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His and Hers....
the Herald Tribune

[[image]]
$65,000 -- Again Wyeth Sets a Record
By John Gruen
Of the Herald Tribune Staff
The haunted, poetic, and meticulously executed world created by painter Andrew Wyeth continues to hypnotize museum directors throughout the country.
The highest price ever paid by a museum for a work by a living American artist went to Mr. Wyeth yesterday when the William A. Farnsworth Library and Art Museum in Rockland, Me., paid the record sum of $65,000 for his painting, "Her Room," a work executed in tempera and measuring 25 1/2 inches high and 48 1/2 inches wide. This price breaks the record formerly held by the Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, which last year acquired Mr. Wyeth's "That Gentleman" for $58,000.
"Her Room" shows Mr. Wyeth's living room in Cushing, Me., in the mysteriously glowing half light of late afternoon. An old sea chest takes up the foreground. Behind it are two windows, the drapes painted a delicate pink. Through the window panes can be discerned the Georges River flowing into a distant sea. There is an open door to the left of the painting showing a vista of river headland and sky.
The Farnsworth Museum is reputed to own the world's largest collection of Wyeth family works. The acquisition of "Her Room" brings to a total of 12 the number of its works by Mr. Wyeth. It also owns three oils by his

noted father, N.C. Wyeth, and it has recently been presented with a watercolor executed by Jamie, Andrew's 17-year-old son.
Mr. Wyeth claims that "Her Room" is his best painting to date.

Art Tour
The Galleries - A Critical Guide
[[image]] Genauer [[\image]]
Each Saturday the Herald Tribune publishes as a reader service for gallery-hoppers this critical guide to the week's new exhibitions. To save time and steps, it charts a gallery-to-gallery course in separate areas of the city where they are clustered. Lengthier reviews of major new exhibitions, by Emily Genauer and John Gruen, appear regularly in the lively Arts Section of the Sunday Herald Tribune as well as in daily editions.
[[image]] Gruen [[\image]]

Upper Madison Av.
Kurt Schwitters (Chalette, 11 Madison): More than 50 superb examples by this German painter and collagist continue to amaze in their freshness, invention and humor. Schwitters was ever the investor of life to the seemingly lifeless: a torn stub, bits of newsprint, a sullied piece of cloth are all combined to produce the most magical effects. He knew how to bring a kind of absolute beauty and serenity to the most insignificant object.

Pachita Crespi (Crespi, 1153 Madison): This artist manipulates a roughly textured pigment to create sunny, well composed landscapes and figures. Some of her nudes may be hung in several ways, thus altering the figure's stance. Florals may also be rotated. So that all may be in good order, Miss Crespi signs her canvases in more than one corner.

Latvian Artists (Duncan 215 E. 82d): This group of five Latvian artists is decidedly forward-looking. Laimons Eglitis paints excellent semi - abstract landscapes that suggest a latter-day Feininger. Oskars Skuskis is a Fauve who relishes the excitement of color, making it sing in forceful abstractions. Guna Smitchens does sensitive florals in pale, monochromatic hues. Arnolds Treibergs is an impasto man; his thickly applied pigments form full-bodied landscapes and figures. The lone sculptor in the show, Voldernars Jansons, recalls Maillol in his concern for the formal, the pure and the felt.

Charles Sarka (Bernard Black, 1062 Madison): A delightful exhibition of the late illustrator's watercolors done in Tahiti, capture the light, mood and singular beauty of this oft-depicted South Sea island. In execution the watercolors brim with spontaneity and freshness, the liquid, palpable line and color creating an atmosphere of languid exoticism.

Richard Miller (Graham, 1014 Madison): Strong, almost brutal abstractions swerve and slash in all directions to form supercharged paintings of uncommon beauty. The medium of collage is employed to lend textural variety, rather than design. In color they are as fiercely intense as in structure. An exciting show!

No Show (Stein, 24 E. 81st): A wild, hysterical and totally provocative journey through the anguished and sex-obsessed visions of beat artists who mince no images in telling us that the world is a sordid, sick and stupifyingly naked jungle, where murder, rape and unholy desperation

are the order of the day. There are collages by Boris Lurie and Stanley Fisher, where photographs and screaming headlines collide in brilliant sang-froid. Constructions by Kusama and Kaprow and Gilman are equally chilling.

Harvey Weiss (Rosenberg, 20 E. 79th): The skill and depth of a sculptor may be measured by the manner in which technical considerations become but adjuncts to emotional expression. Mr. Weiss, a superb technician, offers ample evidence that strength of feeling is of prime importance in these welded steel pieces that conjure up powerful images of religious and mythical subjects, each invested with an intensity that is as austere as it is memorable.

Dahmen (Lefebre, 47 E. 77th): A first one-man show introduces a German painter preoccupied with the mystique of graffiti and wall surfaces. The earth, in all its roughness, magic and mystery is recorded on canvases that themselves possess an almost atavistic force. The scratches and incisions that lend interest and complexity to these works seem to occur as if by accident, but, instead, they are as deliberately applied as the hieroglyphs that occur on ancient wall carvings - and just as mysterious.

Albert Bierstadt (Lewison, 50 E. 76th): Famous a century ago for his gigantic panoramas of the expanding West, this German-born painter of spectaculars is seen now to have been a master of the minute, too. Not only are the oil sketches in this new show tiny (they run around 5 by 7 inches); their composition is austere, and details are virtually non-existent. All is tone, and of the subtlest. In comparison with this phase of Bierstadt even the stark economies of Rothko look fancy.

Edward Giobbi (Contemporaries, 992 Madison): This is a fascinating show by a Connecticut artist who sees man whirling in dizzying anxiety in a world that spins in equal distress. His canvases, mainly circular, show men and women (in curious Van Dongen dress and color) gyratin gin centrifugal manner, their heads converging at the center of the canvas. Elsewhere, Giobbi cuts recessed squares into his paintings which, like so many windows, give out on enigmatic landscapes and figures.

Along Madison Av.
Jean Chabaud (Thibaut, 799 Madison): Here is pop art of the computer age -- large white movie-screen canvases riddled with rows of holes, which are enlarged program feed-ins for electronic brains. Only one, "Information, Order and Disorder," in which the punched out parts have been rearranged against the holes with touches of oil color, is likely to move a human brain or heart.

Antoni Tapies (Martha Jackson, 32 E. 69th): Most of the new works by this well-known Spanish abstractionist are huge, painted with grayish pigment mixed so thickly with marble dust the results look like bas relief. Mysterious patterns are scratched into the surface, like graffiti on a back fence. Bulbous masses of the pigment erupt enigmatically here and there. All this may sound unattractive. Actually, the results are fascinating, as Tapies continues to exploit textures, to extract a surprising range of tone from a most limited palette, and to fuse bulbous compositions whose meaning is elusive, although their atavistic origin seems clear enough.

Alice Terry (Fried, 40 E. 68th): An artist from rural upstate captures the noise, movement, fury of our urban civilization with anatomical maxes in monotone washes on which are superimposed gaudy colored titles like "Go," "Mine," "Don't Do It, Joe." Her artistry makes pleasant decorations of the direst portents.

David Shapiro (Milch, 21 E. 67th): One keeps seeing Gwathmey and Shahn in Shapiro's figure paintings, because of the frenetic structural lines with which he laces them together. But in his landscapes, which do not have the lines, he is seen as himself -- a fine colorist with plastic sensitivity and original vision.

Marcello Muccini (Gallery 63, 721 Madison): A first New York show for a 35-year-old Italian who's billed as "a solitary painter." His interiors, usually a woman in bedroom, are a moody gray, suggesting the lonely side of la dolce vita. Outdoors, his rooftop views of Rome are lonely, too, but sunnier, and more satisfying as painting.

Bob Solotaire (Nessler, 718 Madison): This young New York realist in his second one-man show lives up to the promise of his first. There are flowers of the field, and landscapes recognizable as Main and the Hudson Valley. Figures are absent in all except in a tour de force of derbied metal workers posing with a huge eagle, which seems to have been painted from an old photo.

Mataniya Abramson (Romanet Vercel, 710 Madison): White, pure, cold Carrera figures stand, just under life size, like icebergs, rounded and grained by the sculptor's chisel to conform to familiar names -- "Eve," "Madonna," "Harmony." In this upstanding white company, a squat little dark piece called "Sforza" is outstanding.

57th Street & Environs
Emilio Cruz (Zabriskie, 36 E. 61st): Lively variations on a single theme - female figure groups in frenzied dance are done in abstract expressionism of a sort. Shades of Rubens and Delacroix, when the figures are painted in flesh tones; of the German expressionists, when in magentas and lavenders. And in pastel - Degas.

Pat Magione (Rehn, 36 E. 61st): Some of this veteran woman painter's oils are peopled with dreamy figures set against large, free-form patches of pigment. But content is not so important as the color, so remove the figures as she sometimes does, and the patches form highly satisfying abstractions.

LeRoy Neiman (Hammer, 51 E. 57th): This one is pure show biz. With considerable virtuosity, Neiman illuminates the international world of racetracks, gambling casinos, bars and jazz musicians. The drama is played through highlight and gesture, the strongest possible visibility obtained through maximum contrasts of tone and color. The orchestration is all brass, brilliant, flashy and loud.

[[image]] GRUEN

Charles Eanet (Salpeter, 42 E. 57th): Charming, subtly colored landscapes in which the erosions and heavings of earth are exploited as cerebral abstract compositions. While each painting is satisfying in itself, variations on the same scene, to show the change of season and hour,

make Eanet's New York debut especially rewarding.

Eleven Abstract Expressionists (Janis, 15 E. 57th): The force and splendor of a movement that many feel is on its way out, here discharges a light of overwhelming strength. But then the masters of this most pronouncedly American art expression are on hand: deKooning, Francis, Gorky Gottlieb, Guston, Kline, Motherwell, Newman, Pollock, Rothko and Still. They reaffirm that the power and vitality of original and deeply felt concepts cannot be dimmed by waning interest.

Ronald Slowinski (Poindexter, 21 W. 56th): Enormous paintings, each composed of grills and stenciled motifs of a double fig-like shape, offer surprising variety in this first New York show by a young artist. Grills of horizontal and vertical bands, four or five inches wide, traverse the canvas, with stenciled shapes sometimes placed in front of the bands, sometimes behind, sometimes ambiguously. The interplay of grill and motif differs in each painting, with handsome and bold effect.

John McCarty (Burr, 115 W. 55th): These regional paintings of the Southwestern plains are romantic in feeling, poetic in effect. The artist's strength is his sensitivity to nuances of tone. If there is weakness in composition, it lies in the awkward placement of forms. McCarty is best in two paintings on copper-enamel, in which the limitations of size and medium act to his advantage.

Out of Town
Portraits of Painters, by Blatas (Montclair Art Museum): A stunning show, worth anyone's trip across the river to Montclair, is this collection of oil portraits done over the years by Arbit Blatas, of his painter friends, among them Leger, Matisse, Soutine, Zadkine, Gromaire, Picasso, Chagall, Vlaminck, Utrillo and others. All are at once free, and vibrant, first-class paintings and enormously alive likenesses. Exceptional even in this company, however, are a portrait of the sculptor Zadkine, of piercing intensity, and one of Leger in which the subject's great physical strength is paralleled by the strength of the painting.

Daily Book Review
The Disquiet of Jean Genet
Our Lady of the Flowers. By Jean Genet. 318 pp. Grove Press. $6.50
Saint Genet: Actor and Martyr. By Jean-Paul Sartre. 625 pp. Braziller. $8.50
By Alan Pryce-Jones
Shortly after the war I asked a Paris bookseller what I ought to have read during the years when French books were inaccessible to British readers. He fumbled under the counter and sold me the privately printed edition of "Pompes Funebres," by a writer of whom I had never hear. "Genet," he said, "writes perhaps the most beautiful French prose of our time. Just don't leave his books about, that's all."
If they can be left about now, it is largely owing to the apostolate of M. Sartre, whose "Saint Genet" first appeared in 1952. Now Mr. Bernard Frechtman's excellent translation of the untranslatable puts both Sartre's claim for Genet and the evidence -- in the form of Genet's most famous novel -- before us, so that we may judge for ourselves whether critical judgments like "enchanter of the first order" (Richard Wright), "great poet" (Cocteau), "work of genius" (George Slocombe) are in order.
The case for the defense is that Genet was abandoned in infancy, took to thieving in the most innocent fashion until his foster-parents threw him out, turned homosexual in the spirit of an outcast from Paradise who deliberately rejected the claims of society, and yet, through the liberating

effect of his genius on others, finally justifies his position in limbo; indeed, not only justifies it, but deserves congratulation upon it.
Having heard the general defense, look at the detailed evidence. "Our Lady of the Flowers" is a subjective fantasy written twenty years ago on scraps of brown paper in Fresnes prison. It is an onanistic fantasy: that is, Genet is allowing his imagination to rove in search of excitement: not satisfaction, for, as Sartre says, this is a deeply pessimistic book. He is pronouncing the Open Sesame to that homosexual dreamworld which has later been mapped out in more vulgar detail by William Burroughs and John Rechy, among others.
The reader has therefore to settle back into an erotic roller coaster and grit his teeth against the spooks which haunt the tunnel of love. What makes the journey possible is that Genet, though his fantasies stick at nothing, is not, I think, an obscene writer. He is out to describe and to explain, not to excite anybody but himself.
In many ways I find his book much less shocking than Sartre's. For Sartre is also offering an onanistic experience, but one of dogmatic intention. Much of it is extremely opaque; some of it -- more often in its asides than in its direct argument -- is wonderfully illuminating. It is as if, with the idea of Genet propped before him, he allowed his intellect to freewheel. Existentialism, we know, runs to length, and an extremely clever freewheeler can manage to fill 600 pages on almost any theme. What may seem shocking is that Sartre has found it necessary to pack this particular portmanteau quite so full of miscellaneous gear when quite a small suitcase would have done as well.
For the essential point about Genet is that he covers a very tiny part of human experience. He is a precursor, all right; much the most interesting fact about his book is that it was written almost a generation ago, before Messrs. Burroughs, Ginsberg, Rechy and the rest had conditioned our responses to four-letter words. But he cannot, however beautiful his prose, build limbo into a world, nor can any commentator, however gifted, raise the status of limbo. It is the misfortune of a sow's ear that it cannot be made into anything more important than a silk purse. Furthermore, it is doubtful whether words are the right medium for conveying the special kind of disquiet in which Genet excels. The paintings of Francis Bacon, for example are far more powerful symbols of the lonely saintliness heaped upon the prisoner of Fresnes than all these thousand pages put together.

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