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REPORT FROM BERLIN, May 1 to 7th.

There are many art galleries in Berlin but the Gerd Rosen gallery seems to be the best known to the Americans. If more time had been available I certainly would have looked up some of the other good galleries. But I, like most visitors to Berlin, found myself restricted in enough minor unavoidable ways to leave the city with only a good report on the Gerd Rosen to pass on to friends contemplating a trip to Berlin. And so the circle goes. One difference does exist in the local American paper. In Berlin sen or eight exhibitions are listed in the "where to go for art", whereas in Frankfort practicall no mention is ever made in our local paper about art galleries other than an occassional mention of the curant exhibit at the State Museu

I arrived at the American Berlin stop at a lottle country station called Wannsee. When the other Americans piled out of the train I followed but was very doubtful that this could be Berlin until I saw my smiling hostess, Ruth Christian. No one seemed to know just why we debarked in the middle of a pine woods, 20 minutes from the outskirts of town, but a good giess is that the main station is smac in the middle of the Russian Sector. I may be wrong.

Ruth was very helpful with a car and driver and a determination equa. to mine in visiting as many artists as we could crowd into a short week. A few hours after my arrival we headed for Max Peckstein at 18 Hubertus Allee, Grunewald, Berlin. He lived in a big square creamcolored house, but it can be assumed that many others lived in the house as well as he and his wife and son. He came to the door to spea to me but did not invite me in. Instead he asked me to come at noon c Sunday. The meeting, however, was pleasant and we exchanged business cards. Young blond Joachim acted as interpreter. As the day progresse he liked his job as driver more and more. He was nineteen, his father a painter, and he had never had such an opertunity to see so much art in his life. That may sound odd but one cannot forget that the best in creative modern art had been forbidden by law to be exhibited for twel e years in Germany Our next stop was at the Gerd Rosen Galle at 215 KurFirstendamn Strasse, a big boulevard street near the center of town. The two big windows displayed old prints and books, but insi a fresh clean feeling of a green tree growing in a desert filled me with wonder and appreciation. Neat gray cases displayed new illustrat books, one wall was lined with books and the other held quiet unagres ive abstract watercolors, mostly in blues, by a young painter in his 20's, named Frankenstien. His first name is Wolfgang. This was his first one-man show. He was born in Berlin, May 5, 1918. In 1942 he was forbidden to paint in any place or school and was put in prison by the Gestapo in 1944 till the end of the war... A handsome open steel and glass staircase led me to the second floor. On the landing a nicely shaped piece of pink stone with gray and white streaks in it attracted my eye. It was a mother and child by a sculptor unknown to me, Lidy von Lüttwitz....the gallery on the second floor held the rest of the Frankenstilen exhibit. I liked it but made no purchase because I felt that equally fine work and better was made by young American artists. The two sculpture cases held work by Luttwitz, Uhlmann and Hartung. Uhlmann worked in metals and Hartung in wood. The Luttwitz white stone shape was so simple and softly rounded when held in the hand that I knew I wanted it. The next day I purchased both the white and the pink stones from the gallery.

I returned to the first floor and inquired about prints and was led into a small curtained room where I spent two hours brousing thru portfolio after portfolio. All the Bauhaus group were represented, Kandinsky, Klee, Chagall, Muthe, Marc, Grosz, Heckell, Beckmann, Peckstein, Schmidt-Rotloff, ... it was like a dream to me, to be able to see, feel and handle so much fine work after eight months of waiting in a vacum of misery and destruction which is what Germany is today. Berlin itself is such a bombed out mess that the impact off finding this earlly flowering of the German modern art movement in the midst of destruction, left me with wonder that anything had survived. Most of these men today are either dead, left the country, or have finished producing, their fire burned out For sure, it will be at least 25 years before indigenous creative art will be felt outside of this country again There was so much to see that it was difficult for me to deside just what wished to have and returned the next afternoon.... However, my day was not quite finished, there was still enough time to pay a short visit to Schmidt-Rottleff at 136 Schuetzalle, Zehlendorf, Berlin. He lived in a small apartment within walking distance of Ruth's home. Joachim went up the stairs with me and again acted as interpreter. Frau Schmidt-Rottleff came to the door, a lovely whitehaired, blue-eyed woman. I introduced myself and explained that Frau Hanna Bekker had asked me to visit the professor. She was ver cordial and called to her husband that an American was here with news of Hanna Bekker of Hofheim. We were led down a dark hallway and into a small sitting room. Schmidt-Rottloff rose slowely from his chair to shake hands and asked us to be seated around the big table. I spoke to him the best I could and finally fell back on Joachim for help. Apparen y these charming old people had had too little contact with roving Americans to watch the hang of our maner of speaking their language. So Joachim told them that their old friend, Hanna Bekker hoped to get her pass in time to leave for Berlin on the 15th of May and arrive on the 17th. They had not seen her since she left Berlin in 1943. At that time she had won the admiration and respect of painters by holding a rather clandestine private exhibition of forbidden German artists in he Berlin apartment, right under the Nazi's noses... I could not stay long since Ruth was waiting for me in the car, and I asked for another appoi ment to see the artist's work. We agreed on Saturday afternoon at 4 PM. And thus I closed my first full day of painter hunting in Berlin. I carried in my mind a vivid picture of the professor and his study. Big brilliantly colored landscapes were on the 'walls, a small stove' jutted into the room with a two foot primitive colored wood relief carving leaning against it on the floor. On his desk, loaded with papers and objects a small bronz figure stood out. The Professor, to me, was a big man, reserved and stooped with age. He wore dark rimmed glassed and a gray short pointed beard. He still had a twinkle in his eye dispite the ups and downs forced upon him in his late years. On Friday I returned to the Gerd Rosen Gallery with Ruth. This time I met Mrs. Vogel who runs the print department, owns much of the work in stock and jointly arranges the exhibitions with Mr. Rosen. I never did meet Mr. Rosen as he was away at the time. Mrs. Vogel was a very attrac ve blond woman, about my age. When she realized that I knew a little ab t contemporary art, we got quite friendly and she took Ruth and I into the back office and had a very interesting and informative discussion about the young German painters today. She seemed very fair about all t painters not connected with the gallery and showed me their photographi record of the 14 who are known as the Gerd Rosen Group and whose show i now on tour in cities in the British zone and will come to the American zone as well. I promptly spoke of Mrs. Bekker and told about her new gallery in Frankfurt which was opening on May 11th with a Kathe Kollwitz retrospective, and suggested that she might be interested in showing the group from Berlin. And since I promptly visited Mrs. Bekker upon my return from Berlin and gave her all the information I had gathered about the Berlin artists before she left hersælf for Berlin, perhaps something might come of it....Mrs. Vogel gave me catologues of all the exhibitions held during the past years and it is quite impressive the varietly of talent they are encouraging and showing today. Those listed in the group catalogue are: Alexander Camaro, Edgar Enses, Wolfgang Frankenstein, Karl Hartung, Werner Heldt, Juro Kubicek, Jeanne Mammen, Luise Sophie Stomps, Paul Strecker, Christian Theunert, Hans Thiemann, Heinz Trokes, Hans Uhlmann, and Mac Zimmermann. The sculptors were Hartung, Stomps and Uhlmann... Mrs. Vogel told of the fun the gallery had in showing extreemly modern work and the public reaction. Some artists make fun of the group and disparagingly call it the Gerd Rosen gang as tho they were trying to foist something on the public and call it art. But they are bravely sticking their necks out and going ahead with their shows and I am sure that they are doing the right thing from what I have seen. I was able to make a few purchases of prints with my limited funds. It is an expensive gallery. Mrs. Vogel put me on her mailing list so that I can be informed of her new shows. On Saturday we visited Karl Hartung. I had first seen his work at Mrs. Bekker's home in Hofheim. She had a lovely white plaster shape remeniscen nt of Brancusis Bird in Space. I asked about the sculptor and Mrs. Bekker said that she did not know just where he lived but that I might aske Gerd Rosen. At Rosen's I saw a good piece of abstract sculpture in wood which I knew Hartung had made and they, the girl in charge at the gallery table, gave me his address in Berlin. He lived in a large apartment at Stierstasse 21, Friedenau, Berlin. I never did get to meet Lidy von Luttwitz who lives at 12 Moltkestrasse, Hermsdorf, Berlin.... Hartung is a nice looking black haired man who also sports a decorative hair growth above and around his lips ending in a little pointed beard. His thinning hair was covered with a beret. His wife was a charming blue eyed large woman with auburn hair. She had just returned a few days previously from the hospital with their new son, a fine baby... The big room was very restful in color, tan walls and green rug. The simply designed chairs had been made by a friend for them. The walls were mostly covered with non-objective pale watercolors by Mrs. Hartung. I was reminded of the work of Lucia Stern's in Milwaukee, only Stern's is better. Hartung opened a sliding door which led to his studio. There the shelved were loaded with plaster models which he had no way of enlarging in his limited space. Two big charcoal sketches of proposed work were tacked on one wall. They were good. He also had stackes of drawings, sketches in pencil and ink, and a good series of gouache paintings which he was making ready for a show at Gerd Rosen, also a few woodblock prints and etchings. The last two mediums seemed to best express his sculptural approach and style...He moved a modeling stand into the main room and one by one displayed his wood carvings. They were splendid, all of them. He also showed some beautifully formed bronzes of animals. I was really impressed with Hartungs work. He respected his various mediums so completely and abstracted his forms each into an object of beauty, and when held in hands, the shapes and forms flowed so delicately to the touch. He is the German Henry Moore on a smaller scale. Give him time, he is ayoung man.

One wood carving about 14 inches wide of a horizontal floating figure pleased me most. It was his latest work and he had not signed it yet. When I returned to Hartung the following Tuesday I took a photograph of the Hartungs seated at their table with this carving on the table. I later saw that I had finocased the camera too high and only got part o the carving in the picture...Hartung was very interested in American art and what kind of work was being done across the sea. In fact, all the artists I saw asked me the same questions and seemed quite starved for news of what was going on in the art world outside of Germany. I was very sorry that I had no catalogues and pictures of exhibitions with me. I had carefully left all my files in the States, never dreamin of the interest they would have created over here. They had been given one catalogue of the Encyclopedia Britanica collection. The painting by Julio de Diego was the only one they commented on favorably. When I turned to George Grosz' painting in the book, they shook their heads and said "that is not the Grosz we knew, he is so sentimental now". They could not understand the change in his work. Hartung was particulally curious about Henry Moore, and I told him about his curaftly success touring exhibition in the States, And also that the British Council or Govt. had loaned Gunther Franke a collection of Moore drawings which he exhibited a few months ago in his Munich gallery. (I-think he would have thumbed a ride to Munich if he had known about the show and could have gotten out of Berlin) ... Hartung expresses a quiet sofistication in all of his work. His student days of working with Maillol and Despiaux in Paris in the earl/y thirties and a year in Florence are well behind him and now I can see nothing but progress result from his work. He is a sesitive man with the true soul of the artist. He has already exhibited in the States, only drawings, I believe; and a California Musem has purchased some of these, possibly the San Francisco Museum, I do not remember ... He told me that he intended to have larger studio quarters so that he can develope the numerous studies he has made. I certainly hope that he can get started on his larger work while I am still in Europe so that I can witness my private convictions come true. As an artist he is sure of himself and the path he is taking and showed touch ing concern for the talented lesser known sculptors in Berlin, and sugg ested to me that I visit Hans Uhlmann ... The Hartungs seemed very anxiou to see more of me so that we could discuss painting and painters but I had to explain the great difficulty for Americans to get into Berlin. I was both touvened and amused to have them tell me that they knew sever American families in Berlin and that they would arrange for me to stay with one of them whenever I wrote that I could come to the city again. Perhaps I will be able to make another visit because of the Hartungs.

Late Saturday afternoon Ruth and I returned to the Schmidt-Rottloffs. This time I was expected and a very large stack of watercolors was in the room for me to see. The work was recent, 43 thru 46, full of good color, shapes and design. It was the mature, finished work of a successful German painter who was one of the leaders of German impression ism 25 years ago. There were two watercolors in the entire bunch which would have liked to own, but none of the work was for sale. He showed ma few wood carvings of figures in relief and a few bronzes made in his early days. This work is perhaps, the best known outside of Germany. The period when he was interested in African negroid sculpture as were most of the early experimenters in Emppe before and after the first was These few bronzes were just about all he salvaged from the cellar of his bombed out Berlin home.

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Schmidt-Rottloff was a very kindly man who seemed to move with infinate sadness in his step. I think that he enjoyed showing me his work, and he, too, asked if I had any catalogues of work by American painters. We spoke more of American men and galleries at this meeting, and he understood me better this time. He was interested in hearing that his old friend Dr. Valentiner was now in California. I had only known the latter during the few days he acted on the jury for a big regional show held at the Milwaukee Art Institute in 44-45 season, and doubt that he remembers me.... I later learned from Mrs. Bekker that the professor and his wife had enjoyed my visit very much and appreciated my coming to see them. Mrs. Bekker also said that the professor was very nervous about Russians and would not even dare venture into the Russian sector of the city. He was afraid that the Russians would take him. Mrs. Bekker hopes that the artist will be able to come to Hofheim to paint in August. For many years he has always spent part of the summer at Mrs. Bekker's home in Hofheim, and now, perhaps, he can renew his old custom. It would be difficult to find a lovelyer place in the summer, except, perhaps, in Bavaria.

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On Sunday we visited Max Pechstien. He is a short gray-haired man, with blue eyes and a rudy complexion. He has a ready smile and seems to be getting on pretty well with the assistance of his British friends. Both he and Karl Hofer were installed as teachers in the Berlin Art School which is located in the British Sector of the city. He also has several British army students as pupils. He began by showing me large recent oil landscapes which said nothing and meant nothing to me. I asked about his prints and drawings and he brought out a few old folios of his earlly work. This was what the rest of the world knew him best for and it was good, and strong; and also sad to see how little he had been able to save. A friend had given him a set of his "Lord's Prayer" colored woodblock prints, the only one he now has. I asked nothing of him, but he gave me one print and then asked me to choose another. I was very touched and told him that if he came south to paint this summer, I would have "care package sm sent to him. My friend Capt. Gilkey had seen him earlyier and had asked him to come to the Taunus. He had spoken to Capt. Heinrick in Wiesbaden who had asked Mrs. Bekker to let him stay with her. She was willing except for the food problem and so I had answered that. But I have since learned that the best of intentions and good will cannot always work themselves out. All of these artists are almost twice my age or more and have been in and out of many conflicts and feuds long begore I came into the picture. I have since learned from several sources that a few facts that help make the situation more clear to me. Many years ago, when they were young painters, the artists Max Peckstein, Offer Sahlysher, Karl Schmidt-Rottluff and Erich Heckel called themselves as a group, The Bridge. After they all attained a direc of fame, The Bridge must have collapsed. I know that Y intuatively felt that I should not mention the group to any one of them. Pecksteins early woodcarvings are quite similar to those of Schmidt-Rottly ffis. His watercolors were alright, but not new in ideas and he was not selling, just sending them around to exhibitions. In contrast to Schmidt-Rettluff, he was planning a short trip into the Russian zone to bring some of his work to a museum for exhibition, and said that he did not fear them. So, it seems that it would be quite impossible for Peckstein to go to Hofheim as he would be regarded as a copying fox by Schmidt-Rottluff. And Peckstein plans to have a two months vacation, his first in three years, in Bavaria, instead.

From Gilkey I learned more about Peckstein since I did not talk to him long enough to get his story. He fled to Mexico around 1935 and stayed

there a few years, painting presumably and worrying about his family in Germany. He returned to Germany to get his family and his work he had left behind him. This was a secret journey. Some one recognized him and reported him to the Gestapo. Again he was forced to flee and this time he got as far as Pomerania where he hid throughout the war. He managed to stay alive and eat by selling his paintings for food....It is hard to say this, but it is conceeded by many that the war has finished him and his work. As a teacher, however, he is probably contributing much to his pupils, it is to be hoped....He did a very kind thing for me. He phoned Karl Hofer and made an appointment for me to visit him at his home studiat 9 Barr Strasse in Wilmersdorf, Berlin the following Tuesday at 6 PM.

Hofer has always meant a great deal to me because of the influence his work had on me in my art student days at Yale. There I had the finest instruction in history, paint mediums and techniques and their use, and compositional design, but from Hofer I became aware of form and personal expression. His two figure painting called the Storm which won the 1939 Carnegie International impressed me considerably which is surprising because at that time I was working on a term paper about Sur-rearlist painters. Then later I saw a Hofer painting in the Worcester, Mass. Museum of a girl with fruit, and in Chicago his large painting of three girls at a window, and last in Milwaukee a still-life of flowers. I saw portrait of a man at the Nierendorf Galleries in New York in '39 also. And then I went on with my interest in abstract and non-objective art. I disregarded all the rumors and amusing tales I have been told about the man and went to see him as a form of tribute to the painter whose work had greatly moved me ten years ago. I know that he got into politic a little bit by writing that the Nazi theories were contrary to the best interests of the artist and that much of his work had been confiscated. The most amusing tale about him now circulating amoung the german artist is that Hofer is now very busy repainting all of the paintings which he had lost and that he is now on number 164. Now that I have seen his stud I must admit seeing some old designs along with the new, all with 146 or '47 dates on them....but one more story.... an aquaintance of mine who has since moved to Frankfurt from Berlin, has this incident to tell: He had been asked to meet a train and bring Hartung and Hofer to a party given by the Howards for local artists. Hartung got off the train and Horner introduced him to Hofer. The artists gave a curt nod to each other but did not shake hands. Horner was quite flustered and sped them off to the party, and later noticed that they did not exchange one word with each other. When a European does not shake hands on the slightest preter achknowledgement or introduction, there is only one answer, they sure don't want to.... I have to laugh a little to myself. I am not used to hearing that paint and polotics are pretty well mixed on this side of the ocean, whereas, if an American artist gets on a political soapbox in the states, his fellows are amused and say to themselves that he must be a rather bad painter to find so much time to think and talk on any other subject than his own creative flame of genius ... From an allied source was told that Hofer spent four years in a concentration camp, but the German artists I have spoken to flatly deny this story and say he was never put in a camp, and that a lot of artists say they were just to get aid and sympathy from the allies. Like Alo Altripp told me that he was in a camp, and another German said, "yes, as a prison guard". It is a little difficult to get the real truth, so one can only guess that it is mostly just half-truth one hears. Rumors still thrive over here, and I certainly have heard some woppers.

This idle gossip has little to do with a report on German painters other than to show the type of talk an American does hear about them occasionaly And for an artist to take a strong political stand during the Nazi regien was to hoped and expected from the best of them because of the importance and necessity of right-thinking at that time.

Hofer's home was on a baren street. His and a few others were the few standing amidst piles of broken stone and rubble. Typical of most of Berlin. His maid unlocked the gate and led us into the small house where Mr. Hofer greeted us in the hallway and led us up the stairs to his second floor studio. On the stairway walls were many closely hung paintings, all very fine work. I was startled to see a painting of three girls at a window, the same that is in the Chicago Art Institute, only smaller. I told him that I knew the painting and where it was in America. He was quite surprised and amazed to learn of its whereabouts and said that he had sold it to a woman in Berlin many years ago and that was the last he had heard of it. He did not remember that his girl with fruit was in the Worcester Art Museum, nor that the Milwaukee Art Institute owned a flower still-like of his. He was pleased to hear that I had seen his Casandra in the Boston Moseum of Modern Art when Nierendorf had sent on tour a group of Forbidden Art of the Third Reich, and that I remembered his Storm in the Carnegie Show in '39. In fact, I had the feeling that he had learned from me a few things which he did not know, which and which seem to come under abstract painter Otto Ritschle's remark that when the Nazis confiscated modern art, they did not destroy it all but sent it to Switzerland to be sold. I may be wrong.

Carl Hofer is 69 years old, medium height, light complextion, blue eyes, thinning white hair, slight mustache, and pleasant quiet nature. I was with him for less than an hour, and those that know him well might have much more to say about him. But in all honesty, there is little else for me to tell.about-him. He wore a white smack as did Peckstein and seemed extreemly neat and businesslike. His studio was not very large and a long table in the middle of the room was covered with drawing papers and various art supplies. A bright sun streamed in thru the windows on one sid side of the room. I took out my little camera and asked to take a picture. I set a chair near to his easle and he obligingly sat a few minutes for me. It came out rather well. The stretched canvas on the easle was sketche ed in with a girl with mandolin, a composition which I am sure I have seen before. It held the same sure touch and familiarity of his style. If he made a dozen of them, it would be alright with me. I saw several familiar still-lifes, and on the walls were sketches, cartoons and finished paintings of varied subjects, from landscapes to three-figure groups. A head of a girl pleased me very much, made in '47.... Suddenly the door flew open and into the room hurried a young woman who grasped my hand and shook it firmly, grasped my friend Ruth's hand, spoke a few words to Hofer, and rushed out as Hofer raised an indicating hand and said, " my Frau". I was startled to recognize that she was the woman in all of his paintings that I had ever seen. And yet she was not his first wife. but a comparatively new one. I had been told that he had been married several times. So, he must have picked women that all looked alike. The one I met was thin in her blue slacks and trench coat. Her face was small and round with high cheek bones and pointed chin. Her hair was jet black, b/obbed, and pointed down the sides of her face in an earl/y 20 s fashion. Her greene almond eyes and black eye-lashes were rather frightening. When I left I felt good and used for myself the Army term, "mission accomplished". Now for more abstract painters.

Hans Uhlmann, a sculptor member of the Gerd Rosen group was not at home when I called on him a few hours before my train left Berlin. Fortunately I had a hunch that he would be at the Rosen gallery. I found him there arranging a new exhibition and he readily got in the car and went back to his apartment with me. He led me up three flights of stairs. The windows on the landings were broken and boarded up. His studio, however, was bright and cheerful, tho small, and rememded me most of the many studio of young Americans. One bookcase lined room was the studio and living room and the ajoining room was for eating and sleeping. The studio was filled with his own work, drawings, watercolors, photographs of his wife and child, and much interesting wire sculpture, while the walls of the other room held good examples of other members of the Rosen group. He particularily asked me about Alexander Calder and his mobiles. He said that he was the only man he knew of who was working with wire and metal in Germany and that he had learned of Calder and his work long ago but he no way of finding out what the other mobile sculptors were doing. So I sat down and told him and tried to describe, with my hands flying about my head, what I had seen and knew in America. I told of Calder's big mobile on the stair's landing in the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and of Lucia Stearn's mobiles which she had incorporated sound as well. He was delighted. Again I wish that I had some pamphlets or pictures to show Later, I remembered that I should have told him that I knew a Chicago collector who owned work by Calder. Just to be able to tell him of a person I knew who purchased metal sculpture and that it realy was quite well accepted in the States, would in itself have given him a little satisfaction and pleasure and confidence that he was not so alone in his experiments and ideas. I am thinking and speaking of Harry Byirkk's collection of modern painting and sculpture and the hot summer day in Chicago when Polly Coan, acting director of the Milwaukee Art Institute, George Buerh, artist lecturer at the Chicago Art Institute, and I spent a few cooling hours looking at Harry's collection. Heavens, that was three or four years ago Hans Uhlmann impressed me as an extreemly kind and good man who was realy having a rather difficult time in his personal life to keep his family together and fed. And an artist doing the type of work he was most interested in, and felt compelled to explore, does not sell much work. He showed me a large portfolio of ink and wash sketches and drawings. They were sculptural in style and his manor was indeed his own, but it was not, to me, very impressive. By that, I mean, he was not as good as Hartung or Matare. In fact, no where near as good. Yet it is important that he is working, that he is teaching and making his ideas felt amoung the younger painters in the city. I did not see any mobile sculpture, just wire heads and figure groups. His heavy ink Tine drawings expressed these figure groups very compactly and gracefuly. His lines encompassed shapes and space just as surely as the finished wire groups did.... He was a very tall big bolond man wearing a black jersey and dark suite/ He, too, agreed to having a photograph taken, so he cleared off his work stand and put one of his recent works on it and stood quietly by it. The photo by itself tells his story. I regretted that one of his wire heads hanging on the wall did not get in the picture He was very glad that I came to him to see his work and happy that I departed with a few drawings and a little wire horse...One hour later I . was on the Berliner with Carol and waving goodby to Ruth. The next day she moved out of Berlin to another city in the British Zone. And this brings to a close my report on the artists and art activities I managed to find and learn during seven days in May in Berlin. 1947