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SOUTH AFRICAN ARCHITECTURAL RECORD

THE JOURNAL OF THE CAPE, NATAL, ORANGE FREE STATE AND TRANSVAAL PROVINCIAL INSTITUTES OF SOUTH AFRICAN ARCHITECTS AND THE CHAPTER OF SOUTH AFRICAN QUANTITY SURVEYORS

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EDITOR
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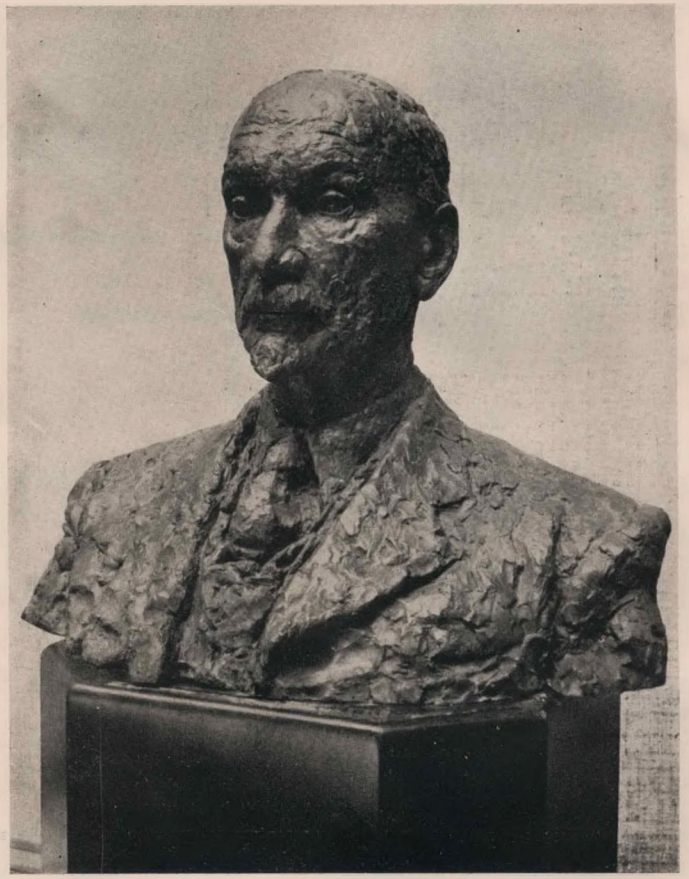
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VOLUME 35

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GENERAL J. C. SMUTS — Bronze.

Moses Kottler, Academy Gold Medalist, 1949

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THE SOUTH AFRICAN ACADEMY

THIRTIETH ANNUAL EXHIBITION, 1949

INTRODUCTION

The Thirtieth South African Academy Exhibition was held in the Municipal Art Gallery, Joubert Park, Johannesburg, from October 7th to October 23rd, 1949. The South African Academy was founded by the Association of Transvaal Architects in 1920 and has been held annually in Johannesburg ever since. After 1927 the Transvaal Provincial Institute of Architects continued to develop the South African Academy, and in 1937 entered into collaboration with The Transvaal Art Society in organising the Exhibition, which collaboration has continued successfully from that time.

The Academy Committee for 1949 comprised:

Representing The Transvaal Provincial Institute of Architects:

W. A. Macdonald Esq., F.R.I.B.A., M.I.A. (Chairman).
Professor John Fassler, A.R.I.B.A., M.I.A.
B. S. Cooke, Esq., A.R.I.B.A., M.I.A.
H. G. Summerley, Esq., A.R.I.B.A., M.I.A.
P. S. Aneck-Hahn, Esq., M.I.A.

Appointed by the Transvaal Provincial Institute:

Councillor G. L. Matthews
P. Anton Hendriks, Esq.
Willem de Sanderes Hendrikz, Esq., M.A.
Le Roux Smith Le Roux, Esq.
Mrs. Marjorie Long.

Appointed by the Transvaal Art Society:

Mrs. E. K. Lorimer
H. E. Winder, Esq.
Mrs. Nina Campbell-Quine
Miss Joan Pell.

The President of the Transvaal Provincial Institute of Architects, C. C. Irvine-Smith., Esq., A.R.I.B.A., M.I.A., (ex officio).

The Organising Secretary was Mrs. E. K. Lorimer.

The Judging Committees were as follows:

Painting and Sculpture: Alexis Preller, Esq., Pretoria; John Paris, Esq., M.A., B. Litt., Cape Town; Geoffrey Long, Esq., Maritzburg; Dr. J. von Moltke, Cape Town; Coert Steynberg, Esq., A.R.C.A., Pretoria.

Architecture: B. S. Cooke, Esq.; Professor John Fassler; C. E. Todd, Esq.

The Report of the Jury for Painting and Sculpture submitted to the Committee after selecting the work to be hung is as follows:

REPORT OF THE JURY, SOUTH AFRICAN ACADEMY, 1949

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Several major points have arisen in consideration of the works submitted for the current Exhibition, arising out of its intention, as the only open general exhibition of the year, of setting and maintaining a high standard of accomplishment. If the object were attained, then even established artists might very well enhance their reputation by showing with the Academy where their work would be seen in an overall setting of high excellence. It is the opinion of the Jury that the particular method adopted of inviting certain artists to send without submitting to judgement defeated its own purpose. It actually became necessary, when, after the assessment of the uninvited works, the invited works were examined, to recall out of fairness a number which would not have been included on their own merits by this Jury. Although certain artists were invited to submit three or more works so as to allow the Jury a choice in building up the Exhibition, of which two were to be hung, several obtained an advantage by sending only two, which made the Jury insist, after consideration of the letter of invitation, on the principle of choice, even among these two. The Chairman of the Committee of the Academy was accordingly asked to notify the artists concerned, and the selection was made most carefully in this manner, every work being inspected many times and judged on its own comparative merits.

Arising out of this it is submitted that: For future exhibitions no artists be invited to send without submitting to comparative judgement; but that everything be done to encourage established artists to send, by advertising the intention of insisting upon a very much higher standard, which would, it is felt, sufficiently justify the good artists exhibiting. Everything possible should be done to encourage artists to send only their best work where it is seen by a very great number of the public. In the present Exhibition invited works actually set a character for the whole, outside the control of the Jury. All works should be voted upon.

WORK BY JURY MEMBERS

No artist members of the jury submitted work to this particular exhibition, though they asked that jury work also should be judged when submitted in the future. They recommend: That jury work should be inspected in complete groups only after the Exhibition has been impartially, and completely assessed, and with the artists concerned out of the room and uninformed as to the decisions of the remainder of the Jury until the completion of the judging. The jury work should be held separately. It should not be seen by any members until it comes up.

PREPARATION OF EXHIBITS

Several works were in the opinion of the Jury greatly hampered as regards their seeming merits, by bad framing. It is recommended to the Committee that:

1) All works should be framed simply and without over ornament, and eccentric colouring.

2) All works should be made easily removable from their frames so as to allow, in doubtful cases, inspection of the work without the handicap of an unsuitable frame. The Academy should in its regulations reserve the right to request reframing on the advice of the Jury.

VERY LARGE EXHIBITS

To avoid unnecessary costs in submitting, perhaps exceptionally large and heavy works, it is suggested that such works, if any, should first be inspected by the Jury and that a photograph should be submitted in advance. Conservation of space, the avoidance of overcrowding and a carefully balanced exhibition seem to the jury to be the highest importance.

CONCLUSIONS

The Exhibition, however, maintains a standard and the Jury would wish to place on record its appreciation of those artists who submitted of their best, realising the aim of the Academy. It is obvious that certain artists with "established reputations" did not take the Exhibition sufficiently seriously, and sent, in some cases, work far below their known standard which belied this "established" reputation.

AWARDS

1) It is recommended to the Committee that the Academy Gold Medal be awarded this year to Mr. Moses Kottler for the works submitted by him and for his outstanding and important contributions to South African Art.

2) It is also recommended that the Academy Bronze Medal be awarded to Mr. Gerard de Leeuw for an outstanding sculpture which he had also cast very beautifully in his own workshop.

* * * * *

The Report of the Jury for Architecture after selecting works to be hung is as follows:

REPORT: ARCHITECTURAL SECTION, SOUTH AFRICAN ACADEMY, 1949

The Architectural Section for the South African Academy for 1949 comprising twenty-one perspectives and one model, makes a very modest exhibition. In the majority of cases perspectives themselves are of rather small size, and with one exception the framing and mouting are not imaginative. Only three renderings represent centres outside the Reef. The usually lively contribution from Pretoria architects is absent this year. The impression cannot be avoided, that the exhibition is below the usual standard, and is lacking in vitality.

On review, the buildings illustrated give the impression that architecture is in the doldrums. There is a dearth of forward looking schemes that suggest lines for future development. The architectural revolution of the early 1930's has apparently left a train of motives which are still very much in evidence, and rather well worn at this stage. There is also a lack of the refinement that should be associated with the use of contemporary materials. On the contrary the prevailing spirit is one of heaviness and coarseness.

Some of the shortcomings mentioned may be attributed to the fact that constructional methods have hardly changed at all during the past twenty years. The close liaison between industry and building which is necessary and desirable, and which should provide new building components of great strength, economy and lightness, has not occurred in South Africa. Thus until constructional method and materials do show appreciable development here, architecture will remain under the shadow that effects it at the present time. It is the exploitation of technical advances that can play a part in bringing it into the full light of day.

However as industry that produces for building in South Africa lags far behind Europe and the United States, development for some time ahead must perforce be well behind that overseas. Architects here are handicapped by this lag and should endeavour to assist in bringing about these technical advances. It is interesting to note in passing that new methods of construction are already giving Architecture in England a different look. The character of school buildings for example is much more slender than it has ever been before.

A well constructed model, the first to be exhibited will it is hoped be the precursor of other projects presented in a similar manner. By permitting models to be shown, the committee has recognised how valuable they are for conveying a comprehensive impression of buildings to laymen.

The Jury recommends that the Provincial Institutes should again attempt to stimulate interest in the archi-



DORSET SQUARE — Water Colour. *Erica Berry, A.R.C.A.*



WINTER EVENING, BULAWAYO — Oil. *Audrey Kloppers*

tectural section of the Academy to make good the decline evident this year. It should be borne in mind that this is the only occasion on which local architecture is presented in exhibition form to the public, who judge it accordingly. There is thus a measure of duty incumbent on architects to endeavour to support the Academy in the interests of South African Architecture. It is clear from the projects illustrated, that there should also be much more discussion amongst members of the profession, to determine directions for future development. All the old time-work clichés should be given a respectable burial at this stage.

* * * * *

The list of Exhibitors at the 1949 Academy is as follows:

Paintings:

*Nils Anderson, Durban; Charles Argent, Benoni; Wellesley Bailey, Johannesburg; *Erica Berry, A.R.C.A., Johannesburg; Jan Buys, Johannesburg; *Eric Byrd, Durban; Nina Campbell-Quine, Johannesburg; Richard Cheales, Johannesburg; Dominique P. G. Claessens, Heilbron, O.F.S.; Christo Coetzee, Johannesburg; Anne D'Amant, Brakpan; Eirys Davies, Durban; Mary Davies, Germiston; T. O. Davies, A.R.C.A., Johannesburg; *Nerine Desmond, Cape Town; Merlyn Oliver Evans; *John Ferguson, Durban; *Natalie Field, Durban; Bruce Franck, Cape Town; Harro H. T. Fromme, B.B.K., Johannesburg; *Phyllis A. Gardner, Johannesburg; Simone Gast, Johannesburg; Benny Gruzin, Johannesburg; *Ruth Everard Haden, Moedig, E. Transvaal; J. C. W. Heath, A.R.C.A., Port Elizabeth; J. Humphreys, Johannesburg; John E. Humphreys, Johannesburg; Anthony John, Durban; Ruth Katz, Johannesburg; Anne Kierski, Johannesburg; *Edith L. M. King, Moedig, E. Transvaal, Audrey Kloppers, Bulawayo; A. S. Konya, Pretoria; *Jay Krause, Pietersburg; Alfred Krenz, Cape Town; Ivor Kruger, Johannesburg; Alpheus Kubeka, Johannesburg; Rosemary Langford, Johannesburg; Maggie Laubser, Strand, Cape; *Joyce Leonard, Johannesburg; *Le Roux Smith Le Roux, Pretoria; V. Renée Liebermann, Johannesburg; *Frieda Lock, Cape Town; *Terence McCaw, Hout Bay, Cape; *Erich Mayer, Pretoria; D. A. Meerkotter, Johannesburg; *Professor O. J. P. Oxley, A.R.C.A., Pietermaritzburg; *Ruth Prowse, Cape Town; Mary F. Ralphs, Johannesburg; S. Reichmann, Johannesburg; Beatrix Roland, Johannesburg; Rupert Shephard, Cape Town; Cecil Edwin Skotnes, Johannesburg; *Maud Summer, Johannesburg; *Reginald Turvey, Johannesburg; *Maurice van Essche, Cape Town; Tony van Noort, Pretoria; *Jean Welz, Worcester; Walter E. Westbrook, Pretoria.

Sculpture:

Gerard de Leeuw, Johannesburg; *Willem de Sanderes Hendrikz, Johannesburg; *Moses Kottler, Johannesburg; *Lippy Lipschitz, Cape Town; *Ivan Mitford-Barberton, A.R.C.A., Hout Bay, Cape; Lily Sachs, Johannesburg; Henri van den Brouck, Pretoria; Edoardo Villa, Johannesburg; J. Vorster, Johannesburg.

Architecture:

S. A. Abramowitch, Johannesburg; G. Candiotes, Germiston; Castle Brewery Architectural Department, Johannesburg; Alan Fair and Partners, Johannesburg; Fleming and Cooke, Johannesburg; Gibbs and Dixon, Windhoek; Jarrett and Franklin, Johannesburg; Phillip Karp, Johannesburg; Harold H. Le Roith and Partners, Johannesburg; W. Percik, Johannesburg; Reid, Martin, Murray and Telford, Johannesburg; Schaerer and Schaerer, Johannesburg; Stegmann and Porter, Johannesburg; H. Pinfold, Johannesburg; W. W. Wood, Cape Town.

*Artists invited by the Committee to exhibit.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN ACADEMY EXHIBITION

A Radio Talk given in "People and News" prior to the Opening of the Academy Exhibition by Le Roux Smith Le Roux.

Under circumstances where those of us concerned with the tangible promotion of opportunities for the development of the arts in the Union, have come to look upon the mere survival of our organisations as an achievement, the unbroken run of thirty consecutive annual exhibitions on the part of the South African Academy must be hailed as a triumph in itself. A thirtieth birthday is as important for an organisation as for an individual. It provides the opportunity to look back and to draw conclusions, and to apply them when looking forward to the next phase of development.

This coming Friday afternoon South Africa's distinguished Ambassador Extraordinary, Mr. Charles te Water, who has done so much for the arts in this country, will open the 30th Annual Exhibition of the South African Academy at the Municipal Art Gallery, Johannesburg, and to give an idea of the wide-spread interest which this show commands, let me tell you that approximately nine hundred works, paintings, drawings and sculptures, have been submitted by some three hundred would-be exhibitors from as far afield as the Congo, Rhodesia and South West Africa.

Our Academy labours under the difficulties attached to its name. The body of Transvaal architects to whom it owes its inception in 1919, gave it the name "Academy" at a time when the Royal Academy in Britain still had a formidable reputation. To-day that is vastly different and the very term 'academic,' when applied to a work of art, has a strongly derogatory flavour and means in fact **Dull, Uninspired, Lifeless.** The Juries appointed by the South African Academy in recent years have consistently shown that they welcome modern and experimental trends and that they are interested in the standard and not the style of work submitted. Such exhibitions are completely dependent on what is sent in and great efforts are made to attract works from our most important artists, and to give a representative cross-section of the more important art trends in the country.

For many years the Academy was entirely conducted by the Transvaal Provincial Institute of South African Architects but some years ago it was decided to call in the collaboration of the Transvaal Art Society in the hard and complex task of organising these exhibitions. The exhibition is to-day jointly sponsored by these two bodies. During the last five years they have been fortunate enough to be given the hospitality of the Johannesburg Municipal Art Gallery and, depending upon the standard and nature of the exhibitions, this arrangement has to be re-confirmed from year to year. As a rule rather less than 150 works are actually accepted for exhibition, after rigorous selection on the part of the Jury. To avoid the dangers of uniformity in selection, the membership of the Juries is changed from year to year, although we have not a great many experts upon whom to draw. This year, for instance, the Jury consists entirely of new people, namely Mr. John Paris, Director of the National Gallery, Cape Town, Dr. G. van Maltke, formerly of the Cologne Museum, Mr. Coert Steynberg, sculptor, and the two painters Mr. Alexis Preller and Mr. Geoffrey Long.

In view of the success abroad of our official Overseas Exhibition of S.A. Art, a special interest attaches to all attempts at holding national exhibitions in the Union, and the organisers of the South African Academy are giving their most serious consideration to improvements and reorganisation. It has been suggested, for instance, that Academy exhibitions should be held less frequently and should be given the opportunity to circulate throughout the Union. It has also been suggested that the name be changed to avoid the academic stigma; in other words, the organisers are thinking of the **next** thirty years and are determined to get the fullest possible support of the South African artists and public. The scattered nature of the population may well be one of the reasons why our artists do not develop characteristic styles and mixed exhibitions give not only the public but artists themselves the chance of seeing what goes on. We are undergoing the interesting if painful process of "growing up artistically" and learning that inflexible lesson that one cannot live **within** the realm of civilisation and **outside** the realm of art.



XOSA MODEL — Water Colour. *Eric Byrd*



STILL LIFE WITH ROSES — Oil. *Joyce Leonard*



NOCTURNE — Oil. *Reginald Turvey*

OPENING CEREMONY

The official opening of the Academy Exhibition took place on Friday the 7th October, 1949 at 2.30 p.m. in the Main Hall of the Johannesburg Municipal Art Gallery, before a large and representative audience.

The following persons were on the platform: Mr. W. A. Macdonald, Mr. Charles te Water, Mr. and Mrs. Irvine-Smith, the Mayor Councillor S. P. Lee and the Mayoress of Johannesburg (Mrs. Holland), Mr. H. E. Winder and Mr. and Mrs. Hendrikz, Councillor and Mrs. H. P. Matthews.

* * * * *

Mr. Macdonald, Chairman of the S.A. Academy Committee opened the proceedings. The following is the text of Mr. Macdonald's speech:—

Mr. te Water, Your Worship the Mayor, Your Worship the Mayoress, the Chairman of the Art and Culture Committee and Mrs. Matthews, the President of the Transvaal Provincial Institute of Architects and Mrs. Irvine-Smith, the President of the Transvaal Art Society, Ladies and Gentlemen, — It is my privilege to preside once again at this opening ceremony of the 30th Annual Exhibition of the South African Academy, and, may I say how delighted I am to see so many of our friends here this afternoon. One of the duties assigned to me is to publicise the award of the Academy Medal—if such an award is made. It gives me great pleasure to inform you that the Jury recommended to the Committee that a gold medal (the first in the history of the Academy) be awarded to one of South Africa's best known sculptors. This recommendation is based, not only on the excellence of his exhibits on this Exhibition, but also for his contribution to South African Art over a period of many years. The Committee approved the recommendation to award the gold medal to Moses Kottler. This award is made doubly interesting by the fact that Mr. Kottler was responsible for the original design of the medal.

The Jury recommended further that a bronze medal be awarded this year to a young sculptor for his outstanding piece of work on this Exhibition. Here again the Committee agreed to the recommendation to award a bronze medal to Mr. Gerard de Leeuw.

I have pleasure in calling upon His Worship the Mayor to speak—Councillor Lee.

* * * * *

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Te Water, Ladies and Gentlemen,—May I say, first of all, that the Mayoress and I are most happy to be with you today and to associate ourselves with the opening ceremony of the South African Academy.

Mr. Te Water, who probably needs no introduction to you, will shortly perform the opening ceremony and on behalf of the City of Johannesburg, I extend to him a hearty welcome on this occasion.

You will all doubtless remember that up to the outbreak of World War No. II, Mr. Te Water was High Commissioner in London. On his return to South Africa, he became a leading figure in the National Council for the care of cripples. He also became the President of the National Veld Trust and was a moving spirit in the creation of the Epping Garden Village Housing Scheme at Cape Town.

During the last year, as you have probably observed from our daily press, he acted as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary on behalf of the present Government, and he has spent most of his period of office in travelling round the world and visiting countries in Europe, America and Africa. Before taking up the last mentioned position he was President of the South African Association of Arts, which has done so much good for art in South Africa, and whilst in office, he was instrumental in sending overseas an exhibition representative of South African Art, which exhibition is still travelling around the world and has received approbation wherever it has appeared.

Accordingly, I now have much pleasure in requesting Mr. Te Water to formally open this the 30th Annual Exhibition of the South African Academy.

* * * * *

Mr. Mayor and Lady Mayoress, Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I think it falls to me to reply immediately to the very charming opening address that we have just heard from the Mayor before I perform a duty which the Committee has asked me to do, that is, to present the two medals. Mr. Mayor, I listened very carefully to what you had to say about me and I confess it is very kind of you to say these things.

Before I go any further, a duty does fall to me to present two medals of the Academy. The first one is the 1947 silver medal and has been awarded to Mr. Jean Welz.

I am informed that the reason why the medals are being presented in 1949 is due to some delay at the Mint, but better late than never. This medal is awarded to one of our most distinguished artists. I know so very little about him. He is very well known throughout South Africa. His work, which is of the greatest distinction, speaks more loudly than any words of mine. Possibly I can say that, speaking for myself, the highest praise I can

DIE SMEKER — MAN OUT OF THE DARK — Oil.
Jean Welz





ARCADE — Oil. *Tony van Noort*



CASTIGLIONE DEL LAGO, ITALY — Oil. *Terence McCaw*

pay is that I have in my own collection his works which I treasure above all others.

The 1948 Academy Medal. This has been awarded for outstanding work, in this case to a sculptor well-known to all of us, Mr. Hendrikz. What greater praise can I give him than to say that he was born in the Orange Free State. A small country which has produced so many distinguished South Africans in our country. Mr. Hendrikz "is 'n egte seun van die Vrystaat" in his own field of work as a sculptor in Johannesburg. The present generation of young artists have been taught by him and we as art lovers have the greatest confidence and pride in his work. I call upon the Mayoress to present him with the Silver Medal of the Academy and I hope he approves of everything I have said about him.

* * * * *

It is an honour to be standing here today on this occasion. I prefer to stand talking to artists and art lovers more than in my own sphere of life. I am sure that the works you are going to hear me speak about will be approved by all. It is a great honour for me to be here opening this Exhibition, the 30th Exhibition of the South African Academy.

It is a great opportunity to say one or two things that should be said. Before doing so I think you will all wish me to express our great appreciation to the Academy Committee, to the organisers of this exhibition, and to the Chairman of the Committee in particular. You and I go to these exhibitions—and I go to a great many of them—but do we ever think of the work that lies behind these exhibitions. It is hard and difficult work. We wish to express our appreciation to all who have organised this 1949 Exhibition of the Academy. In expressing our appreciation to the Committee I must not fail in my courtesies in also expressing our appreciation and thanks to the members of the Jury. This is a thankless task and an extremely difficult one. When we have seen the pictures we will find that they, who are men of great appreciation and artists of great distinction, have exercised a sound judgement. Sound judgement is a great thing. I am sure that we will discover that they have been impartial and fair in their judgments. I have great pleasure in expressing all our thanks to the members of the Jury.

Lastly it falls on me to thank the Mayor and his Councillors for having played so great a part in the art development of your city and of having allowed, on this occasion, the Academy to show its exhibition in the Municipal Art Gallery in Johannesburg. I do not think any other Council in our country has had the vision that you and your colleagues on your Council have had in this work and that you stand as a model to other Councils in South Africa. Not alone in the visual arts either for you have a very fine orchestra. These things are due to the vision of your Councillors. I desire here today to pay my tribute to you and your colleagues for this work.

* * * * *

I think it is right that on an occasion such as this that one should stand and ponder for one moment and take stock of these things with which we are concerned —these things of the spirit—and to think about the place of the arts in our South African way of life. I wish to remind you of what lies behind an exhibition of art which has been organised on as wide a scale as this exhibition —a national exhibition.

The arts have a civilizing influence in the life of a people. Art versus materialism! There is no doubt that if we have become a materialistic people. You in Johannesburg know what that means. The fact is that there is a disequilibrium in the South African character. That disequilibrium can only be checked by the arts. Consequently it behoves us all to support widely the development of all arts in order that this disequilibrium can be checked. I mention this as a first point behind an exhibition of art —the civilizing influence. Yet I ask you all to support these efforts. Our standards of taste must be developed.

Mr. Welz and his colleagues have been playing an important part in our country. I am referring, particularly, to the art centre in Worcester. All have proved to be successful. Our own children have been able to develop their sense of beauty, and a sense of self-expression. That kind of work should be widely supported by all of us and these Art Centres should be extended.

I recall the thrill which I got in travelling through Sweden. There they have this sense of beauty. The child is taken in hand and tought a sense of beauty. It is as difficult to find something ugly in Sweden as it is to find something beautiful in our own country. How easy it is to publicise our country in terms of the arts done by our own people. In my youth we travelled with a Baedaker. It contained 4/5 of the culture of the country. The Travel Corporation should improve that side of our publicity.

I recall my visit to the U.S.A. and Washington. There is one of the greatest Art Galleries in the world. The National Gallery of Art, the Melton Art Gallery. There a visitor can hear one of the finest orchestras in the world.

When a visitor from overseas comes to Pretoria, they will find a beautiful city, a people of fine culture, garden conscious people and through that quality other great features will grow. But there is no theatre, no music, no gallery. These things have to be corrected.

I should refer at this point to a matter of national importance. Our late Administrator had a great vision —the development of a National Art Centre in Pretoria.



VILLAGE IN THE KARROO — Oil. *Maurice van Essche*



THE RAINS BREAK — AANKOMENDE REËN, S.W.A. — Oil. *Nerine Desmond*



MOUNTAIN FORMATIONS, GRAAFF-REINETT — Oil.
Le Roux Smith le Roux

This idea was widely accepted. On my return from overseas I found there was a retrogression. I sincerely hope that our authorities will give this question of the establishment of a National Art Centre in Pretoria the deepest thought. At the moment it is fairly possible that the University might be asked to guide the destinies of an Art Centre of that kind.

The ideal of an Art Centre is practical as is also a musical centre. I speak now as one of the original supporters of the idea as well as in my new capacity as Chancellor of the Pretoria University. These things cannot be done by the University. While I support this idea, I still think about these things practically. A National Art Centre in Pretoria should have its destinies controlled by an ad hoc body set up for that purpose.

* * * * *

The year 1948-1949 I look upon as a "Wonder-year" a "Wonder Jaar." An important period in the development of the arts in South Africa. First, during this period of 12 months we have sent abroad our first national exhibition of painting and sculpture. It has been successful in spite of what has been said in the press. I am taking this opportunity of saying that here. It must be said. The press should see this most important national undertaking in a proper perspective. The tour is now ending and the collection of South African paintings is about to return to our own country. I have with me a report of a talk that was broadcast by the Chief Curator of the Melton Art Gallery in Washington, about the visit of our exhibition to America, which so amply supports what I am saying to you. I quote from a broadcast made by the Chief Curator of the National Art Gallery in Washington on the occasion of the opening of the South African Exhibition of Art. The opening ceremony was performed by Mr. Walker. It was the first exhibition of contemporary art ever shown in that gallery.

> Mr. Walker (Chief Curator): It has often been said that through works of art different peoples can communicate without the barrier of language. Though in this case we share a common tongue, still I question whether the written work could convey the vivid impression of your country which we have all had from looking at these examples of South African painting and sculpture which are now being shown at the Gallery. I have enjoyed it (the exhibition) because so many of the paintings and sculpture are beautiful in themselves, are aesthetically stimulating regardless of the subject matter. These works of art are not dependent on local colour. I disagree with those critics who have implied that there should be a South African School of painting and that it is a misfortune so many of your painters and sculptors have studied in Europe. This European training has allowed your artists to express themselves with felicity but it has not destroyed their individuality. Living for the most part several thousand miles from the centres of fashion, though trained in Paris and London, they seem to have escaped the cults and fads of our time, without becoming in any way remotely provincial.
>
> The Ambassador: Your question prompts me to ask another, Mr. Walker. Could you, perhaps in a few words, tell me what impression is uppermost in your mind after visiting this Exhibition.
>
> Mr. Walker: It is obvious from this show that the artists of South Africa are aware of the important artistic movements occurring today, but their work seems to me remarkably independent and individualistic. I find that my admiration is divided about equally between paintings and sculpture which have a native feeling such as the remarkable canvasses of Battis with their inspiration derived from the engraved and painted rocks of the Stone Age which he has found scattered through the Union and Rhodesia, and those of an international character like the charming landscapes by Du Plessis with their brilliant and personal interpretation of the doctrines of Impressionism. In sculpture these is a wonderful feeling for the texture of wood, stone and bronze which seems to continue a tradition of carving indigenous to Africa. Some of the greatest achievements of the Exhibition in my opinion are the statues by Hendrikz, Kottler and Lipschitz.

From such an important person as Mr. Walker, we can gauge the high opinion that is held of South African art. We fail to appreciate our own art in our own country. We allow personalities and unnecessary currents to guide our judgment. This first great effort of our country to send a representative exhibition has been a remarkable success. Let there be no more doubt about that. In all exhibitions of art there are weaknesses—there might have been a stronger collection. However, let there be no more argument. It has been received with the greatest of interest and pleasure.

* * * * *

One more matter. We have during this year persuaded the State to establish a Department of the Fine Arts. It is important information—an admission by the State that the arts have come to play an important part in our way of life. They have taken the first step. The Associations of Art of all kinds have done everything in their power to solve some of our problems, but they have not succeeded. Now we have a department and it seems to me that by speaking with a concerted voice we can create a powerful group that can compel the department to take action. I call upon all associations to present their



OLD LADY — Oil. *Rupert Shephard*



SELF PORTRAIT — Oil. *Harro H. T. Fromme*



ZANZIBAR — Oil. *Frieda Lock*



KALK BAY HARBOUR — Oil. *Anthony John*

opinions to the department, so that their guidance can be given to the State. We have to see that the State plays its correct part. They are not going to control the development of the arts but are going to give State assistance. It is up to all of us to give great thought to this matter. We must direct the new department according to our own thinking and our own view. In that regard we have the Association of Arts, which ought to be the voice speaking for all the arts in our country. It has been said that it is only the auctioneer who can admire all schools of art. In this country the Association of Arts has no prejudices in this regard. All sections are welcome. I say to the Academy and all other associations concerned with the arts, we must come under one banner. We are speaking with too many voices on all subjects. I appeal to you to support the national body. This national body, the Association of Arts can give direction in all fields of art.

Not always is an opportunity given to me to discuss important questions of this kind on so important an occasion. In Johannesburg you have seen the light. You have the material means to forward these great movements. It is right that you should take the lead.

* * * * *

To me personally it gives me very great pleasure to talk to an audience of this quality and character. It gives me the greatest pleasure and I now declare this 30th Exhibition of the Academy open.

Mr. Macdonald then called upon Mr. Irvine-Smith to speak:—

* * * * *

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Te Water, Your Worship the Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen, — It is my pleasant duty to offer the Institute's thanks to the many people who have contributed to and assisted with the preparation of this Academy.

I would first of all like to thank Mr. Te Water for coming here this afternoon to open the Academy. If I may be permitted to say so, Sir, the Committee's decision to ask you to perform this ceremony was indeed an appropriate one, for there are few public men in South Africa today who take such a keen interest in art and architecture as you do, and we welcome this opportunity to express publicly our appreciation of your efforts in this direction.

I should like, too, to thank His Worship the Mayor, Councillor Lee, for coming here this afternoon and introducing Mr. Te Water. I am particularly pleased that you and your colleague, Councillor Matthews, are present today to enable me to express to you both personally our appreciation of the enormous amount of assistance that we receive from the City Council of Johannesburg. If this assistance were not available to us each year, it is doubtful if the Academy could take place. Certainly it would not be on the scale that we witness today. Not only does your Council provide a very substantial financial grant, but facilities are made available for the receipt and exhibition of exhibits in this building, including the valuable assistance and guidance of our good friend, Mr. Anton Hendriks. In addition to all this, arrangements have been made whereby we enjoy the services of Mrs. Lorimer as Organising Secretary, without whom it is difficult to imagine the Academy.

Then I would like to record our thanks to our partner in this venture—the Transvaal Art Society—for their ready co-operation and assistance and to express the hope that this happy association of the two bodies will continue to produce successful Academies for many years to come.

I wish to thank the members of the Committee, the members of the Juries and the secretariat for the large amount of time and energy that they have devoted to the preparation of this exhibition.

Finally, I would like to record our appreciation of the support that we have received from artists and sculptors throughout the country, who, by the submission of their best works, ensure the success of the Academy each year.



SEA HARVEST — Gouache. *Nina Campbell-Quine*



LOT'S WIFE — Oil. *Bruce Franck*



MALAY QUARTER, CAPE TOWN — Gouache. *T. O. Davies, A.R.C.A.*

SOUTH AFRICA AND ART NOW

Extracts from a lecture delivered for the Academy in the Municipal Art Gallery, Johannesburg, on Wednesday, 12th October, 1949.

By John Paris, M.A., B.Litt.
Director of the National Gallery.

In a way, Ladies and Gentlemen, the title of this lecture is a deliberate fraud; the bit about South Africa only comes at the end, and I propose tonight to talk about the background for the art of our own age, which includes of course the art of South Africa.

Whatever I may say, painting is the most inexplicable of all the arts. It is the most tangible, but also the most independant and untranslatable into words, for it is concerned with the experience of solid matter declared in terms of solid matter, and the tension which arises between sticky paint and the tingling nerves of a man who loves it and understands the peculiar nature of it.

The enjoyment of painting involves the use of a very painfully acquired sixth sense. One in twenty thousand people, perhaps, may be born with this sense in suspension, even as a like number may be born with green eyes. It is a sense just outside the range of all the others, and rather like a mixture of them all, with emphasis upon the eyes and the finger tips and the feet in going places: and for those who expect to acquire it without working for it I can only reply that nothing is more pathetic than a baby lying kicking on its back, stretching for what it wants, and easily misinformed about everything.

Now Baudelaire writing of Guys says that beauty has two elements, the one eternal and invariable and very hard to define, a thing unbearable to most people unless diluted; the other relative and circumstantial, peculiar to the epoch, the fashion, the morality, the day's passion or the current taste. The second element contains the first like and envelope, and the envelope charms and delights, whilst the other strikes at your vitals. This is a doctrine of the soul and the body of art.

The arts are like a leyden jar which stores and discharges, when wanted, the life energy of an age. If you really want to study history examine the arts and you will find in them an absolutely true and continuous archives written in a universally legible language. It makes the intermiable controversies about "modern art" so utterly unprofitable and foolish. No amount of opinion will make a work of art other than it is. It is a fact in the world for as long as its substance shall last or the memory of it and its influence shall endure. An original work of art adds to our knowledge and the fullness of life, and changes the history of painting by just so much and forever. When Cézanne saw an orange, or M. Chardin walked into his kitchen and found a loaf and a knife and a folded linen cloth, something happened in history which changed the face of the world by just so much and forever.

The sensory experiences of our normal life take the form of a continuous "film strip" of images and impressions which, with their daily occupational recurrence seem to have an inevitable order, and make a protective crust over our most delicate feelings. But every now and then a new experience, something new seen or re-seen and re-felt, comes upon you from outside, it changes you inside, adds a positive thing to your knowledge, and you are different for that experience. The artist is a man who sets out to understand the experiences passing from the outside in. He stops the film strip to fix it, and passes on to other experiences relieved of all anxiety about it, enlarged in his knowledge by it, and better equipped to understand the next. In relieving himself it also so happens that he may relieve others; make them aware of a solution, just as he became aware. He does not, like the popular derivative painter, a commercial product, whose work has nothing to do with the history of painting, obscure the face of his own age. The derivative painter works with what he believes to be other people's experience, and makes society portraits with all the attributes of fashion, pink sunsets, Autumn glades and erotic nudes with little bits of veiling and romantic "spiritual" titles, and gives his patrons a thrill of nostalgia for a world which never was, which of any rate is certainly not the world they really live in. His methods are those of ape-like imitation of his last popular triumph, maybe a picture of the year, a "problem picture," made with no intellectual effort from no first-hand experience. He simply sets his subject dressed or undressed in the studio and copies in a steady and unreal light the shadows falling upon it, animating the whole with a few peppered highlights, usually blue or pink!

But for the original artist, of whom it is worth while to speak, the face of the world must be re-examined, shelled as it were, and quietened into history. One might use the simile of a coral reef, experience dying upon experience to make a wall invincible to the knock and hiss of the tide. Every great work in the world is a part of this reef, a part of the continuity of a vast unassailable tradition.



STUDY — Crayon. *T. O. Davies, A R C A.*



MEUDON UNDER SNOW — Water Colour. *Maud Sumner*



STREET SCENE — Water Colour. *Benny Gruzin*

Throughout its history painting has had a dual nature. On the one hand there is the vision of a three-dimensional coloured world to be recorded on a two-dimensional canvas of fixed size. On the other there is the making of an **Objet d'art**, the precious thing, the absolute creation in terms of man's order as opposed to God's. The emphasis shifts now to one aspect of the dual nature, now to the other. In the Byzantine icon is the happy compromise between the vision of the thing and the object made out of it by a process not at all unlike that used in the abstract art of our day. With the rise of European painting there is the gradual discovery of how to represent a three dimensional scene on a flat surface until the perfection of a Rembrandt or a Vermeer is reached. But the icon had posed the question of the dual nature once and for all, and we return to it and to the primitive arts of mankind just as soon as we are freed by the camera of the old anxiety about superficial experiences, and at the moment when those appearances and the very nature of matter is in question. This fact, I submit, is all important to the understanding of the contemporary problem of painting. Even in Vermeer's **Love-letter** now in the National Gallery in Cape Town, the facts are very clearly seen. It is the very perfection of representation of two women in a room. But unlike the Terborgh and the two Metsus also to be seen in the same room in the National Gallery, there is an added architecture, the real thinking about cubic space, which makes the picture a thing in its own right, an **objet d'art**, a precious unquestionable independent thing with an entity of its own.

In our own time, with its hosts of scientific inventions and discoveries which have changed our way of thinking about the world as well as our way of life in it, it is not at all surprising to find a new kind of picture, a different way of seeing. In the last century the Impressionist painters shattered the face of the world with a levelled sunshaft, just as surely as the atomic bomb has now called matter itself into question. The old dark shadow and the local colour gave place, when white sunlight was split up into seven pieces by the prism, to a new analysis of all surfaces, and coloured light became the principal personage, its deeds the epic subject of the picture. The world was split up into whirling atoms of light all stuck together by the seeping light itself. Poussin realised something of it when he wrote to M. de Cambrai in 1665:

There is nothing visible without light.
There is nothing visible without a transparent medium.
There is nothing visible without form.
There is nothing visible without colour.
There is nothing visible without distance.
There is nothing visible without the instrument of sight.

The Venetians very nearly stumbled on the secret by sheer hard looking joyously at colour. But it was left for our time and the discoveries of science to fathom it fully. It is here, if we must speak of it, that we may speak of modern art, and a new way entirely of thinking about painting.

Now begin the three great visual adventures of our time:

1. Impressionism, the adventure with light.
2. Cubism, the adventure with space.
3. Surrealism, the adventure with things.

But before we go on let us think of the changes which have come suddenly upon our way of life. Electricity has been realised as a form of motion. Radio has destroyed the sense of space and time containing us. X-ray had penetrated solid matter to the bones within. Aircraft have discovered the abstract pattern of the world under foot, and broken the controlling scale of a man's eyes six feet from the soil. The camera has arrested birds in flight. The car, the train, the steamship and the bowler hat, the Eversharp pencil, reinforced concrete, the telephone and the lift, the underground railway, the push button, the refrigerator, and the mass production of machines with a strange inhuman beauty of their own, but devised by the brain of a man, have revolutionised our whole way of life, given a new meaning to mathematics and proportion quite different from that which pre-occupied Leonardo and The Florentine masters of perspective. The rhythm, the movement, the speed and the geometry of the machine, and lastly the violent psychological changes, and consequent discoveries about human minds, necessitated by violent adjustment to a new way of life, show clearly enough, I think, that our thoughts are not really those of the previous centuries save only in fundamentals, and lead us to expect that the art and expression of our day should be different in kind from all that went before. It cancels nothing. It adds much to the great reef of tradition of which I have already spoken. We have Braque saying in the review **Nord Sud** in 1917 that the aim of painting is no longer the recreation of an anecdotal fact, but the creation of a pictorial fact. That is the **objet d'art** again. Not the reproduction of what has already been seen and taken for reality, but of a new reality, of a concrete existance by means of shapes and colours and of "plastic" thought.

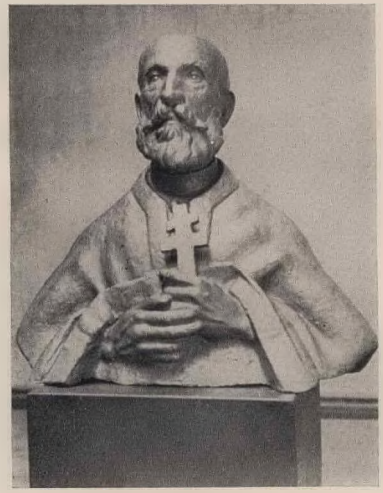
In any stage of history certain concepts are preferred which make up the typical ideology of the period. In art these particular concepts become objects of aesthetic contemplation in their own right. Do you see how far we have already travelled from those aspects of Academic derivative art of which I spoke in scorn near the beginning of this lecture? Why it has become impossible to look at such different things with the same eyes and the same



FIGURE — Diorite. *Moses Kottler (Gold Medalist)*



MOTHER AND SON — MOEDER EN SEUN
Model for commemorative panel in sandstone.
Model vir Herdenkings-paneel in sandsteen.
Willem de Sanderes Hendriks



BUST — Bronze. *Gerard de Leeuw (Bronze Medalist)*



EARTH AND WIND — Sandstone. *Lippy Lipschitz*

brain? Only the universal human and divine things are constant, that fixed and terrible element of beauty which we cannot bear unadulterated.

I have spoken much since I have been in South Africa of old things, because I would have them everywhere, like old books of wisdom and traveller's reports. But it is time to speak also of our own age in a new and splendid land. Great victories have been won by artists as well as scientists. Are we to beat a hasty retreat, like some wilful and ignorant frightened men in Europe with their "Romantic Revivals," into a fuzzy unreal world of sentiment tied up with paper and string? Or are we to make an art of our own age in South Africa out of this unmapped, half understood, passionate world of mountains and deserts and rivers and minerals and sun and splendid power and untried vigour? South Africa has been spared the terrors of war and the hysteria which made Da-Da and anti-art an absolute necessity. We have a clear run to think it out, in a clear clean sunny land full of unsapped vigour and passion. We have also, as Europeans and modern men, inherited the scientific knowledge and all the new images in the modern painter's vocabulary, which we may use as we please for our own special purposes. What then do you suppose the art of South Africa should be? If there isn't one, let us make it. For us here it isn't what has happened, though we must try to understand that, but what is going to happen which matters most. You can't stand still and live on the earnings of the past or you atrophy and rot, as the romantics do with archaic imitations. We have these things to our heritage whether we like it or not. We know these things, and we are men and women, matter and spirit. The matter has animation, and the spirit eternal life.

It is a fact that the education of the public has not kept pace with the evolution of technique. The public is still all too often a baby waiting to be misinformed, as those who read a new book in a strange language only with the aid of an archaic dictionary.

Ages fall away like leaves
The dark old books
Flutter in a whirling wind
And grass lies under the furrow.
What image shall restore
What resurrection shall restore
An image after the repetition of numbers
Promises of an hour restore
Time's pennies of whirling?

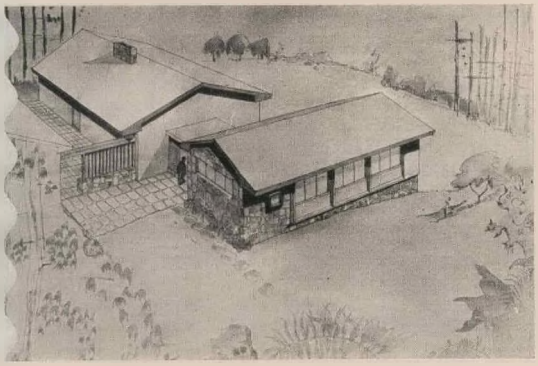


HOSTEL AT VANDERBIJL PARK, DINING HALL WING — Water Colour. *Fleming and Cooke*

PROPOSED HOTEL — Water Colour.
Castle Brewery Architects' Department



BELOW: HOUSE AT SENDERWOOD —
Water Colour. H. Pinfold (J. Paynter, delt.)







BLOCK OF SERVICE FLATS — *Model.*
Alan Fair and Partners.

LEFT: CLINIC, LOUIS BOTHA AVENUE, JOHANNESBURG.
Harold H. Le Roith and Partners.

BOOK REVIEWS

"OVER THE DRAWING BOARD," by Robert Forman, F.R.S.A., F.I.B.D. Ceaver-Hume Press Ltd. London, 1949. 10s. 6d.

This is an unpretentious little book, intended as "an introduction to Architectural Draughtsmanship," and containing much information of a general nature which should prove useful to aspiring architects.

The description of an Architect's equipment and its use and the notes on Architecture in general should, by their very briefness and oversimplification, appeal to the beginner still hesitantly wetting his toes before plunging into the subject.

In it the reader will also find explanations of what a working drawing is, of how to indicate conventional materials, how to dimension, etc. The information on perspective, isometric and axonometric drawings, and shadow projection in particular, should be interesting even to more advanced students who would like this subject presented to them with a minimum of technicalities, for Mr. Forman explains in a very simple, almost school teacher manner.

The author, probably influenced by the curricula of many English Universities, seems to have drawn the inspiration for his pleasantly executed illustrations mainly from Classical Architecture. J.M.

"TEGNIKON."

"Tegnikon" is exclusively an Afrikaans publication covering the activities of the Engineering, Chemical and Science Sections of the Faculty for Natural Science and Technology (S.A. Academy for Science and Art) and is published quarterly.

The Engineering Section of the Academy commenced its own publication in roneoed form in 1948, but the success of this publication and the urge to expand it, made publication in printed form highly desirable.

For these and other reasons, the Section for Engineering (all branches, including Geology), Physical Science and Chemistry together decided to issue a quarterly publication. The publication covers the activities of the Branches and Sections, and contains well written engineering and scientific articles—in fact, the aim is to bring "Tegnikon" on a par with the technical publications of other South African Engineering Institutions in English.

The objects of this publication are briefly the following:

(a) Promotion of Afrikaans in the natural sciences and technology;

(b) Development and standardisation of an Afrikaans terminology in these subjects (see list published in "Tegnikon");

(c) Promoting research in the fields of science and technology and the encouragement of research workers by publishing their work;

(d) Providing scientific and technical information, and

(e) Stimulation and encouragement of interests in science and technology amongst the Afrikaans-speaking section of our people.

Sample copies of the journal are obtainable from the Secretary, "Tegnikon," Engelenburg House, Hamilton Street, Pretoria. The subscription is 10/- per volume (4 numbers), or 2/6 per copy.

NOTES AND NEWS

PAINTING OF AUTOMATIC SPRINKLERS.

As may be you are aware, there are an increasing number of buildings in the larger towns of Natal that are protected, or are being protected, against fire with Automatic Sprinkler and Fire Alarm Systems. The actual Sprinkler Heads, wherein the fusible element is either a multiple piece metal strut joined together with a special fusible metal alloy or a quartz bulb filled with a highly expansible liquid. These Sprinkler Heads are constructed to operate at certain fixed temperatures in the event of fire in a sprinkler protected building.

It will therefore be obvious that if these Controlling elements (the Soldered Struts or Quartz Bulbs) are coated with paint the correct fusing point in the event of the fire would be very seriously retarded.

Several times recently we have been called upon to clean off paint from paint-coated Sprinkler Heads. Although most of the older operative painters know that Sprinkler Heads should not be painted and act accordingly, there is a newer element in the trade who do not appear to be aware that Automatic Sprinklers should never be coated with paint.

We should therefore be very much obliged if you would bring this matter to the notice of the Master Painters and others, so that they could advise their workmen that when carrying out contracts in sprinkler protected buildings that under no circumstances whatsoever must the operating elements of the actual Sprinkler Heads installed in Automatic Sprinkler and Fire Alarm Systems be coated with paint.

The Main Controlling Valves, Pipes, Fittings and Hangers can be coated with paint for preservation or decorative purposes in the usual manner.

Extract from a letter from Associated Engineers Company Limited (Durban Branch).

PARTNERSHIP.

Mr. John W. Biggar and Mr. John Vigour have entered into partnership and are practising under the style of John Vigour and Biggar, at Central House, Central St., Pretoria.

Journal of the SA Architectural Institute

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