

1963

ARNE HIERSOUX
California Palace of the Legion of Honor
San Francisco

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Exhibition Catalogue excerpts by:

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We are the music makers

And we are the dreamers of dreams,

Wandering by lone sea breakers,

On whom the pale moon beams

What does an artist paint when all the world about him seems shattered into fragments, when the images of man and the values of man seem ephemeral as the mist, when the times in which we live seem hollow, and all our yesterdays seem indeed to have "lighted fools the way to dusty death". ...

.....In his art - and through his art - he attempts to confront the world and simultaneously to rise above it, to penetrate to its depths, no matter how foul those depths may be, and at the same time to seek the heights.

This world of confrontation and ascension is not tranquil. The paint is often harsh. Figure edges are jagged, as if ripped and torn. Spatially, the paintings are taut and anxious, and yet, there is a sense of calm, too.

.....Hiersoux's work constantly probes and explores that synthesis, that unity of opposites, which is life. The images are frontal and vertical. They are both an affirmation and a negation of space at the same time. The distant and the proximate become one. All time becomes one moment, and an instant becomes eternity. All space becomes a single space in this unity of the one and the many, the near and the far, the past and the present.

Throughout his work, the artist seeks for man. His image is the image of man, not as an optical imitation of nature, but man as the ascending spirit, blood-drenched and covered with mud, fragmented yet seeking wholeness, seeking the very essence of life in the face of annihilation, deeply involved in the deathless struggle for rebirth.

.....In their own art, they must regain the initiative for the human being and the forces of life, helping to chain the demons we have allowed to run loose, and releasing the angels of grace that we have imprisoned.

The artist is a maker, a creator, an interpreter of possibilities. His intuitions of the future may give substance to a better world and help start our civilization on a fresh cycle of adventure and effort, as he struggles to find within himself a link to wholeness, so terribly lacking in our society.

Confrontation and Ascension - these are the keys to Arne Hiersoux's work.