

Rembrandt Exhibition

by **Theodore A. Heinrich**
Chief, MFA&A Section
OMG Hesse

WESTERN GERMANY'S celebrated Rembrandt exhibition attracted a record attendance of 65,000 persons to the Wiesbaden Collecting Point. These included 2,580 American and Allied personnel, who came to see this unique one-man show devoted to one of Europe's greatest painters.

Professional praise of the display's quality and importance was expressed by leading museum directors and professors of art history visiting from England, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, Norway, Poland and Switzerland, including the director of Holland's own great shrine to Rembrandt, the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam.

Arranged by the Monuments, Fine Arts & Archives Section of OMG Hesse with the assistance of the Hessian Ministry of Education, the Rembrandt exhibit was the eight in

a series initiated and organized at the Wiesbaden Collecting Point as a voluntary activity by MFA&A. The show is an example of the kind of exhibit which has made Wiesbaden a center for art-loving people all over the western zones.

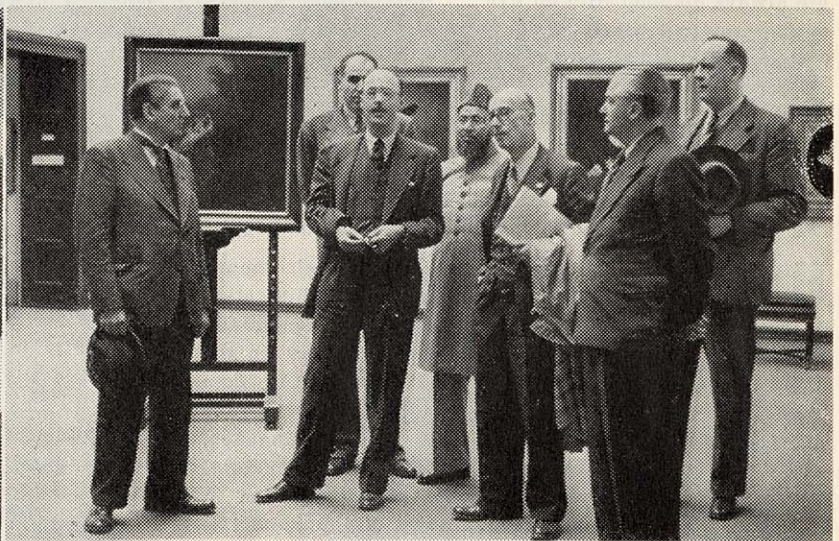
THE ORGANIZATION of a great exhibition in postwar Germany presents many severe technical difficulties, ranging from transportation to insurance, but it was nonetheless possible to assemble in the Collecting Point galleries 43 paintings, 155 drawings and more than 80 etchings by the great Dutch master. In addition, five paintings and a drawing by his teacher, Pieter Lastman, were shown and 60 paintings by his pupils and close colleagues who were influenced by his powerful example. In nearby Frankfurt three more paintings by Rembrandt were exhibited, as a pend-

ant to the Wiesbaden show, at the Staedelsches Kunstinstitut (Staedel's Institute of Art), which is prohibited by the terms of its founder's will from making loans.

The paintings were drawn from the museums of Berlin, Brunswick, Cologne, Darmstadt, Kassel and Munich. The entire Kassel collection, one of the largest single groups of Rembrandts in Europe, was lent with the exception of several canvases still inaccessible outside the US Zone, and made the journey to Wiesbaden under military guard.

So large and important an assembly of Rembrandts under one roof has been equalled only once previously and has perhaps never been exceeded, particularly as many of the canvases by Rembrandt's pupils went under the master's name until modern research

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(left) Dr. Hans Vogel, director of the State Art Collections at Kassel, delivers the principal address at the opening of the Rembrandt exhibition, Standing behind him is Dr. Erwin Stein, Hessian minister of education.

(right) Dr. Heinrich, author of this article, explains the exhibition to visiting British Commonwealth officials:

(left to right) Senator A. W. Roebuck of Canada, Mr. Harper, OMGH; Mr. Heinrich; Mr. Tamizuddin Khan, deputy president, Constituent Assembly, Pakistan; Sir Howard d'Egville, Empire Parliamentary Association; Mr. H. E. Holt, minister of labor, Australia; Mr. W. Sullivan, member, Parliament, New Zealand.

proved their true authorship. It was not surprising then, that art-lovers and students went to great effort, despite the discomforts of German travel and the severe of temporary restrictions imposed by currency reform, to visit Wiesbaden while this unique opportunity was offered.

REMBRANDT'S extraordinary creative fertility found expression in three quite different media: painting, drawing and etching. He was an innovator of such force in each of these fields of artistic endeavor that his influence is still strong nearly 300 years after his death. The stamp of his intense and manifold personality on his work was so strong as to make him at first a richly rewarded hero and later an incomprehensible enigma to his own generation, which allowed him to die in neglected poverty. This error of public judgment began to be corrected in the 18th century and his titanic stature is now universally recognized.

The exhibition was designed to emphasize the Dutch context in which he lived and worked, and at the same time to underscore the fact that a genius of such universality of spirit cannot be confined within any rigid pattern of nationalism. The compassion which shines from all his pictures, the absence of intellectual pride, are notable characteristics of his life and work of which we all, not alone the German people, need frequent reminding.

The Wiesbaden exhibitions are always planned with an eye to their potential reorientation function in a field where the eager response of the German people minimizes a suspicion of propaganda in any form. The selection and arrangement of works to be shown is consequently guided with this in mind, although the first consideration to be given is always that of quality.

HIGH QUALITY in the exhibitions permits their important use as vehicles for the introduction and illustration of the ideas and ideals of western civilization. Rembrandt, with his deep humanism, his insistence not only on the dignity but the responsibility of man, his absolute freedom from religious or racial prejudice, his emphasis on justice and good, and the clear power of his artistic language, was an ideal choice for this purpose. The thoughtful newspaper and magazine response to this exhibition in every part of western Germany indicates the impact it has had on the cultivated public.

Efforts of the Hessian Ministry of Education to bring as many school children as possible to Wiesbaden for the exhibition were severely handicapped by the introduction of currency reform, but a gratifying number (more than 250 conducted groups) made the trip. Early in the

run of the show it was necessary to advance the opening time by an hour to accommodate the crowds, who were lining up as if the museum were a movie. School groups were encouraged to come early or during lunch hour to relieve the congestion.

The success of the whole undertaking seems in retrospect to the exhibition management like a triumph over currency reform. The rumoured imminence of the reform presented serious problems in securing loans of paintings and preparing an illustrated catalogue. The latter is not yet in print, but so many demands for it are on file that it is at last to be printed for distribution.

The Exhibitions without subsidy, from either the occupation sources or the Hessian government, must be self-supporting. The automatic abolition of all but 10 percent of the reserve in the revolving fund by currency reform was at first regarded by the ministry as a catastrophic blow from which the enterprise was unlikely to recover, but the confidence shown by the people has only served to provide one more proof of the people's spiritual need.

The immediate effects of currency reform were strikingly reflected by the attendance figures. The exhibition had been open less than six weeks when the public was informed by radio on June 18 that the Reichsmark was to be recalled on the 20th and replaced by the Deutsche mark. Almost 10,000 people had visited the show during that week. The figures are counted from Sunday through Saturday and during that week of June 20-26 the total fell to 2,115, of whom 1,600 had come on the Sunday when the Reichsmark was still valid. This means that during the first week in which the new currency was in force only 500 felt they could afford one of their precious new Deutsche marks to view pictures, even Rembrandt's.

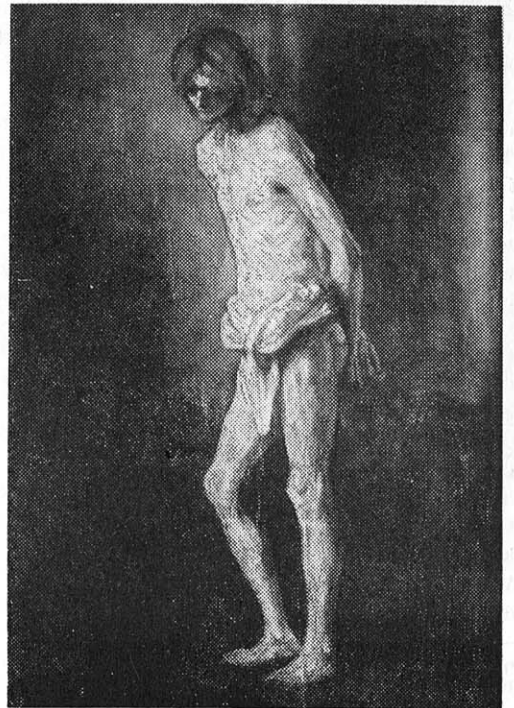
As the majority of the visitors come from out town, it took some time before people had accumulated enough surplus to finance the train journey, and of course many student groups scheduled for July or later had to cancel their plans. But a steady flow in circulation of good money was soon reflected in the attendance figures: the second week brought 776 visitors, the fifth 1,205, and during the final weeks an average of 2,100 came each seven days. The dropping of French Zone border restrictions also permitted a flow of visitors from the Mainz area.

June 20 produced one of our pleasantest anecdotes. On Monday morning an elderly man, shabby but neat, was waiting at the door at 9 o'clock to be (Continued on page 12)





Among masterworks displayed: (opposite page) "Portrait of a Lady" from the Herzog Anton-Ulrich Museum, Brunswick; (above) "Romantic Landscape with Ruins" lent by the Kassel Museum; (below) "Portrait of an Old Man with Gold Chain" from Kassel Museum; (right) "Study for Flagellation of Christ" from Wallraf-Richartz Museum, Cologne.



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among the first to enter. He handed the cashier a crisp new Deutsche mark note and confided, "Ever since I heard the announcement on the radio Friday night about the currency reform, I've been thinking how I should spend my first D-Mark. I wanted to use it for something that would give me great and lasting pleasure. Last night it suddenly occurred to me, tomorrow no one can afford the exhibition, so if I go, there will be just Rembrandt and me—and here I am."

The crowds during the opening weeks had suggested that the 50,000th visitor would probably pass through the doors on about June 24, but because of currency reform the event did not take place until July 12. A specially inscribed book on Rembrandt with a large number of fine reproductions had been prepared, and a very surprised young man found himself being presented with this book while flashbulbs flared* in front of the famous Kassel portrait of Saskia.

The recipient, Hans Voss of Bieberich, turned out appropriately to be a first-year student in art history at Mainz University. He was especially delighted to receive a good book on Rembrandt in German because his own copy, given him by his father, had Italian text, which he was unable to read.

UNIVERSITY and art students are always a foremost concern in arranging the Wiesbaden exhibitions. The acute shortage of books is clearly indicated by the number of students to be seen earnestly scribbling lengthy notes in the galleries or, as with one group of visiting art students from Munich, standing precariously stork-like on one leg while copying Rembrandt drawings on upraised knees. Organized groups of students conducted by professors, frequently spending two or three days in Wiesbaden for the purpose, visited the exhibition from the universities of Bonn, Cologne, Frankfurt, Freiburg, Hamburg, Mainz, Marburg, Munich, Heidelberg and Wuerzburg, and special lectures were arranged by renowned authorities; art

students came in groups, from among others the academies of Duesseldorf and Munich. A few enterprising students from Berlin even managed during the blockade to secure special permits and air transport "to see the Rembrandts." Several students experienced real adventures to reach Wiesbaden from areas where authorizations for such purposes are not normally granted.

Accommodation, especially when the state legislature is in session, was not easy to find, and the students in particular had great difficulties in solving the lodging problem. On at least one occasion the Reichsbahn (railroad office) intimated that Rem-

Photography by

Miss Eva-Maria-Czako

Wiesbaden Collecting Point

brandt was responsible for overnight congestion in the main station; it was found that a large student delegation from Munich was camped there for the week-end. Another large group from Freiburg was billeted all the way from Frankfurt to Ruedesheim, rallying each morning during their visit in the Collecting Point galleries at nine. Eminent museum directors and professors have passed a night or two on field cots in an empty room in the museum, but for security reasons it was obviously not possible to provide dormitory facilities for the students.

The Rembrandts are being packed for return to their owners, and the ninth Wiesbaden art exhibit is taking place. But students and art lovers alike will enjoy the benefits of the 1948 Rembrandt show for many months to come. +END

Medicine Leads Professional Studies

DOCTORS will not be scarce in Western Germany's future, according to the Education and Cultural Relations Division, OMGUS, which has compiled the first statistical survey of US Zone education since the war. Twenty-one percent of all students in higher institutions of learning are taking medical or pre-medical courses.

Next most popular major is philosophy with 14.7 percent of the enrolled students, while 13.7 percent are preparing for legal careers. Other figures show that, while 11.1 percent of students are studying to become architects, only 7.3 percent are taking engineering courses. Mathematics and the natural sciences account for only 9.5 percent. The remaining students are enrolled in various other college studies.

Universities, colleges and other higher institutions of learning—34 in all—had 42,296 students enrolled in 1947. Full-time agricultural schools enrolled 9,598 pupils in 152 schools. In the 11,488 elementary, secondary and intermediate schools 2,593,316 children attended classes. Full and part-time vocational schools, 4,175 in number, claimed 429,947 students.

Although the total number of secondary schools has decreased since 1942

from 563 to 545 in 1947, the number of private schools, including those under the auspices of religious groups, has increased. In 1942 there were 21 such schools in US occupied areas, but from the war's end until 1947 they have increased to 82 in number.

Yearly Leaves Approved

The Bavarian legislature, in what was called by a Social Democratic spokesman its first "social-political legislation," approved a law regulating minimum yearly leaves for employees. According to the law, all employees are entitled to a minimum paid annual vacation of 12 days, with an additional grant of six days to persons more than 50-percent disabled and to employees in dangerous jobs. Minors up to 18 years of age are entitled to 24 days' leave, of which at least one week is to be spent in training and education in civic, religious, scientific or vocational fields.

Two Vacancies on High Court

Since the judges appointed to date to the German Bizonal High Court are able to deal adequately with the present work of the court, it was agreed that no appointments would be made for the present to the two vacant positions of associate justices.

* Photo reproduced in Information Bulletin, Issue No. 141, Aug. 10, 1948, page 16.