THE PICTURE IS THE WINDOW
THE WINDOW IS THE PICTURE

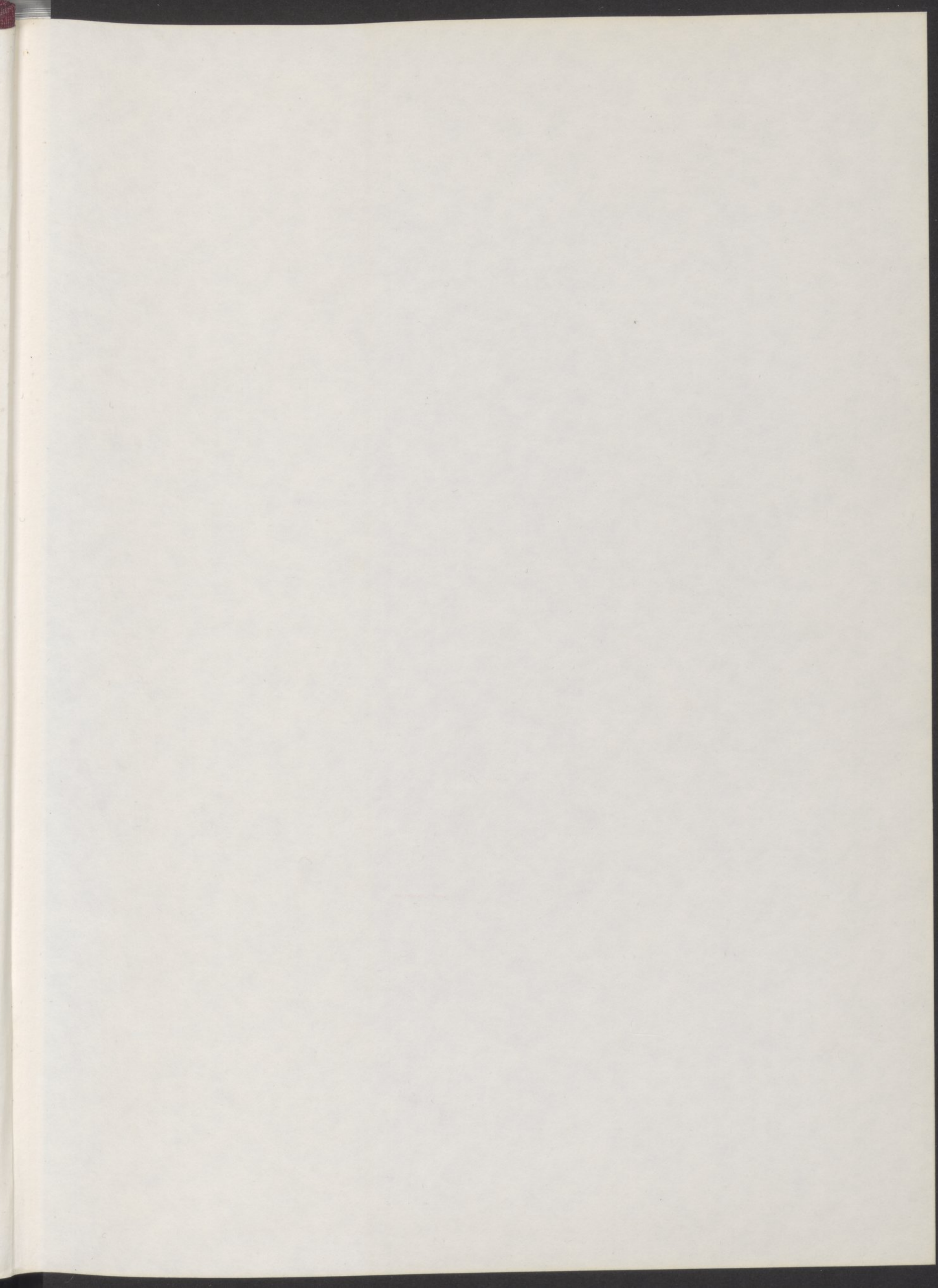
An Autobiographical Journey

Abby Weed Grey

The Picture is the Window—The Window is the Picture: An Autobiographical Journey, the extraordinary memoirs of Abby Weed Grey, a St. Paul, Minnesotan who became a cultural emissary, friend and patron of artists worldwide, and the founder of New York University's Grey Art Gallery and Study Center.

The Picture is the Window—The Window is the Picture is Abby Grey's story of her childhood and upbringing in Minnesota, her happy marriage, and a journal of self-discovery and the fulfillment of an ideal. She recounts the adventures and mishaps which befall the traveler, as well as the special problems she faced in establishing rapport with artists from disparate and alien cultures, and the frustrations of dealing with government bureaucracies. Her book is a window which provides an intimate look at the living and working conditions of artists abroad—especially in Iran before the revolution—and provides vivid sketches of some of the best known artists in each country. She journeys from the triumph of her exhibition of 1001 works from her collection, *One World Thru Art,* in 1972 at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds Gallery over the difficult road to finding a proper home for her collection, which culminated in the creation of New York University's fine arts museum, the Grey Art Gallery and Study Center.

Since its founding in 1975, the Grey Art Gallery has become one of New York City's most prestigious exhibition spaces, located in one of the most active centers of art in the world. The Gallery, with her consistent support, continues to implement Mrs. Grey's working philosophy through exhibitions and publications, many of which circulate around the country and abroad.



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Abby Weed Grey

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Manufactured in the United States of America

To each third of my life:
my parents and family
Benjamin Edwards Grey, my husband and companion
my friends in the world of art

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I want to thank also the United States embassies in the countries where I traveled for support received and courtesies extended in regard to *Communication Through Art* I am obliged especially to two friends in Washington, D.C., Margaret Cogswell and Lois Bingham, who were always my first contacts with official Washington.

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My final thanks go to my family. My brother, the Reverend Paul Weed, searched for family photographs through many old trunks. My sister, Emmy Lu Lewis, has honed the entire text, during which time she demonstrated the patience of twenty and the stick-to-it-iveness of fourscore. Her evident delight in reviewing times past encouraged me greatly in this arduous task. Her house on Sanibel Island, Florida, welcomed the collaborators to complete and edit this book, the final version of my diaries and reminiscences. Emmy Lu has also most generously allowed her own vision, her clay sculpture, to adorn the cover of this volume and lend its name to these memoirs:

The Picture Is The Window The Window Is The Picture

But wait! There is a master collaborator, Robert R. Littman, Director of the Grey Art Gallery and Study Center. My confidence in Bob's overseeing a book that would match my hopes and endeavors of so many years, rode out my lengthy efforts to assemble the material and put it on paper. My most grateful thanks are owed to Bob for his patience and for his creative hand and eye.

Thanks, everyone!

Abby Weed Grey
St. Paul, Minnesota
December, 1982

In Tribute

It is difficult, if not impossible, for me to be objective concerning Abby Grey. I have known Abby for seven years and for the past several I have been involved with her in reading through her diaries and helping to organize them into the present volume.

I came to the Grey Art Gallery and Study Center as its director one year after its founding. Since that time, Abby has always been my staunchest ally, my most consistent supporter and great friend. Her interest in the gallery which proudly bears her name has continued—an active force since its creation—the point at which her own narrative ends.

Abby's abiding belief in the power and importance of communication through artistic perception has continually guided her. Her consistent and unwavering conviction that a work of art is one of mankind's most direct expressions of needs, beliefs and aspirations has been her touchstone throughout her travels, in the formation of her collection and the founding of the Grey Art Gallery, and now, in the writing of her book. Abby is truly a creative individual; her greatest creation has been her philosophy of communication through art, her vision of a world understanding and united through the communicative powers of artists everywhere. All else she has done has grown from this belief, one which she has implemented throughout her life in most extraordinary ways.

There are many ideas as to how Abby might best be

presented in her own book. It was thought by some, for example, that she should be perceived as being in the forefront of the struggle for women's independence; or that she should be presented in the tradition of women who explore unknown regions, such as Freya Stark or Gertrude Bell. Abby however, always steering this project, simply does not think of herself as a heroine. In any case, I have always believed that one best achieves a sense of person through his or her own arts and words. Abby's actions and her voice, I believe, are clear throughout this text. These are her words, her views and her deeds.

The reader of this volume will discover exactly how unique her achievements have been, how hard-won they were, what difficult obstacles she faced and overcame. What Abby chooses not to detail are the ways in which her struggle has continued, how her active presence has been vital to the success of the gallery she has founded. Her drive has remained constant. Her guidance, help, and support of the Gallery have been instrumental in its achieving the recognition and reputation it has secured during its first seven years.

I must, as well, express my appreciation to Abby on a more personal level. She has on several occasions welcomed me with home cooking as well as a home-away-from-home, and has many times served as a terrific, amusing traveling companion. As her book makes clear, Abby knows how to travel. Most importantly, she has the special ability of being there when needed, never more than a phone call away, to bounce ideas off of, to give encouragement and advise in the face of frustrations, and to provide a share of her own commitment and belief in the importance of the artist, the importance of the art created.

Although she would never admit it, during the past three years Abby has undergone one of the most arduous of her many great adventures, one which she faced with incredible courage.

She has survived and triumphed over the physical ordeal of cancer and its treatment, and she has emerged, as before, a vigorous, vital and contributing human being. Now that she has finished the present volume she has, without hesitation, embarked on her next project, that of assembling her poems.

I salute Abby on the completion of this book, a task long contemplated, long nutured, and long in the making, but one well worth the effort. I trust her friends and the friends of her

gallery will find it a picture of art and artists in the countries she visited and a window on their particular cultures. I am sure the reader will be entertained for it is, indeed, an accurate depiction of this extraordinary woman whom I have come to treasure.

Robert R. Littman

Introduction

The picture is the window. The window is the picture. These words, almost mystical in their simplicity, summarize the life of Abby Grey. These are the memoires of a woman who has journeyed between the dimensions of many lands and canvases, seeking between the two the response of a common soul. Many travel these paths from picture to window and back. We begin in life with windows: our first frames of the world which outline finite terrestrial parallelograms. They capture a patch of the landscape and tame it into familiarity, almost; the horizon, with all its secrets and possibilities, lies always just beyond the frontiers of the frame. But sometimes, when provincial windows overlook walled gardens, and we become blinded by triteness to the beauty of the view, we must seek new perspectives. These we get vicariously, from new friends who look out our windows for the first time, or from the more sinister perspectives of mirrors. Or we travel. In unfamiliar places, even the most wearyingly familiar becomes fresh and new: a cup of tea at home is no thrill, but drunk from a tin cup in Karachi, it makes a great comeback to our senses. I remember the first pictures of the earth sent back from the satellites: how mysterious and hopeful our old planet looked from a distance.

Another way to gain a fresh perspective is not the outward travel of finding new windows to look out of, but an inward

journey. Some are blessed, or driven, to do both. The path that Abby Grey has taken has led her from the outward window to the inner picture, as her windows have always been open to those far reaching landscapes. She has thrown open her shutters in the mornings on many lands from Iran to Japan, working not for the outward views but for the inner pictures. Contemporary art works have been the windows through which the minds and souls of living men may be distantly glimpsed. Though separated by language, culture, and continents, "One World Through Art," is the philosophy of Abby Grey, a belief she has demonstrated by collecting the art of Asia and displaying it to the western world. Though separated by language, culture, and continents, the indigenous artists still belong to the same canvas of humanity.

This drive for new perspectives has taken Abby far from the fields of her home, and she has touched many lives in her travels. It is fitting that the offspring of her journeys—her collection—should find themselves a permanent home in the cultural crossroads of New York.

As I jog around Washington Square Park in the mornings, I pass the Grey Art Gallery, and Abby's children, and salute her creative spirit.

Peter Chelkowski

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Life is meant to be something more than tensions, problems, annoyances, petty frustrations. What if it were meant to be enjoyed, savored, relished, used rather than endured, taken lightly rather than too seriously, personally, or with the reformer's zeal? What new gusto in the release?

Daybook
March 8, 1949

Preamble

It hurts to give away a million dollars. Physically. For the last couple of days my ankles have been swollen and my right leg hurts from some kind of circulatory congestion. My hair has been falling out.

Tonight in my attorney's office sits a manila envelope containing papers giving away securities equal to almost half of my kingdom. In the office of the *Minneapolis Tribune* lies the news item that I have abandoned the University of Minnesota. I am not giving them my collection. I am moving it out of the state to New York City.

After all my travail over giving away so much, I have succeeded. I never thought it would so affect parts of my anatomy, which ache! Perhaps tomorrow I shall find a penny in the road, pick it up and have that lighthearted feeling of being lucky, befriended by the stars. And so, I know, I am!

That was how I felt eight years ago when I made my decision to endow the Grey Art Gallery and Study Center at New York University. I realized I had made a very substantial commitment but I never knew it would take so much time to actually give away that amount of money. Before the actual events leading up to this decision there were, of course, a great many other events. These make up my story and they are detailed in what follows.

EARLY YEARS

Both sets of my grandparents came to Minnesota shortly after statehood in 1858. My paternal grandfather, James

Emmy Lu (left) and Abby and their parents in their Holly Avenue home, 1904

Henry Weed, came to St. Paul from Connecticut, and from young manhood on, he was a prominent figure in the insurance business, establishing the first agency in the state. He married Agnes Curtis, the daughter of his business partner, and they sent their son, my father, Paul Charles, to Princeton University where he graduated with the class of 1896.

My mother's father, Alpheus Beede Stickney, was involved in the building of railroads. In 1883 he began the organization of what was to become the Chicago Great Western Railroad, of which he was owner and president. Both the Weeds and the Stickneys built big stone houses on Summit Avenue, the grand, elm-lined residential thoroughfare of St. Paul, where my parents met occasionally as children at parties. Two of the Stickney daughters went to Vassar; one remained to get her B.A., the other, my mother, Emily Stickney, left after a year to accompany her father abroad on a business trip and soon to marry my father in 1900.

I was the oldest of four children: I, Abby Bartlett, was born in 1902, my sister Emily Lucile was born eighteen months later, followed by Paul Charles, Jr. in 1906, and Agnes Stickney in 1912. All but Agnes were born at 529 Holly Avenue, a few blocks from the grandparents. In 1911 we moved to a spacious brick house built by my parents on Mississippi River Boulevard, where the lamplighter came by in a two-wheel cart and cowslips covered the adjacent fields in the spring.

In spite of my Eastern education and my travels both within the United States and abroad, I consider myself a dyed-in-the-wool Midwesterner. My roots are here, and the fact that I have chosen to make both my permanent and my vacation home in Minnesota testifies to my deep feelings about this state, the source of the Mississippi River.

I was about nine when my family moved into the Mississippi River Boulevard house. I always enjoyed coming home to my own room on the second floor. From the cushioned seat under the front window, I could see the river bluff across the boulevard through the maple, oak, and elm trees. On one wall of my room was a large sepia print of Sir Joshua Reynolds' *Innocence;* on another was a color print that I liked even better, a summer scene with children lighting Japanese lanterns.

My bookshelves gradually filled up with favorites, folk tales, fairy tales, and Bible stories. One book I particularly treasured was the Andrew Lang illustrated edition of *The Arabian Nights* which contained an inscription from my father: *A little girl who misses only one word a month in spelling is one*

Weed children on staircase of Mississippi River Boulevard home: Emmy Lu, Abby, Agnes, and Paul Charles, Jr., 1915

392 Mississippi River Boulevard, St. Paul, Minnesota, 1915

to be proud of. By the time I finished college, the shelves contained special editions of Arthur Machen's *The Hill of Dreams,* and Francis Thompson's *The Hound of Heaven,* as well as carefully chosen titles by Tolstoi, Turgenev, Gogol, Dostoyevski, Katherine Mansfield, complete volumes of the Romantic poets and a well-worn *Oxford Book of English Verse*.

No matter what was going on in our house, Sundays were set apart, the Bible was read aloud, and my Dad's wishes prevailed.

I was eight years old when a classroom situation occurred at Oak Hall, my school, in which my critical judgment about art first caused particular comment, something which would continue throughout my life. The class's crayon drawings were arranged along the blackboard ledge and we were asked to put a mark on the board above the one we thought was best. I was alone in my choice. The teacher thought I must have voted the way I did as an act of kindness, because I had picked the drawing that obviously wasn't going to get any votes. At this distance I can't precisely say what my motive was, but I have an idea that the drawing I chose was the most creative of the lot,

the one exhibiting the greatest originality, no matter how awkwardly executed. I felt sure it was "best" and I stuck to my decision.

When I was still at Oak Hall, one of my stories in the school literary journal won first prize. *The Priceless Jewel* was written during a Christmas vacation. It was about a powerful king who spent his life searching for the jewel of happiness only to have it shatter into a thousand pieces when he came upon it in the Garden Beautiful. As he stood there with everything around him in disarray, a voice said, "You have with you always true happiness and the Garden Beautiful. Cultivate them and you will indeed have a priceless jewel."

During those years we spent our summer holidays as a family at some northern lake in a tent or resort cabin. We drove there in the family Packard, each with a drawstring bag for belongings, and with our Airedale, Mike, on the running board. Eventually my parents chose a site two hundred miles north of St. Paul, on Deer Lake in Itasca County, the headwaters of the Mississippi River. There they built a cabin that incorporated my mother's insistence on airiness and expandability, and my father's ideas of economy and practical living (oil lamps, ice from the lake cut in winter, water from a pump outside). When we were children, the big screened front porch was the place where we slept on canvas cots with our friends, while our parents had the one and only indoor bedroom behind the fieldstone fireplace. Each of us had a shelf for our personal possessions. We brushed our teeth by going out the front door, down the path through the cedars and birch, to the lake.

I'm the only one who still goes there for summer visits. To me, it remains a "Woodsman's Place" and not a fashionable vacation residence. Today the grass and clover around the cabin are cut only twice a season with a hand scythe; the bunchberry, flowering clintonia, and wild roses grow unimpeded, and the kinnikinnick, June berries and thorn apples get tall enough to obscure the lake. The original hand pump draws up well water heavy with iron that I have to filter myself. The old woodshed and ice-house still stand. There is a worn path from the back door to the "little house out back," a two-seater.

My last three years of high school were spent at an institution newly founded by my own and my friends' parents. They named it The Summit School (after its location and its aspirations). When the school opened in 1917, the United States was still involved in World War I. My father was a dollar-a-year man working for the government as head of a draft

Weed family at Pinecone Camp, Lake Wabado, Minnesota, 1920

office; Mother was engaged in Red Cross meetings where school girls my age were knitting, making cotton swabs, and rolling bandages. I especially recall how moved we were when I read aloud a letter that arrived right after Armistice from my French pen pal.

How was November 11 for you? Here it was glorious. I was at school, and at eleven o'clock, the cannons and the bells of every church announced that the Armistice was signed. So we all went into the salle des fêtes *and we all sang La Marseillaise. It was splendid to hear a thousand girls singing together especially on this day, for we sang with all our heart and the teachers joining us of course.*

COLLEGE YEARS 1920–1924

In high school my thoughts about Vassar College were pretty nebulous, resulting mainly from contact with older women who had gone there. Although it seemed pretty far

Abby at Vassar
1922

away, I never considered any other alternative. (At this time, I had not been away from home for more than overnight visits with friends or cousins and one slightly longer visit to Washington, D.C., with my Weed grandparents.)

Despite my attempts at assimilating the orientation material that had been sent to me, I was a very green freshman indeed. No more than a handful of Midwesterners made the train trip of two days and two nights to Poughkeepsie, and when we arrived, we seemed considerably more confused than our Eastern counterparts or the girls who had gone to Eastern schools.

For the first few weeks, life was like a theater performance. Here, before the footlights, were all sorts of young women playing roles, appearing, disappearing, and here was I, trying to decide as I watched them which ones to talk to, whom to walk to classes with, what group to join in the dining hall.

I was homesick. At night I dreamed of home; during the day, I longed for the familiar faces and loving voices of my family. One way of dealing with these feelings was to write frequent letters to my parents. My letters were more than cheerful, full of entertaining anecdotes about adventures and misadventures. Writing them provided my moments of self-composure, an escape from the play called "College."

During my first semester, I was quite apprehensive about how and where I was going to spend the Thanksgiving holiday. Going home was out of the question in view of the length of the train time. It was my unexpected good luck to be invited by a classmate to New York for the weekend. The warmth of that invitation still remains with me. In addition to a festive dinner with a hospitable family, I had my first experience of a New York that I had never even thought about: we went to Ellis Island and to a women's court. I was stunned that behind the lights and glitter there was so much misery. It was with mixed feelings of pride and shame that I contemplated these facts. At the same time my country welcomed the poor and downtrodden, it did not treat them with much respect and consideration once they got here.

My freshman grades were disappointing, but I did pass all my exams and finally chose English as a major, with a minor in psychology. My course in art appreciation meant little to me; in fact there was a time when I wanted to drop it. We sat in a darkened auditorium, in chairs to which a writing surface and a small lamp were attached. We listened to lectures about slides on a screen.

I wrote home that we joked over the ridiculous things we were being shown as contemporary art. We thought they were outlandish—Picasso's *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon*, Braque's Cubism, De Chirico's emphasis on the supernatural.

But if I didn't respond to art in the classroom, I was always excited by the natural beauty of the campus, and my letters home were full of lyrical passages: ". . . Imagine walking around a hill, all still except for a brook as it gurgles out from under the ice, and the sound of snow falling on dry oak leaves. . . ." "We went on another geology trip. I used to imagine a spot by a waterfall where there would be gray rocks to break the spray, and on either side, pines, moss, and green ferns. Yesterday I found a place like that. At my feet was the place of my dreams."

There were also all the wonderful mindless activities that were part of being a "Vassar girl" of the period: hay rides, sleigh rides, off-campus walks to Valentino movies followed by a heavenly concoction of chocolate cake and ice cream called a Devil.

Vassar gave me a good education during which I learned how to learn. I realize in retrospect that it was essentially during those years that life is a great adventure; that joy often comes from saying Yes to what life has to offer.

MY WANDER YEAR June, 1925–May, 1926

After I received my Vassar degree, I spent a year at home in order to quality for a Minnesota State Teacher's Certificate for which I needed the required number of courses in education. For two semesters, I was enrolled in Macalester College near my home, and I must say it was interesting to be at a coeducational institution for the first time since kindergarten.

During those months, I was making plans for a summer in Europe. My father had given me $1,000 to cover all expenses for the summer abroad. It was of considerable significance for my future travels that I was able to stretch these funds so that they saw me through a stay of eleven months. It was to prove a voyage complicated by tragic death and one with periods of loneliness, but which provided exposure to the mysterious and foreign atmosphere of Riga, Latvia, in its first days as a republic and to the more sophisticated life of Paris in the 1920s.

My recent roommate and traveling companion, Bertha Paret, and I were unexpectedly invited to visit Riga, where her sister's husband was the military attaché. I spent five months

there. While my introduction to diplomatic life was mostly parties and learning the fox-trot, as it turned out, the intricacies of diplomatic life I was exposed to in that remote outpost proved to be an important introduction to similar confrontations and complications of international diplomacy I would encounter forty years later. In addition, Bert and I accepted an invitation arranged by a Latvian Vassar classmate to attend the University of Riga. We enrolled in a French literature class as that was the only foreign language in which I was slightly proficient. My Latvian was rather limited.

In a letter from Riga to my father, I said, "I don't want to think that I'm wasting my time. I'm looking for some good work to do and won't be satisfied unless I make the most of being here." I was doing lots of thinking. The events that had sent me off to Riga affected my ideas about Fate. I was developing the attitude that I was in two worlds at the same time: "Events influenced me; how much do I influence them?" The concept of manipulating Fate was becoming a less important aspect of my philosophy. "I see life as a mystery to which I will probably never find an answer. Don't look for an answer," I told myself; "look for the happy accident!"

Occasionally I would find Bert alone at teatime, nibbling cinnamon toast, listening to the samovar brewing and the wind howling outside, and feeling very cozy as we settled down to our sewing or knitting. At such times we would talk about serious matters: What is the special contribution that America can make to the rest of the world? My answer to that was Optimism. I had come to the conclusion that there was a hopelessness pervading the countries of the Old World. One diplomat who had spent years in Russia told me that a single genius would rise who would bring about the necessary changes.

My next residence, in Paris, was on the Left Bank . . . the American University Club where I shared a room with a number of different roommates. The club itself was comfortable; it had a good library and served adequate meals, but my six weeks there were the loneliest I had ever experienced. To fill the time, I learned as much about Paris as I could by visiting the famous landmarks, getting to know the geography, and finding my way around on the Metro. I began to feel that it wasn't the people or the language or the surroundings that were strange; it was I, myself. Except for an occasional evening spent with an Englishwoman working for some commission of the League of Nations, I felt confused and desolate.

I wanted to get into the mainstream of Paris life, and I thought that if I lived with a French family and took French lessons, my time would be spent more agreeably and more profitably. I didn't seem to be able to find a French family, but I did find an English pension near the Arc de Triomphe. I moved there anticipating the arrival of the Parets. While there, I connected with a remarkable Frenchwoman whose name had been given to me as a possible French teacher.

This person, Mlle. Dhercourt, received me twice a week and introduced me to the contemporary culture of France. While my diffidence and Midwestern accent have stayed with me in my French conversation to this day, I learned to read French fluently, and I even began to write short essays and poems as well. Without those mornings in Mademoiselle's library where there was always a small grate fire and a gleaming copper bowl of tulips or mimosa, those weeks in Paris would have been dismal.

During a lecture on art at the Louvre, I was particularly struck by a French term that eventually had a significant influence on my own appreciation of art. A particular painting was described by the lecturer as "*trop recherché*." Because it had been "overworked," it no longer expressed the spontaneity or the zest that had to be part of art. When I started to collect art seriously, I always looked for something fresh, for a breaking-away from old cliché forms and ideas, for spontaneity.

MARRIED LIFE

When I returned from Europe in late May, 1926, I was hired to teach fifth grade in a private school for girls in Kansas City. Although I liked teaching, I felt that my social life was more restricted than it should be. After my first year, I returned home and invested my savings in a Ford with a rumble seat, to drive up to the lake. It was a time for taking stock.

Back in St. Paul, I went on a blind date at a Fort Snelling party where I met Lieutenant Colonel Benjamin Edwards Grey, a West Point graduate and career officer. His family was among the early settlers of Kentucky, but because his mother died when he was three years old, he was raised by his maternal grandparents who had an orange grove in Florida. Hard times had struck all of them following the loss of the groves in the Big Freeze of 1894.

Ben received an appointment to West Point and after graduation served in the Philippines. During World War I he

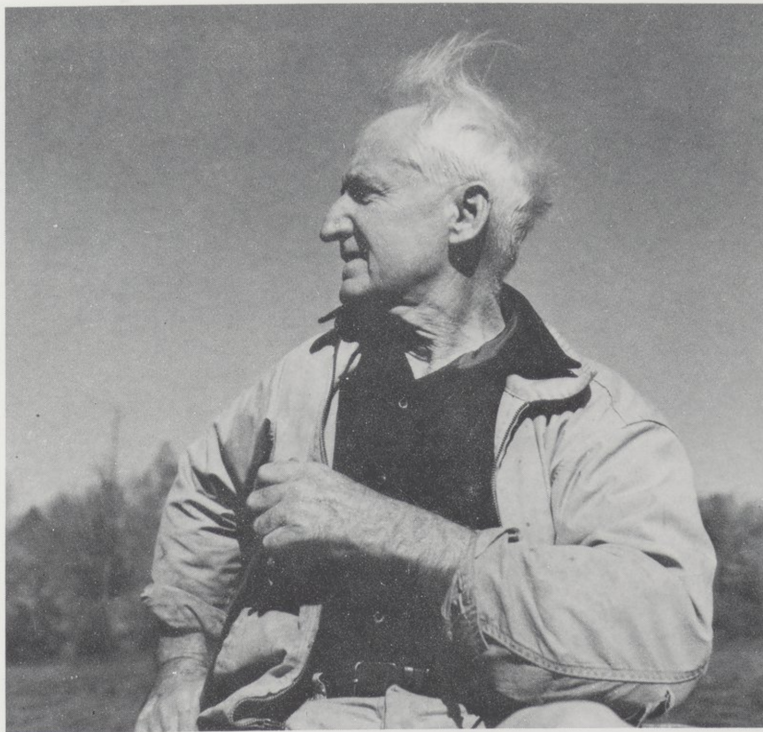
Abby's engagement photograph, 1929

Ben and Abby shortly after wedding, Culver, Indiana 1930

served in France with the Seventh Division. Ben was a thorough-going military man, a man of the highest integrity and complete loyalty. At the same time, as his friend O. K. Carlson wrote after Ben's death, . . . *he had a tenderness of heart, a thoughtfulness and consideration of others that was somewhat rare in a military man. He was most generous to his friends.* He was, as well, a loving husband.

At the time of our engagement, I was twenty-six; Ben was twenty years my senior. He was second in command at Fort Snelling. Five months later, I was a bride going down that wonderful staircase at home, and after the ceremony, there was a military reception, crossed swords and all.

For the next twenty-seven years of my life, I was an army wife. In the beginning I had to make adjustments to the army social scene, which involved playing bridge, spending four summers in a tent at Camp Knox, Kentucky, and giving parties at various posts. Although it was considered somewhat unusual for so young a woman to be the wife of a senior officer, I managed. Entertaining was an important social factor and in my position protocol was strictly observed, which made for a rather rigid social life.



Ben in retirement, fishing at Deer Lake, 1950

I came to my marriage with some sense of how to handle money, the result not only of my native caution but also from my European experience. From time to time my father gave me bonds and stocks, so I started with a checking account of my own. Ben's monthly army check went into our joint account. For a while we were strapped but Ben's interest in financial affairs was aroused and he read and studied a great deal. Over the years, he made many investments and purchases—all in my name.

When Ben retired in 1942 we began to travel with the seasons, spending more and more time at Deer Lake. My father died in 1947, and Ben and I purchased the cabin with the full consent of the family. With this step, we actually owned a home of our own for the first time. We filled it with Navajo rugs as we acquired them one at a time during our western travels, and with mementos from my Riga days, the quilts from Kentucky, and sofa cushions from Seminole Indians in Florida. The important art that I was beginning to buy remained on the walls of our Salt Lake City apartment, our last army assignment.

When the lake froze and heavy snowfalls threatened, we

became wanderers, spending winter months in Austin, Texas, where we shared Christmas with Ben's uncle and family. After several years of gypsying, however, we felt the need for a permanent winter home in the south. When we embarked on this search, we went first from Minnesota to New York for a visit with my mother and brother. At this time my brother Paul was the vicar of St. Luke's Chapel in Greenwich Village where he lived in a commodious vicarage on Hudson Street. From New York, Ben and I followed the coastal route to Florida. We crossed the Everglades and finally found a cottage at Fort Myers Beach which suited us. We spent four happy winters there. Later we rented a house on Captiva Island so that we could be closer to my sister Emmy Lu and her husband who were living on nearby Sanibel Island.

These were Ben's last months. We both knew he was dying of cancer, and we were very close. Alone in the evening, it was I who read aloud or practiced music on my recorder while Ben rested on the chaise longue near the French doors that overlooked the water.

Ben died on March 19, 1956, in a St. Paul hospital.

ADJUSTING TO A LIFE ALONE

Although I had been braced for Ben's death, it was still a terrible blow. I was bereft not only of his physical presence and his companionship, but a whole way of life that we had created together, as well. I missed our cross-country trips and our seasonal changes of residence.

Gradually I began to feel a bewildering sense of freedom. I felt that everything was possible. At the same time I was confronted by the moral responsibility of how best to use the large amount of money now at my disposal.

Ben had accumulated a fortune which was now in trust in my name. He had done so by acquiring detailed information about defaulted western railroad stocks and bonds, by poring over maps, as he had over those of the Civil War, so that he understood where the rails crossed the plains and mountains and their potential for payloads of grain and metal. Instead of selling securities, he used them to borrow for down payments on additional purchases. For this reason, we always seemed to be in debt and chose to live modestly indeed, uncluttered with property.

Now I was alone with this inheritance. What next?

Several months after the funeral, I moved from our apartment in Salt Lake City to one in St. Paul to be near my sisters. But before I left I established the annual Benjamin Edwards Grey Memorial Lecture in poetry as part of the summer writers' conference at the University of Utah.

I had already decided that part of the large sum of money in my trust was to be transformed into the Ben and Abby Grey Foundation. It was set up under the tutelage of lawyers and a trust officer, first at the Walker Bank in Salt Lake City, then at the First National Bank of St. Paul. I proposed that the funds be used to seek out artists, sponsor them, encourage their creative expressions, and purchase their works for exhibition at some future time.

In 1959, when visiting mother who was living with Paul in the St. Luke's vicarage, I heard about a trip around the world to be composed of fourteen women—mostly New Yorkers—that would provide entree to special places and people not usually available to the ordinary tourist. While I had some misgivings about joining this group, it was a project that seemed to bring many of my deepest impulses into a clear focus. I wanted to be part of the big world again. I wanted to see as much beauty as I could and to understand cultures other than my own. I especially wanted to communicate my sense of oneness with all artists and poets by encouraging them and gathering courage from them.

I read the brochure that spelled out the itinerary of our trip and discovered that there were "days at leisure." How would I spend these days? I had no intention of wasting time hunting for souvenirs or being fitted for custom-made clothes in Hong Kong. I wanted most to communicate with the people I met, not merely to stare at them as oddities. And suddenly I knew, without any doubt, how these "days at leisure" would be spent. Wherever I found myself, I would search out contemporary artists and buy their work to show in my country. Thus the Grey Foundation collection had its beginnings as part of an ongoing process of self-education.

In India, for instance, I didn't look for miniaturists or gem setters; in Iran, I didn't look for rugmakers. In many places, I didn't know where to look or exactly what to look *for,* but whatever it was going to be, it had to express the response of a contemporary sensibility to contemporary circumstances. In every country, I asked, "Where are your working artists? What are they doing? How are they breaking with the past to cope with the present?" I used every means I could think of: the

First travel group at Taj Mahal, April, 1960

native guides, the United States Embassy and United States Information Service (USIS), and I followed up leads from casual contacts and strangers.

Since that first trip that lasted two-and-one-half months, I have been four times to India, once to Japan, Hong Kong, Thailand, Cambodia, and Nepal; twice to Pakistan, eight times to Iran; five times to Turkey and Greece; to Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, Tunisia; to Italy, Spain, Holland, and England. Most of my travel time has been spent in the Middle East and the subcontinent.

From the account that follows of my earlier years as an art collector, it can be seen that I have always been as much interested in the human contact with the artist and the driving force behind the work as in the intrinsic aesthetic aspects of the work itself.

FIRST ART COLLECTING

As I review my beginnings as an art collector, I must say that I was being educated not only by the art itself, but also by my encounters with artists. It was in these encounters that I became increasingly aware of the motivation, the dedication of

the creator, and of the importance of the interplay between the patron—I suppose there is no better word for it—and the artist.

I bought my first piece of original art when I was an undergraduate. The work of a group of Austrian children had been mounted in the Vassar Art Gallery, and from this exhibit, I selected the reproduction of a painting by a fourteen-year-old of a girl of similar age standing on a hillside and holding a bunch of wild flowers. When I brought the work back to St. Paul, it was put into a narrow red frame, and occasionally I find a place to hang it in my present dwelling.

While throughout my years collecting I spent only modest sums, I felt sure that when I bought an artist's work, I was encouraging the artist to go on working. While the works were often not "important" except in the eyes of the creator and myself, many had often been publicly exhibited. In buying them, I was pleasing myself and expressing my own taste which was essentially good but needed educating in modern idioms. I had to progress from the lyrical watercolors to which I responded so easily, to works that were a response to a world both beautiful and ugly; works that were arresting and strange, demanding that, through art, I perceive and understand reality in a deeper way.

There is a footnote to this preamble of my art education. As a young woman, I had closely examined reproductions in art books, and later, I studied large prints borrowed from the Salt Lake City public library. Years afterward, I realized that I couldn't really enjoy commercial reproductions for more than a summing-up glance. When I started on my travels, it struck me almost at once that even in Nepal, there were young artists who were subsisting on art reproductions in magazines from the West that somehow found their way to the Himalayas. What these artists wanted to see was original work by their Western contemporaries. That is why, on my second trip abroad, I carried with me a portfolio of ink drawing, watercolors, woodcuts, pastels, and acrylics. These works were on loan from Minnesota artists. Whatever their intrinsic merit or their market value, they were unique. I know they made their mark as the first current original work from the West to be seen by the general public and particularly by the artists in the faraway places I visited.

This next portion of my story has been gathered from almost a decade of diary entries that form a kaleidoscope of associations with artists, places, and events of special interest to

me. Throughout the years of my travels, I always felt a poignant urgency about *time,* knowing that I would never again be able to experience an exact duplication of conditions, circumstances, and my own state of receptivity to them. Thus at various times of the day—immediately after a particularly compelling encounter, perhaps late in the evening when the events of the preceding hours were still sharply etched in my mind, but usually at dawn when memory had already begun to retain some impressions and reject others—at these times, I would fill the pages of my notebooks. These records include names, addresses, dates, conversations, descriptive fragments, deep thoughts, sometimes in the form of poems. This was my way of accumulating a treasure house of recollections that I have been able to call up at will.

Front porch at Deer Lake

MONGOLIA
Ulaanbaatar
INNER MONGOLIA
SINKIANG UIGHUR
NINGSIA HUI
CHINA
TIBET
Lhasa
Gartok
Wulumuchi (Urumchi)
K'ashih (Kashgar)
Soch'e (Yarkand)
Chiuch'üan (Kiuchuan)
Hsining
Lanchou
Hsian
Ch'engtu
Ch'ungch'ing
Ichang
Wuhan (Hankow)
Changteh
Ch'angsha
Hengyang
Kueiyang
K'unming
Kueilin
KWANGSI CHUANG
Kuangchou (Canton)
Macao (Port.)
Hong Kong (U.K.)
Shant'ou (Swatow)
Hsiamen (Amoy)
Fuchou
Nanch'ang
Nanching
Wusih
Shanghai
Hangchou
Ningpo
Wenchou
K'aifeng
Chinan (Tsinan)
Ch'ing Tao (Tsingtao)
Yent'ai (Chefoo)
Luta
Peking
T'ienching (Tientsin)
Changchiak'ou (Kalgan)
Ch'angch'un
Shenyang (Mukden)
Chilin (Kirin)
Haerhpin (Harbin)
Ussuriysk
Vladivostok
NORTH KOREA
P'yongyang
SOUTH KOREA
Seoul
Inchon
Taejon
Taegu
Pusan
SEA OF JAPAN
YELLOW SEA
EAST CHINA SEA
RYUKYU IS.
JAPAN
HONSHU
SHIKOKU
KYUSHU
Tokyo
Yokohama
Nagoya
Kyoto
Osaka
Kobe
Hiroshima
Fukuoka
Nagasaki
Kagoshima
Kitakyushu
Kochi
Niigata
Sendai
Shizuoka
Kanazawa
Aomori
Taipei
TAIWAN (FORMOSA)
Tainan
BATAN IS.
BABUYAN IS.
LUZON
Laoag
Quezon City
Manila
PHILIPPINES
Legaspi
MINDORO
SAMAR
Iloilo
Cebu
PALAWAN
MINDANAO
Davao
SULU SEA
CHINA SEA
PHILIP
SE
HAINAN
Haikou
Hanoi
Haiphong
Hue
INDO CHINA
VIETNAM
LAOS
Vientiane
CAMBODIA
Phnom Penh
Saigon
THAILAND
Bangkok (Krung Thep)
Chiang Mai
BURMA
Mandalay
Lashio
Bhamo
Myitkyina
Rangoon
Moulmein
Bassein
Akyab
Gulf
BAY OF BENGAL
ANDAMAN IS. (India)
BANGLADESH
Dacca
Chittagong
Imphal
BHUTAN
Thimphu
NEPAL
Kathmandu
Gangtok
INDIA
Calcutta
Patna
Varanasi (Benares)
Allahabad
Lucknow
Kanpur
Agra
Delhi
New Delhi
Moradabad
Jaipur
Bikaner
Ahmedabad
Baroda
Indore
Bhaunagar
Surat
Bombay
Poona
Nagpur
Cuttack
Kakinada
Hyderabad
Panjim
Bangalore
Mysore
Madras
Pondicherry
Madurai
Kozhikode (Calicut)
LACCADIVE IS. (India)
ARABIAN SEA
PAKISTAN
Karachi
Hyderabad
Sukkur
Multan
Lahore
Amritsar
Rawalpindi
Islamabad
Peshawar
Quetta
KASHMIR
Srinagar
AFGHANISTAN
Kabul
Qandahar
Herat
Mashhad
Tehrān
Kermān
Bandar Abbās
Sharjah
Muscat (Masqat)
Ashkhabad
Krasnovodsk
CASPIAN SEA
ARAL SEA
Bukhara
Samarkand
Dushanbe
Kokand
Tashkent
Andizhan
Frunze
Alma Ata
Lake Balkhash
Karaganda
Tselinograd
Semipalatinsk

Is it enthusiasm that makes reality? Or the will that enforces the cleaning up and digging of ditches? Or does necessity drive us with time goads, summer into fall into winter? Reality is obvious to common sense people. But it is not to enchanters, miracle-makers, bead-tellers, poetical persons, of which I am one.

Daybook
August 1, 1949

DIARY I

Around the World 1960

JAPAN
HONG KONG
THAILAND
CAMBODIA
INDIA
KASHMIR
NEPAL
PAKISTAN
IRAN
ISRAEL

I know the isolation of an intellectually creative woman. Where are her companions? What boundaries must she cross? Who am I? Having been everything and nothing, is it possible to become Self Aware in the next two months at Deer Lake? To be who I am? It is essential to know this in order to shape the "Act" to the "I." Possible solutions: 1) Examine when *I am most aware of living,* whom *I enjoy,* what *thoughts excite me. 2) Deliberately make choices. "This is more mine, this less," etc. 3) Often ask "Who am I?" Possible results: useful knowledge in accepting shocks, terrors, disappointments of life and thus extending blessings by my self-composure, producing economy of gestures, and taking pleasure in fitting self to act.*

Daybook
August 1, 1949

In early March of 1960 I met the group who were to be my traveling companions for the next two and a half months, during which we would be going around the world, my first voyage. I had already begun to formulate the project of seeking out artists and perhaps buying some of their work while my tour-mates were searching shops for souvenirs. Pearls, obis, and lacquerware were fine in their place, but I was motivated by an eagerness to communicate with and understand other cultures and the creative expression they inspired. This motivation led me to the studios of artists throughout the world and

resulted eventually in a series of international exchanges of artists and exhibitions.

Tokyo, Japan
March 20–26, 1960

We were in Japan in the early spring of 1960, and although the cherry trees had not yet flowered, some of their naked branches had been adorned with paper blossoms in the Tokyo streets. Through the weeks to come, I was able to achieve a degree of intimacy with my surroundings by using binoculars that helped me fill in details too far away to be delineated from my view through the window of a bus or taxi. I remember an occasion when we stopped to enjoy a panorama; my binocular glasses brought me the close-up of a scene in a distant valley where a lone farmer with a hand scythe was cutting early barley or some other grain while his oxen and two-wheeled cart stood in the field.

The Frank Lloyd Wright Imperial Hotel. I went to sleep last night with visions of the Kabuki play we had seen. The sets were enchanting: a country road bordered by a hedge revealing irises that the horse seemed to be chomping. Our horse talked by nodding and backing away and by tugging the hero's sleeve . . . At four a.m. I was awakened by the sound of timbers being thrown from a height onto a pile—thwang, thwang—like the slapping of wood on wood in the play, a sound described in the program notes as being "associated with the melancholy of an autumn eve." Then, as I heard the soft tones of a flute, I thought "Japan is filled with Kabuki sounds at night, and they are all real, the very tissue of local life."

Dust blows about the city; windows are wrenched open by gusts. Another wild hot day. The hotel is steady enough now, but last night there was a tremor, an earth dragon speaking. After lunch, to the kimono markets: stacks and piles, many hanging—rough, thin, stiff, falling in graceful folds in a bewildering and ingenious range of colors and images. I bought two half-length "happy coats" of brocaded satin, lined in silk, one white, one peach. The one for my teen-age niece, Abby, was crimson with geometrical designs of what looked to me like goodluck signs—a ceremonial urn for instance. The other for myself had scattered chrysanthemums tinted orange or brown, very feathery, with gold centers. Both had a pocket in the left seam, invisible, of course.

The great Buddha at Kamakura called the Daibutsu—very still, very holy, contemplating some Otherness and not the pine trees sheltering the little deserted shops, nor the cold urn

First travel group in Japan, 1960

no longer wafting incense smoke after the night of rain. This Buddha smiles, including me standing under my umbrella in the cold drizzle.

This afternoon I went to the art gallery in the Matsuya, a department store on the Ginza, where I bought a portfolio of twelve works entitled "Masterpieces of Woodcut Colour Prints." They came in a tan cardboard case tied with ribbon, the cover printed with titles and names in English, each print matted and accompanied with a resumé in Japanese. I could only read the dates in Arabic numerals and from that gathered they were created by artists born around 1900, most of them participating in exhibits as late as 1959. Most were figurative works, all having a watercolor appearance, very lovely, harmonious, shibui colors, a bird with uplifted beak, singing; several women seated, one holding a violin; an abstract; a seascape with brilliant blue sky and sea green depths of water. I never ran across any of their names in the working artists I chose later. They give me great pleasure, four standing in a row against the dresser mirror. I must ask Taki, our accomplished guide, to translate the comment accompanying each one . . . .

After the bus trip—tortuous turns and switchbacks, vistas of valleys—to Fujiyama, we went to a print shop in Makone where I searched through piles of work looking for something contemporary. The senior proprietor helped me find four ink paintings that I thought were modern in brush stroke and as he handed them to me he said, "Very powerful. The Kano School; over 150 years old." I was astounded at their age. I bought them all for $24.44 American money: a lion, a temple and trees on a mountainside, a hawk, and another bird, perhaps a kingfisher. They were a preview for me of the Zen style of painting.

The following day, I made my first visit alone to a print shop. I was put into a taxi by Taki who provided me with the name and address of the Mikumo Wood Block Hand Print Company. When I was deposited on the busy street in front of a courtyard entrance, I hadn't the slightest feeling of fear. I felt excited and competent; above all, I had a conviction that I was doing exactly what I was supposed to be doing.

Within the courtyard, laborers were chiseling large pieces of stone. An enormous dog in a large wicker cage barked furiously at me as I came in. There were several doors leading to different dwellings, and I was uncertain about which one to enter when I noticed that behind a large window, two men were sitting on the floor engaged in hand-printing. An arrow pointed to a door on the left. When I knocked, it was opened by a young man who, it turned out, was the head printer, Ishihara Mikumo. He led me into his living quarters where I was seated on a low sofa with my back to the window.

Since this was my first glimpse of a Japanese dwelling, I tried to absorb as many details as possible. I noticed with a certain amount of astonishment a single bowl containing a few oranges and several sprouting onions. A small oil heater was brought into the room and lit, and Mikumo, whose English was fragmentary, brought in a portfolio, shoving aside the art objects and pottery so that a space could be cleared on the low table. At first glance, the woodcut prints he showed me didn't seem to be the kind of work I was looking for. But as I continued to examine them, there were certain affirmations: unusual colors—lavenders and mauves, a delicious pink—reminding me of the party favors and snappers of my childhood. The images were rooted in Japanese metaphor: I was especially taken with a goose with two heads, each looking in opposite directions as if defying the viewer to find such a phenomenon unusual.

Yas Kobashi,
Expectation,
color woodcut, c. 1960

Our conversation proceeded haltingly, but I was determined to find out the titles of the works I was looking at. One particular title was too difficult for Mr. Mikumo to translate, so off he went to another room to consult a dictionary. The word was "expectation." This was the goose print.

The artist whose work I was examining was Yas Kobashi who, I discovered later, had created the ceramic construction

that is part of the background for the small garden at Asia House in New York.

After a good deal of agonizing, I chose seven Kobashis and one by the printer's wife, Inagaki, of moonlight in a midnight blue sky. As I waited in the darkening room for the bill to be presented to me (it came to a total of $50), an old woman with a toddler clinging to her kimono sleeve came in with several branches of forsythia which she arranged in a vase set in a niche.

Watching the life that was going on around me, I felt a surge of confidence that came from my first successful venture on my own into the world of art. And as I rode back to the hotel in a taxi that had been summoned for me, surrounded by the lights, the people, the color and movement, I felt completely at home and completely alive, savoring the immediacy of the moment, the directness of the experience, with no interpreter between me and my impressions.

Kyoto, Japan
March 27, 1960

The Red Lantern Shop is a small chilly room, yet one of the most renowned print shops in Japan. A bench runs the length of the large window; three chairs at right angles to the bench face a small platform on which Mr. Kondo, Sr. places a small sampling of the work of several artists. It is drizzling outside and I am the sole viewer. Mr. Kondo, soft-voiced and wonderfully composed in manner, creates an atmosphere in which nothing intrudes on my concentration. As he goes back and forth to fetch additional work for me to look at, there is no sound other than the whisper of the rice paper, causing the prints to seem to be breathing presences. I chose about a dozen works: Kiyoshi Saito's *Tenderness,* Okiie Hashimoto's *Stone Garden,* Tomio Kinoshita's *Couple,* Tadashi Nakayama's *Girl and Sun Flower* (later stolen when on tour in the USA and replaced), Jun'ichiro Sekino's *Girl and Red Bird,* Tamami Shima's *Returning Way* (marvelous perspective), Shigeru Hatsuyama's *Flowers* (very imaginative, with mermaid connotations), among them. Mr. Kondo gave me Kaoru Kawano's *Doves and Girl,* a naive woodcut of a child with the doves on her head which he presented with great seriousness and with humor too. It is a gift I treasure. But Mr. Kondo has given me an even more valuable gift by imparting a sense of the sacredness of a work of art as the unique expression of the artist's talent and sensibility.

A few days later, we went on an excursion of five hours by boat to the Island of Takamatsu in the Sito Inland Sea. As the

Okiie Hashimoto,
Stone Garden VI,
color woodcut, 1958

boat plowed through the waters, I focused my binoculars on the shore with its terraced mountainsides, green patches of garden, orange trees laden with fruit. There were plum trees in bloom and a huddle of tombstones. Many of these images had already become familiar through my increasing knowledge of Ukiyoe prints; others seemed to come directly from a Japanese novel, already a classic but only recently translated into English, which I was reading at the time: Ogai Mori's *The Wild Geese*. I have the most vivid recollection of reading that book in the Kawaraku Inn, Japanese in style, where my room was bounded by sliding panels and contained a post that was actually the highly polished trunk of a ginkgo tree. The lintel was of natural bamboo, and a glazed pottery brazier glowed with a little warmth in the early morning. I was often wakeful with the excitement of new scenes, and at that particular time, I finished the book at 3:30 in the morning. But though the hour

was predawn and I was too warm under a gorgeous orange silk puff printed with applegreen cranes and tied with dark blue silk knots, I scribbled impressions of temples and shrines in my travel diary.

Tokyo, Japan
April 3, 1960

Because I always listened, and my traveling companions as well were now on the lookout for information for me, I discovered the Yoseido Gallery on the Ginza, where I chose about a dozen prints, including some of Umetaro Azechi's mountaineers. One of these works included a plump bird resembling the ruffed grouse familiar to me as the northern Minnesota partridge. When I asked the dealer for the name of the bird in the print, he checked his dictionary and reported that it was a snow grouse. That connection pleased me.

Kowloon, Hong Kong
April 4, 1960

No more Taki to ease the way, to find the answer in an unknown environment. In a second-rate hotel in Kowloon, my room faces a dismal court, the plaster wall is cracked in patterns resembling black-stemmed vines. The streets are bewildering—shops everywhere and a dizzying amount of junk. A sullen rain is falling. Dreary and dark.

Kowloon,
the City of Nine Dragons
April 5–8, 1960

Banks on banks of one-room dwellings. In New Territory in front of a small doorway, children with babies strapped on their backs stare at the passersby. One child of about eight, totally blind, rests her right hand lightly on the shoulder of a younger child as they move together in total unison. Inside the corridor of the walled village, within the dark interior, are animals and people, straw, litter, droppings, the stench blending with the perfume of incense. Families of ducks with newly hatched ducklings parade around in the clutter. The only adults who sit or move around in these caves are old women. I am reminded of the Pueblo homes in the beehive above Taos where dried Indian corn cobs and husks hung from pegs provide a festive touch. No such festive relief in this dismal place.

The chief attraction in Hong Kong for most Western tourists is the shopping. As soon as we got here, most of my companions dashed off to tailors, whose addresses they had hoarded, to get fitted for suits and dresses. The small shops near the luxury hotels are crammed with carved ivory, jade, Chinese antiques, exquisite embroideries, gold and silver brocades. I look at this bewildering array of objects with a de-

Jun'ichiro Sekino,
Flowers and Dragon,
color woodcut, 1973

tached interest and without the remotest desire to own any of them. In desperation for a gift I bought an abacus. Luckily at a Relief Store for Refugees, called Welfare Handicrafts, run by the English on Salisbury Road, I found a table piled high with scrolls. I selected five: They were all watercolor paintings on silk, bordered by white brocade, very elegant, delicate colors, chrysanthemums on long stems, a lily with a nearby dragonfly. Each had a red logo and a vertical title, or perhaps a poem in oriental lettering. This purchase included a "comprehensive certificate of origin" saying that the art was "absolutely produced in Hong Kong."

Wandering about later in the afternoon, I found a dressy,

flat red leather purse and I'm going to have matching red shoes made so that I can remember walking the streets of Kowloon.

As I glance out of my draped window late in the evening I see in the uncurtained bedroom across the way a Chinese mother undressing a toddler and settling him at the foot of a large bed. Father comes in and removes his outer clothes as he sits on the edge of the bed. When the woman passes by him, he pulls her to him in an embrace. In the midst of these intimacies, the child bounces up and tackles his father from the back, flinging his arms around his neck. No privacy in these dwellings. The ways of men and women are observed by the children from their infancy. The tableau continues as the baby's mother detaches him from his father, wipes his nose, talks to him all the while, and lays him down again, covering him with his own little orange silk quilt. I feel like an intruder, a little embarrassed but nonetheless a little more knowledgeable of life in China.

We were about to leave for Bangkok and my red shoes had not yet arrived! Nor my red purse! Everyone else had suits, coats, gowns, and the only mementos I had bought for myself remained undelivered. Our hotel manager remained unperturbed and assured me that he would attend to the problem. All I had to do was to leave the balance owed for the articles. Well, what could I do but trust him? The trust wasn't misplaced. At the eleventh hour, as I stood at the airport surrounded by my baggage and waiting with the others for the plane, a young Chinese rushed up to me, all smiles and affability. Here is my purse. And here are my shoes—firecracker red, both. I try them on and they are a perfect fit, and a perfect remembrance of my many walks through the Hong Kong streets. Applause all around from tour friends and bystanders.

Bangkok, Thailand
The Oriental Hotel
April 9–10, 1960

My room has six large windows overlooking the river, thus providing a continuous panorama of lively boat traffic. The water is teak brown, punctuated here and there with pink lotus in full bloom. Coconut rind goes out with the tide; in two separate places, the bloated carcasses of pigs. Young girls sit on their front steps, feet in the murky canal. They are washing dishes, clothes, and I even see a soap-sudsed dog.

The mamas make the babies wave to us, but when the tourist launch noses its way through the floating market, interrupting the native tempo, pushing aside the graceful, heavily

laden skiffs, I feel ashamed. The people around us look disgruntled, scarcely veiling their thoughts. "Who are these foreigners staring at us from their canopied seats on that chugging foul-smelling craft?"

On the water, the teak logs are prevented from sinking by a buoy made of bamboo. The rice boats unload their cargo into the double baskets of men who carry them ashore balanced on a pole across their shoulders. A boat with a single paddle is loaded with red clay pots. A few that are neatly stacked are painted white and decorated with geometric designs in red, blue, and yellow. The market boats that jostle each other are laden with baskets of dried roots, fish, leafy green vegetables. There are big mounds of papayas and bananas, and small mounds of eggs.

Siemreap, Cambodia
April 11, 1960

We were fortunate to see the Khmer ruins intact, before the bombing of Cambodia but after the recent clearing of the engulfing jungle. When we arrived by car at Angkor Thom (royal capital of the Khmer civilization), it was just before the rainy season, and the jungle had a bleached look: the earth a hard-packed yellowish clay; the tree trunks chalk white; the fallen leaves brown. A bright green tangle of vines reached toward the high foliage of trees growing singly in and about the temples. Birds sang, joined by the cicadas in the grass. It might have been a hot summer day back home.

But the look of Angkor Thom raised from the earth as though conjured up in a vision! At first glance, an elaborate sandcastle worn away by water that had been dribbled on it; on closer inspection, ruins from a fairy tale, eerie and ominous, surrounded by tropical growths, covered with patches of lichen, occupied by birds, bats, chameleons.

The creative energy of the civilization that built these structures is unimaginable: the meticulous mathematical and mechanical calculations, the labor of armies of artisans, the prodigality of the sculptural forms. Carvings and embellishments are everywhere, and the religion of the Khmers as a source of inspiration is manifest throughout. The walls of a pillar supported by four praying hermits are covered with carved scenes of war, heaven, hell, amorous pleasures. Snakes and elephants mingle with mythological creatures. The eye is dazzled by the profusion of forms.

We reached Angkor Wat, the most stupendous of the temples, by crossing an open space in the blazing afternoon sun, then climbing stone steps into shaded corridors. The

perspective from above indicated the grandeur of the scale—four and a half miles from one end of these ruins to the other, and everywhere carved walls alternating with columns set into apertures, embellished stone alternating with patterned shadow and light. Having made the climb, I found myself at eye level with singing birds and orchid plants bursting from the upper regions of eucalyptus trees. We descend only to find, at the entrance of Angkor Wat, a small tin-roofed building where native handicrafts and batiks were sold to the inevitable tourist.

While still in Bangkok, I stumbled on a dispensary shop in a lane where I bought a contemporary woodblock print as well as four acrylics, not startling, but interesting attempts at a departure from classic conventions. The most appealing to me was titled *Lotus and Ladies,* a holiday no doubt, with three skiffs filled with persons preening, posing, one with a black parasol and all the ladies with abbreviated colorful sarongs spangled with gilt stars. They picked pink lotus from the water.

Calcutta, India
April 13–15, 1960

As we began the nine-mile drive into Calcutta from the airport, it was 2:30 a.m. In the light of the full moon, I could see shadowy tree trunks, crumbling walls, a weaver at a loom, oxen pulling a two-wheeled cart. When we reached the city itself, with its overhead streetlights casting grim shadows on the gray walls, it seemed to me that a catastrophe must have struck. Otherwise, why should there be all these human forms on the pavement, forms that were wrapped in sackcloth? They might have been sleeping; they might have been dead. This seemed a calamity beyond the comprehension of my Western ways of thinking, this utter devastation and desolation of the streets at night in this Indian city of six and a half million people.

Driving in oppressive heat toward the cantilever bridge that crosses a branch of the Ganges, we pass men in the shafts of loaded carts, three or four pushing from behind, and everywhere, sacred white cows and bullocks move freely in the streets, nosing and nibbling the litter.

The soft-spoken intelligent Hindu who is our guide directs the turbaned Sikh chauffeur to take us through the parks to the National Library. In buildings that were formerly the banquet halls of the viceroys, attractive young people sit quietly with their books in an atmosphere of purpose.

In the evening, a performance by a weird and wiry male

Indian dancer. I was somewhat horrified by his elephant, snake, and lion dance, as if in another moment he might go mad and the madness would be contagious.

At the north Patna town where we are to change planes in the flight from Calcutta to Nepal, a huge crowd has assembled along the fences to await the arrival of Nehru. When he makes his appearance from a special plane, he is pelted with the petals of a saffron-colored flower. Through this colorful rain, he walks to a car, and as it takes off down the dusty road, the crowds stream after it, screaming their messages to him.

Katmandu, Nepal
April 15–17, 1960

When we arrived, I wondered whether it would be possible to find a local artist in Nepal. In Katmandu, the masked dancers performed by the light of six bonfires in the cool mountain air of the hotel court. Wherever we went, I asked about working artists. Finally, a meeting was arranged by a young Nepalese working in the hotel curio shop. He directed me to Patan, the old Newar city that adjoins Katmandu, where he knew a working artist. A meeting was arranged.

My usual feelers were out, trying to find artists. Other travelers might have been suspicious or reluctant to follow the advice of a hotel clerk, but this was my only lead and I felt a good one. If I went to the universities and asked for their advice I was given lists of those who emphasized the academic style espoused by those institutions. I wanted the new. It was guides or young natives who offered me the contacts I sought. Thinking about it now, it seems unbelievable that I did this; it took a bit of courage, but I always assumed that I would find the right leads and a good chance was not missed.

In Patan, we picked our way over paving stones where no car could have navigated. Here the shrines were almost as filthy as the streets, with an accumulation of the previous day's offerings: dead petals, rotting slices of citrus fruit. The curio shops were caves never penetrated by the sun. In one, I bought a seven-inch wood carving that I could scarcely see—a Sherpa child straddling his mother's hip.

When we reached the artist's studio, we climbed two flights of stairs made of packed earth swept clear and entered a room where we were invited to sit on mats laid out on the floor. The artist, Gyan Bahadur Chitakra, had little to show beyond a contour map he was building on the floor and a watercolor of a Buddhist god. He apparently earned his living as a sign painter but considered himself a fine-art artist. I asked for something he had painted for his own pleasure. He produced a portrait of

his sister, which I bought. It was a good oil likeness done with attractive freedom.

An unexpected encounter occurred on my last day in Nepal: an Indian artist from Bombay was offering four large watercolors of local Himalayan scenery for sale in the open hotel corridor. During a brief conversation with him, I learned that "for himself" he painted abstract art, and that he "knew about" Jackson Pollock. He brought some sketches to my room, probably just dashed off, of a male and female figures, definitely erotic. Since I thought the price he had set for all four was too expensive, I bought only two. This artist's name was R. B. Gujar.

In retrospect, I think it was this encounter that resulted in my thinking that it might be of service to the artists in this part of the world if they could see original work by their Western contemporaries. As I sat on the terrace after my conversation with Gujar, this idea began to germinate, with consequences that were to affect my future activities in most gratifying—and occasionally in most frustrating—ways.

Not too long after my return to the United States following this first trip, I happened to be passing Air India's office on Fifth Avenue, and when I went in to inspect the paintings on the walls, I was pleased to see the work of Gujar among them.

One of the most moving situations I found myself in during my brief stay in Nepal occurred on Easter Sunday when my Nepalese friend showed me the work being done at the College of Art Education. Here I met a seven-year-old boy who had taken a prize with a fingerpainting of a comic figure, a grinning head minus a front tooth. His finger work covered the entire sheet, ranging in color from pale lavender to medium brown. When I met this young student and praised his work, he insisted on giving it to me. Packing it in my valise, I had the feeling that it represented an important break away from more traditional methods of instruction and would eventually lead to new concepts of creative art paralleling those in the West. It seemed odd at the time that this break should be manifested for me in Katmandu, at the foot of the Himalayas.

Benares, India
April 18, 1960

On to Benares driving through villages for fourteen miles in the dusk. When we come to a bamboo gate at a railroad track, I get out of the car to see what's going on. By flickering kerosene lamps, two men, streaming with sweat, are winding cotton on bobbins with their fingers. Tiny pools of light shimmer from the doorways of nearby huts packed closely together.

Oxen wander about among the bamboo mat beds placed here and there along the dusty roadsides. The heat is stifling after the cool air of Nepal.

Pilgrims crowd the streets at six a.m. in an almost silent procession to and from the Ganges. A corpse on a bamboo bier borne shoulder-high is covered with a white gauzy fabric splashed with a rosy dye. Some people advance toward the river, others are returning from it; all are isolated in their own meditations. As I go toward the steps leading to the water, I hear the mumbling of the beggars and see an old man too near death to move his bony body from his own excrement.

We go upriver on the deck of a cumbersome boat rowed by two men. On the steps and in the water, people, some swimming, others facing the rising sun with palms together in prayerful salutation; women in wet saris flinging back their water-soaked hair, brushing their teeth; strong men conscious of their muscles, concentrating on yoga exercises. Animals wander about on the steps—a hobbled burro, cows, a dog howling on hearing a temple gong. Groups of worshippers with matted locks have their bodies smeared with ashes.

We come to the ghats with the funeral pyres where the stiff feet of the corpses extend beyond white shrouds. The bodies are placed on carefully arranged piles of split wood. The fire is started and the holy water sizzles as it is sprinkled on the blaze. Untouchables carry away the cold ashes in wicker baskets and dump their loads into the river. "There are no more untouchables in India by decree," says our young guide. A Hindu near me says, "God is Untouchable."

Later in the day I am in a silk factory where young boys handweave a complex design of birds, flowering trees, richly robed women, and a border—all against a background of gold. The boys do not return my smile. What experiences would have taught them anything about the friendliness of a stranger from the West? Like their fathers before them, they have been working since their fingers were large enough to hold a bobbin. They are bound to their work by their caste: they are weavers.

New Delhi, India
April 20–23, 1960

As the result of a forced landing, we spent the night in an old Lucknow hotel and continued on our flight to this city early this morning. Once installed in the Ashoka Hotel, I slept all afternoon. Toward five, when the heat abated, I took a cab to Central Cottage Industries Emporium. I never got there, how-

ever, because on the way I passed a building where a poster announced the *National Art Show*. I left the cab, went into the show, and discovered that it was the last day of an exhibition of contemporary Indian sculptors and painters. From what I could see, they had not yet found their own idiom or style—either as individuals or as twentieth-century Indians. Apparently the work I was looking at had been submitted as entries in a competition. However, a statement by the judges in the catalogue indicated that many contributors had not understood the purpose of the show, which was to be contemporary work, not depictions of Krishna, Rodha or Gopis. No piece of work was deemed distinguished enough to merit the gold medal award.

One morning in New Delhi, after visiting the twelfth-century Tower of Victory, Qtab Minar, I arranged for a visit to the National Gallery of Modern Art at Jampur House. When I arrived, I was offered a guide, but I said I didn't think I would need one. However, I soon found myself in a gallery where an attendant pulled a cord and revealed picture after picture by Rabindra Nath Tagore. I was astonished by their power and beauty and surprised to discover that this great poet and philosopher was also a great watercolorist. So I asked for a guide after all, and a thin intense young Indian, Sukanta Basu, presented himself. He was the assistant director of the museum and a painter as well.

After a lively conversation about Tagore, I accompanied my companion into a storage area where I was shown many works by another beloved Indian artist, Amrita Sher-Gil, who died at twenty-nine. Because of her use of experimental materials, her paintings were deteriorating rapidly, and one of Sukanta Basu's principal duties was their restoration, a laborious and demanding task.

When I asked Basu about his own work, he invited me into his office and brought out a sheaf of his drawings, mainly ink sketches of villagers. I couldn't help remarking that all Indians, especially the children in the villages, seemed to have such sad faces. "Yes," he said. "You see, they do not expect much from life."

But it was some few days later in New Delhi that the owner of one of the shops in the Ashoka Hotel took me to a private establishment called The Modern School where an extraordinary pair of artists, Kanwal and Devayani Krishna, were teaching art.

When I entered the large studio, I was impressed by the

Devayani Krishna,
New Delhi, April, 1960

display of students' batiks which had been mounted for a sale whose proceeds were to be used for the purchase of the work of living Indian artists. The batiks had been designed and executed by students ranging in age from eight to fourteen—and here was *joie de vivre* indeed! I felt fortunate to have the opportunity to buy about a dozen pieces—lively and appealing themes and dramatic colors all evolved by the children themselves. The most striking of all was a black and orange abstraction of an organic form—a sea anemone or some other underwater creature.

When I asked Devayani how the children were able to achieve such variety, she told me that any work copied from someone else's was torn up and discarded. As we talked, the youngsters came and went—some squatting around the pots that held the hot wax, others wringing out a piece that had already been tie-dyed. What a difference in freedom and spontaneity from the little old children of Benares tied to looms for the rest of their lives!

Kanwal Krishna,
New Delhi, 1960

Kashmir, India
April 24–28, 1960

We left New Delhi in oppressive heat on our way to Kashmir, and when we came through the clouds that rolled around the snow-covered mountains, it was still quite cold, although all manner of irises, large and small, white, yellow and purple, were blooming by the wayside. We have been installed in quite comfortable quarters—a houseboat bedecked with bouquets and adorned with Kashmiri handwork spun by the women, woven and embroidered by the men.

Houseboat "Clermont": Rain beats a continuous tattoo on our tin roof and creates brief bubbles on the pond encircled by the reef of grasses where the rosy-breasted kingfishers build their nests. The surrounding mountains are scarcely visible through the low clouds, but one can see that the fresh snow reaches almost as far down as this valley. As I look around the houseboat I have a sense of *déjà vu* and I realize suddenly this is a fulfillment of a wish I had many years ago when I saw pictures in a *National Geographic Magazine* of this very houseboat and I said to Ben that I was going to go there sometime.

And here I am. Mr. Butts, the owner of the houseboat, has confirmed this recollection by producing the ancient, bug-stained magazine.

Mr. Butts has located an artist, Dina Nath Walli, for me to spend the afternoon with. This arrangement was accomplished with a considerable amount of difficulty. "Why, I don't think he ever talked on the telephone before! He simply couldn't understand me," said Mr. Butts with some astonishment.

Walli arrives with his watercolors wrapped in two large cloth squares. He studied in Calcutta with an English watercolorist whose precepts he feels he violated in two of the three works I select because he applied a light gouache on them in places. He calls himself an "impressionist" and explains that although he paints out of doors, he does not try to execute what he sees, but rather to create a composition that would be "beautiful." I find out that he has also published a volume of poetry, and from the review he shows me, it is apparent that his poems, like his paintings, are infused with his romantic feelings.

He lives in Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, and when I ask him whether there are local artists with whom he can discuss his work, he says "No." According to him there are several other artists but none who support themselves by painting. Moreover they work in what he calls "modern style," of which he disapproves. He gives me an address at which I would be able to meet these "moderns." His two paintings which he "did not think, madam, were good," I bought. They had taken much more time to do than the clear, bright British School one I also bought. He thought he had made errors in the former two that he was forced to redeem. He had worked longer and harder on them; he did not think they were his moment of inspiration, and strove to correct them. He valued them less, but I, the more for his strivings.

He said to me, "You can't imagine how wonderful it is in Kashmir to see the first signs of spring." One painting was titled *Srinagar in Spring*, the other, *Sunrise on Dirpamchal*.

Lahore, Pakistan
April 29, 1960

After inspecting the palaces, tombs, forts, and mosques of the Moguls, it is a refreshing change to wander about in a lively market where from one shop out of the many crowded together on the cobblestoned street, I choose a festive garland of bright glass beads and yellow wool terminating in a golden bell. It is meant to hang on a horse's neck. At a nearby handicraft shop, I select a watercolor that has been badly handled. It has

not been protected by glass and has been spattered with bird lime, but it is the best of the bunch. The artist is Syed Jehangir and the clerk says that some place in the shop there is a brochure about him, but alas, she can't find it. And so she writes out two pages of his resumé which sound important. This gesture compensated for her langorous inefficiency. When I returned home I found that the *National Geographic Magazine* had published a photograph of a woman weaving, so similar to the watercolor I wondered if the artist had copied it.

New Delhi, India
April 30, 1960

On my last day in India, after returning to New Delhi and before leaving for Teheran, I phoned a young woman whose name had been given to me by an American with whom I had had a chance encounter. A young girl arrived at my hotel, quite unlike anyone I had thus far encountered. Her name was Anjolie Dev. She wore black pants, sandals, a tight burnt-orange tunic, and her hair was done in a long braid ending with a gold ornament. Apparently she was both an artist and a poet, but she drove her own car as if she were a racer. Our destination was the National Gallery of Modern Art where Basu, the assistant director I had previously met, was eagerly waiting for me, responding to our phone conversation of the previous day.

He and Anjolie spoke to each other in the businesslike way of young educated contemporaries, and off we went to his studio in Old Delhi. It was located near the university in a government development all concrete and shadowy doorways opening off a dusty court. Basu led us into a small bedroom where paints were neatly arranged under the bed and canvases were neatly stacked on the bed so that they could lean against the wall for me to see.

"Where do you paint?" I asked.

"I up-end the bed and paint right here."

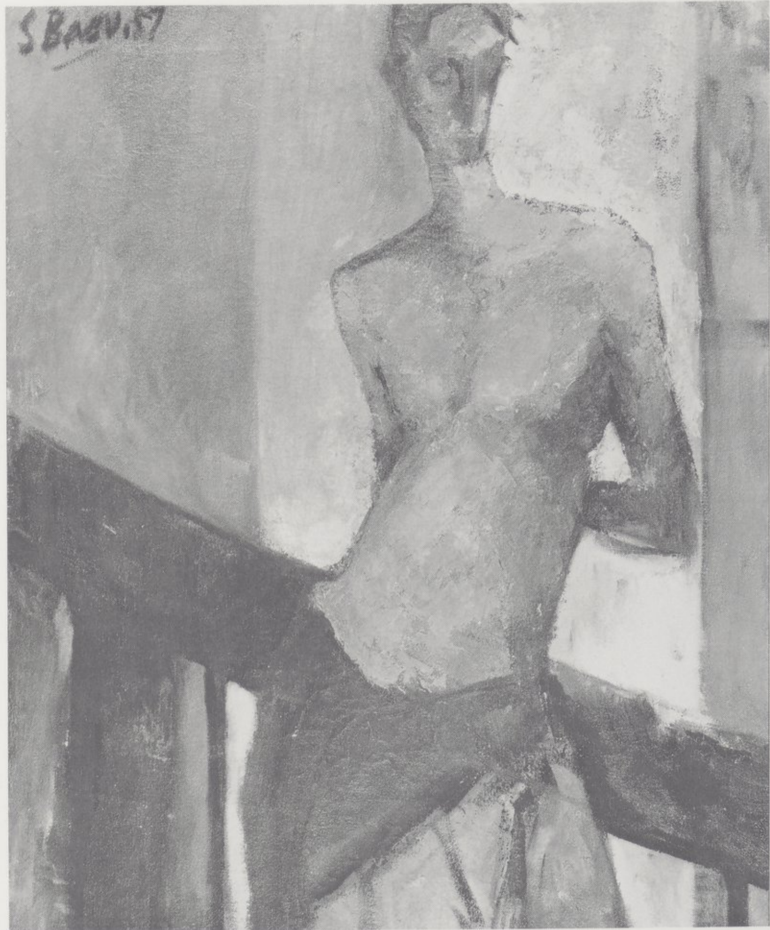
"Do you have an easel?"

"I don't," Anjolie joined in. "I paint on the floor."

As Basu began to show his work, he remarked that he prepared his own canvas.

"I'll buy some from you," Anjolie offered, impressed by the quality of the rolled material.

The paintings were not yet mature, but they showed an emerging power in the handling of color and composition. I chose a picture of a figure done in somber tones. "Myself," he said, "in a black mood." He hesitated to set a price since he had never sold anything before, but after a brief conference with Anjolie, he asked for 200 rupees, about $40. Three years



Sukanta Basu,
Self-Portrait in a Dark Mood,
oil on canvas, 1957

later, when I saw Basu again, he had the same job and looked even more gaunt and somber than before. He was still very much involved with village people and he was still painting and showing in exhibitions.

We declined his offer of tea because Anjolie had scheduled other stops. When we said goodbye in the courtyard, the car was practically invisible because of the swarms of children surrounding it.

Like all other drivers in Delhi, Anjolie careened past oxcarts, tongas, bicycles, buses, motorcycles, jaywalkers. We were now on our way to the studio of a friend, and from there to dinner with her family. She explained that the artist was totally deaf. His name was Satish Gujral.

We went from a small garden to a charming room containing, among other handsome furnishings, a colorful two-

paneled batik screen and a tile-topped table. Satish's young wife entered in sari and sandals, a sad-eyed woman, her eyes made sadder still by their kohl outline. Gujral spoke to me in fluent English, and when he occasionally asked his wife for help, she spoke in the merest whisper as he read her lips.

Once again I heard the complaint of the working artist. There was no market for his experimental, often brutal and depressing work. But he had a good life nonetheless. His wife's batiks, screens, and tiles all sold well, and he was therefore free to paint as he liked. Though his home was obviously filled with love—a young daughter, an infant son, a solicitous amah—his work was filled with anguish. (I later learned from Anjolie that he had lost his first family in the violence accompanying the partition of India and Pakistan.) Each canvas depicted figures in postures of sorrow and hopelessness. I chose one that I felt was particularly compelling for which I paid 500 rupees, then equal to about $100. It was titled *Christ in the Desert,* an utterly silent figure painted blue-black with shafts of light, threatening. These were somber and hot, an effect obtained by toned-down red so that the only descriptive words for the figure and scenery were "lonely" in "a place apart."

After a wordless but deeply felt farewell, I was whisked off to Anjolie's house. As soon as we entered it and she called, "Daddy," I knew that I was in the presence of a privileged family. On the marble floor of the living room was a superb Kashmir rug. Anjolie's paintings were hung throughout the house. She had just received her bachelor's degree in art and now all she wanted to do was paint and paint. We all dined in the garden: Granny, a one-time blonde from Boston; Daddy, a handsome Indian naval officer, now a widower; four-year-old Ralwina, her sister; Anjolie, and I. We were served a delicious meal by a manservant of chicken, rice, melon. The air was heavy with the fragrance of flowering Queen of the Night Trees (locust). Crickets chirped their comments, and as I left, two hyenas skittered into the shadow of bushes.

At two o'clock the next morning when I departed for our flight to Teheran, I was determined to return to India, knowing that I had only begun to experience the mystery, the contradictions, and the power of that sprawling subcontinent.

Teheran, Iran
May 2–3, 1960

It is not yet six a.m. but the sun is already very bright. My room at the Semiramis Hotel looks out on a snow-capped mountain range, down the shadowed slopes to lush verdure, along our avenue lined with trees almost in full leaf. The water

that flows in the jube (gutter) nourishes the trees and cleans the streets, but it adds to the traffic complications: children play where they please, pedestrians cross as the spirit seizes them. Never have I seen such erratic driving.

Glitter and more glitter: the Peacock Throne in Gulistan Palace—marble floors covered with Persian rugs, gardens of pansies, fountains jetting rainbows in the setting sun, chandeliers, mirrors inside and out. Lots of sparkle but no life. As I write now I realize that even the glitter is gone and the revolutionary regime will probably put them up for sale as evidence of a rule they abhor but against whom at that time I heard never a murmur.

The artist contacted by the embassy on my behalf is downstairs in the lobby. I will recognize him, says the secretary over the phone, by his big mustache and his thick glasses. "He looks like an artist," I am told.

I knew him at once. "Mr. Golzari." His face was young and gentle-looking in spite of the fierce mustache. His somewhat sad voice and the way he held his head to one side while listening were very appealing. His speaking knowledge of English was fragmentary, although he seemed to understand what I was saying.

It was a source of irritation to me that yesterday, when we visited Gulistan Palace, no one had told us that in another wing there was an exhibition of the First National Biennial of Modern Art. It was to this exhibition that Golzari and I went together. Well, it was quite an eye-opener, surpassing anything else I had seen so far on this trip. The work was spread out over a number of rooms; one large area was given over entirely to sculpture. There was an energy, a buoyancy, a delightful do-and-dare quality comparable to what some artists were doing back home.

In spite of his limited English, Golzari was able to evaluate each piece of work, and occasionally people would follow us so that they could hear what he had to say. Once or twice, he was addressed by colleagues. When we finally got to his work, I liked it very much, especially a somber ink drawing of a racing horse, clearly a thoroughbred and all verve.

We went to his studio which was hung from ceiling to floor with his own work and that of two of his friends. For more than an hour, I examined drawings and watercolors, and finally I set aside a group that included an ice cream parlor with its famous curved staircase; street musicians with horns and gar-

lands; and a very poetic windblown girl on a hillside titled *Spring*. When I asked how much they would cost, he didn't answer directly, but said that he would bring my selections to the hotel on Sunday, almost a full week away.

Isfahan, Iran
May 4–5, 1960

The Iranians have yet to develop a conscience about allowing seven-year-old girls to spend their days knotting the long threads in Persian carpets. The children were sitting high up on scaffolds, and when I came into the room with the earthen floor, their chanting stopped altogether. One rug was almost finished: it was hanging from the ceiling over a pole and was already thirty feet long. The rug was being custom-made for a dwelling in Teheran, on the mountainside, with spacious rooms and walled-in gardens, and woven into it was the fingerwork of many little singing girls. In Iran, the girls and women weave; in Kashmir, the women spin; weaving is done by boys and men.

At the bazaar, the tattoo sounds of hammers on silver, copper, iron came from a honeycomb of underground caves in a labyrinth of passageways, cobbled streets, and arched cells where bellows blow flames on metal, where ancient techniques are used to produce handicrafts sold on the spot. We spent hours in this buried marketplace where the air is pungent with spices. Only once did we come to a sunny courtyard, and once, as we descended deeper into this netherworld, we crossed a dark passageway to the center of all this activity. There a blindfolded camel circled endlessly around a huge millstone that was pulverizing linseeds so that the oil could be separated from the kernels.

I got involved with an old guide at the hotel because I felt drawn to his rugged face covered with a stubbly beard. When I asked how old he was, he said there were no records—that he was probably sixty, or seventy, maybe older. We went in and out of shops together looking for a necklace for my niece and for a few flutes for my recorder friends. He was also going to help me find an artist I had heard about. When I chose a blue enamel necklace with his approval, I was told that the craftsman was "an honest man." He wouldn't let me buy any flutes because he tried the ones I selected and announced that they weren't any good.

When we located the artist, we were asked to return later in the day. After some additional sightseeing, we both turned up again and were received by Sumbat Kiureghian, an Arme-

nian, who began to show me his work. It was the kind of thing I wanted—free and fresh. His "palette" was created from the newspapers on which he tried out his watercolors, and from these worksheets he conceived small spontaneous paintings. Sumbat said that an American from Teheran had bought all of his experimental paintings—about a dozen. I came away with two swatches—dashes of color that suggested bazaar scenes, a vendor with a tray on his head being hustled through a crowd.

Shiraz, Iran
May 8, 1960

Sightseeing yesterday and the day before in Shiraz and Persepolis: today, last-minute shopping for a flute and an ivory fish. The taxi driver spoke no English and we would have had a hard time of it if we hadn't been joined by a young Iranian with an English book under his arm. We went to a bazaar that he recommended as "the best in Iran" but it didn't begin to compare with the one in Isfahan. There were no copper workers, no silversmiths squinting and pounding, no small boys singing as they pumped bellows. But I did come upon a rug that I wanted immediately. "A child's rug," said our friend. It was a small rug that expressed an artist's bravura in wool, a bright bursting away from traditional patterns. When the young man said "goodbye," we exchanged addresses, and when I asked whether he would like me to send him a book, perhaps a novel, he replied, "Send me a grammar." I did.

Teheran, Iran
May 9, 1960

The artist Golzari returned with the works I had selected, but I recall being shocked at his prices. Beautiful though they were, they were his sketches done on sheets of paper torn from an airline scratchpad. What to do? He seemed so erratic in his prices: one was marked 3000 rials—about $42—another 250 rials. When I questioned him about this disparity, he added another zero in pencil.

I thought a young clerk behind the hotel desk might be helpful, but when he looked at the work, he threw up his hands and said, "I don't understand it!" However, we were joined by another Iranian who *did* understand the sketches, and said, "They are beautiful." I thought so too, especially the one of a performer at a grand piano, another of a group of beribboned merrymakers on a Vienna street. Our new friend interpreted for us and was able to effect compromises. After we had agreed on prices for two paintings, and as I looked longingly at three others, Golzari suddenly said I must accept those three as a gift. I agreed to do so only after I paid him twice as much as agreed

Behrooz Golzari,
Three Native Women,
watercolor and ink on paper,
1959

upon originally for the other two. Our intermediary said that the artist was "very happy."

Since that visit, I have searched him out every time I have been in Iran. At one time he was doing art work for the U.S. Information Service. At another, when he was working on copper bas reliefs of Darius and Xerxes for a government building, he had a serious leg injury. There were family tragedies as well. But he continued to paint. When I saw him in 1967, he was sharing a studio with several other artists. I felt his recent work had a commissioned look, Cyrus or Darius with a curly beard. I chose several earlier works, so full of his painterly eye and his experimental technique—pen, brush, ink, and collage. I am especially fond of a sketch of an old plane tree, its enormous shadow extending over the door and wall of the

seminary Madresheh in Isfahan. Its serene and commanding presence far outshines the postcard art of mosques and minarets and exotically dressed women so often served up as "local art" to the tourist.

Tel Aviv, Israel
May 10, 1960

In the flight from Teheran to Israel, we bypassed Jordan and went over the wrinkled, snow-powdered face of Turkey, swung over the Mediterranean, and in a series of bumps and buffetings, came down at the Tel Aviv airport. When I entered the elevator at the Dan Hotel, the operator greeted me with a glorious smile and said, "Shalom! Welcome home!" In some complicated way, I felt complimented and enjoyed that reception. Although I had never thought of Israel as my "home" because of my Christian upbringing, I immediately felt "at home" because of my familiarity with the Bible. Now, seeing and hearing those names—Jericho, Jerusalem, Mt. Hermon, Galilee—I am enveloped by echoes of my childhood and the sound of my father's voice reading to us on Sundays.

Israel
May 11, 1960

Coming from the East, it is unexpected—and refreshing—to see men and women holding hands in public. We drive to Jerusalem, through countryside that is planted with a million pines; burgeoning vineyards are watered with automatic sprinklers. No primitive methods here. No man is a beast of burden, no woman either.

It was not until my last day in Israel that I had the opportunity to look for contemporary art. The American cultural attaché conducted me to Disenoff House where there was an exhibit of six artists from Safed, formerly an Arab village, and now an artists' colony north of Capernaum. I thought the work had an "arty" look and I was after something more personal, something that was more of a testament. I made my way to Eliezer Rosenfeld's frame shop and gallery or "Galerie of Pictures and Frames." From the many works he and his wife showed me, I made two selections. The first was an ink drawing by Ruth Schloss, who had spent ten years on a kibbutz, of two children, one Arab, the other Israeli, squatting close to a group of pigeons and absorbed in feeding them. The other was an oil executed in the earthy colors of Israel in the spring, delicate and half-bleached. The artist was Tessler who lived in poverty and continued to paint in spite of his lack of worldly success. This work hung in my living room for a season until it and the other works gave way to a light and airy summer display of Japanese woodblock prints.

Ruth Schloss,
Jewish Child with Arab Friend,
ink on paper, 1960

If I were asked to name the person whose attitudes towards art I found most congenial during those few days in Israel, it would be Dr. Kanuik, director of the Tel Aviv Museum, whose kindly glance and carefully chosen words communicated his response to my appreciation of the work I saw.

E U R O P E
A S
MOSCOW
GORKI
Kazan
KUYBYSHEV
Orenburg
Tselinograd
HAMBURG
BERLIN
PARIS
WARSAW
PRAGUE
VIENNA
KIEV
BUDAPEST
LISBON
SPAIN
Bay of Biscay
English Channel
Lyon
Bern
Bordeaux
Marseille
Strait of Gibraltar
Tanger
CORSICA (Fr.)
SARDINIA (It.)
ROME
NAPLES
Adriatic Sea
GREECE
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Algiers
Tunis
SICILY (It.)
MALTA
ATHENS
Aegean Sea
Tripoli
CRETE
ALEXANDRIA
CAIRO
Suez
Azovskoye More (Sea of Azov)
DONETSK
Rostov-na-Donu
Odessa
BUCHAREST
BLACK SEA
ISTANBUL
Bosporus
Batumi
Trabzon
Ankara
TURKEY
Izmir
CYPRUS
Aleppo
SYRIA
LEB.
Beirut
ISRAEL
Jerusalem
Damascus
Amman
Dead Sea
JORDAN
IRAQ
Baghdad
Basra
Kuwait
KUWAIT
Riyadh
QATAR
Persian Gulf
G. of Oman
Muscat
KIRGHIZ STEPPE
Gur'yev
Astrakhan
CASPIAN SEA
Tbilisi
BAKU
Tabrīz
TEHRĀN
Mashhad
Eṣfahān
IRAN (PERSIA)
Shīrāz
Būshehr
Kermān
Ashkhabad
Mary
Bukhara
Dushanbe
Samarkand
TASHKENT
Kokand
TURKESTAN
ARAL'SKOYE MORE
Alma-Ata
Ili
Ozero Balkhash
Sufu
Soch'e
Herāt
AFGHANISTAN
Kābul
Peshāwar
Islamabad
Srinagar
Rāwalpindi
Quetta
Nushki
PAKISTAN
DELHI
New Delhi
KARACHI
Baroda

Proposition: that much is discovered and then forgotten because not shared or handed on.

Daybook
April 14, 1949

Who I am eludes me. If a real person, I am composed of desires as well as deeds, and these desires are as much me and mine as any performances. Example: my desire to extend towards the poetical is as real as Abby Weed Grey, a person, and to be reckoned with.

Daybook
September 2, 1949

DIARY II

Minnesota Art Portfolio (MAP) 1961

SPAIN
GREECE
ITALY
TURKEY
IRAN

St. Paul, Minnesota
May 1960–May 1961

No sooner had I returned home when I began to think about going abroad again so that I could explore in greater depth the activities of young artists in the places I had visited. But of even greater interest to me was the project that had begun to germinate in Nepal: How could I contrive to take with me examples of original art from my part of the world so that they could be exhibited for the benefit of artists who had to depend on unsatisfactory magazine reproductions in order to find out what their Western counterparts were doing?

If such a project was to have any validity, the works to be shown would have to have a certain authority. My desire to involve top Minnesota artists in this undertaking determined my next step. Therefore, in the winter of 1961, I arranged to meet with my friend Malcolm Lein, the director of the St. Paul Art Center (now the Minnesota Museum of Art). When I outlined my plan, he gave it his endorsement and provided me with a list of Minnesota artists who had been showing at local galleries. He also volunteered to help me make my final selections after the artists had submitted their works.

A great deal of interest was generated when I explained

my intentions to the artists and practically everyone I approached provided more than one work from which to make a final choice. Thus, one afternoon in January 1961, all the submissions were spread out on the floor of my living room, and from these, the curator of the art center, Paul Kramer, and I made our selections. As far as I could find out, the cooperating artists whose works initially traveled with me provided the first exhibition of original contemporary work by Americans to be shown in the Middle East. The final selection included woodcuts, acrylics, caseins, silk screens, watercolors, ink drawings, pencils, pastels, lithographs—a representation of work on paper in various media by eminent artists.

Arrangements were then made to mount and mat each piece and cover it with protective transparent acetate. Grommets and hooks were attached to the back to facilitate hanging. The problem of transporting all this art was solved by two sturdy portfolios of fiber board equipped with straps and handles. The smaller of the two presented no problem, but the larger one weighed seventy-five pounds and was too heavy to carry. Wheels were attached to it, but they vanished almost immediately during the rigors of shipping. However, the cases withstood all the hazards of five years of travel.

While these details were being taken care of, I was able to persuade my recently widowed sister Em (Emily Lucile Weed Read) to accompany me, and we were joined by Hilly (Mrs. Hildegarde Pischel), an old friend from Salt Lake City. Another person contacted was Eleanor Mitchell, then executive director of the Fine Arts Commission in Washington, D.C. She was especially helpful in supplying me with contacts abroad through the People-to-People Program. She gave me a list of key names in Madrid and Rome and established connections in advance of my departure with individuals in the United States Information Service (USIS) in Athens, Greece; Ankara, Turkey; and Teheran, Iran. We had already decided to end our travels in Iran, first stopping along the Mediterranean, exploring Greece, as well as seeing something of Turkey on the way.

As we coped with our already overstuffed luggage, our check-list with introduction arrived from the printer, adding another twenty pounds to distribute among the three of us. At the last moment, it occurred to me that the portfolios should be labeled so that they could be identified at airports and other stopping-off places. As soon as I printed the words Minnesota Art Portfolio in small letters, it occurred to me that the acronym MAP should be printed in large ones as a suitable way of

referring to this project. (In Turkey the smaller portfolio was almost confiscated by a suspicious customs inspector who kept asking, "What are these maps?")

On May 16th, 1961, we left on the first stage of our journey, laden down with luggage, lighthearted, and full of confidence that something significant was going to happen.

MAP began to lead a life of its own from the very beginning. Because of two blown tires, our plane had touched down in Lisbon and therefore reached Madrid later than anticipated. Only the smaller portfolio was unloaded with us. I was told the larger one was on its way to Rome. But since we didn't intend to spend too much time there, it seemed advisable to instruct the proper authorities to send it directly on to Athens.

Madrid, Spain
May 16–22, 1961

As soon as we were installed in our Madrid hotel, I called Dr. Enrique Lafuenta Ferrari, director of the School of Fine Arts, who had been informed of our arrival. An appointment was set up, and we were taken to his office by a young woman lent to us as liaison by the local USIS. She was known to everyone as Mimi (easier to deal with than Micheline Echeverria Barriere) and had recently completed a curriculum that included a new course in abstract art. As a former student of Professor Ferrari, she had no difficulty establishing a lively and informal conversation which was eventually interrupted by the arrival of Fernando Chueca, director of the contemporary wing of the Prado.

I handed the portfolio to Senor Chueca and as he began to examine its contents, I was breathless with anticipation. He commented first on the expert manner of presentation, then on the American ingenuity of the portfolio itself, and finally he studied each work, with an occasional "Bueno" or an approving smile. His reactions gave me confidence to ask him directly whether the entire collection might be exhibited in his galleries in the near future. Without any hesitation, he said "Yes." It was a most auspicious beginning.

We knew how important this arrangement was for us and for MAP, but we had an additional sense of accomplishment on the following day when we were told by some of the embassy personnel that in one meeting we had succeeded in making the kind of contact for American art that they had been working toward for more than a year.

As a result of my telling Mimi about my interest in getting to know something about the current art scene, she arranged a showing for me in a small gallery that was part of a private

dwelling. It was from this collection that I chose a watercolor by Jorge Castillo, a dramatic contrast of blacks and reds depicting an old hag and a death's head. Years later, when I learned that a work of Castillo's was being shown in an Arizona gallery, I went off to see it. This one, called *El Poeta,* presented the image of a spirit in steel-blue armor descending into a blue vastness. It reminded me of the somber and quixotic elements that were part of the Spanish character.

My diary for those few days in Spain are dense with impressions of Goya, Velasquez, El Greco, cathedrals, the ominous aspects of the Toledo landscape, faces, fragments of conversations.

Contrasts and contraries that puzzle and intrigue me: in describing the grotesque carvings on the choir stalls—head of tapir, brow of griffin—in the Toledo Cathedral, the guide says they are "ironic" and contrasts them with other carvings that are "sacred." Thus what would otherwise be considered "profane" becomes part of a religious setting.

. . . The black madonna robed in dazzling white, a metaphor that goes beyond the visual.

. . . At the Prado, a large mirror is placed opposite Velasquez's *The Maids of Honor* in such a way that the modern viewer is encouraged to stand with his back to the original painting in order to duplicate the artist's experience of the reflected image.

. . . In a discussion of the tradition of the bullfight with Mimi, she insists that in the eyes of the crowd, the bull is really the Female and the encounter is therefore deeply sexual.

Fragments of conversation during a cocktail party given for me at the gallery where I bought the Castillo. When I ask whether a particular guest is a painter, my informant says, "Oh yes, and a very good one, only he is an intellectual and this is a very great handicap to him." From another guest in a challenging tone, "Why is it such a terrible thing in America to say that someone has no sense of humor? Why is this considered a defect of character?" And before I can respond, he goes on. "In Spain we value *wit.* A Spaniard must have *wit.*"

Rome, Italy
May 23, 1961

When we arrived in Rome we went directly to the embassy where the cultural attaché had been alerted. John L. Brown, the Cultural Affairs Officer (CAO) in Italy, was quiet, capable, and direct, and presented us with the facts of artistic life in this clamorous city. He could think of no place where MAP might be shown. In essence he told us that the competition for gallery space was so keen among the local artists

themselves and between foreign artists and Italians that art from some backwash in America (where and what was Minnesota?) didn't stand a chance. (I wonder now if I didn't make it clear that these works were not for sale.)

I wasn't about to abandon the possibility of showing the works in Rome, and I continued to press for suggestions. Well, perhaps there was some way that Odyssia Skouras whose gallery showed contemporary art could be convinced . . . or perhaps we should go to see Jane Fairweather, the director of the USIS library . . . This latter suggestion seemed to offer some hope, so off I went.

Miss Fairweather was agreeable. "Maybe . . . let's see . . . maybe I could make some space for the pictures above the bookshelves. . . ." When I showed little enthusiasm for this solution, she had another idea. Perhaps Mme. Amelia Carreras would let us display the art in her Biblioteche Populari located in the shell of the Olympic Stadium. In my innocence I thought it might be just the thing. And who frequented this Peoples' Bookshop? Oh, waiters, taxi drivers, sports fans.

Later that day when I was being shown around the Via Marguetta by a knowledgeable sculptor and mentioned the Biblioteche as an exhibition space for MAP, the response was immediate and unequivocal. "But that's impossible. Out of the question. Artists and art lovers would never go there to see the work."

After visiting several of the smaller galleries clustered in the area of the Spanish Steps, I summoned up the courage to have a look at the Odyssia Gallery. I had not realized it was a commercial gallery. So from the outset, it was obvious that MAP didn't belong on those walls. At the moment, they were occupied by a one-man show, the work of Sergio Vacchi. I had seen a bewildering amount of contemporary art during the past few hours—by Italians, a Libyan, a Swiss, not to mention the Jackson Pollocks and other Americans at the Galleria Nationale d'Arte Moderna, but I found Vacchi's work particulalry appealing. No, I wouldn't make a choice on the spot. I would return after we had seen some of the treasures of Rome. There was no point in continuing to agonize about MAP. I was determined to return to Vacchi's show before we left, but for the remainder of our stay, I was a conventional tourist gawking in wonder at the art and architecture of the past.

When I did go back to Odyssia Gallery, Mme. Skouras was there, pleased that I was ready to choose one from the twenty or more works on paper. I finally selected a crayon and

gouache called *Composition: Dei Corpi* which I thought was very good. The fact that I found it was priced above the others, combined with Mme. Skouras's complimenting me on my choice, confirmed my taste even on a day when I was suffering from the confusion caused by overexposure to art both classic and contemporary.

Athens, Greece
May 26, 1961

As we drove from the airport to our Athens hotel, my first glimpse of the Acropolis took me back to those years when Ben and I read the classics to each other, and back beyond that, long before Ben, when I was a child charmed by the Greek myths. In the here and now I experienced a sense of fulfillment knowing that I had reached another milestone.

Our first day was spent trying to locate both MAP portfolios so that we could begin the necessary arrangements for a show. The embassy directed us to the Hellenic-American Union where we found the CAO, Mr. Homalsky, who proved to be understanding and eager to cooperate. But he had received only the smaller portfolio, and since the larger one containing the major part of the material had not yet turned up, wires would have to be sent.

We were scheduled to leave for our trip around the Aegean the following day and so I had no alternative but to accept Mr. Homalsky's assurances that by the time we returned everything would be in order for the formal opening of our show. It was with these comforting words that we took off for our island adventure free of worries and filled with great expectations.

When we got back, completely exhilarated, I had to reconcile myself to the continuing absence of the big MAP portfolio which apparently had been sent from Madrid but was nowhere to be found. However, when we saw how attractive the contents of small MAP looked on the walls of the Union, we were somewhat mollified, especially because I was again assured that by the time we got back from our land trip, the other pictures would have been hung and an invitational opening scheduled.

I asked a student who happened to be in the gallery how she liked the works. "Well, they're interesting," the young woman replied, "but I prefer the ones that are the most representational." A standard reaction the world over. No matter where, the abstract had a hard time making a place for itself.

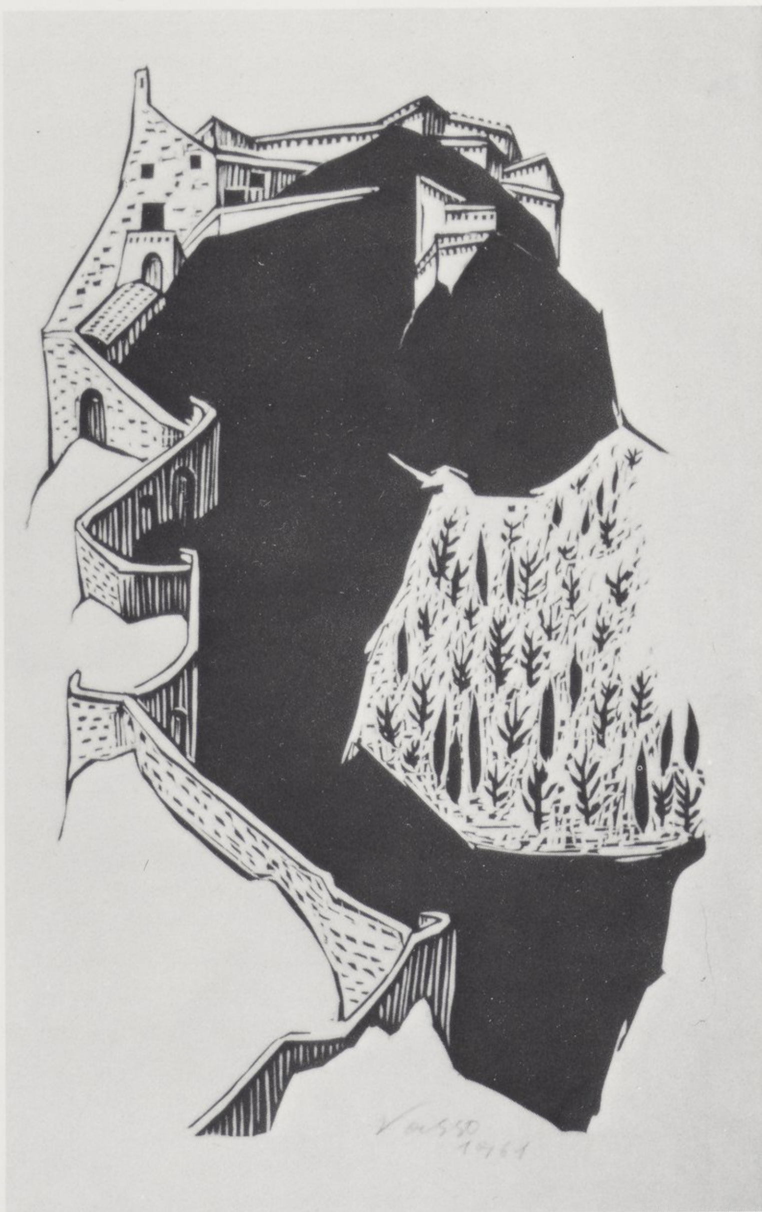
Athens, Greece
June 4, 1961

Today I visited the Nees Morphes, or New Forms Gallery where contemporary work is shown. I bought my first Greek painting there, a watercolor by Alcos Condopoulos who already had a considerable reputation. When I ask whether I might meet him, I am told that he spends his mornings working at the National Museum—on restorations, of course.

At this point, I was still limiting myself to the purchase of works that would fit into my suitcase. It was with this focus that I was curious about the artist whose woodblock prints decorated the walls of the new government-built hotel where we stayed in Nauplia. When the manager gave me her phone number, he told me that her name was Vasso, and that she was the wife of the eminent Dr. Katrakis in Athens.

Because of concern about the missing portfolio, I insisted on extending our stay in Athens for as long as it would take to find it, a change in plans that involved frantic phone calls about our tickets, reservations, and new arrival times in Ankara and Teheran. No sooner had I recovered and calmed my travelmates than I was informed with apologies from the staff that big MAP had been found someplace in the embassy storerooms and was waiting there "all the time." Somewhere there had been a breakdown in communications between the USIS and various parts of the bureaucracy. How the change in schedule caused by this confusion would affect our arrangements, we had yet to learn.

However, the extra days in Greece made it possible for me to hunt up Vasso. Through a network whose complexity could match the plot of any thriller, we were finally able to meet face to face. On the way to her studio, when I asked her what medium she worked in, she laughed. "I do my work in what Greece has the most of—stones." And indeed when I began to examine her prints, I was shown the somewhat soft soapstone that was the foundation of her art. I was particularly struck for the first time by a similarity in the images created by artists in places at a great distance from each other: Vasso's head in profile with the hair in a ponytail was much like Sekino's Japanese print. Vasso's girl with a bird perched on her outstretched finger recalled two works I already owned—the



Vasso Katrakis,
Palamedes, woodcut, 1961

ink drawing by the Israeli Ruth Schloss of the two children feeding the birds, and the Kawano print that had been given to me in Kyoto of a bird that had settled on a child's head.

From the work spread before me, I selected one of fishing boats, another of a fortress, for which I paid $15 each, and to these she added a linoleum cut of a girl as a gift.

As a result of my experience tracking down Vasso, I

learned that the contemporary art world is not easily accessible to the ordinary seeker, whether native or foreign. Vasso Katrakis had shown at the *Sao Paulo Biennial* and had received an award. She was known by architects and interior designers who chose her work for the buildings they were commissioned to do. The Nees Morphes Gallery and her professional colleagues were familiar with her work and her reputation, but it took time and trouble for someone like me to find out about her. In this connection I might add that it took several additional trips to Greece before I was able to find the internationally known artist Jannis Spyropoulos because he wasn't showing at any of the local galleries when I was there. Of course, I eventually learned that "the art world" is essentially a world unto itself, and although a painter in Paris may know all about a painter in SoHo, the ordinary gallery-goer in New York or San Francisco is likely to be unfamiliar with an artist who is living and working close by.

Ankara, Turkey
June 14, 1961

Left Athens today for Ankara, with small MAP (big MAP is going directly to Teheran, I hoped), my art purchases, a bound volume of Greek folk music (on another trip I hoped to buy a Greek flute—which I did), and a first edition of George Seferis's poetry in English translation. (Two years later he received the Nobel prize for his poetry.) Wonderful mementos and wonderful memories to nourish me until I come back again.

Before the ten p.m. landing at the Ankara airport, we pass over the city sprawled out on the great Anatolian plain, peculiarly beautiful from above with clusters of rosy streetlights glowing like luminous flowers in the older parts of the city and strands of cold crystal defining the newer boulevards.

Apparently the letters explaining our delay did not have time to precede us, a mixup that resulted in our absence from a reception given in our honor by Earl Balch, the CAO. We sit in his attractive dwelling to which we were driven from the airport, and as midnight approaches, we hear a dolorous tale about invitations to eighty-five artists and critics—*handwritten* invita-

tions—and everyone showed up and no guests of honor! What a fiasco!

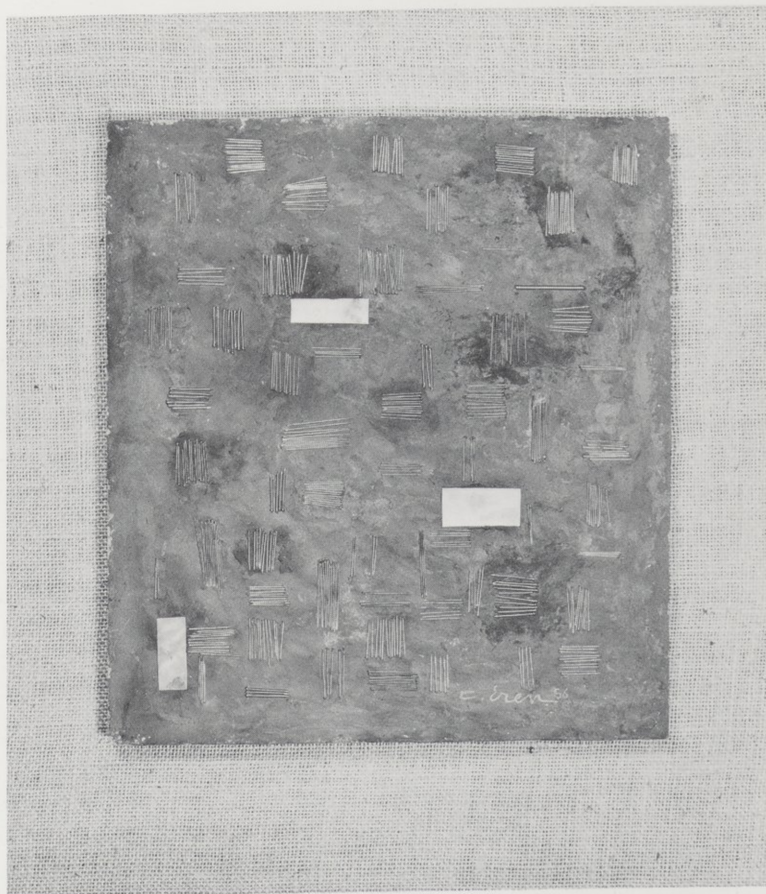
Our apologies and explanations are all very well and how interesting that we're from St. Paul as he was and, yes, he did go to Central High School with Em's husband. But he was leaving the next day for a hunting trip and, alas, would not be available for the rest of our stay.

On the afternoon of our first day in Ankara, the Turkish-American Union arranged a meeting of artists and critics to whom I could show the contents of the small MAP portfolio. An attractive young woman acted as both hostess and interpreter so that I could take the time to place each work on an easel and say a few words about the artist. The pictures were then handed around, and as they went from person to person, they produced a great deal of interest and enthusiasm. The guests not only spoke animatedly among themselves but also addressed questions to me. Many of those that dealt with technique I was unequipped to answer, nor could I give a simple response to "Which is the most important museum in America?" or "What is the most important style of painting?" And to the question translated by the interpreter as "Who is sending you?" I could only reply I was sent by no one but was acting on my own and at my own expense, although I did have the approval of the museum director in my own city. My audience seemed to have a hard time dealing with this piece of information, and as I look back, it would have been extremely difficult to explain all the circumstances that had brought me from St. Paul to Ankara to introduce a small collection of Minnesota art.

As the reception drew to a close, I was invited by several artists to visit their studios, but there was a particular one whom I had not yet met whose work I was especially eager to see. His name was Cemil Eren, and he had been described in a French magazine I read on the plane as one of Turkey's finest and most original contemporary artists.

Ankara, Turkey
June 16–17, 1961

With a guide-interpreter in tow, we made our way to his studio where we were welcomed by a slight young man—he was then thirty-three years old—and without further ado, he began to show us his work: first a collage of shells, then an arrangement about twelve inches square of pins and needles and little tin rectangles on a red earth background, followed by his most recent paintings—abstractions in which pale greens and blues were lightly brushed onto a white ground.



Cemil Eren,
Pins and Needles,
needles, pins, nails, sheet
metal on clay, 1956

I bought the second. (Cemil remarked that I chose *Pins and Needles* because I was a woman.) When he delivered it to the hotel, he was accompanied by a fellow artist, Adnan Turani, whose work he wanted me to see, explaining that because Turani's studio was too far away—I thought probably because it might be too poor, since he looked shabby—he had brought some examples to Cemil's. Back we all went to see Turani's abstract gouaches, one of which I bought for $50. He also showed me a textbook he had written for use in classes at the Teachers' Institute. I found it interesting that the index included Apollonaire and Verlaine, Freud and Einstein, as well as Braque and Rothko.

Through our interpreter, I asked Turani whether he had a complete conception in his mind before he began a canvas. "No," he replied. "It grows as I work on it."

Cemil wanted to know whether I could find a way to

Bedri Rahmi Eyuboglu, *Man Carrying a Goat*, silk-screen, 1956

show Turkish art in America. Instead of answering his question directly, I asked whether he was a member of any art organization, to which the answer was no. However, it was at that moment that I began to ask myself why, if I was showing American art in Ankara, I couldn't arrange to show Turkish art in the States. Five years later, I brought the exhibit *Turkish Art Today* to St. Paul, and from 1967 to 1970 it was circulated by the Western Association of Art Museums in twelve states. Cemil Eren and Adnan Turani were among the artists included in the show.

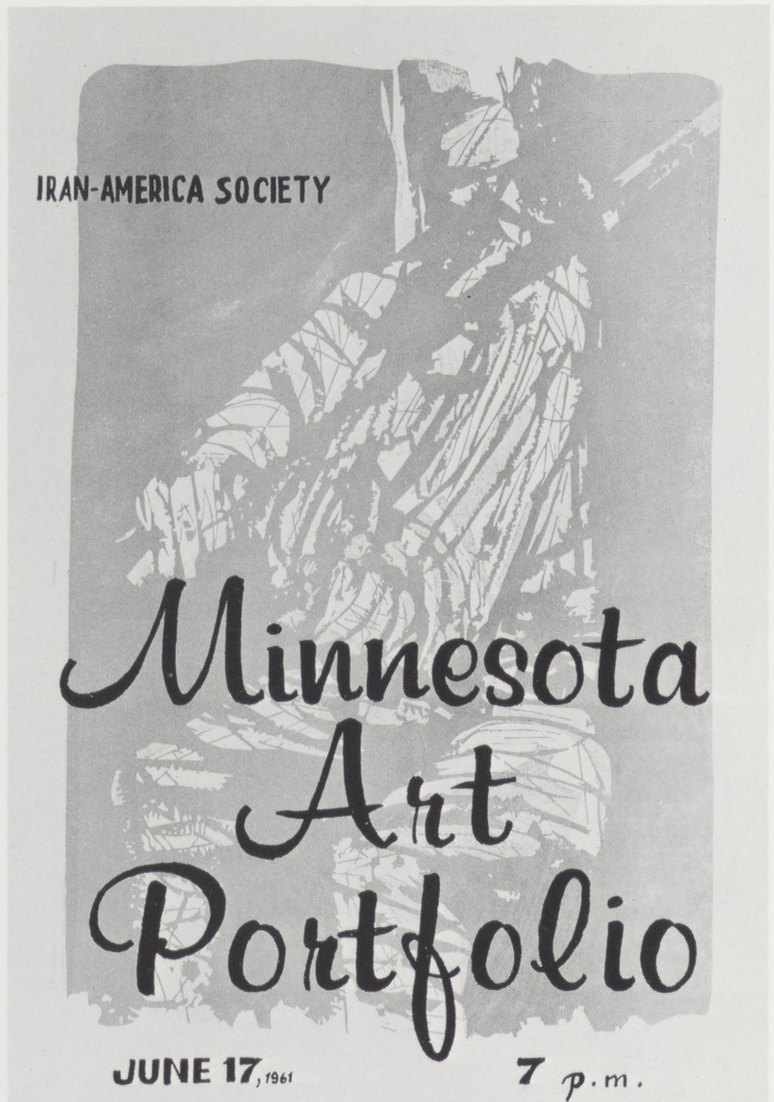
Our last afternoon in Turkey is spent at the Galerie Milar, by far the most beautiful establishment we have yet encountered, with its old embroideries, modern batiks, mosaics, and ceramic necklaces displayed amidst prints and paintings. The

Abindin Elderoglu,
Six Lines of Abstracted Calligraphy, watercolor and ink on paper, 1960

owner and his wife are graciousness itself, and when I exclaim over the beauty of an old piece of needlework, Mr. Milar promptly removes it from its case and insists that I must take it with his compliments. In spite of my protestations, he busies himself with wrapping it in elegant paper to which he attaches a gold-imprinted seal, and ties the jewel of a package with a gold ribbon.

In return for this unexpected gesture, I decide I must make an important purchase. The four-paneled screen presents problems of transportation, and so I choose two serigraphs. I learn that the artist, Bedri Rahmi Eyuboglu, is now in the United States on a Rockefeller grant. It took me three visits to Istanbul to find his studio and call on him—crossing the Bosporus from the European side to the Asiatic.

A hurried visit, again with an interpreter, to the studio of



The poster for MAP, Teheran, June, 1961, featuring Eugene Larkin's *Cello Player*

an artist who has been pursuing me by phone—Abindin Elderoglu. As we approach his house, we see him at the window, posed theatrically before his easel. We enter a room where canvases are neatly stacked, and he informs us that he has recently retired from his teaching post at a girls' school in Izmir so that he can devote all his time to painting. If only he could get to America, he sighs, he would paint and paint. If only someone would just pay his traveling expenses. . . . He is too poor to go on his own. . . . To end these laments, I point to a highly stylized canvas and ask whether he is conveying a

dancing figure. "Yes," he replies, "and the tree is dancing too." Then he looks bashfully to the floor and says, "I am just playing." I select two watercolors, which he practically gives me, and a small calligraphic work that he insists is a present which he inscribes on the back, "To my friend." I feel very complimented.

A final purchase of a long dervish flute in one of the old brass shops.

When we weigh in at the airport, our luggage is ten kilos over the limit.

Teheran, Iran
June 18, 1961

Iran was to be our last stop with MAP and from the outset it proved to be exciting, all-engrossing and productive. As soon as we got off the plane, we were greeted by a fleet of cars from the embassy and the travel agency. Big MAP had arrived from Athens. I was told that the Teheran CAO, David Nalle, whom I had yet to meet, thought I was "wonderful" and that he had already installed the paintings in the Iran-America Society's gallery.

As soon as we arrived at the hotel, I was presented with a handsome poster announcing the show, featuring a reproduction of Eugene Larkin's *Cello Player*. Along with the poster was an invitation in English and Persian to an evening reception to be held several days hence at the Society.

The following morning we were fetched by a car that delivered us to a garden at the rear of the Society's building which had once been a private dwelling. It was situated opposite the main entrance to Teheran University. The "garden" was in fact no more than a large backyard in which, at the time of our arrival, a Persian woman was ironing under the shade of a tree.

Eventually, David Nalle appeared. He was a quiet young man dedicated to his job of interpreting the two cultures to each other, and for this purpose he had learned to speak Farsi fluently. He invited us indoors where MAP was hanging on burlap screens. For the reception, the work was to be exhibited in the "garden."

Parviz Tanavoli
at time of first meeting with
Abby, June, 1961

The rest of the day was made memorable by my first meeting with Parviz Tanavoli, in whose career as an artist and teacher I was to play a significant role and who was soon to become intimately involved in the activities of the Grey Foundation both in Iran and the United States.

The meeting came about because of David Nalle's insistence that we go to an exhibition of contemporary art that was to be dismantled on that very day. It was an exhibition that had come about in an unconventional way. Six or seven artists whose work was considered too innovative to be supported by the Iranian Fine Arts Administration had received permission to hang a show in the foyer of a new bank building. When we got there, we found ourselves in the midst of a crowd of lively and fashionably dressed young people. Even the women in chadors looked especially chic: imagine a beautiful face looking out from a tent-like garment of white decorated with large black polka dots and wearing handmade French shoes. The architectural setting with its polished marble floor and marble walls, its vaulted ceiling and elegant lighting, was the perfect background for the work: bold abstract paintings, collages in wild and exciting colors, modernist metal sculptures and ceramics.

I was eager to examine the work closely and to talk to some of the artists. After a bit of searching, one of the guests turned up with a young man who could speak English. That young man was Parviz Tanavoli.

As a way of initiating the conversation, I asked him for the price of an arresting work in front of us. When he told me it was $100, I told him that I was also interested in knowing more about other works at the far end of the lobby. As we approached them, he asked whether I liked them. "Very much," I replied.

"They are mine," he said.

Parviz was then only twenty-four years old, but he had already spent a year in Italy studying with Marino Marini. When he had gone to England, he had been encouraged by Henry Moore to pursue his career as a sculptor. I discovered these facts when I visited his studio the following morning.

Teheran, Iran
June 20, 1961

Promptly at ten a.m. Parviz appeared at our hotel impeccably dressed and drove us off to an attractive part of town. In the center of the entrance to his studio was one of his own works, a fabulous creature in concrete painted Persian blue. The interior glowed with the brilliant colors and vitality of his work—paintings, sculpture, ceramics.

As I tried to make a choice, I kept returning to a large painting in ink, gouache, and gilt whose subject was intriguing. The work, which was called *Myth*, depicted three figures, one, the apprentice, holding a mallet, the other a legendary sculptor, Farhad. Protecting both was a gold and blue angel, wings open. For me it went right back to *Arabian Nights*. But of course it was a Persian tale. I felt I had to have it and purchased it on the spot.

When I got back to St. Paul, I hung it on a stair landing, and as I became familiar with it, I couldn't help feeling that the work was an invocation by the young artist for the protection of a patron who would be his guardian angel.

On the evening of the reception, I arrived at the Iran-America Society to discover that tea tables had been set up and that the burlap screens on which MAP had been hung were now placed under the plane trees where it was agreeably cool.

An Iranian student pointed to Jerry Rudquist's abstraction, and in a challenging tone said, "What does that mean?"

I had been talking to the head of the university's art department, and he had chosen that particular work as his

Parvis Tanavoli,
Myth, watercolor and ink on
paper, 1961

favorite, remarking on the skill with which the dark whorls had been added to the cream background—"like our calligraphy," he said. So I asked him to answer the young woman's question about meaning which resulted in an animated discussion in Farsi on the spot.

Surrounded by the hum of conversation, aware of the enthusiasm, curiosity, and especially of the power of art to transcend language and tradition, I felt that this MAP show could be counted a success even though the setting was no

more exalted than a Persian backyard festooned with clotheslines.

As I look back on that June evening in 1961, I can see how naive and uncritical I was about the whole enterprise. But had I been more worldly and "realistic," I never would have undertaken what I did. As it was, in spite of unanticipated obstacles and a lack of professional expertise, I was able to arrange the first exhibition of original contemporary American art to be seen by Turkish and Iranian artists. Moreover, my informal contacts with these and other third-world artists laid the groundwork for precedent-setting shows in the United States.

Isfahan, Iran
June 22–25, 1961

To the Jum'a (i.e., "Friday") Mosque, past the old Jewish quarter, through the impressive entrance, being restored to show the Zoroastrian foundations to the square. In amongst the huge pillars, at the north end, a single voice chants a prayer. Beyond the sixteenth-century prayer niche is a large winter hall with its extraordinary light diffused in ambers and blues through the alabaster insets in the domes. As we pass column after column, we find votive candles lit and others burned down or flickering out. Suddenly part of a brick comes hurling at Em. "A man threw it," she says. "No, no," is my immediate reaction, a brick has simply come loose and fallen. Then another brick, this one slipping across the stone floor, and a figure—lithe, agile, noiseless, barefoot—runs past us. Bright green cloth strips are wrapped about his brow, his arms, his waist, and over his tattered clothes. A gendarme appears. We are told the person who startled us was probably an overzealous sufi. The shouted prayer or curses gradually fade away.

To a carpet factory where the fingers of the little girls manipulate the strings of the warp so quickly that they twang faintly like a harp. Some of the youngest children hum to themselves, creating a strange descant. It is true, as they say, that when you walk on a beautiful carpet you are walking on the eyes of children. Where is their childhood and where is their future? I hope they never revert to this occupation that provides necessary funds for the family existence. It is true a manufactured carpet will never compare to the work accomplished by these little fingers. Yet, although no rugs can be manufactured to be as beautiful as these, I hope families never have to depend on the industry of children again. I myself

Opening of MAP in Teheran,
June 1961

would give up the beauty of Persian rugs if they must be derived through such labor.

I leave Em and Hilly to their sightseeing and go off to visit with Sombat Kiureghian, the Armenian artist whose work I had found so interesting last year. He is now a great success doing paintings of minarets and arches and watercolors of native life to which he adds graceful swirls of Persian calligraphy. For one that is still wet, he asks 3400 rials—about $45. I shake my head and say "Too much." His bright eyes and warm smile tell me that he isn't at all offended. An oil company has just ordered fifty of his watercolors to add the right decorative accent to their hostels. Even the "palette" paintings that I found so fresh last year have lost their spontaneity during this commercial period.

After the reception at the Iran-America Society, and often enough in other times and places, I realized how fortunate I was to have the cooperation and support of David Nalle. Knowing that we were to visit Isfahan and Shiraz before returning to the States, he had already alerted the cultural affairs officers in both places and arranged to have our two portfolios go with us by plane.

Isfahan, Iran
June 26, 1961

It had been my intention during these travels to attend Anglican services whenever and wherever possible so that I might get to know my church, which is Episcopalian, in various parts of the world. It was this desire that resulted in my meeting Bishop Hassan Dehqani-Tafti and his family in Isfahan. That meeting inaugurated a deep and abiding friendship that has brought me great joy over the years and, more recently, profound sorrow occasioned by the murder in 1980 of the bishop's twenty-five-year-old son by revolutionaries on a street in Teheran.

On that Sunday in 1961, we made our way to St. Luke's Church where we felt quite at home as we listened to the new bishop, consecrated only three months before in the Jerusalem Cathedral. It was our good fortune to hear him deliver his first sermon following his return from a trip through his diocese—"twice as large as Texas," as he said subsequently. A Persian Muslim by birth, he had traveled a tortuous road to Christianity, and at the time of our meeting, he was both the first Iranian and the youngest person to hold the office of bishop of the Anglican Church in Iran. His wife Margaret was a most attractive Englishwoman, and we were astonished at her calm and loving way with her young children while at the same time she supervised a tea party that had unexpectedly, and with no advance warning, expanded from three guests to more than thirty.

During that afternoon, I invited the bishop not only to the MAP reception to be held the following day, but also to be my guest in St. Paul, if he ever visited America. Within two years he did, and later Margaret came. When attending U.S. graduate schools, the two older children also visited.

The Iran-America Society in Isfahan had installed MAP in a small gallery to which we all repaired after tea served on the lawn. Most of the guests were faculty members at the local fine arts college, including one charming old man who was a famous miniaturist. He was especially enthusiastic about Keith Havens' *Great Snag*—three old tree stumps executed in a few strokes. Through an interpreter, I was able to speak briefly about the project and some of the individual works, and except for the insistence by the head of the college that one of the pictures was hanging upside down (he was mistaken), the occasion seemed to be a successful event. The respectful attention and interest of the guests was a far cry from what we would experience at our next and final destination.

At the Isfahan airport en route to Shiraz (by chance I

Bishop Hassan Dehqani-Tafti, 1961

supposed, but Em thought otherwise), we met Tanavoli. He was on his way to Abadan with an architect friend to repair and relocate some monument for the government. He asked whether he might sit with me, and during the hour's flight, he proved to be a delightful and informative companion. He mentioned that in Shiraz I might be able to find rugs that, unlike the traditional Persian ones, depicted animals and fantastic forms in bright colors (rather like a "Miro or a Klee"). As soon as he said this, I realized that the small rug I had pounced on at the Shiraz bazaar the previous year wasn't "a child's rug" as my English-speaking Iranian guide had insisted, but in fact a Qashqa'i tribal rug.

It was during this flight that Tanavoli spoke of his eagerness to come to the United States. It occurred to me that I might be able to establish such a connection, but I said nothing about this to him, and we parted with no mention of a future meeting.

Shiraz, Iran
June 29, 1961

Had I known what a deflating experience awaited us at the Iran-America Society in Shiraz, I would possibly have thought of heading straight for home! (Never, of course!) The director who met us at the airport proved to be a breezy Californian. Around his neck, instead of a tie, was a braided

cord adorned by a large medallion on which the letters J A C K were engraved. He took us in tow so that we would assist him in hanging MAP in the Society's room for the showing scheduled for that evening.

When we got there, we were appalled by the inadequacy of the space, but we did what we could, placing some of the pictures back to back on the room divider and hanging others from nails that went straight into the walls.

In spite of the heat and our exhaustion following several ill-advised sightseeing adventures, we turned up at 7:30 to find a group of Americans assembling in the Society's courtyard for the eight o'clock showing of a Jules Verne movie. Most of the audience were foreign service officers—public affairs press, radio, foreign agriculture service—and their wives.

In a brief conversation with one of the women, I was told that the only available amusements were their own houseparties and the movies shown by the Society.

Em, Hilly, and I went upstairs hoping to find our J A C K waiting for us. Instead, we found only one American visitor. Eventually a few more straggled in together with our host and his pretty wife. Memorable comments: "Oh, here's a picture of a husband stealing out of the house. . . ." ". . . or in," said someone else, "after a binge." "Don't these look like kangaroos?" "No, they all look like Rorschach blots." At some point, Jack leaned out the window and called to the crowd below, "Hi! There are some beautiful pictures up here."

It was five minutes to eight. We asked someone to get us a taxi, leaving the assemblage to their movie in the courtyard. I turned out the lights, locked the door, and left MAP in the dark.

Teheran, Iran
July 2, 1961

Hot Teheran—tired, packing ahead, and a four a.m. rising in prospect. Trip's over in a single jet flight to New York, in one long day.

Although I was uncertain about MAP's future, I was determined to have the work travel on its own. I was confident about the worthiness of the art, and while it might be ignored by some, it would carry an important message to others. I decided that as soon as I got back to Minnesota, I would send reports on this trip to the People-to-People Program, to the State Department, and to Minnesota Senator Hubert Humphrey, who was already aware of MAP.

Before I headed for St. Paul, I stopped off to visit my mother and brother in rural Connecticut. During that week as I read to them from my diaries, I tried to gain some perspective

on my recent experiences so that they could form the foundation for the future. It seemed to me that the next step was traveling shows in the United States of contemporary art from the countries I had visited. Perhaps such a show could be presented to my contacts in Washington as an intercultural salute.

When I returned home, I placed my recent acquisitions where I would enjoy them most and without further delay went to see Dr. Wilhelmous P. Bryan, Principal of the Minneapolis School of Art, about Tanavoli's prospects. When I asked whether the school could invite him as a visiting artist, he said the only problem was the matter of funding. So I went to my financial adviser who determined that the Grey Foundation could present the school with a one-semester grant for an Iranian artist.

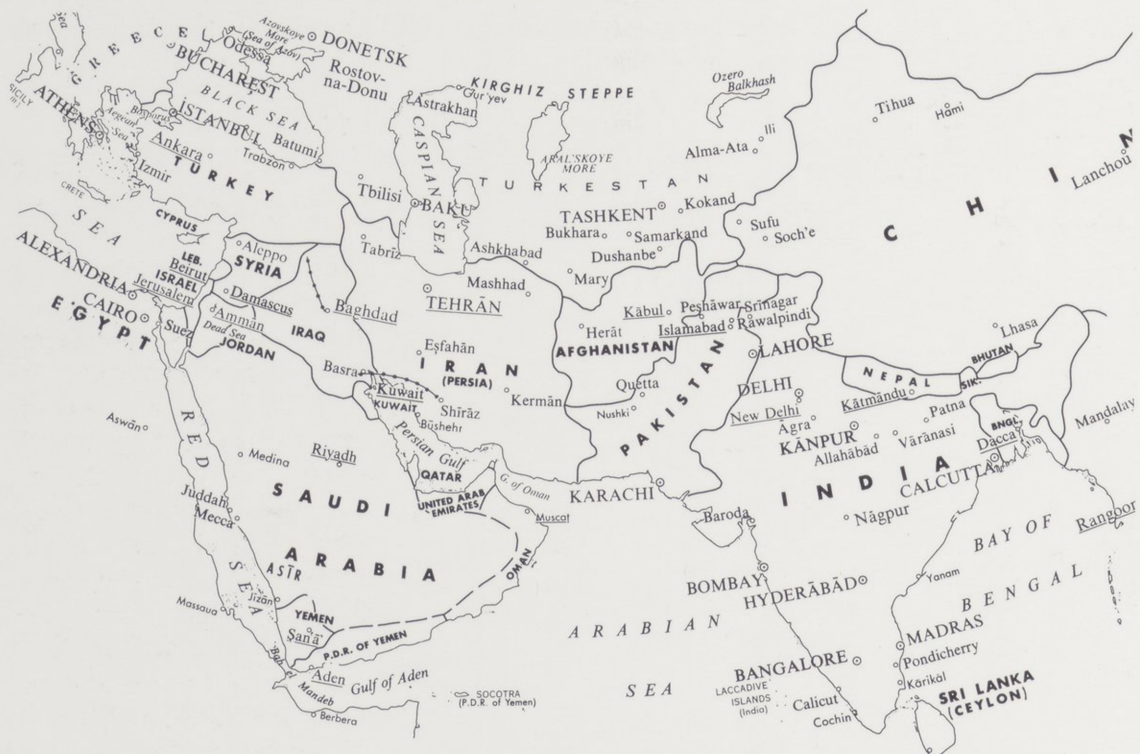
As soon as the invitation was issued, Tanavoli sent a formal acceptance, and on this basis he applied for an exit visa from Iran. Arrangements dragged on and on, letters and documents went back and forth, financial matters had to be adjusted to everyone's satisfaction, and it became apparent that he would not be able to get to the States in time for the fall semester.

By the time he reached St. Paul on a snowy day in February, 1962, Parviz was impatient to rush into all aspects of his American experience. His relationship with the art school was so satisfactory that after six months as visiting artist his stay was extended for two years more as instructor in sculpture.

During the delays in Iran, he had been using his time productively by helping to organize a complimentary exhibition of graphic works by fourteen Iranian artists to be shown first in Teheran and then, it was hoped, in the United States.

The *Fourteen Contemporary Iranian Artists* exhibit, after its appearance in Teheran, had a gala opening at the Minneapolis School of Art and after its acquisition by the Grey Foundation, was circulated for the next four years under the

auspices of the Western Association of Art Museums. It was seen in cities from Seattle to Austin, Texas. The works themselves remained part of the Grey collection, until it came time to relocate them in a chosen resting place. For whatever uncertain future, although I did not know it then, I gave them to the Damavand College for Women in Teheran. They had become a notable collection of contemporary art, holding their own in their last Minnesota showing in *One World Thru Art* at the State Fairground Pavilion in 1972. One wonders what has now become of them?



GREECE
DONETSK
Odessa
Rostov-na-Donu
BUCHAREST
BLACK SEA
ATHENS
ISTANBUL
Batumi
Trabzon
Ankara
Izmir
TURKEY
KIRGHIZ STEPPE
Gur'yev
Astrakhan
CASPIAN SEA
ARAL'SKOYE MORE
Ozero Balkhash
Tihua
Hami
Alma-Ata
Ili
TURKESTAN
Lanchou
Tbilisi
BAKU
TASHKENT
Kokand
Bukhara
Samarkand
Sufu
Soch'e
CHIN
CYPRUS
SEA
ALEXANDRIA
Aleppo
SYRIA
LEB.
Beirut
ISRAEL
Jerusalem
Tabriz
Ashkhabad
Dushanbe
Mary
Mashhad
CAIRO
EGYPT
Damascus
Amman
Dead Sea
JORDAN
Suez
IRAQ
Baghdad
TEHRĀN
Kābul
Peshāwar
Srinagar
Rāwalpindi
Islamabad
Herāt
AFGHANISTAN
LAHORE
Lhasa
Esfahān
IRAN
(PERSIA)
Basra
Kuwait
KUWAIT
Shīrāz
Būshehr
Kermān
Quetta
Nushki
PAKISTAN
DELHI
New Delhi
NEPAL
BHUTAN
SIK.
Kātmāndu
Patna
Āgra
KĀNPUR
Allahābād
Vārānasi
BNGL.
Dacca
Mandalay
Aswān
Medina
Riyadh
RED SEA
Persian Gulf
QATAR
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
G. of Oman
Muscat
KARACHI
INDIA
CALCUTTA
Juddah
Mecca
SAUDI ARABIA
Baroda
Nāgpur
BAY OF BENGAL
Rangoon
OMAN
Jizān
Massaua
YEMEN
San'ā'
P.D.R. OF YEMEN
Aden
Gulf of Aden
Bab el Mandeb
Berbera
SOCOTRA (P.D.R. of Yemen)
BOMBAY
HYDERĀBĀD
Yanam
MADRAS
Pondicherry
Kārikāl
ARABIAN SEA
BANGALORE
LACCADIVE ISLANDS (India)
Calicut
Cochin
SRI LANKA (CEYLON)

My feelings of sympathy with all that exists, the doom that encases, the destiny that pursues, the fate awaiting, is an awareness that says to me: This is part of me, these too are part of me.

Who am I? Actually I am separate. My responsibilities are limited; another's curse is not my curse; sympathy is not identity.

Daybook
September 2, 1949

DIARY III

Art Tour of the Ancient World 1962

EGYPT
LEBANON
JORDAN
GREECE
TURKEY

St. Paul, Minnesota
July 1961-Febrary 1962

During the period that I was involved in the arrangements for Parviz's arrival, I wrote to all the Minnesota artists about the response to their work. I also told them about my determination to keep MAP moving abroad before it came home, and asked them to cooperate further by allowing the Grey Foundation to purchase the works. All agreed, save one, Cameron Booth, who gave me his *Grey with Red Spot* (frontispiece to *One World Thru Art* catalogue), complimenting me for doing so much for Minnesota artists.

After consulting various people in Washington, I decided that the best way to keep the project afloat was to get the CAOs abroad to ask that they be placed on the MAP itinerary rather than to try to stir up interest from here. I therefore determined to be a traveling salesperson and to cover the territory by presenting promotional material to embassy personnel and convincing them of the importance of scheduling the exhibition.

The opportunity to visit areas new to me and MAP arose when I learned that the Minneapolis Institute of Arts was organizing a trip called "An Art Tour of the Ancient World." The itinerary included Egypt, Lebanon, and Jordan, as well as parts of Greece and Turkey as yet unknown to me. In advance of my

departure, I decided that I would continue a trip-diary, but only in the sketchiest way. As far as writing was concerned, I intended to concentrate on creating a journal of poems. While they are not so relevant to my adventures in the art world, they were and continue to be my favorite form of creative expression and certainly help me to achieve an in-depth understanding of a country and its culture.

Thus, what with doing a sales job for MAP, making notations in my diary, writing poetry, and continuing my quest for contemporary art—not to mention a schedule of sightseeing—this trip promised to provide me with busy days and nights.

Some of my experiences during this tour are described in the pages that follow, but here I would like to summarize the adventures of MAP. In 1962, as a result of the groundwork I had laid before, and under the auspices of the USIS, the portfolios were circulated to Milan, Rome, and Naples in Italy, and to Madrid, Seville, Barcelona, and Valencia in Spain. In 1963, because of my determined presentations to the proper cultural contacts in Lebanon and Egypt, the USIS sponsorship continued with shows in Beirut and Cairo. And the delayed Athens show also took place that same year. After returning to the United States, MAP traveled to various midwestern cities under the sponsorship of the Minnesota State Arts Council and was eventually included in the 1972 show *One World Thru Art:* A Selection of 1001 Works of Art from the Ben and Abby Grey Foundation.

There is no way of precisely assessing the impact of MAP on those foreign artists who were seeing the work of their American contemporaries for the first time. I can, however, assess the importance of the project for me. When I look back on the hours, the energy, and the money spent, on the disappointments and frustrations endured and transcended, I can say that this involvement widened my perceptions of the world, deepened my awareness of human variety, and opened my eyes to new possibilities for future activities. I came out of the MAP experience with the confidence to pursue my contacts at home and abroad for the promotion of art as a means of communication.

Cairo, Egypt
March, 1962

Following up the Nile a few miles from Cairo
During the second crop—white radishes, green alfalfa
Tied on the backs of bicycles, roses, pinks, carnations.

Turn west toward Memphis
Five women stately and proud walk homeward with their
water jugs balanced
From here on, the desert burns and
The Nile is carried in drops on the heads of women.

On my one "morning at leisure" in Cairo, I introduced myself at the American Embassy and made a presentation for the MAP show. I had with me a package consisting of the list of artists and their works, Malcolm Lein's sendoff, some photographs, as well as documentation of the enthusiastic response to the exhibit in the places where it had been shown. While no specific promises were made, I was pretty sure that this meeting would be reported to Washington as part of the business of the day.

I then asked for information about local artists I might call on. An Egyptian staff member provided me with two names and addresses, both located in Zamalek, on the other side of the Nile. The first was Vessela Farid, a Rumanian woman married to an Egyptian. After being delivered by taxi to a group of flats with a central court, I needed someone to direct me. A woman was crossing the yard. I approached her, "Do you speak English?" The answer was "Yes" and with relief I discovered she was Vessela. I was conducted back to her apartment and my visit was filled with the pleasure of contact with a very observant and sensitive person. I bought three of her works: *Woman with a Can on her Shoulder* and *Face of a Woman*, both ink drawings, and *Seated Woman* done in watercolor and ink. In their choice of subject and their style, these three pieces spoke volumes about the artist's sympathy for the situation of Egyptian women.

For my second visit of the day to the dean of faculty at the College of Fine Arts—an appointment had been made in advance. After a few pleasantries managed in English, I asked if I might see some of the students' work. Before acceding to my request, the dean asked if he might examine the things I was carrying, and when he saw Vessela's drawings, he put them aside without comment. When he returned with a competent but conventional oil painting of a Cairo street scene, probably a student's, I realized he was making a tacit criticism of Vessela's

Vessela Farid,
Face of a Woman, ink on paper, 1961

work. I was quite overwhelmed when he insisted that I accept the painting as a gift, but although it came home to Minnesota with me, I only occasionally found a suitable place for it on my walls.

Beirut, Lebanon
March 10, 1962

When I called on the CAO in Beirut, his gratifying response indicated that he planned to schedule a MAP show in the near future. He also put me in touch with Aida Marini, an artist who was devoting herself to documenting the daily life of the Lebanese in her woodcuts and paintings because, as she said, "The old ways are changing so quickly." I bought a woodcut called *Labourer* in which a farmer is hand-plowing

straight furrows with oxen in the background. Aida was eager to come to the United States to show her work. She wanted to come "at the time the red buds bloomed" and she was able to do so the following year. Although it was impossible for me to arrange for the formal show requested on her behalf by the Friends of the Middle East in Washington, I spoke to an old friend who was the director of the art collection at the Minneapolis Public Library. It was through her that Aida Marini was invited to spend several weeks exhibiting her works at the library and talking to visitors about her work and her country.

Athens, Greece
March 16–20, 1962

During this second time around in Athens, final arrangements were made for the entire MAP show for the following year. Once this schedule was taken care of, I went off to renew my contacts with the Nees Morphes Gallery. When I got there, it turned out that the owner was in Paris and had left a young artist in charge until her return. This was Alkis Guinis. He told me that he was expected to take several hours off at midday and would be happy to show me his studio and his work if I cared to take a long bus ride to the outskirts of town. I agreed to do so the following afternoon.

During our lengthy trip, he let me know how disgusted he was with the unplanned expansion of Athens. He spoke of the Turks with open hostility. And as for the English, he remarked, "If they were gentlemen, they would give back the Elgin Marbles."

Alkis's studio turned out to be a construction of galvanized sheeting set in the corner of his parents' small rock-walled lot. It had a single window and was unheated in winter. He prepared his own paints by grinding the colors, and he was now working on large and complex compositions executed in a brilliant palette.

After seeing some of his earlier work, I chose a recently completed oil called *Clouds*—abstract and unevenly textured. I was pleased to learn that he was the youngest artist—he was then twenty-eight—to be invited to participate in a group show being mounted in Israel for the coming summer.

Since Alkis was officially represented by the Nees Morphes Gallery, I returned there to formalize my purchase. A new show had just been installed of the work of Celia Daskopoulou who painted nothing but houses. She and I discussed her paintings, and I was somewhat surprised when she said, "You must have one of my typical works. When I am famous, you will want it. My friend here"—pointing to a young poet who

had been helping her hang her show—"my friend thinks I am a real artist already because I have an original point of view." At a future time, I did buy one of her oils, called *House and Trees*, the house looking quite like a face.

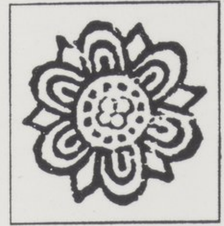
Rome, Italy
March 24, 1962

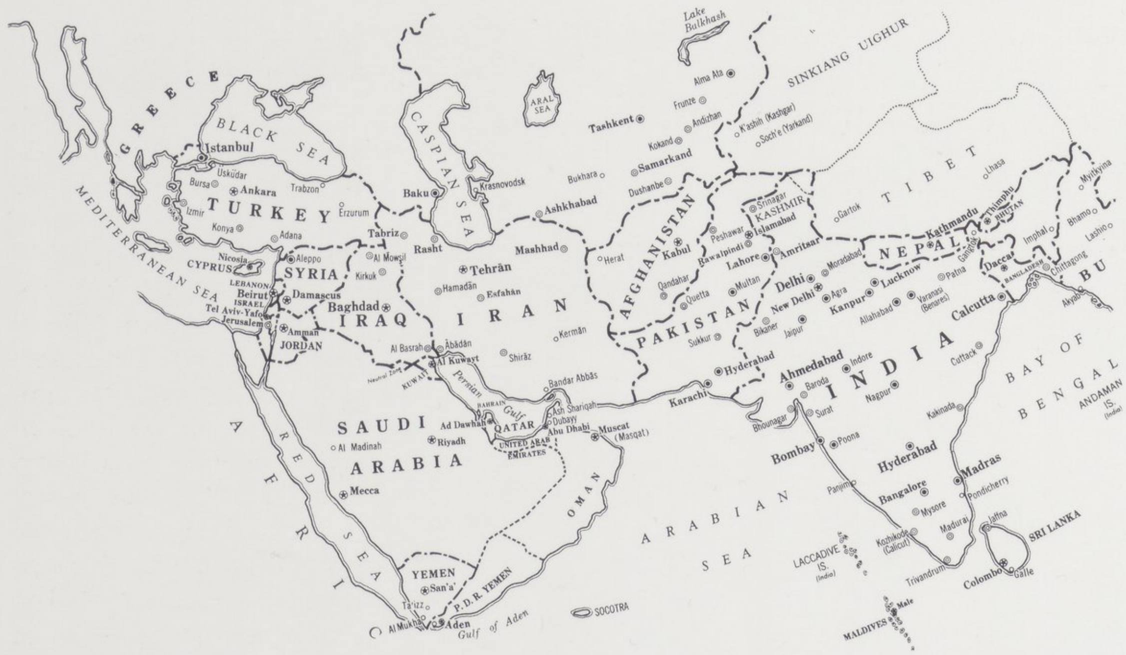
As our tour came to an end in March, I knew that I would have to spend many quiet hours sorting out my impressions of places and people. I left for home energized by my modest success as a self-appointed missionary in the service of the visual arts and determined to enlarge the scope of my efforts.

DEPARTURE
Recall: it rained yesterday.
Greece sent up a boy's kite
Winds howled around Sounion

Salerno hung out its family wash
Neptune's Temple was raucous with ravens
A dead snake lay between pillars, and
A cur dog, lazing in the sun, understood English.

Remember: Sounion is worn by winds
Paestum sinks under sea marshes
Karnak crumbles beneath the sun.
Time has released them all.
What is a thousand years to a Temple?





GREECE
BLACK SEA
Istanbul
Üsküdar
Bursa
Ankara
Trabzon
TURKEY
Izmir
Erzurum
Konya
Adana
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Nicosia
CYPRUS
Aleppo
SYRIA
LEBANON
Beirut
Damascus
ISRAEL
Tel Aviv-Yafo
Jerusalem
Amman
JORDAN
Baghdad
IRAQ
Al Mowsil
Kirkuk
Tabriz
Rasht
Baku
CASPIAN SEA
Krasnovodsk
ARAL SEA
Lake Balkhash
Tehrān
Hamadān
Esfahān
IRAN
Kermān
Shirāz
Mashhad
Ashkhabad
Bukhara
Tashkent
Samarkand
Dushanbe
Kokand
Andizhan
Frunze
Alma Ata
SINKIANG UIGHUR
K'ashih (Kashgar)
Soch'e (Yarkand)
Herat
AFGHANISTAN
Kabul
Qandahar
Quetta
Peshawar
Rawalpindi
Srinagar
KASHMIR
Islamabad
Lahore
Amritsar
Multan
PAKISTAN
Sukkur
Bikaner
Hyderabad
Karachi
Gartok
TIBET
Lhasa
NEPAL
Kathmandu
Thimphu
BHUTAN
Gangtok
Delhi
New Delhi
Moradabad
Agra
Lucknow
Kanpur
Jaipur
Patna
Allahabad
Varanasi (Benares)
Daccal
BANGLADESH
Chittagong
Imphal
Myitkyina
Bhamo
Lashio
Akyab
BU
Calcutta
INDIA
Ahmedabad
Indore
Baroda
Bhaunagar
Surat
Nagpur
Cuttack
BAY OF BENGAL
ANDAMAN IS. (India)
Bombay
Poona
Kakinada
Hyderabad
Madras
Panjim
Bangalore
Mysore
Pondicherry
Madurai
Jaffna
SRI LANKA
Kozhikode (Calicut)
Trivandrum
Colombo
Galle
LACCADIVE IS. (India)
MALDIVES
Male
ARABIAN SEA
Al Basrah
Ābādān
Al Kuwayt
KUWAIT
Neutral Zone
Persian Gulf
Bandar Abbās
BAHRAIN
Ad Dawhah
QATAR
Ash Shariqah
Dubayy
Abu Dhabi
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
Muscat (Masqat)
SAUDI ARABIA
Al Madinah
Riyadh
Mecca
OMAN
RED SEA
AFRICA
YEMEN
San'a'
Ta'izz
Al Mukha
P.D.R. YEMEN
Aden
Gulf of Aden
SOCOTRA

How can one force circumstances and blind, uncaring necessity to deserved ends?

My end, an acceptable communication.

Just where is reality in this undertaking?

Daybook
July 23, 1949

DIARY IV

Communications through Art 1964

GREECE
TURKEY
IRAN
INDIA
PAKISTAN

St. Paul, Minnesota
Summer 1963

The decision to launch a new project of larger dimensions led me to Harris Prior, director of the American Federation of Art (AFA) in New York. When I presented him with the idea of the Grey Foundation's financing a show of contemporary American works of art on paper that would travel throughout the third world, he offered his enthusiastic cooperation. Well, this was no mere parochial MAP. The endeavor that came to be known as *Communication Through Art* involved enormous amounts of time, expertise, talent, heartbreak, and disappointment, and would never have been such a success if it hadn't been for the devoted efforts of the people who believed in the value of what I hoped to accomplish.

Harris Prior's efforts began with correspondence to United States embassies in Asia and Africa eliciting their responses to the project and asking for their cooperation. It took almost a year for the reactions to accumulate, and they were unanimously favorable.

The art to be shown was collected in the following way: Mr. Prior chose three museums geographically distant from each other that would supply twenty works each: the Oakland Museum in California, the Krannert Gallery of the University of Illinois, and the Rochester Museum in upstate New York. Of the works selected, forty were bought outright by the Ben and Abby Grey Foundation; those from the Krannert Gallery were

provided on extended loan, since they were purchased through the University of Illinois, where they finally found their home.

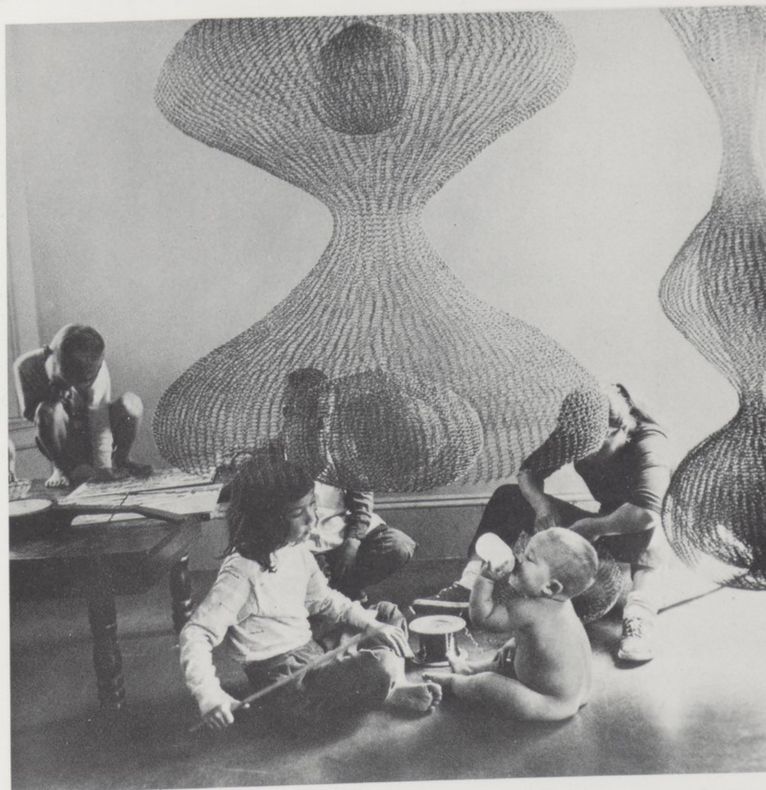
It was also decided that the effectiveness of the project would be increased if the museum directors accompanied their selections with photos of themselves, their museums, and the artists at work, as well as capsule biographies. Space was left on the text panels for translations. Since we wanted to provide the CAOs with as much useful material as possible, a projector and slides, accompanied by typewritten lectures, became part of each of the three packages. A brief history of American art was written by Lloyd Goodrich, director of the Whitney Museum, and a history of American prints was provided by Una Johnson, then curator of prints at the Brooklyn Museum. These lectures would, of course, be translated for delivery by an interested art person of the host country.

The bulkiest addition—and in its way the most ingeniously designed—consisted of three individual crates of art books chosen by H. Harvard Arnason, director of the Guggenheim Museum. The crates were prepared so that they were transformed into bookcases when the lids were unscrewed.

The project was organized so that each group of twenty art works and the material related to them would travel separately as a self-contained exhibition. Openings were scheduled in Istanbul, Teheran and Lahore over a four-week period early in 1964 so that I could be present at all of them.

I left for Athens on New Year's Day, disappointed by the poor attendance at the American Federation of Arts' New York gallery, on 64th Street, where *Communication Through Art* had been placed on view before it began to travel. Despite a half-hour public television interview with me and exposure of some works in the early evening, because of a continuing newspaper strike, not many people received word of the event. It pleased me enormously, however, that David Nalle, the former CAO from Teheran (then back in Washington, D.C.), who had been so helpful and supportive with MAP, came to this New York launching of my latest venture with his congratulations and good wishes.

On this trip, my traveling companions were Ruth Dundas, head of the National Gallery of Art's museum shop, and Margaret Cogswell, head of the Department of Publications of the American Federation of Arts (thereafter deputy chief of the International Art Program, National Collection of Fine Arts).



Imogene Cunningham,
Ruth Asawa and Her Family,
photograph

When she returned she wrote a splendid article on the project for the AFA's *Quarterly*.

We attended the three openings abroad as scheduled. The one that was the greatest success from beginning to end was the event in Lahore, Pakistan. An oriental tent called a shamiana had been set up outside the room in the National College of Art Museum where not only the works from the University of Illinois were installed, but as a companion show, there was an installation of works by contemporary Pakistani artists. On a long table were Pakistani art books placed side by side with those from the United States.

Inside the tent, a conference on contemporary art took place. Among the highlights of the conference were discussions conducted in English by John Ferren, a New York painter who had come to Lahore from Beirut, where he was a visiting artist on a State Department grant. The principal of the local art college, Mr. Shakir Ali, was so impressed by Ferren's defense of abstract expressionism that he stood up and announced, "I

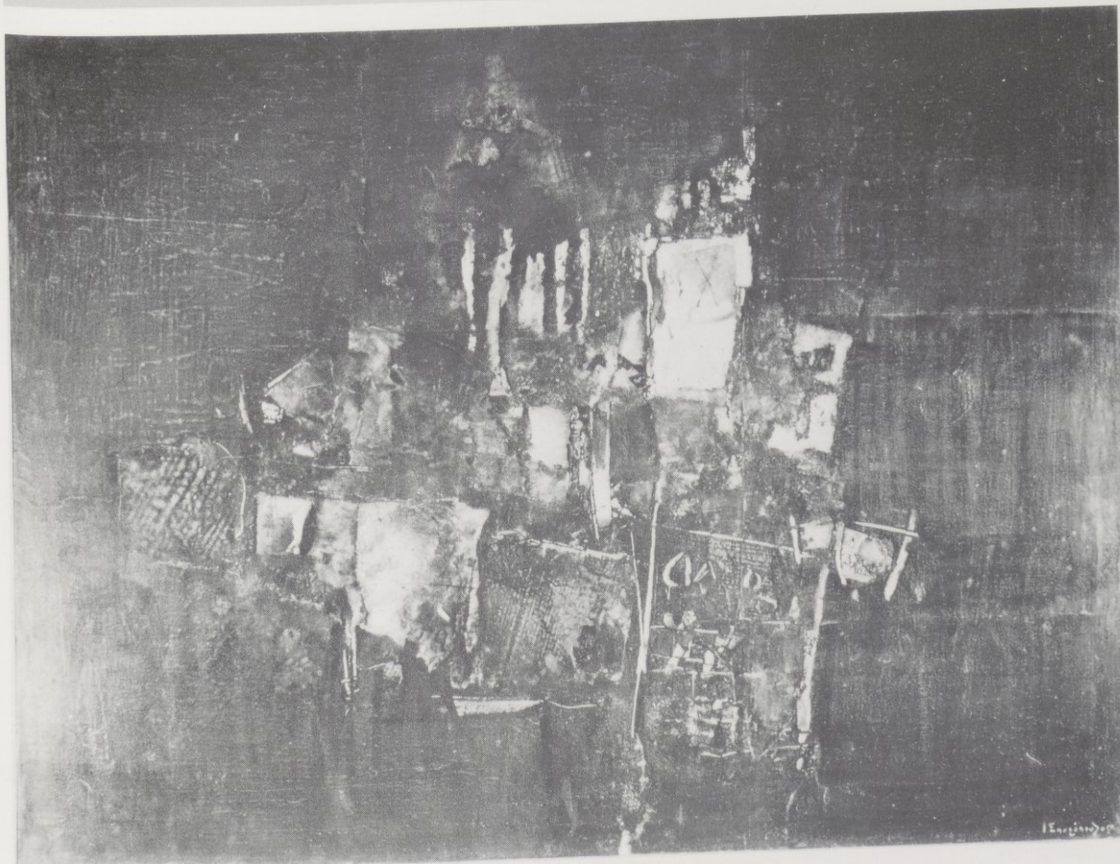
Seminar,
Communication Through Art,
Lahore, Pakistan,
John Ferren
and Margaret Cogswell
(Third and fourth from left at
table), January, 1964

understand modern art for the first time. Congratulations," and shook hands with him.

There were other occasions when an invigorating exchange of ideas occurred, especially among students and working artists, but I must admit there were times when everything seemed to go wrong. The books, which were eventually donated to various libraries, were a source of complications on at least one occasion. The show presented in Teheran consisted of the works selected by Paul Mills. His selections were all by women and about women, and what a mistake that turned out to be in Iran! The first thing the students did was to grab one of the library books—a directory of American artists—to check on the status of the women whose works were on view. Well, not everyone was included in the directory, with the eventual result that the local press said that a housewife had brought the works of American housewives to their country, and the implication was that the Iranians had been insulted.

Paul Mills had had a good idea, but unfortunately it turned into a fiasco. However, it was another valuable learning experience for me.

In Turkey, Harris Prior's selection was shown at the Istanbul Academy of Fine Arts. It was a night opening and the pictures were in the lobby, hung on panels set on the marble walls on either side of a room which faced the Bosporus. The view of the lights on the water, seen through a huge picture window, with fishing boats, ferries and steamers, was spectacular. If you looked at the pictures, you were doing quite a favor!



Jannis Spyropoulos,
Arini,
oil and collage on canvas,
1963

While I was involved in the early adventures of *Communication Through Art* abroad, the show known as *Fourteen Contemporary Iranian Artists* was continuing to circulate in the United States, I had begun to think of that show as the forerunner of a series that would familiarize American audiences with contemporary art from the countries I was visiting. Thus, during my travels in 1964, I continued to seek out new artists as well as to return to those whose work I had already begun to collect. It was during that year that I also became involved in a project that concerned the continuing activities of Parviz Tanavoli and the Dehqani-Tafti family.

Athens, Greece
January 2, 1964

A few days after my arrival in Athens, I visited Nees Morphes where I was shown the work of some of the gallery's newer artists. I bought nothing on that occasion, but I soon made the acquaintance of Sosso Houtopoulou, a sculptor

working in metal. In her studio, I saw some of her older work created by welding sheet iron. The piece I bought, *Secret*, was about to leave for a show in England, so was delayed many months in reaching St. Paul, having been shipped by sea to the port of Duluth, via the Great Lakes.

Another artist I met for the first time on this trip was Jannis Spyropoulos. His wife was waiting for us when we stepped from our taxi, and when she asked whether we spoke French—her husband spoke no English—I was thankful for those too-brief Berlitz courses I had managed to attend during the previous year's hectic schedule.

Spyropoulos was then in his late forties, with a thin, lopsided face, lively brown eyes, and a quick smile. As his wife went off to make coffee, he began to pull out a number of canvases. Too large, I thought, for my usual way of transportation. But when I saw the smaller ones, they seemed insignificant by comparison. He was working in a dark palette with swirls of white, creating an effect of solidity and vitality.

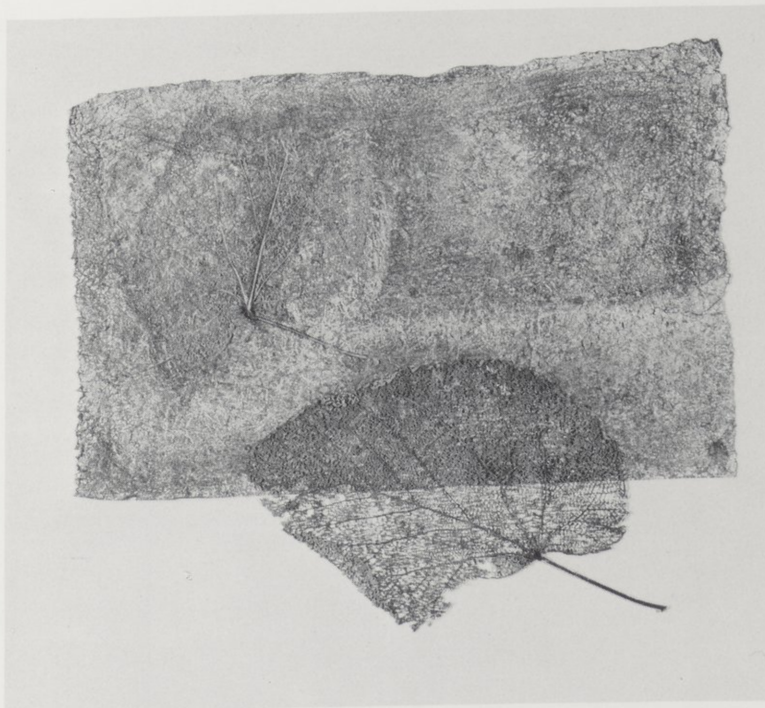
When I asked him to help me make a choice, he brought out his most recent painting which contained a hint of a calligraphic image. His manner of presentation made me feel that this was a work he especially treasured. But when I asked which ones he preferred, he replied, "*Elles sont toutes mes enfants*." I finally bought *Arini* for which I paid $750. I considered it my first major purchase.

My impression was that Spyropoulos was not being honored in his own country. Few contemporary Greek artists were being collected. Nees Morphes had practically no local clientele, and the painters who were surviving were exhibiting and selling their work abroad—some in Paris, others in London, Rome, or New York.

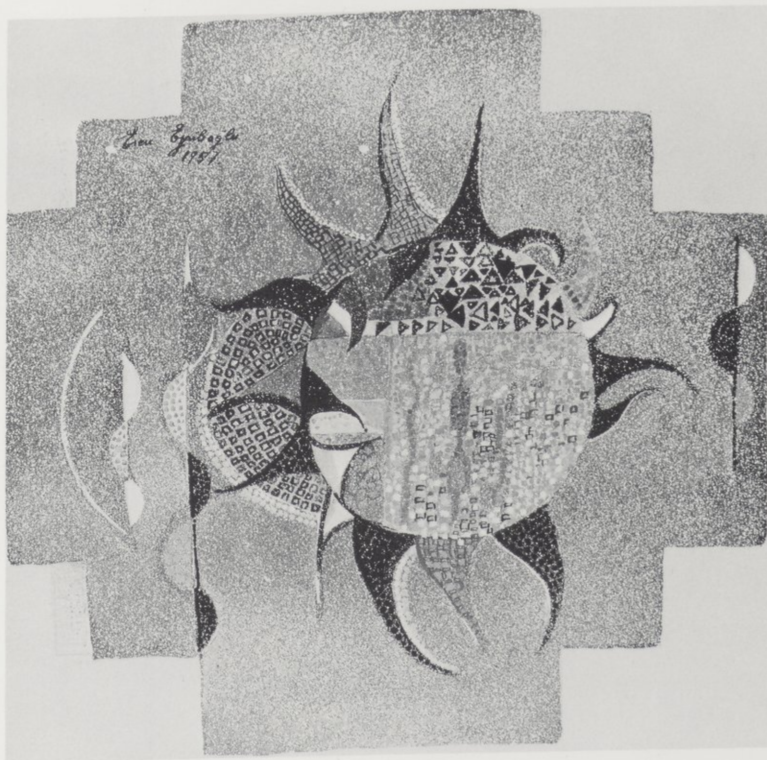
Istanbul, Turkey
January 6, 1964

By the time we reached Istanbul, I had decided to try to bring back enough new work for a Turkish show similar to the Iranian one. When I was in Turkey in 1961, I had bought two serigraphs from the Galerie Milar in Ankara by the artist Bedri Rahmi Eyuboglu who was in the United States on a Rockefeller grant at the time. I was determined to get to his studio this trip, especially because one of his colleagues described it as "the best in Turkey." It turned out to be a memorable occasion—a glimpse into a way of living and working completely new to me.

Ruth Dundas accompanied me on this visit which involved leaving Istanbul and crossing the Bosporus by ferry. We



Bedri Rahmi Eyuboglu,
Leaves Returning to America,
collage of oil, wax, and leaves
on paper



Eren Eyuboglu,
Design for a Mosaic, gouache
and pencil on paper, 1957

Nerzat Akoral,
Water Buffalo,
lithograph

arrived by taxi at our destination—a yard littered with rocks, shells, glass—mounds of junk in disorder. Going past the glass door and the Turkish rug that hung as a space divider, we found ourselves in a similarly cluttered interior. The wife of the artist and an artist in her own right, Eren Eyuboglu, had made no attempt to look presentable. Our host was unable to shake hands because of a painful affliction caused by the materials—sand, gravel, dyes—he was using.

As he opened a large portfolio, he told me that now he had no interest in form—only in Color! Color! Color! I don't know whether I was bewitched, but I did buy two of his works and one of hers—at prices higher than I would have agreed to if I had been in my right mind. While Ruth and I were examining the portfolio, Eren tied some rags to her feet so that she

could help the servant with the dusting on the floor. But she interrupted this chore to cut out a mat for the picture I chose. She went at it with ruthless skill; nothing could have stopped her knife as it slid along the steel T-square.

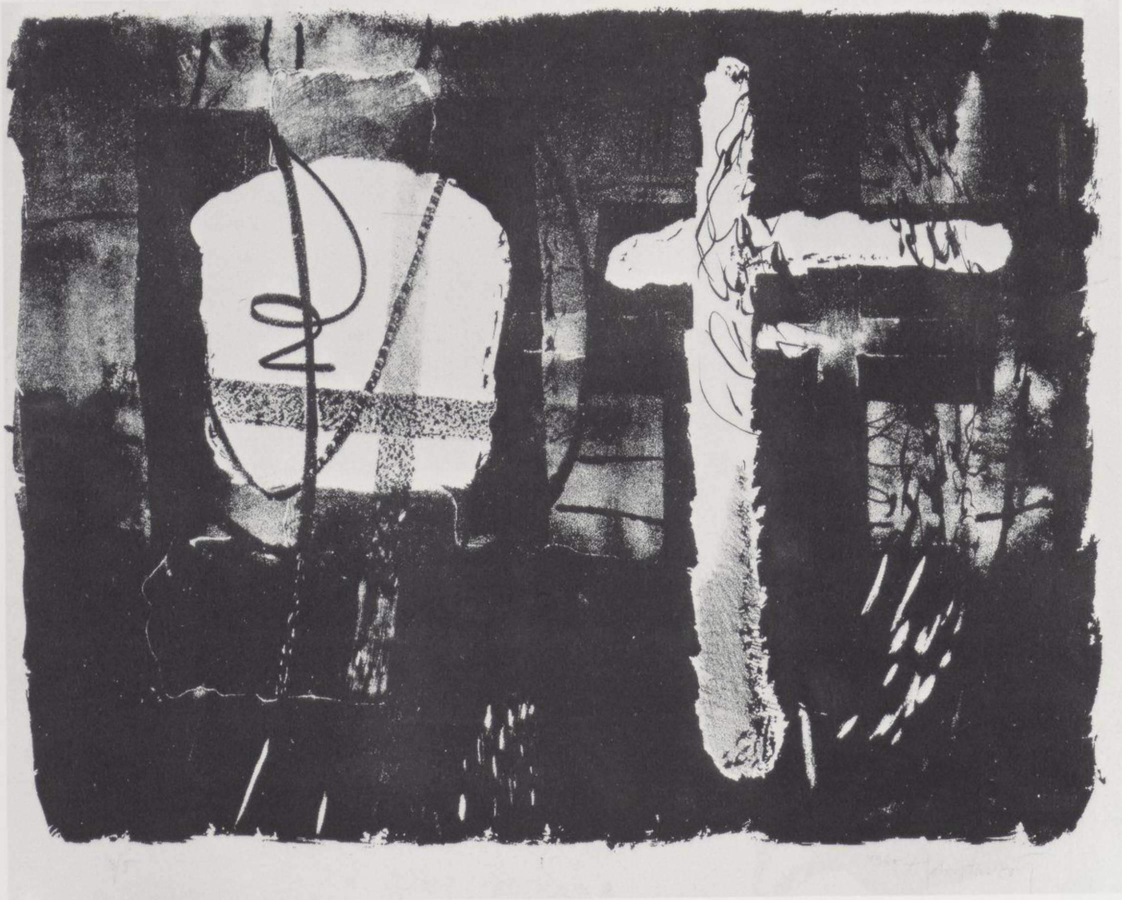
I can still recall the details of that first encounter with the Eyuboglus as if I were watching a film: a studio like a castle tower with open stairs that go up and up; beds covered with Turkish rugs, some hand-tied like our old quilts. Coming from a pot on the stove situated in what seems an all-purpose living room, the steamy smell of cabbage. It seemed wild, uncivilized, disorganized. This environment and these people, creative to their fingertips, were perhaps "too Turkish" for me, and I remember thinking at the time that perhaps there was some connection between their living on the Asian side of Istanbul and their un-European style.

Ankara, Turkey
January 9–12, 1964

In the three years since I had met Cemil Eren and bought his metal collage, he had become thinner and more fragile. He was still working in the same way, building up washes from a light ground, and in some cases using layers of pigment, but always achieving a delicate effect. On this occasion, I bought a watercolor for the coming show and two other works: a large vibrant oil titled *Vision* and a small "bride" oil in white and clear yellow. (About this one, Cemil remarked that when an artist friend saw it, she burst into tears.)

The Old Painter at the Window—that was how I remembered my first view of Abindin Elderoglu. Some of the bounce had gone out of him by this time (he was sixty-three; he died ten years later in 1974), but his shy smile and gentle appeal remained the same. He showed his work without making any effort to sell it. The oils were dark and adorned with calligraphic designs; the works on paper expressed a childlike humor, and he gave one each to Ruth and me, as if he were scattering leaves. I bought two additional pieces, one for the exhibition and one to give to a friend.

At a showing of contemporary Ankara art arranged for us by USIS, I met several artists whose work was new to me, among them Nerzat Akoral whose black and white woodcuts were so appealing I decided to include several in my collection. I had hoped to be able to connect with Adnan Turani, the painter whose abstract gouaches I had seen at Cemil's studio in 1961, and who had been present when Cemil had asked me



Adnan Turani,
La Guerre (War),
lithograph, 1960

whether I could find a way of showing Turkish art in America. When I got to his studio—which I had never seen before—I was welcomed by his wife. While I was disappointed to learn that he was in Izmir, I was delighted that many of his recent paintings were now in Israel for the first one-man show by a Turkish artist to be mounted in that country. Since I was eager to include him in this current collection, I bought a lithograph—*La Guerre*—which had already been selected for a graphics show in Japan.

By the time I left Turkey, I had accumulated the beginnings of a collection of such quality and diversity they could be shaped into a representative show. When *Turkish Art Today* opened in St. Paul in 1966 and began its travels the following year under the auspices of the Western Association of Art Museums, it consisted of forty-nine works by twenty-five artists.

For the first time, the American public was presented with an aspect of Turkish creativity removed from the traditional miniatures, tiles and rugs of the past.

I have already described the unpleasantness attendant on the Teheran opening of *Communication Through Art* but that occasion was soon viewed with philosophical detachment and the hope that the exhibit would be received more enthusiastically elsewhere—which of course it was.

I was anticipating a delayed Christmas celebration in Isfahan as a guest of Bishop Hassan Dehqani-Tafti and his family. I had last seen him a few months before when he had been able to visit me as a house guest in St. Paul for a week after he had attended an Anglican Congress in Toronto as a delegate.

My diary entries for this interlude convey the few discomforts and the many delights of this holiday during which the first steps were taken that eventually led to the Abby Garden.

Isfahan, Iran
January 14, 1964

My room in Bishop's House is forty degrees Fahrenheit, and I am wearing practically all the clothes I own. My breath shows . . . my nose is red, my hands frozen. But the room is delightful nonetheless. I love the place, the people, the left-over-from-Christmas carnations, the cleanliness, and the Iranian voices in the alley. I am intensely happy to be here and am determined to embrace these few days for my warm remembrance in the future. Bishop's House is welcoming, and so is Margaret in her fleece-lined boots and two sweaters. In the front hall is a huge center staircase whose high treads are faced with Persian tiles. Upstairs the bedrooms open out onto a balcony that goes all along the front, sheltered by a pillar-supported roof that also extends over the ground floor verandah. The windows in the deep-set bays have small trefoil arches with six ruby-stained glass petals around a yellow center. From inside, these form strong decorations, and from outside at night, they glow like an ornamented Christmas tree lit by interior lamps. Hassan's study corresponds to my room at the opposite end of the house. It's very comfortable, book-lined and warmed by a proper oil stove with a stovepipe. In the afternoon, I find this stove in my room. It raises the temperature to the low fifties, and now it seems almost balmy. Margaret still supplies me with a hot water bottle.

. . . Susanne—a darling five-and-a-half-year-old, black-eyed, rosy-cheeked beauty—unceremoniously runs into my room at her recess time to get a look at the visitor. Bahram is a

gamin—nine, I think, and very bright. In the evening, I listen to him teach Susanne to read and write Farsi. He is the perfect instructor, cajoling, reasoning, enticing her on. Eleven-year-old Shirin, the oldest, is unusually withdrawn. She looks appealing in her white bathrobe, saying goodnight later than the other two, hugging a hot water bottle to her little-girl breasts.

. . . Meals are delicious, brought to the large table by a male servant, a kerchiefed matron in the background. Besides myself, there are usually one or two other guests. The first evening, Margaret knitted while we listened to "Amahl and the Night Visitors."

Isfahan, Iran
January 16, 1964

Christian business friends of Hassan's come to lunch to give advice about finding a vacation place for the Dehqani-Taftis. Since my 1961 visit, I have determined to give the family a place like my Deer Lake hideaway where they can retreat from their church obligations and be by themselves. I want them to have a little bit of earth that will be their very own.

Later in the afternoon a chap on a motorcycle comes into the compound. He is to be our guide on this first search for a Persian garden.

No suitable property was found during my brief stay, but the search continued after my departure, and six months later, a letter from the bishop arrived in St. Paul. Among other things, it contained the following news:

Bishop's House, Isfahan
June 7, 1964

My dear Abby:

This is to say that the Abby Garden has been bought! Yesterday was our twelfth wedding anniversary, a very fine day to own a garden. The sensation was wonderful—such a feeling of really belonging to a particular spot on earth and that spot belonging to you. It brought healing all over me. . . .

I didn't see the property for myself until October of 1965, but in the preceding August, I received the following letter:

August 15, 1965

My dear Abby:

A few days after my arrival in Isfahan, after my Jerusalem trip, we started to have our annual leave . . . . As normally I am very preoccupied and I am not much with the children, I decided to devote this year mainly to them, teaching them some Persian literature and doing some handwork together. We decided to go to the Abby Garden for three weeks! Some people thought it would be too hot, but the swimming pool is the saving factor. . . . We have now been in the garden for twelve days and we have never had a better holiday. Bahram and I have painted the gateway. It took us four days to do it. . . . The gate we meant to paint blue for the Abby Garden ('abi' means 'blue' in Persian) but because of the dusty lane outside, blue did not seem suitable. So we have chosen 'grey' as the colour for the gate and railings—perhaps a more suitable colour—if not Abby, then Grey!

Before leaving for Isfahan, I called on Hossein Khataie, the last survivor of an antique art. He sliced leather paper-thin, fretted it, inlaid it, and colored it—thereby creating a Persian picture, or a charming still life of a rose and a nightingale. This is then set into an elaborate frame which he decorates with painstaking delicacy. I appreciate the craft and the craftsman, the bearded, calm-eyed patient worker. An old friend who watched him at work said, "He is a contented man." One of his works, *Bahram's Hunting Ground,* is in my collection.

Teheran, Iran
January 18, 1964

When I returned to Teheran, I made arrangements for a meeting with the chancellor of Teheran University and invited Peg to accompany me. It was my intention to talk to him about presenting the university with a bronze foundry that could be sent back from the United States with Parviz Tanavoli, who was due to return to Iran in June. He already had been a junior assistant member of the Teheran University faculty. During his

stay in Minnesota he had acquired all the techniques for reviving bronze casting and installing the necessary equipment for a foundry in Iran. Tanavoli's interest in bronzes of ancient Persia, along with the techniques he had mastered with his own work, made this an important opportunity for the revival of a lost art form with the bonus of a contemporary attitude. It took two hours to observe the proper protocol and make the proper presentation to the proper people.

Mr. Seihoun, the chancellor, discussed the need for someone to handle curriculum in architecture and town planning—a problem I was in no position to solve. I did accomplish my mission, but I certainly had to work hard to give away a much-needed foundry!

Teheran, Iran
January 22, 1964

Sohrab Sepehri was one of the artists whose work had been included in the Iranian show that had been circulating in the United States since the previous year. I was especially eager to meet him, not only so that I could see what his current production looked like, but also because he was a published poet.

On the January day that I visited him, the Teheran streets were hazardous with ice patches, but I eventually made my way up a marble stairway and entered a serene room in which sunlight was filtered through hand-decorated curtains. Potted red tulips and blue hyacinths created splashes of color against a linen wall-hanging bordered with an abstract tree motif. The hand and the eye of the artist were evident throughout—in the placement of the plants, in the design of the bookcases made of bound reeds and branches, in the handwoven material that covered a cube shaped shade over a hanging light fixture.

Sepehri was then about thirty-six years old, and he had the most beautifully expressive hands. Hands are a characteristic I always remark on when I meet people. I therefore occasionally find myself looking at a person's hands when I cannot discern a great deal from their other features. In describing a person, my mother would always speak of the hands first saying, "Did you notice his hands?" He showed me one canvas after another, placing them on two nails in the wall so that they could be viewed effectively. His manner was deliberate; there was nothing to break the line of communication between the work and the beholder.

He had spent some time in Paris and also in Japan, but originally he was from Kashan, a high desert and mountain area in western Iran, where the great pleasure of his early years

Sohrab Sepehri,
Persian Garden,
oil on canvas, 1963

had been the opportunity to join his father and his uncles on their hunting trips in the mountains at daybreak.

At the time I saw his work, it was essentially an abstract statement about the earth. He was working from nature, making bare minimal sketches from which he developed his formal canvases. When I asked whether a particular painting in which pink was dominant had been done at sunrise, he said he did not bring time into his work—only eternity. This is something that can be said in Farsi—and in French too—without sounding pretentious. He writes poetry in both languages. And when I asked whether he was dealing with a particular problem—space, mass, or the like, he replied that he was always faced with the same problem: realizing his conception in paint.

I bought two of his works, a watercolor called *Canyon* and an oil called *Persian Garden*. He gave me one of his French poems before we parted. Here is one of his poems translated into English:

Buds of a dream, that is what we are.
Buds of a dream? Shall we ever Bloom?

Some day, but through no motion of petals.
Here?
Nay, in the valley of Death.
But, darkness and loneliness?
Nay, Beauty's private domain.
Whoever shall come to admire us, smell us?
To be blown away by the wind?
And yet another descent?

Kayhan International
March 20, 1963

Teheran, Iran
January 23, 1964

Parviz's brother Jamshid and his cousin Iraj have come to fetch me at the hotel this evening for a visit with his family. I want to meet his parents. They are much as I expected, although his mother is younger than I imagined. Conversation proceeds through the English-speaking Iraj. Everyone keeps asking when Parviz is coming home. His father is a big burly man with a boisterous, perhaps even bawdy, humor. He knows a few random English words, for instance, he says that the cakes he incorporated into the dessert are "ladyfingers." And what a masterpiece the dessert is! A huge mound of ice cream covered with pistachio nuts has been placed on a plain cake, the entire construction surrounded by spun sugar formed into a wicker basket and set on a platter amidst ladyfingers and orange slices cut out to hold burning candles. All the lights are turned out when this triumph comes to the table.

Everyone is relaxed and comfortable as the evening wears on. Jamshid who directs the fine arts programs for the city's elementary schools shows me his collection of the work of about 200 children. I think about taking some of it back to Minnesota. The work of one child is really outstanding. I am told, "He is sad, quite withdrawn."

I am pleased to see Parviz's work on the walls and also some pictures by my new friend, Sohrab Sepehri. Parviz's two wrought-iron assemblages are the mythical monsters that guard the stove.

It is an attractive family in an attractive setting. They are all learning English so that they can welcome Parviz's American wife Janet and their daughter Shirin.

It would be several years before a museum would open in Iran and there were very few commercial galleries—one could even say only one—for fine art. The so-called international moneyed set were, on their return from their travels, beginning to find and appreciate native contemporary talents and native

Beth Van Hoesen,
Profile,
etching

crafts. Yet still the best sources of finding Iranian contemporary art were by constantly asking questions and the assistance of the Iranian deputies at the USIS. I was interviewed by various newspaper people about my role in *Communication Through Art* and my activities at home on behalf of Iranian art. I was also trying to prepare a script required by the censor for a live telecast on which I was scheduled to appear. I knew that I would have to be very circumspect in my comments about the arts and the university, about Parviz's leaving Iran to work in the United States, and about the traveling show.

Teheran, Iran
January 24, 1964

On the evening of the broadcast, Ruth Dundas and I were driven to the complex of buildings at the top of a hill from which we were treated to a spectacular view of Teheran at night. When we entered the spacious two-story lobby David Ramzi, a USIS employee, took us in tow and led us to the studio. Ramzi had translated my script into Farsi, and we had rehearsed the dovetailing, so that during the telecast, we were able to alternate smoothly. The program also included a presentation of eight paintings, among them: June Wayne, *We Are Tapers Too*; Imogene Cummingham, *Ruth Asawa and Her Family*; Beth Van Hoesen, *Cynthia*. As I recall, I answered the usual questions: Who I was, why I was there, and my hope that the art works would open avenues of friendship and understanding, etc.

The presentation lasted for about half an hour during which, thanks to Ramzi, I felt quite at ease. As soon as it was over, two phone calls came into the studio: the first from a well-known miniaturist who apparently thought I was "charming," but "why weren't more paintings shown?" and the second from a woman who wanted to know why the snappy jazz trio that had preceded us couldn't have been cut short so that we could have had more time.

On the evening of our departure for India, John Ferren invited Ruth, Peg, and me to a late dinner with him at our hotel as a festive farewell gesture. He had also invited several Iranians who in their charming softspoken way were sharply critical of the United States. Why was it that everything we did to foster intercultural relations—for example the Point Four Program—was such a failure? Why was it the Italians who had just sent a magnificent show of their drawings and accompanied them with a superb catalogue? Why were the American cultural officers so unscholarly? The French were installed in an old inadequate building, but their staff consisted of top-notch personnel who stayed on for years, knew the language, and did so much to promote understanding.

Peg interrupted this barrage by saying she was tired of hearing all these complaints about America, and then somewhat angrily flung the following question at our critics: Where was it that ninety percent of the young Iranians would want to go if they could leave their country—to France, Italy, England, or the United States?

We had to make our excuses after this discussion for in less than an hour the three of us were on the 11:45 plane, scheduled to land in Old Delhi at five a.m.

New Delhi, India
January 26, 1964

One of the first jaunts we took in New Delhi was to the National Archeological Museum wonderfully laid out around a central court where the sun streamed down. But the galleries themselves were unheated and unpleasantly cold and filled with too much sculpture and painting to enjoy in one visit. Besides, I was impatient to renew the contacts I had made during my first trip to India in 1960 and to investigate the work being shown in the newer galleries specializing in contemporary art.

One such establishment was the Kumar Gallery, started by Pradeep Kumar, the oldest of seven brothers, all involved in the arts in one way or another. During my first hurried visit, I saw some things that were interesting in an experimental way,

but not much that was solid and original. However, *Myself Crucified* was a work that merited consideration. Its idiom seemed to fluctuate between the macabre and the blandly appealing. The artist was Gumal Rasool Santosh, and I made a date to return on a day when he would be there.

New Delhi, India
January 29, 1964

During the fall preceding my departure from Minnesota, I had had a gratifying meeting with Prodosh Das Gupta who was in the United States at the time, on vacation from his post as director of the National Gallery of Modern Art in New Delhi. I now took the opportunity to call on him, and as I waited in the reception room, his assistant appeared, a thin, large-eyed young man who greeted me by name. No sooner had I asked, "Who are you?" than I immediately added "Mr. Basu?"

I was startled by his gaunt appearance. I had been looking at his self-portrait in my own house for more than three years—and here he was, more angular, more constrained than I remembered. After a brief exchange of cordial greetings, he led me into Das Gupta's office where we were both invited to make ourselves comfortable.

I was especially interested in finding out about the public who visited this museum. The director's description of the situation as of 1964 was the following:

"The bourgeois intelligentsia has no use at all for this museum. This is a large group of the population, but one seldom sees them here, yet New Delhi, being the capital, with its foreign diplomats, has a small segment of the population interested in contemporary art. Among the maharajahs and the native élite, few are seriously interested in the study of modern art.

"Sometimes the fathers collected and appreciated art, but the sons don't care a snap for it and don't even know what they own. Someone in their employ, a secretary perhaps, will tell us what they have, and we will offer to buy some of the more distinguished works. In this way we build our collections. Money is no problem. The difficulty consists in finding what we want.

"However, the Ministry of Culture has been abolished recently, and I think that's a pity. Everything to do with art now comes under the jurisdiction of education."

When I asked whether the museum sponsored class trips by schoolchildren and their teachers, I was told that it did. But, he went on to say, "At least seventy-five percent of our visitors come from the villages. They come, but they do not view the

paintings as art. They look for some form of a divinity. For example, this drawing"—he pointed to a black and white at the other end of the room—"is of a figure playing a musical instrument—that it's a nude doesn't matter. So, they reason, Krishna plays the flute. This is therefore an incarnation of Krishna, and they may even salaam before it. . . ."

"Or even prostrate themselves," added Basu. "I have seen them do that often when they troop through here in the summer."

Before I left his office, Das Gupta suggested that I go to the Kunika Gallery where a painter named Laxman Pai was having a one-man show. "You will like it," he said.

And so I did, in a way. Pai's canvases were inspired by classical poetry, the *Festival of the Seasons* by the fifth century Hindu, Kalidasa. I had a quick response to *Winter* but it was almost too lush, a nude figure in profile holding her breast and looking toward four suns—like four oranges—on the horizon. I left without making a decision and stopped at the shop below, the Central Cottage Industries Emporium, where I bought a Kalomkeri (folk art with a religious theme) painting on cloth.

New Delhi, India
January 30, 1964

We have been invited by Ambassador and Mrs. Chester Bowles to a duo piano recital at seven p.m., so I wasted part of the day at the hairdresser. To me it was a dull evening. On a cold night Roosevelt House (Edward Durell Stone, architect; a part of the United States Embassy complex used for hospitality, guests, etc.) is huge and uninviting. The contrived effect of heads of roses floating in the pool in the entrance hall is not especially welcoming. Dorothy Stebbins Bowles and her ambassador husband greet about 100 guests—embassy people, distinguished nationals, "important" foreigners. I remember Steb as a campus personality, Vassar '24, a whiz on the hockey field, lanky and freckled-face. Her athletic frame is transformed by a sari, and her manner is gracious and her voice gentle as she introduces the duo pianists.

A buffet supper was served after the concert. Before we left, Steb asked a few questions about our trip and said the embassy would love to beg, borrow, or steal some American art.

The following day, I returned to the National Gallery because Ruth and Peg wanted to see the Tagore paintings. Das Gupta welcomed us in his charming way and immediately wanted to know whether I had gone to the Laxman Pai show.

Laxman Pai,
Winter,
oil on canvas, 1963

When he found out that I hadn't bought anything, he said he thought it was too bad. It was his opinion that Pai's work was full of the life and color of India. The museum already had two of his paintings. He asked which one I had considered, and when I said *Winter* he nodded his head in silent corroboration as if he thought it was one of the best ones. I told him I probably would buy it, which I did. *Winter* was included in the show that began to circulate in the United States three years later.

One of the most vivid recollections of my first visit to New Delhi was the batik work done by children under the supervi-

Gumal Rasool Santosh, *Myself Crucified*, oil on canvas, 1963

Devayani Krishna, *Birds and Blossoms*, batik

sion of Kanwal and Devayani Krishna at the Modern School. On this trip I found the Krishnas in the enormous studio containing examples of the children's batiks which were being sold to raise money for the purchase of contemporary art. The display was effectively lit from behind, and accompanying it was a display of handsome pottery. On another wall were the works by professional artists, the beginning of a permanent gallery.

The Krishnas are a wonderful pair whose ability as teachers is made manifest in their pupils' performance. They are both also creative in their own right. One of Devayani's recent batiks was displayed on a panel. It was called *Bird and Blossom*. When I asked what bird, she replied "I love all birds and flowers." I bought this piece for 450 rupees. It was also my intention to bring back a collection of children's work to show to Anna Marie Pope, Chief of Traveling Exchange Service at the Smithsonian Institution. For this project I looked through stacks of paintings and selected six from the twelve-year-old group. And through a donation of $75 to the school's contemporary painting fund, I selected thirteen of the children's batiks.

While I was making my selections, a recess occurred during which several boys and girls came into the studio to work—some painting what appeared to be boldly executed portraits, others dipping their brushes into the iron waxpots and continuing with their batiks. I was once again struck by their originality and recalled Devayani telling me that copying was discouraged by tearing up and discarding any work that was a duplication of someone else's.

She and I discussed her etching *Mask* that I was buying. When I remarked on its macabre quality, she turned to her husband for help with the meaning of the word and then said, "No, it is not sad. This is a veiled mask. It is very hard to get to know people. This is a human being behind two masks."

Kanwal told me that his wife had worked on nothing but masks for the year that they had spent in a Tibetan monastery.

Later in the day, I returned to the Kumar Gallery to make up my mind about the Santosh painting *Myself Crucified* and to meet the artist. When he arrived, he apologized for not being able to shake hands. They were swathed in loose bandages because of an allergy to turpentine. I was shown the progress of his work, from an impressionist canvas of a Kashmiri boat and mountain scene, through a Leger-like period, to abstractions executed with heavily applied paint. I wanted to know more about the self-portrait. Why the Christ image?

"Christ is a part of our Muslim religion. I do not know why I did it. Perhaps there is a part of me that feels as if it were being sacrificed. I put the nail hole in the hand, and now look at my own. Now I cannot paint! Some say the body is dead and only the head and hand are alive."

"Why did you lighten it with yellow?"

"I do not know. But the hand upraised like that, in that particular gesture—I see it just now—says Peace, Peace!"

I chose that painting and also Ram Kumar's cool and peaceful *Kashmir* to add to my collection of contemporary Indian art.

Then, from India to Pakistan for the Lahore opening of *Communication Through Art.*

I have already indicated how successful this opening was, and how well-received the exhibit continued to be during the time of its installation. My diary entries about the event provide some additional sidelights.

Lahore, Pakistan
February 2, 1964

The work is excellently hung in the gallery of the National Art College, with a similar exhibit by Pakistani artists and photographic panels of the artists at work. I am escorted around the show by Shakir Ali, the director of the college. He invites me into his office to show me a terra cotta head modeled by Rudyard Kipling's father. I discover that John Lockwood Kipling was curator of the museum from 1875 to 1893, "an artist of considerable ability."

. . . We rejoin the crowds at the opening and I am pleased by the sounds of laughter and lively conversation. There is to be a radio broadcast this evening of a tape in which I am interviewed for "Voice of America." Lucky that it's not a live broadcast because I'm beginning to lose my voice.

Lahore, Pakistan
February 4, 1964

My Lahore laryngitis didn't prevent my keeping an appointment with Anna Molka Ahmed, head of the department of fine arts at Panjab University. At that time, she had established a curriculum in which about fifty students could be trained in graphics and design as well as painting. In spite of primitive conditions and a painful shortage of materials and equipment (easels, brushes, and other supplies had been burned the previous month during a student riot), she is forging ahead and accomplishing her goals. She hoped that Colin David, one of her instructors, would be able to go abroad for additional training in design. When I went to his cubbyhole of a studio, I found a painting of his with excellent design composi-

Ribbon cutting ceremony,
Communication Through Art,
National Art College, Lahore,
Pakistan, February 2, 1964

tion that especially appealed to me. It was an oil called *Country Scene* and I bought it on the spot.

As part of our visit, Anna Ahmed had arranged for a drive to the Institute of Education and Research of Panjab University, a new campus under the aegis of Indiana University. It was the latest thing in campus architecture, with a superb auditorium containing a portrait of Jinnah that Anna had been commissioned to do.

But in the midst of this modernity, where the equipment made Anna drool with envy, there occurred the usual disaster caused by the great gaps in technology. After months of delay, an eagerly awaited electric kiln had recently been delivered. It had been broken in transport. In the United States it had been loaded by an electrically operated crane. Here in Pakistan, the only known method of handling a crate of that size was to roll it to its destination. The kiln was cracked in the process.

Before departing with Peg for Karachi, Pakistan (Ruth was returning via San Francisco and left before we did) and then on to the United States, I went to have a last look at *Communication Through Art*. By this time, a catalogue of the works of the

Pakistani artists had been published similar to our own, and the exhibit continued to draw an enthusiastic audience. In the forty-four works of art, the photographs and the books, a dialogue was taking place between the two cultures. I was proud of the show and pleased that its travels had only begun.

Jamila Zaida, one of Pakistan's "new women," came to see me off. She was a teacher and artist of distinction whose company I had enjoyed during my stay in Lahore, and I had been impressed by the murals she had been commissioned to do for the airport.

Her remarks about the exhibit more than compensated for many of the criticisms that came from elsewhere. She told me that I would never know how much *Communication Through Art* had done for her and her students. It was the stimulus of the original work—to which they had never been exposed before—that brought them to a new level in their own endeavors. And the books were constantly in use. The young artists in Pakistan needed this encouragement.

This contact with the work of their peers in the United States, actually getting some sense of American artists at work as shown in their photographs, all this acted as a catalyst for their creative talents.

Karachi, Pakistan
February 7, 1964

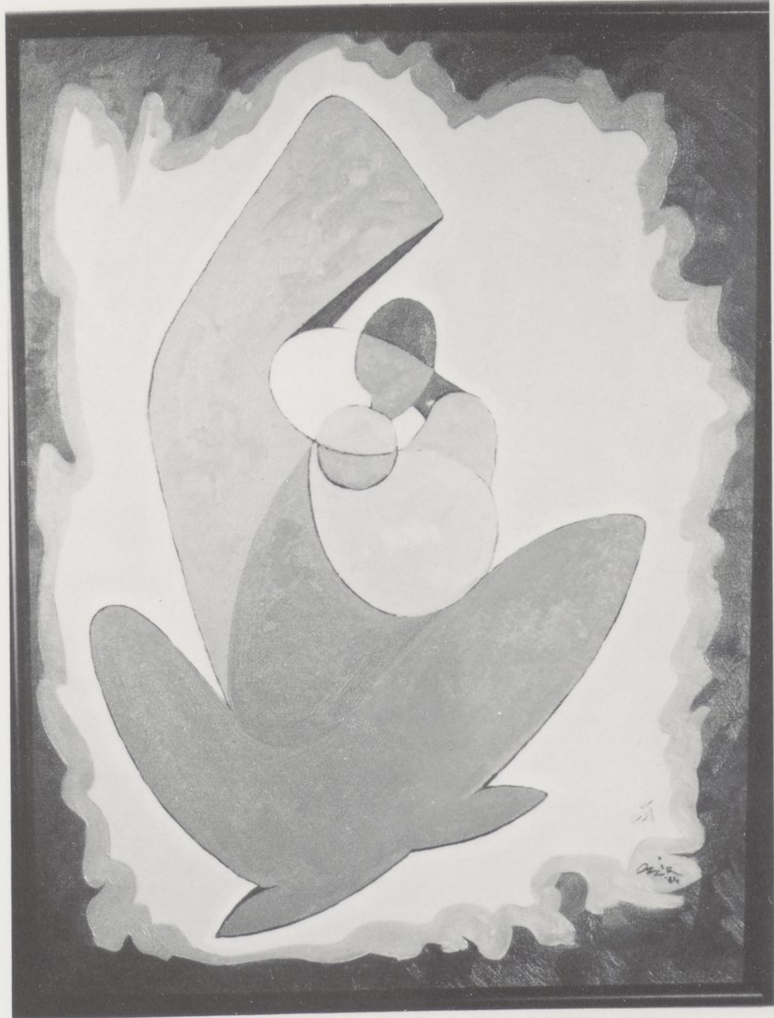
A riot of flowers—hollyhocks, sweet williams, calendulas, bougainvillea. Late in the day Peg and I visit the Pakistan Arts Council in an attractive new building. We climb to the third floor and find an art class in progress. A young woman offers to take us to the director, Ozzir Zuby. In his office there occurs a curious conversation devoid of superfluities because we both sense that our time is limited. After I say where I am from, why I am here, and what I want to discover, I ask whether he is an artist. This is his response:

"I am from Lahore. My father was a poor man. When I entered the competition for a scholarship, I wrote to the committee that I did not have the 35 rupees for the fare to Karachi where I was supposed to take a physical examination as part of the requirements for all entrants. I just assured them that I was healthy. I don't know how it happened, but out of seventy applicants, I was the one who got the scholarship for three years of study in Rome."

He shows me several of his paintings.

"Did you ever design for the stage?"

"Yes, I have done that." He then uncovers a large canvas. "This has just been done for a new bank building. I tried to



Ozzir Zuby,
Man, Child of Nature,
oil on canvasboard, 1964

express the kind of circular energy that occurs when a handful of straw is thrown into water. The horse in the middle is rather balky and the woman has him by the bridle. Everything circles out from there.

"We human beings are all separated from each other. We can give care, comfort, money, of course, but we cannot take the pain away from another person. All we can give is a little ointment for the burnt hand perhaps, but the pain is still his to bear.

"My wife is a painter too. I am a poor man, but I married into a well-to-do family. I have a studio. . . ." He shows me a snapshot of it. He is proud of his visitors—Eunice Kennedy Shriver with the then Vice President, Lyndon Johnson.

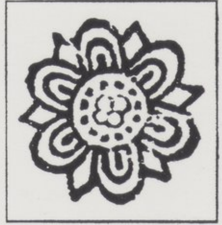
I choose the painting *Mother and Child* recently done, almost a poster in its design. The mother is an abstraction with no face. She is Nature. Nourished at her breast is the man-child.

Zuby stands firm on what he considers to be the immutable rules of design and color. He calls himself a "painter." I say he is an *artist.* He agrees, but East and West are not talking about the same thing. It is an absolutely wonderful thing for me to become aware of these nuances.

St. Paul, Minnesota
February, 1964–
October, 1965

I didn't go abroad again until 1965. In the interim I rented the upper floor of 497 Otis Avenue with its storage space and good-sized rooms. My landlord redesigned the space for me, creating the Grey Foundation Gallery to house the large Grey Foundation collection in the upstairs apartment. The gallery was then made available for house tours, talks, slide shows and visits by art groups. Before Parviz's return to Iran in May 1964, an invitational reception was held there. The space is still in use today; I have my Turkish collection of prints and drawings there, and use the space for community group meetings and entertaining visiting artists and dignitaries such as David Hockney when he was in the Twin Cities for the opening of the Picasso exhibition at the Walker Art Center in 1978.

During the spring of 1964, the USIA International Art Program told me they had a real emergency. The funding for an American print show they had assembled had fallen through. The Grey Foundation picked up the tab. The works were purchased and sent to the Art Festival at the inauguration of the Iran-America Society Theatre in Teheran. As the prints were on loan from the Grey Foundation they were later sent to Minnesota and added to a print show circulating around the state.



GREECE
BLACK SEA
Istanbul
Uskudar
Bursa
Ankara
Trabzon
Erzurum
Izmir
TURKEY
Konya
Adana
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Nicosia
CYPRUS
Aleppo
SYRIA
LEBANON
Beirut
Damascus
ISRAEL
Tel Aviv-Yafo
Jerusalem
Amman
JORDAN
TUNISIA
Kirkuk
Al Mawsil
Baghdad
IRAQ
Tabriz
Rasht
Baku
CASPIAN SEA
Krasnovodsk
ARAL SEA
Ashkhabad
Tehrān
Hamadān
Esfahan
Mashhad
IRAN
Kermān
Shirāz
Al Basrah
Abādān
Al Kuwayt
KUWAIT
Neutral Zone
Persian Gulf
Bandar Abbās
BAHRAIN
Ad Dawhah
QATAR
Ash Shariqah
Dubayy
Abu Dhabi
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
Muscat
(Masqat)
OMAN
SAUDI ARABIA
Riyadh
Al Madinah
Mecca
RED SEA
Tashkent
Alma Ata
Frunze
Andizhan
Kokand
Samarkand
Bukhara
Dushanbe
Herat
AFGHANISTAN
Kabul
Qandahar
Peshawar
Srinagar
KASHMIR
Islamabad
Rawalpindi
Lahore
Amritsar
Quetta
Multan
PAKISTAN
Sukkur
Hyderabad
Karachi
Bikaner
Jaipur
Delhi
New Delhi
Agra
Moradabad
Kanpur
Lucknow
Allahabad
Varanasi
(Benares)
Patna
NEPAL
Kathmandu
Thimphu
BHUTAN
TIBET
Gartok
Lhasa
Dacca
BANGLADESH
Chittagong
Calcutta
Imphal
INDIA
Ahmedabad
Baroda
Indore
Bhaunagar
Surat
Nagpur
Cuttack
Kakinada
Bombay
Poona
Hyderabad
Panjim
Bangalore
Mysore
Madras
Pondicherry
Madurai
Kozhikode
(Calicut)
Trivandrum
Jaffna
SRI LANKA
Colombo
Galle
LACCADIVE IS.
(India)
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BENGAL
ANDAMAN IS.
(India)
NICOBAR IS.
(India)
BURMA
Myitkyina
Bhamo
Lashio
Mandalay
Akyab
Bassein
Rangoon
Chiang Mai
Kunming

For a poetical person a sense of reality is valid if it shocks, pains, bends, shatters, pinches, worries, panics, prostrates, stops or elates.

How does religion shock? Or art? Or mathematics? Or science? These questions are answered by the setbacks and surprises which a poetical person is capable of encountering in his/her life-patch. The shock area is suggested by what is seen as odious, difficult, undesirable, or complacent, which are encounters to be avoided, or sought out. At the moment of encounter of opposites, at the moment of impact, a person feels alone. Thus contrasts and paradoxes are essential elements of reality.

So shock becomes change, the poetic version of world makeup, of reality.

Daybook
May 26, 1949

DIARY V

Extensive Exploring With Jane 1965

IRAN
INDIA
TURKEY
GREECE
TUNISIA

New York, N.Y.
October 17, 1965

When I left for the opening of the Iran-America Society Theater in the fall of 1965, I planned an itinerary that would enable me to see Bishop Hassan and his family installed in the Abby Garden. I was also eager to spend some time with Parviz, who had been back in Iran for a year, and to catch up with his new work. I had to face the problems connected with renewing the travels of the three parts of *Communication Through Art* which had been in storage in Greece for about a year. But above all, I wanted to assemble purchases of Turkish art and add to those I already had for a show that could originate abroad and then circulate in the United States.

On this trip, my companion was Jane Gregory, secretary for the Grey Foundation and a recent Vassar graduate. Her knowledge of French was an invaluable asset, and since she was an excellent photographer, she intended to document the places and the people we visited. It turned out that she was indefatigable as a picture-taker and could be counted on to lug her equipment around in any weather and all circumstances.

We expected to take off from New York, to cover parts of

Iran, Turkey, Greece, India, and Tunisia, and be back home in time for Christmas.

Shopping for a tape recorder on a Saturday afternoon, walking my feet off in the din of 57th Street and along Madison Avenue, no chance to look in the shops. Impression: subtle sales promotion in the midst of ravishing displays . . . I simply couldn't decide between a $100 tape recorder in one place and a $120 one in another. Didn't buy either one. Ridiculous. The problem is, do I want a tape recorder at all? What's creative about it? I am not a recorder of mechanical contacts but a thoughtful human being who wants to continue to learn as much as possible about the world and its ways and to be part of today's scene. I have faith that what is at the core of human beings is more important than any record; that I can be joyously generous; that I can listen and be encouraging. It is my hope that I will continue to start conversations, explore creativity wherever I find myself and make it burst forth in unexpected ways.

Lufthansa, White Swan over Paris
October 18, 1965

The flight to Teheran. According to Emily Genauer in the *Herald Tribune*, a poll of museum directors indicates their preference for old masters. She asks whether this is so because art which is stimulating primarily to the senses and the intellect (which can be said of contemporary painting and sculpture) is less rewarding than the art of the Renaissance, which was deliberately created to satisfy spiritual needs as well. In the very old world, in the Middle East, Greece, India, I refuse to rest with the old treasures. I am looking for *emerging* art forms.

Teheran, Iran
October 19, 1965

We were met at the airport by Parviz who drove us into the city. Along the wide highway, bordered by trees, images were kaleidoscopic: flocks of goats being herded to a safe part of the road; women washing clothes in water flowing from a break in a culvert; a new fairground climbing a hillside; modern buildings rising in fantastic patterns.

Parviz stopped the car briefly in front of the fresco he was commissioned to create for the building of Red Lion and Rising Sun—the Persian Red Cross. It was a vast wall with heroic figures painted in bright colors, a woman erect, picking cotton tufts from a cotton plant as singular and erect as herself. A glass-enclosed restaurant obscured the bottom of the fresco from the avenue below, and practically all surfaces were swarming with workmen. As we watched the construction, the

foremen were being served tea in dainty cups by men who handled their trays as deftly as the construction workers handled their tools.

During that evening's talk, he told us that a royal baby was on the way, and if it was a boy, the Shah would suspend the military draft for an indefinite period. At the moment, Parviz had a four-month deferment, but hanging over his head was the specter of military service as a common soldier in the hottest and most remote spot in Iran, for he had overstayed his leave in America. So there he was, their best contemporary sculptor, a distinguished teacher and painter, earning honors in America, haunted by this threat. What a shame no similar celebration would occur on the birth of a girl. I told him we would all pray for the arrival of a son, a beautiful amnesty-bearing boy!

On April 29, 1966, a second royal son, Ali, was born. Parviz was exempted from any further military harassment; he was officially installed in his academic job (though an old artist attended every class to see that he wouldn't teach anything "modern"!), and his back salary was paid up.

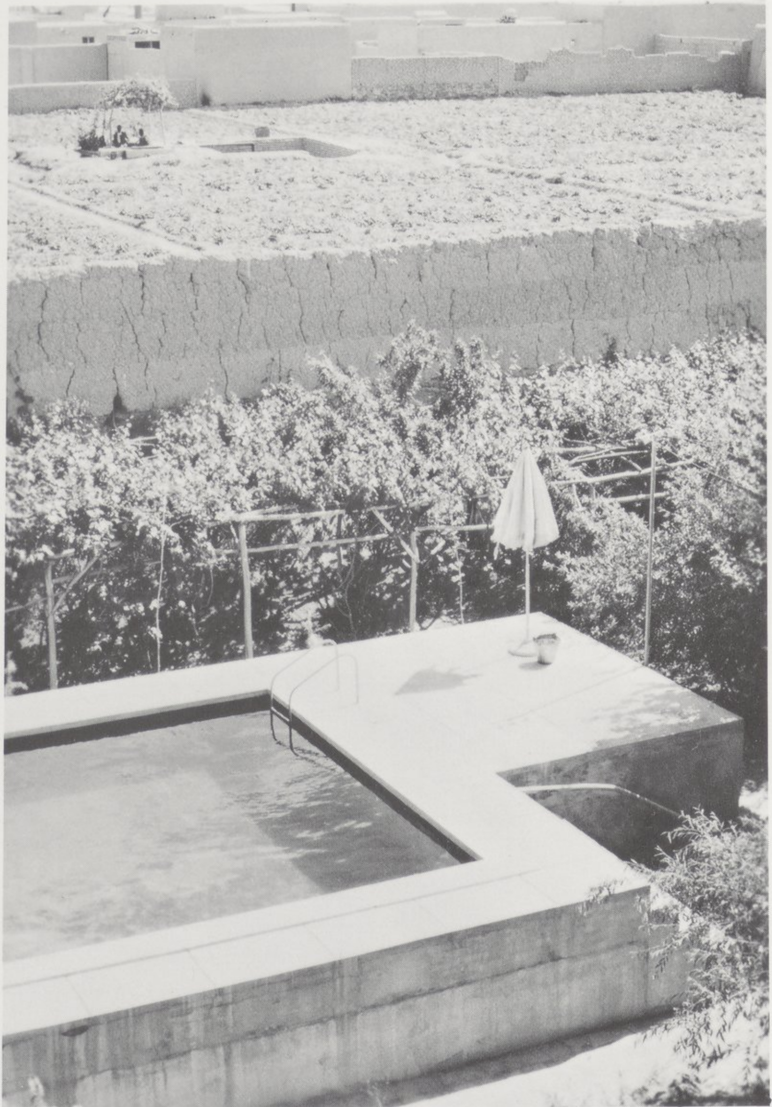
Isfahan, Iran
October 22, 1965

In Isfahan two days later, I had my first look at the Abby Garden—and what a little paradise it was! Apricot, apple, quince, and almond trees close together; sturdy posts supporting the grape arbor in which clustered grapes hung among the leaves and tendrils. When I tasted them, they reminded me of the thick-skinned tokays of my childhood.

The house itself was invitingly cool and scented throughout with an exquisite aroma from the quinces lying on a window sill. In the central hall was a pool lined with blue tiles containing a tinkling fountain. The living room off to one side had a large fireplace which, according to Hassan, "smokes because the builders have forgotten how to build such things."

Upstairs was the bishop's study, a truly Persian room—no chairs; the floor covered by an old rug whose pattern embowered anyone sitting on it. Hassan sat among the brightly covered cushions, his back against the wall. It was here that he spent Wednesday afternoons in solitude, with a notebook at his side, already filling up with his thoughts.

The house and grounds were looked after by a caretaker who, with his wife and six children, was installed in a dwelling of sunbaked mud bricks. The floor of their single room was covered by a tribal rug except for the area that served as a kitchen. This nook had a dirt floor and contained a storeroom



Abby Garden in Isfahan, Iran, 1965

of Old Testament sparsity where there were quinces in a basket. The bedding was neatly stacked in a corner.

The mistress of this house who smiled and welcomed us was as thin as a wraith in her black form-hugging chador. The black watchdog was tied up, but he greeted us with friendly barking and tail-wagging. At night, he was let loose to patrol the whole enclosure, sometimes lying near the six sheep, sometimes stretched out near the iron gate. From the rooftop, we could see over the walls to the Zagros Mountains crossed by Alexander.

Hassan invited Jane and me to accompany him on one of his periodic visits of his diocese. Avo, who spoke no English, drove us. It was a trip of about a thousand miles through the Lut Desert, crisscrossed by the nomadic tribes of Fars.

Shiraz, Iran
October 23, 1965

On my sixty-third birthday, we were in Shiraz and visited the gardens there and walked through the bazaars. This city of poets, of roses and nightingales, has the most glorious gardens: bougainvillea, petunias, roses, dahlias, clematis, salvia, marigolds, hollyhocks, zinnias, nasturtiums, heavenly blue morning glories, and sweet alyssum. Here and there among the flower beds were signs whose messages Hassan translated for us: "O great and respectable traveler, one must see God for a moment in a garden and go around in the spirit of love." "The purpose of building a garden and palace is to keep a friend happy for one moment. Otherwise what is the purpose of building a house only to leave it behind?" The sign I warmed to most was at Saadi's monument. Calligraphy in glazed tile read: "Even if you come one thousand years later, you will sense the odor of love from Saadi's tomb."

Hassan explained that this enamorment with gardens originated in the fact that it took a desert traveler many days to reach this spot for refreshment of the body and spirit. The flowing water with its gentle murmur was an endless delight. The shadows cast by the trees on the pebbles, the stretches of lawn, the flowerbeds—all were an abiding balm to those who had arrived by caravan after a twelve-day journey through desert sand under unrelenting sun.

The bazaar we visited was set up on hard-packed earth on which people, bicycles, donkeys wearing bells, and an occasional truck managed to mingle and scatter the buyers and traffic. I bought two rugs, one that I spotted immediately as we entered the shop—a Qashqa'i with a maneless smiling lion in soft natural dyes—colors of burnt orange, winy red, and adorned with bouquets, individual flowers, birds, and gazelles, as well as hunters—each smelling a rose. Hassan found out that it was at least eighty years old. The other was a contemporary tribal rug done in garish aniline colors: an avant-garde tribeswoman scattering yarns about with complete abandon—two suns, the blue head of a charger facing one way, a lion facing another, so that either image would be upside down if the rug was hung. I was told it was a child's plaything. I thought it probably was intended to be a saddle rug.

En route to Yezd, Iran
October 25, 1965

Because Hassan was eager for me to meet his father and see the village where he was born, he, Jane, and I made the trip from Shiraz to Yezd—eight hours in the car driven by Avo. A good but narrow macadam road to start with, but then, hard earth baked to a crisp and strewn with chipped rock. In one locale, spiky green bushes no larger than a bowling ball were garnered into bundles and held down with rocks for goat fodder. As the wind began to blow at our backs, the sun was blotted out and we were engulfed in a whirl of sand. Like Muslim women, Jane and I covered our faces against this onslaught.

A little after noon, we stopped at a teahouse where we spread out our picnic lunch. Jane and I sat on the edge of a rather high platform that went along three sides of the cool shadowy interior. Hassan and Avo sat cross-legged on a Persian carpet. A young Muslim was saying his prayers facing one corner of the room; half a dozen men were being served at a distance from us, and one dangled his legs near the charcoal pit in the center of the platform where water was simmering for tea. He couldn't stop ogling us.

The journey continued after this interlude. Conversation never flagged. An eager young American woman recently out of college and soon to be married; a man in his prime born in a primitive Persian village who rose from these beginnings to become a bishop in the Christian world; and I, an older woman enduring the rigors of travel for the sake of adventures of the mind and spirit in the lands that called to me. We spoke of the complexities of the West, of the rituals and traditions of the villages we were passing through, of the rising divorce rate in America, of the changing status of Muslim women. Hassan spoke as he had on other occasions of "sacrificial love."

Yezd, Iran
October 26, 1965

Before too long, we found ourselves in Yezd where we put up for the night in a guest house. There was no hotel in the city. Meals were served in the basement. We settled ourselves at an oilcloth-covered table and ate chili kabobs, eggs, and flat bread, washing everything down with Iranian beer. Jane and Hassan ate the raw onions that are always served with the bread.

We had scarcely slept at all when a car started up in the walled courtyard at four in the morning. The commotion startled a whippoorwill and soon all the cocks in town began to crow. It was a clear fall morning, with very little wind.

The heat of the sun was bearable until we climbed to the

roof of All Saints Church. After a look around, viewing domed roofs and wind towers, we were confirmed in our suspicion that Yezd was a torrid place, in late summer at least. We hurriedly returned to explore the interior of the little Christian church where Hassan had been pastor early in his marriage and priesthood. It was built in 1928, and in 1940, most of the compound—dwellings, hospital, and school—was reduced almost entirely to mud and ruin by a desert flood. While the church itself still stood, it was not now in use. The quarters where Hassan and Margaret had been living when Susanne was born were still intact. It was in this dwelling, in a locked room where the stained glass window was now covered with dust, that Hassan had written *Design of My World*, which chronicles his life from his Muslim childhood in the village of Taft to within a few years of his elevation to the highest office in the Christian church in Iran.

The old mosque, situated on the old silk route from India, was still a focus of village life. The doors opened for us by the imam were delicately carved on the outside and monumental on the inside, with split sycamore trunks for braces. We were shown the library and allowed to handle a book of Saadi's poems, handwritten and illustrated with exquisite miniatures.

"Will you send us Dr. Arthur Pope's books?" asked the courteous librarian. (Arthur Upham Pope was a leading authority in the United States on Persian civilization.) I had been thinking that a book on American art would be appropriate, but it was their own world they wished to know more about.

At the Yezd bazaar, Jane and I bought talismans of dried chickpeas tied with silk tassels to hang over our doors at home. The nearby Zoroastrian temple was walled in, flanked by long-needled pines and shadowed formal gardens—somewhat tousled. The shining brass cage in the center of its dimly lit interior contained a tripod holding the sacred fire. It was something on which to meditate: a flame said to be burning continuously since the time of Darius.

We proceeded to the most important visit of the journey: to Taft to see the house where Hassan was born and where his father still lived.

Taft, Iran
October 27, 1965

We drove into the little walled town through the graveyard where Hassan's mother's burial site has been permanently lost from view among the many others marked by flat stones that cover the earth. She died when Hassan was five, and in his book he describes the many hours he spent sitting by her grave

Bishop Hassan with village elder

hoping to receive some message from the surrounding mountains and sky.

We were met by groups of women and children—all talking and embracing Hassan. It was hard to realize that these people were his kin: all Muslims, the women in chadors, one holding a baby with an amulet sewn onto his hood directly above his forehead.

When they had had their fill of exclaiming over him, they welcomed us and led us through a courtyard where a pool reflected the blossoming pomegranate trees and a handsomely feathered rooster strutted. Before we entered the house, we took off our shoes. Worn Persian rugs were on the floor within, cushions were piled against a wall, and tea was being brewed over a charcoal brazier.

Hassan's father came down from the rooftop—a good-looking man with a gray beard cut to a point and a sharp profile that could have belonged to one of Xerxes' men. His eyes revealed his gentle nature and his reconciliation to his circumstances. His smile was quick, intelligent, benevolent.

The two men kissed on both cheeks—a swift gesture of familial affection. The father smiled throughout his conversation with his son. They spoke in Farsi, and I was addressed through Hassan, who had apparently told his father that I was the donor of the Abby Garden. His communique: "Tell her that I would like to come and live there!"

We left him for a brief visit to other relatives who lived nearby, and when we returned, he told Hassan that he would leave us so that he could say his evening prayers. No doubt the religious strain runs as deeply in the Muslim father as it does in the Christian son.

As a child, Hassan must have had great longings that were left unfulfilled by the formalism of Islam. His mother, Sekineh, knew these longings also. She became a Christian during the period when she was working at the mission hospital. She may have been the one who imbued her son with the spirit of "sacrificial love" that causes his face to shine.

The son and daughter-in-law of one of the old aunts led us to the rooftop of their house and offered us whole pomegranates which had been squashed so that the juice could be sucked from a small hole made in the rind. We had been followed up the steps by a number of chickens who were shooed back down from their roost on the railing to the courtyard thirty feet below. Hassan's cousin, blunt but seemingly good-natured, said of his mother sitting on the floor of her uncarpeted cubicle, "She has lived too long." To which the chadored figure smiled, seemingly in agreement.

It was as miraculous to me that Hassan sprang from these roots as that autumn crocuses pushed through the hard earth and rubble around Persepolis. Later, as we drove back to Isfahan, he said thoughtfully, "It is nice and sentimental to talk to a peasant for five minutes, but to live in such a way that his condition is alleviated is another thing altogether." We had shared our lunch with an old goatherder and his wife.

Isfahan, Iran
October 30, 1965

My last day in Isfahan: between the morning services, Hossein Khataie comes to call. He is the craftsman who creates images with mosaics of leather and whose work I had so admired on a previous visit but had not purchased. He sits on the edge of his chair, his work wrapped in a square of white cloth that lies beside him on the floor. He is all in black except for a somewhat soiled dress shirt lacking a collar. A thin black cape has fallen from his shoulders. He is unshaven. He has

come to show a recent work in the hope that I would appreciate it enough to buy it. I did, and I did.

On this occasion, Khataie spent at least an hour showing, explaining, and reading the verses in gold calligraphy surrounding a hunting scene. He had chosen to inscribe a poem by Mesami called "Bahram's Hunting Ground" which recounts the daring feats of "King Bahram, audacious hunter." Hassan's son had been given this noble name, and was restlessly sitting nearby listening to his father's translation, and joining with us in the general laughter. Khataie had illustrated the hero on horseback in four scenes: with spear, scimitar, arrow, and dagger—created by fitting incredibly thin shavings of leather in luminous colors into the gold background. To create such an exquisite object requires not only the spirit of an artist, but also an unerring eye, a steady hand, and the patience of a saint. No wonder that Khataie was the last of the practitioners of this technique.

My original awareness of this artist had been made through a visit to the Steuben Glass Store and Gallery, New York, two years before. There was a vase displayed with a design etched in the crystal by Hossein Khataie from Isfahan, Persia. So I was drawn to seek him out on my next trip to Iran. Later I saw the same vase in Teheran's Decorative Arts Museum. It had been presented to President Eisenhower when he was in the White House; he in turn had presented it to Iran. Khataie had received a thank you letter from the President on official stationery.

Teheran, Iran
October 31, 1965

Soon after returning to Teheran from Isfahan we attended the Festival of Arts inaugurating the Iran-America Society Theatre with Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*. A string quartet played in the art gallery where there was a display of recent Iranian Art. Space was reserved for the American prints collected by the Smithsonian Institution and sponsored by the Grey Foundation.

There I met charming Mr. Phalbad, Minister of Cultural Affairs. I was immensely relieved to have him tell me in connection with the Grey Foundation's *Fourteen Contemporary Iranian Artists* traveling in the United States,"I didn't think you could do it! Keep it on tour as long as there is any interest in it."

Caspian seashore, Iran
November 4-6, 1965

Directly thereafter we left with the Tanavolis for a trip to the Caspian seashore where they had the use of a vacation cabin. The route took us through rubbly foothills toward the

Hossein Khataie,
Bahram Gur's Hunting Ground,
paint on leather mosaic,
1965

snowcovered Damavand Mountain that glistened against an immaculate sky. We stopped along the way in a valley rich with fall colors to picnic by a roadside stream. We passed hundreds of black goats and fat-tailed sheep making their way up the mountain for pasturage, but no humans in sight anywhere. Through my binoculars, I could see cascading falls across the valley and the outlines of an ancient tower and ruined houses.

As we neared the sea, pale white-lavender autumn crocuses appeared, and everywhere pomegranate shrubs. The sandy soil near shore was covered with shepherd's purse, mint, mustard, sorrel, pigweed.

We dined on the cottage porch by the light of an Aladdin lamp. The gardener's wife, in a short dress over pantaloons, her head kerchief-covered, cleared the dishes and brought us tea, over which we lingered late into the night.

Awakening in the morning, we found our host had driven

up from Teheran and was rolled up in a rug on the porch floor. After breakfast of Caspian caviar, we drove partway up the mountain, accompanied by a local guide, and then left the car so that we could continue on foot along the charcoal burners' path through the jungle. It appeared to be a well-worn horse trail. When we reached a clearing and called a halt, we were passed by a pack of ponies with wood tied to their backs, heading down the side of the mountain.

We had heard birdsong from the brambles, had seen the places where pheasants had scratched for their breakfast under the pomegranate bushes, and with the dampness under our feet and the soft moist air all around us, in the midst of a tangle of vines and briars and huge trees surrounded by luxuriant ferns and moss, we understood why this area was called a "jungle."

Since it appeared to be too far and too hazardous to make our way to White Devil, the hamlet from which our guide came and to which there was no road, we started back to the car. On the way, we encountered the local khan who owned much of the mountainside land. He invited us to tea, whereupon we all crowded into one car and drove through the tangled brush to his compound. The first building we reached was a large whitewashed mud brick structure with a handsome wooden balcony—some sixty years old, he told us—and near it, several smaller structures of handhewn shingles. Beyond these was the newer and grander house of the khan.

Leaving our shoes outside, we were invited to sit on a Kerman rug of rich rose. We leaned against plump pink pillows and drank our tea from small glasses. Through one open doorway, the blue Caspian was visible, stretching to the horizon; through another, we could see the green mountain slopes on which the khan's herds and flocks were tended by twenty-five herdsmen. It was surprising to learn that not too distant from this pastoral scene, in the remoter mountain fastnesses, the traditional sport of tiger hunting was still going on.

On the way down the foothill we noticed that at one point, smoke was coming out of the chimney of an isolated building in a field. We were told that it was a bathhouse, and that this was a women's day. Jane and I immediately responded to the suggestion that we go and see it. We were helped across the rivulet between the road and the house and were left to our own devices inside the building; the men we left to their speculations.

When we pushed an inner door, we found ourselves in an

outer chamber where clothing appeared to have been tied in bundles. Beyond a low door, we were in a dimly lit steam chamber where naked young women were sitting on the floor, naiads combing their dripping hair, gossiping and telling secrets. Large tin basins were in front of them; light came faintly from the center dome.

If they were embarrassed, they didn't act it. As we retreated, we heard them laughing and chatting. They followed us, draped in towels. At the outer door, we waved goodbye to them, laughing and chatting ourselves on our way back to the car.

We intended to return to Teheran by a different route, driving along the coast so that we could get a look at the Reza Shah's summer resort at Ramsor. A mile-long avenue between cypress and palm trees led to the casino by the sea. As we continued along the coast, we were unexpectedly stopped by a blockade against cholera. Since the Tanavolis had no certificates of inoculation, we had to retrace our route, buying provisions on the way, stopping to eat them along the banks of a rushing stream where we could watch the birds: a black and white water ouzel alternately submerging completely to catch his lunch and emerging to eat it. He was soon joined by a sedate heron. Through my binoculars, I saw smoke coming from a hut, and farther downstream, a young woman scrubbing a large brass pot. When I followed her figure back to the dwellings, I could see a group of men cutting up a large carcass. Two women in black stood to one side, apparently commenting like a Greek chorus.

Though this mountain road was blacktopped and smooth, it had no guardrails, and when we reached an altitude where the rivulet turned to ice, the ride became somewhat nerve-wracking. A species of scrub pine appeared, the rocks were in strata; here and there smooth surfaces seemed about to crack and slide thousands of feet to add to the rocky detritus in the canyon.

As we approached Teheran, the Karadj Dam blocked up miles of blue-green water, dark and deep in the twilight of the overcast sky. The string of electric lights on the dam seemed brave and lonely, welcoming us back to the city after our glorious too-brief holiday.

Teheran, Iran
November 7, 1965

Before Jane and I left for India, I visited the Borghese Gallery, where a show of Parviz's work was causing considerable hostile clamor among the students. The woman in charge

of the gallery was so distraught that she thought she might be forced to close the show, or at least take down some of the more "outrageous" works and replace them with the inoffensive paintings of another gallery member, leaving only the Tanavoli ceramics.

I had chosen *Hands of a Poet*, a box construction in which from the inside two plaster hands clasped a crisscrossed lattice grille. This is such deeply involved symbolism that it must not be read as representing repression (hands extending through the bars of a prison cell). Rather it represents the hands of a suppliant at a prayer grille. Indeed the Shabanu herself finally chose this work for the royal collection. In fact Parviz told me, "those are the hands of my assistant whom you met when we went to look at the fresco at the Red Lion and Sun Fair. It is the first of two such works that I did, and with me, the first is always more powerful. Although perhaps not the more mature," he added thoughtfully.

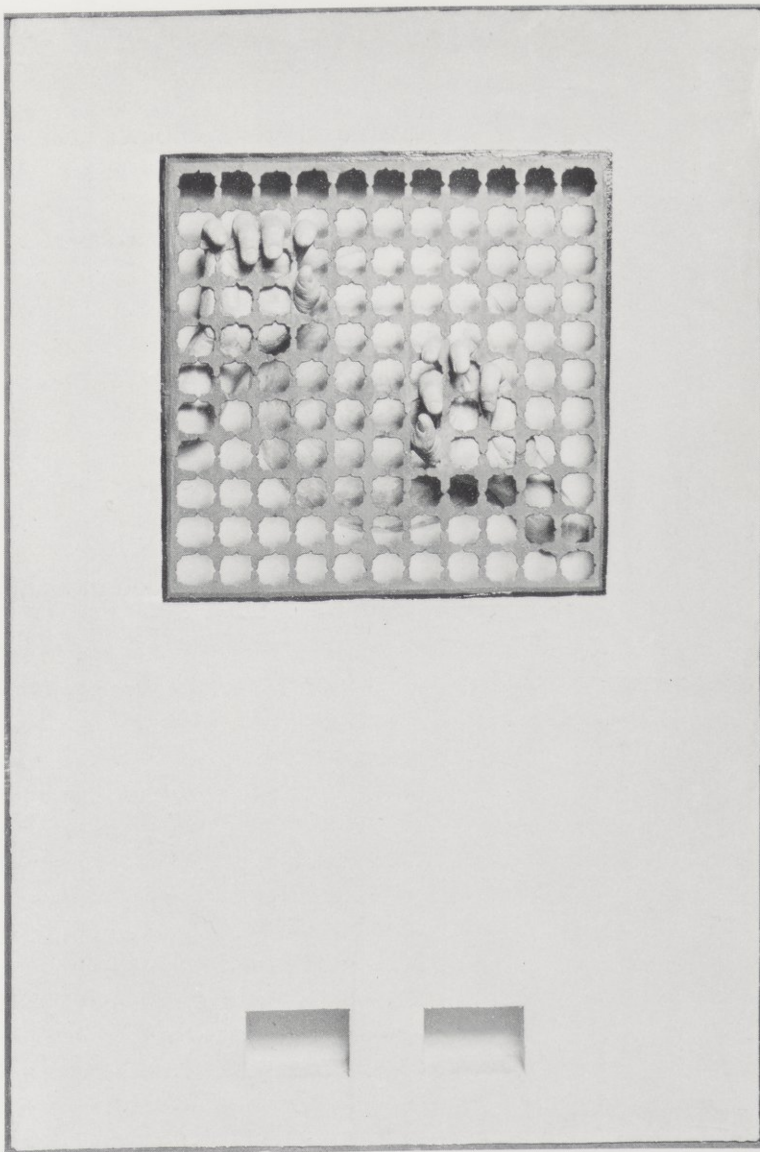
New Delhi, India
November 10, 1965

Early morning mist lies over the city, and the little wood fires send up smoke that becomes a fine gauze drapery between the cassarinas and the neem trees, enfolding the landscape in gray. The sun comes up and for a moment is a persimmon on the horizon, full and ripe.

My friend of five years, Sukanta Basu, whose self-portrait still hangs in my St. Paul home, came to the hotel for tea today. He has a shy smile, very intelligent eyes, and he speaks carefully but with absolute candor about his hopes and fears, his trials and failures. He tells me he has lost two years experimenting with raised surfaces, only to abandon the technique altogether. Only last week he was thinking of me because he had done a large oil somewhat like the one I owned. In this new portrait, he did not think he was "in a black mood." "It might be anyone," he added.

Did I understand? To assure him that I did, I repeated it all in my own words. He is exquisitely courteous, and we are happy in each other's company, not drawing too close, only briefly face to face and seeing clearly. Before his departure, he wraps three little cakes in a napkin to bring to his wife, and he invites me to visit them at their apartment.

Soon after my arrival in New Delhi, conferences were scheduled concerning the circulation of *Communication Through Art*. The end result of meetings with USIS officials and representatives of the Indian art world was that the show would be manageable under local conditions, that the cost to



Parviz Tanavoli,
Hands of a Poet,
painted wood and plaster
construction, 1966

the Grey Foundation would come to about $1500, and that both the State Department and the USIS had to give their permission. And so I was saddled with the responsibility of getting the work together at home, paying the delivery costs for getting it to India, and wheedling two sets of government bureaucrats into cooperating in the venture.

Having tried to launch this project, I could now devote myself to seeing what work was being done that looked new. Jane and I went to visit Laxman Pai. His studio was on the

outskirts of New Delhi where the old temples were crumbling and the stones were being concealed by tall weeds. Our guide mentioned that many people were afraid to venture this far out of the city "because of the wild animals."

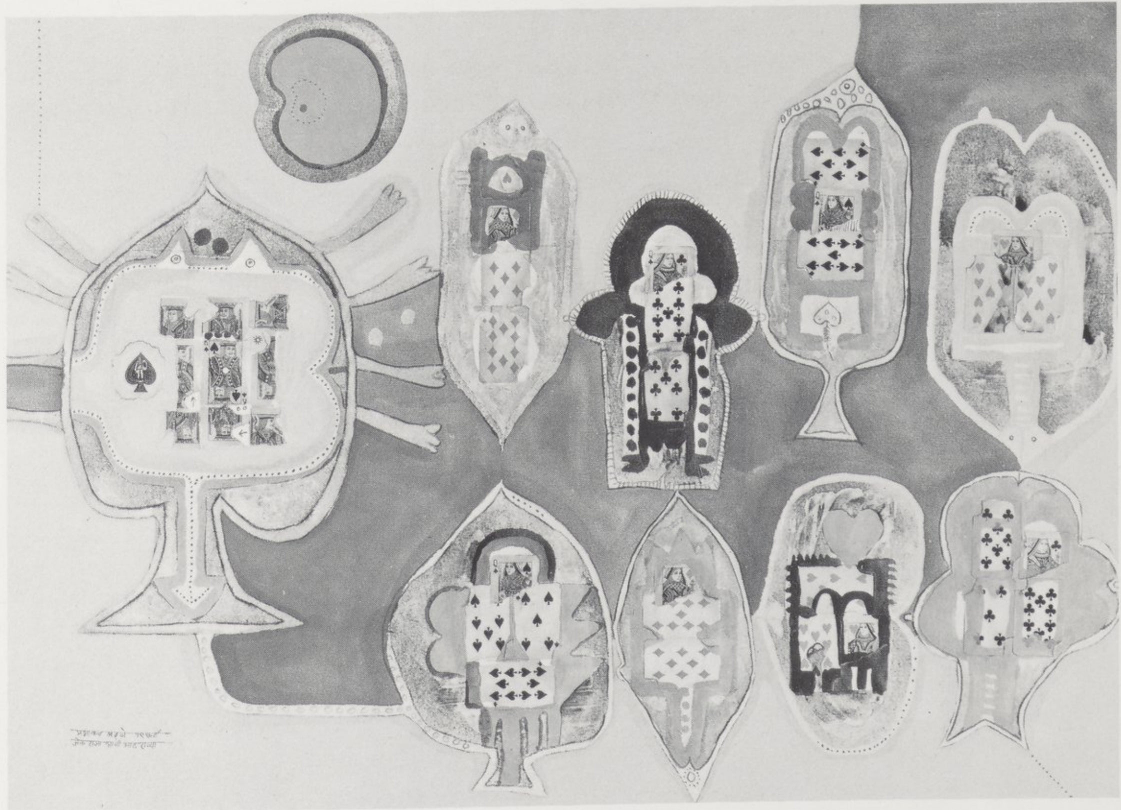
Laxman himself was tidier and so were his paintings. He had spent some time in Kashmir and was now turning out canvases in which snow and mountains were the background for big-eyed maidens. When I asked him what kind of contemporary American art should be brought to India, he said, "Bring Pop and Op and abstractions that show texture—and some of the human figure."

New Delhi, India
November 11, 1965

One of my happiest meetings took place in the Kumar Gallery where Devayani Krishna was having a show of her recent work. When I arrived, she was sitting on a low cushion, her brown silk sari falling gently around her sparse figure. The two rooms of the gallery were hung with paintings that were her response to the Kashmiri crisis. She had worked at white heat for eight days during the Delhi blackout, producing vibrantly colored sharp-edged forms, naming the canvases out of her deep philosophical orientation: *Portrait of the World, Veil of Peace, Blackout of the Conscience*. The largest and most successful was called *Under the Roof of Heaven*, in which yellow light radiated from two huge beams that intersected in the middle of the canvas. Here are her comments about it: "The crossed beams are the strongest things in the world. They cannot be broken. Our roof at the school is falling down, but two such pieces"— crossing her palms—"cannot be broken."

I went to see Basu. Basu's apartment turned out to be commodious and attractively furnished with good furniture and many green plants, an inviting decor probably created by his new wife who is a designer and a potter. She spent several years in England, has an eighteen-year-old daughter, and may be somewhat older than her husband. They hope some day to have a house on the outskirts of Delhi where she can have a kiln, and he can paint full-time. (Basu still works on restoring other artists' works, and is still Das Gupta's assistant at the museum.)

His most recent painting was partly figurative—a male torso in sharp black lines with areas of mustard yellow, a pale blue center, white—"pure white," he said—in the lower right, and opposite that, a black amorphous mass. I am moved by the painting because of something in the lines of the figure. The artist waits for a comment.



Prabhakar Barwe,
King and Queen of Spades,
oil and collage on canvas,
1967

"It is a sad painting," I said.

"Yes. The eyes are crying."

It was his most recent expression of his involvement with the tragic side of life, his awareness of man's predicament, his helplessness as an individual in today's world.

"Do you remember what I paid for that first painting of yours that I bought?" (It was the first one he had ever sold.)

"Yes. It was 200 rupees."

"Would you sell this one for the same?"

"Yes."

His wife Lola protested, hinting that he should give it to me, not sell it. But he and I had our own way of handling things. He came back with me to the hotel where I was able to transform a Foundation check into 300 rupees in cash. Be happy Sukanta!

Bombay, India
November 15, 1965

During our brief stay in Bombay, I connected with an especially interesting artist, Prabhakar Barwe, born in 1936.

He sat with me on a bench in front of his four paintings and explained as best he could their intricate meaning.

They are tantras, he explained, images which include a yantra, the diagram of a symbol, and mantra—or calligraphy—and are expressive of a mood, an outburst of emotion. A catalogue says of Barwe's work:

> *In his "Tantric" paintings he is concerned chiefly with yantra—the pictorial part of the practice of Tantra. Yantra is a symbolic diagram or picture containing symbols and calligraphic expressions which deal with the occult forces and super-human powers that govern human destinies. The artist's approach is chiefly aesthetic, but he feels it must have a psychological impact on the observer. He has evolved his own symbols but he believes that these. [Yantras, diagrams] stir the mind and fantasy through the meanings we associate them with. The inspiration is Tantra, but the language of forms and colors is his own.*

He went on to say that God could be expressed through evil, because either extreme, whether good or evil, takes one nearer to God. He spoke of ritual exercises, prescribed metals, geometric patterns and calligraphy that were part of an old Indian science—Yakshini—concerned with spirits in the evil sense. His black drawings done on orange enamel and highlighted with gold foil he called his "Op" art because of the series of double eyes.

By far the most astonishing artist of all to me was a Parsee, J. P. Vazifdar, also an architect, builder, and contractor. He had two paintings marked "Not For Sale" in the show, and from five o'clock that afternoon until we left Bombay the following morning, I had to deal with the complications resulting from his having presented me with a three-by-four-foot oil painting, *A Portrait of the Artist*.

He came to the Taj Art Gallery and escorted Jane and me to his offices in his own establishment—the Vazifdar College of Building Industries. Of the three rooms, two contained his paintings and one was used as a studio. In a five-page monograph which he handed me, and which I didn't read until some time later, I learned that he called his work *Paintings of the Future*. He had also devised a "Color Alphabet and Dictionary" whose purpose it was to clue the viewer into the "vocabulary" of his work. His alphabet consisted of designations for the primary colors—white for death, black for peace, yellow for

J. P. Vazifdar,
Self-Portrait,
oil on canvas, 1965

life, red for sorrow, blue for joy. And when these were combined, he arrived at meanings that might be clear to him, but not necessarily to anyone else. Leaving this exegesis aside, the work itself was striking, and I told him I wanted to buy something of his to take back to the States. His reply was that he never sold his work. He wanted me to choose one, and after some hesitation, I chose the self-portrait.

I then had to deal with the problems involved in having it crated properly for air freight, of getting it to the airport, and so on—all this literally at the eleventh hour! Even in New York or London, this would take several phone calls and a certain amount of frustration. I needn't describe how much more irritating it was in Bombay.

We agreed to spend that last evening with Vazifdar who

fetched us at the hotel in his flashy sports car, showed us his club—the former British Wellington Sports—as well as numerous new buildings he had designed and constructed.

Eventually he took us to his house for an informal dinner. About a dozen couples turned up, mainly Parsees and probably wealthy; there were drinks, an elaborate buffet (I was served from a side table of Western food) and we were back at the hotel before eleven—in time to receive the crated painting.

Our host appeared in the morning to ask for a letter saying that the painting had been a gift from him. When I handed him such a statement handwritten on hotel stationery, he asked me what I thought the value of this particular work would be in the United States. I unhesitatingly replied, "Five hundred dollars."

"I spend fifty percent of my time painting," he said. "I refuse commissions. Why should I go on making millions? I am continuously frustrated in my professional work. I cannot get the building materials I want, and so on. But in my paintings, I am a free man."

I saluted him.

Teheran, Iran
November 18, 1965

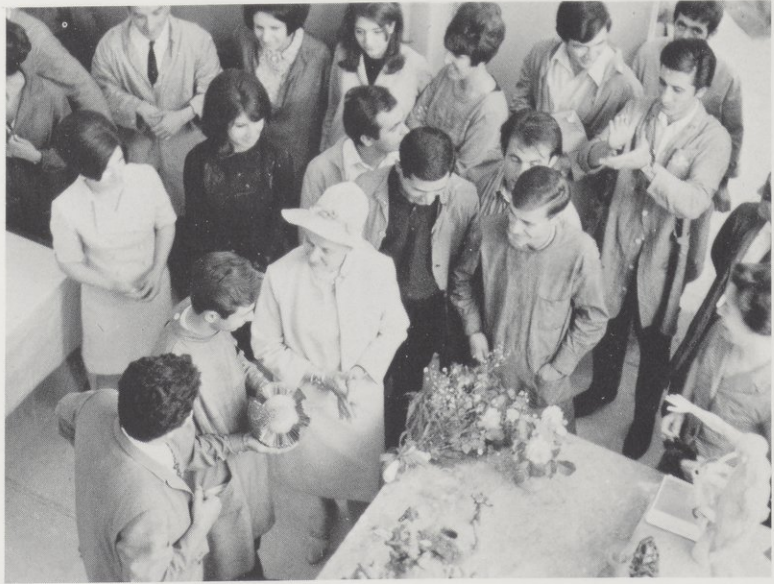
When we returned from India, I found the following formal invitation awaiting me:

A tea
in honour of
Mrs. Benjamin Grey
will be held in the Sculpture Department
University of Teheran

5 p.m. Nov. 19
Sculpture
Students
Committee

The party was held in the department studio where a long table was festively arrayed with fruit and flowers. In the center was a marvelous two-tiered cake, its upper layer supported by a pillar of spun sugar. Two chocolate angels at the top held a streamer that said, "Welcome, Mrs. Grey."

This presentation was made when the pretty young chairperson introduced Mr. Seihoun, the head of the art department, who later let it be known that there should be many more such parties in the future. And so Parviz began to make plans for the one that would take place when the Grey



Tea in Abby's honor, sculpture department, University of Teheran, November 19, 1965

Foundry installation was completed and the first class graduated.

I was honored with another party and a "presentation" given by a group of young Iranians who had attended the University of Minnesota. This event took place at the Iran-America Society. I received an eighty-year-old wooden box inlaid with ivory and decorated with robustly colored miniatures. Inside the box were two fascinating objects: a small bronze animal from Ardabil, probably dating from 1000 B.C., and a perfume vial, so encrusted with mineral deposits that I held it upside down with great care until I found out it was not a finial of some sort.

Kazvin, Iran
November 21, 1965

One day, we went on a long drive to Kazvin, northwest of Teheran. During the seventy-mile trip, Parviz and I talked about religion. Somehow we couldn't find the right words for our deepest thoughts: his, that the Christian religion with its emphasis on the individual, was remiss; mine, that through the awareness of individual responsibility, it became possible to embrace all humanity.

After our road-side picnic near a flock of goats, we had the good fortune to connect with Hannah and Abi Nev, Israelis on a one-year leave from their kibbutz, who had established a comfortable temporary home in Kazvin. They were among the forty-eight families under contract to the Iranian Development

Commission to aid the villages which had been almost entirely destroyed by the 1963 earthquake. Together with three members of the Peace Corps, they were digging wells, installing electricity, and planting one hundred thousand fruit trees whose yield would eventually help the local economic situation. Abi Nev is from St. Paul, and he told me that no matter where he is, he gets homesick for Minnesota, and the red leaves of sumac in the fall.

Hannah remembered visiting me at Deer Lake with a group of mutual friends and driving through the birch and pine woods that surround the cabin. They seemed not at all surprised to encounter me outside their Persian dwelling one fine November day, and they insisted on giving me a prehistoric pot they had found in the rubble.

Teheran, Iran
November 22, 1965

In the midst of these pleasures and all this appreciative recognition, I continued to deal with keeping *Communication Through Art* on the road. And what frustrations these activities entailed!

It seemed to me the USIS in Iran and the parent organization in Washington had done little but stall and continue to cause confusion. The sixty works were to have been assembled for the Athens showing, scheduled to open in December. Before leaving for India, I had had a conference with the CAO in Teheran who had already received a Washington communiqué to this effect. His explanation for the delay on his part was that his wires to Washington asking for permission to send the materials by air had gone unanswered. As for the materials, "library" apparently meant only books, and the additional phrase, "to designate lectures, slide projector, and slides besides books," was ignored. Moreover, Una Johnson's lecture was never mentioned in the list of materials. It had been commissioned and paid for by the Grey Foundation.

"Was Lloyd Goodrich's lecture ever translated into Farsi?" I asked. Dr. Reinhart said he didn't know.

Would he please have it translated so that it could be delivered at the University of Teheran which had requested it? Would he please write to Karachi and Ankara to find out how their part of the *Communication Through Art* exhibit was being shipped?

Most of these complications were eventually straightened out, and the entire show did reach Athens in time for a February opening in 1966.

Aliye Berger, 1965

Interior of Aliye Berger's studio

Istanbul, Turkey
November 24–30, 1965

During our week in Istanbul, several old acquaintanceships were renewed and new ones established. The chief point of this visit was to make additional purchases for the show of contemporary Turkish art that I hoped would begin to circulate in the United States the following year.

Aliye Berger was living in an old wooden firetrap with dark hallways that were drafty and cold. This marvelous woman, then in her early sixties, received us in an apartment that was in an advanced state of chaos. In the living room, on a great chair inlaid with mother-of-pearl, was a large cushion adorned with bits of mirror and gold and silver embroidery. Everything was shabby and cluttered, except for the canvases neatly stacked against the wall. She herself—an incredible artist—presented an alarming spectacle: her bleached hair disordered, her eyes darkened with kohl, her still-gorgeous skin so heavily powdered that her white turtleneck sweater was flesh-colored at the throat.

She had been ill, she explained, and poured herself a brandy which she offered to us, too. We chose coffee, and she invited us into her kitchen while she prepared it. I had to step around a pail that was catching the drip from the ceiling. She remarked that the roof tiles had been broken and the landlord refused to repair them. "He wants me out!" Pointing to the casement window, she said with an edge to her voice, "Isn't

Bedri Rahmi Eyuboglu, 1965

Bedri Rahmi Eyuboglu,
Color! Color! Color!,
wax, oil on red fabric, 1962

that an enchanting view?" The window framed the dreary spectacle of a courtyard with a single tree and two cars parked in the rain.

We had a glimpse of her bedroom with feather boas escaping from half-closed drawers. But there was a tile stove, and with the doors closed, no doubt she could be snug and cozy on the bed among the pillows, with her stuffed plush cat for company.

Her friend and neighbor, the famous artist Bedri Rahmi Eyuboglu, came into the apartment and kissed her with affectionate gusto on both cheeks. His head was covered with a mass of wet black curls. We intended to visit his studio on the other side of the courtyard when we left Aliye. I had told Jane about my first encounter with him and his wife, Eren, in their house in Vskudar, on the Asian side of the Bosporus, and how put off I had been by their somewhat primitive style.

It was almost impossible to keep up with the conversation. Aliye spoke a bewildering and altogether enchanting mélange of French, English, and Turkish. She told me to feel free to poke among the pictures that were stacked at the boundaries of the confusion, and as I did so, I put several aside. I ended up by buying five of her color engravings and three of her sister's lithographs which Aliye had been given permission to sell.

It is a gifted family. Her sister, Fahr–El Nissa Zeid, in London temporarily, is well-known in the Paris art world. Her

Fureya Koral in her studio, 1965

niece Fureya Koral is a ceramist, her nephew, Nejad Devrim, a painter, and her brother a writer. Their ancestors were viziers.

We left with Bedri Rahmi and crossed the courtyard to his studio, one large room containing a rug-covered couch, a few wicker stools, and everywhere, canvases, paints, books. While he and Jane talked French in a blue streak, I poked around in search of work that would be right for the show. (I already owned several of his works and one of his wife's.)

Occasionally I asked questions about the materials he was working with, recalling that at our last encounter almost two years before, his hands were so enflamed from his experiments that he wasn't able to hold a brush. The work I decided to buy was done on a piece of butcher paper about twenty-four by twenty inches wadded up and then somewhat smoothed out. I asked him to talk about it, and in French he told us of his passion for the designs in old tribal rugs. This work was one of his bravura explosions: an oval outlined in black and lavender on textured gray; in the red center, a cabalistic design in black with the image of an opening—a mouth?—in bright yellow.

Fureya Koral, Aliye's niece, was considered the foremost ceramist in Turkey. Her studio was not far from our hotel, so we walked, Jane toting her heavy photographic equipment.

Fureya's apartment proved to be an elegant contrast to her aunt's shabby disorder. Handsome ceramic tiles were mounted on the walls, causing the rather dark interior to glow

with color and subtle reflections. Many large and expensive art books published in France, Germany, and Switzerland, were visible in orderly rows on the shelves.

The artist herself was an attractive woman with a slight figure and an intelligent face, her gray hair becomingly arranged in the current bouffant style. She was wearing a magenta top and black pants, and to watch her moving around her three kilns, descending the ladder-like stairs to the two lower floors, managing to be hospitable to us and at the same time to a Finnish couple who had come to make a purchase—was to be present at a wonderful performance.

While looking at her work, we had a brief conversation, and I decided to buy several of her sketches for the tiles. Two of these were about fourteen by eighteen inches—both in somewhat the same rectangular form that was free enough to suggest a torso. They had simple open areas—empty spaces—which, in their final execution would have mobiles thrust through them, she said, thus giving them an additional dimension.

Istanbul, Turkey
November 28, 1965

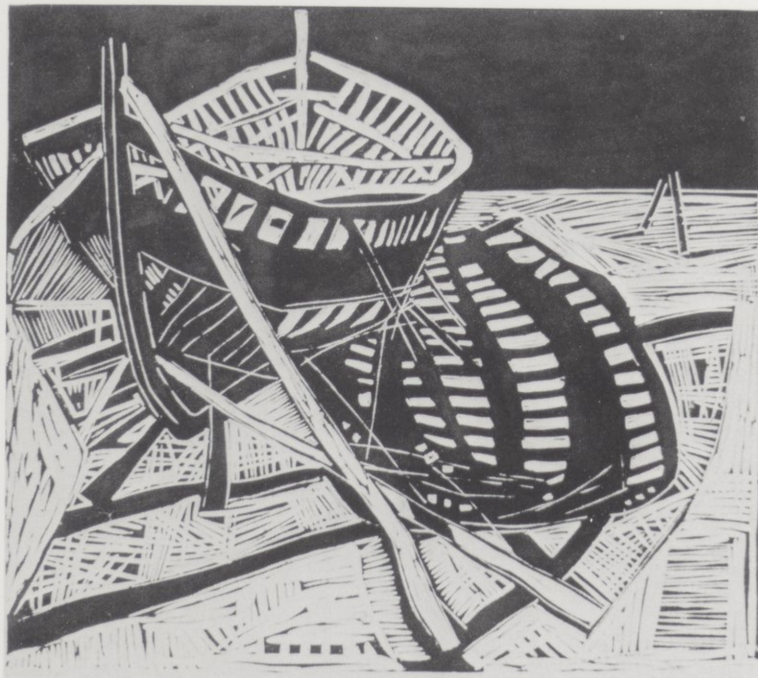
On this sunny afternoon, Jane and I find ourselves quite unexpectedly on a ferry going up the Bosporus. It is warm enough to spend time on the foredeck, returning to the benches just inside the starboard door when the wind blows too hard. We make numerous stops on both sides of the strait and as we have full views of both shorelines, it is an ideal way to make the journey along this waterway. Many pleasure craft are tied up on the European side. As the afternoon wears on, the small fishing boats on the Asian shore are docked and their nets are emptied of their silvery catch—fish that are similar to the ciscos of the Great Lakes.

We pass the old stone fortress Rumeli, flanked on each side by round towers; then a palace with the look of a child's construction of sugar cubes. It is set in the midst of a green lawn surrounded by an iron fence painted white, each fence post topped by a fancy lamp. There are many old wooden houses in weathered browns and grays, with ornamental pillars and carvings. Occasionally we see leafless trees with golden globes of fruit in their topmost branches—persimmons in the setting sun. An hour-and-a-half later, we leave the ferry at Anatolia. We mingle for a while with the Saturday evening crowds and return to our hotel in a dolmus (a shared taxi) that drives through the narrow roads curving along the shore.

Ozer Kabas,
Exile,
oil on canvas, 1963

Ozer Kabas had graduated from the Yale School of Art. At the time of our visit with him in his Istanbul studio at Robert College, he was combining various materials and producing work of unexpected excellence. During his army stint he had made many sketches about the war. Two of the paintings I bought were based on them, and they were fresh and powerful. On his easel that day was a portrait of Charlie Chaplin, an international icon.

During my previous stay in Istanbul in 1964, I had met Ercumend Kalmik, then described to me as a well-known painter and lecturer. (He had delivered the translation of Lloyd Goodrich's slide lecture.) I had the pleasantest memories of our encounter. His studio was low-ceilinged and against one wall were stacks of paintings; near another, his easel. On a low platform was a chair surrounded by various objects, including a guitar—all used for posing his models.



Ercumend Kalmik,
Fishing Boat,
linocut, 1967

He told me about a five-months tour he had made of the United States in the mid-fifties when his interests were scattered. He then had looked at lots of architecture, studied American design, gone to museums and galleries. He hoped to go again so that he could focus his attention on art alone.

The canvases that he had shown me on my previous visit were all of seascapes or boats—inspired no doubt by his vistas of the Bosporus where his family spent the summers. Most of his work was done in a light and cheerful palette, but the painting I had bought was rather more somber than the others. It was *Boats* of course, but with a tangle of yellows, as if all were held in a morning light.

Now seeing Kalmik again in 1965, we met at the Modern Art Museum in the children's wing of the old palace—the Dolmabahce Muzesi—so that we could sort out the works on paper he had collected for possible inclusion in the Turkish show. (I noticed that his own works were not among them.) While we examined all the work that was being considered, it began to get dark, at which point the single light bulb in the crystal chandelier went on. In the ensuing dimness it was impossible to continue what we were doing, so we agreed to meet the following morning.

Mehmet Guleryuz,
Exiles,
ink on paper, 1965

By the time Professor Tullu of the university and Sam Courtney and Miss Bingul, the local CAO and his assistant, arrived, there had already been a general agreement that the works laid out on the floor were the best we had seen. The three newcomers decided that the collection before them was certainly worth a show in Istanbul before departing for the States.

Istanbul, Turkey
November 29, 1965

Muhsin Kut, who had been my guide on a previous visit, came to see me at the hotel with a group of friends, including three young graphic artists who were not old enough to be called "academic" but who had probably been Eyuboglu's students. They had their portfolios and they showed them to me in an orderly way. I was delighted with them and their work, especially with Mehmet Guleryuz, the one with a brown muffler around his neck. His large portfolio was the last one I looked at, and from it I chose an ink drawing—*Exiles*—and a painting—*Man – Angel and Beast*. He was beginning to break out of bland subject matter and make direct social statements. *Exiles* was a comment on the underprivileged in Turkish society and how they were being neglected by the government.

That evening, Jane was invited to visit Kut's fiancée, a dollmaker. Kut had told me that they would be married in a few months, an old-fashioned wedding for which he himself intended to paint the wedding cart. I was promised a photograph of the event, but never received it.

Jane reported that in the course of the evening's conver-

Mushin Kut,
Pottery Shop,
watercolor, felt pen and ink on paper, 1965

sation she learned that while Kut was serving in the army and doing some teaching in a small Anatolian village, the local mullah bought one of his paintings and hung it. Soon after, a fanatic entered Kut's room while he was sleeping and shot him. He nearly died of the wound.

But he was really irrepressible. He returned to the hotel to show me his own work, and with some hesitation, I chose a large painting in black-browns and grays with a bit of russet—*Pottery Shop*. The old professors at the academy would have thrown him out if they could; he was so brash, exuberant, and untidy. And essentially self-taught.

Because Kut's fiancée's home was only a few steps away from Aliye Berger's, we climbed the dark creaky stairs to her apartment. We found her in a black fur hat, about to put her coat on. She was talking to her nephew, Nejad Devrim, who had lived in Paris for seventeen years.

Half an hour after we arrived back at our hotel in the taxi Nejad had summoned for us, he came to my room with his

Ercumend Kalmik,
The Birds and Girl,
oil on canvas, 1969

portfolio of watercolors. His manners were gallant and he hoped we could all have a drink together. The watercolor I bought was a burst of blues and rose, with the dedication: *Polonaise pour le joie de ma fille*. Oddly enough, in the notes I had made in the Museum of Modern Art before leaving New York, Nejad Devrim's name was listed as one of the Turkish artists in their collection. (The other name was Bedri Rahmi Eyuboglu.)

When I showed Nejad my notes, he exclaimed, "But that is *me.* I can't be there. How could that be?" Since I couldn't tell him who the donor was, I couldn't solve the mystery, but it gave both of us pleasure.

I was pleased by Ercumend Kalmik, too. Since he hadn't brought any of his own work to the museum when we were making the selections for the show, I went to his studio to see whether he was still concentrating on boats and marine landscapes. His door was wide open and he greeted me warmly in his melodious voice.

The one thing I wanted for the show was on his easel. It turned out to be his sketch for a fresco competition in Ankara, and it had to be sent off at once. But would he paint one like it for me?

"Certainly."

"But not exactly like," I remonstrated.

"No, of course not. Because I am a person, not a machine."

I received it before the collection was shown in the United States.

Istanbul, Turkey
November 30, 1965

I now felt ready to meet with Sam Courtney at USIS and give him the forty-seven works of contemporary Turkish art that I had collected for the American show. A list had already been sent by Jane to my insurance company with a valuation of $3,225. It was generally agreed by Sam Courtney and Consul Stanford that as long as they could sponsor the exhibit before it left Turkey, they would be able to ship it to me in Minnesota at USIS expense.

What really got the support of the USIS people for this art project was my telling them that they could expect a representative of the Grey Foundation to assist them in mounting a bang-up show and in seeing that the works got to me safely when the show was dismantled. This representative was the pro, David Gebhard.

I had met him in 1961 when he was traveling back to the United States via the Orient at the tag end of a year's Fulbright scholarship in Beirut. He and his wife Pat, Em, Hilly, and I had spent some social evenings together in Isfahan, and he had also seen the MAP show there. More recently, he had been the director of the Santa Barbara Museum.

When I ran into him in Istanbul where he had a grant for an architectural history study, I invited the family—there was now an eight-month-old baby—to dinner at the Divan Hotel where I was staying. At a table in the corner of the pink and white dining room—the decor, and the music being played by a nearby trio, were both left over from another era—we drank Turkish rosé, and David said yes, he would take charge. I was pretty sure that the whole experience would be simultaneously enlightening and frustrating for the people at the Turkish Museum and the Cultural Affairs Department of the USIS. For David, I hoped it would be interesting. And for me, completely satisfying.

Athens, Greece
December 1-5, 1965

Hotel Hilton, Room 842. A view of the Acropolis marred in the evening by the huge flickering advertisements for Ethiopian Airways, Olympic, Lufthansa. On a rainy day, the temple is almost invisible in the haze. But there are times when it holds its own: during the night when the signs are extinguished and it is illuminated by the moon in such a magical manner that all the columns seem to topple toward each other, and the portico of straight women with their thin necks and heavy hair supporting the stone roof stands out exceedingly white. The perfect moment occurs as I look at it and become aware that the moonlight is fading gradually, like a drawn-out sign from the caryatids. Left to itself, the Acropolis becomes brighter, suddenly pure and glistening, all alone—and then that moment of blackness when the hill devours the flowers on top and it becomes all velvet. It is exactly midnight.

Communication Through Art seemed to be getting a new lease on life. A press officer, Warren Dunn, met us at the airport and drove us to the hotel. I slept for the rest of the day and through the night, and when I saw him in his office the next morning, he had just found out that the crates had arrived from Karachi. Everything still looked touch-and-go until he deposited us with the CAO, Daryl Dayton. What a reception we got from him! He was thrilled by the program. He knew who Lloyd Goodrich was and immediately undertook to translate the lecture into Greek and deliver it himself. He was amazed and chagrined that *Communication Through Art* had never come to his attention until that very moment. He congratulated me and was marvelously encouraging. I must say that I was overwhelmed by his reactions, so different from the apathy to which I had become accustomed.

On the following day, everything continued to go well. The Hellenic-American Union was located in a beautiful new building where the crates could be stored. Jane and I found ourselves confronting four gentlemen sitting on a long sofa: one of whom, the CAO, couldn't say enough to express his enthusiasm. He thanked me for turning an imaginative idea into a reality and handling it so intelligently. I was really overcome.

It appeared that there was some information that I couldn't supply then and there. For some of it, I suggested they wire Washington, and as for the details about names, titles, and the like, I would send them everything as soon as I returned to my desk in another week.

It was decided that *Communication Through Art* would

open in Athens on February 24, 1966, and run through March 10—and all sixty works would be shown. I was sure they would look wonderful in those marble halls.

The remainder of our stay was given over to sightseeing, and visiting friends: Alkis, a young painter, Sosso, a sculptress, famous Jannis Spyropoulos, and Vasso,who had a pet owl in her basement and whose works I encountered at the New York World's Fair, but never got one to Minnesota. Jane was photographing wherever or with whomever she found herself.

Tunis, Tunisia
December 6, 1965

We arrived in Tunis on December 6 and were scheduled to leave for New York on the morning of the 9th. Jane was eager to get home to Vermont so that she and her fiancé could make final plans for their wedding in January. And she was especially eager to see how her family would react to the beautiful material she had bought in Delhi for her bridal gown. As for me, I hadn't even begun to think about Christmas in Minnesota or winter snows.

The side trip to North Africa had been undertaken in spite of being travel-weary and fed up with packing and unpacking. I wanted to appraise this site for a showing of *Communication Through Art* and to reinforce whatever had come out of Washington in connection with it.

A wire was sent to Tunis from the press officer in Athens to the local USIS, and we were therefore met by the director, William Astill. But he knew absolutely nothing about "a Mrs. Grey of the Grey Foundation" nor was there anything in his files about an art exhibit.

We met the CAO the following morning, a soft-spoken woman named Lois Taylor who asked a number of interested questions and assured us that the exhibit would be very acceptable as I described it. She then made an appointment for us with Rafik Said, the director of La Maison de Culture.

At first glance, the building seemed unsuitable, but after meeting Mr. Said, who welcomed us cordially and took us on a complete tour of the interior, I changed my mind. The hall, capable of seating four hundred, was the right place for the Lloyd Goodrich lecture, and the lounge and reception rooms on the floor above could be used to good advantage. As we walked about, Jane chatted in French with our host, and eventually he not only acceded to her request for a guide to take us through the souk, but also gave us the use of his car and chauffeur for a trip to Carthage the following day.

This particular bazaar was clean, the little shops attractive,

and the traffic was orderly. But the edge of my enthusiasm for bazaars was blunted by the begging Berber mothers cradling their babies in their arms, pitiful in their gentle insistence, and so easily ignored.

Our guide would not let us loiter until we came to a substantial establishment which was entered through an enclosure open to the sky. A Tunisian sold Jane four burnooses. I bought simple things: a wedding candle, two carved wooden antelopes, and a dazzling green satin fish with sequin eyes—to ward off the evil eye.

Carthage, Tunisia
December 8, 1965

Carthage is a beautiful necropolis, a garden of the dead. Here are the ruins of luxurious baths, paved avenues, villas—Punic, Roman, Byzantine. A mellow sun filters over all on a gorgeous December day; birds sing; cypress, geranium, oleander, poinsettia all mingle with the sea. A single violet, which the guide gives to Jane and Jane gives to me, is so fragrant that I continue to twist it under my nose all afternoon.

Then a quick trip to Sidi-Bou-Said, a cluster of white houses with blue shutters on a site that commands a spectacular view of the bay and ancient harbor. We stand among the white houses with the shutters at our backs and gaze at the sea. It is all a long time ago, a long way away. I prefer the clamorous, dreadful, difficult, exciting present.

Washington, D.C.
December 15, 1965

One week later, I was in Washington, D.C., accompanied by Peg Cogswell from the American Federation of Arts. We were to meet with several officials about the continuing disposition of *Communication Through Art.* The meeting had been set up by Lois Bingham, until recently the director of traveling fine arts exhibitions for the USIA, and at that moment working in a similar capacity for the Smithsonian Institution.

I was hoping to foster a good future for all the artists participating in *Communication Through Art* and had read and reread my journals, making copious notes so that I would be prepared to answer questions. But I felt headachy and depressed. The fact that no one in Athens had known anything at

all about the show except that some crates were arriving, and that Tunis drew a total blank, made me despair of ever bringing Lois up to date.

We met with David Burns, head of the African desk, USIA, in the office of Dr. David Scott, director of the National Collection of Fine Arts at the Smithsonian. Burns, who had been briefed by Lois, was in favor of editing the show down to about forty paintings—which of course meant remaking the crates and revising the accompanying material. He also spoke of having a "festival."

He estimated that there were eight places where the show would be well received. He seemed to think that Dakar, Lagos, and other East African cities would welcome these gentle American paintings. He proposed they start their tour in Khartoum, Sudan, but this had to be bypassed for diplomatic reasons.

I didn't especially warm to the idea of this tour. Somehow it seemed to me that art was becoming a propaganda tool in Washington's hands. I had thought I would be delighted by any efforts made by official agencies in behalf of this exhibition, but I began to feel half-hearted about it. I said that I would rather pay for a curator to accompany the show than to provide money for constructing new crates. They agreed to draw up a budget. The artist, Clayton Pond, was the curator selected by the USIA to be in charge of this new aspect of *Communication Through Art* in its African travels. Supplementary material consisted of silkscreen materials to form the basis of a workshop which would be open to local artists and art students.

Pond eventually reported back to the USIA on the accomplishments of this trip, using demonstration. I received the print he pulled as part of his demonstration, a very appealing silkscreen of a red chair. It was personally inscribed to me with a message.

I should add here that *Communication Through Art* was shown in one form or another in many parts of Africa during 1967, but never in Tunis, Dakar, or Lagos.

New York, N. Y.
December 18, 1965

St. Luke's Chapel on Hudson Street. As I go to meet my brother, Paul, he comes bursting out of the church door, and close behind him, Father Flye, the extraordinary old priest known far beyond the purlieu of Greenwich Village because of the book, *James Agee's Letters to Father Flye*. We stand on the sidewalk talking about my travels. When I tell him that in Iran I accompanied Bishop Dehqani-Tafti on one of his regular visita-

tions, his face lights up. "What marvelous things you are bringing back with you! Your trip is not over because you will relive it. God bless you." And he puts his hand on my shoulder as if sending me off on my next adventure.

ENGLAND
EUROPE
UNION OF SOVIET
MONGOLIA
INNER
Perm
Sverdlovsk
Chelyabinsk
Magnitogorsk
Omsk
Tomsk
Novosibirsk
Novokuznetsk
Barnaul
Semipalatinsk
Tselinograd
Karaganda
Lake Balkhash
Alma Ata
Frunze
Andizhan
Kokand
Tashkent
Samarkand
Bukhara
Dushanbe
ARAL SEA
CASPIAN SEA
Krasnovodsk
Ashkhabad
Baku
BLACK SEA
Istanbul
Üsküdar
Bursa
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Trabzon
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Tabriz
Rasht
Tehrān
Mashhad
Hamadān
Esfahān
IRAN
Kermān
Shirāz
Al Basrah
Ābādān
Al Kuwayt
KUWAIT
Neutral Zone
Persian Gulf
BAHRAIN
QATAR
Ad Dawhah
Bandar Abbās
Ash Shariqah
Dubayy
Abu Dhabi
Muscat (Masqat)
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Herat
AFGHANISTAN
Kabul
Qandahar
Quetta
Peshawar
Rawalpindi
Islamabad
Srinagar
KASHMIR
Lahore
Amritsar
Multan
PAKISTAN
Sukkur
Hyderabad
Karachi
Wulumuchi (Urumchi)
SINKIANG UIGHUR
K'ashih (Kashgar)
Soch'e (Yarkand)
Ch'iuch'üan (Kiuchuan)
Hsining
Lanchou
TIBET
Gartok
Lhasa
Delhi
New Delhi
Moradabad
Agra
Bikaner
Jaipur
NEPAL
Kathmandu
Thimphu
BHUTAN
Lucknow
Kanpur
Allahabad
Varanasi (Benares)
Patna
Dacca
Calcutta
INDIA
Ahmedabad
Baroda
Indore
Bhaunagar
Surat
Nagpur
Bombay
Poona
Hyderabad
Cuttack
Kakinada
Madras

I am not alone, yet I am not public property, goods, or person. In every true sense of the word, I am private. I am myself and I need to act from my peculiar wisdom, which is honorable so long as it is pure, true, level-centered and staunch against contrary currents. Every second of day and night is charged with this load of privacy. My poetic hope is within reach, if I privately weigh the seconds, day and night, with poetic content.

Daybook
September 19, 1949

DIARY VI

Iran With a Photographer 1967

IRAN
ENGLAND

St. Paul, Minnesota
January 1, 1966

I returned to St. Paul in the New Year where one of my primary interests was playing the recorder. I had been inspired to take up the recorder by an article I read by a Vassar classmate published in the alumnae magazine years before. I especially had wanted something to play during long stays at Deer Lake, and when Ben and I traveled. I was often without a piano. A recorder seemed so portable that I bought a book on how to play it. From my first exercises, I was enamoured with it.

Nineteen sixty-six was a busy year with my playing companions. We met once a week for evening sessions, and became good enough to perform at concerts.

On May 3, the Turkish Art Show arrived in New York and was cleared through customs. Eventually it arrived in a single crate in St. Paul. I immediately had the works catalogued and then after consultation with the present Grey Foundation curator, Tom Waite, and my friend, Paul Kramer, who had started me off with MAP, we decided on a handsome matting and framing for all of them. I also engaged an English designer who had recently designed a British postage stamp to extend his

talents to a catalogue. He was very successful, culminating in a catalogue with an orange cover featuring the Grey Foundation logo, a woodblock print of a seventeenth-century Persian rosette in white. There was an introduction by David Gebhard who was so helpful in Istanbul when I left the works for showing there. A gala opening occurred combining the guest lists of the Minnesota International Center at the "U," the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, and mine. The refreshment table was laden with grapes and apples, hazel nuts, and a punch with a mint and tea base.

St. Paul, Minnesota
March, 1967

In March of 1967, I talked to my Salt Lake friend, Hildegard Pischel, who had accompanied me and Em on the MAP safari, into meeting me in Arizona. On that trip we explored the Frank Lloyd Wright home and studio north of Phoenix. Later, I visited at Spring Valley, Wisconsin, with the principal of Damavand College in Teheran because the Wright Associates had been engaged to design the women's college when it moved to the hills above Teheran. Unfortunately, when I came to distribute the Grey Collection, MAP was sent to Damavand College, and I very much fear the works will never be seen again.

In 1967, I joined Peg Cogswell in New York to select six serigraphs for the edited *Communication Through Art* exhibition which was to travel in Africa along with the silkscreen workshop curator, Clayton Pond.

Finally, I needed someone to accompany me to Iran for my next trip. It was only at the last minute that I thought of Ted Hartwell, the photographer, and persuaded him to join me.

On the plane to Teheran
May 8, 1967

I do not know my direction this time. . . . Without my diary I am not anyone. It is a curious forming of me. I must not omit it—like a prayer, a look behind the curtain. What shall I see, know, undertake? It will be a loving making, for no reason save that I know nothing less will release, relieve, remake me, and provide me provision.

On this trip I was accompanied by Carroll T. (Ted) Hartwell, friend of Parviz and curator of photography at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. Ted accompanied me to Iran in the capacity of Grey Foundation photographer-recorder of artists, their studios, special openings, an Embassy Fair, architecture, and village life, later using a volunteer boy actor for documentation of early chapters in the book *Design of My World* by Bishop Hassan Dehqani-Tafti.

Teheran, Iran
May 8, 1967

Parviz was there to welcome us when the plane landed at Merhabad Airport. On the way to the hotel we talked about whether we could see and photograph his bronze sculpture for the Queen's Park, how the bronze foundry at Teheran University was progressing, and the forthcoming exhibition for the first graduating students who were using the foundry. In my room, I found long-stemmed roses he had sent in advance of my arrival.

The following morning Ted and I went by taxi through a breakneck flow of traffic to the USIS office where I checked in with Lois Roth, Assistant CAO, and we had a brief visit with Golzari. He was the first Iranian artist I had met in 1960, when I bought several of his works that became part of the Iranian artists show that had circulated in the United States. Now he was at his drawing board, hobbling about with a cane as the result of an auto accident. We greeted each other with smiles, his soft brown eyes melting with pleasure, his voice as gentle as ever. He was tidier on this occasion than I remembered, the bushy beard trimmed to a Van Dyke point. He showed us his current portfolio of works on paper, and we promised to go to the studio to see his latest paintings.

In the Iran-America Society gallery was an exhibit of the work of Hossein Zenderoudi who had also been selected as one of the participating artists in the circulating Iranian show. At that time, he was only about twenty years old, covering rolls and scrolls of paper with images of fabulous monsters and men—enough to carpet a king's throne room. His present work reminded me of the idiom of Mark Tobey, inspired by calligraphy. All the time we looked, a young woman on her lunch hour, purse and gloves nearby, played the open grand piano like a passionate homesick maiden longing for other worlds.

During these past months, at the unhappy conclusion of his marriage, Parviz maintained his grip on his sanity through involvement with his work. He wanted Ted and me to see his newest ceramics, now on view in a one-man show at the Seihoun Gallery. There were mythical creatures, monsters in bright colors, some plates with figures in strange postures.

Teheran, Iran
May 10, 1967

The place was crowded with young people, pleased with themselves and with Parviz, curious about Ted and me, the only guests who spoke no Farsi. Pari, a name meaning "fairy" in Persian, was the gallery assistant, enchanting in her white

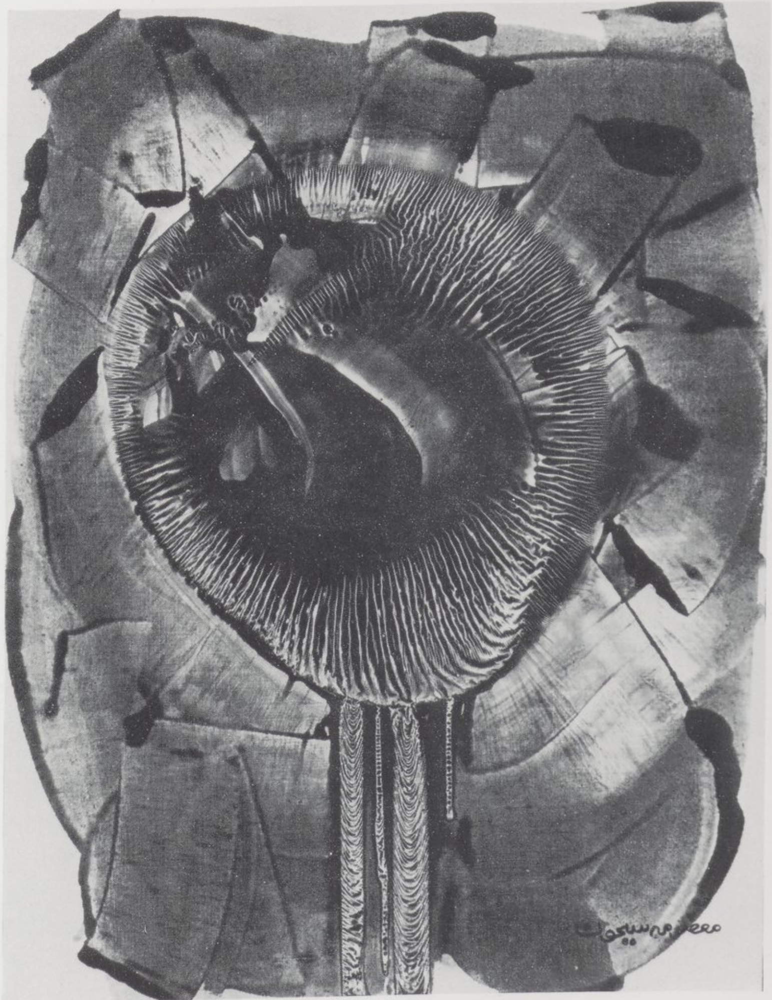
Hossein Zenderoudi,
Sun and Lion,
ink, watercolor, and gold paint
on paper mounted on board,
1960

miniskirt and brown and yellow sweater, white stockinged, her black hair tied at the nape of her neck with a yellow ribbon.

At one point, Massame Seihoun, director and owner of the Gallery, went to a storage area close by the stone fireplace now banked with a pyramid of pine cones. She pulled out several of her own canvases for me to examine and I promptly bought one of crème brulé enamel and lacquer, the color running off the canvas onto the gilt frame. It was a tour de force by the pale mistress of the gallery whose husband is an architect and the head of the art department at Teheran University.

When I asked Parviz about the meaning of "Massame," he replied "pure young girl." "Virginia?" I suggested. After he thought for a moment, he said "Yes."

In the twilight we drove for an hour through wide avenues and narrow streets to Parviz's present studio. Zenderoudi's minicar, looking quite hoydenish with violets painted on its hood, was in the corner of this small courtyard where he did most of his welding and casting. There was a feeling of desper-



Massame Seihoun,
Composition #13,
enamel and lacquer on
canvas, 1967

ate labor in the tidied clutter, in the dirt of the floor, the areas separated by mud walls, Parviz's mean little sleeping room with a record player on the shelf. The past summer, in the burning heat of sun and enclosed walls, a work crew under his direction had cast the seven bronze figures of children for the Queen's Park.

We then went to his club for dinner. Rasht 29 Club was a joyous place—"like a party every night," Parviz said. The young people were gentle, intelligent, cultivated, vibrant, fun-loving. The food was delicious—a beef Stroganoff and a salad with a tender green new to me—rather like watercress but with the flavor of anise and mint. I asked Parviz whether he

had been speaking much English. "No, not much. And not Farsi either. I have to stop and think for words. It never used to be that way."

A street performer "with a machine" was brought in from the street with a box-like contraption with three windows so low that guests had to squat to look in. "Start it now," they shouted and the fellow cranked away and recited a running patter that produced gales of laughter. Cylinders plastered with cut-outs from advertisements were a complete jumble to me, as they revolved to tell a story.

When I returned to my hotel room three roses had opened their seductive petals. But Massamé Seihoun's picture on the dresser stared them down.

Teheran, Iran
May 11, 1967

The following day, Parviz joined Ted and me for lunch, and by four in the afternoon, when we left the table, we had discussed the possibility of a book mainly about contemporary Iranian art. Such a book would emphasize the idea of cultural exchange and the main purpose of the Grey Foundation.

I was eager to acquire a painting by a particular artist who was recently deceased. It would mean a trip outside the city to the studio of Mansoor Ghandriz, who with his sister and sister-in-law had been killed when his car hurtled off a mountain road the year before. When Parviz had selected his paintings for inclusion in the Iranian show, he was only twenty-five. At thirty, he was dead. His young son and widow were living in a house bought by his brother. It was the brother who showed us the paintings in a room alive with shadows and barely lit by a single light bulb. The work—what we could see of it—was somber, comic, subtle, beautiful. I bought a large oil on burlap, a painting of the fabled bird, Simurg, which we strapped face up on the top of the Volkswagen.

As we turned around in the narrow unpaved street and began the ride back to the city, there were fine drops on the windshield—a golden shower in the lamplight. The fabulous bird was being washed by a rain that seemed to be Mansoor's benediction. Of course, the painting was undamaged.

Teheran, Iran
May 12, 1967

On a happier occasion, we went off to see the work of Faramarz Pilaram, one of the band of artists that included Parviz and Zenderoudi, as well as the ill-fated Ghandriz, whose friendship was nurtured during their early years together at the Fine Arts Academy. Pilaram led us through the chaos of traffic to his home, reached through a door in a wall that surrounded

Mansoor Ghandriz,
Simurg,
oil on burlap, 1967

a tiny court. This entranceway was noticeably cooler than the street and fragrant with the scent of roses. We stared for a moment into the pool lined with blue tiles where three large goldfish lazed. Then into his studio.

I didn't much care for the direction his work in oil was taking: short, isolated brush strokes floating over a defined

circle and leaving some areas of the canvas bare. This minimalism seemed to have evolved after his gorgeous Persian tapestry period, a dazzle of gilt and silver, orange and green, rich blocks of color on paper with a faint black imprint of signets and seals, antique and shimmering. From a bowl of assorted objects, he clutched a handful of these signets, laughing over a particular one, the figure of a man, feet firmly planted.

He was animated and cheerful, yet a little diffident. Even with Parviz's translations, we were able to communicate only on the simplest level. I found out that the signet paintings were done during Pilaram's second year at the academy, at the same time that Zenderoudi was doing his marvelous drawing on paper. During that time, they all looked on Parviz as their mentor. Even now, he was still considered their superior and treated with a special respect and show of deference.

The chief repository of the art and artifacts of old Persia is the National Archeological Museum for which we set out one morning. Because of language difficulties with the cab driver, we arrived much later than we had hoped, leaving us with less than an hour before the noon closing. We hurried through the bronze, gold, silk, and parchment on the first floor and dashed to the floor above to look at the glass and ceramics. As noon approached we were herded toward the stairs for departure, but luck was with me: suddenly I became aware that a senior guard was beckoning in my direction. In great solemnity, we withdrew from the others and walked across the width of the gallery to a huge polished door. A mammoth key was produced, and in a moment, I stepped into a room, the words "Shah Abbas," the great king and designer of Isfahan in the early seventeenth century, ringing in my ears as the door was pulled closed behind me, leaving me alone.

A carpet of majestic dimensions; walls lined with glass cases containing ceramics. Avid, but slightly uneasy, I circled the large room trying to devour what I saw: glazed earthenware in heavenly colors—lapis blue and glistening white; covered pots, bowls—all in pristine condition. I could only presume this treasure-trove of historical residue from a king's banquet table was reserved for only the most privileged eyes. Mine were that, that day.

When I returned to the door, it was opened by the smiling guard. As I thanked him, I rummaged in my purse for coins and came up with a Kennedy half-dollar. "A souvenir," I said, as I gave it to him. No doubt he turned it over in his mind as curiously as I did the knowledge of that locked room.

161 *Teheran, Iran*
May 13, 1967

Early this morning, from a cab window, I saw three mounted police. The one riding in advance held a leather leash which went around the wrist of a man, a prisoner who had to *run* at a good pace to keep up with the horse or be dragged over the stony road. This was just a glimpse, but I wondered whether other things of which I was not aware were going on under the surface.

Those days in Teheran, dashing about from one place to another in taxis or buses or on foot, I was in a constant state of excitement and apprehension: white-knuckled as a passenger at the mercy of drivers darting in and out of traffic; flinging caution to the winds as a pedestrian in the desperate act of crossing the street. And when I arrived at my destination without having been knocked down by a car, or with no collisions to report, I usually collapsed with relief and gratitude. I remember watching in amazement as three-year-old Gita Golzari got out of a car and with the fleetness and canniness of an experienced alley cat, skirted four parked cars before she ran back to the curb. I called after her "Bébé, Bébé" and was alarmed her father did nothing more than shake his finger at her.

The day before the opening of the foundry was such a day of traveling. Ted and I went from the north to the south of the city, our first objective the Gulistan Palace. But when we arrived, we were denied entrance by the guards at the gate. The president of Rumania was within on a state visit.

We were only a stone's throw from the bazaar where we spent the hour at our disposal before the taxi came to fetch us. The Shah could look out of the palace windows and see his subjects in a mélange of booths, wheels, cries, calls, the smells of cumin and saffron, the scurrying back and forth; and they could look at the palace and see the green garden and roses and budding plane trees and alabaster stairs and no commotion at all.

When we returned to the palace steps to wait for our taxi, the muezzin had just started his noonday call to prayer. I crossed the street so that I could stand near him at the entrance to the mosque and turned on my hand tape recorder, hiding it in a fold of my shirt, afraid to alert a Muslim passing by. I recorded his voice—loud, full, and with amazing control over range and timbre—plus the sounds of nearby traffic as a background.

I went to a nearby rug shop that had promised to have some banners on hand for my consideration, similar to the crewel-worked ones that were hanging outside. After a certain

amount of delay and confusion, the proprietor returned with three choices, each about five feet by eight feet, worked in a colored machine chainstitch on heavy black denim. For 500 rials, about six dollars, I bought the most astounding white horse, wearing an orange bridle tasseled with pink, and charging on green curliques of grass, scattered over with a white glove, a flying pennant, minarets and dome of a mosque, a blue pitcher. The name of "Abbas" was in magenta. Parviz, when he saw it, pronounced it jokingly as "early abstract." Everything associated with Abbas was there save the saint himself!

Then back to the hotel to await the arrival of Behrooz Golzari who was escorting Ted and me back to his studio. A friend of his was driving, and big-eyed, brown-haired, three-year-old Gita was in the front seat sitting on her father's lap. When we left the car, she took me by the hand and led me up two flights of concrete stairs to her father's workplace. Sharing it were four other people—painters who also did some drafting; one a smiling young woman with whom I would have liked to communicate, but, alas! we had no language in common. I chose four of Golzari's works—mainly watercolors—and a young man was summoned to interpret so that our financial arrangements could be made.

His colleagues placed some of their work on the table for me to see. The mood was relaxed, the pace leisurely. Orange and cola drinks were served, and when I saw that Gita had just finished a painting, I asked her whether I could have it. She signed her first name but would not part with her work until her father added "Golzari" to the signature. She then gave it to me and I gave her a kiss in return. She spoke a little English and in every way was truly astonishing.

Ted and I were put into a taxi and went up a beautifully lighted street bordered with elegant trees, past a park with water flowing in its midst, and eventually to the mountainside restaurant where we had a good dinner.

In the late afternoon we visited Jazeh Tabatabai's studio. I played a joke on myself. I purchased a wood block print I was attracted to, but did not register that I had been given a similar one several years ago—similar but different. *Three Figures in a Fountain* Parviz called it, but one was in sunshine, the other in starlight so that I framed the two together and they come across provocatively. Jazeh displayed a large tea-house oil that was in four episodes. The cut-off hand of a butcher who had spoken rudely to a respectable matron was put on again by a

dervish. The painting could not be understood unless the episodes were read from right to left, Persian style.

Teheran, Iran
May 14, 1967

An exhibition of student sculpture
Department of Fine Arts
University of Teheran

That morning, I dress carefully in a new off-white ensemble—sleeveless dress with jacket, standup collar—and a Nepalese brooch of gold-washed brass with milk-glass insets of a goddess which I hung from a gold and pearl antique chain. Gold earrings, Em's offwhite kid gloves, and a small hat—all indicate the air of formality with which I set out for the university at 9:50 a.m. Parviz and Ted wear black suits. We have our invitations, printed in Farsi and stamped with two seals from the security offices in French—*passage.* On the cover of the catalogue, in gold lettering: "In the presence of Her Imperial Majesty Farah Pahlavi, Empress of Iran." A bronze-colored band at the bottom contains the exhibition notice, and below that, "sponsored by the Ben and Abby Grey Foundation."

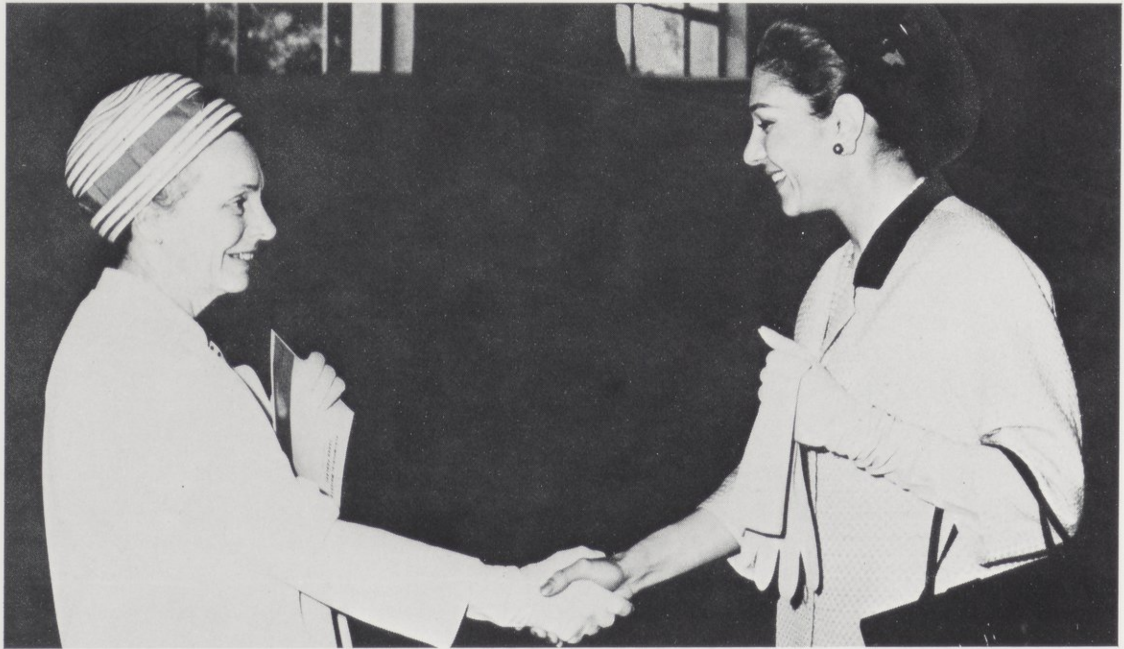
We are challenged at the gates of the university by the military, whose cordon extends to the parking lot. A walk in the morning sunshine to the entrance of the art department building in whose halls Persian carpets have been laid end to end.

A large assemblage of diplomats, professors, and personages has arrived, and tea is being served. The royal car is at the door and a small group detaches itself, surrounding Her Majesty's entourage. She is dressed in white trimmed with black; a halo hat with the shiny look of patent leather makes an eye-catching frame for her beautiful face.

In the upstairs gallery, I am one of a number of people introduced to her. As Ted starts to take a picture, someone is at his elbow at once. "No photographs." Ted is shadowed from that moment on, and he is informed that unless special authorization has been given, only licensed photographers can take pictures in the royal presence.

When the Empress is about to descend the marble stairway after having visited the students' exhibit, she sees me standing in the doorway of the students' exhibition room and comes directly over to speak to me, her hand out in greeting. In English, she expresses her thanks for my contribution to this occasion.

During her two-hour visit, as she moves within the periph-



Abby's meeting with Her Imperial Majesty Farah Pahlavi, Empress of Iran, exhibition, student sculpture, University of Teheran, May 14, 1967

ery of black-suited men and a galaxy of flashbulbs, her gracious air never leaves her. No one may depart before she does, and I spend the last half hour in the breezy portico chatting with friends.

The Empress appears with her retinue and hastens to her limousine. As it draws away, the discreet applause of the crowd follows her. Her car is trailed by two jeeps of soldiers in uniforms, some holding submachine guns in their laps.

I plan to return to the exhibit soon, on an occasion when I can really look at the work of the first graduating class of sculpture students without social distractions.

Teheran, Iran
May 17, 1967

A day or so later, Ted and I visited the Decorative Arts Museum, housed in what must once have been a private residence, hidden away at the end of a court off Modarres Avenue and surrounded by plane trees draped with wisteria. We had the place to ourselves except for a guard who stood about reading a novel. The walls were hung with gorgeous things but completely unorganized to a western museum eye—silk rugs, shawls, and manuscripts "in varieties of scripts—Kufic, cursive Maskhi, Tholth, Rayhan, Talic. . . ." Khataie's design of a crane etched on a Steuben glass vase was in a case with a card, "Presented by the U.S. Embassy."

Abby and Parviz viewing watercolors at Sohrab Sepehri's home/studio

Teheran, Iran
May 18, 1967

Sohrab Sepehri, another one of the participants in the *Fourteen Contemporary Iranian Artists* show in the United States, lived near the university, but Parviz had a hard time locating the address from Sohrab's instructions: ". . . on that narrow street, turn right, cross the vacant lot, and at the next street continue until you get to the row of stucco flats, and then look for the door filigreed with iron. . . ."

Sohrab, the artist-poet, came out, thinner and more wiry than I remembered from our first encounter. His smile showed his irregular teeth; his brown eyes were welcoming. We went up a flight of stairs, each one decorated with a potted plant, and entered his studio with its southern exposure over a rose garden. In the alcove was a most spectacular Persian bed transformed for the occasion into a teahouse platform: a rug laid on the floor, spindles on the sides except in the space to enter and sit on cushions (like a throne), a brass tray in the center, with cups and other items of hospitality on it.

He said that he was still writing and publishing poetry and that he had recently sent off his commission of large canvases for the Montreal World's Fair. I asked if I might see the working drawings: one, lovely in warm and earthy browns. In the forefront was a wraith of a figure, very unlike his style but romantic and poetical.

Among his oils, none of which was very recent, only one contained a figure. Lovely warm browns again—his slight mother with dark bobbed hair falling forward over her face as she squatted to tend a plant in the corner of her walled court—a scrubby plant, an elegant figure in sackcloth, beloved, as the artist-son saw his mother. I was eager for this painting done out of the fullness of the artist's inner-looking spirit. I bought it, and two of the sketches.

We couldn't see Zenderoudi because, though he had recently visited his Iranian home, he had returned to Paris. But we did go to see his parents. There had been two deaths in the family recently. Zenderoudi's baby niece had crept into the court pool one summer day and drowned, and only a week before our visit, the baby's father, Zenderoudi's brother-in-law, had driven off the perilous mountain road at almost the same spot where Ghandriz had had his fatal accident. As we went up the concrete steps, Parviz shook his head. "It has been a bad year for artists."

Everyone was in black, including the children. The artist's room was a mess, beds unmade, towels strewn about. Only three pictures stacked against the wall: one, his "antique" work on paper which I would have snatched up but it was glued on masonite and too large; two small canvases; and one oil that I bought—*Four Directions of an Artist*, a wave of abstract green calligraphy starting left and dwindling to white canvas on the right edge. An art connoisseur friend seeing it on the Grey Gallery wall remarked: "He intended to cover the whole canvas but his artistic judgment made him stop." No longer necessary to cover the entire surface.

Madame Zenderoudi came out to sign the necessary papers for customs inspection. The black drape gave her classic Persian features a chiseled aspect.

When we left, there was a child at the gate twirling a rose. I indicated that I would like to smell it too, and she trustingly held it under my nose.

We went back to the student sculpture show so that we could take our time looking at the work. It was really very good. Parviz asked me to choose several things. I chose a wooden ball studded with nails that prickled and shone in a closed-open pattern. It weighed a lot, and I wasn't sure how I'd get it home.

We then proceeded by car to the Queen's Park to see Parviz's composite bronze sculpture of seven children. In the

Parviz Tanavoli's large-scale bronze sculpture of seven children, 1969

late afternoon the park was full of families sauntering amid the pansy beds of yellow and lavender. Students were reciting their lessons aloud as they walked slowly under the trees; children licked ice cream cones as they ran.

Parviz's statues waiting to be unveiled stood on free-form travertine stone pedestals in the midst of a blue-tiled pool where fountains were to spout and lights shimmer. Parviz had heard that the unveiling might occur on May 24th, a few days hence. If this was so, I would have to get involved in a complicated change of plans and postpone my departure for Isfahan and the Dehqani-Taftis. As we left the park, we passed a gardener with a rose held between his teeth.

The day ended with a leisurely look at the antique shops

on Ferdowsi Avenue. I bought a small carnelian seal set in silver, intending to hang it on my silver Navajo necklace, to join American Indian, ancient Persian, and me. Pilaram used such seals most successfully, stamping gilt backgrounds in his first paintings, like brocade on patterns of silk.

Teheran, Iran
May 20, 1967

An excursion day—high blue sky, small white clouds puffed and billowy, a whistling wind. I sit next to Parviz who drives; Ted is hunched up in the rear. It is Friday, the Muslim holiday, with much traffic. We drive through the old part of the city, through the food markets, and Parviz says, "Here come the most beautiful junkyards, everything on shelves and in piles like a museum," where he often finds treasures that cost practically nothing. We stop and look through crumbling arches across a large landscape where clay was once dug for brick, and where some kilns still exist with huge brick chimneys. Now rainwater stands in pools and the land rises gradually to the far-off city limits.

We drive on to the modern-looking city of Rey. The guidebook says Rey is built on the site of Rhages, "one of the mightiest cities of the ancient world, destroyed by the Mongols in 1220 B.C." It is a mosque-shrine and a major pilgrimage site for the Shia sect. The dome is of bluish bricks, beautiful to behold because of the slight variations in color. When Parviz was a little boy, he and his mother often visited this shrine, driving by carriage or riding on the train. He tells me that the train was a marvel, so uniquely elegant that "now that it has been retired, the world wants to buy it for its brass. It was so pretty," he continues, "and it went so slowly that children ran around on the top of it, and mothers were able to make tea in their samovars. It was hard to get passage. We had to get up very early in the morning and stand in line. You had to be lucky. But once you got on that train, you felt like a king."

More than a million pilgrims come here each year. We see many Arabs who have come from the Arabian Peninsula, their women shrouded entirely in black, with no more than an eyelet-embroidered panel through which to view the world.

A boy on a bicycle guides us to the Spring of Ali—the kingdom of the carpet washers. Here a clear spring emerges from the rock, the washers and rinsers are at work. The washer places a rug on a flat stone surface and scrubs it with soap and a long-handled brush. The rinser then places it under the running spring until the water is clear of suds. Both men then haul the sopping object a few feet out to the steep side of the

hill so that it can drip downward. When less waterlogged, it is carried up the incline to lie face up to the gorgeous May sun. Rugs lie on this hillside in rich profusion—old ones in soft colors, new ones bright, long strips of carpeting laid more or less flat (I wonder how they dry without bumps!) and side to side.

Women do their laundry and boys cavort in the lower pool, a lively, lovely scene. An American artist (William F. Draper, who had just completed portraits of President Kennedy and of the Shah) has set up his easel and is surrounded by a crowd of young Iranians who have their own antic embellishments to perform.

We drive on to Veramin, some twenty miles to the east, where there is a ruined mosque dating from the twelfth century. The walls of the brick structure, open now to the sky, are beautifully patterned with designs carved into the cement between the bricks. The turquoise blue tile decorations in the upper part are still intact. It is all hollow and still—a pigeon roost now. I pick up a few shards. Here and there are signs that it is being renovated. Three boys are lolling about the unlocked iron gate. It is noon. The oldest begins the call to prayer of the muezzin. His boy-soprano voice sounds full, strong, and accustomed to reverberating in this timeless ruin.

The ruin stands in a large open space where some cultivation is going on. A donkey browses; a farmer carries an insecticide in a cylinder hung over his shoulder; his wife and children wait in the shade of a single tree. Nearby are two shrines. Ted photographs one that seems to rise organically out of the earth. It is built of mud and straw near to the ground with a rounded dome. Within is a Muslim burial vault or tomb with an oil lamp, a candle, and a book on it. Ted points out that where there is no wood, only an arch can support a roof. Thus the ubiquitous domes.

On the way back to town, we visit the cemetery where, within the past year, the artist Ghandriz, his sister, and his sister-in-law were buried after hurtling from a mountain road. Above the side-by-side graves are three tombs with grave inscriptions on top. As we stand there, the attendant flushes them with pails of fresh water. Parviz says, "It is the custom." We also go to the grave of his young poet friend who committed suicide, leaving a note asking Parviz to have his body cremated. This was not permitted by the authorities. Parviz shudders at the thought of a Muslim burial—the shrouded body laid directly into the earth and covered over, spadeful by spadeful.

Late in the afternoon, Parviz comes to the hotel with an early Zenderoudi painting—an emblematic one—the lion with sword and sun. It belonged to Pilaram who traded one of his canvases for it, no doubt when they were all students together, and now he will let me have it. It is gorgeous; I feel very lucky.

The following day, between errands, I stopped at the Queen's Park to watch some men working around Parviz's unveiled statues. I was able to see the whole for the first time. The travertine on which the figures were mounted could have stood alone and pleased the eye. Even without the clambering children, the square, the pillar, the cone, the sphere would have been monumental. Because of Parviz's seven-figured sculpture, the Queen's Park sang, laughed and invited recreation. These sculptural forms were quite an innovation for an Iranian to have produced, as there were no other contemporary relatistic sculptural images treated completely in the round. The bas reliefs at Persepolis were the last figures to be produced, as Muslim religious precepts prohibited the depiction of human beings. As I write these words in 1982 I have learned that many of Parviz's bronzes have disappeared from the parks.

Teheran, Iran
May 23, 1967

A few days before my departure for Isfahan, Parviz and I talked once again about his plans for the immediate future. During the talk, we stood on the site "Elahieh" No. 1, a site among those he was dreaming about—a rather high hill in the north suburbs of Teheran. It was here that he hoped to establish his home, studio-gallery and sculpture garden. Ted was snapping photographs nearby. We were there in the late afternoon; the sun was just right, the sky clear, the snow on the mountains melting. The brow of the hill was all shale and clay, nothing growing but pigweed. Parviz had his artist's vision of structures rising in perfect harmony amidst surrounding trees and rose gardens, terraced greenswards.

We looked at the panorama for a long time. Unbridled horses were making their way down the hill; a shepherd was grazing his flock further along. At night, to the south, the city would provide a vista of twinkling varicolored lights.

Kamran Diba, an architect, a first cousin of the Empress, was having a one-man show at the Seihoun Gallery. His invitation read, "Opening Preview—Monday, May 22 at seven p.m. Dress: Only persons wearing dark, gray, or white will be admitted. No colors." Apparently nothing was to be permitted to compete with his poster-like paintings, and when I got to the

gallery, it was packed with people clad to his specifications. Parviz wore a black suit with a gaudy tie which he said he would remove if asked to do so. He was not.

All the works, which had a hard-edged quality, were concerned with images of swimmers, silhouetted against the sea and sky. Somewhere on each canvas was a beautiful flow of Farsi script. The one I bought said, "I am an expert swimmer." Half a leg and half an arm of the tan figure were white in the blue water, dividing the canvas horizontally into exact thirds.

The gathering was lively, young, amusing. On a tape, someone was declaiming a litany in Farsi about water, drop by drop. This added to the confusion, good humor, and stylishness of the event. One guest remarked to me: "Diba thinks he can make a painting Persian by writing on it in Farsi."

Teheran, Iran
May 24, 1967

A reporter from the daily *Teheran Journal*, John Mahoney, has a ten a.m. appointment for an interview. He turns out to be coatless, tieless, with his hair in disarray. Over iced drinks, we talk for an hour. He is never at a loss for big questions: "What do you think of Pop art?" and the like.

Later in the day to the Reverend and Mrs. John Hovespian's for tea. Their daughter, Carmen, a nurse in the Children's Hospital, and several other family members and friends are present. It is a welcoming home, bordered by a patio garden full of blue delphinium. When I ask Rev. Hovespian about his work, he makes the following observations:

"The Christian church must do something. Education and the study of comparative religions is creating a vacuum in the beliefs of the young intellectuals. The Muslim faith is no longer satisfactory.

"More dedicated people are needed to effect greater unity between the many Christian sects—Syrian, Catholic, Armenian Orthodox, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Persian Union, Russian Orthodox. . .

"More churches should be spread around the city, and more bookshops too. At the moment, the distances are so great that there are many people who can't get to services.

"And what is wanted from America? Young clergymen who wear their clerical collars and join in the activities of the local young people—hiking and the like—talking, explaining. No Farsi is necessary; the students want to practice their English."

In a way his remarks were prophetic, but not in the way

The artist Monir Farmanfarmaian in her studio
1965

he anticipated. The Muslim faith did become completely satisfactory—in the view of the Ayatollah Khomeini and his followers—and has overwhelmed "comparative religions." Farsi is now very necessary and Americans are not welcome. Only history can write the final paragraph on this turn of events.

That evening, we pick up the Belgian journalist who has also been invited to an evening at the Farmanfarmaian's hillside home. The moon is full in a deep blue Persian sky, and as we enter their walled garden, moonlight shimmers in their pool and frogs are croaking loudly. In the lighted house, beyond the shadowy, rose-scented terrace, cushions are piled on Persian rugs. The setting is beautiful; all fourteen guests are charming and debonair. Our hostess, Monir, sends us into gales of laughter with a description of her yoga lesson. At the dinner table the host, Abdul, entertains me with his childhood memories of the summer exodus to the country, a parallel to mine: the horse-drawn moving van transporting furniture and family to and from White Bear Lake, spring and fall. We commiserate with our mothers. After dinner slides taken by Jane on the previous trip are shown that include slides of Monir, painting in her home-studio, and Abolbashar with his

Sculpture students working from the model at University of Teheran, May, 1967

sailboat and broken mast at their Caspian home. When we leave, the frogs in the garden are asleep.

On arriving at the party given for me by the students to celebrate the opening of the bronze foundry and the show of their works, I was greeted at the door of the sculpture studio by a young woman in shell pink, holding a bouquet of red, red roses adorned with crimson streamers. She was flanked by two fellow-students in gray work smocks as she delivered a welcoming speech in English thanking me for my contribution. To oblige a photographer, the whole ceremony had to be repeated. With some confusion, the roses went back and forth and the welcome was accomplished again.

After a brief glimpse into the studio where students were working from two almost-nude male models, we trooped into the foundry: roses on the table, trays of cucumbers ready for slicing, and a pastry topped with strawberries in rose gelatin. Tea was passed; compliments went back and forth. I gave Ismaiel Tavokol, the janitor who had helped Parviz so much with the show, a note of appreciation containing 2,000 rials and in acknowledgement, he placed his hands over his heart,

bowed, and presented me with a small ceramic he had made: two birds in a blue tree. Various embassy people turned up for the occasion, and I was pleased that they were there when important university people arrived. I was asked whether I liked the show, was anything lacking, were there changes I would like to suggest? In replying I tried to express my enthusiasm for everything that had been done, and my gratitude for all the work they had put into this event in my honor.

More of the students spoke English on this occasion than at the previous party. We were all pleased with each other, and Parviz was particularly proud that the young people had planned this whole party on their own and carried it through without any help from their elders.

After Ted had taken a picture of all of us standing outside against the wall of the studio, we went to the new library of Teheran "U" where the Grey Foundation art books included in *Communication Through Art* had been placed on open shelves. A discreet little sign said, "We trust our students; they may use this library freely." But many of the shelves were empty.

Isfahan, Iran
May 25, 1967

That same afternoon, we loaded the Volkswagen at the hotel door and started the three-hundred-mile drive to Isfahan. Lorry travel was heavy. It was hot and seemed a very dangerous road to me, but after Qom it began to cool—that holy city which has a golden dome on its mosque and where no female goes without a chador, even very small girls. Less than five years ago many people here were killed for their uprising against the Shah's land reform program. At welcome dusk, a handsome fox, bushy tail extended, crossed the road blending with the desert, swift and purposeful.

When we reached Isfahan, Bishop's House side door was opened for me. I was welcomed by two old women in shawls and babushkas who showed me to my upstairs room and brought tea. Hassan and Margaret were at a reception. I asked to see the new baby by name, "Gulnar," for I knew no other Farsi words to express my desire.

I followed my escorts to the kitchen area where I first gazed at my goddaughter Guli, asleep in her crib. We were all pleased and happy.

Abby Garden
May 27, 1967

Mid-morning: I am writing from the upper veranda of the house in the Abby Garden in Julfa. At nine this morning, this is the way the bishop's small car is packed: Margaret driving,

Bahram next to her, then Hassan holding Gulnar, the newcomer; in back Susanne, her friend Mureen, Shirin, and I. Gulnar is handed to the back seat to be played with. At eleven months she is a bright and adorable baby with a definite mind of her own. I am a proud godmother.

The road to the garden goes sedately over the Zender Rud, continues a short way over a respectable highway, then makes a turnoff into an almost impassable alley alongside a canal, all ruts, turns, bumps, crossings, with the hazards of children and bicycles. Then there is the open gate.

Chained Black Dog hears the familiar car and his barks summon the gatekeeper. We make a sharp turn and here we are.

Between the house and the swimming pool, the Abby Garden has a trellis festooned with honeysuckle. Inside, the jet of water in the central hall tinkles all day into its little blue basin. At the rear is a handsome full-length window. The stairs rise at the side and turn at a landing. For eight hours, we amuse ourselves in this garden house.

At teatime we sit around the pool and I distribute little gifts. It is lovely—the happy flow of familial contentment between parents and children quite naturally including Mureen and me. Gulnar entertains her father, who forecasts a flirtatious future for her. Those big black eyes, the willful ways. On the way here, the children were given chocolate-coated ice cream on a stick. The face that Gulnar made at the dawning of an enrapturing experience made us all burst into laughter.

Hassan comments on Bahram's education. (On his sixth form government exam, he scored 19.12 out of a possible 20 points.) "I would like him to have a classical education with Greek and Latin, which I did not have."

Isfahan, Iran
May 28–30, 1967

Bahram is my guide and interpreter for the morning. We go first to the Shah Abbas Hotel to arrange for our traditional evening party. The receptionist quizzes Bahram. "Where did you learn your English?"

"My mother is English."

"Are you Persian?"

"Yes."

And to me, after cashing my check: "Haven't you been in Persia long enough to learn the money? Aren't you going to count it?"

As far as I'm concerned, the dinner party is really a children's festivity. Susanne gets up from a sickbed to join us;

she could not face the terrible disappointment of not being there. Bahram is in long trousers and a necktie; Shirin, the teen-ager, has bathed with sweet-scented soap and spent a long time fussing with her hair. She wears a pretty pink dress that shows her budding young figure.

May 29, 1967

Ted and Parviz come to Bishop's House for dinner. When we are having coffee on the veranda, Bahram brings out a box of pastels I had given him. Parviz asks for a piece of paper, and then, with care and concentration, reaches for one color after another as if he were thinking with his fingers. He draws lines tentatively—a bird? a mathematical problem? This is the way he teaches. The seriousness, the obvious thought, the searching, and even the playfulness of his putting crayon to paper, are so absorbing not only to him but to the onlookers that Bahram responds with total attention. Ted withdraws quietly from the circle to take pictures.

Later, Bahram and Shirin take us to the Abby Garden so that Ted can continue to photograph. It is now a wonderfully secluded oasis among the cherries, quince, and grape arbor. I am pleased that it is being used by other members of the Christian community besides the Dehqani-Taftis. It must refresh them all.

May 30, 1967

Shirin, Bahram, and I go exploring in the afternoon, and we three have a fine time. At the Shah Mosque, begun in 1612 and finished in 1630 by Shah Abbas the Great, an old guide attaches himself to us and gives us the benefit of his excruciating English. He rings the great marble urn, presently empty, by slapping the palm of his hand against it to produce a great sonorous tolling. We do likewise and get the same result. On the pavement standing under the exact center of the great dome, seven echoes return to us when we clap our hands. A vista through an arch into the court shows a mock orange in furious white bloom spotlighted by long sun rays.

At my tip of 20 rials, the old fellow is so primed that he begins all over again: "This door is very old, made of silver, and garnished with gold, and the back is made of two pieces of wood of a plane tree."

Bahram is scornful of him for repeating himself and for not knowing north from south. When he mentions this at dinner, his father lectures him for not being respectful to an old man. Then Hassan bursts into laughter. "He is just like I was.

Kamran Diba,
I Am an Expert Swimmer,
oil on canvas, 1967

Just exactly! It is hard to see how he could have inherited all my characteristics at his age!"

Teheran, Iran
June 1, 1967

When I returned to Teheran, I did some last-minute gallery hopping that included a visit to the Seihoun Gallery. I had reserved the *I Am an Expert Swimmer* that I had seen at Diba's opening, but on reconsideration, I chose instead an upside-down red figure with a Farsi inscription that said "I am an underwater swimmer. Where is underwater?" Parviz said, pointing to the diver, "That calligraphy was done by Pilaram. He is the best. The hard edge was put on by Ali, my cousin,

and my assistant did the main fill-ins of color. Diba designed all this show and all the canvases in it and is given credit for having the ideas and the overall layout of each oil. It is his wit and bravado that come through." I was very interested in the fact that a number of artists contributed to each of the paintings. No doubt this work helps younger artists to get fresh ideas and free themselves. Diba is gifted with originality and knows how to make use of common materials. It was he who put the old airplane in the Queen's Garden for the children to play in.

And then, in quite another tone, Parviz continued, "I have a place here now. I feel like the bishop. I want to live my life on Persian soil—going away from time to time, but always coming back. An artist does not plan too far ahead. I am not making any big decisions now."

Teheran to London
June 2, 1967

June second was the day of my noon flight to London. It was a bright morning, and in the spare hour before departure time, I walked down the fashionable Takti Jamshid Avenue under the shade of the plane trees, stopping to look at the jewels in one shop, the fabrics in another. The mix of people was wonderful too—some elegant, some in homespun; children in black dresses patterned with flowers, students, businessmen on their way to Bank Melli around the corner. And then, by the luckiest accident, I found myself in a music store that sells records in the grand manner—a double-high ceiling and half a dozen eager clerks. They had just what I wanted for the bishop's children: recordings of some of Schubert's music and a narration in English of his life.

Parviz drove me to the airport, and as we were having a drink in the time that remained, he told me about his first flight out of his home town on a cargo plane to Basel, and his train trip to Rome—a frightened youth all the way. He stayed awake all night to look out at every stop until his final destination, Rome, was reached. He knew practically no Italian and he was seventeen years old.

London, England
June 2-5, 1967

I reached London at 9:15 in the evening. It was still twilight when I boarded the bus that took me to Victoria Station, and from there, I phoned the Grosvenor Hotel to see what they could give me with no reservation. I was offered a double room on the sixth floor, and when I got there, I was amazed to discover it had no private bath. The communal bathtub was next door. And where, I asked, were the toilets?

"At either end of the corridor. Two, of course."

I made the turn at the gorgeous stairwells: the bannister spindles were gilded iron, the stairs were white marble, the carpet a regal red with pattern and border. There was stained glass in the windows at the landings. It was superb—but I missed the plumbing.

After breakfast the following morning, I arranged to visit Margaret's parents, Bishop and Mrs. Thompson, and I changed my flight reservation so that I would have an extra day for a tour of Coventry. When my schedule was settled, I wired my brother Paul to tell him of my new arrival time at Kennedy International Airport—June 6th.

An encounter in the lobby with a young woman carrying a portfolio resulted in an unexpected and rewarding experience that afternoon. When I asked her whether it was her own work she was carrying, she told me it was not. She conducted therapy classes in art for mental patients, and the portfolio contained a show of their work that was to be picked up for an exhibition in Leeds. By coincidence she called her show "Communication Through the Arts," almost my own title. When her friends arrived, they all agreed that if I was interested in seeing current work, the best place to go was the ICA (Institute of Contemporary Art) on Dover Street.

Before going there, I took a taxi to the Tate Gallery where I not only renewed acquaintance with familiar contemporaries, but was startled to discover a Charles Biederman construction called *Red Wing*. Of course it was Red Wing, Minnesota, the Mississippi River town below Hastings. How surprising to find him among the greats at the Tate! I had heard of him only recently and had meant to visit him. Now I had a special reason for doing so.

While I was there, I heard the sound of heavy rain on the skylight, and before long, drip, drip, drip into the gallery in three different places. A uniformed guard sprinkled wood shavings on the puddles because "anyone might slip and break his neck."

The taxi to Dover Street went past St. Mary's Park where there was a border of pink and white foxgloves standing tall, like spears set in the ground in ranks, defying the rain.

I liked the Institute of Contemporary Art at once. It was up a flight of stairs, and at the door was a table piled with books and catalogues. I paid the small admission fee and found myself in the midst of an impressive show: *The Three Banners*

of China: Photographs by Marc Riboud. Most of the work was in black and white; some in color. As I walked about examining it, I tried to determine what makes an effective photography show. This one included political posters, scenes of violence, demonstrations against Americans, Picasso's dove, big mountains, little people walking in the rain.

I wondered what kind of show Ted might produce about Iran, and hoped it would not be the kind that was technically brilliant but inspired in me not love, but rather dismay, as did this China show. I felt that Iran should be presented as a breathing space for love in this violent world. (It seemed that way to me in 1967!!!)

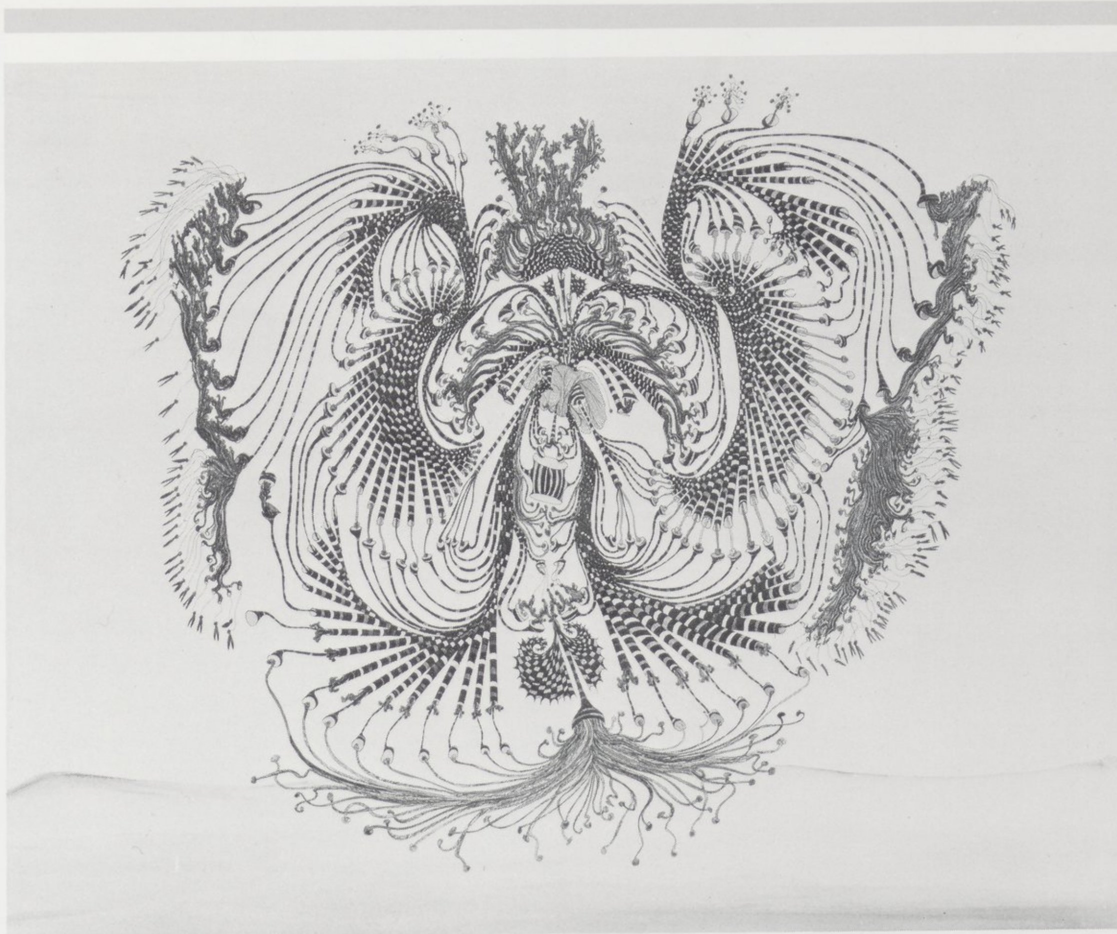
There was an arrow pointing to another exhibit in the rear room of the gallery. Here I found a show of color ink drawings, a few washed with watercolor, a show of intriguing intricacies.

The artist was Robert Howe, twenty-two years old, who described his paintings as "organic, starting with the minutest detail in an attempt to bring a little order from confusion." I bought one called *Bird in the Desert*. It was not very large and cost 20 pounds. When I gave the director my personal check, he thanked me and said that since the British economic restrictions had been imposed, there had been few sales at the gallery, and this young self-taught artist would be encouraged and elated by my purchase.

This is the day of the rented car with the red leather upholstery and the portly, voluble Scottish chauffeur—at my service for the next ten hours. I check most of my baggage at the hotel desk and check out for the night. I am going to Leeds to fetch Margaret's parents, retired bishop of Iran, William Thompson and Mrs. Thompson, for an outing to Canterbury, and then back to their house for the night.

In the car, amidst all the other ponderous black cars, we drive through city and town streets more heavily traveled than I had expected. Not enough countryside. A few fields of hops and the old granaries, one or two hillsides with sheep, a river once, a castle, a ruin occasionally, and numerous patches of gardens in front of row houses. We talk about the church, about the education of Margaret's and Hassan's children, the grandchildren of this retired missionary couple who lived for so long in Persia. Mrs. Thompson was born in Persia, the daughter of missionaries.

I carry away a thought from these conversations: It is God who initiates the stirrings of spiritual awareness in the human



Robert Howe,
Bird in the Dessert,
colored ink on paper, 1967

heart and it is not we ourselves. We are God-touched and turned away from absorption with ourselves, to care and service to others if we do but acknowledge Him. Are human beings today too self-confident and self-loving to worship God? And so do they go astray?

Our first stop in Canterbury is St. Augustine College where the Reverend Douglas Pitts meets us at the gate. Douglas is my priest and the rector of St. Matthew's Episcopal Church in St. Paul. His visit was made possible by a Minnesota diocesan grant for a six-week summer seminar in theology. This is a different setting: old crumbling stones, beautiful green lawns sprinkled with tiny white daisies, a thrush singing, a cloistered look. We are taken to the Pitts family's basement apartment where Bess and young Janet greet us. We plan to go to a country inn for midday dinner.

On the way back to St. Augustine College, we visit Can-

terbury Cathedral. It is three p.m. and evensong is being sung by a choir of boys whose beautiful voices come from hidden, distant choir stalls. Douglas insists on seeing the cloisters and the exact spot where the historical events of *Murder in the Cathedral* took place.

At the house of the Thompsons, at breakfast my boiled egg is served in the shell and I am offered fresh mangos from India. I learn how Hassan and Margaret found each other, and how the young man came in perturbation and uncertainty to the teen-ager's mother, able to say nothing more than "I love Margaret." And I hear of their clandestine meetings with the aid of the family—for no rumors were permitted to leak out before all those concerned were certain about this English-Persian marriage.

A brilliant sunshiny day. I join fourteen other passengers for a bus tour of 200 miles through Middlesex, Buckinghamshire, Northhampton, "land of spires and squires," and Warwickshire. My chief purpose is a visit to the new Coventry Cathedral. When we get there, I speak my impressions into my small tape recorder. These are the words I am able to retrieve: "In the ruins is this little sign: 'Hallowed be Thy Name in the Arts. God be in my senses and in my creating.' And another says 'Hallowed be Thy Name in Education. God be in my mind and in my Growing.'

"The etched glass of the doors—a screen of incised glass panels, the work of John Hatton—is very beautiful—winged angels, saints, martyrs. I understand this is hung as a curtain is. The weight is taken from above, permitting the lightest of jointure with the pavement. Looking out through it I can see the ruins of the old church. Within, this is simply a glorious church. I am standing near the baptistry window which has a burst of light in the center. The upper part is a deep blue; reds at the sides. Underneath is a stone from Bethlehem . . . the baptismal font.

"The tapestry by Graham Sutherland is fantastically beautiful to me. It is the Christ figure in a white robe, the holy spirit shining on his head, his hands upraised as if to receive the rays. As I stand here the organ is being tuned. . . ." At this point, my tape comes to an end, although I was not aware of its having done so, and went on talking to it. I remember noticing an urn of wild flowers—Queen Anne's lace backed by leaves of Solomon's seal on one of the altars.

This is a new cathedral for the modern world. I find it inspiring. And then, into this bravely conceived oasis of peace, we hear the news over the bus driver's transistor radio: fighting has broken out between the Israelis and the Arabs. . . .

"God be in our mind and in our growing."

London to New York City
June 6, 1967

The jet flight to New York was uncomfortable and exhausting—no leg room, arms to the sides at all times for almost eight hours. A plane full of people fleeing from Baghdad, Tunis, Tel Aviv, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt because of the outbreak of war in the Middle East.

I am not fleeing, but this trip has come to an end. Paul meets me at Kennedy Airport in the early evening, and we go straight to the vicarage for dinner.

CASPIAN SEA
Baku
Krasnovodsk
Bukhara
Samarkand
Dushanbe
Ashkhabad
Tabriz
Rasht
Mashhad
Tehrān
Hamadān
Esfahān
IRAN
Kermān
Ābādān
Al Kuwayt
Shirāz
Persian Gulf
Bandar Abbās
BAHRAIN
Ad Dawhah
QATAR
Ash Shariqah
Dubayy
Abu Dhabi
Herat
AFGHANISTAN
Kabul
Qandahar
Quetta
Peshawar
Rawalpindi
Islamabad
Srinagar
KASHMIR
Lahore
Amritsar
Multan
PAKISTAN
Sukkur
Hyderabad
Karachi
TIBET
Gartok
Lhasa
Delhi
New Delhi
Moradabad
Agra
Bikaner
Jaipur
NEPAL
Kathmandu
Thimphu
BHUTAN
Lucknow
Kanpur
Patna
Allahabad
Varanasi (Benares)
Calcutta
Dacca
BANGLADESH
Imphal
Myitkyina
Bhamo
Lashio
Mandalay
Chittagong
Akyab
BURMA
Bassein
Rangoon
Ahmedabad
Indore
Baroda
INDIA
Bhaunagar
Surat
Nagpur
Cuttack
BAY OF BENGAL
Kakinada
Bombay
Poona
Hyderabad
Madras
Panjim
Bangalore
Pondicherry
Mysore
ARABIAN SEA
Madurai
Jaffna
SRI LANKA
LACCADIVE IS. (India)
Kozhikode (Calicut)
Trivandrum
Colombo
Galle
MALDIVES
Male

In the poet's terms, realization of the poetical is the greatest understanding of necessity a human being can have. It is full consciousness of life, participation in it and creation of it. The poetical is the poet's reality.

Daybook
August 7, 1949

DIARY VII

First India International Triennale 1968

INDIA
IRAN

For some time, Peg Cogswell and I had been talking about a festival of international contemporary art in India, and early in January 1967—before I left for my last trip—we met a USIA official to discuss a proposal we had in mind. I said that I would be very interested in helping to organize an exhibition of American art, which I hoped could travel throughout India after the festival. This proposal was dropped when the Museum of Modern Art in the spring of 1967 sent a large show of American works of the 1950's and '60's to New Delhi. However, after that, plans by India for a *First India Triennale of Contemporary World Art* reached the State Department. Since they knew of my interest, they asked me to sponsor the American section of the Triennale.

Shortly after our Washington conference, Peg went to Athens to edit *Communication Through Art* for its tour through East Africa, another project I was sponsoring. After Africa, to my delight, that show did go to India, where it circulated for two years.

St. Paul, Minnesota
June, 1967

When I returned to the States in June, 1967, *Turkish Art Today* was traveling through the Western Association of Art Museums. And MAP was being circulated through Minnesota by the State Arts Council. I was particularly pleased with this tour, as was the State Arts Council itself. For this became their first venture, after which their programs really got started. It was very successful. In most places, the exhibit was accompanied by a lecture by one of the exhibiting artists, and this made a hit with both the artists and their audiences.

Soon after my return, Mrs. Jill Pardee from Bristol, Rhode Island, who was visiting her daughter in Minneapolis, contacted me. An enthusiastic patron of the Bristol Art Museum, she, like me, also volunteered her work. She wanted a show for the museum.

I was buoyed by the successful tours of these other shows, and by then I was expert at putting a show together. I chose thirty-seven works—paintings and sculpture—and so developed the exhibition *Contemporary Art of India and Iran*, which was then sent to Bristol.

I commissioned the carpenters at the Minneapolis Institute of Art to build the crates, and put out a small catalogue, with an introduction by Brewster Ghiselin, a poet friend from the University of Utah who headed the summer Writers' Conference and chose the annual Benjamin E. Grey Memorial Lecture participant.

By word of mouth, other places in the Bristol area learned about the show and approached me, so I also arranged installations in Brunswick, Maine; Andover, Massachusetts; and at Vassar in Poughkeepsie, New York. After that, I solicited assistance in circulating it, and the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service picked it up. It traveled around the United States under their auspices for four years.

Also that summer, Paul Kramer, who was then director of the State Fair art show, approached me about lending an exhibition of contemporary Japanese wood-block prints. He said he wanted something really good for the fair this year; if people came from all over Minnesota, they should have the opportunity to see the quality work of such a collection. So I lent him my whole collection, and he put it in a special room there. It was a big hit, especially with the Japanese community.

That later exhibit circulated as well, first through the Grey Foundation, and then through the Western Association of Art Museums.

Just before the State Fair opened with the inclusion of the Grey Collection of Japanese Art, I received a letter from the director of the Minneapolis School of Art, Arnold Herstand, a Grey Foundation trustee, in which he enclosed a number of newspaper clippings. They were reviews by Indian art critics of the Museum of Modern Art's *Two Decades of US Painting* that had been in New Delhi at the Lalit Kala Akademi in the spring—a number of them unfavorable. Herstand thought I'd better look these over before the Grey Foundation got too involved in the proposed Indian festival.

The reviews claimed that the underlying principles of these styles were opposed to traditional Indian art, that they were cold, pointless . . . reactions to sociological factors, and evidenced intuition giving way to mere inventiveness.

Preparation for entry into the India Triennale was under way. By early September, the Grey Foundation had officially offered a contribution of up to $20,000 for the exhibition, and Ellen Johnson, professor of art at Oberlin College, had been designated to select the art to be included. Lois Bingham, Chief of IAP (International Art Program) at the National Collection of Fine Arts, had recommended Ellen, and I concurred.

It wasn't until October that David Scott, director of the National Collection, sent me a formal proposal for participation in the Triennale exhibition. It spelled out the agreement that, among other things, the National Collection would pick up the tab for transportation, while the Grey Foundation would fund the details of project preparation and accompaniment of the commissioner of the exhibition to India, and later, travel expenses for a curator to go to Bombay. I agreed with his budget. Yet I had a primary dissatisfaction.

The idea all along, as far as I was concerned, was to have a show that could travel around India, and this wasn't in the outline. Unfortunately, the Triennale show did not travel, except to Bombay at Grey Foundation expense.

January was a whirlwind of last-minute arrangements. I was going to India, for the opening of the Triennale show. Just before I left, I received a bit of good news: the set of fifty books and catalogues ordered by the University of Teheran after the showing of *Communication Through Art* had finally arrived, after much delay, and the next time I visited Teheran I was delighted to see them on special shelves in the university library.

New Delhi, India
February 6–12, 1968

On February 6 , 1968, Ellen Johnson and I flew directly to New Delhi to attend the festivities in connection with the opening of the *Indian Triennale of Contemporary World Art*. Parviz, who was by now the officially designated representative of the Foundation in Iran, joined our flight at Teheran airport. Lane Slate, an executive producer for National Education Television, was the curator, already in New Delhi installing the exhibition.

On February 12, all of us attended the opening luncheon at which we were guests of honor. Our hosts were Ambassador and Mrs. Chester Bowles. It was held at Roosevelt House, the

building designed for the residency of the ambassador, now used entirely for official entertainment. There were seventy guests, including artists, critics, officials of the Triennale, and diplomats. We were graciously received by Steb Bowles, my Vassar classmate, and I was happy to be among old friends—Satish Gujral, Laxman Pai, Krishen Khanna, Shanti Dave, M. F. Husain, Ram Kumar, G. R. Santosh and Akbar Padamsee. All these were artists whose works were circulating in the United States in the *Contemporary Art of India and Iran* show. Later that afternoon we went to the USIS office for a "Voice of America" interview with Khanna, a member of the Triennale subcommittee who had recently had a show in a 57th Street gallery in New York City and so was "up" on American contemporary art.

There was another interview the following morning with William Miller, USIA CAO, and among the things accomplished was his assurance that there would be a separate catalogue printed for the American section that would include Ellen Johnson's introductory essay, which had not been printed in the handouts.

On Sunday afternoon, Parviz and I went to Iola and Sukanta Basu's apartment for tea. Iola's daughter Pria (from her first marriage) was at Vassar where I later met her and recommended her for a summer job at the Metropolitan Museum. She told me what pleasure she took in being allowed to handle the pieces she classified. I was eager to catch up on all their activities. I was also looking forward to introducing them to Parviz, especially since he was already familiar with Basu's self-portrait which he had seen in my house.

Some of Basu's more recent work was moving in a direction that was not especially appealing to him as an artist. He told me that that he had destroyed a year's work in his efforts to become an abstract painter. But there was one particular painting, called *Aqueducts*, that I thought showed he had mastered his problems and I bought it on the spot. He continued to be employed at the modern museum as a restorer, but whenever he had a holiday, he worked on his own paintings. He confided that his creative activities gave him the essential satisfaction that he didn't get from his job. When Parviz and I left their small apartment—enriched with Iola's handiwork—her ceramics, hand weavings, the choice of exotic plants—Parviz remarked, "Every artist should have a wife like his."

Jaya Appasamy,
Ethonic Figures,
oil on canvas, 1967

Jaya Appasamy was a young Indian painter whose work I had not yet seen. She had been an M.A. student at Oberlin College where she became a great friend of Ellen's. We were invited to her home for lunch. She lived and worked in Old Delhi, in a small apartment that was reached by climbing a flight of stairs to a roof, then walking along mud-covered sun-baked rooftops decorated here and there with clusters of potted plants. The door of Jaya's "penthouse" was wide open to the wind and the light, and when we entered, she welcomed us with great warmth and charm. We looked at her work, which I thought very poetic in its quiet use of earth colors and shadowy figures.

Jaya says: "My paintings portray every man. Their brooding presence is an extension of my life." I was particularly drawn to a recently finished painting of three nudes—highly abstract—which she titled *Ethonic Figures*. An earlier work, somewhat controversial, was called *Earth Mother with Child*. Lunch was served, consisting of a variety of Indian dishes

placed on a table indoors by a manservant. We filled our plates and went outside to sit on the parapet of the roof among the potted plants where shade was provided by the shining leaves of a neem tree and bird sounds were all about us. (I was sure I heard a mockingbird.) I went inside from time to time to look at Jaya's oil paintings again, and when I asked Ellen and Parviz to tell me their preferences, it turned out that we all agreed on the two I had chosen originally, and those were the ones I purchased.

One of the memorable sightseeing trips we undertook during our brief stay in New Delhi involved a two-hour early morning flight in a twin-motor plane. We were going to see ancient stone-built shrines near present-day Khajuraho. These shrines were built during the Chandela dynasty that extended over one hundred years (950–1050 A.D.). The powerful Rajputs built more than eighty-five shrines and after their reign, many fell into oblivion. Some twenty-two now remain.

Our plane came down on a dirt airstrip from which we traveled by rickety bus to the shrines in their park-like setting. I recall looking through my binoculars at some of the more inaccessible friezes of voluptuous figures—male and female, as well as animals, principally camels and elephants. Though tourists often focus on the erotic depictions of couples, these sculptures include all kinds of forms, animals as well as divine beings and human forms showing all the facts and all the emotions of life. The couples and the spiritual beings symbolize creation, altogether vibrant with life itself. As I walked along the balustraded upper deck of one particular shrine, amidst the carvings of warriors and dancing girls, I looked up. Across the barbed-wire fence there was an old white-garbed Hindu priest walking within one of the ancient Hindu shrines. He vanished as I stared at him, but I found him later, mingling with the crowd.

It was this apparition that caused me to decide to walk into the marketplace instead of staying within the confines of the ancient Khajuraho park grounds. As a result, I saw the people of a small Indian village going about their daily tasks. As soon as I went over I was attracted by a sound that I thought was a very squeaky flute. It turned out to be a water wheel under a neem tree, turned by two bullocks driven by a man walking around and around. Nearby, on a small wooden incline placed where the water ran shallow, naked children were splashing the water at each other, filled with the joy of the day, and themselves.

On the way to this scene, I had walked through groups of people sitting outside their houses. I let the children look through my binoculars. Looking myself I saw a small lake, a boat on it, people washing and bathing and a line of cow buffalo traipsing out of the lake onto the road. Suspicious looks followed me, but no one interfered with my progress. One of the saddest sights I encountered was a mother carrying a round grain basket containing an emaciated infant covered with flies. The father was there too, and when they approached a particular verandah, a man appeared with a stethoscope around his neck. He beckoned the parents to follow him into the house. There seemed to be very little life left in the child, and there was very little hope in the faces of the solicitous parents. After that, I was especially glad I had seen those healthy children frolicking about in the water!

The following day we went by car to Agra. The weather was glorious and we were in high spirits. Our attempts at serious conversation were constantly thwarted by the driver's horn-honking—the only way in which the passage of the car could be accomplished without running into children playing in the road, pedestrians, bullocks, carts, and sacred cows.

We had lunch at the newest hotel and from the windows next to our table we could see the Taj Mahal and the Agra Fort. Probably because we were the only diners, we were given the dubious benefit of a performance of the melodies of Stephen Foster by a four-member ensemble.

The places we visited that day weren't new to me as they were to my companions. Though first-time visitors, they reacted with the awe and pleasure of long familiarity with the history and reputation of the famous monuments, and seemed completely satisfied. In 1960, during my first trip to India, I had seen the abandoned city of Fatehpur Sikri, the enduring monument to the great Moghul Emperor Akbar, twenty-three miles from Agra, where the Emperor's bedroom is surrounded by water. Now, it was the glimpse of the garden through a small archway of red sandstone and the warm scent of roses that followed us as we walked along the edge of the path that most appealed to me.

When we reached the Taj Mahal, it was swarming with people. I had no recollections of any such crowds. Unfortunately the reflecting pool was being cleaned, so there was no water in it. And when I examined the Taj Mahal with my binoculars, something had gone out of it. This time I felt that it

was indeed a tomb—marvelous, yes, but in spite of the gay and colorful crowds, the shining purity of the fine white marble, the inlaid semi-precious stones, we were in the presence of death—of a mausoleum. The smooth white structure was such a contrast to the shrines we had seen the day before at Khajuraho—dull and earth-colored, absolutely alive with figures of humans and beasts carved almost a thousand years before, that I felt some of my previous admiration for the Taj Mahal subside.

New Delhi, India
February 13, 1968

Today I do a broadcast for the "Voice of America," and arrangements are also being made for a TV program based on the works in the American section. I thoroughly enjoy the presence at the show of several teen-agers, girls with messy hair and giggly manners. They come in and look at Claes Oldenburg's *Soft Toaster* and are completely mystified by it. For the benefit of a large group, Lane Slate, the curator, takes the toast out—a hard board that comes out of a soft toaster—and there is laughter, but the faces express confusion as well as amusement. Mr. Das Gupta tells me he has seen all the works and is particularly impressed by the crowds and by the distances many people travel in order to attend the show in two buildings, two miles apart. The entries were alphabetically selected for exhibition sites and U S A was adjacent to U S S R along with Yugoslavia and United Arab Republic in the National Gallery of Modern Art, while twenty-eight other invitees were in the Tali Kala Gallery along with the contemporary India exhibition.

That same day I went with Parviz to the studio of Shanti Dave, one of the artists included in the Grey Foundation *Contemporary Art of India and Iran* show that had begun to circulate in the United States. He worked in a memorable place that reminded me of Bedri Rahmi Eyuboglu's studio home in Istanbul on the Asian side of the Bosporus. Just as Bedri Rahmi's home seemed "pure" Turkish, Dave's seemed "pure" Indian to me.

To get there, we went through Buddha Jaynti Park, an extensive natural preserve whose grounds were covered with low shrubs. The road was very rocky, requiring a frequent shifting of gears, and when our driver took a wrong turn, we found ourselves in what appeared to be a camp ground occupied by tents and motorcycles. Our driver called them "thugees," a Hindustan word that had been adopted in English for the practice of murder and robbery. They looked threaten-

ing and we turned quickly back. We tried another road—which went up a hill—and there at the very top was a stone building that had once been a royal hunting lodge.

At the head of the stairs, framed by a huge doorway, stood Shanti Dave. He came down to welcome us and led us back up into one of the rooms off the central hallway. This complex structure with its thick stone walls was to have been transformed into a hotel by promoters, but when Nehru heard about this project, he arranged to have the building turned over to the Academy of Fine Arts for use by artists. As it turned out, there were very few who took advantage of the situation since the place had neither electricity nor running water.

Once inside, we had some difficulty getting accustomed to the dimness of the interior which was illuminated only by the light that came in through the front door. Shanti's pictures were neatly stacked against a wall according to their size, and soon after our arrival, he began to show them to us.

At the time of our visit, Shanti was in his late thirties. He was rather fragile-looking, with very black eyes and a nice smile. He told us that he had six children, and that he came to this abandoned place each day to work. He never slept there because his wife forbade him to do so, probably, he said, because the surrounding countryside was so dangerous. In point of fact, he told us that a woman had been murdered in the vicinity a few nights before.

He made it a practice to arrive early in the morning with some food, and he was provided with a day's supply of water and milk by a local villager. He probably pulled his easel out onto the entrance platform under the doorway and painted there in the morning light. The colors in the work that he showed us were simply gorgeous. The one I already owned, called *The Bull*, was done in black, white, and shades of gray. These works were gem-like, glowing in the gloomy interior like emeralds, sapphires, and rubies against a warm velvety background. I bought two rather small ones, called simply *Composition #1* and *Composition #2.*

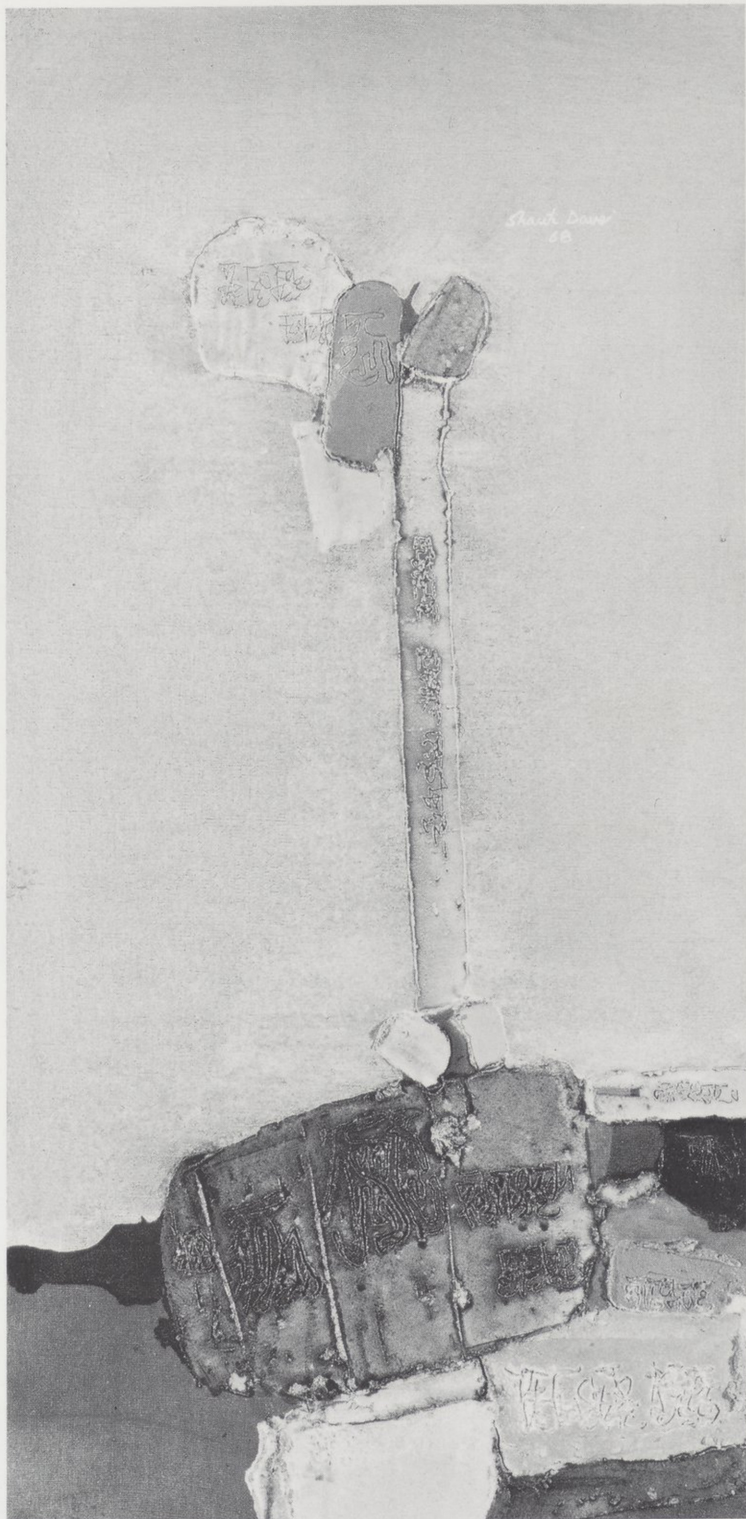
A man appeared from the shadows to make tea on a little portable burner, and while this was being done, Shanti took us up a flight of steep narrow stairs that led to the roof. From there we could see all of Delhi: our hotel, the Juma Mosque in Old Delhi, the Parliament and office buildings, and even the Ashoka Monument way off in the distance, all visible over the tops of the trees which became a sea of moving greenery while everything else was more or less flat on the distant horizon.

American section of
Indian Triennale showing
Claes Oldenburg, *Soft Toaster*

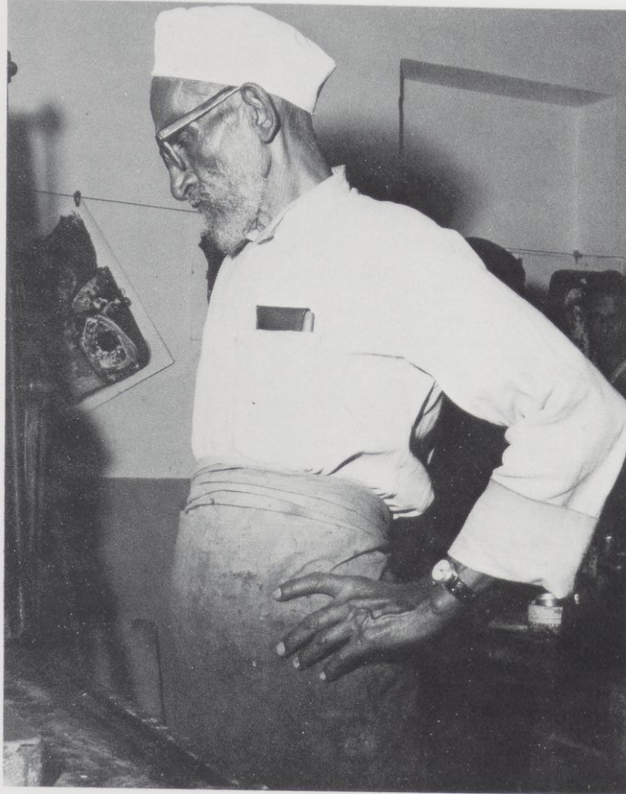
Shanti told us that while he rarely saw them, he heard peacocks and parrots, and although the site was very isolated, it was a good place to work. He was turning out paintings at a great rate and they were selling well. One of the comments he made just as we were leaving was that when he started to use color, he couldn't stop to do anything else.

Bombay, India
February 14, 1968

When we arrived at the Bombay airport from Delhi in midmorning, before our connecting flight that afternoon to Aurangabad, we were met by the USIS car, and driven to a club in the suburbs of Bombay Harbor for lunch. The ride was full of fascinating sights, and we had as a companion an energetic American of Armenian extraction named Corinne Heditsian, who had come from the American Embassy and was our guide on this stop-over. Since we intended to spend time at the Ajanta Caves the following day, I thought a parasol would be useful, and at one point in our drive, we pulled over



Shanti Dave,
Composition #1,
oil and encaustic on canvas,
1968



Printer's workshop in India

to the side of the street so that Ellen and Corinne could search a department store and buy one for me. Their shopping expedition took about twenty minutes, long enough for a crowd to gather around the car. I was unexpectedly able to conduct an informal English lesson when one of the bright-eyed school children handed me his well-worn textbook through the open window. The lesson came to an end when the shoppers returned with a parasol patterned in red and orange with a plastic orange handle.

Aurangabad, India
February 14, 1968

On this Valentine's night there was a full moon. We have arrived in Aurangabad and tomorrow we will visit the Ajanta Caves. We got to our Indian hotel in Aurangabad at twilight, and as we were having tea on the verandah, we watched several flocks of ibis fly over in the clear light of the setting sun, all rosy and rusty tones in the sky draining away as the sun slipped to the other side of the world.

I have been exploring, walking on the roof—one of my

favorite pastimes in Indian palaces and remote hotels. It is always possible to find a rear stairway, and in this way, I climb three flights of stairs and find myself in a jungle of pipes and air-conditioning equipment. I walk about on the tarred surface of the terraced roof, looking at the full moon and the bright star next to it. It is absolutely quiet except for the sound of a bird—a curlew, I think—crying off in the distance, and the occasional barking of a lone dog. The smell of wood and dung fires hangs in the air and makes my throat feel scratchy. It is so warm out here! I feel comfortable in my thin nightgown and robe. Only yesterday we were so cold in our Ashoka hotel room that I never once stepped out onto the balcony.

Ajanta and Ellora Caves
February 15–16, 1968

I haven't been feeling well because of a continuing dysentery problem, so I have been using my small tape recorder, laying it on the pillow and talking into it rather than writing in my diary. I was not in the best condition for a demanding day of sightseeing, either, so when we got to the Ajanta Caves (where I found the restrooms deplorable), I decided to hire a chair and four bearers so that I would not have to be on my feet except when I desired to examine the interior of a cave. So, there I was on a palanquin carried by four Indians. Whenever we were in bright sunshine, I opened my red and orange parasol. Since I was wearing a light blue, colorfully printed dress and a coral sweater, I was a somewhat unusual sight among other more conventional sightseers from all nations.

In addition to feeling conspicuous, I also felt precarious. I had to hang onto my purse with one hand, and with the other, I gripped a hand-hacked pole smoothed from much use. When we descended flights of steps, the bearers tilted me backwards, and when we went up, I was tilted forward. In either position, it was all I could do to maintain my own balance. Most of the time I hung on for dear life as I looked down into the great gorge.

The caves were on the side of a hill, with plateau stairs cut into the living rock. The temples were carved in the same way, and within them were often columns, with a good-sized niche at the rear center where the Buddha sat. There were no artificial lights within except for the spotlights carried by the guides for the convenience of those who wished to take photographs. When the sun was out, enough light came through the entrances to make the paintings visible.

The paintings were rather dark, done in natural pigments; the blue, for example, was achieved by grinding lapis lazuli.

Abby in open palanquin visits
Ajanta Caves, Aurangabad,
India, February 15, 1968

One lively royal lady wore a jeweled necklace with a pendant painted in white pigment encrusted with pure crystals so that the effect was luminous in the darkness. The figures were mythological—gods and their consorts and offspring, saints and attendants. While they had suffered considerable damage, it seemed miraculous that they had survived so well over the centuries. They were remarkably exciting to my imagination, conveying the sense of man's eternal desire to express his concepts of life's meaning through his art.

The drive back took us through green countryside with birds everywhere, and in one place, chattering monkeys. We stopped to take pictures of an informal procession of women going to and from a well. They were barefooted, clad in saris, and on their heads were the elegant brass jugs in which they were carrying water from the well. Once again the driver had to honk his way through the tangled traffic: bicycles, trucks, saunterers, public carriers, and several caravans of bullock-drawn carts—many piled high with cotton and sugar cane, others transporting large families.

On the following day we made the trip to Ellora, the site of more temples and carvings from the post-first-century period through the eighth and ninth centuries. The combination of caves in the area involve Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Islam. It is about eighteen miles northwest from Aurangabad,

and the drive took us through verdant country roads lined with rows of mango trees, and eventually acacias that housed families of monkeys, beautiful slender creatures with long curly prehensile tails. We reached the temple site before ten in the morning, in a wonderful light that produced a glow on the horizon and gave a softness to the landscape, effects probably caused by all the dust in the atmosphere.

We left the car in the shade of a banyan tree and made our way up a slope to what seemed an uninspiring entrance to temples hewn into the rock. Once inside, we spent over two hours marveling at the feats of carving. The giant elephants that greeted us were not created by piling rock on rock but were carved entirely out of the living cliffs. The central areas, about four stories high, contained shrines, pillars, corridors elaborately ornamented with friezes and openwork.

The sun that penetrated to the center temple created patches of sharply defined light that fell on the stones and warmed them. There seemed to be fewer urban Indian tourists here and rather more country people—women in groups who called to each other in order to make the chambers echo.

I found my way to an area where I could walk along a low stone ledge and look across to the huge elephants and the domes and spires of the central court. Here the air resounded with the screech of parrots, and as I looked up from the well-lighted place where I stood, the parrots flying against the sunlit sky became an iridescent green.

I had become conscious of a humming that was surely the sound of bees, but it wasn't until I returned to the central area and looked back at the walls I had just left that I saw two huge clusters of honey cells hanging down in a great medulla about four feet long. The bees in the sunlight were furiously at work; it appeared that the ones in the shade had not yet been awakened. What with their humming, the screeching parrots, the cooing of the doves, and the chirping of the sparrows, the place was full of life.

I eventually climbed the long stairway to the temple. When I reached the front of it, I was in the presence of yet another vista across the valley. An attendant standing nearby held a baffle covered with foil which he directed into the corner of a long interior hallway so that light reached the shrine at the end of the room. This contained not a Buddha but the lingam, the sacred phallus used in the worship of Shiva, the Hindu god of destruction and reproduction. On the ceiling above was a most elaborate and perfectly rounded petal of a blossom, with

its center representing the yoni or vulva, the symbol used in the worship of the female consort of a particular god. The attendant who flashed the light from his reflector onto the lingam also directed it at the ceiling.

Since the walls were apparently not darkened by torch smoke, it is quite likely that the builders of these hidden places of worship had an elaborate system of lighting which would have created a dramatic effect of light and shadow, since the sculptures were carved in high relief. As I reconstructed it in my own mind, I imagined that originally even the small and delicate work was covered with plaster and bright paint. Some of the reddish ocher and bits of blue still remained. The floors were all single slabs of stone; occasionally there were areas where a wavy effect was created as the glare hit portions of the rock that might have been igneous.

In one of the last temples, the male figure was carved with its genitals exposed, and they were smooth and shiny, as if they had been fingered often as a gesture to bring good luck.

Before we left, Parviz and I climbed to the topmost temple. It was different from the ones below since it had a raised roof with a skylight arrangement that allowed the light to reach the center. The sides had geometrically placed openings that served as windows on the courtyard and created a lattice.

Bombay, India
February 19, 1968

We flew back to Bombay. Because Ellen's stay was running out, our primary aim was to see the site of the only stop which the American section of the *Triennale* would make in India before returning to the United States. It was planned for only a week's showing at the Jehangir Gallery, from April 8th through the 15th. Lane Slate was to arrive here again from the United States as curator for that show. I extended the Foundation grant to cover this event since I had been disappointed in previous efforts to set up a traveling show in India. (Later, *Communication Through Art* did finally travel extensively through India.)

We met Lane Slate in the Jehangir Gallery. He was disturbed to have only two days allotted for the installation in April, but this was a necessary fact of the schedule.

The USIS had also arranged an opportunity for Ellen to deliver the introductory lecture she had written for the American section of the *Triennale*, which had been printed in New Delhi. It was excellent, a very scholarly lecture in which she gave her reasons for her choices. Regrettably, it was poorly

Jatindas,
Nude,
lithograph, 1967

attended. Mr. Hawthorne, CAO, and his wife were there, and a few Indian artists. Present also was Mrs. Gandhy, director of the Chemould Gallery, which showed contemporary Indian art. I later purchased several works from artists who exhibited there.

At this point, I must mention a young English woman,

Bettina Corke, a free-lance cinema producer. She had spent some time the previous year in India and had made a short film of four Indians in Bombay moving a grand piano. It was hilarious. This I did not see until back in the United States, but when I met her in Delhi her whole attitude in solving problems in connection with camera, film, etc., impressed me. She also turned up in Bombay along with Lane Slate and Stanley Landsman, one of the artists represented in the American selection.

Later, when I determined a film might be made in Iran about bronze casting, the University foundry, etc., as another adventure in promoting communication through art, it was Bettina with whom I got in touch. The film, *Poet/Philosopher, Revival of Bronze Casting In Iran*, premiered two years later at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts.

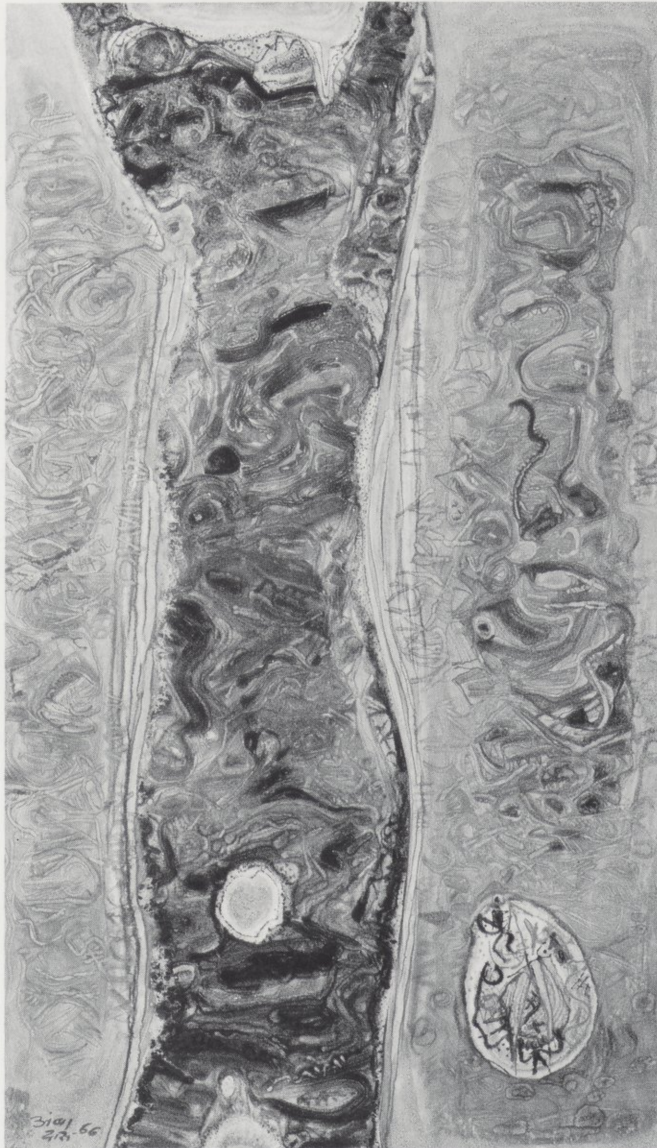
One of the artists whose work I was seeing for the first time in the Chemould Gallery was the twenty-seven-year-old Jatindas. Parviz and I spent some time at his studio and learned that he had gone to art school in Bombay, had done some teaching, and was eager to come to the United States with his wife and child for about two years. I bought a signed offset of one of his lithographs. "A first," he told me, a quality print "deal" between artist and commercial art printer in India. The litho was a large image, thirty-five by twenty-two inches, of a standing woman, nude, combing her hair.

He seemed to be supporting himself and his family by his work, especially by the sale of his portraits which were much in demand. One sitter however had refused his portrait because of Jatindas' obstinate refusal to tone down the fiery-red background.

Mrs. Gandhy introduced Ambadas to me in her gallery as he helped install a show of Indian artists. I was fascinated with his large oil: *The Mirage and The Muse*, and purchased it to be sent to me after the show. As quoted by an Indian art critic: "It is a proliferation of self-born images contained in naturally sprung structures of colour. The shapes of shells, spermatozoa, interlocked lovers, skeletal remains, etc.... build up like coral reefs." I am certain of only another quotation: "He is a mystic."

I visited Ambadas at his home, a pocket of artists in a suburb near the Arabian Sea called Sea-Face House. I learned that for four years he rambled far and wide in India seeking and absorbing experiences of his travels.

One of the last artists we saw before leaving for Teheran



Ambadas,
The Mirage and the Muse,
oil on canvas, 1966

was Jahengir Vazifdar whose *Self Portrait* was circulating in the show back home. It may be recalled that this painting had been given to me by this unusual man who was a rich and successful Parsee architect and builder. His recent work consisted of assemblages of canvas, paint, and found objects of all descriptions. He appeared to create under a powerful inspiration that would be difficult to verbalize. It seemed to be connected with his involvement in Zoroastrianism. When we saw him, he had

just returned from a weekend pilgrimage to a Zoroastrian House of Silence where a flame burns continuously, and the dead are exposed to the birds and the elements.

He was more subdued than he had been at the time of our first meeting when he had come to the hotel to fetch me and Jane Gregory in his luxurious car. Yet his worldly pursuits continued. He was building a cooperative apartment house on Malabar and had reserved for himself the penthouse which was to have a swimming pool on the terrace. He was a man of intriguing contradictions.

Teheran, Iran
February 21-28, 1968

By the time we left India for Iran, we were really loaded down. I was carrying two flight bags, a mesh sack, and of course we had a huge roll of canvases. The plane was a crowded BOAC, but Parviz and I had a comfortable trip during which we had some good talks. He said, once again, "I don't believe in belonging to just one country. I want to keep my roots in Iran, but I want to belong to the world." It seems ironic now in 1982, since he is a virtual hostage in his own country, his hands tied in his studio for lack of material for his sculpture work and his exit visa no longer in his possession.

No sooner did we arrive in Teheran and make our way through inspections than we discovered that Parviz's cholera shot was too outdated to permit his re-entry. He therefore had to be detained overnight. It was really quite a shock to find out that he was going to be incarcerated, although the group of friends who had come to meet him seemed to find his predicament very entertaining. I was picked up by his brother and sister-in-law who dropped me off at the Teheran Palace Hotel. Some time before I fell asleep, exhausted with my illness and the tedious trip, Parviz called from his place of detention to assure me that everything was all right. When he was released from quarantine at noon the following day, he told me that although he had been locked in, he was very well-treated: he was given whatever foods he asked for, and a television that worked.

My double-windowed corner room at the hotel provides two vistas—one to the south, the other to the west. Lying in bed, I can see a pale blue sky with clouds. Children are pouring into the school across the street. A vendor in an old khaki uniform is selling penny sweets on the curb. Yesterday the weather was pleasant—more like Minnesota!—and I saun-

tered for about an hour-and-a-half. My eventual destination was the Queen's Park so that I could look at Parviz's sculpture again. On the way, I enjoyed the elegant shop windows; the most gorgeous were the flower shops. I passed about half-a-dozen crammed with dark cyclamen, carnations, forsythia, mimosa, and on the streets, flower sellers offering pots of tulips, flowering cherry, hyacinths, tiny narcissus—in full array and very tantalizing.

When I got to the park, the sculptured figures seemed dwarfed by the mammoth apartment buildings that had begun to rise up all around the area.

I haven't been able to write often in my diary this trip. After the siege of illness in India, I have to conserve my energy, still using my tape recorder.

When I walk through the crush of pedestrian traffic on these busy streets it is rather an ordeal because I am constantly stared at. I knew that comments are being made about me by the local men, and by the women too. I suppose I attract attention because I wear a Borsalino hat, am obviously Western, and walk by myself. I look straight ahead at all times. When I returned to my room one evening, my resentment was transmuted into poetry.

Evening streets of Teheran
   explode with traffic.

The carpet on the terrazzo floor
   of the hotel bedroom
   erupts stars, sunbursts, fountains.

Men stare rudely at the Westerner
   because she wears a Borsalino hat.

No chador covering, look straight ahead!

In side glances see a million ladies' shoes
   in lighted stores.

They are a sex symbol.

Trot trot on high heels, mesdames.

Let your black draperies pinch your shoulders,
   your breasts, your fine brows.

There is nothing like a carpet
studded with flowers
with a border of arabesques
with a background of passionate red
for unbinding feet. How beautiful on the mountains.

In that unspoiled place neither of us could have possibly foreseen the nightmare of the situation eleven years later. Recently I received a letter from Parviz dated Teheran—March 15, 1979:

When I wrote you a few weeks ago, just after the revolution, I was quite concerned about my family [his wife and three children] . . . In our area, as in all the other areas, we stayed up all night with guns, watching our homes and families. You wouldn't have recognized me with a gun on my shoulder, unshaven and dirty . . . How am I going to make it again? Everything looks so difficult and impossible. And yet I'll do my best . . . Where else could I gather all this junk around myself? It'll take years before a sculpture studio gets settled . . . then my love for these mountains, deserts and tribes . . . .

Teheran, Iran
February 29, 1968

Nothing has done me so much good as the trip one evening up city streets into the tree-lined lanes of the Shemiran area where "the beautiful people" live behind high walls. I was on my way to visit Monir and Abul Farmanfarmaian's home. Their garden sings—even now at its plainest. Empty clay jugs hang from one portion of the wall; in a landscaped setting of trees and shrubs, Parviz's large ceramic horse shines, green-glazed. He looks down his nose into a pool that extends to the terrace in front of the house where guests sit on summer evenings in a garden lit with torches and golden lanterns.

Monir is special, unique. Her home is sumptuous, with marvelous rugs, gold velvet cushions, flowers—geranium heads, sweet williams, carnations jammed into jars and absolutely stunning. Monir paints on glass, has collected coffee-house art (large canvas or wall paintings commissioned by restaurants from itinerant folk artists—usually religious in sub-

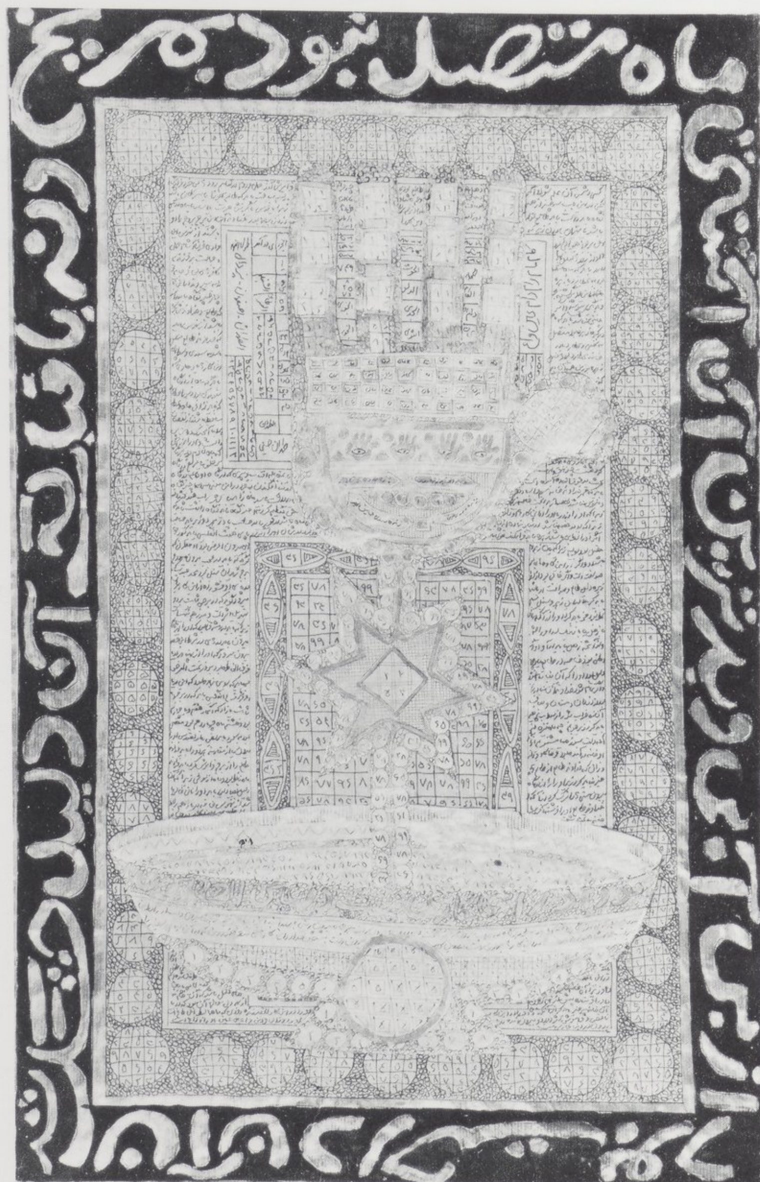
ject), printed a catalogue of her collection, exhibited her own work, and gets up at dawn three times a week to go mountain-climbing. We have a superb Persian lunch, but Abul refuses the pomegranate jelly dessert in favor of a creamy rice pudding dribbled with amber syrup made from the white grapes of Kazvin.

The day ends with a late call from Parviz. He is phoning from his club (I hear the background noises of cutlery and boisterous laughter) to tell me that he received a letter from the Museum of Modern Art in New York telling him that his bronze *Prophet* has been accepted by the acquisitions committee for their study collection.

Good news!

A part of my last day in Teheran was spent in conference with Parviz and Karim Emami, an excellent writer and the editor of the *Kayhan International Daily*. He had spent some time in Minnesota, and he now proposed a book about contemporary Iranian art which he would hope to get written in the next two years. It would be heavily illustrated in color and would concentrate on the Saqqakhaneh School (translation: *Water* meaning on one level a public water dispenser, on another, a religious institution symbolizing lifegiving water in a dry land) of the '60's, consisting chiefly of Parviz, Ghandriz, and Zenderoudi. It would discuss in detail the antecedents and experiences of each: Parviz in Italy and the United States; Ghandriz, Iran only; and Zenderoudi in Paris. Religious and folk roots would be explored and an attempt would be made to explain the burst of energy that catapulted these painters into the contemporary world. Other artists were considered for inclusion: Pilaram, Oveysi, Sadr, Armajani. (Siah Armajani, now a U.S. citizen, had never exhibited in Iran, but it was agreed that his work was powerful and creative.) When the Teheran Museum of Contemporary Art opened in the fall of 1977, one section contained paintings from the Saqqakhaneh School. The catalogue that accompanied it was a handsome piece, containing colored illustrations, and photos of the artists with an enlightened essay on the roots of Saqqakhaneh. Karim Emami wrote the introduction crediting Parviz and Zenderoudi with being instrumental in launching the movement.

In November, 1978, in the short-lived House of Iran on 49th Street, New York City, an exhibition titled *A Special Event* opened. It was a loan of forty-nine contemporary Iranian works from the Grey collection, Grey Art Gallery and Study Center, New York University. A few of the Saqqakhaneh



Hossein Zenderoudi,
The Hand,
collage with ink, watercolor,
and gold and silver paint
on paper

catalogues had been received from Teheran. It was the first time I saw them.

This event was truly the end of an era. At the time of the opening, police cars were already in the street in front of the building. The show itself closed almost as soon as it opened. The Iranian revolution was on its way.

209 *Isfahan, Iran*
March 2–3, 1968

It is Saturday and I am in Isfahan, in the end bedroom at Bishop's House where I have been so many times before. The kerosene stove that makes the temperature bearable gives off foul-smelling fumes. However . . . a bud vase contains yellow narcissus from the front border of the garden where only a few are in bloom. During the drive down, I saw only two fragile pink-blossomed fruit trees; the rest of the countryside was still wintry. There was a lively moment when we came upon a hunter at the side of the road offering two hare and two grouse for sale. Avo, the driver, bought the hare for himself and stuffed them somewhere between the brake pedal and the dashboard. He took them with him when he reached Isfahan. During a conversation, Hassan talked about "teamwork" which he feels "is learned principally in athletics." He says the prototype of the Persian character is Hajji Baba of Isfahan.

I want to remember Isfahan of a March evening; the lovely walk onto the Chahar Bagh, all the people sauntering, and the enticing little shops, the man playing the sitar sitting on the dirt walk, leaning against the wall; the beautiful walls with the fantastic shadows etched by street lights. Then I come to the *moodi* and in the dark waters between its walled-in banks are the *chinars* (oriental elms) and the plane trees. I am lifted by the play of lights from a single doorway. I know the world is abundantly, secretly beautiful.

Hassan takes me to see the new Carr School the church is building outside of Isfahan on which he has settled so many of his hopes and ambitions for a contribution to education in Iran. We drive along the Chahar Bagh, out of town over an unpaved road full of holes, our car in the midst of two-wheeled carts that trundle along with their loads of night soil, surrounded by numerous flocks of goats and sheep. The skeletons of the school buildings rise before us. Very impressive: classrooms for one hundred fifty pupils, dormitories for thirty boys; cement and steel framework two stories high, two large earth-colored skeletons facing each other, with numerous other buildings marked on the blueprints. Men are working in the most primitive way, throwing bricks from a pile on the ground to the second story; wheelbarrows are homemade; cement is mixed on packed earth. Hassan says that tuition will be very expensive for all but Christians.

Ten years later, in 1978, a young Iranian, Farzan Navab, was attending the Minneapolis College of Art and Design. He wanted to make a film of a small American town from the

Street bazaar, Isfahan

viewpoint of a foreign student. He wrote such a carefully prepared proposal that, when it reached me, I gave him the go-ahead. A Mississippi River town was chosen, Diamond Bluff, forty miles south of the Twin Cities. When finished, the film was shown at the college to his professors, classmates and an interested neighborhood. His audience liked it very much. I felt proud of him. Curiously it was then that I discovered he had attended the Carr School in Isfahan when he was a boy, and I was proud of that too.

During that weekend, Margaret and I combed the bazaars for little things. It was great fun, for the shops were endlessly exciting with the bustle of the boys and the shopkeepers and workers, the noise and smells, the contrasts of dark and light, the aura of mystery. I came away with five very small hand-carved flagons of jade-like nephrite. They had a marvelous feeling in the hand, and I intended to wear them one at a time on a chain around my neck to suit my mood, each one a talisman from Isfahan.

One weekend evening, I continued the tradition of taking the whole family to the Shah Abbas Hotel for dinner—an

enjoyable meal in a fantastically opulent setting. After dinner Margaret drove us on the Shiraz road until it ascended to a plateau from which we looked back at the lights of Isfahan, amber to rosy and blue-white lights twinkling as if they were hung in trees, strung across bridges, as if Isfahan were a walled city surrounded by black unelectrified night.

Before returning to Teheran for my flight back to the States, I went with the whole family to the Abby Garden. The road was still impossible, but inside the property itself there had been many improvements. We all played croquet on the packed clay court in the orchard. Shirin borrowed an iron spike from the gatekeeper in order to drive holes for the wickets. It was a great way to shout and laugh away the sunny afternoon. Bahram won and leaped high in the air with his mallet over his head. He did like to win! I saw one tree with sparse white blossoms. Hassan said it was an almond.

On the following day after he and Margaret drove me to my plane for Teheran, his parting words were, "God bless you. You are still a miracle in my life."

Teheran, Iran
to New York, N.Y.
March 6, 1968

Aboard the Pan Am plane that will bring me to Kennedy Airport early this evening. I feel a sadness about leaving Parviz, the Dehqani-Taftis, and friends in this part of the world; of arriving back in Minnesota even though it will be spring soon there, too. I suppose it is because I always hate to say good-bye.

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NETHERLANDS
Amsterdam
The Hague
Rotterdam
Utrecht
Hamburg
Bremen
Hannover
DEM. REP.
Berlin
FED. REP.
GERMANY
Magdeburg
Essen
Dortmund
Düsseldorf
Cologne
Bonn
Kassel
Halle
Leipzig
Dresden
Gorlitz
Karl Marx Stadt (Chemnitz)
Antwerp
Ghent
Brussels
BELGIUM
Lille
Liège
LUX.
Frankfurt
Prague
POLAND
Poznan
Bydgoszcz
Warsaw
Lodz
Radom
Lublin
Wroclaw
Czestochowa
Bytom
Katowice
Gliwice
Krakow
Ostrava
Lvov
CZECHOSLOVAKIA
Plzen
Brno
Regensburg
Nürnberg
Mannheim
Stuttgart
Karlsruhe
Augsburg
Munich
Salzburg
Linz
Vienna
Bratislava
Miskolc
Chernovtsy
Kishinev
Odessa
Kerch
Le Havre
Rouen
Amiens
Reims
Paris
Brest
Rennes
Le Mans
Orleans
Angers
Nantes
Nancy
Strasbourg
Dijon
Basel
Zürich
Innsbruck
Bern
SWITZERLAND
Lausanne
Geneva
FRANCE
Limoges
Lyon
St. Etienne
Grenoble
Bordeaux
Toulouse
Marseille
Nice
Perpignan
Toulon
AUSTRIA
Graz
Györ
Budapest
HUNGARY
Debrecen
Oradea
Cluj
Iasi
Galati
Simferopol
Sevastopol
Novorossisk
Szeged
Arad
Pécs
ROMANIA
Stalin
Ploesti
Timisoara
Subotica
Novi Sad
Bucharest
Constanta
Craiova
Ruse
Varna
Belgrade
BLACK SEA
Bolzano
Bergamo
Verona
Milan
Brescia
Turin
Genoa
Padua
Venice
Trieste
Ljubljana
Zagreb
Rijeka
YUGOSLAVIA
Modena
Ferrara
Bologna
Florence
Leghorn
Perugia
ADRIATIC SEA
Split
Sarajevo
Nis
Vidin
BULGARIA
Sofia
Plovdiv
Stara Zagora
Burgas
Edirne
Istanbul
Skopje
Kavalla
Salonika
ALBANIA
Tirane
Pescara
Foggia
Bari
Brindisi
ITALY
Rome
CORSICA
Bastia
Ajaccio
San Sebastian
Santander
Oviedo
Gijón
Bilbao
León
Burgos
Valladolid
Zaragoza
Lérida
Barcelona
TURKEY

What qualities would be most apt to issue in a poetical extension?

1) *persistence in seeking, in thrusting, and humbly seizing on small opportunities*
2) *good humor in acknowledging failures—and successes*
3) *following the pleasure path of interests and somehow remaking same*

DIARY VIII

Assembling a Turkish Exhibition 1969

ITALY
TURKEY
IRAN
NETHERLANDS
ENGLAND

I want a style that is quality and capable of enlargements. I want to be capable, to accomplish goals. So I have my own techniques of encouragements, checks and balances, discoveries. Wait for sunshine!

Daybook
April 9, 1949

When I left on my next trip in 1969, the following shows that I had initiated and organized were being seen in various parts of the United States:

Twenty Prints From the Grey Collection was being circulated throughout Minnesota under the auspices of the Minnesota State Arts Council.

Contemporary Japanese Woodblock Prints was making the rounds in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and elsewhere under the auspices of the Western Association of Art Museums.

Turkish Art Today had already been on tour for three years under the auspices of the Western Association of Art Museums and was now making its way through museums in California, Washington, and South Dakota.

Contemporary Art of India and Iran, sponsored by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service, was being viewed during this particular year in such far-flung places as Lincoln, Nebraska, and Macon, Georgia.

In addition, *Communication Through Art* was traveling in India. Having begun in that country the year before, it was now proceeding from Calcutta to Bombay, with eleven stops in between.

Almost a decade had passed since that first trip when I had begun my art adventures and my quest for the new. During those years, I had been preoccupied with the mission I had undertaken—to introduce in my own country the work of contemporary artists from the Near and Middle East, India and Japan, and then to reverse this communication by bringing some of our contemporary art to countries where it was rarely seen in its original form.

And all this time, I had never felt a strong pull in the direction of the great works of the Renaissance. But this time I had good reason for a different kind of adventure. My traveling companion was to be Ruth Coleman Dundas, my friend of Riga days who had accompanied Peg Cogswell and myself to the openings of *Communication Through Art* in 1965. Contemporary art did not turn her on. We consolidated our interests and decided on a week's tour of northern Italy, going first to Venice, then to Rome and thence directly to Istanbul.

Aboard a TWA jet to Venice, Italy November 10, 1969

Suddenly the night withdraws; likewise the stars and the inner eyes of my apprehensions. We are over land, sun out, blowing tails of clouds. In my purse, two letters: one from Hassan, the other from Parviz. I shall be going to Iran, of course; but this time my concentration is in Turkey. I go to collect important oil works by Turkish artists working today, collaborating with the director of a university art gallery. So how do I see this trip? To educate me? This is not an easy thing to do, for I have so much of the world inside me through so much living, and digesting, and surviving. Man is God's *lila* (His plaything). Perhaps my only way is simply to allow what is to happen, to happen, "and now let us all sit down in the cloud meadows, to greet the sun."

Venice, Italy November 11–12, 1969

When I wake from seven hours of sleep, I am in an exquisite room four stories high above a canal. The wood of the furniture and parquet floor is a burled, honey color. When I step out onto the balcony in the predawn, I see through the corridor of the waterway, between windowed walls, the mist-hung Grand Canal. Lights came on last evening like flowers suddenly blooming along the quay, candelabra held in tendrils of iron.

Venice, Italy November 12, 1969

As soon as the day is struck on the great bell resounding through St. Mark's Square, I wake to the fortieth nuptial anni-

versary of Ben Grey and Abby Weed, the latter still waiting and waiting to join her husband, still struggling, still longing for reunion, remembering the enclosed life in its loving tender embrace.

Today in St. Mark's I spy a very old, rust-covered, four-sided, six-inch spike, very sharp. Its bent head is lying eye-height on a ledge of brick that circles the base of the dome above the great nave. I take it away to place alongside another four-sided iron nail covered with desert sand that I spied on a pillar ledge in the Juma Mosque in Isfahan and carried away with me. Two hand-fashioned iron nails, one from the far-off mosque, the other from a cathedral drowning in the tides; one death by desert fire, the other, doom by sea; both nails weathered, saved, fetched into the twentieth century to be recovered by a single eye and hand for their mysterious epithalamion—the association in my mind of the East and the West.

Ravenna, Italy
November 13, 1969

By private car all day, cold, almost raining. A stop at Padua to see the chapel sanctified by Giotto—an absolutely enrapturing experience. Behind the chapel, a park with green cypresses and magnolias where a sweeper of the gravel paths makes heaps of dry flower cones. Drooping protectively over the high narrow chapel roof, a clump of glorious gold leaf beech. Here stands an American woman from a faraway world who puts her prayerful hands over the unlit altar, who hardly knows how to say her thanks.

Then Ravenna. The mosaics in Ravenna! Mausoleums, churches, baptistries, chapels, basilicas. In earth shades like the clay of the Po valley, mosaics in pale pinks, blues, greens like midnight skies far out over the silent swamps; then gold, gold that truly glitters, fantastic eye-charmers even in unlighted interiors, turned just so, capable of flashing a direct embroilment. It is dusk by the time we visit St. Apollinare Nuovo, so we return the following day in the morning sunshine because the procession of virgins and young martyrs is so angelic. Each figure is a unique witness. I will select my guardian angel from among the six that guard the Lord!

At night we walk to Dante's tomb from our hotel and are aware of the strangeness of the enclosure, where dark cypress stand sentinel over a rough mound covered with ivy, and where the compound with its iron picket fence tries to hold off the boys on their motorcycles, the din of night, and the electric lights of Dante's updated city.

Florence, Italy
November 15-16, 1969

Two visits: the Uffizi, and I Tatti, two repositories after life's liveliness. The Medicis gave to Tuscany the contents of a museum, and Bernard Berenson gave his villa and estate to Harvard. What is the story of each? In one canvases, paint, marvelous gilt frames; in the other weathered bronze, marble, granite with fingers of rain and dust of centuries eroding all the treasures. Then that heroic ferocious boar rising on powerful haunches that I stared at as I rested in the Uffizi. Not madonnas and gold nimbi, but that horrendous boar! The bequests were to the future, the once passionately caressed treasures poured out gratuitously for an unknown public to gaze at. What does someone like me, brought up near the headwaters of the Mississippi River, receive? Or what should I or can I? Or will I ever know the enrichment?

I Tatti is a hillside villa with a cascading view flowing from the living room window down the lines of cypress to a marble statue, a figure more ancient than the cypress, more pitted, crumbling, yet still resisting rain and sun. Inside, a Sassetta, a brown-garbed St. Francis enclosed by an oval aura of flame, not a bird on his shoulder nor on his finger. A pilgrim's staff, an utterly beseeching gaze, a vulnerability blessed by a valiant spirit.

Two American women under open umbrellas saunter down the garden paths. One goes to the very end where a linnet sings a half-song. It is a lugubrious scene. Purple bergamot is still in bloom.

Ruth and I leave Florence by bus early in the morning, the only passengers on this cold damp day, and we make a brief unscheduled stop at Arezzo to see the Piero della Francesca frescoes in the Church of San Francesco. Far off, in front of the dark interior, a service is in progress; along the side aisles, candles are burning before statues of saints. It is such a dark day that only patches are illuminated.

In the apse off the nave, a monk is selling postcards and the book *Piero della Francesca* by Ensio Carli. Speaking of the wall paintings ". . . Our eyes are captivated by the luminosity of the colour which subdues all the faculties of the senses with a peremptoriness that can only be compared with the effect produced by the sudden apparition of a natural phenomenon (as when we emerge from damp shadows into a garden bathed in sunlight and filled with a luxurious abundance of flowers) . . ."

Behind the high altar, light from the windows is sufficient to start in me the surprise of recognition of the Queen of

Sheba. Years ago I had been enraptured by her in the pages of an art history book. Here she was—real; here was the source of my captivation! One hundred lire dropped into a slot in a switchbox turns on the light for a few minutes and the wealth of this experience floods in on me. It is surprise that recalls an experience and makes the fact a miracle. Or is it a miracle when the long-awaited recognition takes place?

We lunch in Perugia and drive on to Assisi. In the crypt of St. Francis Church, the saint's tomb is hidden away in a grotto carved out of living rock. The candles that burn before it shed light on the monk who sits nearby behind a small desk with a place for offerings. He is on guard alone and appears not to notice the little group of pilgrims. He continues to play solitaire with well-used cards, slapping them down on the table in quick movements. Pilgrims' prayers, devout looks, reverent sighs and longings, and outstretched hands find crannies for their prayers in the grotto in back of the enclosed tomb.

From the sixth story of the Hotel Excelsior, I step from the elevator to the outdoors, and standing on the deserted rooftop where the wind blows, I can see all of Florence. Directly below, the mud-colored Arno rushes down full-throated this day after rain, and falls in a great sheet over a causeway. Undeterred by bridges spanning, the wayward river is capable of exposing stretches of bottom land embedded with rubbish as it was the day before yesterday. Today it is many feet higher, filling its banks; in 1967 raging and overflowing to the destruction of large areas of the city and its inheritance of great art and archives. Do I look on the Arno reformed now? It appears smooth, domesticated, and calm enough this night to reflect the strings of streetlamps and the domes of illumined churches against the twilit sky.

In the opposite direction, a vista of red-tiled roofs, curved domes, bell towers, occasional pine trees; hills, too, and villas, castles and the town of Fiesole, and on the wooded hills, a single smoke plume from what vineyard cuttings?

In the morning, Michelangelo's David. I did not expect such a powerful communiqué from the marble figure. "Come into my spirit," it enjoins me. "I am bold, humble, ready to undertake, to undergo, to be victorious."

When I leave the building, the pavement is wet. Looking ahead to the end of the street, I see a rainbow stretched between buildings.

In the afternoon we go to the Boboli Gardens, climbing all the way to the top of the hill on the fine gravel path between

lawns and clipped yew hedges. When we reach the marble goddess who holds her handful of arrows and shouts her victory, we look back at the Pitti Palace far below, beyond the amphitheater, the oval of green, the fountains playing in pools.

The meals at the Excelsior are delicious. Tonight for dinner, sweetbreads in truffle and wine sauce. I think how truffles are found hidden in the ground under fallen leaves. And so I dream of the woods around Deer Lake in the fall, and the leaves wet after rain and the mushrooms sprouting. There is a little house at the foot of the hill surrounded by trees—my palace! I walk behind it up a little hill and discover a stream of clearest water in flood, and I call to my companion, "Come and see this marvel!" What a deep and tender yearning I feel for that remote, that private garden where so much living has been watched over, saved, deposited for all my dream-time meetings!

Istanbul, Turkey
November 20, 1969

We reached Istanbul on November 20, where we were joined by Michael Milkovich, the director of the University Art Gallery at the State University of New York in Binghamton. We were planning to work together in the selection of new Turkish art for a traveling loan exhibition as part of the Binghamton program called SWANA (South West Asian-North African) studies. Earlier that year, I had sent sixteen Grey Foundation prints to Mike for his SWANA project, having been introduced through our contacts with the Smithsonian's Traveling Exhibition program.

Ruth's and my accommodation was a three-room suite with a seven-sided glassed-in aerie that hung between the many-storied houses and the Bosporus with its ferries constantly going back and forth between Europe and Asia. In the evening, there were a million lighted windows, and when I woke up in the middle of the night, I was enchanted with the lights beyond the dark waters, lights that twinkled and curved around like a crown set with amethysts, topaz, diamonds, and emeralds. In the predawn, a bright star appeared close to the horizon.

On the following morning, there was the blast of a siren from the direction of the St. Sophia mosque beyond the Golden Horn. It assaulted my ears every second—every second!—and I couldn't help wishing for the background din of morning traffic to minimize that ear-shattering sound. (It went on all day, and I eventually found out that it was the foghorn at Leander's Tower!)

Sadan Bezeyis,
The Rising of a Rose,
oil on canvas, 1968

In the afternoon we went to the Technical University of Istanbul, met Sadan Bezeyis who was appointed a teaching fellow in the architectural department. He had recently had a one-man show. Since I was now seeing his works for the first time, he was not one of the artists included in the graphic show

Turkish Art Today that had been circulating in the States since 1966. But I was attracted by what he was doing and was especially impressed by some excellent canvases done with acrylics displaying his sense of architectural order in his composition. I purchased an oil, later exhibited in the Binghamton SWANA show. Eventually this admirable work, *The Rising of a Rose*, became part of the Grey collection.

We had had a somewhat discouraging meeting at the USIS office with Kenneth Keith, the CAO, and his Turkish assistant, during which we were informed that local artists were hesitating to cooperate in this project. Somehow the efforts of the USIS to have the works assembled in one place for us to see had only succeeded in antagonizing the artists. It was therefore suggested that it would probably be more productive if we went off on our own to visit studios and local galleries. Our time was extremely limited, and Mike was furious at everyone, even me, claiming that nobody was behaving professionally. When Keith left the room, his assistant tried to put the best light on the initial response of the artists.

I returned to the hotel for a brief rest before a conference scheduled for that afternoon with a group of the artists. No sooner had I settled down than I heard the tom-tom of a crude drum, and when I looked down from our crow's nest balcony, I saw a gypsy on the sidewalk. He and his bear were sitting on a flight of steps as small boys cavorted around the animal—which from six stories above looked like a well-used worn teddy bear. As I watched, the entire troop came under my balcony, and to the rattling of a tambourine, the bear began to perform on its hind legs. What gaiety!

Before going back indoors, I enjoyed the vista before me: beyond the tower of Rumelhisor across the Bosporus, I could see far-off the Anatolian hills—the sheep, the rocks and ruins, the castles, and beyond these, the curves of the low mountains against a blue, blue sky.

The conference was held at the Modern Art Museum in the north end of Domavachi Palace, and even with a sympathetic translation of our reasons for coming, our credibility, etc., it was obvious that there were tense factions among the artists. Mike and I could only guess at the differences in their attitudes, but the serious and conscientious answers that he and I gave to the barrage of questions that we had to undergo as art emissaries, began to melt the ice.

We were then invited to see the museum's collection, and

the meeting was brought to an abrupt end with the understanding that works would be assembled for a viewing by us on the following Monday. Mike and I then dashed through the rooms of contemporary Turkish art, and I was amazed at the number of significant works that had been hung since my visit four years before. We didn't get to see all the galleries because it was soon too dark to see anything without artificial light, and there didn't seem to be much, only one bulb hung from the ceiling in the meeting room.

Istanbul, Turkey
November 22, 1969

I walk down to the Bosporus from the hotel, down many crumbling stone steps, through narrow streets paved with hand-hewn blocks of stone. On this sunny morning, I pass a shop the width of the open door and glimpse wooden cages of drooping finches. Above the door, jutting over the sidewalk, is a narrow ledge with a wrought-iron balustrade. Here on a cushion sits a little girl kerchiefed in black, turning her head from side to side to look at me, like a little bird, caged. A man blows a whistle and calls "Baa-loon!" as he shakes a ten-foot pole festooned with balloons, red, blue, yellow. A mother sends her little daughter up the hill to buy one, but the coin she has given her is not enough. The hawker shouts this information down to the mother and sends the child back empty handed. In the schoolyard where chrysanthemums are still in bloom, kindergartners—boys and girls in shiny black pinafores—hold hands in a circle and then let go as they try to touch their toes. On the sidewalk in front of one of the wooden flats (as the close-packed houses are called) the bear's gypsy master has stashed his staff, tambourine, and drum. Walking along the Bosporus shore, I notice a beautiful striped rubber ball in a pile of rubbish (chicken feet and orange peel). I retrieve it and roll it to a boy and his sister. Grandfather on a bench acknowledges me with a nod and a smile.

Bedri Rahmi Eyuboglu was now the dean of the Academy of Fine Arts. He still had his fierce eyes, but he was walking more slowly and with a cane. The yard and house were as weird as ever with their scarecrow airs and macabre objects. In the big room, a plastic doll had drowned at the bottom of a vase full of water. A life-size toy dog kept guard over a collection of dolls heaped on a corner of a sofa. Beautiful old embroideries were scattered about, and there were some colorful wall hangings from Rumania that I hadn't seen before.

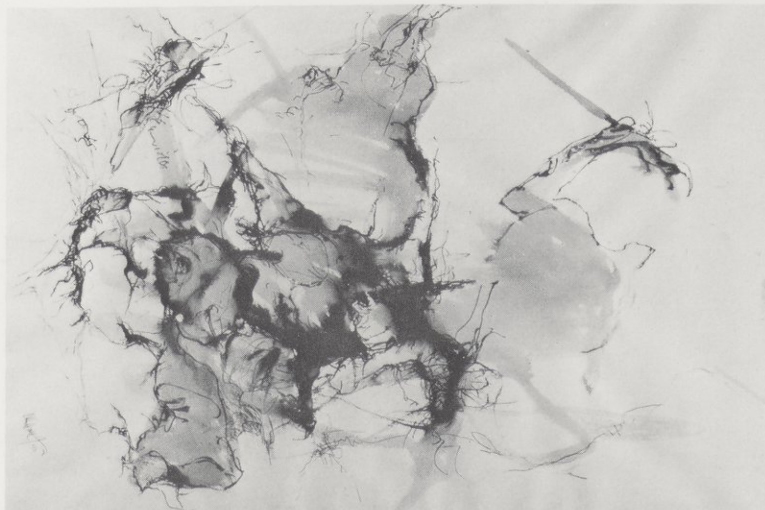
As for the Virago—as someone had called Eren Eyuboglu—her work had become even more slapdash, half-painted; grotesque heads with the staring eyes of Biafran children were frightening. I was reminded of Devayana Krishna in New Delhi at the time of the Kashmir-India dispute, and how she too had worked out her horror and despondency in violent images.

Eren called to Bedri to prepare tea for us. She kept repeating "I have many, many pictures" as Mike began to examine her work in his courteous and witty way. I knew that he was desperate to come away with at least two pieces, for by now both Eren and Bedri were internationally known artists, both having spent a year in America on a Ford Foundation grant at the University of California at Berkeley.

They were definitely more prosperous, partly because of Bedri's sales in America and his recent promotion, and also no doubt because of the return from the United States of their son who was a businessman, a representative for an international pharmaceutical company. His Canadian wife seemed fascinated by our feet, and after a while, she said, "I envy only your shoes. The leather here is so stiff and hard."

One Sunday, I met Mike for tea at the apartment of Ozer Kabas, whom we had finally contacted by phone. Because of his five years at the Yale Art School, his English was excellent, and so was his wife's. They lived four flights up in a flat in the Bebec area, and their apartment, which also had a large roof terrace, was full of rugs, books, treasures, art such as an artist might collect. Cemil Eren from Ankara was there when we arrived; other friends came later. They were beautiful women and attractive men, artists keeping sane and sweet like "sweet water" (not saline) in a dry and sometimes hostile art world. Ozer had made a sketch for me which was displayed on an easel: a death's head on a seated figure with a scarf wrapped around his neck, an artist holding up a palette, and saying, in a comic's balloon from his mouth, the words: "Merhaba, Mrs. Grey, we are just 'fine'." The message was clear: they weren't.

The moon came up from the terrace and we could see it big and full over the hills of Anatolia beyond the Bosporus. From there we taxied to Mehmet Guleryuz's dwelling. Although the surname means "smiling face," Mehmet did a lot of scowling, being one of the obstinate ones where art was concerned. We were greeted by his American Peace Corps wife and their three-week-old son, and by his art—strong, rebellious, brutal, and occasionally bordering on the obscene.



Mehmet Guleryuz,
Composition,
ink and wash on paper, 1965

Later he took us to his studio in an old waterfront building, a place, he said, "that does not fall down but only leans a little." The footworn stairs were so dimly lit, so steep, so winding, they were breath-snatchers!

When we reached his studio, we found that there was a little balcony on which we could stand in the moonlight. As we listened to the Bosporus lap the foundation stones, a ferry came by just offshore with all its lights on.

At the outset, Mehmet seemed firm in his refusal to bring anything to the Academy for the viewing because of his stubborn pride, we thought, or some jealousy among the artists, but Mike's patience and understanding eventually brought him around.

The morning arrived when all the artists we had contacted were to deposit their works in the basement of the museum. From these, Mike and I made our final selections for the exhibition to be known as *Contemporary Turkish Painting 1970–1971* as part of the Binghamton SWANA project. Of these, eleven became a permanent part of the Grey Foundation collection.

We had to deal with bruised feelings, bureaucratic forms, instructions to the USIS, and the correction of last-minute mistakes. We said our warm and hasty farewells, and as we were being driven at breakneck speed to the airport for our plane to Ankara, in the soft twilight under the old walls of Istanbul, I was scribbling last-minute directives, hoping to bring some order to our efforts. Out of the corner of my eye, I

Muammer Bakir,
Seascape,
woodcut

glimpsed fishing boats anchored near shore and a wharf covered with drying wine-red nets.

Ankara, Turkey
November 24-28, 1969

Moments With Turkish Artists

Nerzat Akoral We enter the living room of an apartment where an elderly man sits on a sofa reading a newspaper. While I look at the prints the artist has laid out on a table, a young woman enters quietly and goes swiftly to the man who has risen from the sofa. She bows low over his hand as she kisses it and presses it in a quick respectful gesture to her forehead. Akoral's black and white woodcuts are stunning depictions of peasant life—one, of workers crouched around a small fire in desolate country, had received a medal in the last Sao Paulo Biennale.

Muammer Bakir urges us to look at the half-dozen paintings in his office at the Gazi Teachers Training Institute. Two of his friends are present in addition to our party of four. Mike chooses two canvases, but I am drawn to a different one, *The Old Olive Tree*—a burst of imaginative bravura. I am told that it

Orhan Cetinkaya,
Ego,
oil on canvas, 1966

was done "in play." Mike and Ruth will not relinquish their choices in favor of this one. I follow Bakir to another room where the selected works have been photographed. "I like the other one," I insist. "I shall buy it now for myself." His face takes on a most happy expression. "When you say you like it, then I do not feel so much alone." A thousand Turkish lire.

Cemil Eren's hair is streaked with gray now. I notice this as he bends to kiss my hand. There are several canvases of nudes in the living area of his basement home: a torso, reclining shape like two rounded Anatolian hills, brown and stone-flecked. I see nothing that really moves me until we go into another room—his studio—where there are two new works. "I like them!" I exclaim, overcome by their magic. They make me rejoice. One was titled *Train Accident*, strangely shattered

bright colored brush strokes, a departure from his work six years ago of harmonious pale shades of white, gray and yellow. When we leave, Mike buys a pomegranate from a street vendor and rolls it around in his hands for the pure pleasure of it.

Orhan Cetinkaya We walk up so many winding stone stairways! Artists are mostly at the very top—because of the light —or in basements—because of the low rent. Orhan leads the way to his studio where he shows us many canvases, some abstract, some figurative. We make our choices without too much enthusiasm, but when the work is spotlighted for photographing, the colors come alive and we begin to feel a strong attachment to our selections. Orhan is a bit of a dandy. He has finely chiseled features and wears a soft cravat. His lithographs are full of protests, and they have caused some trouble at the USIS print workshop. (One of Orhan's prints is titled *Viet Cong.*) On his cot is a worn crocheted afghan in a multicolored square design just like the one in my Deer Lake cottage. Mine was made by an elderly deaconess in the Everglades; his perhaps by his grandmother.

Ankara, Turkey
November 28-30, 1969

From my window I see four women coming down the hill on three donkeys making their way through an undeveloped area between the hotel and the parliament buildings. They dismount, rearrange their donkey blankets and say goodbye to the oldest woman in the group who goes off—probably on an important errand in town—wrapped in her shawls and rags. The remaining three remount their individual animals and return the way they came. The youngest, whose long back braid can be seen to end at her knees, protruding as it does from the black shawl that encloses her, looks back at the figure on foot.

In the afternoon the wind blows the smog away, the clouds break, there is a patch of blue. Through this sky window, the sun appears, showing the hills north of Ankara. Each abode is completely visible standing on its own bit of mountainside, casting its own shadow. When the houses light their oil lamps at night, they send out their feeble radiance through curtains of smog.

To the Hittite Museum today. At the entrance, where songsters in their cages are riotously happy, greenery cascades from an urn flanked by concrete planters containing spiky

shrubs. The interior is jewel-like. Music floats in delicate wisps around the walls and up to the brick-domed ceiling. The glass cases that rise from the stone floors sparkle, their contents dramatized by backgrounds of brilliantly colored velvet. They are filled with astounding works of art: animals forever alive—deer with silver bindings on their horns, spots of gold on their hides; clay rabbits that never hopped among the prickly pears but there smell springs and clover. Oh, how could eyes and hands fashion such exquisite baubles! Or a gold plate or goblet?

The fertility goddess is clay also. She has survived 8,000 years, yet the real keeps breaking into this jewel case of a museum. A cold winter rain drips from a crack in the skylight onto the floor, drop, drop, drop.

Tomorrow we leave for Teheran and part company with Mike who takes an early flight to Greece and then goes on to London before returning home. During our time here, Mike and I have made a good team, pooling his resources as an art historian, museum director, and teacher, and my previous experiences in Turkey. I think we both learned something on this trip about working through personal contacts. Together, we have been able to shape a good exhibition of contemporary Turkish painting for showing in the United States. It is a *fait accompli,* if Turkey now will expedite customs.

Teheran, Iran
December 1-2, 1969

On arrival at the Teheran airport, I was driven to the Park Hotel by Parviz. Ruth followed in the official car. During our brief conversation, he told me that he was now an assistant professor at the university. I was especially eager to catch up on the activities of Bettina Corke, the English film producer who had been commissioned by the Grey Foundation to make a film on location featuring Parviz's work and the activities centering around the Teheran University foundry.

When I connected with Bettina that evening, she filled me in, sitting on my bed, reading her scenario. She and her cameraman had been photographing for the last several days, and everything had gone amazingly well, with plenty of assistance from the Iran foreign relations office.

We had our evening meal in the dining salon, Caspian caviar and wine, after which Bettina in her lavender suit, her blond hair shining like a halo, said goodnight and went out to the ten o'clock streets of Teheran. To the surprise of the desk clerk, she refused a taxi, saying that she wanted a walk. I reassured him somewhat by explaining that she had been

alone when she had driven her jeep from India through Afghanistan to Istanbul.

The years between 1966 and 1969 had been years of sorrow for the Tanavoli family. After the tragic death of their child while visiting her American grandparents with her mother, the couple's married life had been shattered. Both Parviz and Janet were broken-hearted; they shared a hard destiny. After several years of separation, the two were divorced. Janet stayed in the care of her parents in the United States. Parviz, always a hard worker, threw himself into his foundry work, his teaching at the university and his leadership of the art community.

In the summer before my visit Parviz had married Manije Bahmanieh. The couple had similar backgrounds. In fact his second wife brought a special Iranian culture with her, for her family was related to the Bactiari tribe. She had studied at the Fine Arts Academy in Teheran where Parviz had his first teaching job and had graduated with a degree in decorative arts.

I was finally going to see Parviz's and Manije's new house built on the site where he and I had stood less than two years before, making plans for his future. A wall encircles the irregular mountainside property. The stream that had rushed over the rock gully was now underground. There was a sense of seclusion, with trees in a cluster along the east wall. The house, constructed of handmade yellow brick, was almost finished. Parviz's study and the dining room were one step above the living room, and this whole area opened into one long vista. On the floor above were the bedrooms, airy, white-walled, with large windows and doors leading onto terraces. We stepped out to look at the mountains, already scarred by new dwellings. A large guard dog and a puppy, both barking and wagging their tails furiously, were chained in the rear, to be let loose at night to patrol the grounds. It was chilly, and the snow had begun to fall on the mountaintops, but even on such a day it was possible to imagine the garden, the inviting swimming pool, the apricot and apple trees espaliered along the walls in bloom.

The sculpture studio was at the far end of the lot and when we entered, Hossein, Parviz's long-time assistant, was working. The foundry kiln was burning, and several highly polished completed bronzes were standing on a turntable. I was asked which one I particularly liked, and I chose the model for his commissioned work for the Pahlavi University campus.

There was a large ceramic kiln in the studio too, and when I commented on how spacious and neat the place was, he told me that last summer, when it was crowded with workers who were executing the commission for the Pahlavi University, there was scarcely room to turn around.

On our way back to the hotel, we stopped to see a park designed by Kamran Diba. It was made enchanting by three life-sized bronzes created by Parviz. The figures sat in relaxed attitudes around a pool, isolated, but aware of each other. The pensive man who lounged on a bench had taken off one shoe—which children enjoyed stepping into; another figure rested one elbow on the wall, and the young woman was Manije, who could be seen the length of the access avenue and through the wrought-iron gates.

Flight to Isfahan, Iran
December 3, 1969

Awake at 3:30 a.m. Breakfast at four; taxi to the airport at five; emplane at six for the hour's flight to Isfahan and a meeting at the airport with Hassan. At seven a.m. the sun rises above the horizon disclosing ground fog so dense that the pilot, after announcing our plane's landing, suddenly lifts up and we are flying off to Shiraz. Long since, Hassan has turned around and gone back to Bishop's House and Shirin and Sussie have gone to school. Gulnar is probably outside inspecting the last roses and the big black birds. She has been told that Aunt Abby is coming but she does not remember. I wait, frustrated, in the Shiraz airport for the plane to take off and fly back to Isfahan.

Isfahan, Iran
December 5-7, 1969

Bishop's House. I am spiritually at home here; I fit into this family like an honored relative, a special guest. Throughout our frustrating separations, Hassan and I remain aware of each other. We are six thousand miles apart for very long periods; letters are cold pieces of flat bread from which nourishment has often departed, yet each visit revives our understanding of each other and we are at ease in our friendship.

To the Abby Garden in the forenoon, an overcast December day. The house has been remodeled; the pool and fountain have been removed from the long central hall, and a fireplace has been built partitioning off the rear end of it. Hassan builds a fire of fruitwood. It warms the place and gives off a delicate aroma in the closed room. The garden is in a dilapidated state. The arbor between the house and pool is rankly overgrown; seared and brown leaves hang from the vines; the clutter of geranium leaves is frost-killed. We have a

picnic lunch around the fire and the small presents I have brought are opened. Guli is estatic over her Florentine smocked dress, which she tries on right over her two sweaters. Shirin holds a mirror for her. She is drawn closer and closer until she almost bumps the forehead of the pretty child reflection.

When Ruth arrives from Persepolis, a special day's program to out-of-the-way places is arranged. We will go behind the bazaar and see the workmen.

The glassblowers in Isfahan. We enter a court by a long sunny path; two mounds of huge globules of glass are piled in the corners of the hot, mudbaked enclosure. Their color is the blue of a summer sky, shimmering and glittering, but like a knife the diagonal shadow of the wall cuts across. Some glass is silvered inside. All will eventually be shattered to serve as reflective pieces in inlaid mirror work, a particularly Persian mode of decorating doorways, ceilings, pillars.

The high-ceilinged room of the workshop serves as a ballet stage for the master and his assistants, slight, beautifully proportioned young Persians who dance from the three huge roaring furnaces to the work anvil and vise. The apprentice hands the assistant tongs, dashes to the pan of water set in the outer wall, then across the floor to the cooling furnace with its small door and bed of ashes.

The master continuously twirls the long iron rod on which glows the fragile glass. There is hardly a moment to lose as the glass flowers under his expert shaping, not a moment when his Apollo curls do not respond to his movements of body, hands, and feet. When he is still, the sweat on his face runs down into the grime that covers his body. His feet are sandaled, for the floor, although swept, is scattered with glass chips and splinters.

He is a divinity, so completely attuned to this work that when the first plate droops under some mysterious mishap and has to be discarded, he makes no misstep but commences another immediately, always with the same high tension of joy and discipline. When, on the next two tries, he is exquisitely successful, we applaud with a burst of bravos.

In another place we climb stairs to see metal workers. Several engravers are chiseling and pounding heavy trays with scenes of tribute bearers from Persepolis. But one expert engraver is incising steel "hard hats" with roses, nightingales and mythological beasts for sophisticated oil field workers from Abadan.

Today is Goodbye Day. Communion in St. Thomas Chapel. Guli climbs into bed with me at seven, before breakfast. I work all morning in Hassan's study. It feels comfortable there with all the English and Farsi books. His own newly published collection of poems in Farsi looks so fresh-minted. I open the anthology of English poetry I had given him and write an inscription about walks at Deer Lake.

Without Bahram, who is at school in England, Hassan seems withdrawn. He is subdued, a part of himself lopped off. As he asks questions in Farsi of a seven-year-old orphan, I catch a look on his face that is so benevolent, so cherishing, so solicitous, that I know in a flash how much he misses his own son.

I make plans to stop off in England to see Bahram and his school on my return flight home. I think, too, about the education of the three sisters, Shirin, Sussie and Guli, and ask about schooling in Teheran. Hassan tells me about Damavand College for girls of which he is a trustee. He telephones Dr. Frances Gray, the principal, and we will meet at the college for lunch when I am back in Teheran. Damavand College, presently in cramped quarters in the center of town is about to be relocated to new facilities to be built on the heights above Teheran.

On a later trip in 1973, I saw the school's preliminary steel skeleton on the mountainside. Designed by the late Frank Lloyd Wright's architectural firm, the building was delayed for lack of water. No well had yet been driven. Education in Iran is fully Muslim now, of course, and any cross-fertilization of East-West culture as originally instituted is completely dissipated. This is the college where Bahram was teaching when he was murdered on a Teheran street by revolutionaries in 1980 to the intense grief of the Damavand community, his many friends, and his ever-devoted family.

Teheran, Iran
December 8–11, 1969

Soon after my return to Teheran, Parviz and I drove up a steep mountain road on a gorgeous morning, through a tiny village and along narrow lanes between the walls of estates. We knew that behind those walls were gardens and expensive homes with views from their windows of the city and the steep mountains. Within the house were privacy and pools, paintings and lavish entertainments. Eventually we reached Manoucher Yektai's estate. When the gate was opened, the panorama was breathtaking—the view of the distant city and the house curving around the hillside.

Our host, Yektai, an Iranian painter who for some years

Parviz Tanavoli,
I Desire My Beloved,
bronze on travertine base,
1969

had been living and exhibiting in New York, was a thin, elegant gentleman with a sensitive smile and a quizzical look caused by black eyebrows that he brushed up in little black tufts. His second wife was a talkative young woman, very Persian looking, but she soon gave herself away and let us know she was from Long Island.

We did not zoom in on Yektai's paintings until we had talked about and meditated on his collection of gorgeous rugs. These were from villages between Isfahan and Qom, woven by simple people and absolutely right in their choice of repeated patterns and colors made exceptional by subtle changes, mistakes, accidental as well as deliberate asymmetries.

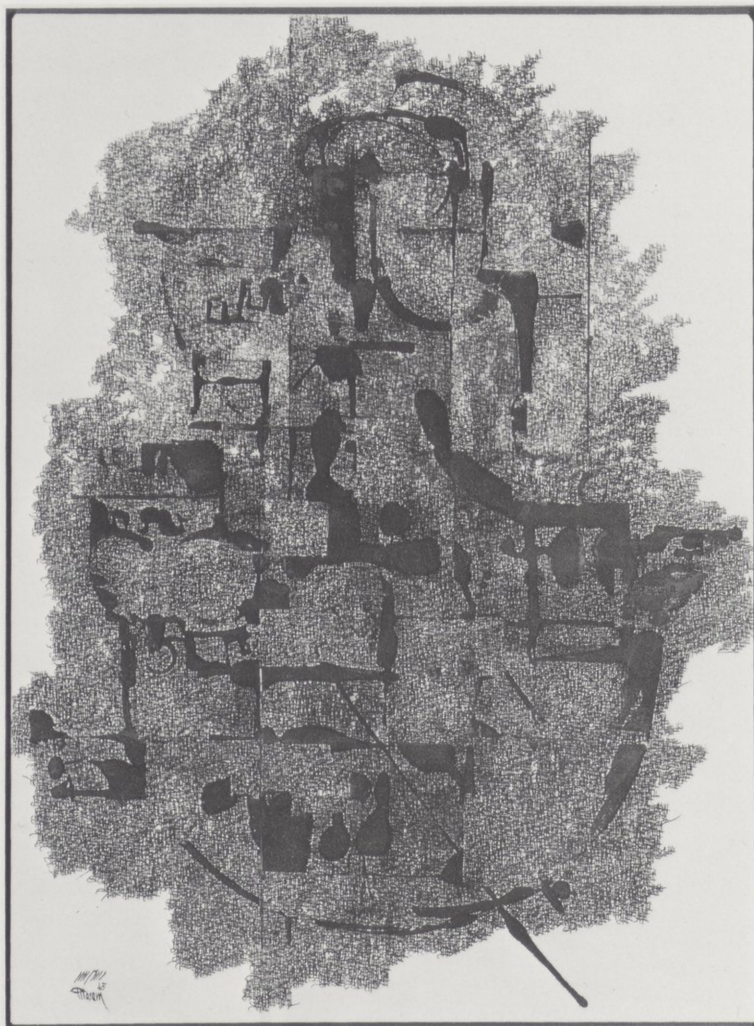
Yektai said he was trying to make similar positive and simple statements in his recent work. He dared leave great areas of canvas unpainted, and into these spaces, he dropped an intentional "mistake." These white areas were accents, like silence in the flow of a symphony, he said, like darkness, a foil for light. He wanted to subtract and subtract as he continued his painting career. I did not purchase any of his works, however.

On the drive back to town, Parviz said, "For such a little amount of work, for so few hours, such high prices! How can I keep my students from burning out, doing everything, attempting to learn everything in a few months when it takes years? How can I give them the taste for a happy life, for maturing, discovering, working through to real thoughts expressed in some form peculiarly appropriate to their ideas?"

In the time remaining before my departure from Teheran, there were several memorable encounters. A Persian evening was planned which, by its sumptuous quality and the rank of the guests invited, gives a picture of Iranian society before the overthrow of the Shah in 1979. The guests were mainly intimates of the Shah and Empress. The co-host was the master of court protocol who chatted amiably with us. The artist Nasser Oveysi was there. The room where the party was held was hung with contemporary and Kajar coffeehouse art. I was particularly pleased to see a print by Robert Evermon, a Minnesota artist, several of whose lithographs were in my collection, though how it got here I had no idea.

Some of the guests lounged informally on floor cushions, others sat on the large sofa or on comfortable chairs. The ladies arrived in gorgeous furs; one paraded down the middle of the room modeling her new belted mink coat. Most wore evening pants and blouses in sumptuous fabrics; the necklines of dresses were encrusted with beads and brilliants. When the lights were turned off, the flames of many candles shed a radiance on the exotic setting. Dinner was a Persian feast of a whole roasted sheep stuffed with oriental fruits and nuts; large slices of halvah, wine, Turkish coffee. In the background was Persian music, vocal and instrumental. With all this and the wines, hookahs, and chatter of Farsi and French, I was bedazzled.

I managed to squeeze in a visit to Faramarz Pilaram's studio which on this occasion was filled with highly decorative canvases that were not especially appealing to me. Four of his earlier works in my collection, however, continued to give me unique pleasure. This time I was able to find a canvas he had executed in 1966 in the same spirit as the ones I owned, which I bought. *Colt 45* was its title and for a long time I could not imagine why it was titled that way. It was a tricky one, innocent in one light—a network of black lines, also some heavy black brush strokes combined with faint magentas, violets, and



Faramarz Pilaram,
Colt 45,
oil on canvas, 1968

greens, all exquisitely executed. But suddenly, in a brilliant light, I was looking at a steel gray woman bandit on a horse. She held a cocked pistol—the Colt 45, no doubt!—and was advancing in a bold and brazen way through a forest of lines.

On my last afternoon, I visited the university sculpture studio where thirty or more young men and women were working in clay on large pieces. The old janitor, Ismaiel Tavakol, longtime friend of Parviz and the students, brought us tiny glasses of tea. In skull cap and gray smock, he stood holding the round tray while Parviz, in his gentle voice and with a half-smile, explained that this old friend had made something for

me to replace the small ceramic piece he had given me at our last encounter which had since been broken.

Then a bronze piece was placed in my hand. It was a tree, about ten inches high, with two opposite branches. At the end of each perched a bird, one's wings open, the other's closed. The top of the tree held a bird as well. With the stroke of a true primitive artist, another bird had been added. A snake that twisted about the tree trunk became this bird that gazed at the tree-cross, exposing its back to the beholder, contemplating something other than perching birds; a part of the whole, yet a different statement altogether. A mythical creature, perhaps.

Teheran, Iran
December 12, 1969

My final evening in this hotel room. What sermons am I bringing out of Iran without knowing it? I open to the following passage in the Gideon Bible, the last verse of Isaiah 40:31—"But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint." I have been reading Kazantzakis's *The Last Temptation of Christ.* In that novel, Judas is also, like the serpent in my new piece, an integral part of the redemptive act. The janitor's bronze becomes all birds; the serpent, the tree, the cross, all birds singing. Oh, what shall I make of all these encounters? These bright pickings? These choice and lovely life touchings? If they have not refined me to a truer, gentler soul, Lord still bless me!

Amsterdam, Holland
December 13, 1969

Ruth and I arrived in Amsterdam with the prospect of two days in Holland before going on to England. It was a city that produced claustrophobia—raw, cold, cloud-hung, enclosing—festooned with Christmas lights and full of Christmas shoppers.

On my first morning, I went by train to Haarlem and took a taxi to Atelier 63 where some members of the Minneapolis School of Art spent their junior year abroad. None of the Americans could be located when I got there. Several Dutch students were having a coffee klatch at one end of the room; some of the staff were conferring in a small office. I was invited to wait in an area off the supply room. It was here that I sat in gloomy quarantine for three-quarters of an hour before the arrival of Richard Arnold, the Minneapolis art history instructor who had accompanied the group from Minnesota.

When he showed me the students' quarters and the litho presses, I was appalled. Bareness in some places, clutter in others; an elderly woman who had been having coffee in the

Ismaiel Tavakol,
Serpent and Birds,
bronze, 1966

staff room was now mopping the floor of what looked like a community lavatory to me. No one spoke to us in the litho room where three or four young American students were getting ready to leave.

This excursion was redeemed by a visit with Dick Arnold to the Frans Hals Museum. We met no one except a guard, and in some of the rooms we had to turn the lights on ourselves. The place felt cold, damp and forsaken, but the number of canvases, their originality and freshness still projected the genius of this important Dutch artist.

At lunch in a restaurant overlooking the cathedral square, a discontented artist-teacher unburdened himself. He found the students uncommitted and the work they were doing less than it ought to have been, of lower standards. Before we parted, he gave me the handsome catalogue of the Kröller-Müller State Museum and encouraged me to visit it.

I invited Ruth to accompany me to this museum the following day. Again an impenetrable fog; a train ride of an hour and a half through flat countryside pressed by a flat sky; no color, almost no shapes. At the station we hired a car that drove us along a slippery, ice-packed forest road to a country

Ismaiel Tavakol,
Goat,
iron, 1973

inn where we had a delicious lunch—ox tongue in Madeira sauce. Then by a winding road, absolutely still and untraveled, to the museum.

We were the only visitors. Dozens of rooms were dismantled, their walls bare waiting for some proposed repairs. A guard led us through them and left us in the remote sculpture hall. Marino Marini's polychromed wood *Horse and Rider* stood there. Outside the forest pressing in, dropping its thin beech leaves, soft and gold, one by one, on the ground, the hemlocks and pines awash in the fog.

On the drive back to the station, the fog had lifted somewhat, revealing more of the landscape, and the trunks of the beeches took on a vivid emerald color, a kind of miracle in all this grayness.

London, England
December 15, 1969

I wake in one of London's great hotels, the Savoy. When I push the heavy drapes from the huge window, I look out on a service alley. After four a.m. I sleep fitfully, wondering about the day to come. There is a feeling of tentativeness, a peculiar sense that a day is valuable only if I can choose something from it that has continuity for me. What is my continuity? My

loves—something deep within that is drumming, drumming, drumming, about heart and soul and work and death. I am still learning.

It may be possible to rejoice completely, as I did, in the color of the trunks of beeches in a Dutch forest, on a day of winter fog. So simply, and so naturally, a recognition took place, whether or not the trees knew. Or does a tree know? And may I find this same recognition in a glance in a London fog, continuously, in other places in the world? Are people, too, like trees? I am not satisfied with a passing recognition. I crave a total meeting. . . .

Bath, England
December 16, 1969

Bahram has the room in the Royal Hotel that Queen Victoria slept in. We three (Ruth, Bahram and myself) have come up from London during his Christmas vacation so that Bahram can show us his school. I write to his parents:

Dear Hassan and Margaret:

Your son is a marvelous person, fourteen years old. I do not know what stirs in him. He is already very complex. . . . He is like his father in self-containment, yet being only fourteen, he waits for a guideline, an occasional hint of his role. . . . He showed us Monkton-Combe School with a handful of keys that let us into the auditorium, laboratories, woodworking and print shops, studio, classrooms, library, and chapel. . . . He did not hesitate to ask his adviser, Christopher Rogers, nor the headmaster, about his grades. He talked with them in a casual man-to-man way. . . . We went to the Rogers' home. He also was born in Iran. The day was one of showers and occasional sunbursts over a lovely valley. A huge sky with winter clouds made the school and green playing fields dwindle in size. It is a grand growing-up place for your son. . . .

Try to have confidence in myself. On what basis?
Answer: I have ideas and they have a way of becoming. This should now become my excitement: to observe how the great poetical will find expression.
Not that I must arrange events but rather allow the release of poetry, of its own accord, naturally, inconsequent of self.
How will the Symbol ripple outward?

Daybook
1958

ON AN INSTANT MUSEUM

One World Thru Art Minnesota State Fairgrounds Gallery 1972

St. Paul, Minnesota
1970–71

In early 1970, negotiations were completed for *Recent Works From the Grey Collection* to open in the Design Wing of the Minneapolis College of Art and Design on July 16th. The exhibition contained a selection of eighty-four contemporary international paintings and sculptures, including works by local Iranian artists: Siah Armajani's *7 Apples*, a construction; Bigan Dowlatshahi's *Red Balcony* and Hamid Zarrine-Afsar's pillar *Black Column of Fingers*.

The same college had cooperated with me in assembling an exhibition of graphics by artists under thirty years of age, prepared at the invitation of the Smithsonian Institution International Art Program. The show, called *Ten Young American Artists*, was originally headed for Bogota, Columbia, but that program was cancelled. At my insistence that all the effort and expense should not be wasted, the State Department agreed to send it to India if I would provide a traveling curator. Under these same auspices the successful print workshop that functioned so well in Turkey would be going to India, coinciding with *Ten Young American Artists*. Paul Lingren, print master and curator, agreed to act as curator of the Grey Foundation's show also. Thus it began to circulate in major

cities in India through the USIS and would continue its career in Teheran, Isfahan, Shiraz, and Tabriz later that same year under the auspices of the Iran-America Society.

1970 was also the year during which the Grey Foundation, in conjunction with the Museum of Modern Art in New York, arranged to sponsor the American section of the *Second India Triennale of Contemporary World Art*.

Since no funds from the State Department were available, the invitation for the United States to participate had been refused by the United States. I was indignant and disappointed. The American section had been so good at the First Triennale that the India Art Committee had made a special effort to locate the United States works in a favorable place in the Lalit Kala Academi where the major portion of the exhibition was shown. I tried to get more funding by contacting the Hirschorn and the Whitney foundations but was unsuccessful. At the last minute the Museum of Modern Art responded. The show opened in 1971 under its auspices.

In the midst of these activities, the many circulating shows that I had initiated here and abroad were beginning to come home. I felt that I had done all I could in promoting them. I was now eager to find a permanent setting for the entire collection, which by this time encompassed over a thousand paintings, sculptures, and prints. A big show in Minnesota seemed to me the first logical step toward an eventual solution of this problem. Such a show would necessitate a comprehensive catalogue of the entire collection, a major effort that had never been previously undertaken.

Toward the end of the summer of 1971, as I looked about for suitable exhibition space, rejecting one location after the other as too small or too inaccessible, it occurred to me that the art gallery in the Minnesota State Fairgrounds would provide the kind of space I was looking for.

The fair itself was set up every fall around Labor Day on grounds situated next to the St. Paul campus of the University of Minnesota. It featured the traditional activities and displays of all such fairs: areas of prize farm produce, jams, jellies, flower arrangements, handicrafts; stalls where cattle and pigs and sheep were judged; coops displaying prize poultry; a midway carnival; a grandstand to accommodate the spectators of auto races, musical events, and other entertainments with family appeal; and, of course, a popular horse show.

In recent years, a gallery two flights up had been created in a commodious area under the bleachers to exhibit a juried

show of work of Minnesota artists. Whenever I was in town at Fair time I attended the opening night of this show. Sometimes I came by a few hours early so that I could look around and make a purchase or two; sometimes I contributed the grand prize. The event itself was a time of festivity for the artists who received the awards, as well as for their families and friends. It was also a special occasion for a public that rarely, if ever, went to an art gallery.

It was from this long acquaintance with the State Fair Art Show that the idea for my own show originated. I had already decided that my show was to be called *One World Thru Art* and would consist of 1001 works, since that seemed like a rather romantic Arabian Nights number. So, once again, I found myself in a position of doing something that had not been attempted by anyone before, and, as usual, I was challenged by the difficulties I encountered from the very outset.

To begin with, this huge space had never been engaged by a private foundation. Also, I wanted to schedule the event at a time when the weather would not be too uncomfortably hot or bitterly cold, for the space was unheated. Negotiations were begun with the Minnesota State Fair Commission, and the space was rented for $100 a day plus the cost of utilities. I chose two weekends in June and two in July, ending the weekend after the Fourth of July. Thus no heating would be necessary, and I was pretty sure that the ceiling fans would keep the space comfortable during the early days of summer.

As soon as these basic arrangements were completed, a whirlwind of activities began, centered mainly in my workshop and gallery. I was fortunate in my friendship with Tom Waite, Grey Foundation curator, who was not only familiar with many of the routine tasks of setting up exhibitions, but who also had a large circle of young acquaintances available for the practical chores of addressing invitations, doing light carpentry, driving rented trucks, and even designing and distributing promotional material.

I decided to ask Michael Milkovich to take responsibility for the publishing of the catalogue. During our time together in Turkey, I had grown to respect his professionalism, and I was especially pleased by the enthusiasm and encouragement he expressed for my unconventional ventures.

As director of the University Art Gallery at the State University of New York at Binghamton, Mike had a demanding schedule, but as soon as I made my request, he arranged to come to St. Paul. When he arrived in January, he helped me

Tom Waite and Abby prepare catalogue for *One World Thru Art* in her Otis Avenue home, St. Paul, 1972

make decisions about how the gallery space should be used and how the catalogue should be organized. Wrapped in mufflers and wearing overshoes, we made our way to the bone-chilling building where we were joined by Paul Kramer, who had helped me with MAP and most recently had served for some years as the appointed chairman of the State Fair Art Show. We knew each other well and he and his young son were essential to the exhibition. When the lights were turned on, we found ourselves in the middle of a cavernous area that extended to the right and left of the central stairway for a distance of 324 feet. There were 2,051 running feet of wall space.

As we stood there, I began to visualize the installation: at the top of the stairs would be my major collection—works by Iranians; on the left side of the area, suitably separated by dividers creating a kaleidoscope off the center aisle, would be the art from India, Greece, Turkey, and Japan, with separate spaces for works by Eskimos, and a miscellany from other foreign places. To the right would be the American wing which would include the paintings, prints, and drawings that had traveled to the Mediterranean, the Middle East, Africa and India. This section would include also selections from two of my private collections—works by Clara Mairs, Minnesota's

Clara Mairs,
Cows' Paradise,
etching

Clara Mairs,
Little Dogs and Ladders,
etching

pioneer woman artist, and Maybelle Stamper's lithographs and poem-letters to me from Florida.

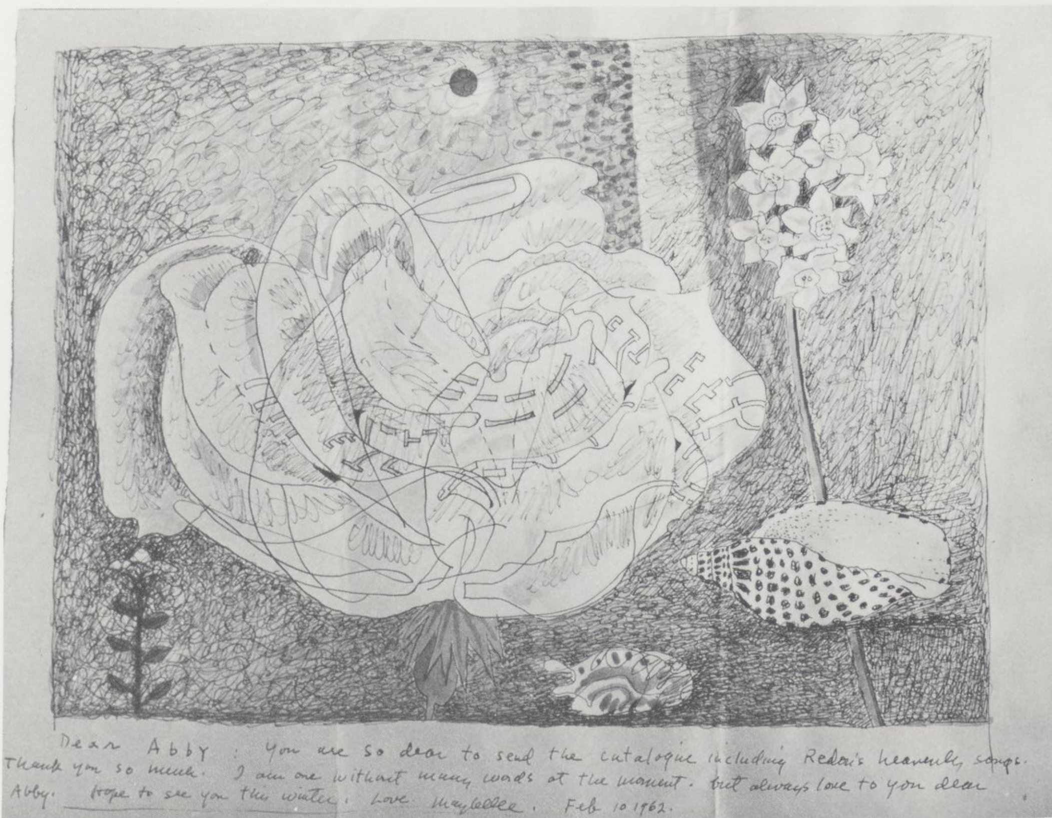
To turn this vision into a reality involved the loyal efforts of

Floor plan for installation of *One World Thru Art*, Minnesota State Fairgrounds, 1972

large numbers of helpers as well as a certain amount of chaos. Since the catalogue was being printed in Binghamton, I had to deal with mistakes and corrections through the mails, with the inevitable loss of time and money. In the midst of slogging through a morass of detail, I managed to go off to Washington to contact the embassies of Japan, India, Iran, and Turkey so that letters from these ambassadors could be included in the catalogue. The honorary committee sponsoring the event had already been organized. It included both of Minnesota's senators, Hubert Humphrey and Walter Mondale, as well as university and college presidents, museum and gallery directors, and persons active in promoting contemporary art both in this country and abroad.

Throughout all these preparations, dealing with disappointments, fatigue, and irritation with incompetence, I had the feeling that what I was doing was truly on an international scale; this was the effort of one American woman to foster communication through art in a community of nations. I wanted this venture to be expressive of an American exhibiting traits of American character: inventiveness, ingenuity, freedom. I wanted it, simply put, to stimulate the public imagination.

The State Fair officials were quite specific about the limited time they were giving us for the installation and dismantling of the show, since work had already started on the

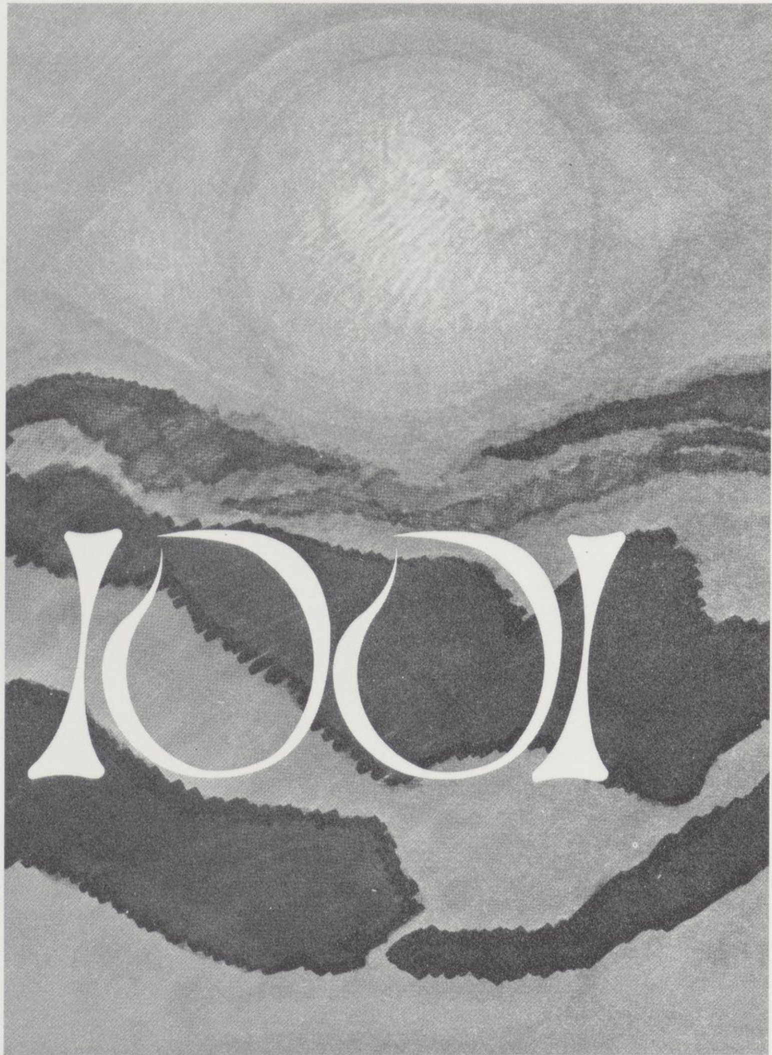


Maybelle Stamper,
Letter: Flowers and Shells,
watercolor and ink on paper,
1962

grounds and buildings in preparation for the official opening of the fair in late August. We were able to obtain blueprints of the space so that we could tentatively plan the placement of the various groups of works. Given the diversity of the cultures, how was this placement to be accomplished? Although most of the art was contemporary, great sensitivity was required to relate the individual pieces harmoniously.

Yet there was one element that did bind these works together—they had been collected by a single person. This made a great difference, for all the time I was collecting, I had in mind "A Collection." From the beginning of my search for innovative art, I made every effort to choose the best that was available to me. As the collection grew, I evaluated every addition in terms of previous purchases, especially when I was making a second, third, or fourth visit to an artist whose work I already owned.

I had no doubt that a really stunning show could be installed, but I didn't think I was the one to do it.



Poster for *One World Thru Art,* by James Cameron

My mind had been cluttered with all the details of plotting, scheming, and producing, for so long, that I was scarcely in condition to think clearly about this important task. Even if I weren't coping with all the other pressures, I was not likely to accomplish such an undertaking in a hurry. In my own home, I always changed the entire arrangement of a room when I introduced a new acquisition. It probably would have taken me much more time than we had at our disposal to decide on the installation of hundreds of paintings and wall hangings, the placement of sculpture, the display of jewelry, etc.

Fortunately the solution to this problem appeared in the

person of Lucille Carlson, an interior designer known to me from her days as a student at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design. Together with a colleague, Nancy Steele, she took on the job of installing the show after several conferences during which we exchanged ideas and she familiarized herself with the collection.

My connections with the college also proved helpful in the creation of a poster. The problem was presented as a project for a class in design. I explained what I wanted, the class went to work, and within a week or so, I was invited back to see the results, which had been hung around the room. The one that most appealed to me presented the number 1001 floating in an oriental burst of light, with the sun—or moon—like an all-seeing eye on the horizon. My choice was approved by the class, and then the student artist, James Cameron, took on the responsibility of choosing a printer, supervising the selection of paper, working out the color separations, and seeing the job to its successful conclusion.

In the midst of all these activities, I was harrassed as well by the problem of an appropriate gown for the opening and the formal dinner to follow at the home of the president of the University of Minnesota. I made several shopping trips, my sister Em ransacked the shops on my behalf, but nothing currently fashionable seemed suitable both for the diversified art and for the dinner. We both agreed that I should have a new dress, for moral support if nothing else. Two days before the event, Em had a brilliant inspiration. From her own wardrobe, she produced an ankle-length Thai cotton sheath with loose sleeves—a black and lemon batik of stylized lotus and bamboo. I was thrilled with it. She approved of how I looked in it, saying, “You must wear it and keep it.” That dress remains in my wardrobe to this day.

Opening night—Friday, June 16—arrived, and I went to the show early to accommodate a crew that had been sent by the State Department to videotape an interview for “Voice of America.” I believe the material had been requested by the Teheran Cultural Affairs Officer. The interview was conducted in the main gallery at the head of the stairs. It had been furnished by Paul Kramer who solved my problem with the loan of a handsome Persian rug so large that it completely covered the concrete floor. The greenhouse on the fairgrounds had sent huge pots of ferns, exotic bamboos, and other showy plants which were now strategically placed throughout the gallery.

I had brought in three dozen pots of geraniums which formed a crimson pool around a screen that supported a child's cradle-hammock. This most unusual object, found in the Isfahan bazaar, was made of a single piece of leather so large that I thought it probably came from a camel. It was bordered by leather-on-leather cutouts appliqued with elaborate hand-stitching. The ends of the wooden poles that supported the cradle were painted in a primitive manner with women's faces, roses, and nightingales.

A huge bouquet of the same crimson geraniums made a blazing centerpiece on the buffet table surrounded by colorful bowls of punch and trays of beautifully arranged Middle Eastern finger foods. These had been prepared by a remarkably efficient chef lent to us for the occasion by one of Minneapolis' private clubs.

The Minnesota International Center was enormously helpful in offering to assist in hosting the gala. Diplomats from Washington were present as well as the Iranian Public Relations Officer, the Japanese Cultural Officer, and other dignitaries. As the guests came up the cement stairs from the second level of the stadium interior, the entrance came to life. Mingling with the newcomers were women in native costume—pink saris threaded with gold, boldly printed sarongs, colorful kimonos. These were the volunteers from the center who had assembled preceding my arrival.

On a table at the entrance hall were the handsome catalogues with their cover photograph of one of Parviz's recent bronzes. I had given a great deal of thought to the selection of the work to be reproduced as the frontispiece. None of the 1001 works seemed as appropriate finally as the painting *Grey with Red Spot* by Cameron Booth, a beloved artist who had nurtured many students through their studio days at the University of Minnesota.

The prologue had been written by Malcolm Lein, director of the Minnesota Museum of Art. He was the one who, from the earliest days of MAP, had encouraged, supported, and cooperated with me. It was appropriate, therefore, for him to be the one to put into words the history of this event and its ultimate purpose. In talking about the beginnings of the *Minneapolis Art Portfolio*, he said:

> *The project succeeded beyond its earliest dreams because of two clearly defined aspects of that original idea. First, it was concerned at the grass roots with human*

Cameron Booth,
Grey with Red Spot,
acrylic on canvas, 1960

beings who were separated from one another by distance and by custom and tradition, as well as language—formidable gaps which hopefully could be bridged on a person-to-person basis through the common language of the arts. Second, it ran counter to the big budget, large-scale, difficult to transport international traveling exhibitions which had become relatively common among upper-echelon agencies of government and major museums. Such an unostentatious project as MAP, however, would have to rest on the selfless commitment of someone who would guide it past Scylla, the formidable rock of lethargy, and Charybdis, the whirlpool of red tape. MAP, and this entire collection, exist only because of that kind of dedicated commitment by Mrs. Benjamin Grey.

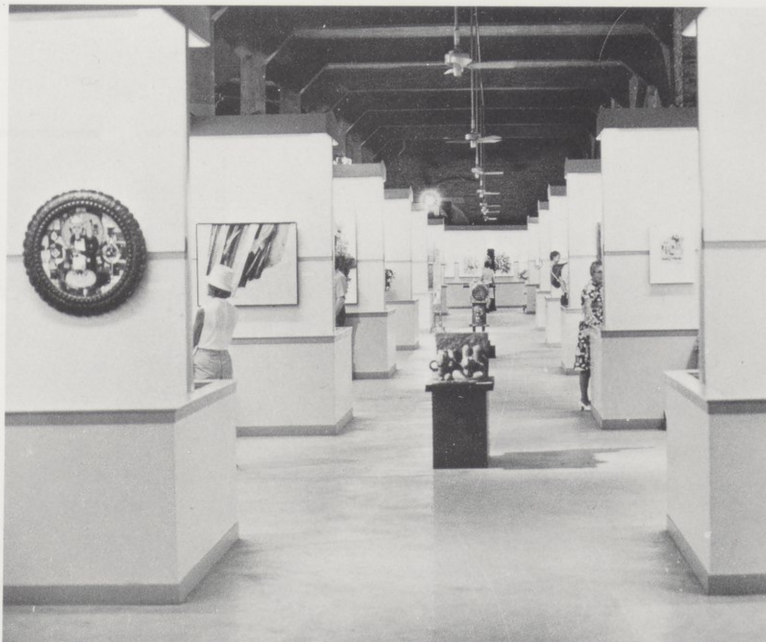
He concluded with the following words:

Opening celebration of *One World Thru Art*, June 16, 1972 with representatives from the embassies of Iran and Japan

This exhibition presents one thousand and one works of art from the past decade. Each speaks for its creator in its own way. Collectively, these works reflect long, deep-rooted traditions and the influence of ancient cultures. But they also move inevitably into the main stream of contemporary art as it courses throughout the world, and help to break down the barriers of nationality, thus bringing nearer to realization the dream expressed in the exhibition's title: ONE WORLD THRU ART.

In the meantime, I had done whatever I could think of to attract an audience. Youngsters were hired to leave handbills on doorsteps. After the first batch was distributed, I wrote FREE in splashy letters across the middle of the sheets. Announcements and invitations kept going out to everyone that anyone suggested—even to people whose names were selected at random from the phone book. This lovely feast and so few coming to enjoy it!

Then, on the next to the last day in June, the St. Paul *Dispatch* ran an article headlined ONE WORLD THRU ART SHOW STAGGERING IN NUMBER, DIVERSITY. Staff writer John Harvey went on to say that "One can spend hours



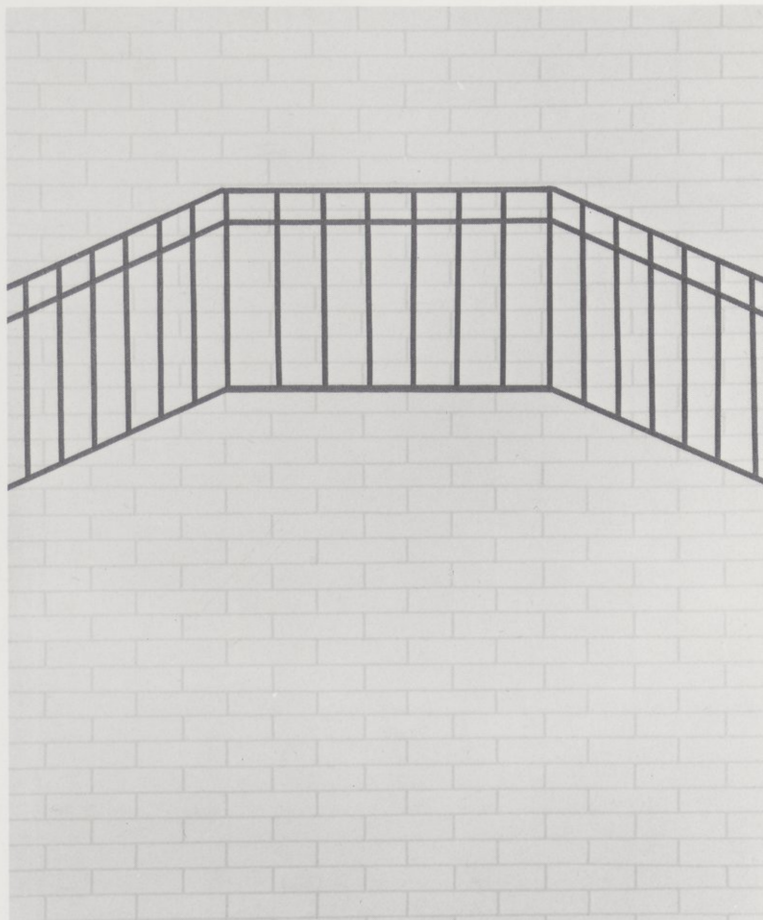
Iranian wing,
One World Thru Art

browsing through this huge show and trying to absorb the tremendous diversity of artistic expression." Things livened up considerably. The review stirred up a new public and stimulated repeat visits by friends and serious browsers.

It was not until the very last week that the *Minneapolis Star* finally took notice in print. The paper's art critic, Don Morrison, spent at least an hour at the show on the morning of July 4th. He was left entirely to himself so that he could examine the well-labeled works and take notes without any distractions.

When he finished his tour of the area, he seemed kindled by what he had seen. He put a hand on my shoulder, and with some emotion, told me that he deeply regretted not having publicized the show sooner. From what he said, I gathered that the unique nature of the exhibition and the offbeat location, together with a breakdown in communication, had kept him from coming until this late date. But he promised to write a special review.

On the Thursday evening before our last weekend, the *Minneapolis Star* headlined his column: HURRY: ART SHOW STUNNING, TIME SHORT. In another edition, the headline was: INTERNATIONAL MODERN ART SHOW SINGS WITH RICHNESS, DIVERSITY. He wrote of the "almost over-



Bigan Dowlatshahi,
Red Balcony,
acrylic on canvas, 1969

whelming excitement of this big exhibition" and called it "modern art in the best sense." He mentioned "the superb collection of Japanese prints," and toward the end of his article, he added, "It is a pretty freaky place, in under the bleachers of the fairground stadium, but it is the only available space roomy enough for so big a show, according to Abby Grey. . . . Although there are no architectural frills, it is well-lighted and laid out."

On Friday July 7, I went over to the fairgrounds with this edition of the paper so that I could show it to any of my crew who might have missed it. What I saw was large numbers of people streaming toward the bleachers. When I stood at the head of the stairs and looked to the left and right, I saw crowds. They were completely detached from me. It was a transcendent moment. I was struck dumb with wonder, with utter

Hamid Zarrine-Afsar,
Evolution of an Illusion
(Number 6 in a series of 21
paintings, oil on canvas, 1970

amazement, with a beatific vision of people, on their own initiative, hungrily experiencing the art of people unknown to them, from the other side of the world.

There was little chitchat. They were all there because "time was short." Yet I sensed no limit to their enjoyment. It was as if the summer day had been designated as one of great satisfaction and accomplishment. These feelings eventually subsided, though a sweet sensation remained.

St. Paul, Minnesota
June 16, 1972

The realization of a dream. . . . As guests began ascending the stairs and entering the galleries, a new awareness came over me. I might have been one of the pigeons craning its head from a hidden rafter. (Yes, at night they roosted there!) All the details of commission and omission, of hard work and frustration were forgotten as I acknowledged the presence of all the artists who were with me through their works on the walls, in the cases, on the pedestals. I felt an Excelsior of achievement! Not only all artists were rejoicing, but everyone who came that evening experienced a special kind of bonhomie.

Everyone loved the art, the plants, the flowers, the music of my recorder associates playing alongside the Persian cradle, the food; everyone loved everyone else looking at everything. They loved me, too!

It was an astounding scene, tremendously diverse in artistic expression, awhirl with richness, almost a half mile of wall space filled with overwhelming excitement, communicating distant modes of seeing. *There* was the wonder of it all.

After that gala evening, it was only natural that there should have been a slight letdown. Still, to me the days that followed were wonderful. I beheld my paintings—in fact all my art treasures—being shown together for the first time to many different kinds of people. On the Saturday morning that the show was opened to the public, I was delighted to learn that a group of State Fair chefs and some of their colleagues from other organizations had arrived in a group. As I told the young people who were on hand to unofficially guard the works and to answer questions, that was exactly the kind of group I had hoped to attract: people who were not typical museum- or gallery-goers.

St. Paul public school officials appeared one Friday with several busloads of fifth graders who were let loose in a flurry of excitement. A pleasant surprise was a contingent of children from Lindstrom, a small town near the Minnesota-Wisconsin border. When they returned home and reported that they had seen a wonderful show, their mothers arrived in chartered buses the following week. I found out that Lindstrom was blessed with a pioneering woman who was an amateur painter, and I subsequently went with a friend to her home town to attend her exhibition of watercolors of scenes ranging from Alaska to Antarctica. I saluted her as another world traveler who hoisted her banner for *One World Thru Art*.

During the first weekend, the galleries were sparsely visited, and I became increasingly apprehensive that the crowds of people we expected were never going to arrive. I felt like the biblical host who prepared a feast to which no one had come. I had prepared a feast for the eyes, for strengthening an awareness of other parts of the world. We were in the Middle West; halfway around the world was the Middle East. In this very gallery was a connecting link.

We attracted a certain amount of attention by setting up my record player and blaring the classical music of Turkey, Iran, and India so that it could be heard by anyone who happened to be near the stadium. I knew that the sparse

attendance was a consequence of the local newspapers' lack of involvement. The writers who specialized in reviewing art events were dragging their feet and had not yet contributed any articles to their editors.

The question is: can a life lived courageously be an acceptable surrogate for a life lived love-bounded? Can courage yield a sense of deep, worthy life-involvement? Can courage conquer? Redeem? Make vibrant? Be beneficent? Good?

Courage: To practice, especially and firstly, in the Dream Area?

Daybook
February 18, 1958

DIARY IX

The Farewell Trip 1973

MINNESOTA
NEW YORK
IRAN

St. Paul, Minnesota
Spring, 1973

For at least two years I had been searching for a home for my collection. In fact, the State Fair Show was in part intended to bring attention to the collection. The Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts was promoting, at the time, a capital fund drive and greatly expanding the buildings of the college and the Institute. An effort was made to include a place for the Grey Foundation collection here, but the program *One World Through Art* was falling by the wayside. I investigated a private college, Hamline University. It, too, was building and its architectural firm drew up plans for a gallery next to the new library. By then, however, I realized I needed sufficient academic studies and art-oriented students to make good use of such a facility. Vassar College, which responded to my inquiry, sent the art gallery director and an instructor in Chinese-Indian art history to talk with me. But again it became clear this would be inappropriate for a Grey contemporary Asian gallery. The State University of New York at Binghamton, through my friend Michael Milkovich, vigorously suggested my locating there. But the spot seemed inaccessible to me. My heart sank at the idea that I would so seldom see my treasures again. During my trials this offer continued to encourage me, nonetheless.

Soon after the "instant museum," *One World Thru Art*, closed at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds Gallery, a long-time friend, the artist Eugene Larkin, approached me about locating on the St. Paul campus of the University of Minnesota. The idea appealed to me very much. But again I needed educating: a very large public university with certain fundings from the state legislature and a prestigious Board of Regents and vice-presidents who had other important duties were somewhat skeptical of certain aspects. I had to prove my ability to produce the funding that I claimed I intended to give. They questioned my insistence on a director separate from the director of the main gallery of the university, and one sympathetic to my interests in contemporary as well as ancient Asian history; and they were not necessarily amenable to the background studies in Arabic and Farsi languages and culture I requested be set up. Finally, there were problems with the building itself.

The selection of Hugh Peacock, a member of the architectural firm affiliated with the university, was especially agreeable to me. We had had an association years before when I had been dreaming up a chapel at Deer Lake, and, in his hands, I knew all would go well. I was greatly saddened to learn on return from my last trip to Iran that he had died of leukemia while I was away. My choice of Marcel Breuer, who accepted the commission, was running into trouble with the Minnesota Legislature which insisted on a Minnesota architect. I began to feel unwelcome.

In 1970, I had discovered on the national television program *Sunrise Semester*, a New York University professor, Peter Chelkowski, Ph.D., conducting a course in Persian civilization. I found his presentation so fascinating that I awoke three mornings a week at six o'clock in order not to miss any of it.

Shortly after this series, I was visiting my brother at St. Luke's vicarage in Greenwich Village. My favorite TV program had always begun with the familiar image of the Washington Square arch which introduced the NYU lecturer. Since the university was within easy walking distance of St. Luke's and especially since I had become a fan of the professor, I phoned and invited him to St. Luke's Chapel with the intention of showing him some of my slides of my art trips to Iran. This contact was to have totally unanticipated consequences.

At first meeting, we enjoyed sharing our mutual enthusiasm for Persian culture and Iran. Soon after, on September 30, 1970, I received an invitation from him to attend a symposium

on the Middle East to be held at the University of Texas in Austin. I arrived before the opening so that I could hear a classroom lecture by Dr. Richard Ettinghausen, then consultative chairman of the Department of Islamic Art at The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Thereafter, whenever I came to New York, I called on Dr. Ettinghausen at the museum, and I usually spent time with Peter Chelkowski too. These meetings were invaluable to me as they provided the background for the contemporary art I was collecting. From time to time, I would speak to Peter about the difficulties I was having in finding a suitable home for my collection.

For a variety of reasons, I hadn't been making very much progress. The fact that I lived in the midwest meant that I was surrounded by institutions sufficiently isolated from the rest of the world to make such places as Iran and Turkey seem exotic. After a while, I got the message that even if I were to give my collection and a museum, things wouldn't easily work out to include my idea of *One World Through Art*.

Moreover, as a result of the lectures I had heard, the books I had read, the personal contacts I had made with scholars, I had accumulated a considerable historical background. I was therefore increasingly aware that wherever the works were to find a home, they needed such a scholarly setting for an understanding of the emerging contemporary artist in the East.

When I came through New York at the start of my ninth—and what proved to be my last—trip to the Near East in May, 1973, I phoned my friend Peter Chelkowski. When he found out that my collection had not yet found the right home, he said, "Would you like me to try down here?" by which I understood that he meant New York University.

My response was "Yes." It was as simple as that. And off I went for three weeks in Iran, completely on my own this time, to be at the opening of Parviz's Heech Show at the Iran-America Society Gallery and to visit the Dehqani-Taftis, Isfahan, and the Abby Garden again.

On the day of my departure, I made the following entry in my diary:

May 18, 1973 What I want in this adventure:

A. To test myself against
   1. the rigors of travel
   2. the demands of the strange, the unfamiliar

3. the accommodation of self to hosts
4. the retrieval of all this in new learning and enlightenment
5. the return home to "normal" with the least culture shock.

B. Actual progress in
1. cementing of friendships
2. greater understanding of Persia, its culture and peoples
3. making a mark for the foundation and its culminating effort viz: my effort at establishing a museum and cross-cultural programs
4. becoming more sophisticated re government programs, attitudes, ways of responding and achieving objectives
5. acquiring some special art works, particularly enhancing the part of the collection from Iran and Greece.

C. Above all: fluidity; netting poetical extensions.

Teheran, Iran
May 22, 1973

The Tanavoli home in Tasrish, a suburb north of Teheran. In the white master bedroom all windows overlook the rose-filled garden. A balcony to stand on at night reveals the lights of Shimran below. The huge shadows of high mountains are drawn out east to west in the first pure morning light. On the white marble floor lie Persian rugs—a tribal lion on a carmine ground—a new rug designed by Parviz.

My first evening here, I lean out the open French window to hear a nightingale in the royal park adjacent, singing in the moonlight. The hermit thrush at Deer Lake sings the same limpid notes.

The grand opening of Parviz's bronze exhibit, for which I had set my arrival date, was held this evening at the Iran-America Society Gallery. It was a *tour de force*, a summation of a long-time theme of the artist, namely: the use of the three Farsi letters composing the word "heech" (meaning "nothing"). This was a total heech exhibition with about twenty-five pieces of sculpture. The heech used on the cover of the Grey Foundation catalogue, *One World Thru Art,* illustrates a single upstanding calligraphic form, looking rather like a rogue with piercing eyes—actually the holes go through the bronze—and the rhythm of the elongated last letter has a curve which, if the piece is large enough, would make a comfortable place to sit.

Parviz Tanavoli,
Heech (Nothing),
bronze on travertine base,
1972

Actually some of Parviz's heeches are that large; one in stainless steel is on the campus of Hamline University and a bronze one is in a royal library. There were also heeches tiny enough to serve as a ring for a lady's finger; one, table-size, wound around a chair; another collapsed in a heap.

The heech I purchased was a tablet (61½" x 12½" x 5") set on a travertine base chiseled with stylus-type markings. The figure of the heech was indicated on both sides of the tablet, impressed on one side and protruding on the other. The sculpture appeared monumental. After months of delay it arrived in Minnesota carrying a dire history with it. The warehouse where it awaited transportation in Iran burned to the ground. All the handwoven and the knotted rugs went up in smoke. Even the travertine base of the heech was split, but the heech itself was dug out of the rubble, whole. When cleaned, and polished, it

Parviz Tanavoli,
Heech and Table,
bronze, 1973, collection
of the artist

carried with it an odor of fire and water and smoke and wedges of charcoal in its holes which remained for a very long time.

The opening was an event that had all the art lovers of Teheran buzzing and competing to purchase. In the introduction to his catalogue, Parviz did not attempt to explain the tremendous creative energy that went into producing his heeches. He did say, "My attachment to the poetry of the East is an old love which I have always cherished for the East in everything."

I think of the heech I purchased as a commitment to the future, for surely it can be incorporated into the architecture of the future Grey Museum now being contemplated as a Grey Foundation project. Where? I do not yet know.

Karaj, Iran
May 25, 1973

To the town of Karaj where weavers are copying one of Parviz's rug designs. The house consists of a single room and a storage area. Stews simmer in kettles on the two portable oil heaters. Parviz's cousin Ali, who is with us, draws my attention

to birth control pills in the sugar bowl on a shelf. Orangeade is served, and the rug is carried in on its frame. It is quite large, in gorgeous colors chosen by Parviz. The weavers do not understand it at all. It takes twice as long to weave as the usual kind.

The farm we visit, which I call an "orchard," a short drive west of Karaj, is full of two-year-old apple, cherry, quince, pear, apricot, plum, peach, pomegranate, and walnut trees, with a patch of grapes, strawberries, peas, potatoes, and onions. This orchard had reverted with the recent land reform to the peasants. This lot was sold in its mud-walled enclosures. A well was mechanically drilled to the water table fifty feet below. With irrigation, the desert has bloomed.

Teheran, Iran
May 26–28, 1973

In my room at the Tanavolis'. At 3:30 a.m. a rooster crows from the upper hillside. I look at the garden below where the rose bushes are loaded with overblown blooms. In the haze of the May night, the pool reflects a halo of cloud that reminds me of a crown of northern lights such as I saw last summer at Deer Lake. A crescent moon lies low on the east horizon. Subdued lights glitter sparsely on the slopes below. An hour later strikes a storm of five minutes' duration, fierce winds blowing. Huge limbs of a mulberry tree are lopped off. Sia, the black watchdog, rouses from his sleep, staunchly standing head into the cyclone. He looks around, yields to the wind, and retreats to the studio.

Before departing for Isfahan, I deliver a portfolio of original prints by Minnesota artists to the office of the personal secretary to Her Majesty. I understood the Shahbanu was out of the country so I write her a note about continuing the contact between our countries and clip it to the yellow ribbon around the portfolio.

Shirin comes home from Damavand College to lunch with Hassan and me in the bishop's Teheran flat. The ride to Isfahan—from one in the afternoon to seven in the evening—is hot. We stop for tea in the shade of a mulberry tree, spreading our blanket on the hard-packed earth covered with dried sheep dung which cannot be avoided.

Hassan is still Hassan. He is in the front seat; I lean on the piled luggage in the rear. Avo is driving. It is a good trip. The Zagros Mountains are spectacularly lit by the sun as it sinks behind us, spotlighting the barley knee-high in small plantings, and the few green areas with stunted trees. The huge lion shadows creep over the valleys until they devour them and the lights of Isfahan appear.

Three and a half years have passed since I was here. It is so familiar at Bishop's House that it could have been yesterday, except that the children are so much bigger.

Isfahan, Iran
May 29–June 5, 1973

As we arrive at a churchman's house for dinner, we see a channeled stream, trees hanging over dark moving waters, a few lights. When the gate in the wall is opened by two young sons of the household, I walk under an arbor bearing a vine with faintly discernible blossoms. I exclaim, "I smell these flowers. What is the vine?" I think perhaps jasmine or honeysuckle. But no. Laughter because this lady guest has mistaken the scent of the pomade on the head of the smaller brother for some exotic flower.

The Friday Mosque, 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. A white pigeon on top of the archway of the entering corridor looks down at the great square, craning its neck. Swallows swoop, a few children climb the center platform shouting so that the echoes enlarge their voices. The pillars and domed ceiling of the Mosque are like tents, with the brick patterns all different and occasional round holes. Were it a tent, the center poles might be where the shafts of sunlight pour down. Marvelous breezes rush from the dark ends to the light, every entry is faced with alabaster columns elaborately carved. In the winter section, where the sky openings are covered with alabaster, the light is amber, melting into the gloom.

The interior of the main mosque is being repaired, its height greatly emphasized by scaffolding on scaffolding. Outside the two minarets rise, each surmounted by a hand. With the dome between, this composition gives the effect, from the opposite end of the open court, of a man's head, hands stretched heavenward.

A few somnolent figures in cool places; a few men saying their prayers in one small chapel, and one woman facing a wall between two pillars, praying, alone and humble, are the only visitors.

Margaret and I search the bazaar hoping to find material suitable for a long skirt. The bazaar is a flow of people between banks of food, more mysterious to me than a boat ride through a water maze at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds in my girlhood. Each lighted tableau is astonishing. The dank cobbled corridors of the bazaar, the passing costumed characters, the carts, the donkeys, the bicycles, the tiny booths, the spicy smells—it is all a hurrah!

Isfahan is being smothered in dust and rubble. The great sycamores survive on some of the avenues, but the horror of the four-lane roads being bulldozed in Jalfa, the old part of Isfahan across the Zender Rud, into clouds of puce-colored dust is very much with me. And so are the torn-down mud brick buildings, the rubble of old houses, hospitals, and schools piled to the side of the streets to make way for a turn-around traffic circle.

All night and all this day I have been laid low with what I think was too much sun. I know the heat and dust intimately, for I accepted Hassan's suggestion of a walk to the garden. As we somehow got lost, it was a purgatory for me with sun beating down between the mud walls in airless lanes across vacant lots littered with debris and filth.

Prelude to the Abby Garden: green and lovely, two pomegranate bushes in full bloom at the front door. The pool, newly painted blue, is filled with shimmering clear water. Guli and three little friends spend all day here.

I long for my unwalled Minnesota north country. There is an intense feeling of confinement for me in this place. The sun scorches and where there is water, the earth becomes mud. Trees grow inordinately with water, and blossom.

That's the way this place is: impoverished until the walls are up and the water flows and the grapevines make dense shade under the arbor. People in such gardens are rich, talk, and have tea.

Visit to Khataie, to the new home of the artist who works in leather. My guide and I are shown into a large carpeted room with an alcove containing a small tea table and stacked chairs. Khataie is thinner than I recall. A beautiful young grandson waits on us. Two large oil-on-canvas works of Khataie's are leaning against the wall—a court and a hunting scene. He has only one work, a leather mosaic, to show me. Verses of Hafiz, the poet, are illustrated by a pair of languorous lovers spangled in gold brocade resting in a garden where clouds painted in the Chinese manner fly east and the lovers' robes fly west in a marvelous motion of blissful eternity. The artist incorporated also his frame, a veritable enchantment of flowers on green enamel, bounded by an outer frame of red and outlined with gold—a total frame for the lovers. The time and delicate tedium, the excruciating detail of the leather composing the love scene are a marvel. Who nowadays would spend a life in such exactitudes? It was composed five years ago. For me, of course, who crosses ocean, sea, and land to purchase it.

Hossein Khataie,
Persian Lovers,
ink, paint, and gold paint on embossed and inlaid leather, 1969

Khataie comes to Bishop's House at 9:30 this morning for his money in rials and we talk in triangles—two Persians and an American.

Recuperating at Bishop's House. From my chair on the upper verandah, the life of the treetops and the azure sky delight me. Two white pigeons perform a matutinal tumbling act high up, appearing first on one side, then the other of the top leafy branches of the aspen. The scavenger crows, black and dun gray, huge, waddling, flapping, make occasional graceful sorties from pine branches. At daybreak, they are capable of crow pronouncements with their piercing caws.

A gardener is working at the far end of the enclosure. He has a twig broom. He sweeps, then disappears behind a cypress, I hear but do not see him. Perhaps he is tidying the

circle that contains the hundred wildly blooming pink and red geraniums. Pansies still flourish, but the columbine is covered with seed pods. All roses have ceased blooming save the tiny clustering singles that have clambered twice the height of a man's head. These last are festive—pink with gold hearts. The sensitive leaves of the silk tree have opened wide to the sun. The gardener now pushes a lawn mower. It sounds like a long summer morning in the house on the banks of the Mississippi.

The towering pine has old brown cones, open and dry, and pairs of tight new green ones—a cathedral for birds, butterflies, bees, spinning spiders, and me. There is even a rood screen of jasmine or crepe myrtle. The scene evokes Ben's oft-repeated childhood memory of sweet smells.

Margaret and Sussie join me on a trip to a Women's Bazaar open only on Mondays and Wednesdays. I was expecting handicrafts. The scene proves too strong for my taste: the cleaned pickled heads of sheep; their carcasses, entrails, livers, hearts, all-intrusive, while mobs push in the narrow outdoor lane. There is a tray of knickknacks, an army button, hot-blow furnaces, mender of baskets. We flee to the main bazaar off the Maidan, cool and endlessly enticing.

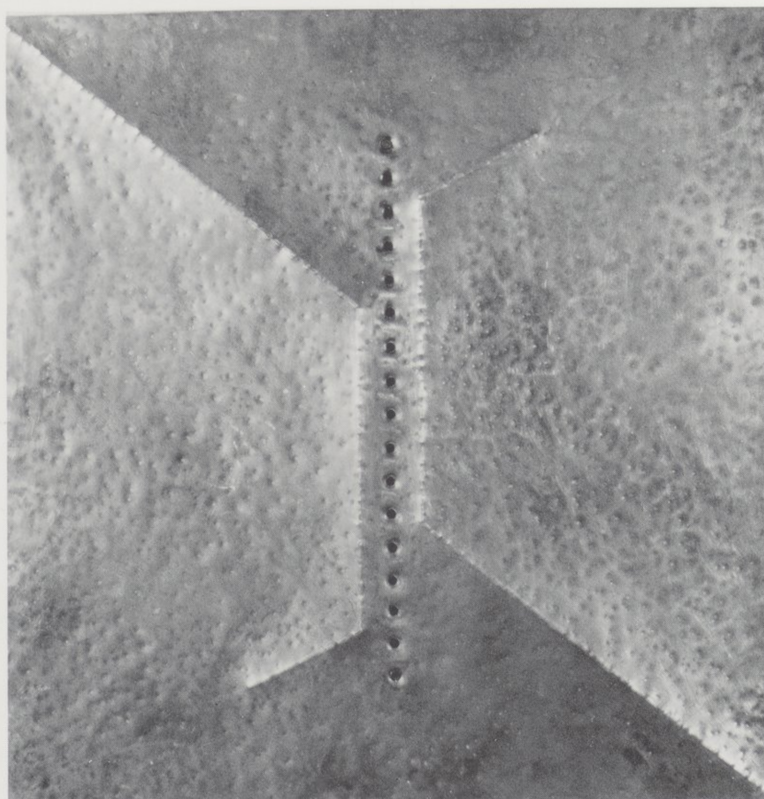
We had our night out last evening at the Canaries Restaurant. It was the eve of Hassan's and Margaret's twenty-first wedding anniversary.

Teheran, Iran
June 6, 1973

Back to Teheran. At eleven last night I was met at Merhabad airport by a tired Parviz and Manije. En route from Shiraz to Teheran they had stopped at Isfahan to collect my luggage and to rest for a half hour on the Persian carpet in the big room. Now I am back in their home and my room is exactly as I left it. Only the vista has changed because the catalpa at the end of the pool is in full bloom. Manije probably put the pink roses in my room. Parviz has laid down new rugs, his own design executed by the weavers in Karaj—a gorgeous new lion. For me he has found a special old lion rug combined with a traditional harmonious design, very soft, which he knows how to fold and pack in my big suitcase.

In the afternoon we do errands that take us down into the Teheran traffic embroilment. I visit the Ghandriz Gallery and buy three works by Rou'in Pakbaz.

On June 7, 1973, the day before I left Iran, Nicole Van de

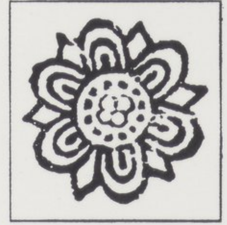


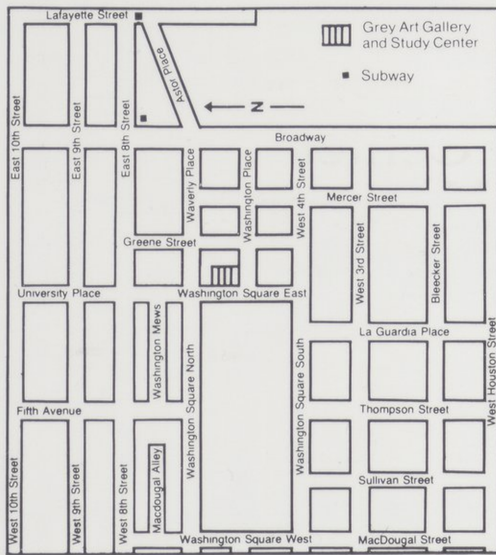
Rou'in Pakbaz,
Ode to the Sun,
copper, c. 1973

Ven's interview with me appeared in the *Journal de Teheran.* This is the way she began:

> *Jeune de coeur et d'esprit, espérant avec bon sens et audace, informée et se tenant au courant, la sympath - ique veuve de l'officier de West Point Benjamin Grey s'est découverte une vocation de mécène voici douze ans aprés un voyage qui la mène à travers le Moyen-Orient jusqu'au Japon où elle découvrit des estampes.*

> Young in heart and spirit, optimistic, practical, and courageous; well-informed and aware of the new, this congenial widow of the West Point officer Benjamin Grey realized her Maecenean vocation (her vocation as a patron of the arts) twelve years ago, after a voyage that took her from the Middle East to Japan where she discovered wood-block prints.




Grey Art Gallery
and Study Center
Subway
N
Lafayette Street
Astor Place
Broadway
East 10th Street
East 9th Street
East 8th Street
Waverly Place
Washington Place
West 4th Street
Mercer Street
Greene Street
West 3rd Street
Bleecker Street
University Place
Washington Square East
La Guardia Place
Washington Mews
Washington Square North
Washington Square South
West Houston Street
Fifth Avenue
Thompson Street
Sullivan Street
West 10th Street
West 9th Street
West 8th Street
Macdougal Alley
Washington Square West
MacDougal Street

St. Paul, Minnesota
June 1973–April 1974

DIARY X

Grey Art Gallery and Study Center New York University 1975

When I returned from Iran in 1973 I still assumed that my plans to settle my collection in a museum on the St. Paul campus of the University of Minnesota would continue to be explored and finalized. I was flown by the University of Minnesota plane to Madison, Wisconsin, to see the gallery at the university there, and I journeyed to see the one at the University of Nebraska as well. In the summer my sister, Emmy Lu, and I did a lot of walking around the St. Paul "open" campus (formerly the Minnesota State College of Agriculture) trying to find a place for the gallery elsewhere than next to the Meat Pavilion, the principal suggestion for its location.

On July 20th a letter came from Professor Peter Chelkowski that was the answer to our brief telephone conversation in New York just before my flight to Teheran. Peter's letter began:

Being convinced that your collection is a unique one in the world, I have come to the conclusion that New York City would be the ideal place to house it.

He went on to say he had contacted the office of the president of New York University, the chancellor and later the dean of the College of Arts and Science. A special committee had been established to study the project, and he enclosed a proposal with seven propositions, beginning with, *A gallery and study center in the heart of the cosmopolitan artistic life, Washington Square.* The proposal still needed to be drawn up formally by both N YU 's lawyers and my own, but Peter had succinctly presented a plan and stated it in such a way that I knew that he had understood the spirit and interest that fired my search for a home for my collection. I did not hesitate to accede to his plans. In Minnesota, up to that time, a collection

Signing contract for Grey Art Gallery and Study Center: (left to right) The Reverend Paul Weed, Professor Peter Chelkowski, Abby, Professor Horst Janson, James Hester, President of New York University, January 31, 1973

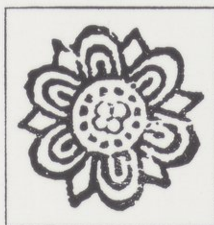
from the Mid East, India and Japan had been considered "exotic" and this perception of strangeness resulted in plans that did not express my basic belief in the communality of all art or provide enough support and accessibility for my treasures.

Shortly after sending his proposal, Peter went to the University of Utah to teach a summer course and stopped off to see my collection in St. Paul on his return to New York. After subsequent visits from Professor Horst Janson, head of the art history department, Ruth Bowman, head of the university collection, and finally Howard Conant, head of studio arts, a formal proposal of eleven pages was sent to me, along with a most beguiling blueprint of plans for the gallery, designed by William C. Shopsin, AIA. It was to be located in the southwest corner of the old Main Building, which covered half a block, and would have an entrance directly from the sidewalk as well as one from the main corridor that ran through the building. I could not quite visualize it, for I thought the fluted iron pillars that were part of the construction of a building of that size in the late nineteenth century were hardly appropriate for an art gallery. Also huge windows overlooking the park would surely limit the space for exhibition. But it was really a large space, a

very visible one, and, considering the costs of space in New York, a very valuable one.

Soon after I had given my support to the proposal sent to me, the details of my monetary contribution (in stocks) were in the hands of the two sets of lawyers (New York and St. Paul) that handled gifts from donor to receiving organization. I was fully briefed by my attorney, Jack C. Foote, senior partner in a large attorney's office, who knew me through his work on the Grey Foundation and his long acquaintance with other members of my family. By this time my brother had retired from his long service as vicar of St. Luke's Chapel and had accepted the chaplaincy of St. Margaret's Order at the Episcopal retreat House of the Redeemer on 95th Street between 5th Avenue and Madison.

Despite plans for the successful interpretation of my wishes, 1974 was a year of great sadness as well as great activity for me. My younger sister Agnes died of cancer. She was living with her husband in Connecticut; her children were scattered.

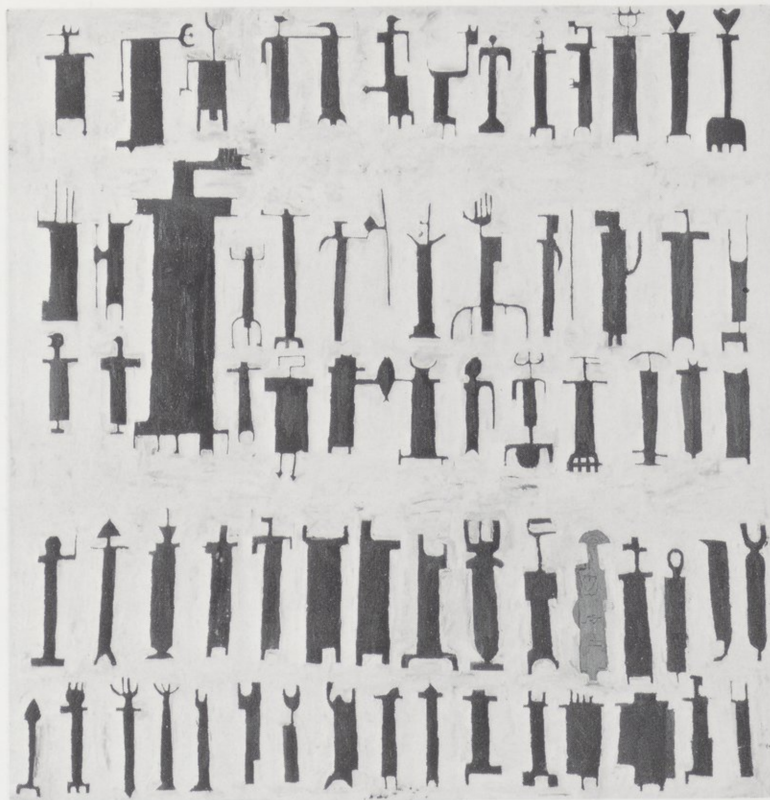


I soon became accustomed to making three or four trips a year to New York, accepting the bus trip of ninety-five blocks down 5th Avenue to Washington Square as part of my New York experience. My most important meetings at NYU took place in the office of the dean of the College of Arts and Science, when the head of the art history department and occasionally the architect would join us. But my smaller problems were always solved by a member of the development office, William Horn or Susan Lamb. The former was associated with the university the longest and I gained confidence from him in expressing the vision that I had, not only of the gallery itself, but its uses, which in the broadest sense I wanted to act as a magnet for the public, the artistic community—simply, a point made for Art in a busy world, becoming ever more and more complicated and interconnected.

My work was cut out for me after the contract was signed. Because I had determined that a home should be made for my

Aliye Berger,
The Flying Cranes,
cardboard cut, 1964

large collection, which I had assembled with the idea of its eventually going to a private or public organization, I was dismayed to have Professor Janson choose only fifty-one of my art objects for the NYU Collection. When my counsel also advised me of many new restrictions being imposed by the IRS on private foundations, I decided that I wanted to phase out the Grey Foundation. So when the time came for crating and shipping the works to New York, I did not hesitate to send almost the total number of works in the international collection: more than seven hundred and fifty works. They had to wait until the work at the Grey Art Gallery was nearly completed (in fact the storage area was completed).



Parviz Tanavoli,
The Last Poet of Iran,
oil on canvas, 1964

It was a cold January when the packing and crating got under way. I was fortunate to be able to get a local artist, Stuart Nielsen, to contract for doing the packing. The normal low temperatures of a Minnesota winter did not hamper the work of Stuart and two of my gallery associates, who had to function in the unheated garage where the crates, home from so many traveling shows, were stored. Everything had to be listed and the crates and boxes counted off as they were loaded into the moving van. It was a horrendous effort physically and emotionally for me. Yet everyone put his shoulder to the task, and the van hit the road the end of January.

Some time previous to the send-off, Kenneth Mathis had been appointed director of the Grey Art Gallery. I was happy to welcome him for a visit at my home so that I could acquaint him with the work and artists in my collection. I felt that he was sincerely interested. When back at NYU he introduced some of the works in a slide lecture, he did so with sensitivity and appreciation. I recall his comments about *The Flying Cranes* by

Aliye Berger, the Grande Dame of Turkish artists. These cranes referred to the machines that raise and lower heavy weights by means of projecting swinging arms, and not a group of tall wading birds as might be expected. This was a humorous analogy. I know there were other works that had hidden meaning, like *The Last Poet of Iran* by Parviz Tanavoli, one red figure among thirty seven blue ones, not the end of the line either. Who is this poet? Would the West be able to come to grips with these works?

I was consulted about the inaugural catalogue which was to cover both the Grey and the New York University collections. I wanted the Grey Collection to share equally in the single catalogue being contemplated and I suggested 250 works from each be featured. I determined that at least one work by every artist in the Grey Collection should be entered in order to authenticate the quality of the collection. Photographs of the many works, in black and white and in color, were distributed at random, just as my original catalogue, *One World Thru Art* had presented works under national categories.

It wasn't too long before I became aware of the fact that, though part of the gallery had been designed with permanent walls, the exposure of works from the Grey Collection would never be on a permanent basis. In my eyes this was later redeemed by designating The Grey Fine Arts Library walls to be used for this purpose in a system of rotation of works. There were only two exhibits in the gallery that I had a hand in. One was Parviz Tanavoli's *Lion Rugs From Fars* which I helped introduce to this country and which was circulated by the Smithsonian Institution. The other was Parviz's and the Government of Iran's salute to the United States Bicentennial, an exhibition of Tanavoli bronzes, a huge undertaking necessitating transportation by several planes. The show also included his collection of antique locks—bronze and gold ones.

I see my role now as one of support for the direction the gallery is taking under the dynamic directorship of Robert R. Littman. He was, of course, selected in the usual way—a university search committee and public advertising. I believe I was, however, partly responsible for the gallery's change in administration, from the dean of the College of Arts and Science to the vice-president of development. This was motivated by my desire to have it function not only for scholars and students but for the art public locally in Greenwich Village and greater New York and to encourage the gallery's reaching as large an artistic audience as possible, even worldwide.

Abby greeting Richard Ettinghausen at opening of Grey Art Gallery and Study Center, February 14, 1974

Daybook
St. Paul, Minnesota
Valentine's Day, 1974

I feel so good about the Grey Art Gallery and Study Center. As if it were a miracle, a century plant blooming. For me, just as ephemeral. Allowed to see the white waxy blossoms that took so long to bloom, last so short a time—and I so short a time—I make the connection. I am the plant. "Agave," Spanish bayonet. Why should I not stand proud? Wrapped, bemused, not hurrying. The bees find honey and spread abroad pollen from gold-dusted feet.

New York, N.Y.
April 6, 1975

On Sunday, April 6th, I flew into New York for the big opening and was met at La Guardia Airport by my brother Paul and sister Emmy Lu, who had journeyed from Florida for the occasion. I began to feel more comfortable and relaxed with their support. For the opening I brought a long straight white linen gown. Its loose sleeves were ornamented at the wrists with deep lace and the square neckline had a hand-crocheted lace yoke. For jewelry I had a pendant made es-

Opening of Inaugural Exhibition, 1975

pecially for me by the foremost sculptor in Iran—Parviz, of course. It was a silver hand, set with points of turquoise, hung from silver beads fashioned by the Navajos of the Southwest. For an evening coat I had a kaftan from Cairo of polished cotton, canary colored with black pinstripes. My shoes were white patent leather trimmed with a fine line of gold leather.

But I was in a stew about my hair. At the time I was wearing my hair short in the front and long in the back. It hadn't withstood the plane flight well. I talked my way into an early appointment at Lord & Taylor's beauty shop and came out all gussied up. I shall never have another hairdo like that one, but decided it had to do! One press report said I looked "stately." This could only have been my coiffure, as I am only five feet four inches tall.

I was in a state of nerves when Paul went out to hail a cab to go downtown to the opening. Yes, I remembered my white gloves, and the evening bag I was to carry—a Viennese handmade petit point with an old gold frame and chain which I had "saved" for a higher destiny from the counter of a Vassar Treasure Sale. My brother and sister were a great support to

me. There were twenty-four guests at a formal dinner in the reception room, on the twelfth floor of the Elmer Holmes Bobst Library. I was seated between New York University President James Hester and the Ambassador of Pakistan, His Excellency, Sahabzada Yaqub Khan. I had few art works from Pakistan. In 1964 Peg Cogswell, my former traveling companion, and the artist, John Ferren, had headed a symposium in Lahore which made history because it was truly an exchange of viewpoints between artists of these two countries.

After dinner, walking from the library to the gallery, a short city block along Washington Square Park, I was drawn by lights from the windows of the gallery streaking out into the spring night, mingling with the street and park lights, and dimmer ones bordering tree-lined paths in the park. I had a feeling of enlightenment myself. My art works were speaking for me. I actually had rights of entitlement to belong here in this metropolis. I had a feeling of coming into rightful possession of an inheritance, bigger than the city. When I walked through the door of 33 Washington Place directly into the gallery, there was such a buzz of people I was really held speechless with pleasure. I was thrilled with the way my collection looked on walls and panels, the bronze sculptures placed so strategically, the fluted iron pillars so proudly supporting the structure. Then people came up to me and spoke kind words and special words, too, of long associations, for many had known me for many years.

Monir Farmanfarmaian with her daughter and Marco Grigorian, artists from Iran, were there, and the American artist, Ahmet Gursoy, born in Turkey. Their works were on the walls. I wished all the artists could have been there—they would have been so proud!—but many of their friends were. A special friend of mine, Rufus Paret, brother of my college roommate Bert, came out of the past. Together we had spent Christmas in Riga, Latvia, fifty years ago and hadn't seen each other since. We were young then and we immediately said to each other: "Will you ever forget that Christmas?" It was a sad Christmas but we smiled that after so many years we should meet at such a gala occasion. Several of Ben's cousins had driven in from out of state for the event, and that made me very happy. Vassar classmates came from as far away as Boston. A St. Paul artist-professor who was having an opening of his own show on Madison Avenue put in an appearance with his wife. Also present was the owner of the boutique in Minneapolis where I bought my gown, and where I had been assisted by a member

Maybelle Stamper,
Of Abby,
oil on masonite, 1966

of the first Iranian family I ever met. Emmy Lu and I paused to look through the large plate-glass windows overlooking the street and the park beyond and remarked on the curious mixture that was the "real" world and this other world of man's attempt to share his own inner world through his art.

Two art objects seemed curious to me; I would have to savor them for a time. One was the only American painting in the gallery, a strange portrait of me, an oil titled by the artist, Maybelle Stamper, *Of Abby*. She had painted it on Captiva Island, Florida, the winter after Ben died, without me sitting as her model but dressing me exactly in my striped blue and white shirtwaist dress with a Phillip Morton brooch at my throat, my hair piled in a pompadour on my head. She had circled me

with night blooming cereus and snail shells à la Redon. The Grey Gallery director, Kenneth Mathis, said to me, when he chose to use a reprint of it in the Inaugural Catalogue: "You look like your own ancestor!"

The other was the horizontal plaque over the door that opened into the north-south corridor of the Main Building, opposite a set of elevators. It was a bronze lintel engraved with the words: *The Grey Art Gallery and Study Center.* Under that was lettered *A Gift of Abby Weed Grey 1975.* I think this too portrayed my ancestors.

Afterword 1982

St. Paul, Minnesota
June, 1982

After twenty years of teaching in Iran, Parviz Tanavoli took advantage of retirement from the University of Teheran shortly after the revolution of 1979 started. Concurrently, he made several trips out of Iran with an exit visa to show his collection of lion rugs, to lecture and to exhibit small bronze works in Italy. He also attended the Edinburgh Festival as a guest speaker. He is no longer in possession of an exit visa and lives very quietly in the house he built on the mountainside with his family. I understand he is writing about rugs—his favorite topic—and filling his time by making family life and his growing children the real center of his activities. His sculpture studio was closed all winter. The difficulty in getting material has put a stop to his bronze work, but he finds things to work with, and he writes me that his young son follows him about and happily tells his father that he is the luckiest man in the world to have so many interesting things surrounding him.

Because of the precarious existence of other Iranian artists it is best not to be too specific. Sohrab Sepehri died of cancer several years ago and as I look over the list of artists included in *One World Thru Art* I see the names of a number who now live abroad. Yet I know the sculptor who was a janitor at the university studio, Ismaiel Tavakol, is still there, even though classes are not in session. It is rumored they will be reopening very soon.

My friendship with Bishop Hassan Dehqani-Tafti has continued. He was forced out of Iran by an assassin's bullets. He

now is situated in a house in England, in the diocese of Winchester, with his wife Margaret. Their three daughters are close by; the youngest, my goddaughter Guli, is in her mother's boarding school. This will probably be a permanent home for all of them, yet the bishop's devotion is still to the church in Iran. With the support of the English Missionary Society, he is the center of the concerned exiles in London.

The fate of the Abby Garden is unknown. Though Hassan is still in touch with the old gatekeeper by telephone, he feels he will never return. This Christian family's life has taken a very different turn with the death of Bahram, ambushed and murdered on a Teheran street in the spring of 1980. Hassan has written a book, *The Hard Awakening*, describing his last contacts with the Church in Iran and the days following Bahram's death.

I keep in contact with all my artists where I can and assist a number in the United States with their careers. I think, however, this is the close of a chapter in Iranian art history.

Yet works from my collection have exposure, and hope-

fully will have more so as time goes on, in selective, changing exhibitions. These are organized and mounted on the walls of the Grey Fine Arts Library which I helped develop and funded four years after the opening of the Grey Art Gallery and Study Center. This space is located two floors above the gallery in a complex of auditoria, student lounge, undergraduate art history classrooms and professors' offices.

My summer cabin at Deer Lake is closed from the end of October to the end of May. I continue to go there when I can. There is a phone at the cabin and electricity but still no running water. There I sleep in the brass bed I was born in.

The Grey Collection: A Brief History

1960 First collecting of contemporary art on world tour.

1961 The Ben & Abby Grey Foundation, Inc., was founded for the encouragement of art through the assembling of international collection of art for cultural exchange programs.

Mrs. Grey, Foundation President, assembled and carried a small exhibition titled *Minnesota Art Portfolio* (*MAP*) to the Middle East. Assisted by People-to-People Program and the United States Information Service, *MAP* was shown in cities en route to Iran, and left in Teheran for circulation by the United States Information Service. For two years *MAP* traveled around Mediterranean.

1962 Provided a six-month grant for Iranian sculptor, Parviz Tanavoli, as visiting artist to the Minneapolis School of Art (now the Minneapolis College of Art and Design). His stay extended two years as staff member. Arranged at the School and later purchased an exhibition of Iranian art titled *14 Contemporary Iranians*. Under auspices of Western Association of Art Museums the exhibit traveled for three years in United States.

1963 Commissioned the American Federation of Arts to explore and then assemble an exhibition of contemporary American graph-

ics in three sections: 60 works on paper, three libraries, two slide lectures. New York opening at American Federation of Arts Gallery, titled *Communication Through Art*.

1964 Under United States Information Service auspices, Grey Foundation exhibit *Communication Through Art*, shown in Turkey, Iran, Pakistan with simultaneous openings in Istanbul, Teheran, Lahore.

Redesigned upper two floors of St. Paul home for the Grey Foundation Gallery.

1965 In Ankara and Istanbul, assembled and purchased exhibit of contemporary graphics. Initial showing in American Consulate, Istanbul.

1966 *Turkish Art Today*, foundation graphics exhibition, opened in Minneapolis Institute of Arts. Shown also in First National Bank of St. Paul, then circulated for four years in United States by the Western Association of Art Museums.

1967 Visited Iran to attend first exhibition of student work from bronze foundry, University of Teheran, installed by Parviz Tanavoli, the gift of Grey Foundation. The opening was in the presence of Her Majesty, the Empress of Iran.

MAP circulated by Minnesota State Arts Council throughout Minnesota as the Council's pilot project. On several occasions, lecturing exhibiting artists accompanied the exhibition.

A foundation exhibition, *Contemporary Art of India & Iran*, assembled on invitation of the Bristol Museum, R.I., shown in several places in New England and later circulated throughout the United States by Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Program for two-and-one-half years.

1968 Grey Foundation sponsored American section of the *First India Triennale of Contemporary World Art*. Mrs. Grey attended opening in New Delhi accompanied by Ellen Johnson, Oberlin College, Commissioner of Exhibition, and Parviz Tanavoli, Grey Foundation representative in Iran.

Contemporary Japanese Woodblock Prints prepared for exhi-

bition, shown on invitation at Minnesota State Fair, then circulated by Western Association of Art Museums in the United States for three years.

1969 Arranged for and sponsored travel of American batik artist, Margaret Cornelius, through Middle East in cooperation with American Friends of the Middle East and United States Information Service. Exhibition of her batiks and lecture demonstrations started in January in Pakistan and ended in Tunisia in April.

Sent sixteen Grey Foundation prints to State University of New York at Binghamton for exhibition *The Contemporary South West Asian-North African Graphics* (SWANA). Entire SWANA exhibit traveled through Minnesota under Minnesota State Arts Council.

Twenty Prints from the Grey Collection co-sponsored and circulated by Minnesota State Arts Council.

On invitation of Smithsonian Institution International Art Program, a graphic exhibit was prepared of "under-30" artists chosen from Minneapolis College of Art and Design. Titled *10 Young American Artists*, it was circulated in India through the United States Information Service with foundation-appointed curator, Paul Lingren. Later exhibited in Iran under auspices of Iran-America Society.

In November, Mrs. Grey traveled to Turkey. Joined Michael Milkovich, Director of University Art Gallery (State University of New York at Binghamton) in selecting a loan exhibition of *Contemporary Turkish Painting* for exhibit in United States in conjunction with the Binghamton SWANA program.

In Iran, Bettina Corke, English film producer, was commissioned to produce a film on location featuring Parviz Tanavoli and the University of Teheran bronze foundry.

1970 Premier showing Corke's *Poet/Philosopher, Revival of Bronze Casting in Iran* at Minneapolis Institute of Arts.

Exhibited *Recent Works from the Grey Collection*, 84 contemporary international paintings and sculptures, at the Minneapolis College of Art & Design.

Sponsored American section of the *Second India Triennalle of Contemporary World Art* in conjunction with the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

1971 Assisted in arrangements for sabbatical for Parviz Tanavoli, head of sculpture department University of Teheran. Four months to be spent at Hamline University (St. Paul, Minnesota) with residency there, use of foundry and lecture tour to Oberlin College, Ohio.

After five years traveling in East Mediterranean countries, Asia and East Africa, first showing in Minnesota of *Communication Through Art* at College of St. Theresa, Winona.

Sponsored the exhibition *Contemporary Turkish Painting* at the Minneapolis College of Art & Design; thirteen works purchased for the Grey Foundation collection.

Sponsored and participated with Nancy McDermott in an interview on educational TV featuring *Turkish Art Today* (KTCA, Channel 2, 30 min.).

All traveling exhibits had returned to St. Paul by fall, and an appraisal was made of the Grey Foundation collection.

Started preparations for the exhibition of entire collection.

1972 Exhibition: *One World Thru Art*, Minnesota State Fairgrounds Gallery, June 17 through July 9, weekends and the 4th of July.

Published catalogue *One World Thru Art*, listing 1001 works of art.

1973 Search begun for Minnesota home for collection. Explored two private colleges in Twin Cities and University of Minnesota. Farther afield, SUNY at Binghamton, New York and Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, New York.

Attended opening in Teheran, Iran, of Parviz Tanavoli's exhibition of large bronze sculpture and silver jewelry.

1974 Decision to accept New York University's invitation to locate collection in space to be reconstructed in old Main Building.

Contract signed. Honored as *Woman of Distinction* by New York University Alumna Club.

1975 In January, shipped over 700 works to New York University. April 7, opening of Grey Art Gallery and Study Center. December, termination of Ben and Abby Grey Foundation. Disposition of further works to Minneapolis College of Art and Design, Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minnesota Museum of Art, University of Minnesota, College of St. Catherine, Hamline University, Vassar College, Iran-America Society, University of Teheran, Iran, University of Lucknow, India, Damavand College for Women, Teheran, Iran.

1976 Published Bicentennial Celebration edition *CLARA*, 50 etchings from the Grey Collection by Clara Mairs, early Minnesota woman artist.

Exhibit at Grey Gallery of Parviz Tanavoli's large bronzes. The exhibit, sent by the Government of Iran to the Grey Gallery as a tribute to the American Bicentennial celebration, included Tanavoli's collection of bronze and gold locks for the Royal vaults. Lock collection was circulated around the United States for several years by the Smithsonian Institution.

1977 Attended Chicago conference of Consortium of Art Schools. Spent much time at Deer Lake. Vassar alumna, Deborah Lewis, '77 visited for two months, helping assemble notes and diaries for possible book.

1978 House of Iran, West 53rd Street, New York, New York, opened an exhibition of Iranian art from Grey Collection, New York University in November. Due to gathering political trouble in Iran, it closed soon after.

1979 April–May, at the Turkish Center, United Nations Plaza, a loan exhibition of Turkish art from New York University Grey Collection.

December opening of Grey Fine Arts Library and Study Center. Presented with the New York University Presidential Citation.

1980 Loaned 53 viscosity prints by Gunduz Golonu, Turkish artist, as part of "Spectrum" program *Islam and the Middle East*.

Hung in Coffman Gallery, University of Minnesota. Received Minneapolis College of Art and Design 1st Merit Award. (Mrs. Grey visits Bishop Dehqani-Tafti family in exile in England after murder of son in Teheran.)

1981 Printed memorial booklet *Bahram Dehqani-Tafti*, passages from diaries, with photographs.

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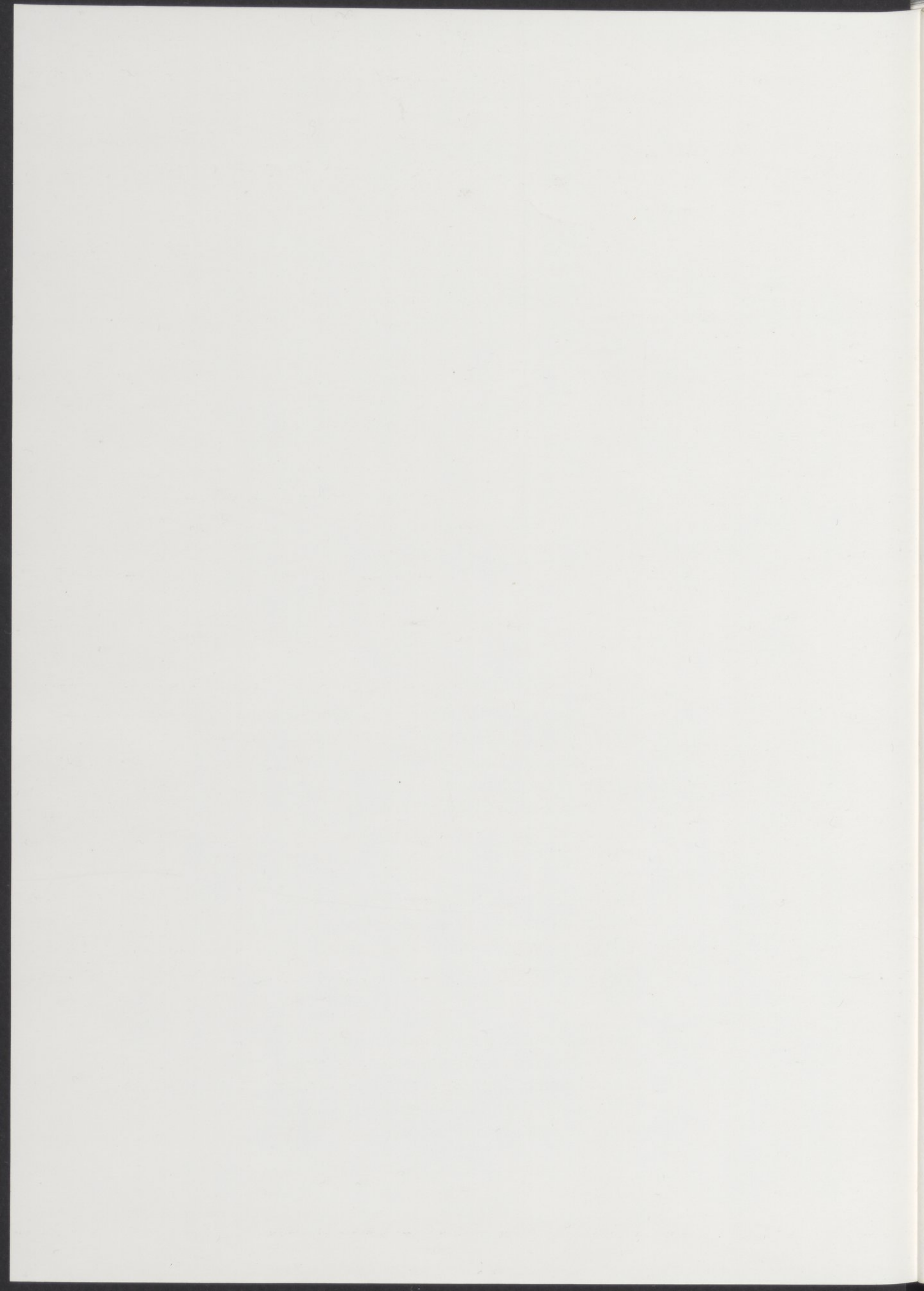
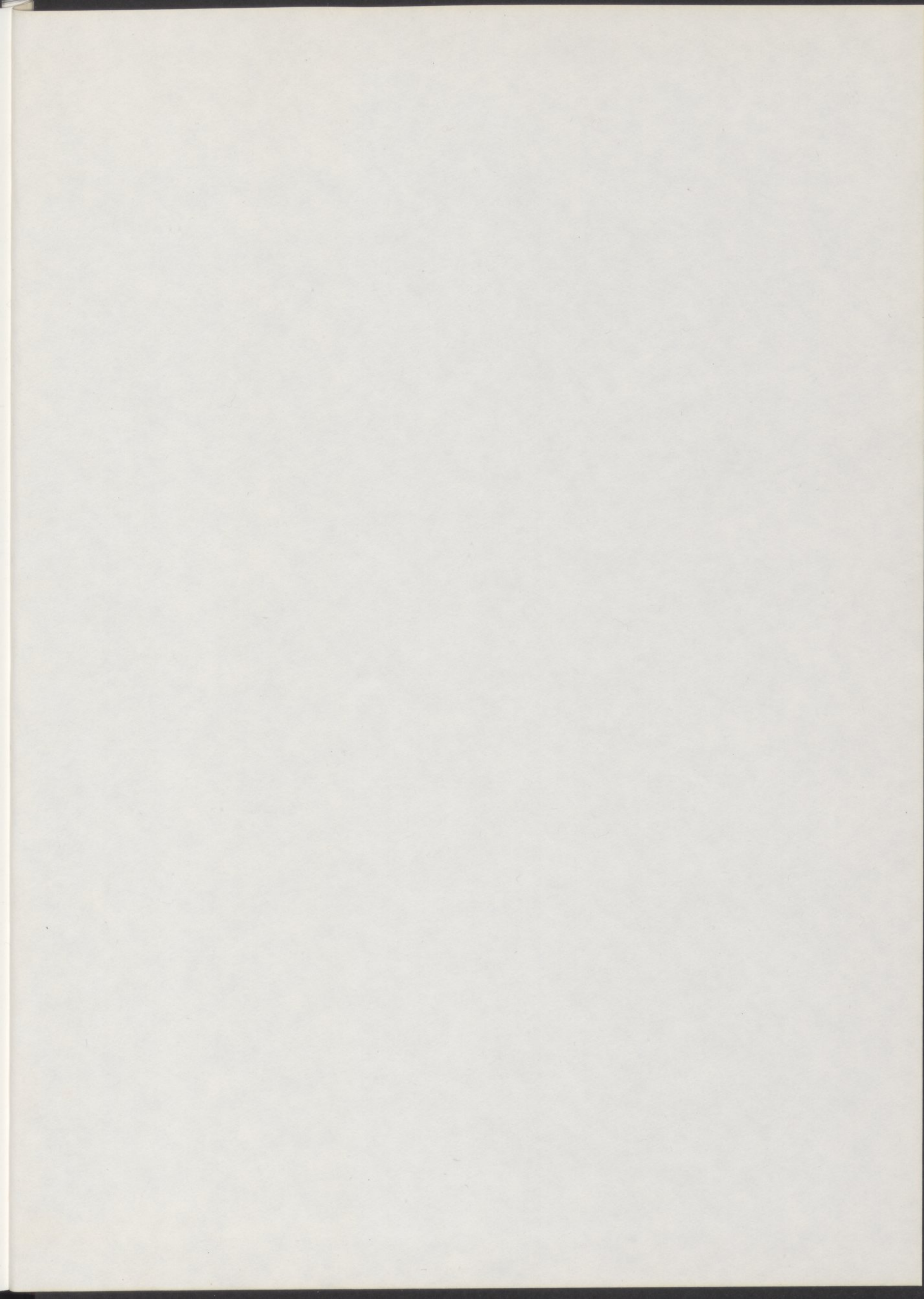
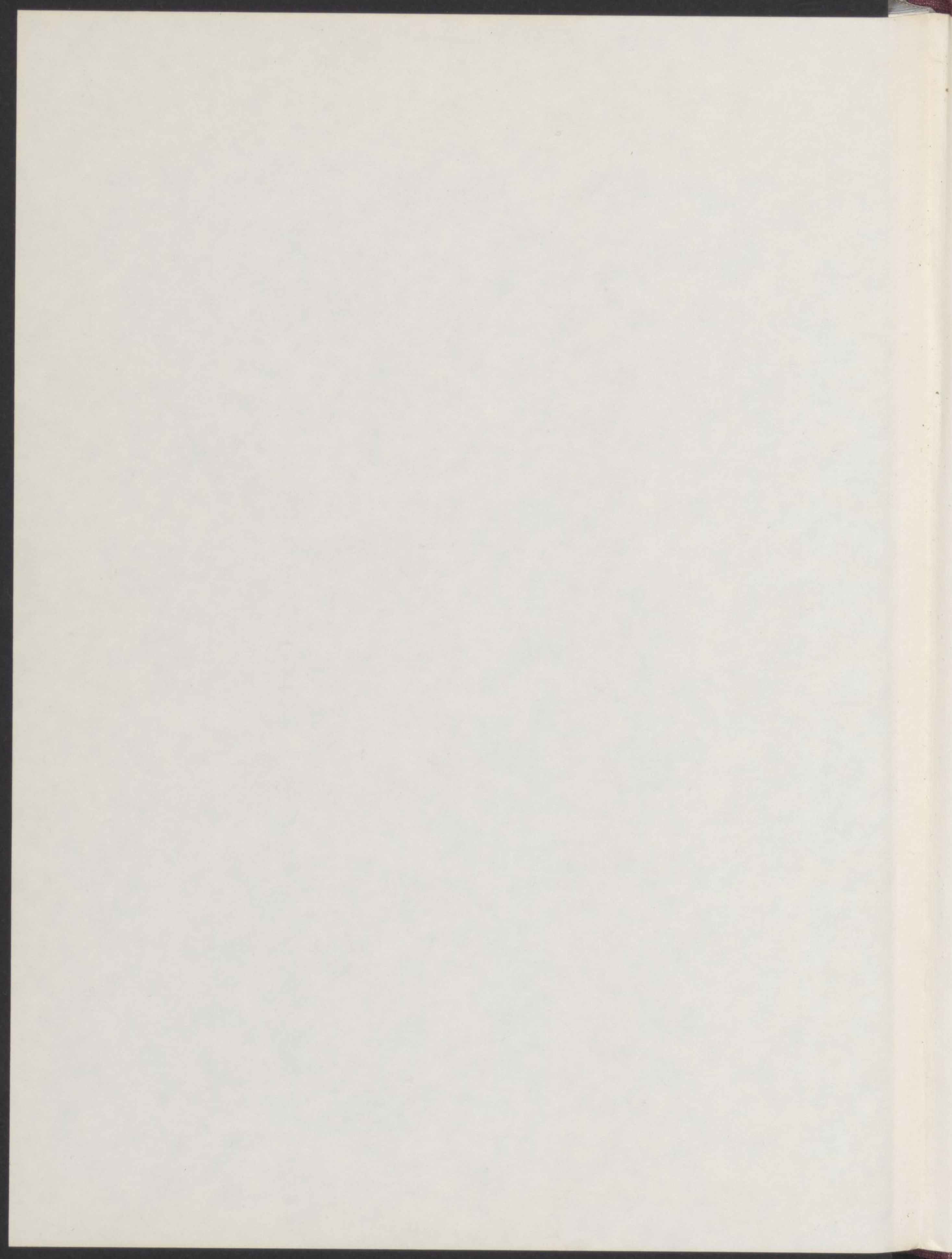
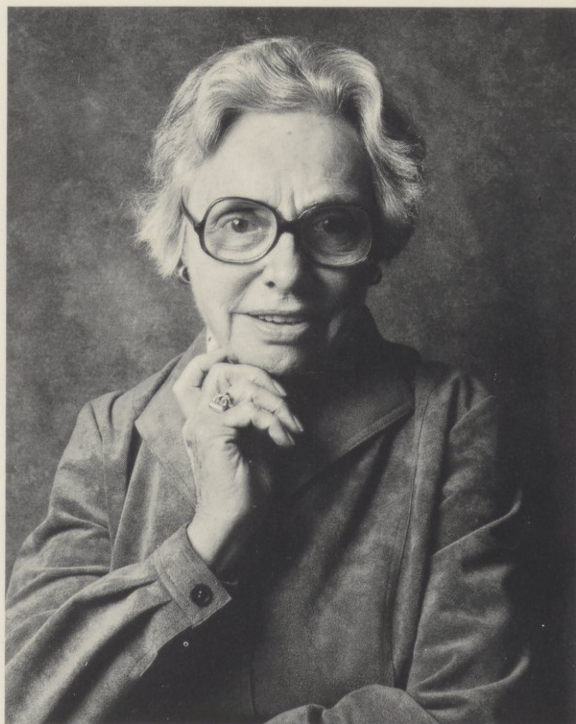
The book is set in Souvenir Light type,
printed on permanent and acid-free
Vintage Velvet paper and smyth sewn.

The rosette used throughout the text
was discovered in Isfahan on a woodblock
used to stamp cloth.
It is a motif which originated
in the ancient city of Persepolis.









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Having just celebrated her eightieth birthday, Abby Grey's reminiscences and reflections will delight the collector, the traveler, and the connoisseur. This book is of particular importance to those interested in the Middle East and those who value cultural exchange, believing, as Mrs. Grey does, in the creative abilities of men and women to foster peace and understanding.

Cover illustration: *The Picture is the Window—The Window is the Picture* ceramic stoneware, 1982.
Emmy Lu Lewis