

Claus Bastian

PAINTINGS / DRAWINGS / GOUACHES



June 11 – July 11

6925 S. Lindbergh Blvd., St. Louis, Mo.





I am happy to introduce to the American public CLAUS BASTIAN, a Munich painter. We both join in the admiration of the great cultural efforts emanating to-day from the United States which instill new artistic initiative into the old world.

Interesting and characteristic is the opinion of the well-known art critic Wolfgang Christlieb of Munich who says in discussing Claus Bastian:

"This exhibition consists of paintings and sculptures by Claus Bastian which originated in the last months and years. They constitute a complete cycle representing exceedingly well the artist's current style.

Compared with his earlier works dating back six to twelve years, they show a dramatic development of the painter and a critical discussion of the artist with himself. It is a development with which many painters of our generation had to struggle: a path leading to the self-assertion of the personality and yet simultaneously to the establishment of a painting's components for the purpose of making them to essential parts of a self-sufficient entity.

Colors freed from any similarity to the natural shades are increasingly employed by logical activation into the ranks of a purposeful harmony of colors stressing the sujet in its totality.

Parallel to this, the elements of panel treatment are extracted from the incidental; they are assigned their proper values as coordinating parts of the

paintings, and thus achieve a meaningful relationship to each other.

Many will conclude from looking at the paintings alone that Claus Bastian is a sculptor as well. His gifts for sculpturing are so powerful and spontaneous that one would almost doubt which side of his work is the more important one. In any event, whether painting or stone, the creative initiative stems from a directly acting power to absorb form and physiognomy and to master them creatively in one straight attempt.

This primary and direct relationship to the figure as a partner to be comprehended as a human being is at first completely independent of the material used, but it is the real source of Bastian's creative powers. It is exemplified already theoretically in the preponderance of portrait and human figure in his oeuvre. It is also manifested strongly, however, in the importance assumed by the body in each particular work. To Bastian the entire composition comes from the traits of his sujet's physiognomy; this applies to color as well as to the formal treatment and extends into the finest insinuations of structure and surface treatment.

Generally we notice a free, open and joyous perspective, manifesting itself above all in the coloring and in the vivacious tones of blues and accents of red set against the image.

One will note here many a similarity to the Ecole de Paris where the body plays also an outstanding role and from which the painting gets its life, no matter how "overcharged" the body may be. In the case of portraits in Bastian's oeuvre, one has to add his searching understanding of the sujet's character, lying beyond any intellectually understandable relationship. Especially in the portrait one sees the direct grip as being particularly effective and convincing. Bastian achieves "resemblance" never by a mere copying of formal characteristics, but it results from a multitude of streams of human understanding baring any individual particularity as if he had a magic key.

As a result there are no problems of "Impression" with the painter Bastian. He is as susceptible for the sceptic astonishment, for the bewilderment in a child's face as he is for the sincerity and intellectual caliber of a scientist's head or for the determination and toughness shown in a politician's looks. And yet, Bastian always succeeds to reduce the portrayed to a valid synopsis of a characteristic trait, and thus frees him from any incidentally "lounging" position.

It will not be difficult for any viewer who permits himself to sink into Bastian's world of paintings to note that his benevolent confidence and his soft humor often succeed in getting at the bottom of a character."

PREFACE BY

H.R.H. KONSTANTIN PRINCE OF BAVARIA

PAINTINGS

Mountains in Tyrol

Sea Landscape

3 Graces

Bavarian Dancer I

Bavarian Dancer II

Scene Tyrolese

Lady in Concert

Carnival I

Carnival II

Concert

Act

Triptichon

Landscape I

Landscape II

Landscape III

Landscape IV

Flowers

Munich

Casino

Harpers

Gouaches & Drawings