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Archives of American Art

Interview with Betty Parsons, WNYC Art Festival, 1951

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textures - with his paint quality, while the American is more concerned with his content. The content determines his paint quality. It has always been true that a new form for a new content creates its own and therefore a new paint quality. The trouble is, that a new concept of paint quality is always judged in terms of the old concepts instead of its intrinsic quality. What is needed is an unbiased free approach to the work, without pre-conceived ideas. If you come to the picture this way, and if you feel it's content, it's plasticity will emerge.

Question:

Do you think this work will last?

Answer:

Many people ask me this question, especially the businessmen. My invariable answer to them is, "How long will you last?"

Question:

What do you do with people who follow your advice, who come and look, and claim they see nothing?

Answer:

I say to them, "You look too much, and see too little. Stop looking. Stay and see."

Question:

Aren't your painters involved in sensation?

Answer:

Certainly not. Unless you confuse sensation with sensibility, one being physical and the other spiritual. Only sensitivity can permit the onlooker to feel the real difference.

Question:

What do your painters communicate?

Answer:

My only answer to this question is sensitivity.

It is not a question of knowledge. Communication can take place only with those who have the sensitivity. To me, sensitivity

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