



Smithsonian Institution

Archives of American Art

Jacques Seligmann & Co. records, General Correspondence: Society of Arts and Crafts, 1924-1935

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name comes down to us, through the consistent excellency of his work; the best known of these are Joseph Pickett and Edward Hicks, whose paintings of both are represented in this exhibition. Both have in the highest degree the freshness and vigor characteristic of all these paintings, and show a sense of design, a directness, and unity which are closely akin to the principles dominating our art today.

Turning to the sculpture of the period, it will be found to cover a wide field, ranging from ships' figureheads to iron stove plates. These objects were made by wood carvers, sailors, shipwrights, cabinet makers, carpenters, and the like, and show strong differences of local and individual style, and great variety and inventiveness in the handling of traditional motives and patterns. Some of the forms are absolutely indigenous, developing from the necessities of American life in those early days, as for example, the wild fowl decoys. Here, again, the relationship to modern art is patent; it is interesting to see how the craftsman's sensitive observation of nature and feeling for design express themselves with disregard for imitative realism.

The great significance of the collection, as Mr. Cahill remarks, is as a genuine expression of the art spirit of the American people, and a demonstration of the fact that talent has never been lacking in this country, even when opportunities for the study of art technique have been limited.

The Society of Arts and Crafts is deeply indebted to Edith Gregor Halpert of the Downtown Gallery, American Folk Art Gallery in New York; to Mr. Holger Cahill, Curator of the Newark Museum; to the Cleveland Museum of Art; and to various friends in Detroit for the loan of the exhibits here presented. To Mr. Cahill, acknowledgement is also made for the material used in this introduction.

The exhibition is given through the generosity of Mr. Robert H. Tannahill.

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