Beauty In The Rough

Leonard Good Finds It In Oil Towns of Texas

By Oscar Brousse Jacobson, Director, School of Painting and Design

WO or three years ago, when Leonard Good was one of the art editors of the Oklahoma Whirlwind, college funny paper, he woke up one morning to find himself the center of a heated controversy. The “powers” had swooped down in wrath and suppressed an entire issue because of one or two of his drawings. Good was not a mischievous student and no one was more surprised or astonished than he at the whole fuss. It all happened because he had anticipated women’s fashions by two years.

When Leonard Good came to the University of Oklahoma he was very young and he looked younger still. He was one of the many students in the art school who failed to choose wealthy parents when they entered this world so he had to support himself all through his college years, and this he did with his art. Young Good loved colors, dyes, and patterns. The girls approved of his shimmering batik scarves and shawls and acquired them by purchase or by teasing. He batiked graceful rollicking flappers on handkerchiefs. These he sold to the up-to-date college boys.

In this manner he made both ends meet until he graduated with honors and Letzeler medals.

The young man showed early that he was talented. He was almost a virtuoso in the ease with which he acquired technique. Too great a facility some of his teachers thought and they sometimes feared that he might only play with the surface of things, that he might become spoiled and not realize on his talent.

After graduation Leonard Good left Oklahoma to take a position as teacher of art at a summer colony in Louisiana.

He didn’t admire the south and came near abandoning the place; however, he stuck it out and actually discovered for himself the negro. With blue pencil he drew the colored people, a whole series of these types, from wrinkled, toothless Grandma to Tom the baby. He made drawings that are technically perfect, but better than that, they show that young Good has penetrated into the negro soul and character.

His works of art these drawings are solidly constructed with a splendid knowledge of planes and shadows; they are done with a minimum of labor and fuss; he has concentrated on the face, merely suggesting the torso, often with the greatest economy of line.

In the fall he went to Burkburnett, Texas, to teach the rudiments of art to the high school children. Away from the pleasant atmosphere of the university art school and away from his old friends, he was, no doubt lonesome, perhaps a little homesick for the college halls. Surrounding him here was mostly ugliness, unpleasant blocks of brick, shacks with tin roofs, oil derricks, scarred fields, disorder.

Out of such rude material Good has with the same blue pencil or with water color distilled an art that is based on the modern tendencies of Cezanne but which is nevertheless essentially his own. Again he has looked and seen deeper than the surface ugliness. He has brought into these paintings his native sense of feeling for design and organization. As compositions they are well worthy of a maturer artist.
Modestly he sent to the university a group of his negro characters and his oil town studies, and his old teachers hung his first professional exhibition.

In one year from graduation he has as it were found himself and his metier. These landscape drawings from the oil fields are not only decorative but well constructed with thrusts and supports filling space until they entirely satisfy one’s feeling for harmony and composition.

He is not a stickler for photographic so-called truth and his trees are often of a species unknown to the botanist but artistically they are satisfying and adequate. Good will be heard from again.

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**Capshaw Gains Point**

Elmer “Trim” Capshaw, ’15 arts-sc., superintendent of schools of Norman, not only won state wide commendation when early in March he opened a campaign to obtain observance of the state law prohibiting high school fraternities, but he has apparently won his point. Backed by the school board, Capshaw expelled several leaders of the Phi Delta fraternity, who capitulated. The members of the fraternity, who will have to relinquish their national charter, must resign from all school clubs, class offices, etc., and must turn in to the school all athletic awards and trophies.

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**Uncle “Buck’’ in Relapse**

Dr. J S. Buchanan, vice-president of the university, suffered a heart attack Monday, March 4, but his improvement has been gradual and sure.

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**Jack Foster in Race**

Jack Foster, owner of the University Cleaners, and loyal Sooner who is now enrolled in the law school, is a candidate for mayor of Norman. He is opposing Guy Spottswood, incumbent.

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**Pi K. A.’s to Build**

Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity broke ground March 6 for its new fraternity home in the 800-block on College avenue. The house, to cost $75,000, will be of English architecture. The McAlester Construction Co. was awarded the building contract. The house will be 102 feet in length and will set on a lot 125 feet by 150 feet.