

indefinitely ahead of other states
constructively.

State of Vic. has lately acquired a remarkable record of gallery activity.
Not only the Arts Centre in Melbourne — so many country galls built or remodelled.

Some of these, now vivigorated by a new bldg, show the people of their towns contemporary works of art such as they might never have seen otherwise — even if
When you remember how provincial galleries used to be quite recently — certainly until about ten yrs ago in most cases: musty museums of Victoriana: brown cows in wintry landscapes, and awful religious pictures of angels & sunbursts (awful not lit.) and nothing more vital than a couple of examples of the blue hills period of Aust. landscape.

[The deathly atmosphere(?) positively?) designed to repel people from the gallery. Anyone who went must have been driven by a puritanical belief that anything so gloomy must be doing him good... or perhaps just getting out of vain.

[Historical fact: pub. gall. grew out of the idea of democratizing the nobleman's priv. gall. Art for everyone instead of the few privileged.

But this was, and is, a pious myth. The privileged nobleman wanted his art. He didn't have to be coaxed into the long gallery to see his latest acquisition. The priv. gall. must start by facing a fact of life: contrary to the old nobleman the pub. doesn't want art. Nothing in his Aust. education or social background calculated to... The function of gall. is not to bring art to the people — it is to bring the people to art.

[Now, how bring them?
One way is to make it a carnival. The Herald O.A. Show for yrs. succeeds in drawing 1000s to Treasury Gardens to look at hundreds of pictures. Only trouble is: no art.

[The 1000s go for the novelty of seeing their friends' or relatives' works, or to goggle quietly at the obvious no-hopers or the occasional rather crude nude. Result? To the extent that they believe they are seeing art it is doing them much more harm than good. In fact: Melb's O.A. Show has set back the appreciation of art in Vic. by about double it ^{own life} span, or one whole generation.

[Because it perpetuates all the public misconceptions: that art means beautiful representations. IF it represents something but not beautiful; NOT ART. IF it's beautiful but doesn't rep. anything CANT BE ART.

[I am afraid that it must be admitted that the average Vic'tn, despite (Bdte) is not highly sophisticated in his appreciation of art compared with people of most other nations, and this is not to say that all others have a very intelligent appreciation. But at least they tend to be with it. We: without it.

[In New York they have outdoor art shows. Late last year in one in Central Park a sculptor, Claes Oldenburg, exhibited a piece called Invisible Sculpture. To do this he dug a fullsize grave, put nothing in it, filled it in.

[That, I suppose, represents the complete antithesis of the H.O.A.S.. I'm not saying either is right, or wrong. There simply must be a happy medium. But at least nonsense 'happenings' like McInnis. Sculpture have some value in blushing away cobwebs and helping to unlock, if not

actually to open, banned sections of the conservative, conventional mind & to free the frozen, numb aesthetic that still rules public art appreciation.

For years we have been trying to involve the public in art by easy stages. It hasn't got us very far. Perhaps it's time ^{now} for some more violent, purging, shock tactics. The kind of exhibitions which are exemplified by the HOAS encourage ^{the} worst misapprehensions about art, especially the desire for recognition. [Of course the experience of art is actually the very opposite from the experience of recognition. It is the experience of being communicated with on a level which one does not recognize. Whatever form, style or kind of work of art - painting, sculpture, architecture - when we receive such an unrecognized communication we know we are in the presence of art. ∴ Encouragement to look for communications in unrecognized packages is the most worthy function of a public gallery. But of course such encouragement is a most intensely difficult function to perform.

It needs a building, a centre, a symbol, to perform it in; but it needs more than a bldg. It needs continuous help from the CITY; needs cont. backing from the more privileged section of the community. It needs enthusiasm. It needs ideas. It needs money.

The building nevertheless is the starting point & as I've said, Vic. doing well with gallery bldg - much more than NSW, or other states. Yet still not a Big Deal.

In the USA - L. Thomas: "4-5 museums every day". Perhaps we can't compare - but Canada, Japan... every province or prefecture vying with the next for biggest & best bldg. Beet. That's where arch enters. A building also is capable of that artistic communication in an unrecognized pack. [Architecture is doomed to misunderstanding ∴ it has to work as well, but appreciation of art of arch is part of the whole picture of art appreciation which the gallery movement stands for.

Yet strange = just as most architects are (to be frank) philistine in re. art, so most artists are philistine in re. architecture applied to art bldgs: galleries. F.L.W: "Nothing as kind as \$1m." Wrong. An artist considering the design of a projected gallery is just as scared that the archt's art may somehow get in the way of the painting art. Prize example: W's Guggenheim. It does compete with the exhibits as a work of art & ∴ resented. Indeed Guq. is impractical in detail, but mostly it proves that high art & high arch are not inconsistent (ridiculous!) - just as Whitney Museum (Madison, Brno) and numerous others throughout world do. In short the aim in every gallery bldg we do should be nothing short of the highest imaginative creative architecture, matching what we will show inside, in artistic communication. Arch can't be separated from painting as IN or OUT media. All in, together or all out.

Camden Nat. Gall. ∴ Limited comp. Much crit by youth. ? Open competition. I not personally involved = accessory. Open comp: only way for young, free ideas. - yet sad record here. Best don't enter. Thus: limited comp. 12. Hopeful.

shows prize to best advantage.

I: Looking for a work of transcendental quality of arch that still / Hope succeed. Important to us all.