibition single-handed, and declared, "If you contemplate doing this next year . . . . I will get it in Houston or die in the attempt."<sup>2</sup> Her attempts must have been effective, since the Houston Public School Art League wrote a letter in July, 1910, and accepted the responsibility for the exhibition the following winter.

As Mrs. Scheuber was the organizer of the circuit for the exhibition, she felt liable for the pictures, not only while they were in Fort Worth, but in other towns. During the first Houston show, she received word from the Secretary of the League, O. U. Arnold, saying "I am sorry you had that uneasy hour over the paintings. They are well, guarded, in a fire-proof building."<sup>3</sup> In this year, 1911, the name of the Houston art group was changed to Houston Art League.

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, January 20, 1910.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Personal letter, February 8, 1911.

When Houston temporarily dropped out of the circuit in 1913, it was rumored that dissatisfaction with the character of the exhibit caused the rupture, but letters on file state another cause of the action. Mrs. John McClellan wrote that Houston did not want the exhibit so late in the spring; members of the art group felt that they should be the first to have the exhibit when it was sent from New Orleans in December.

Lack of a permanent home was a source of concern, as Mrs. Fannie W. Volch complained to Mrs. Scheuber in 1914, "You know we are handicapped in not having a home. Every year, as the exhibition time approaches, there is a despairing search for temporary quarters."<sup>1</sup>

In June, 1919, Houston declined to have the Federation exhibition on account of not having a room available for showing pictures so large. In November of that year, Miss Ideson, who had declared back in 1910 that she would get the exhibit in Houston or "die in the attempt,"<sup>2</sup> made the report for the American Association of Museums, and wrote, "The Houston Museum can be hardly said to exist, nevertheless I suppose it might as well be left in the directory as Mr. Brock, who is Supt. of the City Parks is interested in it and hopes to make it a reality some day."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, January 11, 1914.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, p. 186.

<sup>3</sup>Personal letter, November 15, 1919. Evidently Mrs. Scheuber collected information for the American Association of Museums. The museum was actually not opened until 1924.



Austin became one of the most faithful members of the Texas circuit of the Federation exhibitions, but that city was unable to secure an engagement the first year of the circuit. In September, 1910, Mayor A. P. Woolridge was interested in having the exhibit for Austin and referred the matter to others; on October twenty-second, a telegram from Austin requested the exhibit for that city. Miss Leila Mechlin of the American Federation requested in letters of October sixth and November sixteenth that Austin be included in the Texas circuit. However, Mrs. Scheuber had already arranged the schedule, and Austin was not included until the next year. Mrs. Scheuber's letter to Miss Mechlin explained:

I had a letter from Mr. Woolridge, the mayor of Austin, whom I know very well, regarding the exhibition. I wrote him at length sending the list of pictures together with a copy of the St. Louis catalogue in which they were listed but have not heard anything further from him. We have never had a definite answer from Galveston. It would not surprise me if both Galveston and Austin at the last moment would decide that they want the exhibition. If they should the lesson would be a good one and it would teach them to act more promptly another year.<sup>1</sup>

However, by October, 1911, Miss Margaret Burroughs, President of the Art League, secured the exhibition for Austin, in spite of trouble in finding a fire-proof building. In 1913, she reported that Gregg House was not an entirely

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, October 17, 1910.

satisfactory location for the exhibition, as it was used for Sunday School on Sundays. Yet Austin seemed to welcome the exhibition, as Miss Burroughs explained:

We want to purchase Waugh's "Gulf Stream" to start a public gallery for Austin . . . we hope to do so in the near future in connection with a public library. In the meantime it will hang in the University library. In every way it would be a splendid place to advertise Mr. Waugh and I hope he can let us have it . . . We have \$150 from only two sources already and we have made no other solicitations as yet.<sup>1</sup>

Another matter than lack of exhibition space almost caused the Austin group to retire from the circuit in 1915. At the close of the Austin showing of the oil paintings, the exhibit was packed and sent as usual to San Antonio. Extensive damage was reported by those who unpacked the boxes; canvases and frames were damaged and many glasses broken. Julian Onderdonk reported minutely on each item. Nails instead of screws had been used in fastening the uprights to the frames. Packing cushions had been nailed to the outside of the frames, which, in the main, caused the damage. It was evident that an inexperienced packer had been hired.

All such disturbances were reported to Mrs. Scheuber as manager of the circuit. It was she who arranged for an equitable division of express charges, for the payment of

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, March 31, 1913.



damages, etc. Also she gave advice on the number of catalogues needed, and had all the necessary printing done in Fort Worth, and even by mail planned for the spacing and arrangement of the paintings to be hung on the walls.

In connection with the Austin exhibitions, Mrs. Scheuber wrote a lengthy letter pleading with the American Federation of Arts to void a proposed charge of ten dollars to those groups which were not chapters of the Federation.

In our own circuit New Orleans, Houston, and Fort Worth are already members . . . and I feel sure that San Antonio will want to join but I very much fear that Austin would decline the exhibition as it carried with it an additional expense of ten dollars. As I understand the situation the work in Austin is undertaken by a few women who have not any fund to depend upon and a lukewarm public to draw their patronage from.<sup>1</sup>

Her plea continued to grow more eloquent, as she continued in the same letter:

Still, Austin, is important strategically in the campaign for art education in Texas. It is the capital. Could you but see the historic pictures and portraits in the Capitol Building, a building that cost a million dollars and which is fairly good architecturally, you could understand my anxiety not to discourage anything that has a tendency to cultivate the art perception of the people.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, June 11, 1911.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

Her interest in youth compelled her to conclude with these words:

Then, too, Austin is the seat of the University with a student body of 2,500 and it is most important that these young people, many of whom are from the small towns, ranches, and farms, should have the privilege of seeing good pictures during the formative period of their lives. Of course the fee is so small that it seems absurd to mention it.<sup>1</sup>

Other towns in Texas stirred with ambition when the Federation exhibitions traveled over Texas. In 1911 interested groups in Waxahachie, Brownwood, and Abilene wrote for information concerning the exhibition. Corsicana inquired in 1913. But either the lack of financial backing or the strict requirement of a fire-proof building prohibited these cities, as it would have many others, from securing the show. Mrs. Scheuber and the secretary of the Federation engaged in much correspondence over plans for a small exhibit especially for just such towns, but so far as is known, none was arranged.

Just as Fort Worth had done back in 1904,<sup>2</sup> Miss Alice P. Thompson of the El Paso Woman's Club wanted to know in 1912 how to borrow one painting for a showing.<sup>3</sup> She wrote:

From New York I have received a letter referring me to you saying you could suggest a way. We have never

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, p. 7.

<sup>3</sup>Supra, p. 122.



had a great picture here and I am sure there are many who never saw one and we would like to beg, borrow or \_\_\_\_\_ one for this day.<sup>1</sup>

In July, 1915, Mr. Edward Bellamy of Waco began inquiry of Mrs. Scheuber concerning an exhibit for the Cotton Palace. He hoped that in view of the rather difficult times of the past year an exhibit of water colors might be secured instead of the expensive show of oil paintings; or a collection of colored prints, or a collection of Japanese prints. He mentioned that the Waco visitors were "for the most part untrained to matters of fine perception in art . . . . the Cotton Palace is certainly a fine field for missionary work in these matters."<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, he was sent the same exhibit of oil paintings that later came to Fort Worth, and Miss Mechlin of the Federation reported that although it was viewed by 270,000 visitors, not a single sale was made. Waco continued with the exhibitions for several years.

Galveston was another Texas city wishing to join the circuit. The Art League was founded in 1914, and members immediately wanted the exhibition for the coming year. But, they wrote, the townspeople and the members of the League were so exhausted from a series of campaigns

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, January 28, 1912.

<sup>2</sup>Personal letter, July 16, 1915.

to raise money that they were reluctant to undertake the work. However, Miss Frances C. Kirk, supervisor of art in the public schools, hoped so much that she would be able to engineer the exhibit in the spring of 1915 that she wired Mrs. Scheuber<sup>1</sup> to have 500 catalogues printed at her risk. Later, when the hope for the exhibition was gone, she sent a check for \$20 to cover the cost of the printing. Such incidents are worth noting because they show that the progress of art education in the state was not an easy one. The League was able in other years to secure the exhibition, and by the year 1919, A. T. Webster, president of the League, reported that two pictures had been bought, with a total value of \$700. The exhibitions were held in the Rosenberg Library. The 1920 exhibition<sup>2</sup> was reported to be entirely free to the public, as a large attendance was the aim.

One great evidence of the widespread growth of art education in Texas is that in 1923, a woman's club in Haskell arranged to show the Federation exhibition of American paintings, and managed to make the showing free. This was undoubtedly a large undertaking.

One may wonder why the Dallas Art Association, oldest in the state, did not join with other cities of

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<sup>1</sup>Telegram, December 25, 1914.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, p. 169.



Texas in showing exhibitions sent out by the American Federation of Arts, since Dallas members visited the Fort Worth exhibitions and frequently purchased paintings through the Fort Worth Art Association. One of the early reasons for this apparent neglect was hinted in a letter which Mrs. Scheuber wrote to the Dallas Association in 1912.<sup>1</sup> She mentioned that some of the Dallas group had told her the winter before that they could not hold an exhibition in their gallery in the winter because it was not heated; and suggested to them that gas heaters be installed until the Association was ready to install steam heat. When the Dallas Association joined the American Federation in 1916, Miss Mechlin hoped that the new chapter might be induced to take the exhibitions. But Mrs. Scheuber explained the futility of this hope, as she continued to do for many years:

I am afraid it will be impossible to induce Dallas to take the American Exhibit on account of the expense. The members of the Art Association feel that the Dallas Fair exhibition provides them with their main exhibition, free of expense to them each year, and therefore their best plan is to husband all their resources for the purchase of pictures for their permanent collection . . . . they are laboring under the added disadvantage of having the art gallery open only three days in the week.<sup>2</sup>

In spite of the failure of the Dallas Association to share in Fort Worth's favorite traveling exhibitions,

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, July 16, 1912.

<sup>2</sup>Personal letter, August 26, 1916.

there was always a friendly feeling between the two Associations. And this warmth of feeling existed between Fort Worth and all the towns of Texas. One of the conditions that seemed to draw the art groups together was the financial stress of the 1930's. As money became scarcer, feeling between the art leaders became more sympathetic. Many long and intimate letters tell of their efforts to maintain art programs without any money. The sentiment of all Texas art friends was expressed by Miss Eleanor Onderdonk, Curator of the Witte Museum<sup>1</sup> in San Antonio, when she wrote, "We are going to have to economize in every way this year and run on a smaller budget."<sup>2</sup> In keeping with practices of the depression years, she wrote again, "No one is buying tickets to anything except to benefit performances where they feel morally bound to, so that the hungry may eat."<sup>3</sup> Again, in 1934, "I agree with you that we should get together on exhibitions. Our trouble has been that we had not a penny for anything. This year, I understand, we are to be allotted \$250 for bringing exhibitions."<sup>4</sup> Dr. John W. Ankeney, director of

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<sup>1</sup>The Witte Museum had opened in 1926.

<sup>2</sup>Personal letter, June 17, 1931.

<sup>3</sup>Personal letter, December 15, 1931.

<sup>4</sup>Personal letter, August 18, 1934.



the Dallas Public Art Gallery, sympathized with Mrs. Scheuber in her troubles, "I can quite realize your conditions as they are about the same here."<sup>1</sup> Even the Texas Fine Arts Association shared in the general scarcity, as evidenced in this note, "The treasury of the Fine Arts Association is so empty that ghastly groans are finding their way to the outside world."<sup>2</sup>

However, by the year 1936, prospects of art improved in all the major cities in Texas except in Fort Worth, where the movement continued to lag. While San Antonio, Dallas, and Houston have for some years enjoyed the advantages of a museum,<sup>3</sup> Fort Worth has denied itself this pleasure. The one gallery maintained in the Library has been insufficient to contain many of the important exhibitions which have been shown in the other large cities. Not only in the matter of a building, but in the limitation of the staff to one regularly paid employee, the Fort Worth Art Association has been unable to render to the public the fullest services which are commonly the duties of a museum.

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, October 28, 1933.

<sup>2</sup>Personal letter, 1936.

<sup>3</sup>The Dallas Museum was opened in 1936; the Houston Museum, 1924; supra, p.187; Witte Museum, San Antonio, in 1926, supra, pp. 183-185.

However, the Art Association has a history of long service. In addition to its leadership in bringing to Texas the annual exhibitions of contemporary American paintings, the Association in its first year began an outstanding contribution in promoting creative art in Texas. The exhibition of works by Texas artists, held in the spring of each year, was begun in 1910 and held each year except 1921<sup>1</sup> until 1938,<sup>2</sup> when the old Library was demolished. Beginning in 1939, the West Texas shows<sup>3</sup> continued the tradition. Thus the Fort Worth Art Association has, with two pardonable exceptions, offered the producing artists of Texas forty annual exhibitions, a record untouched by any other museum in the state. Although no prizes were offered, every leading artist of Texas exhibited in the Fort Worth exhibitions from 1910 to 1937.

These exhibitions varied in length from two to four weeks, with attendance records showing that from one to two thousand and visitors came. Catalogues, or finding lists, were printed and sold for five or ten cents. Soon after the first exhibition, invitations were issued to the exhibiting artists. Entry blanks stated that a jury would examine the works submitted, and that all expense of

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, p. 52.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, pp. 86-87.

<sup>3</sup>Supra, pp. 119-121.



expressing the paintings would be borne by the Art Association. Such generosity was no doubt responsible for the large number of exhibits. In the last exhibition, 132 artists each showed one painting, while only one, Frank Reaugh,<sup>1</sup> showed two paintings. In addition twenty-one etchings and drawings and six pieces of sculpture were exhibited. While express charges originated in points all over Texas, shipping expenses were also paid to and from such distant points as Shreveport, St. Louis, Chicago, New York, and Lyme, Connecticut. In spite of the custom of charging a small fee for attendance at these exhibitions, as was customary during the winter exhibitions of American Painting, each of the Texas shows ended with a financial deficit.

It must not be supposed that the entrants in these shows were inexperienced or lacking in training. Entry blanks filled out by the artists listed the schools which they had attended, as well as other shows and museums in which they had previously exhibited. Many had studied in France, a few in Germany, Italy, and England. There were students of William Chase, Robert Henri, Kenyon Cox, Walter Shirlaw, Ralph Clarkson, and John Vanderpool. They had attended the Art Institute of Chicago; Art Students

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, p. 7, infra, p. 207.

League, New York; Woodstock School of Landscape Painting at Woodbury, Maine; Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, and other schools. They had exhibited in St. Louis, Chicago, Denver, Houston, and other places. One exhibit had been awarded a medal at the Columbian Exposition at Chicago. Many were members of the Salamagundi Club of New York. There were others with more varied backgrounds, but those mentioned were taken from the first ten shows.

Some of the exhibitors of that era bore names familiar to those students who have followed the history of painting in Texas: Dawson Dawson-Watson and E. Richardson Cherry of Houston; Marie Cronin of Palestine; R. J. Onderdonk and Julian Onderdonk of San Antonio; Thomas Brown, San Angelo; W. E. Bryan, Dublin; Emma Mendenhall and Blanche Sloat, Denton; Eve Fowler, Sherman; Boyer Gonzales, Galveston; John W. Jenkins and Mabel Brooks, Austin; E. G. Eisenlohr, Frank Reaugh, Olin H. Travis, Jerome Hill, Jessejo Eckford, Stella Elmendorf, James Blanding Sloan, and F. Frank Knott, of Dallas. Some of the Fort Worth artists were Will T. (Professor) McGee, Margaret Littlejohn, Murray P. Bewley, Dura Cockrell, Ella Ray Ledgerwood, and Mrs. G. W. Greathouse. Christina MacLean, S. P. Ziegler, and Royston Nave also represented Fort Worth, as did Sallie Blythe Mummert, who had formerly



painted in Dallas and Paris, Texas. Frank Klepper of McKinney also contributed regularly.

Some of the later exhibitors included Jose Arpa and Mary Bonner, San Antonio; James Chillman, Jr., Houston; Ella K. Mewhinney, Holland; J. B. Martin and Alexandre Hogue, Dallas; Blanche McVeigh, Evalene Sellors, Clinton King, and Eugenia Eberhardt of Fort Worth.

In connection with the exhibitions of Texas art, it seems appropriate to mention some of the Fort Worth artists of that period, and to give a local evaluation of their work. In a letter accompanying her 1912 report to Miss Florence Levy, editor of the American Art Annual, Mrs. Scheuber privately classified the Fort Worth artists as "earnest workers or mere dabblers."<sup>1</sup> This classification, timeless in its significance, did not indicate a lack of regard for the artists, as many of them were her personal friends. The Art Association depended upon the support of all the artists as well as the laymen in the organization; and their services, being specialized, were invaluable.<sup>2</sup> Yet there were a few artists who seemed to be favored in the spring exhibitions.

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, March 2, 1912.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, pp. 70-71.

One of those was Murray P. Bewley.<sup>1</sup> Some of his paintings usually hung with the permanent collection between the special exhibitions. Three of his paintings are listed in the 1928 Catalogue of Paintings. His "Portrait of My Mother"<sup>2</sup> is one of the most popular paintings in the permanent collection.

The Association was much interested in a young sculptor, Joseph Lorkowski, who exhibited for the first time in 1916, with an entry representing an Indian mounted on horseback. The work had been pronounced remarkable by Lorado Taft when he visited Fort Worth the previous year. Sponsored by the Art Association, Lorkowski studied with Hermon McNeil and also at the Pennsylvania Academy, winning several prizes. After service in World War I he was honored in 1920 with a show of his work in the gallery.<sup>2</sup> A bronze bas-relief by him may be seen in Fort Worth, marking the site of the early army post, Camp Worth.<sup>4</sup> Five

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<sup>1</sup>Son of the first President, Mrs. M. P. Bewley. The artist, during the years of the Texas exhibitions, was living in Paris, France, and elsewhere. He presented the first personal money gift to the Association. Supra, p. 131.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, p. 144.

<sup>3</sup>Supra, p. 148.

<sup>4</sup>The bronze tablet is placed on a granite boulder. The Mary Isham Keith Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution dedicated the marker in December, 1921.



casts from his handwere listed as part of the permanent collection of the Art Association.<sup>1</sup>

A third favored artist was Royston Nave, charter member and active worker of the Association.<sup>2</sup> He exhibited in the Texas shows and in others in the state, winning medals for his portraits in the Galveston exhibitions. One of his portraits was hung in the State Capitol.<sup>3</sup> After filling many commissions in Texas, Nave served two years overseas in the Field Artillery, and was discharged as Captain. He then took a studio in New York, where he was engaged in portrait painting for several years before returning to Texas. His one-man show at the Milch Galleries in 1920 brought favorable comment in the New York Times,<sup>4</sup> the New York Sun,<sup>5</sup> the Art Review International,<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Addenda, n. d., (probably 1931), pasted in the back of Catalogue of Paintings (Fort Worth: Fort Worth Museum of Art, 1928).

<sup>2</sup>Supra, pp. 21, 30, 36.

<sup>3</sup>While known as a painter who preferred portraits, this versatile artist also did sculpture, having studied under Pompeo Coppini. His portrait bust of Alexander Hogg was in 1938 reported to be a gift to the Art Association. His painting teachers were listed as Walt Kuhn, Lawton Parker, I. R. Wiles, and Robert Henri.

<sup>4</sup>New York Times, January 4, 1920.

<sup>5</sup>New York Sun, January 4, 1920.

<sup>6</sup>James Britton, "Royston Nave, A Texas Painter Embodying the Sweeping Spirit of the Great Southwest," Art Review International, n. d., probably 1919. Quoted in the foreword of Catalogue, Paintings by Royston Nave (New York: E. & A. Milch Co., 1920).

the American Art News,<sup>1</sup> and the Fort Worth Star Telegram.<sup>2</sup> Nave sent paintings from New York to the Fort Worth exhibitions from 1920 to 1926, the Art Association paying all the shipping charges. A few of his paintings are now owned in Fort Worth, and others may be seen in the Victoria, Texas, Public Library.

Clinton King, another Fort Worth artist who had studied in Paris, exhibited in the last few of the Texas exhibitions. He has since reached further distinction, and was honored with a showing of his work in the Gallery in 1946. His interest in the art activities of Fort Worth continues, as evidenced by his purchases of 1949.<sup>3</sup> Two of his works, "Bistro" and "Anita" are owned by the Association.

While the Fort Worth Art Association was the first to offer an exhibition to the producing artists of the state, it was soon followed in 1912 by the Art Department of the Dallas Woman's Forum. Whether the early shows of the Forum included any artists outside of the city of Dallas is not known, but later catalogues show that a few artists from outside the city were contributing to the exhibits. As it was the desire of the Association not to

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<sup>1</sup>Anonymous, "Royston Nave at Milch Galleries," American Art News, January 3, 1920, pp. 15-21.

<sup>2</sup>Fort Worth Star Telegram, January 11, 1920.

<sup>3</sup>Supra, p. 105.



conflict with the Dallas exhibition, the date for the Fort Worth show was arranged to follow the Forum show in April. It became the custom for the two shows to exhibit many of the same works, as any promising artist showing in the Dallas exhibition was promptly invited to send his work to the Fort Worth show, if not already invited. Mrs. Scheuber, feeling that the month of May was too warm for an exhibition in Texas, finally, in 1920, changed the opening date of the Fort Worth show to March. In this year joint invitations were sent out by the two groups, and costs of express, etc. were shared. Afterwards, when closing the accounts, Mrs. Y. B. Dowell, chairman of the Art Department of the Woman's Forum, wrote her thanks to Mrs. Scheuber, stating that this was the best exhibition by Texas artists ever shown in Dallas. Evidently the Woman's Forum did not continue to pay express charges for the exhibition, for, in 1928, Miss Vivian Aunspaugh of the Forum wrote that for the first time the Forum was considering payment of the shipping charges.

From all accounts of the shows hung in the Fort Worth gallery, there was nothing but praise for the manner of exhibiting. The gallery itself was admirably equipped for an exhibit.<sup>1</sup> It was not necessary, as it was in other towns in Texas, to hunt each year for a place to hang the

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, pp. 26, 27, 28.

paintings.<sup>1</sup> An atmosphere conducive to appreciation marked all exhibitions in the gallery, and the spring exhibitions of Texas art, as well as the winter shows of American paintings,<sup>2</sup> received praise from those qualified to criticize.

One of those who did not fail to express appreciation for Mrs. Scheuber's efforts was Miss Vivian Aunspaugh, leader of an art group in Dallas. The following estimation from her is typical, "No one in Texas has made more effort in behalf of the Texas artists than yourself, and I believe there is no one in the state more sincerely interested in the progress of the young Texas Students."<sup>3</sup>

Another Dallas artist who appreciated the Fort Worth shows was J. Frank Knott, of the Dallas Morning News, who wrote to Mrs. Scheuber:

I had hoped till the last minute to finish a portrait of Mrs. Knott for the Annual Exhibition of the Fort Worth Museum of Art, but illness on her part prevented my doing so. I appreciate very much your kind invitations to these exhibitions and regret that I am not represented this year. In this connection I must say that I have always liked the real metropolitan manner in which your exhibitions are handled.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, pp. 182-183.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, p. 40.

<sup>3</sup>Personal letter, September 18, 1914.

<sup>4</sup>Personal letter, May 8, 1915.



Among the Dallas artists in the first quarter of the century there were many interesting personalities, none more unique than the self-taught painter, John Breckenridge Martin, who signed his many letters to Mrs. Scheuber as J. B. Martin. Employed for a time as a caretaker and sort of Curator of the art works of the Dallas Art Association, he began a series of friendly letters in 1911, and continued to write at intervals through the years. When he was seventy-seven years of age in 1934, Martin's paintings suddenly became popular. Invited to send works to the Fort Worth exhibition, he replied:

I have commissions now and have decided to cease exhibiting for the time being. . . . At the same time I realize that you have done more to promote art in the interest of the state Artists than anyone else living. My loyal friendship will live on.<sup>1</sup>

He did not fail to remember that the Fort Worth Art Association had been exhibiting his work for many years.

I am mailing you a news clipping somewhat amusing to me As the impression that Mr. Thomas Benton has discovered me For Past twenty years by your generous kindness you honored me in your Annual Exhibitions As you have to the Texas groups of artists I often relate that you have done more to aid the Texas artists than anyone living I have repeated this so often have decided I have ever told the truth. Since this Benton racket I have parted with some 35 of my pictures Now have six commissions in Dallas and one in Fort Worth and two in Greenville. Thanking you for past generous favors, and sincere very best wishes.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, April 7, 1934.

<sup>2</sup>Personal letter, January 31, 1935.

Another Dallas artist who showed a fondness for Mrs. Scheuber and her exhibitions for Texas artists was Frank Reaugh, painter of Southwestern cattle scenes. Like Martin, Reaugh had already lived beyond the mature years of life when he wrote in 1936:

I am awfully sorry I cannot accomodate you with the Southwestern pictures. Everything I have is engaged for the Centennial here in Dallas. . . . The series "Twenty-four Hours with the Herd" is to be shown in another building, where a room is being fitted up. . . . I have always aimed to have something at your annual show. It is the best managed show in the country, and it is the only mixed show at which I exhibit. I much prefer a one-man show where I will not be bothered with "modernistic" neighbors. . . . I want to come over and see you, and expect to some time this spring. If I could sell out in Dallas I would like to move to Fort Worth. It is more western than Dallas, and much more of a cow town.<sup>1</sup>

There is no doubt that the interest which the Fort Worth public showed in the gallery activities of the era of the 1940's has been a direct harvest of the seeds sown by Mrs. Scheuber and her friends of the early days of the Art Association. The long years of working with children,<sup>2</sup> of bringing contemporary exhibits from the outside, and of offering exhibition space to the artists of Texas, all combined to produce a patronage at once curious and interested without being gullible. In correspondence with Henry Wellington Wack, donor of several paintings to the

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, April 14, 1936.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, pp. 36-39; 66-67; 103-106.



Fort Worth Art Association, Mrs. Scheuber mentioned the trend in 1927:

Our Seventeenth Annual Exhibition of Paintings by Texas Artists is now on at the Museum. It is a very creditable show and the interest in it is keen. It is splendid to see the many young men who visit the gallery and study the pictures in marked contrast to the people who used to visit the gallery, cast a cursory glance about and leave in a few minutes.

Mr. Dudley Crafts Watson, the extension lecturer at the Art Institute, Chicago, during a visit here last winter remarked that he was greatly impressed with the earnest interest of both the adults and children who visited our gallery in contrast to the visitors to the Art Institute, Chicago.<sup>1</sup>

This earnest interest of the visitors who continue to come to the gallery is perhaps the sign of its greatest influence. Not in cities far away from Fort Worth, nor in other town of the state, but in Fort Worth, its home, the gallery has been an appreciable influence in the cultural life since 1910.

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<sup>1</sup>Personal letter, May 18, 1927.

## CHAPTER X

### SUMMARY

The history of Fort Worth art dates back to 1892, when a charter was granted for a library and an art gallery. The first formal art organization, known as the Art League, was organized in 1899, but was short-lived. Members of this organization continued their efforts in various ways after the Library was opened in 1901 until the successful organization of the Fort Worth Art Association in February, 1910. The one inactive year of the Association was in 1938, when the library facilities were housed in a store building, and the new library was under construction. With the move into the new building in 1939, the Art Association was reorganized. The establishment of a gallery in the Library was the coup d'etat of the energetic group, making Fort Worth for many years the only city in Texas with its own public exhibition hall. Art was shown in the corridors of the Library from 1902 until 1909, when the first comprehensive exhibition of contemporary American art was held, and after that date the gallery was open every day in the week. Admission was free except during the two special exhibitions, the winter show of American art and the exhibition by Texas



artists in the spring. All exhibitions are free at the present time.

The first comprehensive exhibition was held in 1909; since that date, the Association has annually exhibited the contemporary art of America. Beginning in 1910 the Association has encouraged the artists of Texas with exhibitions of their work, although, during the past ten years, the exhibitions have been limited to include only the artists of West Texas. Since 1939, the encouragement of local art has brought considerable favorable attention to the artists and to the Association. The use of qualified jurors for these exhibitions has placed the selection above local considerations. From the beginning, the excellent taste shown in gallery appointments and the metropolitan manner of exhibiting has brought favorable comment from many.

Good judgment in purchasing such paintings as those by George Inness, Gilbert Stuart, and Thomas Eakins marked the Association in the first quarter of the century as a collector of discrimination. The continued policy of purchasing from the exhibitions of American art not only added to the collection of the Association, but provided the producing artists with opportunities for sales.

In addition to its favoritism for American art, the Association has for the past ten years offered exhibitions

of modern art. Not only has painting and sculpture been shown, but practical exhibitions of living needs, such as architecture, housing, home furnishings, and church art.

The Fort Worth Art Association was no negligible influence in the establishment of art centers in other important towns in Texas. When San Antonio, Houston, and Austin first joined with Fort Worth to show the winter exhibitions of American paintings, these cities had neither an art association nor a gallery for the showing of art. Ambition to participate in the annual exhibitions led to the organization of an effective association in each place.

The program of art education for children began in 1910, and the continuance of this work no doubt accounts for the intelligent attitude of many Fort Worth citizens toward the affairs of art.

Perhaps the greatest success of the Art Association is that it conducted a creditable program for forty years with very little money. There has never been any endowment. The endeavors have been financed through membership fees, through the financial backing of a few friends, through public subscriptions, and through the indulgence of the Library Board. For the past six years



the city of Fort Worth has provided funds for the administration of the gallery.

The greatest failure of the Association is the limitation of its services to the public. In 1950, there is yet only one gallery, and that on the second floor of the Public Library. The housing is so inadequate that many important exhibitions shown in other Texas cities must be omitted from the Fort Worth schedule. The staff has never been sufficient. The Art Association did not have a regularly paid employee until 1940, and since that time, the staff has been limited to one full-time director, with occasional assistance. Obviously, the Art Association cannot perform its function in the community until a museum building is provided and adequate financing of its activities is assured.

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