Pioneer of abstract art in Pakistan

Zubeida Agha

Technically speaking, Zubeida Agha's early works are unmistakably imitative and no effort is made by her to hide this fact which immediately establishes her as an honest artist. For there is absolutely nothing wrong in that as no artist or writer can escape this phase of his development. The urge to express oneself comes before one has mastered his individual. independent style of self-expression. At this stage, one cannot help speaking in a borrowed language.

But it happens during this period — that a certain work is middenly produced which is distinctively his own. This is usually the singalpicture to announce the arrival of a talented artist.

This work, in the case of Zubelda

Agha, is undoubtedly her Cotton-pickers. For the first time she seems to be able here to reduce her vision to a comprehensible size. The details are no longer too complicat-ed or bewildering to prevent under-standing of the form in its entirety. She also seems to have learnt to discard them so as to be able to concentrate on the discovery of the basic, simple beauty.

Other works

Most of her other works of the same year (1945) such as The Liv-ing Room. The Riders, Dances, cannot be treated as anything more than scrap-book experiments, mostly imiscrap-book experiments, mostly ini-tative. Her vision has yet to be-come clear; she has yet to get rid of the fear of colour which is noticeable in the tendency to use it com-partmentally by putting thick, dividing lines. Philosophically, she is still lost in the labyrinthine complexities of it, not knowing clearly what is it that she must seek. Her finner sensibility is often dulled by this baffling entanglement with the result that patterns are left half-developed before they could arrive at their final logical conclusion. Riders, the theme of which is that man can conquer Time, is an exam-

Besides, one cannot but notice a heavy over her early painting which may easily be mistaken for a note

of frustration. Zubeida Agha's painting of the following year khows no remarkable change except for one solitary piece of work which like Cotton-pickers of the previous year, once again forces our attention. Done in light colours with straight lines supporting that Zubeida Agha's painting of the such as Seated Woman. Life and Metamorphoris were both cone in 1848. The following year whow an o remarkable damost empty and sha produced no many attention. Done in 1848 for following year was allowed the previous year, once again forces with straight lines supporting the pattern, it is a happy exception, since during this period, still unable to gain deeper imight into her subject, she is always too much troubled by a sense of discipline and loyalty to the academic experience in preference to emotional experiwhich has an egg in the centre and a Picasso face and The Landscape With Stones. In all these we find her vision obstructed by visions of

'The Wind" & "The Bridge"

seems to have mastered her technique ag also the art of treating her subjects exactly the way she needs to treat them. Another remarkable improvement is apparent in the way she handles her colour. The areas of colours do not longer stand acmandant of the colour the areas of colours to the colour the standard of the colour is understood so that even when they are placed in constrasting positions they do not clash with one another. Her SHI Life with dancing figures and a relieving window on the jop left corrar opening on to a blue sky is an encountry opening on to a blue sky is a denote in the use of colour. She has, become almost superb ag a colourist. seems to have mastered her technique

"House with Flowers"

Then comes something which is really startling: it is her House with Flowers. A definite digression in style and mode of expression from whatever she has produced before, the poundation of her future artistic expression.

foundation of her future artistic expression.

In House with Flowers, the arrangement of lines show that she excels when she employs cubistic and not circular, womb-like patterns to express her idea. However, what attracts one most in of condensation it gives. This condensation it gives. This condensation is achieved with remarkable ease. The emotion condensed is rich in spatial quality which is neither perpendicular nor horizontal. The bright colours are held together closey in excellent brought into play with decisive forthrightness not for the sake of sayle but
to underline the inner strength an
artist need, in his lonely batte. The
straight lines in the self-portrait flow
into one another in a pattern which
also reveals a sense of inner modesty
without which no artist can agaze
at herself with remarkable simplicity.
The eyes are beautiful because they
seek beauty not within herself but
outside, through her natellect.
The use of grey and white is generally rare in the artist
as a herself with remarkable simplicity
seek beauty not within herself but
outside, through her natellect.
The use of grey and white is generally rare in the artist
as an expectation of the second of the
sense of balance and extreme delicacy
on as abuse a theme as that of The
Greation, here her grey and white also
oreate an effect of decorative state
on as abuse a theme as that of The
Greation, here her grey and white also
create an effect of decorative the post
through her modernised sensibility.

Her Life is supposed to depict the
birth and its subsequent progress
through her modernised sensibility.

Her Life is supposed to depict the
birth and its subsequent progress
through various stages. Drawn in sections, she herself describes it as an
process of intellectual analysis that is
highly individualised for any attempt
at explanation. Anyway, it is,
and the process of intellectual analysis that is
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of explanation. Anyway, it is,
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of explanation. Anyway, it is, quality which is neither perpendicular nor horizontal. The bright colours
are held together closey in excellent
dynamic equilibrium: the patterns and
colours show no weak link in the
chain which unds in a compact, which
make the compact which
gashing sigh to disturb the intense
emotion held by a hundred strings
and yet so effortlessly.
Kife is another similar type of work,
recently finished, which reveals the
same qualities that characterise the
year of the colour colours of the colours
which were the colours of the colours
that the colours of the colours of the colours
that the colours of the col

remain abstruct and individual, size is no longer alone. A visit to East Pakistan Jast year resulted in the production of some casual, simple, yet good works. Of which Sylhet Tea Garden, A Seeas from Sylhet, Moharram Procession and Chittagong Hill Tracts deserve men-

'Trees & Human Figures''

But perhaps these casual sketches have led to yet another remarkable painting which was still wet when I say it. This is her Trees and Human Figures. In this, human figures and trees are strewn all over apparently asymmetrically against a flat, buff-coloured background. The figures re tain the expressionable simplication and the same planted nearly ten years ago but unlike the figures of the previous one, they are placed in a disorganised fashion without any sense of continuity. that when the artist can free herself from the overhearing sense of the need to adhere to what she had learnt during her academic period, she can bring out simply the said and the said of the said o out any sense of continuity.



Landscape in the abstract.

MUSIC AND MUSICIANS

By Paul Henry Lang In the home of opera

I am visiting in Naples, the pletely dated piece of incompreheashor common panied by wholly underthoused from Rome, one is immediately impressed by the difference in character, demeanour, as well as dialect, between the inhabitants of these two ancient cities. of these two ancient cities.

of these two ancient cities.

While most Italians are friendly, mercurial, gregarious and talkative the Neapolitans are particularly so. The picturesque city is full of street vendors whose spiel, eloquent in words and profuse in gestures, is pure theater, not different from the Punch and Judy shows that one can all over the city.

The verbal facility of these simple people is phenomenal, and they are

The verbal facility of these simple people is phenomenal, and they are redoubtable adversaries. When a policeman apprehends a motorist or any one else the advantage is by no means wholly on the side of the arms that the second of the same people with the eloquence against that of the alleged offender, and it is not at all unusual for the officer to be successfully routed. While, all this is done with lively gestures and a torrent of which we have the successfully routed. While, all this is done with lively gestures and a torrent of walborately politic and they do not abuse each other. But the theatre is always there, recitatives and duets. always there, recitatives and duets, and I am always expecting the aria which seems to be just around the

Spirit of theatre

The other day, attracted by a large crowd entering a curious looking church I joined them and found myself attending an evening error seion. The editice was most interesting, Originally a somble and the results of the control of th

Quality of performance

The performance itself was not bad, neither was it distinguished—I imagine the singers just could not warm to their silly roles. The cast was past is conown beyond the Alpa, What impressed me was the excellence of the orchettra, which, incidentally, is a large one. It is well disciplined and responds with ease to the bidding of the conductor, Angelo Questa, who seems to know his business.

seems to know his business.

Bince "II Glurkmento" abounds in silly little instrumental solos I could form a pretty fair opinion of the players' capabilities. These players, especially the winds, have this style in their bones (and lips) and it was delightful to hear the brasses in the companiments: they know cractly how much yellow gold a hould be thrown into the mixture.

thrown into the mixture.

The staging and lighting were rather unimaginative, the sets a bit drab in a velvety-mobalry way, and the supers apparently irrepressible. The minute they were off stage they started to babble and the palaver was quite audible. The performance began, comfortably, at a quarter past nine—half an hour after the announced in the managers of Sherry's, at the Met with envy.

ed time—and the intermissions would in the manager's of Sherry's at the Met with envy.

Ill the manager's of Sherry's at the Met with envy.

An ardicular feature of the direction accurated the second of the person of the person of the person of the prompter, who grows in the pit, but he had a colleague in the person of the prompter, who from his cubby-hole, conducted with vigorous gestures.

The prompter who from his cubby-hole, conducted with vigorous gestures that the person of the prompter with the person of the reature of the direction of the conductors.

(b) The import policy in this behalf it is of course in the pit, colleague in the person as of course in the pit, colleague in the person certification of the colleague in the colleagu

How to remove handicaps & difficulties of Handloom industry

By Hafizur Rehman Wyne

It is an established fact that the handloom industry is the most important cottage industry in Pakistan, affording opportunities of employment to a large number of people—mostly refugees and displaced persons.

The industry is run by the poor or middle class people, who have a prior claim on their national Government for raising their standard of living. The persons who manage industry of imported yarrs and the competition with mill-made cloth. There has been large-scale unemployment of the weavers on account of non-grant more clothed in the manufacture of the weavers on account of non-grant more clothed in the more contingent of the position if the conditions that make unemployment in nevitable are not checked in time effectively.

Government Departments or Government of the mid-aponacored depot.

WOOLERS HAWIS: There is an ent-aponacored depot.

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Suggestions

In order to ameliorate the condition of the masses engaged in this industry, the following proposals are made, which, if adopted, are bound to give very healthy results—

The following proposals are made, which, if adopted, are bound to give very healthy results—

The following proposals are made, which is a construction and the following the mills have got the advantage of using their own cotton yarn and as such the handloom industry cannot compete with them unless it is granted licences for the import of finer counts of yarns for consumption in the industry damage of the import of finer counts of yarns for consumption in the industry later than the mills and the handloom textile factories, allocation of specified technological qualities between the two is deemed necessary. If the mills are free to produce the types of control of the products allocation of specified to the products allocation than the competition. Over lapping of their respective fields of production should be avoided and the handloom industry be given a sort of automomy within its own limited sphere without and the competition of the production of the producti

It is an established fact that Government Departments or Govern-

Besides the raw materials as mentioned above, the other requirements of the industry are accessories for handlooms, such as wire healds, reeds, shuttles, etc., and chemicals and dye-stuffs, which are not easily obtainable in the market or if at all available, are at a cost of three to four times of the actual cost, for the court times of the actual cost, and tide over the difficulty; it is most desirable that import licences for these items may also be granted to the industry.

If the position of the Govern ir the position of the Government as regards Foreign Exchange be not easy, the policy of granting import licences to newcomer handloom fac-tories be discouraged, till the position

Financial help

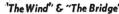
Financial help
reducts allotted to the handloom industry, the latter shall not be able to
withstand such competition. Overlapping of their respective fields of the
duction should shall be allowed to
suttonomy within its own limited
sphere without any fear of encroach
ment by the mills. This alone will
statuse a market for handloom Production should not be allowed to
suttonomy within its own limited
sphere without any fear of encroach
ment by the mills. This alone will
statuse a market for handloom Production should not be allowed to
suttonomy carried to the subject of
such and the supplied of the supplied of the
samufacture fabrics or classes of
fabrics may be reserved only for the
handloom tactories only.

Art silk

Art silk

Art silk

Art silk FABRIOS: (a) The only
competitive line for the handloom industry is the manufacture of art silk
fabrics out of imported Yarn, and it
this is taken away from the supplied of the supplied of the
handloom industry. Licenses,
therefore, for art silk yarn should be
handloom industry, and the import of
art silk yarn should be to be made silved
the handloom industry without providing
any alternative relief. The handloom industry well as the followed to
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art silk yarn should be
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of the followed to the mills, upto 1802-50,
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By Waliullah

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Besides, one cannot but notice a dark and dominant mood that hangs heavy over her early painting which may easily be mistaken for a note

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Zubelda Agha's painting of the following year thows no remarkable change except for one solltary piece of work which like Cotton-pickers of the previous year, once again forces our attention. Done in light colours with straight lines supporting the pattern, it is a happy still unable alone turing the might be able to the pattern of the property of the pattern of the property of the pattern of the property of the pattern of the patt

'The Wind' & "The Bridge" Among other paintings of 1946



Self-portrait

brought into pie with decisive forthrighness not for the sake of style but
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to underline the inner about
the in

Clifton Lights

Back home, Zubelda Agha came out with Clifton Lights in 1953 which is a sparkling production and where night ig gay ag if the spirit has conquered "the forest of the night."

However, the beneficial results of the tour abroad and the experience accumulated there did not begin to show fully until the year after when for the first time she appear, to have finally evolved a definite style. She suddenly begins to reveal natural con-dience and spontaneity and also

seems to have mastered her technique as also the art of treating her subjects exactly the ways hen needs to treat them. Another remarkable improvement is apparent in the ways accounted to no jonger stand demarcated; the integral quality of each colour is understood so that even when they applaced in construction another. Her still Life with dancing figures and a relieving window on the polet corper opening on to a blue sky is an exact the treatment of the still Life with dancing figures and a relieving window on the polet corper opening on to a blue sky is an exact the still the work of colour. She has, become almost superb as a colourist.

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"Trees & Human Figures"

But perhaps these casual sketches have led to yet another remarkable painting which: was still wet when I, say it. This is her Trees and Human Figures. In this, human figures are the remarkable painting which was still be the thing to the figure to the thing human figures are the remarkable to the figure that the expressionable simplicity and mobility of the Cotton-pickers painted nearly ten years ago but unlike the placed in a disorganised fashion without any sense of continuity.

Yet the figures seem to move in

out any sense of continuity.

Yet the figures seem to move in union: lack of imbrication does not affect the basic, almost pricai, movement of the figures because they are not bound by any mundant, description of the figures because they are not bound by any mundant, description of the figures because they are not have a figure of the figures because they are not in its purpose which is precisely to fine towards the sea. The movement in fivelf complete, it is not essential to know whether he is going East or West or whether he is going East or West or whether he is going East or West or whether he is going East or whether he is going East or west or whether he is going East or we have a support to the control of the contro

This work definitely shows that after traversing a labyrinthine path where the artist often found herself inextricably lost size has come out in the open with her emotion weed-free, clear and direct. She is now on the common weed-ree, clear and direct.

'The Wind'' & "The Bridge"

Among other paintings of 1946 perhaps The Wind and The Bridge deserve special mention, the first one because of the way equibalance be-tween the strongly blowing wind and the solid mass is mantained and the second one for its composition which would have been perfect had not the artist used cross bars demarcated by almost parabolic lines, thereby weakening the structure

In The Horses, which came in the year of partition, we see two horses, one galloping and the other pulling back as if about to halt. The contrast between the emotions, one meemingly arrested and the other in full swing, is the main point of the painting. The swab of a vague, draped human figure in one corner (the horses face him), the angular walls, the contrasting positions of the two animals, the preponderance of red with green used at the base combine to give it the lightness of an idea which transforms the physical conflict as revealed in the behaviour two horses into something more than what is actually one is sup-posed to see. The friction of opposite forces are seen to vanish; they almost

meet in harmony.
That Zubeda Agha That Zubeda Agha is a sensitive artist becomes apparent when one sees her self-portrait, also done in 1947. Extremely analytical, it reveals a searching mind which is beautiful besearching it is honest, though perhaps alightly pathetically so Her self-criti-cism draws strength from angular, eism draws strength from angular, sharp lines: there is no trace whatever of celf-satisfaction which is avoided by refraining from using rounded lines. The use of diagonal, and vertical lines horizontal

for the first time she appears to have finally evolved a definite style. She suddenly begins to reveal natural confidence and spontaneity and also

inextrically lost, she has come out in the open with her emotion weed-free, clear and direct. She is now on her own.

STAMP NEWS By ERNEST A. KEHR

Calgary Stampede Cachet

Mail dispatched from the exhibition post office open during Stampede Week in Calgary, Alta., Canada, from July 11 to 16, this summer, again was marked with a special cachet.

The 1955 design features a rodeo contestant riding a Brahma bull set against a shieldshaped outline to suggest the fiftieth anniversary of Alberta Province, Collectors desiring the cachet may send selfaddressed envelopes and five cents for Canadian postage, to the Postmaster at Calgary, before July 1.

ROYAL EXHIBITION

Word was received from London last week that H. R. Harmer, head of the H. R. Harmer Organization, went to Buckingham Palace and selected 100 pages from the Royal Collection which he will take to Auckland for display at the New Zealand Centennial Stamp Exhibi-

POST OFFICE



tion between July 16 and 23.

Mr Harmer, who recently celebrated the diamond jubilee of nis marriage, will fly to New Zcaland with the stamps, where he is serving on the international jury of the show

CHRISTMAS SEAL SHOW

Persons interested in displaying their collections at the International Christmas Seal Exhibi-tion to be held in Oslo in November, may obtain free entry blanks and a copy of the prospectus from the Norwegian National Tuberculosis Association, in Oslo.
SHOW PROSPECTUS

The first prospectus for the Fifth International Stamp Exhibition to be held here next year has been issued. A copy may be obtained from 22 E. 35th St., New York 16.

LATEST PRICE LIST

The H.E. Harris Co. 108 Mas-sachusetts Ave., Boston 17, is distributing a handly catalogue of stamps, packets, albums and supplies. It also contains much useful information for the collector. Copies, which contain several colour illustrations, are available upon request.





Human Figures and Trees.