

15 Polish painters

[by] Peter Selz

Author

Selz, Peter, 1919-

Date

1961

Publisher

The Museum of Modern Art: Distributed
by Doubleday

Exhibition URL

www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/3427

The Museum of Modern Art's exhibition history—
from our founding in 1929 to the present—is
available online. It includes exhibition catalogues,
primary documents, installation views, and an
index of participating artists.



15 polish painters

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NEW YORK

LIBRARY

Museum of Modern Art

ARCHIVE

WHEELER

OFFICE COPY

DEPT. Membership (Contrib) ¹⁹⁶¹

MEMBERSHIP DEPARTMENT
DO NOT REMOVE



PETER SELZ **15 POLISH PAINTERS**

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NEW YORK

Distributed by Doubleday and Company, Inc., Garden City, N. Y.

MOMA 690
C.2

TRUSTEES OF THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

William A. M. Burden, Chairman of the Board; Henry Allen Moe, William S. Paley, Vice-Chairmen; Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, 3rd, President; James Thrall Soby, Ralph F. Colin, Vice-Presidents; Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss, Gardner Cowles, *Mrs. W. Murray Crane, René d'Harnoncourt, Mrs. C. Douglas Dillon, Mrs. Edsel B. Ford, *A. Conger Goodyear, *Mrs. Simon Guggenheim, Wallace K. Harrison, Mrs. Walter Hochschild, *James W. Husted, Philip C. Johnson, Mrs. Albert D. Lasker, Mrs. Henry R. Luce, Randal H. Macdonald, Mrs. Samuel A. Marx, Porter A. McCray, Mrs. G. Macculloch Miller, Mrs. Bliss Parkinson, Mrs. Charles S. Payson, *Duncan Phillips, David Rockefeller, Nelson A. Rockefeller, *Paul J. Sachs, James Hopkins Smith, Jr., Mrs. Donald B. Straus, G. David Thompson, *Edward M. M. Warburg, Monroe Wheeler, John Hay Whitney

* Honorary Trustee for Life

DEPARTMENT OF PAINTING
AND SCULPTURE EXHIBITIONS

James Thrall Soby, *Chairman*

Peter Selz, *Curator*

William C. Seitz, *Associate Curator*

Alicia Legg, *Assistant Curator*

Frank O'Hara, *Assistant Curator*

Sally Kuhn, *Secretary*

Therese Varveris, *Secretary*

Library of Congress Catalogue Card Number 61-16522

© The Museum of Modern Art, 1961

11 West 53 Street, New York 19, N. Y.

Printed in the U. S. A. by the John B. Watkins Company

Designed by Susan Draper

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

During the last several years an extraordinary resurgence in painting has taken place in Poland and a number of highly talented avant-garde Polish painters have already attained international prominence. As an important cultural exchange project carried out on a non-official basis, The Museum of Modern Art, under the auspices of its Department of Circulating Exhibitions, offers the first comprehensive exhibition of postwar Polish painting in this country.

The present exhibition has been planned for more than two years. It was initiated by Porter McCray, Director of the Department of Circulating Exhibitions, during a trip to Poland in the summer of 1959 when he was the first American museum official to visit postwar Poland. During the fall of 1959 and again in September 1960 I visited Poland to familiarize myself with the work being carried on in the various art centers there. Although this exhibition has been organized entirely under private auspices, we wish to thank the Government of the Polish Peoples' Republic for its generosity in making all the necessary arrangements for Mr. McCray and myself to see the work of the artists. Without the help of Polish museum directors and Polish art critics the present exhibition could never have been realized. Mr. James West, First Secretary of the American Embassy in Poland, has also facilitated our work with many helpful suggestions.

The enthusiastic response of the artists themselves has been a constant incentive and we are greatly indebted to them for their assistance and encouragement.

We want to thank all the collectors who, having acquired fine examples of Polish painting, have been most generous in making them available to us. Particular acknowledgment is due to Mr. Frederick Zimmermann of the New

York Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra whose enthusiasm for the new Polish work has been a constant inspiration during the organization of this exhibition and to Mr. G. David Thompson who has offered special assistance in the publication of the catalogue.

We are grateful particularly to Kazimierz Karpuszek of the University of Chicago and the Contemporary Art Gallery who acted as the Museum's consultant, interpreter and photographer during my two trips to Poland and whose intimate knowledge of Polish culture and art has helped to lay the necessary groundwork for this exhibition. In addition, Mr. Karpuszek is a generous lender to the exhibition.

We want to express special thanks to Dr. and Mrs. Arthur Lejwa of the Galerie Chalette who have not only lent most generously to this exhibition but have also been instrumental in obtaining a number of important works and in providing valuable assistance.

Mrs. Hart Perry of the Gres Gallery in Washington has helped a great deal in bringing to this country key paintings which we were able to borrow. The important one-man show of Tadeusz Kantor held at the Saitenberg Gallery in 1960 has enabled us to obtain loans of some of his finest work. We are also indebted to the Felix Landau Gallery in Los Angeles for important loans.

The Rockefeller Brothers Fund and the International Council of The Museum of Modern Art have manifested vital interest in the exhibition and have shared some of the preliminary costs. The CBS Foundation, Inc. has provided a subsidy which makes it possible for the Department of Circulating Exhibitions to make this important show available to other museums. We are particularly pleased that other cities besides New York will be able to see *Fifteen Polish Painters*.
— P. S.

LENDERS TO THE EXHIBITION

Joseph Alsop, Washington, D. C.; Lorin Bernsohn, New York; Plato C. Foufas, Evanston, Illinois; Mr. and Mrs. Milton A. Gordon, New York; Joseph H. Hirshhorn Collection, New York; Mr. and Mrs. Kazimierz Karpusko, Chicago; Larivière Collection, Montreal; Mr. and Mrs. William Lincer, New York; Mr. and Mrs. Albert A. List, New York; Mr. and Mrs. T. Barry McNulty, Glencoe, Illinois; Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Maremont, Winnetka, Illinois; N. Richard Miller, New York; Mr. and Mrs. Jan Mitchell, New York; Mrs. Hart Perry, Washington, D. C.; Piotr Potworowski, Sopot, Poland; Mrs. John D. Rockefeller 3rd, New York; Mr. and Mrs. David C. Ruttenberg, Chicago; Mr. and Mrs. Marc M. Spiegel, London; Ryszard Stanislawski, Warsaw; Mr. and Mrs. G. David Thompson, Pittsburgh; Judge and Mrs. Russell E. Train, Washington, D. C.; H. Landon Warner, Gambier, Ohio; Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Zimmermann, New York.

The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Montreal; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Contemporary Art Gallery, Chicago; Galerie Chalette, New York; Galerie Lacleche, Paris; Gres Gallery, Washington, D. C.; Felix Landau Gallery, Los Angeles; Saidenberg Gallery, New York.

FIFTEEN POLISH PAINTERS

The abrupt and vigorous efflorescence of art in Poland since the end of the Second World War is one part of the total reorganization of a society which has managed to rise from the burial grounds of military devastation. Warsaw, the center of a new intellectual resurgence, was destroyed by the Germans during the war: more than ninety-five per cent of the city was razed after the insurrection of 1944. Although the Poles have erected an entirely new city out of the rubble, their romantic sense of the past and their desire to keep national traditions alive is so strong that, instead of building a functional modern city, they have preferred to rebuild the center of Warsaw as it appeared in the eighteenth century. It was reconstructed after plans following the paintings which Belotto executed during his stay in Warsaw in the 1770's, and which hang in the National Museum in Warsaw. Proportions and details were also carefully taken from old site drawings. Thus, the Old Town—including the medieval fortifications—was rebuilt brick by brick. The reconstructed façades, rising strangely on widened streets and squares, hauntingly suggest de Chirico's paintings of his metaphysical period.

Top floors with northern exposure in many of the houses in the Old Town have been designated for painters. But whether living there or in newer parts of the city, they have neat compact apartments with one room serving as a studio. It would obviously be impossible for Polish artists to paint the vast canvases characteristic of the New York School. There are, of course, no private art galleries and there are no art collectors. Except for sales abroad—which, to be sure, have become numerous in the last few years—the many museums scattered throughout the cities of Poland are the chief purchasers. The National Museums of Warsaw, Cracow, Poznan and Lodz, for instance, have ac-

quired many excellent paintings by contemporary Polish artists. In addition, paintings are bought in increasing numbers by factories, offices, hospitals, etc.

While there are no private galleries, the work of the artists is exhibited and installed with imagination either in museums or in exhibitions organized by the Artists' Union. There is also *Krzywe Kolo*—The Crooked Wheel—the municipally supported gallery in the Old Town of Warsaw where many of the most advanced art exhibitions take place, as well as discussions on various cultural matters.

These earnest discussions among the Polish artists about painting and about a philosophy of art reveal an ardent curiosity. Most of them are men and women who grew to maturity during the war, suffering under six years of Nazi occupation; many were in concentration camps or worked as slave laborers, or joined the underground. After the war their protests, as well as their despair and hopes, were revealed in an important exhibition of modern tendencies in art organized in Cracow in 1945. The show included surrealist, fantastic, expressionist and non-objective trends and strongly manifested a new dynamic force in Polish art. By the following year, however, the political reaction against modern art overtook the artists, imposing upon them the doctrine of socialist realism.

Abstract art was labeled defeatist, decadent and irresponsible, and artists were told to produce paintings of political propaganda value, favorable to socialism and opposed to its enemies. It was demanded, of course, that all art be understood by the masses. Most of the painting shown in large national exhibitions held from 1950 to 1954 was illustrative and imitative and not unlike the work produced in other socialist countries. Nevertheless, certain undertones of expressionism and abstraction can be discerned in the

work of some of the painters who attempted to comply with the official dictum. Others preferred not to exhibit during these years.

Then, during the World Youth Festival in Warsaw in the summer of 1955, the first important break was made in the celebrated *Arsenal Exhibition of Young Painters*, sponsored by students who were opposed to the socialist-realist officialdom. The predominant style of this exhibition was related to certain aspects of German expressionism with the addition of social and political overtones. Once the break was made, an official English-language publication from Warsaw was able to state in 1958: "As a whole the practice of commandeering creativeness under the slogan of socialist realism, imposing upon it conventions academic in form and shallow and commonplace in content, and divorcing the Polish artist's work from the vital sources of world art, acted primarily as a negative stimulus: it provoked a revolt in the name of artistic truth and honesty."¹

By 1955 artists were able to seek their own personal styles and to create the stimulating atmosphere which now prevails. Their discussions about painting and its social, political and philosophical implications remind us of a similar ferment in this country in the thirties and especially in the forties when abstract expressionism was born.

Polish painters travel a good deal, have maintained their traditional close contact with Paris, and are swiftly aware of art events, whether in New York or Barcelona. But, not very much art from abroad has been shown in Warsaw. However, when there is a major exhibition, such as the excellent show of contemporary French painting assembled by Jean Cassou in 1959 or one-man exhibitions of Henry Moore and Emilio Vedova in 1959 and 1960, it becomes a major occurrence.

The artistic-intellectual community in Warsaw is strongly united. Painters are close to the theater, for instance, and have executed admirable stage designs for plays by Genet,

¹ Janusz Bogucki, *Contemporary Polish Painting*, Warsaw, Polonia Publishing House, 1958, (page 18)

Beckett, Ionesco, Tennessee Williams and Duerrenmatt which attempt to match the originality of the play itself. As for the film, some of the most outstanding men among the new crop of Polish film directors, such as Jan Lenica or Valerian Borowczyk, were originally painters. Painters are also active in graphic design which, in addition to earning them necessary extra income, results in excellent posters, book jackets and typography.

In general, art is taken seriously in Poland. Daniel Bell, the American sociologist, discussing the successful protest of the Poles against the Stalinist regime that brought Gomulka to power in October 1956, writes in his recent article in *Partisan Review*: "For the mass of the people, the stumbling block between themselves and the regime was their Catholicism; for the intellectual it was abstract art."²

Abstract art is not altogether new to the Poles. If the current abstract movement is to a great extent influenced by the West, the first wave was largely of Russian derivation. Wladyslaw Strzeminski, a young engineer from Minsk, met Malevich after the first World War and became his assistant in Vitebsk. In 1922 Strzeminski came to Poland and settled in Lodz where he founded *Blok*, the first group of non-objective artists in Poland, dedicated to experimentation in pure formal structure along the suprematist lines of Malevich. Members of *Blok* were in touch with similar movements in the West, especially with neo-plasticism; soon Strzeminski created his own system which he called Unism.³

Unism eliminated all possible reference to the actual object, all space illusion, any kind of emotional expression—attempting to proceed in a scientific, almost mathematical manner toward the attainment of a disciplined and balanced unity of color and form. *Blok* was succeeded by the

² Daniel Bell, "Conversations in Warsaw," *Partisan Review*, vol. XXVII, No. 2, (March-April 1961), (page 264)

³ To the author's regret no photographs to illustrate the interesting pre-war work by the Polish painters were available for reproduction.

artists' group *Praesens* which included architects and designers because—in keeping with the advanced thought of the twenties—its members felt that the artist must share with technology his specific intuitive sensibilities in order to create a better social environment.

Henryk Stazewski (born in 1894), a founder of both *Blok* and *Praesens*, was close to Mondrian and Arp as well as Malevich, and he carries purist construction into the present (page 54). In his recent, brightly painted wood and celotex constructions, Stazewski disturbs and delights the viewer by playfully upsetting rigorously constructed space relationships. By a slight shifting of his wooden pieces which suggest alterations and readjustments that are never completed, Stazewski involves the spectator in his visual game.

The purist movement gained only a limited following during the pre-war years in Poland. Closely related to progressive thought in city planning, it did result in a group of artists, architects and writers called *a.r.* (*Artistes révolutionnaires*) founded in Lodz in 1930. By 1932 it was even possible to organize a public gallery of modern art there (probably the world's second museum of modern art) which was devoted exclusively to such artists as Arp, van Doesburg, Helion, Léger and Ozenfant. But this rational idiom never became the dominant direction of Polish painting. This position was taken by the Colorists in strong opposition to the pure abstractionists during this period.

Oriented toward Paris and post-impressionism, a group of artists and art students in Cracow organized, in 1923, the *Paris Committee*. The Kapists (from *Komitete Paryski*) migrated in large numbers to Paris where they were most closely drawn to the work of Cézanne and Bonnard. They painted landscapes and still lifes with a free use of vibrant patches of color. Eventually all the Kapists returned to Poland to exert a significant influence on the younger generation. Among the most important living artists of this group are Jan Cybis, Eugeniusz Eibisch, Wacław Taranczewski, Artur Nacht-Samborski and Piotr Potworowski.

Potworowski (born 1898), working in Léger's studio in 1924-25, acquired a structural precision which he never lost. During the Second World War he escaped to England where he became a professor at the Academy of Bath and established an international reputation with his exhibitions at the Redfern and Gimpel galleries. As an older member of the Cornwall group at St. Ives, he exerted an influence on younger men better known in America, such as Kenneth Armitage, Patrick Heron, Peter Lanyon, William Scott and Bryan Winter. The English painter and critic, Adrian Heath, reported that Potworowski brought to this community "a taste and breadth of understanding that can truly be described as cosmopolitan, a quality that was hungrily accepted by those that had been insulated from continental opinion by seven years of war."⁴

After the mid-fifties, Potworowski discarded any kind of literal description in his landscapes in order to articulate more clearly his sensuous response to nature. While retaining his basically cubist structure, he stresses more profoundly the juxtaposition of colors and forms which create the particular rhythm of a given scene, thus communicating both its actual appearance and its general sense impression (pages 48, 49). Most recently, he has turned towards an entirely free, inventive abstraction (page 50). In 1958, Potworowski, a British subject, decided to give up his position at Bath for a professorship at Gdansk. When asked about this move, he responded that the greatest artistic ferment was presently taking place in Poland and that he did not want to miss it.

Perhaps the strongest current representatives of pure abstraction and Colorism now active on the Polish scene are Stazewski and Potworowski respectively. The artistic ferment now taking place in Poland so attractive to Potworowski, owes much to both of these directions. Generally we might say that, in Poland, as elsewhere, the postwar generation is concerned with finding a new synthesis of the

⁴ Adrian Heath, quoted in Juliusz Starzynski, *Piotr Potworowski*, Warsaw, WAG-RSW "Prasa," 1959, (page 6)

rational and emotional aspects of art.

The first important figure to emerge after the war was Tadeusz Kantor (born 1915) who also made significant contributions to modern stage design in his experimental theater in Cracow. Until the mid-fifties he painted semi-abstract pictures in which sharply delineated mechanical figures and robots were placed in a surrealist space. After a trip to Paris in 1955, where he came in close contact with the *informel* painters and saw the work of artists such as Mathieu and probably Pollock, he evolved his own tachist idiom and brought a novel kind of abstraction back to Poland. Kantor's work during the past five years has evolved from a typical School of Paris tachism—autonomous color applied spontaneously with a fluid rhythm (page 26), by way of brilliantly executed orgies of turbulent color (pages 27, 28)—to his current thickly-textured, frightening and savage canvases with images reminding us of crater landscapes desolated by the flow of burning lava (page 29).

Tadeusz Brzozowski (born 1918) belonged to the Cracow group around Kantor. His work of the forties was still highly figurative with parabolic suggestions but soon he permitted his imagination to lead him to greater freedom, as in *The Mercenary* of 1956 (page 12) and *The Guardian* of 1957 (page 13). In the latter, the masses are lacerated, the image dislocated, indeed, torn to pieces. Somewhere on the border between figurative painting and total abstraction, Brzozowski's work begins with a title which becomes a sort of *leitmotif* evoking associations in the artist. He welcomes the element of chance; he elaborates his surfaces by using glues, distemper, varnishes, and frequently the material itself will suggest new forms.

In his recent, almost totally abstract work, he still retains his profound feeling for the grotesque. In a painting such as *The Wench* (page 15) he replaces his larger forms with a dense network of trenchant lines; this is a surreal thicker, an incredibly disordered spider web which is broken into by a sharp discontinuous light. The color is phosphorescent and attains an explosive quality.

Living in relative retirement in Zakopane in the Carpathian mountains where he teaches in a folk art school, Brzozowski has achieved a highly personal contemporary style which reflects his concern about the condition of man. "Art is not the contemplation of beauty," he says, "but the perception of all that is human. . . . When speaking of man, I think of a being well-stained and broken."⁵

Related to Brzozowski and also an original member of the *Group of Cracow* is Jerzy Tchorzewski (born 1928). Tchorzewski too has arrived at a carefully controlled surrealism. His wildly jagged, linear forms often seem to resemble some strange zoological specimen hovering in an electrically-charged space (page 55).

Among the younger members of the *Group of Cracow*, Teresa Rudowicz (born 1928) and Marian Warzecha (born 1930) have made some original contributions which relate indirectly to the nostalgia of romanticism. Like so many artists of their generation, Rudowicz and Warzecha have turned to the detritus of civilization for their objects. Both use scraps of old writing torn from letters, books or ledgers, and assemble these *objets trouvés* in a decorative and evocative fashion. Rudowicz' collages, combining bits of writing with old soaked paper and glues, suggests the peeling and crumbling walls of Cracow's medieval buildings (pages 52, 53). Like those of a great many contemporary collagists and assemblers, her configurations—dependent on existing visual phenomena—are akin to the pictorial insight of the photographer. Collage is here no longer employed principally for formal reasons, as it was when Braque and Picasso first invented it, nor does it have the dynamic shock value of a Futurist or Dada collage. It has become softened and mellowed in her work primarily because its intention is neither to invent nor to startle but rather to entice the viewer into considering its ambiguous, multi-layered surfaces as he might explore the levels of memory.

⁵ Tadeusz Brzozowski in exhibition catalogue, *Brzozowski*, Paris, Galerie Lambert, 1960, (page 4)

Renouncing color completely, Warzecha places the old scraps of writing into geometrically constructed embossed surfaces (page 56). The graceful archaic script on its yellowed paper — pasted without apparent meaning into a simple architectural framework — presents us with incongruous forms and suggestions; its excellence lies partly in this quality of the unexpected juxtaposition, partly in the taste and elegance with which the artist has composed these connotative surfaces.

Aleksander Kobzdej (born 1920), one of the major figures among the contemporary Polish painters, is concerned with the constructed object in a different fashion. He limits himself to the traditional means of the painter, but he loves the play of surfaces, the tactile value of textures. After completing his architectural studies, Kobzdej started painting rather Picasso-like distortions in 1945. He then worked with sincerity in the approved idiom of socialist realism, exhibiting his Vietnam cycle at the Venice Biennale of 1954. In the mid-fifties, however, he turned towards abstraction, showing his true preoccupation with material means of painting. Concerned with the identity of the material, he elaborates rich and beautiful textures, often contrasting thick applications of pigment with thin, membranous films.

Kobzdej has created a curious space, which often seems to exist behind the picture plane, implying an area hidden from the viewer (page 34). His shapes, as well as the subdued earth colors with their subtle gradations, are assembled with authority, resulting in structures of restrained elegance. His canvases are characterized by an extraordinary density and always deal with the relationship of texture to space (pages 35, 36, 37).

It is significant of the state of art in Poland that Kobzdej has not only exhibited widely and successfully on four continents but that at forty he is the Dean of Faculty at the Academy of Warsaw.

Perhaps even more closely related to architecture, is the work of Wojciech Fangor (born 1922). His geometric

images, blurred at their edges, are engaged in an optical dialogue between "figure" and ground which becomes more fascinating the longer it is observed (pages 20, 21). Fangor is concerned with rhythmic movement — rotating, ascending, descending movement — in relation to time and space. A muralist and interior designer, Fangor is less interested in the single easel painting than in organizing a larger environment and, at best, his canvases should be seen placed in close proximity and at right angles to each other as they are in the exhibitions of his own work, designed by himself jointly with the architect, Stanislaw Zamecznik. Here he attains the pulsating optical effect of color on space which he desires.

While Fangor is primarily an intellectual painter, a more emotional approach seems to prevail among others of the young abstractionists. Yet, there is no doubt that Unism with its avoidance of contrast, its taste for the monochrome, its calm and uniform all-over rhythm has had an important influence on the work of younger painters like Kierzkowski and Gierowski. Bronislaw Kierzkowski (born 1924) had actually studied with Strzeminski in Lodz and the relationship to Unism is especially evident in his new gouaches (page 32). For a number of years now he has also experimented with relief constructions combining plaster and chicken wire, corrugated iron and various metal parts retrieved from the junk heap (pages 30, 31). Unlike many of his contemporaries, Kierzkowski is less concerned with the literal implication of junk and refuse than with formal structure. Both the properties of the found objects and his working process remain clearly visible: the rigidity of the metal is carefully juxtaposed to the fluidity of the plaster. He will make use of metal threads the way a draftsman uses the penciled line. At the same time he endows his assemblages with an obsessive quality which makes his work memorable to the viewer.

Kierzkowski traveled to North Africa a few years ago and the experience of the desert manifests itself strongly in his work. His reliefs have the austerity of the desert land-

scape: if traces of life exist, they are skeletons or fossils; if there are river beds, they are desiccated arroyos where nothing will grow—mere records of past life. The small globes of plaster, assembled with the most intense precision in Kierzkowski's *Textured Composition Number 150* (page 30) reminds us of an abacus or the beaded curtains in Mediterranean houses.

Stefan Gierowski (born 1925) actually likes to think of himself as a successor to Unism. He has recently abandoned the bright palette of his earlier canvases for almost monochromatic earth colors. These softly colored, muted paintings are structured with a sensitive sureness (pages 23, 24, 25). They always adhere to the flat picture plane and never allow the slightest suggestion of a third dimension. Neither is there any excitement engendered by their slight variations in color, yet subtle vibrations are created by the delicate textures and veiled light which seems to emanate from the interior of the painting. Occasionally, lines moving at varying speeds and following their own deliberation will give some vague definition to his silent, somewhat mysterious space.

If Kierzkowski and Gierowski are seen as the descendants of Unism, Tadeusz Dominik (born 1928) belongs to the opposite tradition. Dominik was a student of the Colorist Jan Cybis: he is concerned with the sensual rhythms of an emotionally apprehended world. He works largely from intuition, proceeding with a lively, unrestrained gesture. Unlike most of his Polish contemporaries whose work is often dark and monochromatic, Dominik is, above all, a Colorist and appears closest to the international abstract-expressionist style (pages 16, 17, 19). His employment of color in movement gives his pictures a dynamic, sensual excitement and his paintings often recall not so much the forms as the processes of nature. He sees the world in metamorphosis and seems, almost physically, to enjoy what he sees. A recent canvas like *Composition Number 5* (page 18), with its audacious large white space separating the dark areas on either shore, stands in the

forefront of the current exploration of dynamic color and space.

Teresa Pagowska (born 1926) comes also from the Polish Colorist tradition and has, in addition, profited from Potworowski's stimulus since his return to Poland. Her abstractions seem to find their origin in the experience of nature, not as it is observed from a distance with a horizon, but experienced intimately: the steaming earth, solid stones, running water, the bark of trees, the graininess of sand—all seem to enter into her sphere and are expressed with a vigorous, yet sensitive spontaneity. Her personal feeling for the decorative is channeled by the physical quality of the paint and the application of the brush towards a rhythmic organization, which recalls the original experience or event (pages 46, 47).

Whereas most of the artists in this exhibition show adherence to the international postwar idiom, Jerzy Nowosielski (born 1923) paints in an entirely unique manner. Originally a member of the young avant-garde group in Cracow (with Brzozowski and Kantor), Nowosielski has rejected realism, abstraction, even surrealism. Turning toward an older tradition, he became fascinated by the solidity of Byzantine mosaics and Russian icons (page 43). He admires the precision of their carefully defined color areas, the clearly outlined shapes and their mutual relationships, as well as the clarity of the light. Interested in ritual sects and little known religions, he uses the human figure as a mysterious cipher in order to ask ambiguous questions and express his non-specific longings (page 42).

His weird, intense landscapes have the abrupt space of fifteenth-century painting, the lack of gradual transition we find in Uccello and Bosch. This device, however, becomes exaggerated: the road shoots sharply into space with incredible speed (page 45). Bosch painted figures and objects being swallowed or disgorged, a feeling which is paralleled in Nowosielski's *Landscape* of 1958 (page 44) by the enigmatic juxtaposition of the large amorphous green object, suspended within and thrusting apart the

angular planes on either side.

There are certain primitive qualities in the work of Nowosielski but there is also a sophisticated atmosphere of secrecy. His paintings have an estranged and hostile relationship to the world of nature in which the foreign body is either attacking or being attacked by its environment.

In an article in a recent issue of *Quadrum*, the eminent Polish art historian and art critic, Juliusz Starzynski, pointed out that "Lebenstein's pictures propose a new solution to the long and increasingly futile discussion on the problem of 'abstract or representational art.' It is not a matter of a compromise or of compilation but of a new synthesis which draws its conclusions from the conquests that modern art has made since the war."⁶ Jan Lebenstein (born 1930) came into public prominence with the double prize he took at the *First Biennale of Paris* in 1959. His imagery is highly original: he has developed axial yet asymmetrical figures that combine geometric and mechanical forms with organisms which resemble both plants and personages. The figures themselves, extended and stretched along their vertical axes, are sharply contoured and rigidly contained—yet they frequently face assault from a fluid background lacerating their surfaces. They recall the skeleton of the human figure, but human-ness is never really described. The whole image of man remains equivocal and all the more haunting for its ambiguity (pages 37-40 and frontispiece).

Like most contemporary Polish painters, Lebenstein tends to paint in monochrome. His color consists of values and nuances, concentrating on a dark metallic glow and permitting attention to center on his viscid surfaces and insistently axial compositions. These vertical totemic images achieve a grotesque humor akin to Ionesco's biting

⁶ Juliusz Starzynski, "Quatre peintres polonais d'aujourd'hui," *Quadrum* VIII (1960), (page 134)

irony; in fact, his surfaces, with their sagging and wrinkled paint, actually resemble rhinoceros skin.

His pictures take on the illusion of ancient objects, some sort of *Ur*-form, yet they can also be interpreted as standards or coats-of-arms for our time. His recent masterfully executed *Axial Figure Number 110* (page 41), a black canvas in the shape of a truncated cone, represents an hieratic figure, portentous yet graceful, a demi-god or demon controlling its environment as stringently as it is controlled within the confines of its flattened funnel.

These atavistic axial figures by Jan Lebenstein may recall the figuration of the cross or they may evoke all manner of associations from burnt flesh to telegraph poles transmitting muted messages of isolation and endurance. They are intransigent idol images of a troubled myth.

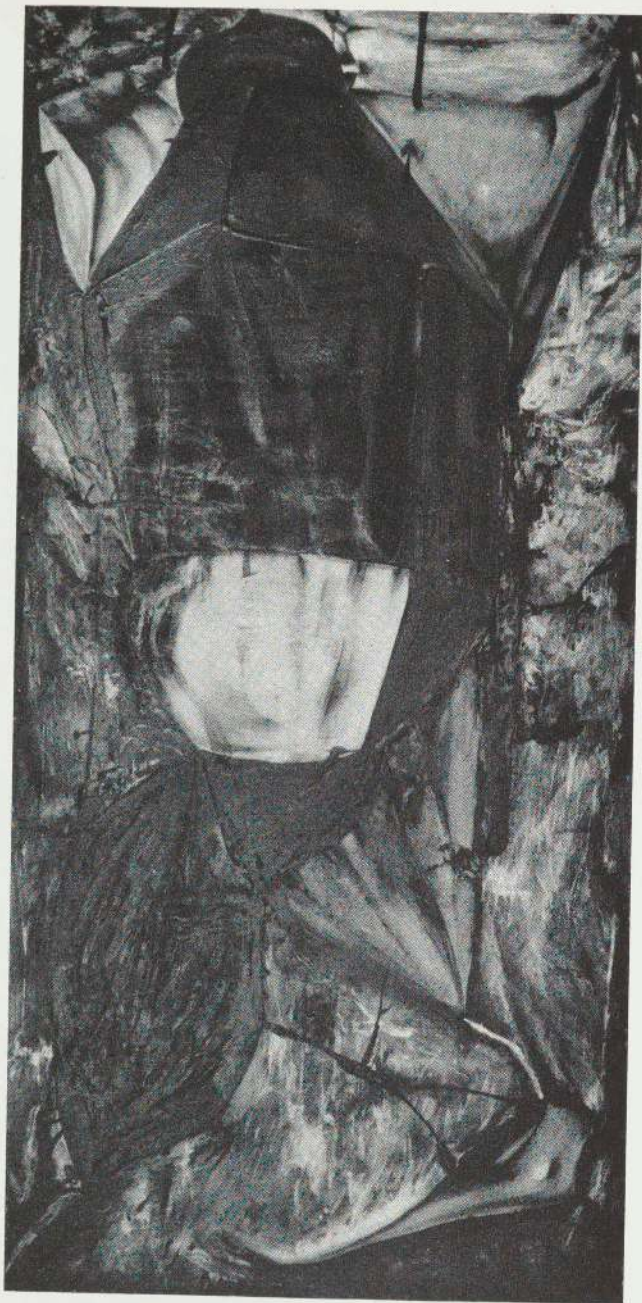
The vital new movement of painting in Poland is represented here only by a personal selection of fifteen painters. Yet they represent the most important trends among the avant garde, trends which are related to the work being done in the postwar generation elsewhere but which nevertheless show a specific national character. After the early abstract movement in Poland (*Block, Praesens, Unism*), the present tendencies can be called the second wave of abstract art in which surrealism and tachism are predominant influences. The painting of this wave tends towards the dark as well as the monochrome. Shapes are similarly restrained and are, with some exceptions, likely to be quiet rather than excited. There is a great concern with textures and materials often resulting in relief-like surfaces. There is an unusual inventiveness of form combined with a most undogmatic attitude and an unsophisticated and spontaneous vitality. But national characteristics are most difficult to define. Surely, the unique personal statement is what matters and several of the Polish painters have achieved true authenticity.



Brzozowski: *The Mercenary*. (1956). Oil on canvas, 54 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 39". Collection Ryszard Stanislawski, Warsaw



Brzozowski: *The Guardian*. (1957). Oil on canvas, 39 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 32". Collection Mr. and Mrs. Kazimierz Karpusko, Chicago



Brzozowski: *Switches*. (1958). Oil on canvas, 44 x 21 $\frac{5}{8}$ ". Collection Mr. and Mrs. Kazimierz Karpuszek, Chicago

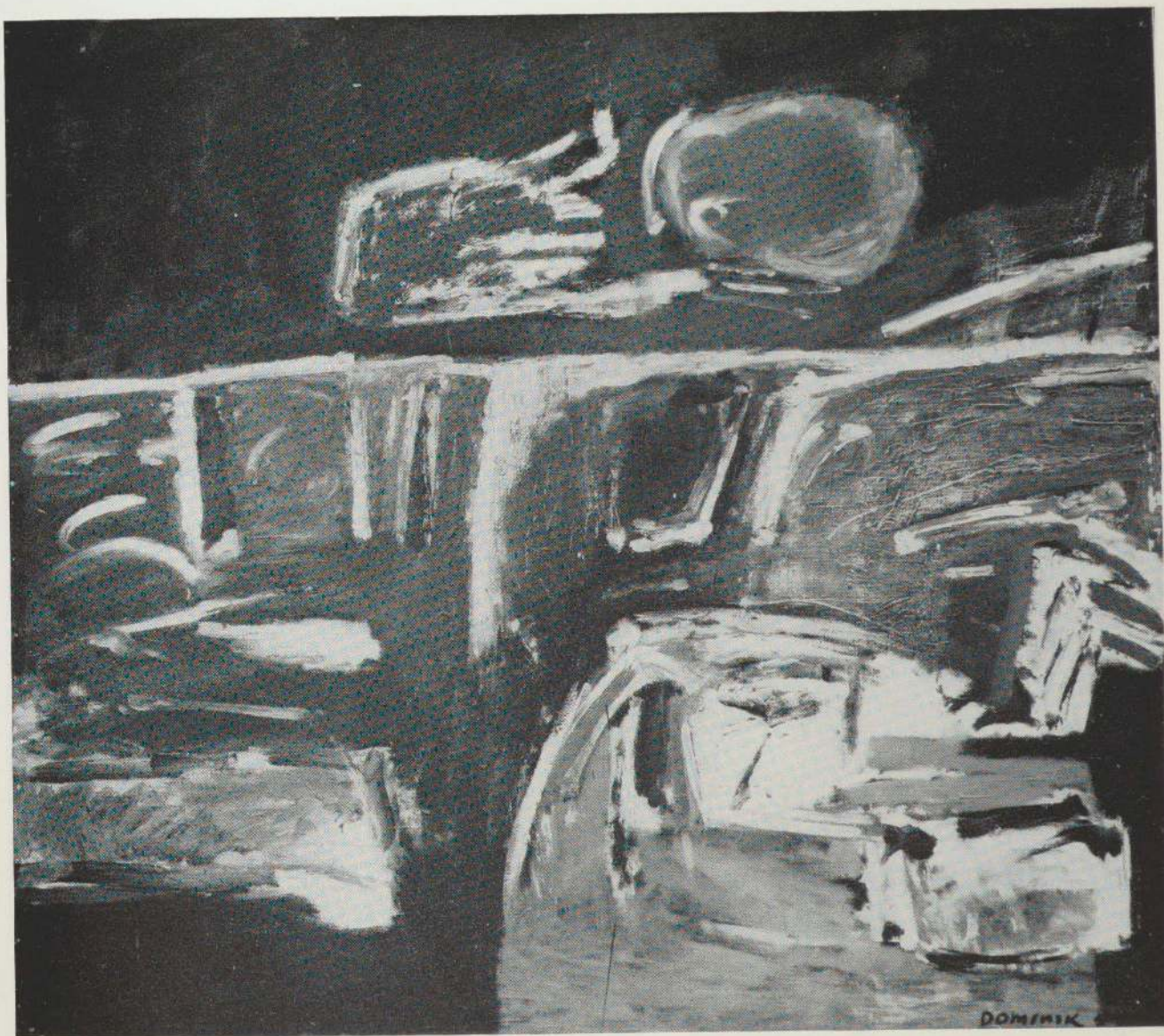
opposite: Brzozowski: *The Wench*. 1959. Oil on canvas, 64 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 50 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Gres Gallery, Washington, D. C.

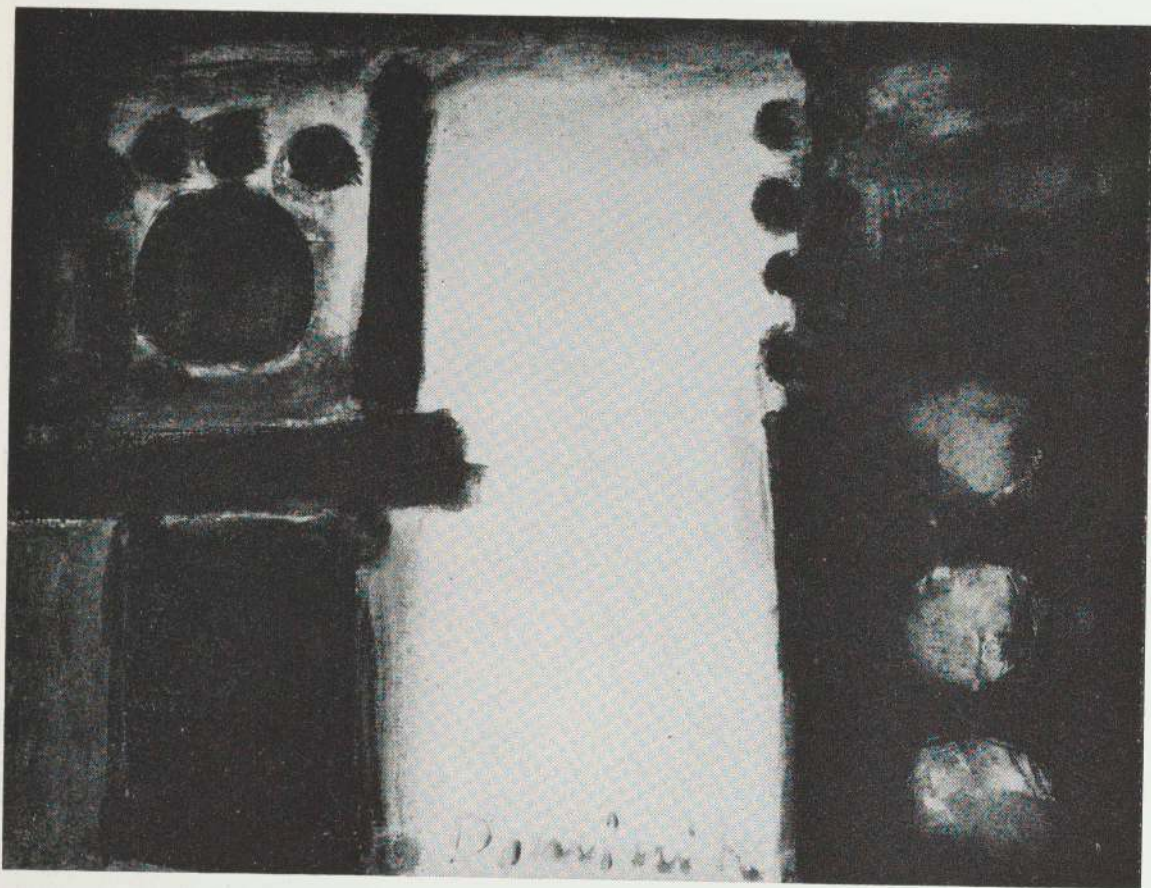




Dominik: *Rocks*. (1959). Oil on canvas, 34 x 35". Collection Plato C. Foufas, Evanston, Illinois

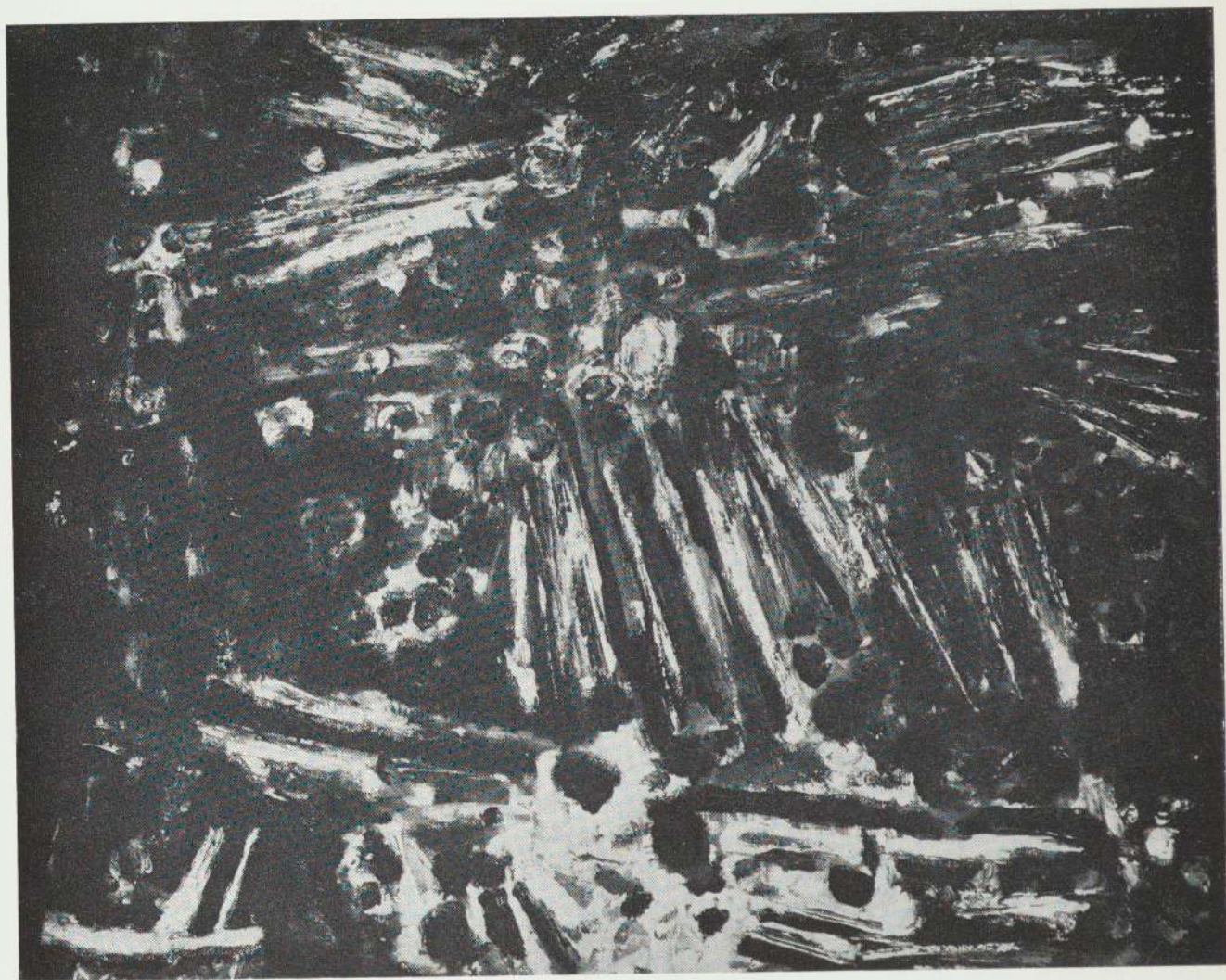
opposite: Dominik: *Landscape*. 1959. Oil on canvas, 47 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 55". Contemporary Art Gallery, Chicago

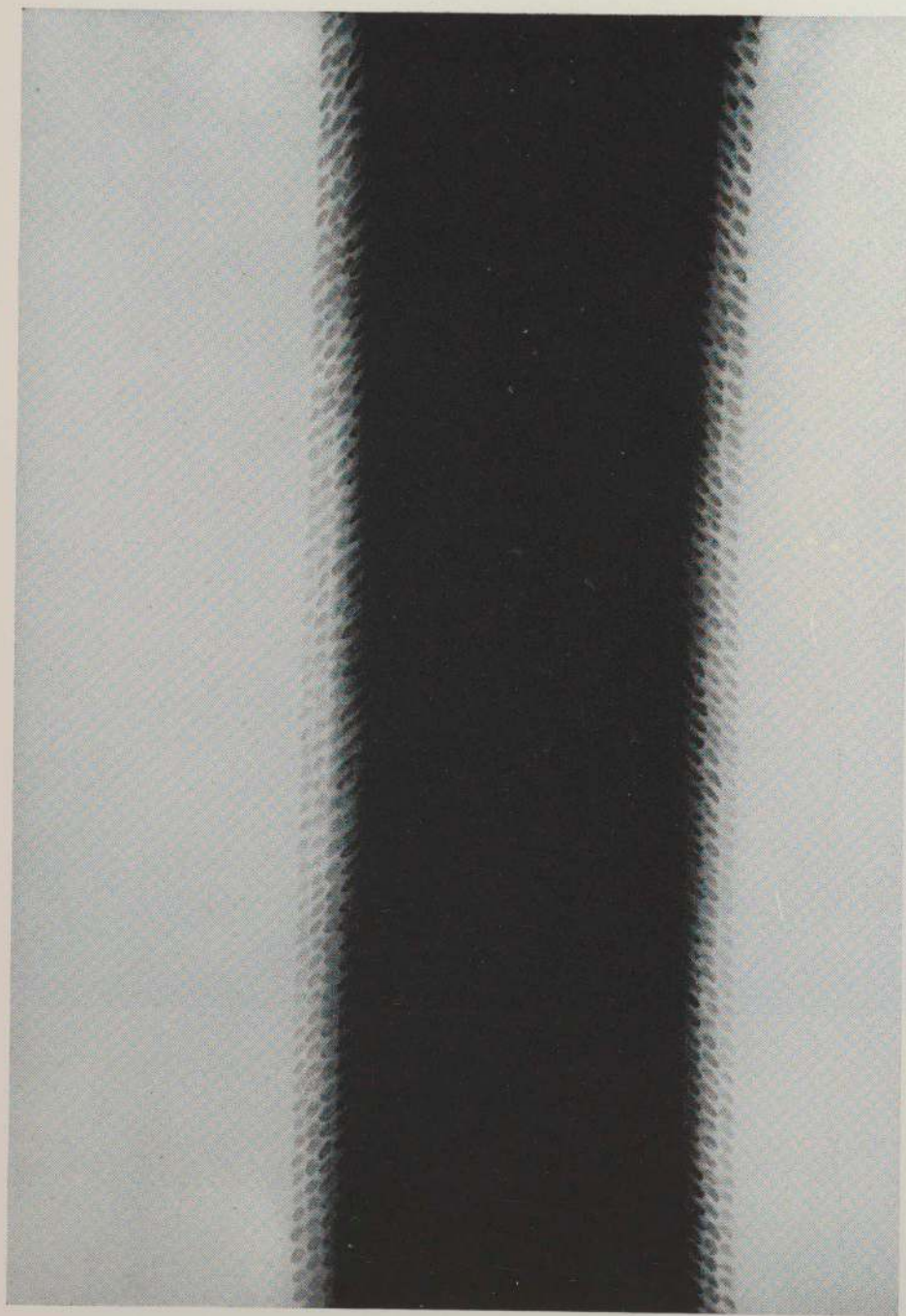


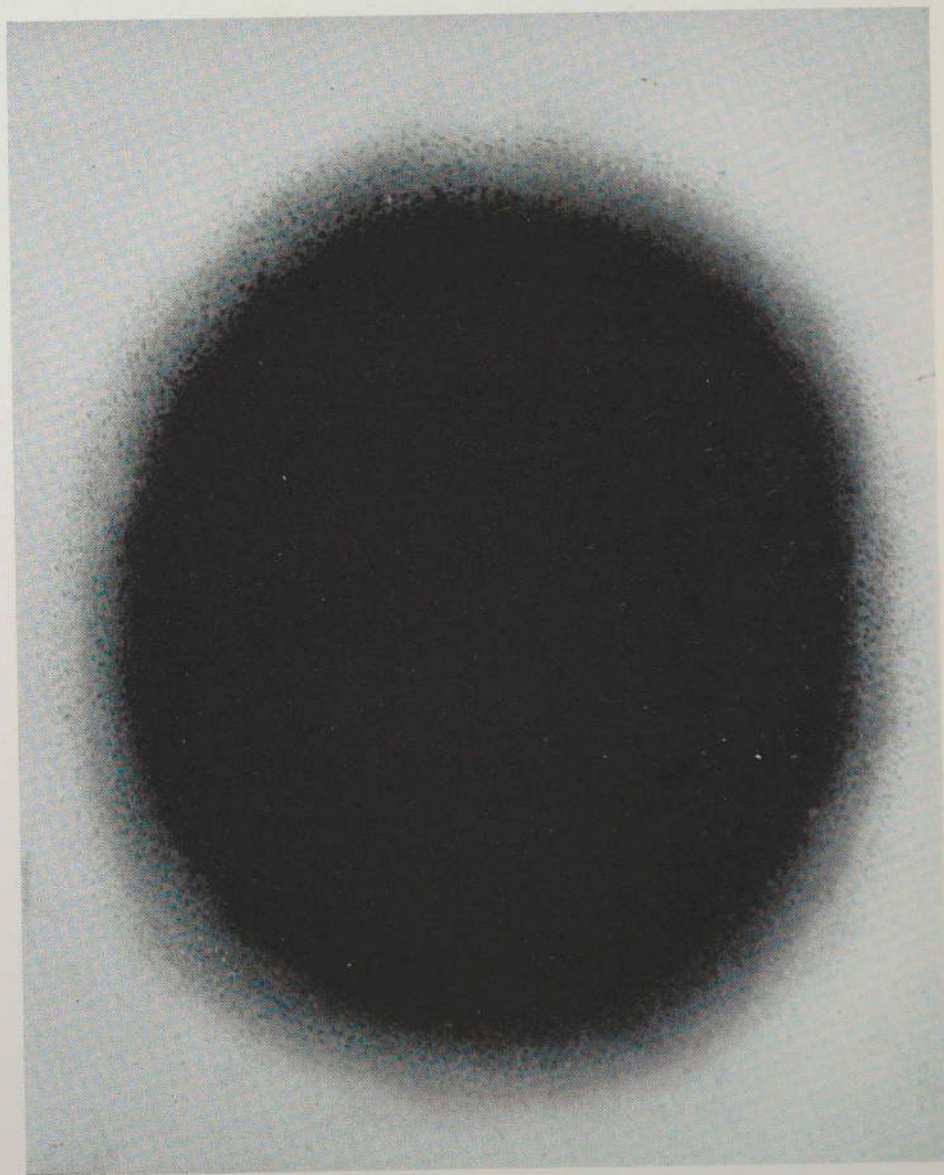


Dominik: *Number 5*. (1960). Oil on canvas, 18 x 24". Collection H. Landon Warner, Gambier, Ohio

opposite: Dominik: *Number 8*. (1960). Oil on canvas, 32 x 39".
Collection Judge and Mrs. Russell E. Train, Washington, D. C.



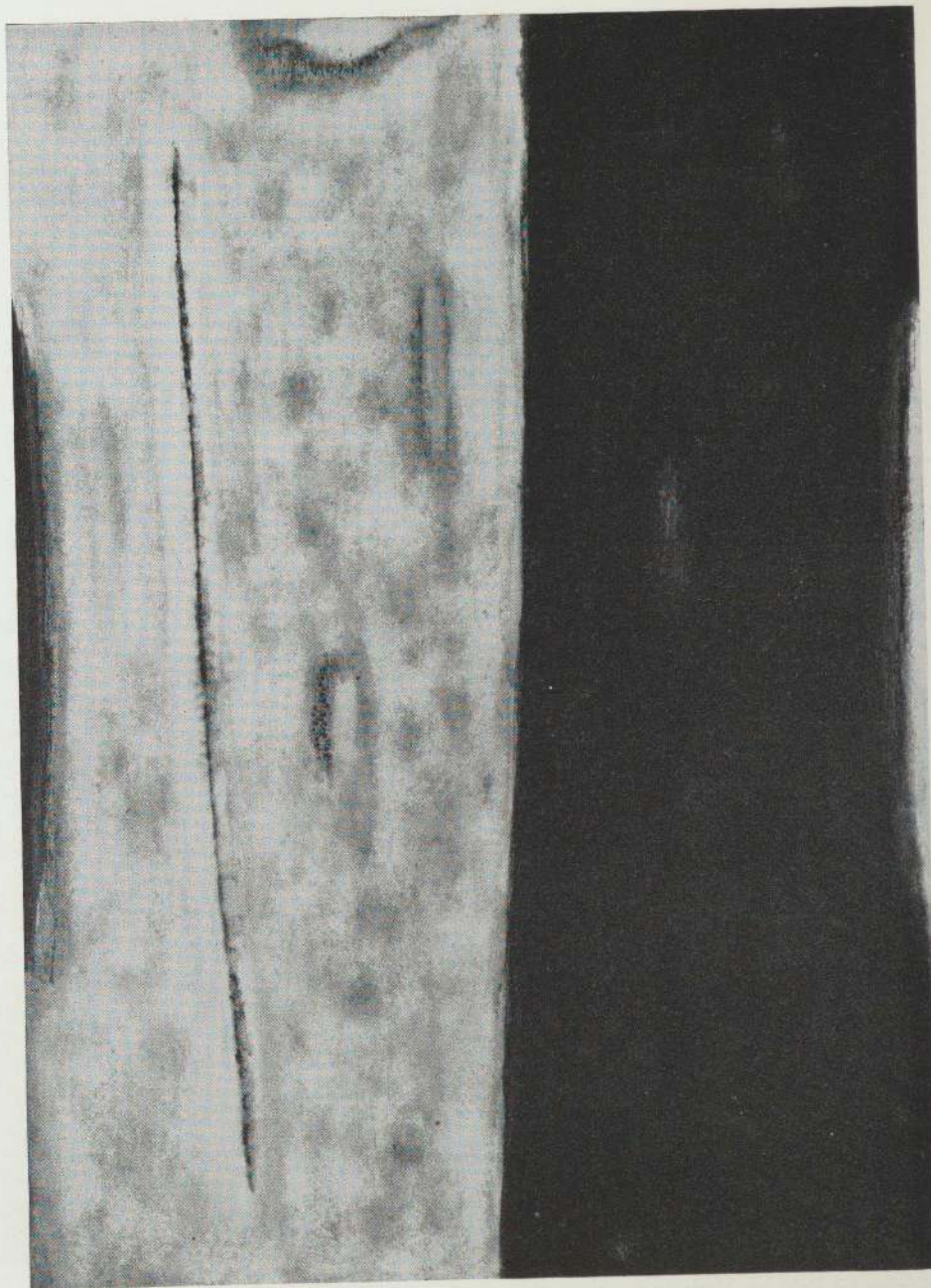




Fangor: *Black I*. 1960. Oil on canvas, $35\frac{1}{4} \times 29\frac{1}{2}$ ". Gres Gallery, Washington, D. C.

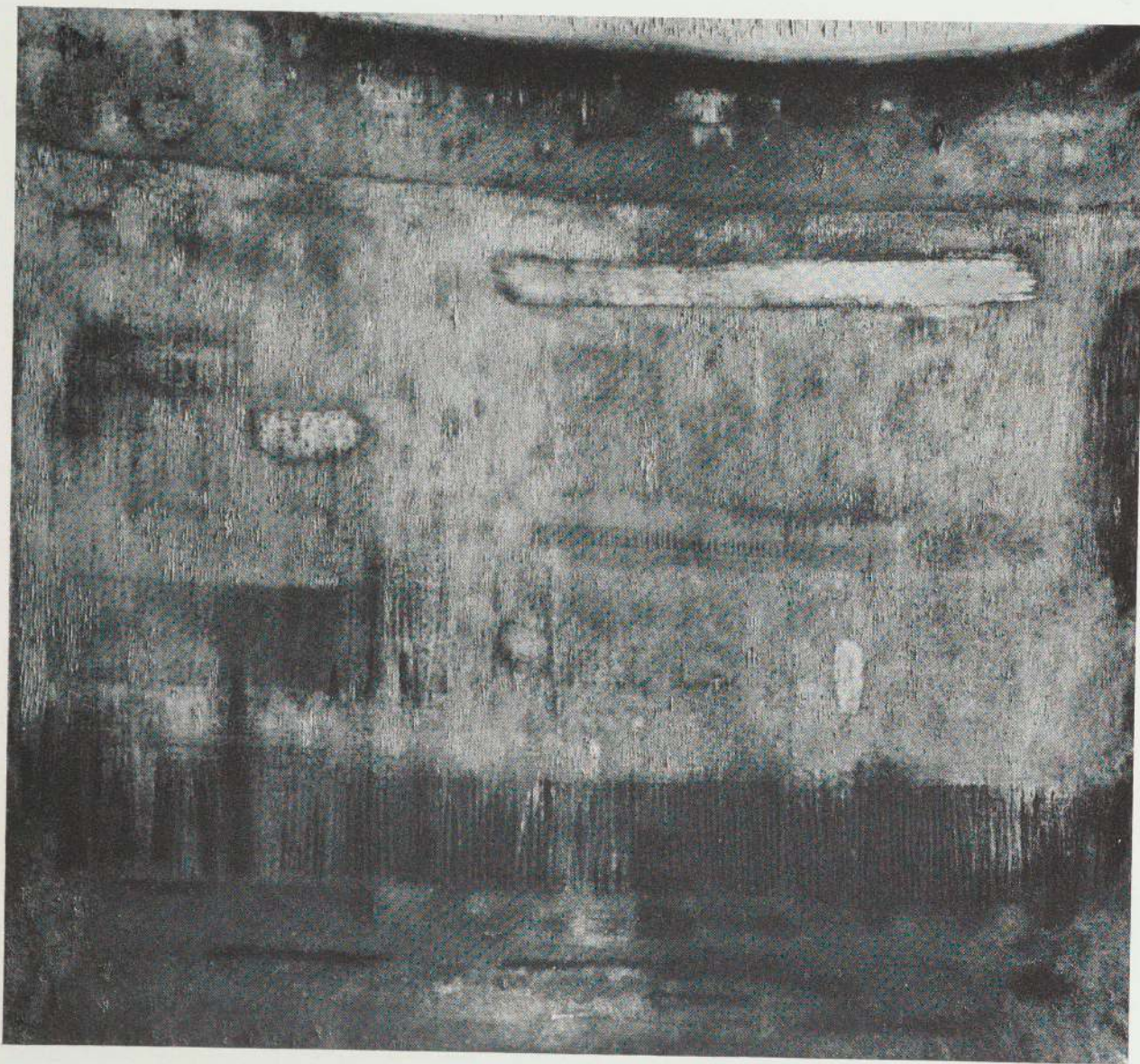
opposite: Fangor: *Black IV*. 1959. Oil on canvas, $50\frac{1}{2} \times 34\frac{1}{2}$ ". Collection Mr. and Mrs. Albert A. List, New York



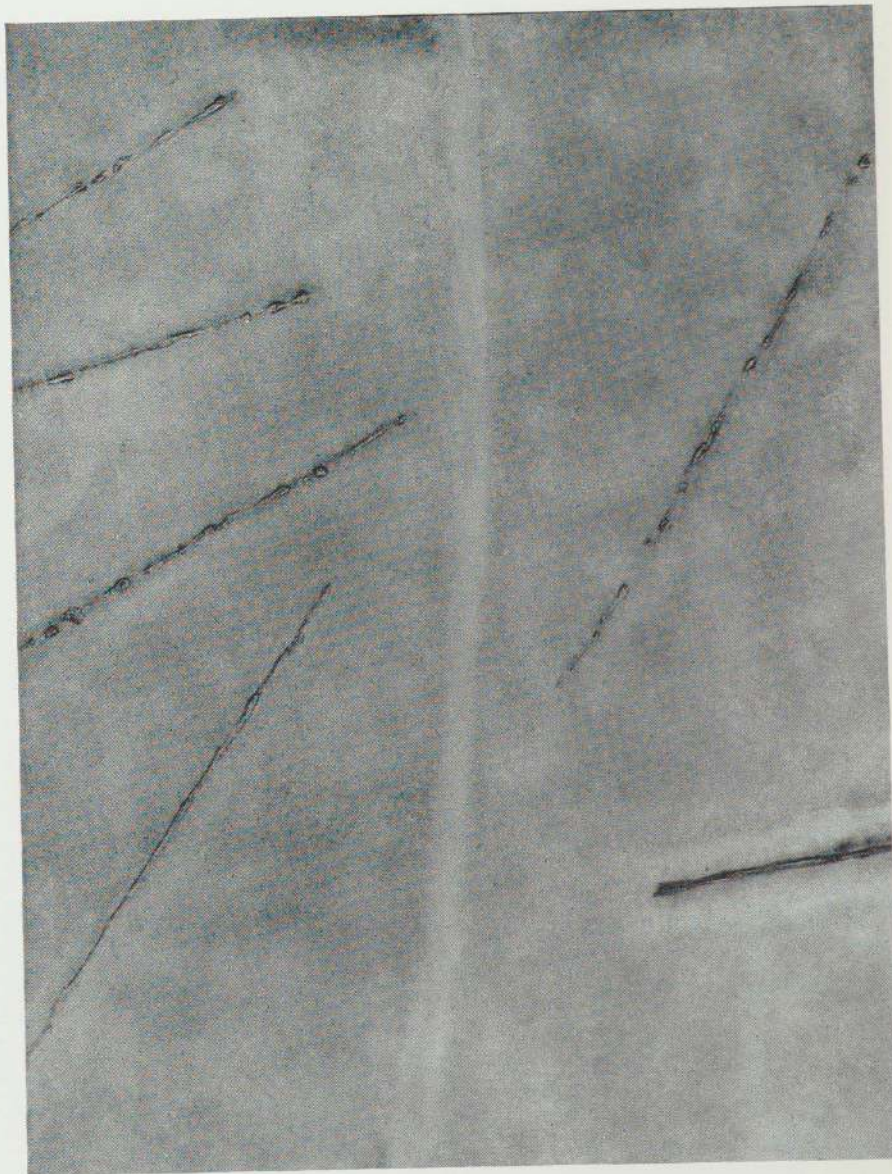


Gierowski: *Painting Number 74*. 1959. Oil on canvas, $52\frac{3}{4} \times 37$ ". Galerie Chalette, N. Y.

opposite: Gierowski: *Number 50*. 1958. Oil on canvas, $63\frac{1}{4} \times 51\frac{1}{8}$ ". Galerie Chalette, N. Y.



Gierowski: *Painting Number 75*. 1959. Oil on canvas, 53 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 58 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Galerie Chalette, New York



Gierowski: *Painting Number 99*, 1960. Oil on canvas, $53\frac{1}{8} \times 39\frac{3}{8}$ ". Galerie Lacloche, Paris

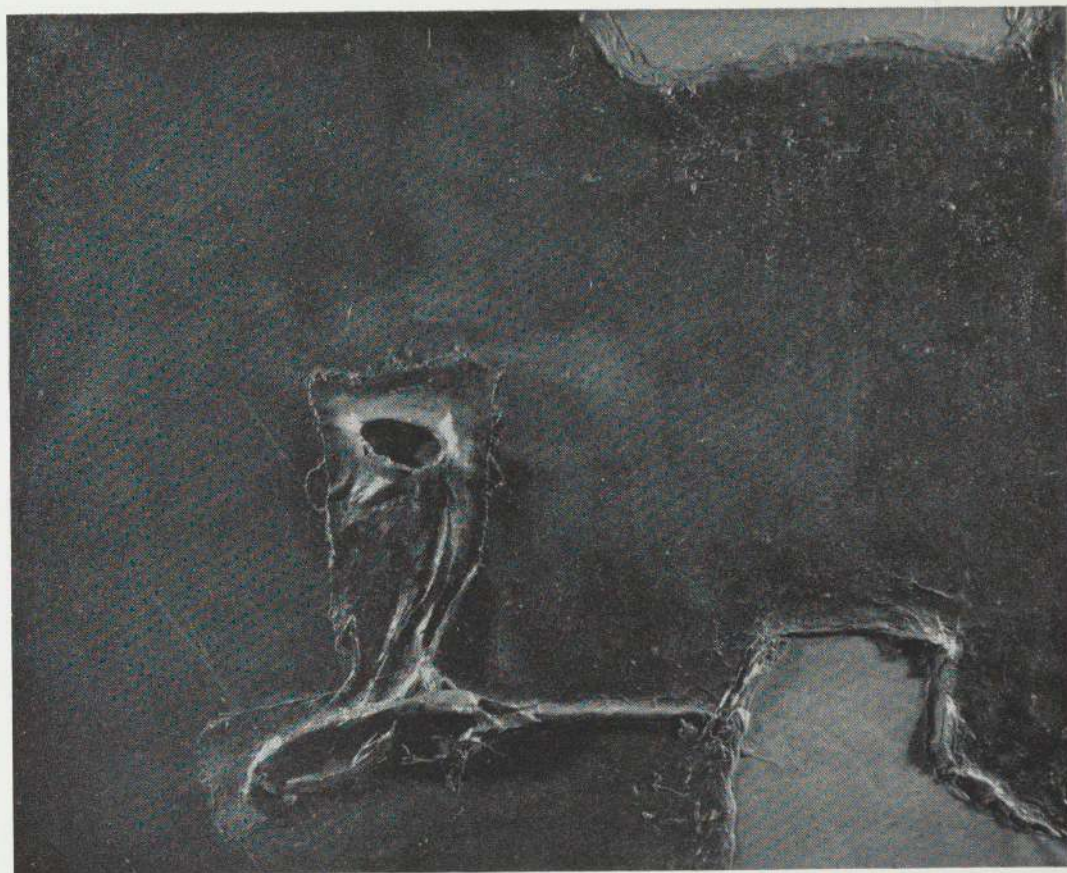


Kantor: *Mumbo-Jumbo*. 1957. Oil on canvas, $47\frac{1}{4} \times 59\frac{1}{8}$ ". Collection Mr. and Mrs. G. David Thompson, Pittsburgh

opposite: Kantor: *Rori*. 1957. Oil on canvas, $59\frac{1}{4} \times 47\frac{1}{2}$ ".
Collection Mr. and Mrs. Marc M. Spiegel, London

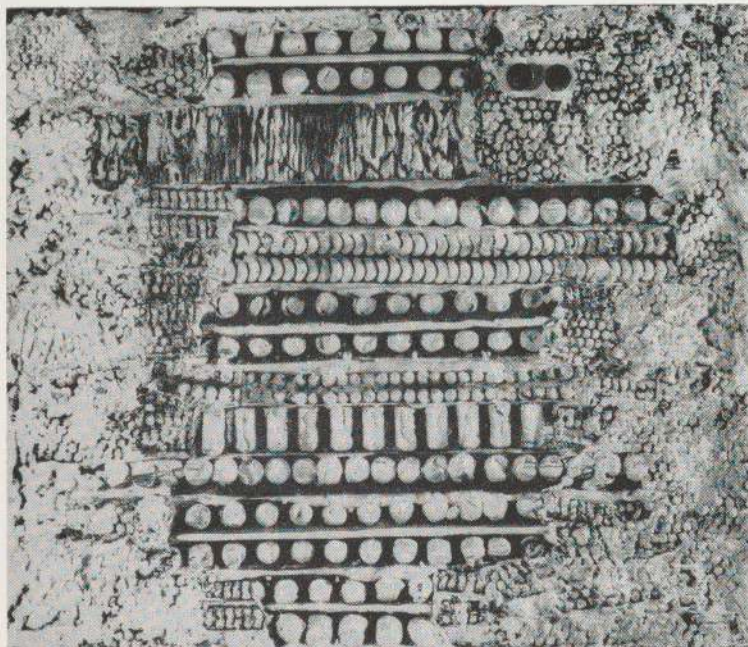




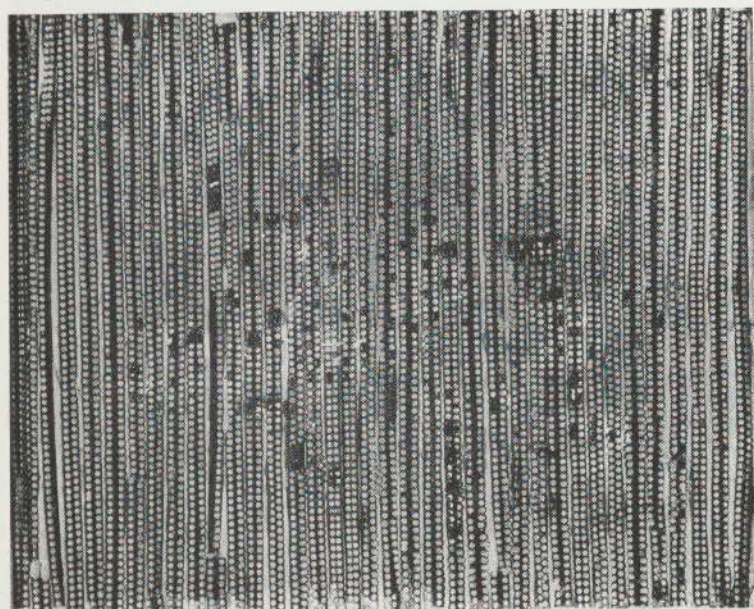


Kantor: *Untitled*. 1960. Oil on canvas, 28 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 36 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Larivière Collection, Montreal

opposite: Kantor: *Alalaba*. 1958. Oil on canvas, 79 x 53". Larivière Collection, Montreal

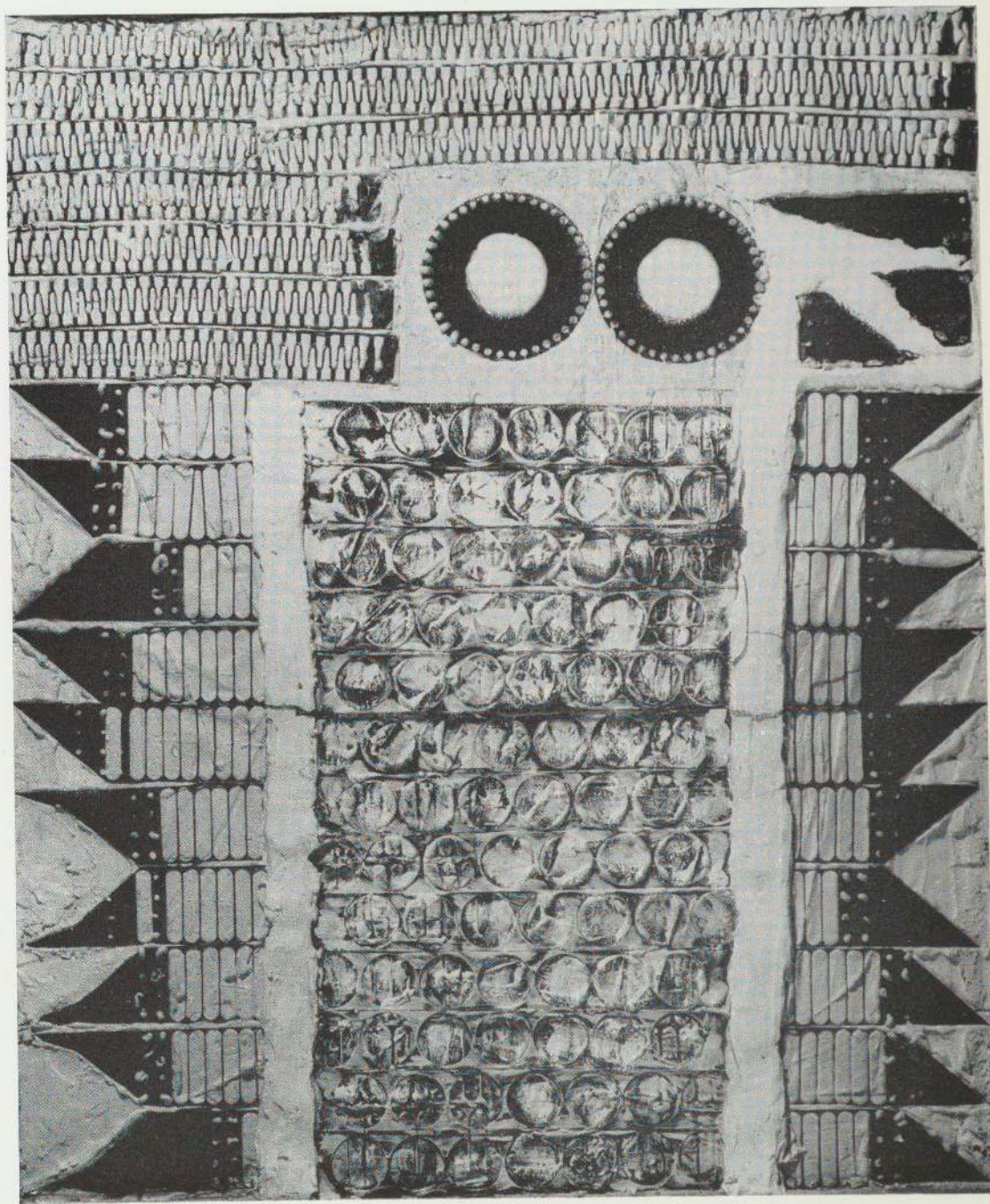


above: Kierzkowski: *Textured Composition Number 111*. 1958. Painted cement, perforated metal and fiber, 24 x 28 $\frac{7}{8}$ ". Collection Mr. and Mrs. G. David Thompson, Pittsburgh



below: Kierzkowski: *Textured Composition Number 150*. 1958. Perforated metal and cement, 20 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 26 $\frac{1}{8}$ ". Galerie Chalette, New York

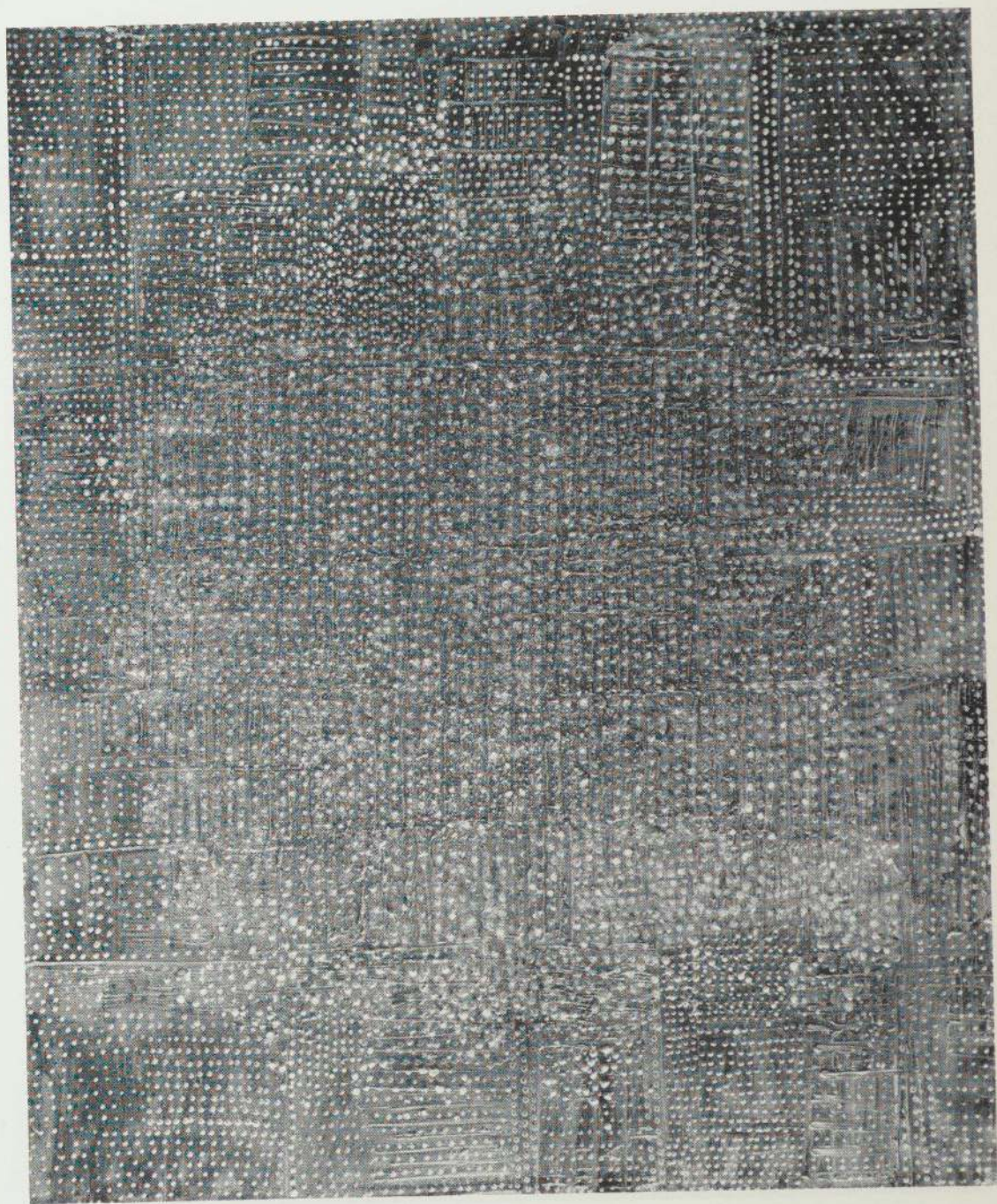
opposite: Kierzkowski: *Textured Composition Number 402*. 1959. Painted cement, iron and steel, 46 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 37 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Collection N. Richard Miller, New York

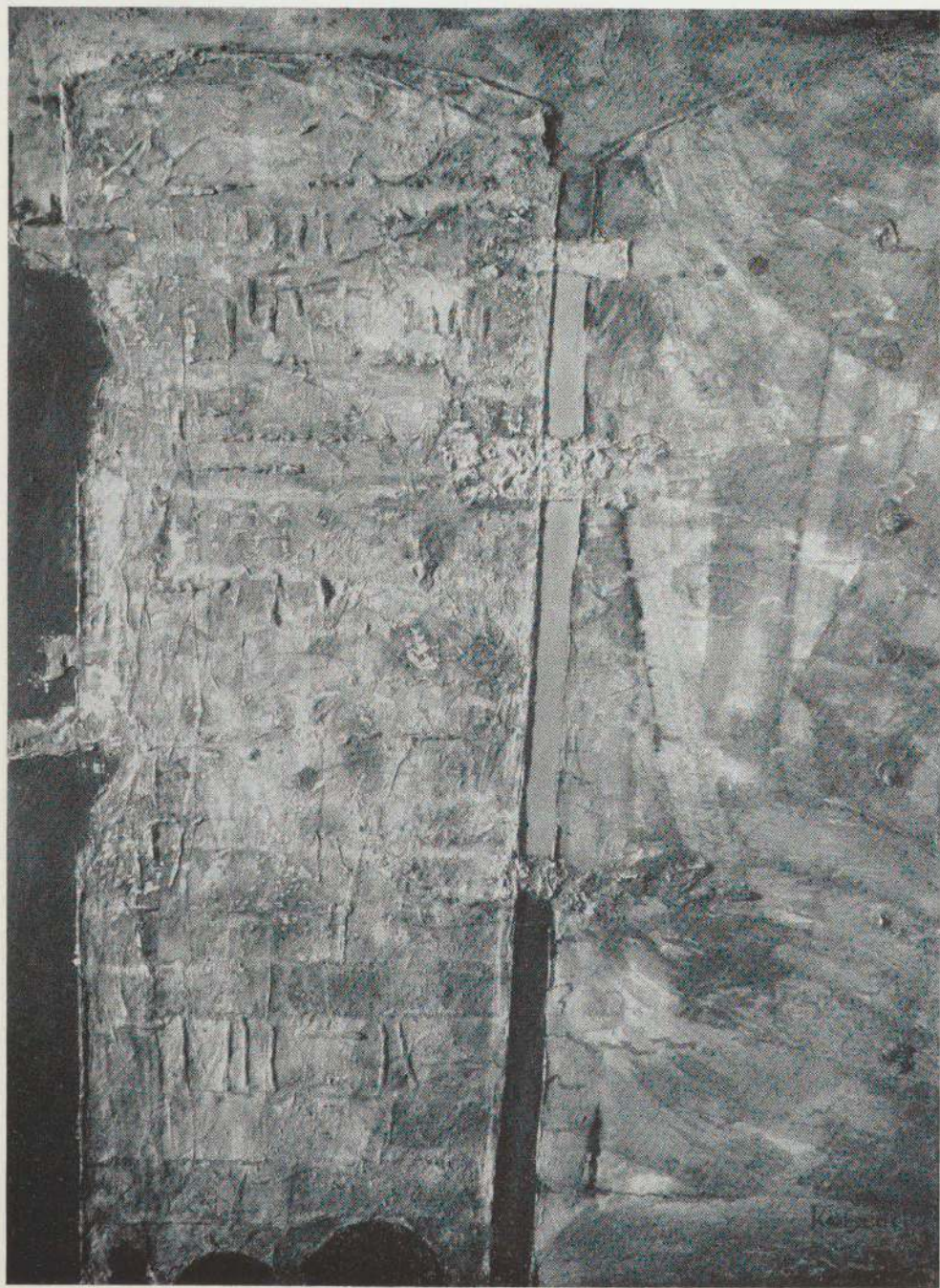


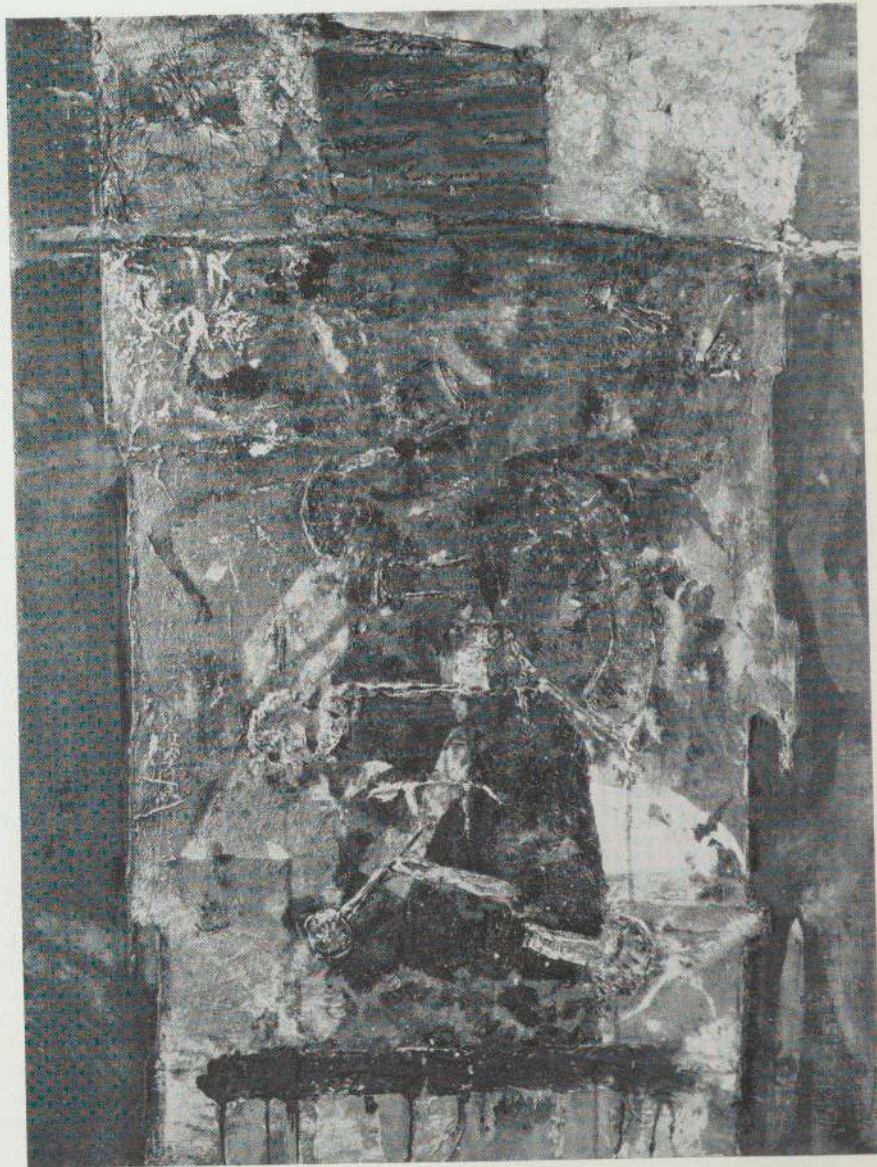


Kierzkowski: *Composition Number 1*. 1960. Gouache, $23\frac{1}{8} \times 16\frac{1}{4}$ ".
Collection Mr. and Mrs. G. David Thompson, Pittsburgh

opposite: Kierzkowski: *Composition Number 400*. 1960. Oil on canvas,
 $55 \times 44\frac{3}{8}$ ". Galerie Chalette, New York







Kobzdej: *Conflict*. 1959. Oil and paper on canvas, $39\frac{1}{4} \times 28\frac{3}{4}$ ". The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Blanchette Rockefeller Fund

opposite: Kobzdej: *Southerly*. 1959. Oil on canvas, $53\frac{1}{8} \times 39\frac{3}{8}$ ". Gres Gallery, Washington, D. C.



Kobzdej: *Traverse*. 1959. Oil and paper on canvas, $39\frac{1}{4} \times 53$ ". Collection Mr. and Mrs. G. David Thompson, Pittsburgh

opposite: Kobzdej: *Ragged*. 1960. Oil on canvas, $80\frac{1}{2} \times 52\frac{3}{4}$ ". Gres Gallery, Washington, D. C.

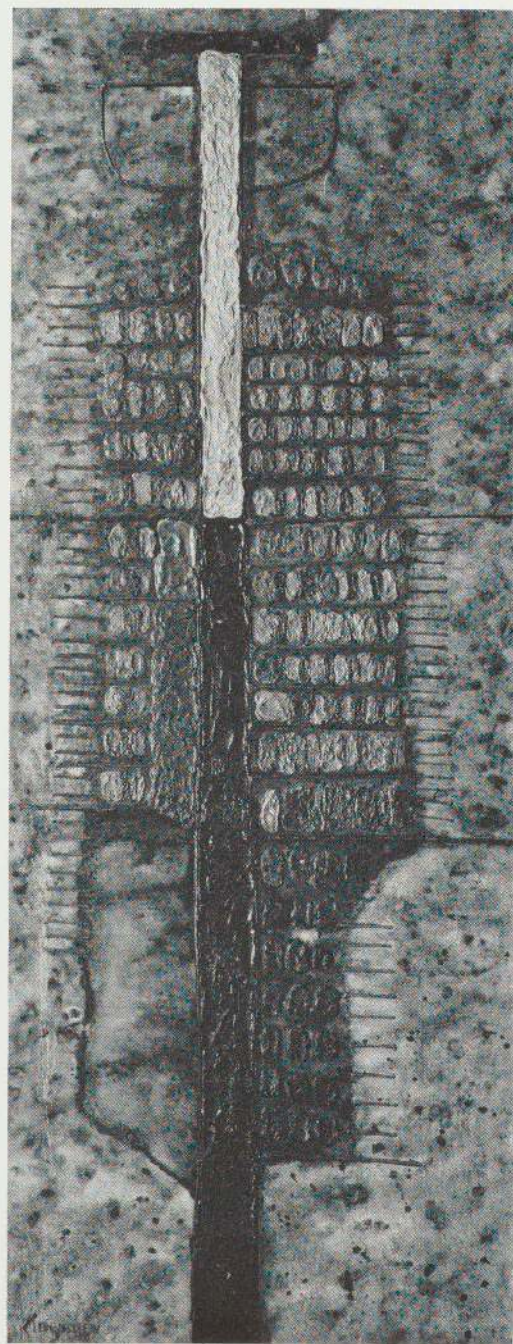




Lebenstein: *Personage*. 1959. Gouache, 22 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 17". Collection Lorin Bernsohn, New York

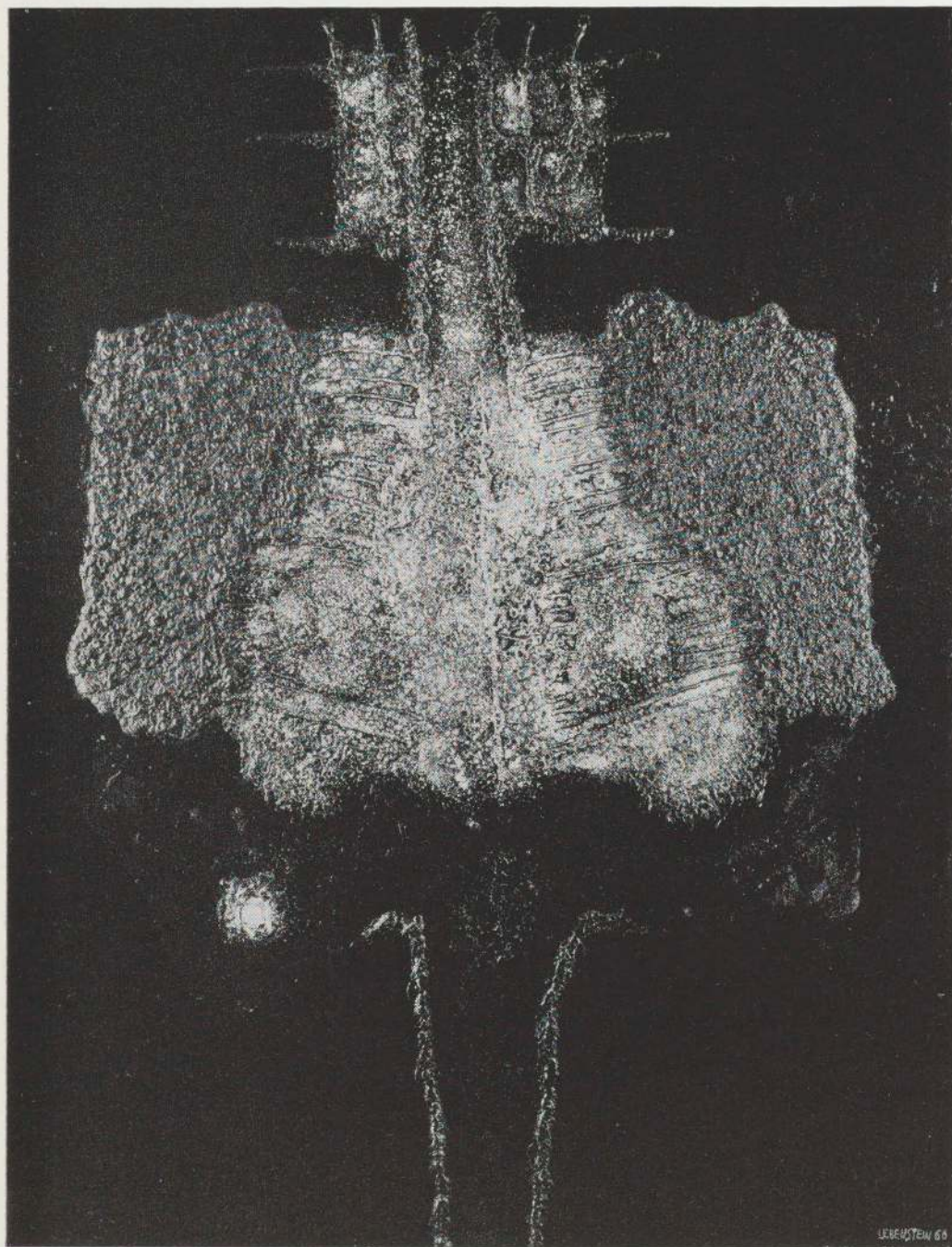
right: Lebenstein: *Axial Figure Number 6*. (1959). Oil on canvas, 71 x 26 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Collection Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Zimmermann, New York

opposite: Lebenstein: *Axial Figure Number 50*. 1960. Oil on canvas, 51 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 38". Collection Mr. and Mrs. Jan Mitchell, New York





LEBENSTEIN 60

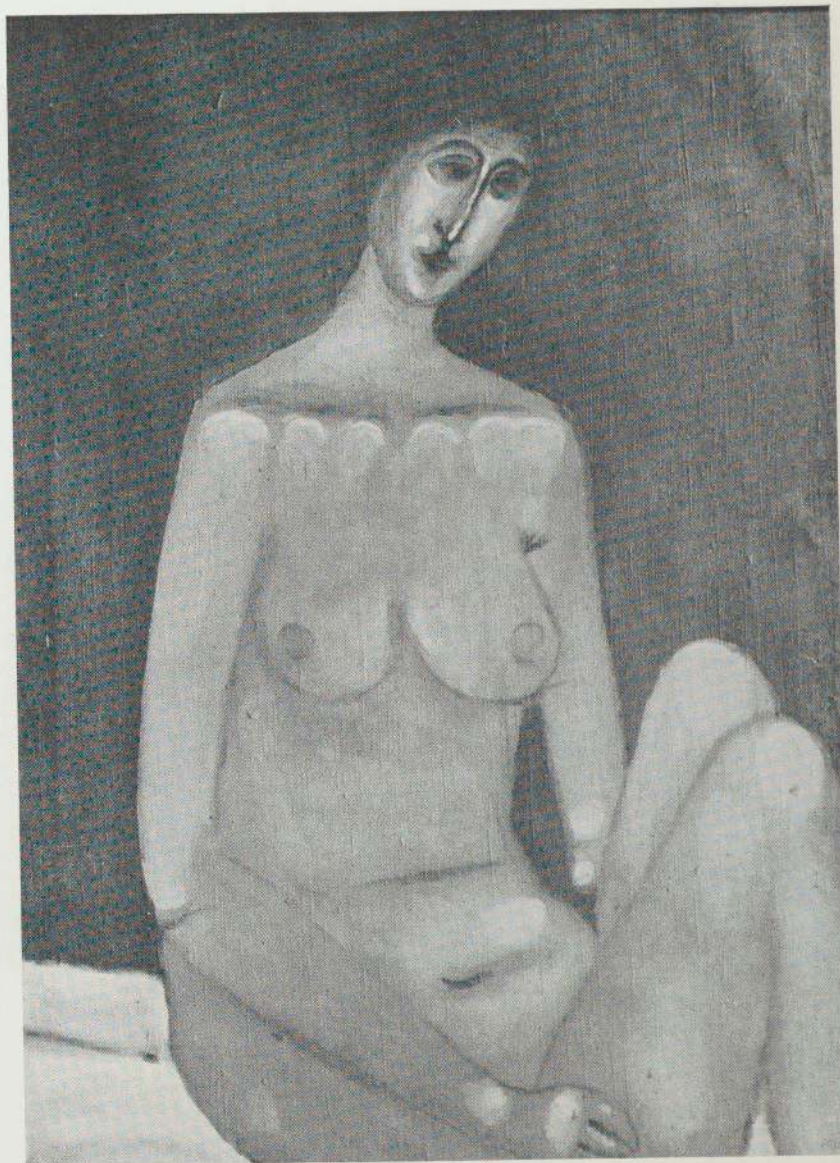


opposite: Lebenstein: *Axial Figure Number 109*. 1960. Oil on canvas, 51 x 38 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Galerie Chalette, New York

Lebenstein: *Axial Figure Number 110*. 1961. Oil on canvas, 85 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 46 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Galerie Chalette, New York

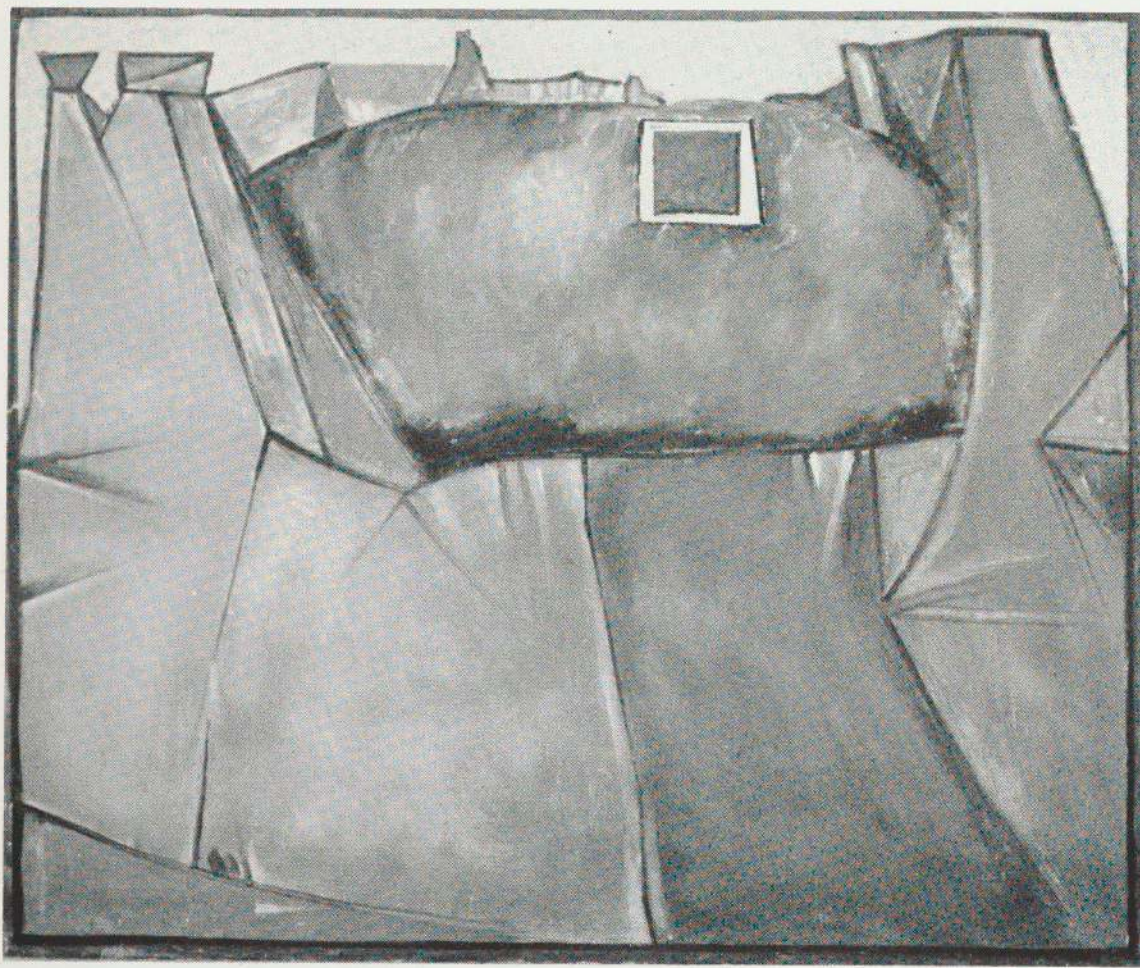




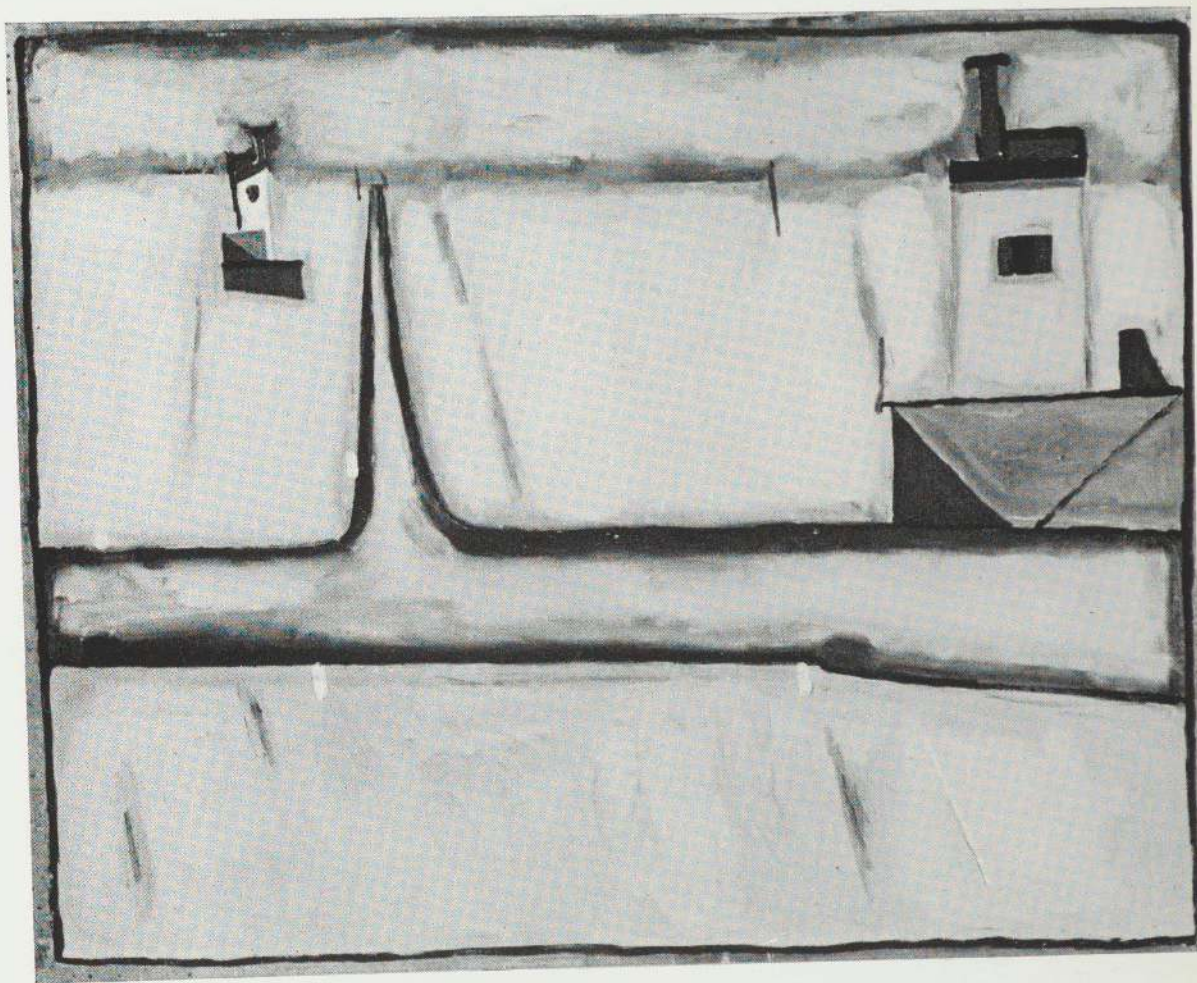


Nowosielski: *Nude*. (1958). Oil on canvas, 28 x 20". Contemporary Art Gallery, Chicago

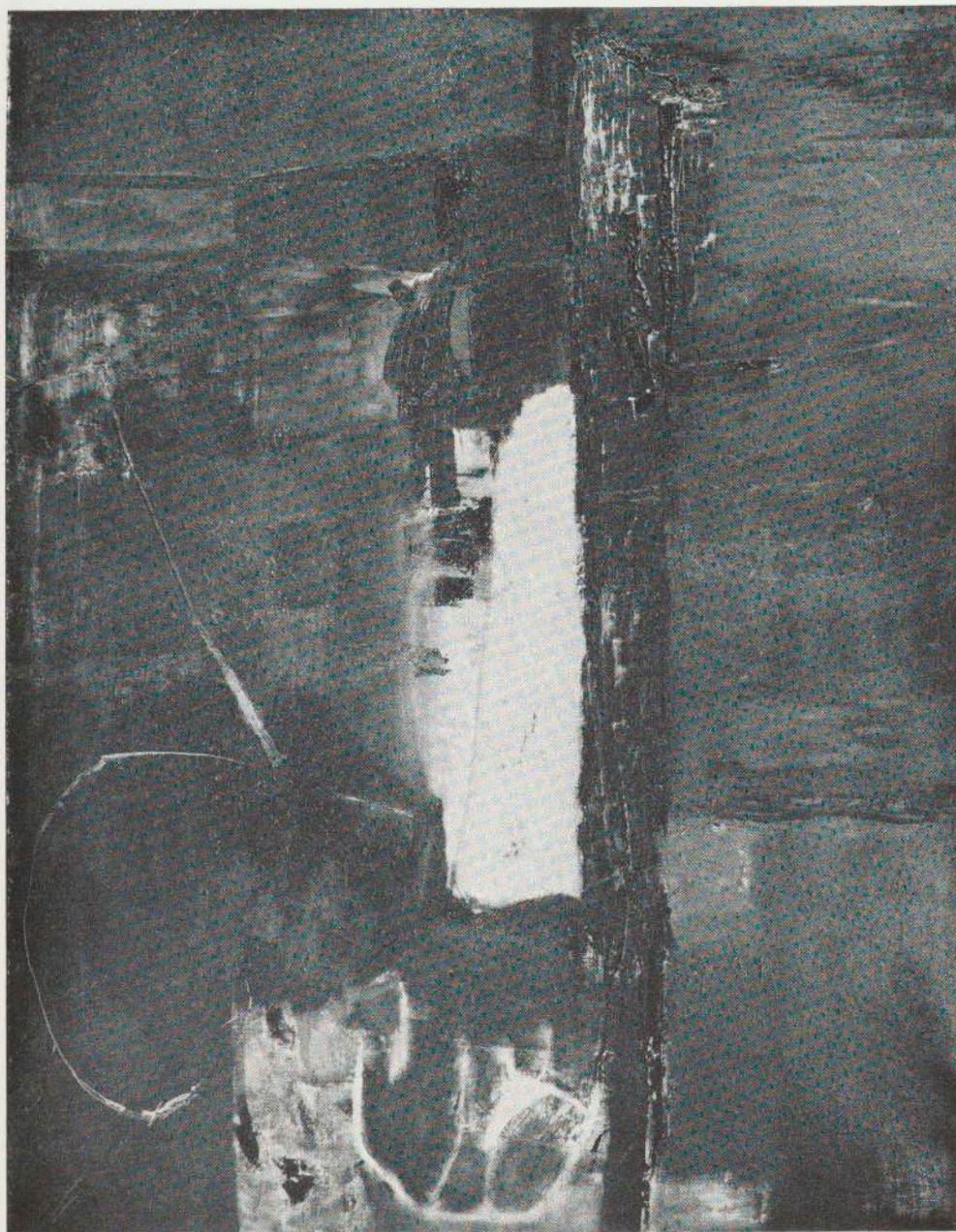
opposite: Nowosielski: *Dressing*. (1956). Oil on masonite, 39 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 26 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Contemporary Art Gallery, Chicago



Nowosielski: *Landscape*. (1958). Oil on canvas, 25½ x 30½". Collection Mr. and Mrs. T. Barry McNulty, Glencoe, Ill.



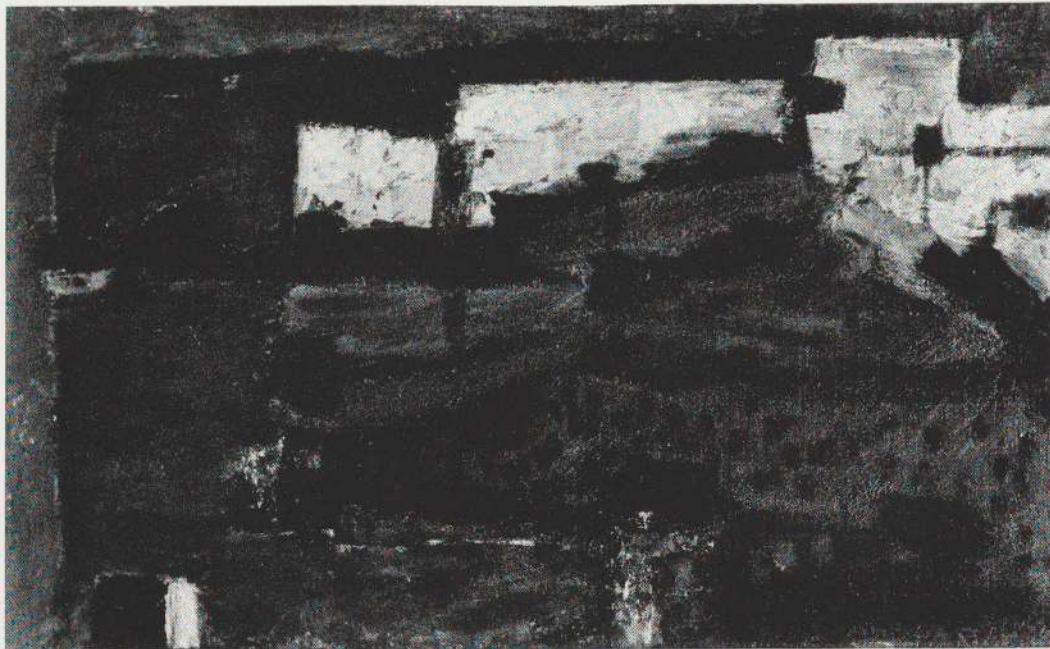
Nowosielski: *White Landscape*. (1958). Oil on canvas, 24 x 30". Contemporary Art Gallery, Chicago



Pagowska: *An Event*. (1959). Oil on canvas, 57 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 44 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Collection Mr. and Mrs. David C. Ruttenberg, Chicago

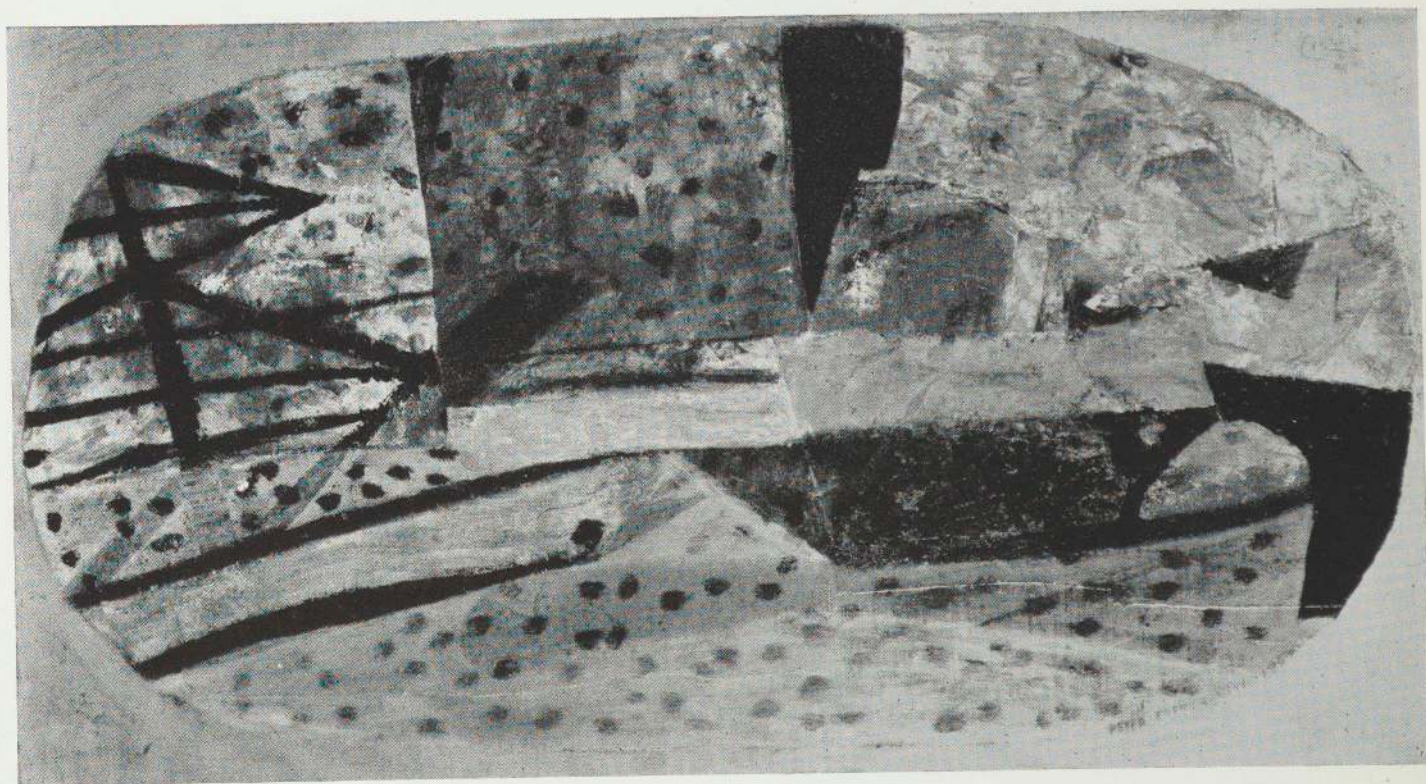


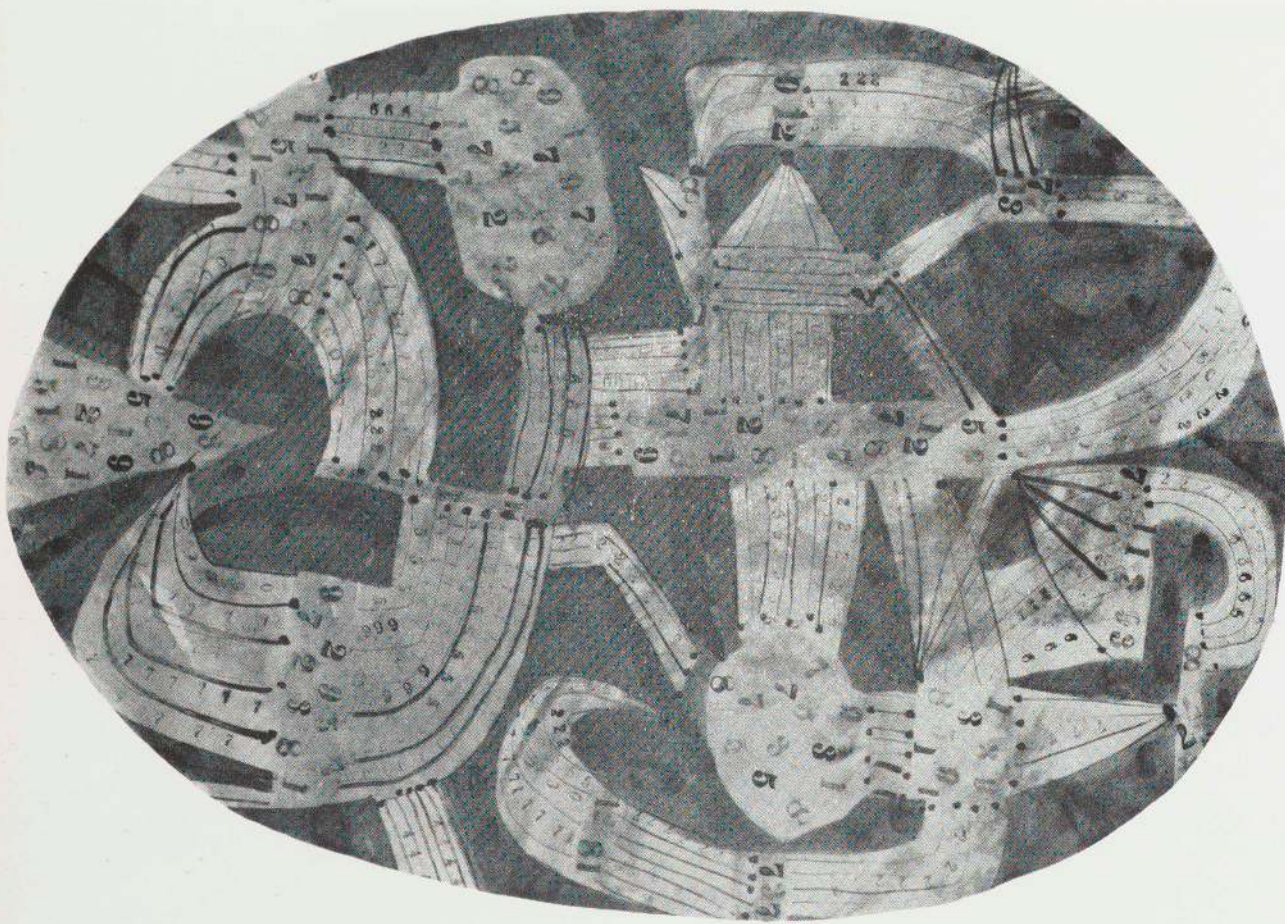
Pagowska: *Greek Sea*. (1960). Oil on canvas, 57 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 44 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Contemporary Art Gallery, Chicago



Potworowski: *Stromboli*. 1957. Oil and collage on canvas, 12 x 19 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Collection Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Zimmermann, New York

opposite: Potworowski: *Fishing Boats at Reva*. 1959. Oil and collage on canvas, 20 x 37". Collection Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Zimmermann, New York

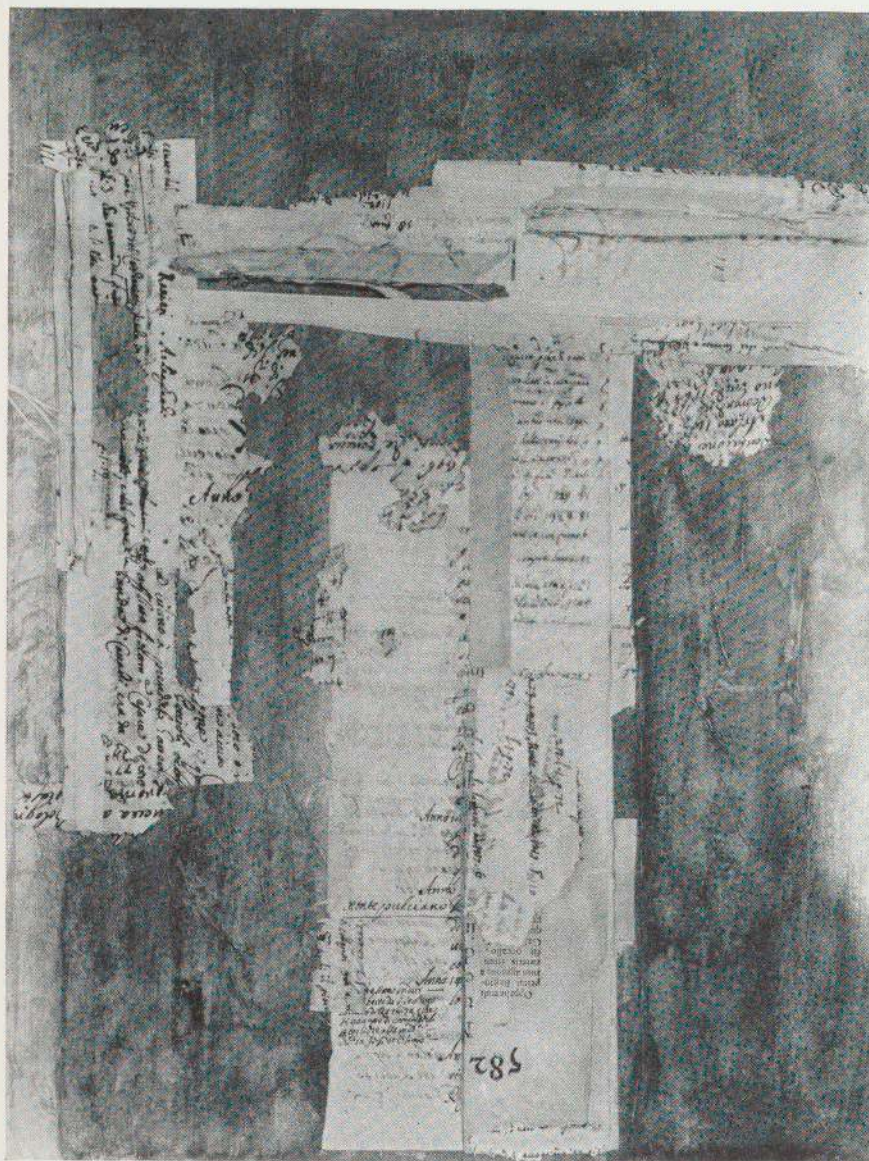




Potworowski: *Electronic Brain*. 1960. Tempera on paper, 28 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 39". Collection Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Zimmermann, N. Y.

Potworowski: *The Prisoner Devoured by Lice. (Auschwitz)*.
1960. Oil, tempera and collage on plywood, 61 x 23 $\frac{3}{8}$ ".
Owned by the artist.

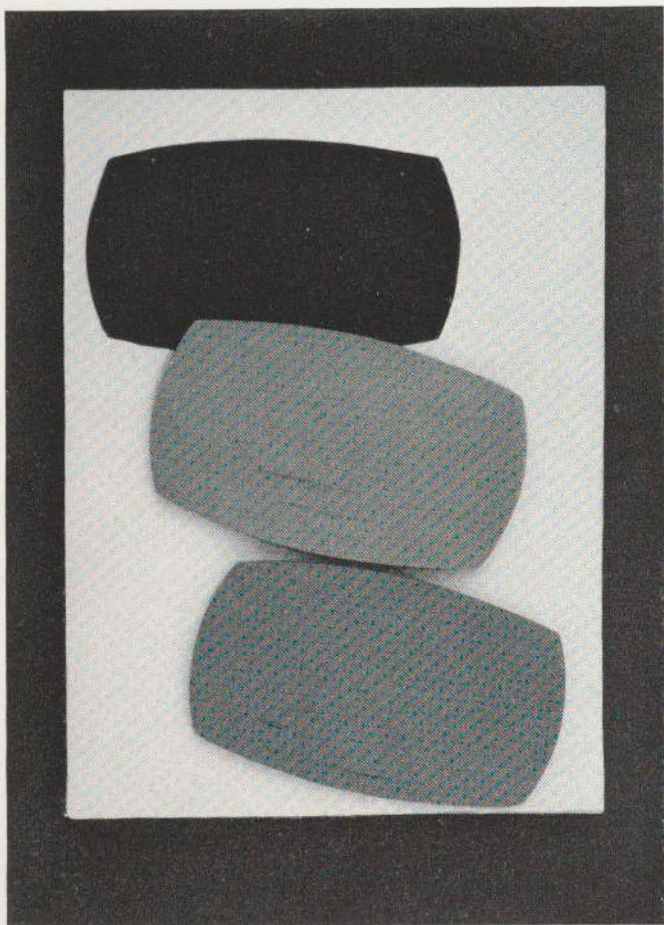




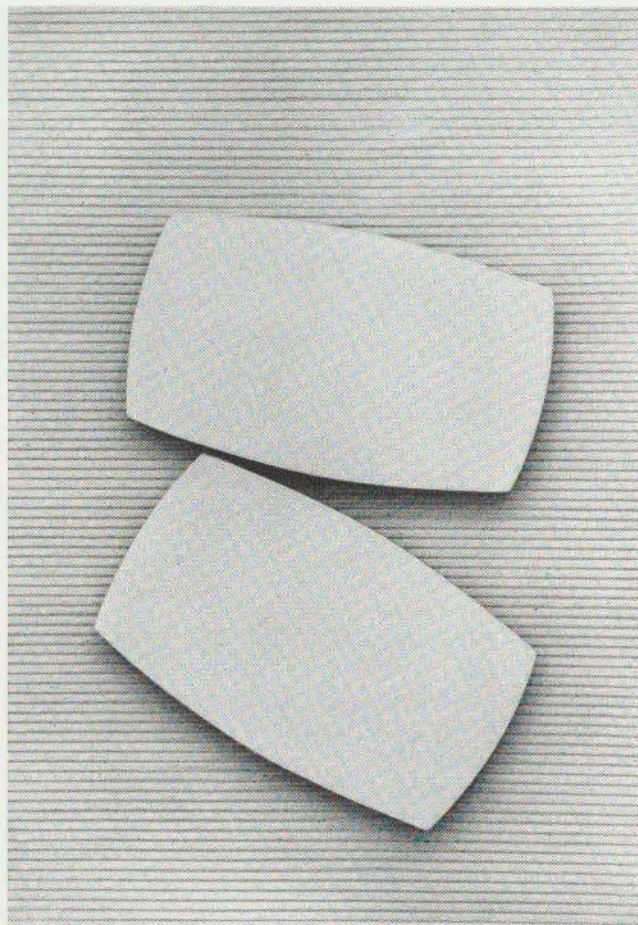


Rudowicz: *Number 76*. 1960. Collage, 14 x 18 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Felix Landau Gallery, Los Angeles

opposite: Rudowicz: *Number 54*. 1959. Collage, 18 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 13 $\frac{5}{8}$ ". Felix Landau Gallery, Los Angeles



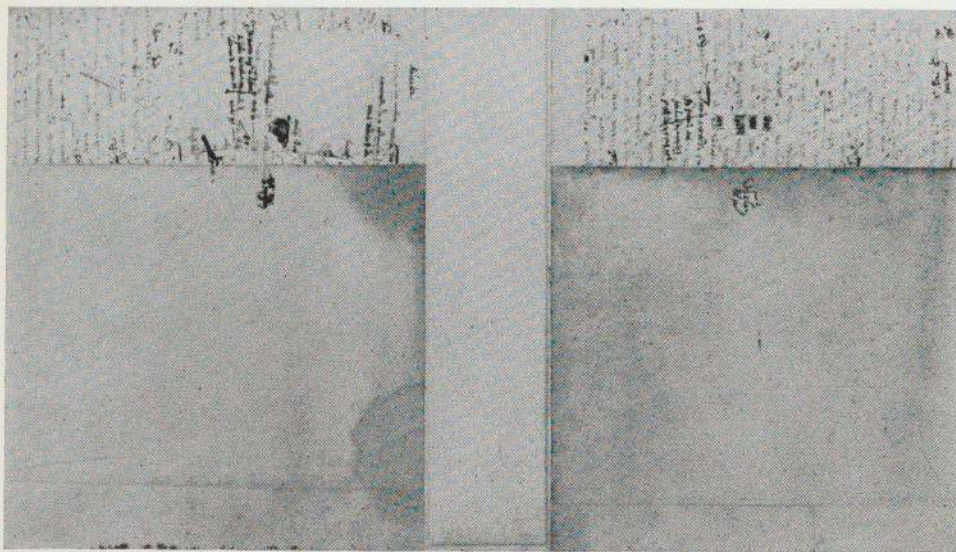
Stazewski: *Red Relief on White and Gray Ground*. (1960). Painted wood and celotex, 27 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 20 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Galerie Chalette, New York



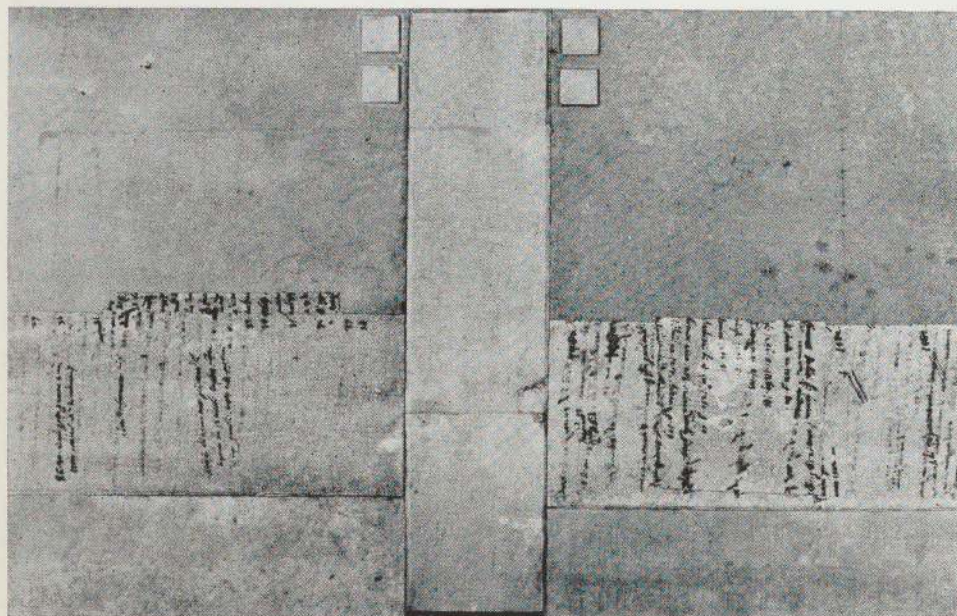
Stazewski: *White Relief*. (1960). Painted wood on corrugated board, 21 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 15". Collection Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Maremont, Winnetka, Illinois



Tchorzewski: *Composition Number 20*. (1958). Gouache, 27 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 38 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Galerie Chalette, New York



Warzecha: *Number 37*. 1960. Collage, 14 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 25 $\frac{1}{8}$ ". Felix Landau Gallery, Los Angeles



Warzecha: *Number 50*. 1960. Collage, 13 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 21 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Felix Landau Gallery, Los Angeles

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE ARTISTS AND CATALOGUE OF THE EXHIBITION

In dimensions, height precedes width. Dates enclosed in parentheses do not appear on the pictures. Works marked with an asterisk are illustrated.

TADEUSZ BRZOZOWSKI

Born 1918 in Lwow. Studied at Cracow Academy of Fine Arts 1940-1946. During Nazi occupation was member of the avant-garde clandestine theater in Cracow under Kantor's direction. Began exhibiting in Cracow in 1945 and took part in the important *Exhibition of Young Painters* there in 1946, the first manifestation of the new generation of artists in Poland. He continued exhibiting in Cracow in 1948, 1955 and 1958. From 1954 professor at the College of Visual Arts in Zakopane and director since 1959. Founder and director of the *Salon de Mars* in Zakopane. First one-man show in Warsaw in 1956.

Brzozowski has shown widely abroad: *Junge Generation, Polnische Kunstausstellung*, Berlin 1956; *Dix peintres polonais*, Brussels, 1956; exhibitions in Zagreb 1957, Bruges, Turin 1958, Stockholm, Amsterdam, Copenhagen 1959; included in the *Mostra di pittura polacca contemporanea* in Venice in 1959 and in *Pologne, 50 ans de peinture*, Geneva, 1959. Selected for the *V Bienal* of São Paulo, 1959. Participated in *Confrontations 1960*, organized for the International Association of Art Critics in Warsaw. One-man show, Galerie Lambert, Paris, 1960 and included in *Douze Peintres Polonais Modernes* at Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris, 1961.

In the United States he exhibited in the *Guggenheim International Award* exhibition in 1960 and was shown at the Contemporary Art Gallery, Chicago and the Gres Gallery, Washington in 1961. Brzozowski lives in Zakopane.

- * 1 *The Mercenary*. (1956). Oil on canvas, 54 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 39". Collection Ryszard Stanislawski, Warsaw. Ill. p. 12
- * 2 *The Guardian*. (1957). Oil on canvas, 39 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 32". Collection Mr. and Mrs. Kazimierz Karpuszek, Chicago. Ill. p. 13
- * 3 *Swatches*. (1958). Oil on canvas, 44 x 21 $\frac{5}{8}$ ". Collection Mr. and Mrs. Kazimierz Karpuszek, Chicago. Ill. p. 14
- 4 *Procedure*. (1958). Oil on canvas, 51 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 37 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Contemporary Art Gallery, Chicago
- * 5 *The Wench*. 1959. Oil on canvas, 64 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 50 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Gres Gallery, Washington, D. C. Ill. p. 15
- 6 *Pretzels*. (1959). Oil on canvas, 51 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 50". Contemporary Art Gallery, Chicago

TADEUSZ DOMINIK

Born 1928 in Szymanow. Studied at Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw under Jan Cybis from 1946-1951. Began exhibiting in 1951 and included in an important annual exhibition in Warsaw in 1952 and 1954. Participated in the historic *Arsenal Exhibition of Young Painters* in Warsaw in 1955. He showed at the National Print and Drawing exhibitions in Warsaw in 1956 and 1959. First one-man show, Warsaw 1957. Took part in the *Salon de Mars* exhibitions in Zakopane in 1958 and 1959.

Dominik at the age of twenty-eight was featured in a one-man show at the XXVIII Biennale of Venice in 1956. The same year he participated in exhibitions in Lugano, New Delhi and Ljubljana. In 1957 he showed graphic work in São Paulo. In 1958 he took part in the *International Exhibition of Art from Socialist Countries* in Moscow as well as in the *Guggenheim International Award* exhibition in New York. He showed in Belgrade, London (Grabowski Gallery), Paris (Galerie Lambert, Galerie Duncan), Venice (*Mostra di pittura polacca contemporanea*) and Geneva in 1959. In 1960 he showed in Tokyo and Johannesburg and took part in "Confrontations 1960," organized for the International Association of Art Critics in Warsaw. He was introduced to the United States as a Guggenheim award winner in 1958 and was represented in the group shows at the Contemporary Art Gallery, Chicago and Gres Gallery, Washington in April 1961. Dominik is adjunct professor in the painting department of the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw.

- * 7 *Rocks*. (1959). Oil on canvas, 34 x 35". Collection Plato C. Foufas, Evanston, Illinois. Ill. p. 16
- * 8 *Landscape*. 1959. Oil on canvas, 47 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 55". Contemporary Art Gallery, Chicago. Ill. p. 17
- 9 *Blue Composition*. (1960). Oil on canvas, 38 x 47 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Gres Gallery, Washington, D. C.
- * 10 *Number 5*. (1960). Oil on canvas, 18 x 24". Collection H. London Warner, Gambier, Ohio. (Exhibited in New York only) Ill. p. 18
- * 11 *Number 8*. (1960). Oil on canvas, 32 x 39". Collection Judge and Mrs. Russell E. Train, Washington, D. C. Ill. p. 19

WOJCIECH FANGOR

Born 1922. Painter and designer. Studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw. Exhibited in Warsaw since 1949. Designed im-

portant exhibitions of his paintings as space environments in Warsaw in 1958 and at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam in 1959. Has exhibited in Germany, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, China, Italy and Mexico as well as The Netherlands and has also been very active as designer of exhibitions and posters. Member of the International Association of Plastic Arts.

Fangor is professor in the department of architecture of the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw. His work was introduced to the United States by the Gres Gallery in Washington.

- *12 *Black IV*. 1959. Oil on canvas, 50½ x 34½". Collection Mr. and Mrs. Albert A. List, New York. Ill. p. 20
- *13 *Black I*. 1960. Oil on canvas, 35¼ x 29½". Gres Gallery, Washington, D. C. Ill. p. 21
- 14 *White Circle II*. 1960. Oil on canvas, 28¾ x 24½". Collection Mrs. Hart Perry, Washington, D. C.

STEFAN GIEROWSKI

Born 1925 in Czeszochowa. Studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Cracow from 1945-48 and settled in Warsaw in 1949. Traveled in France, Yugoslavia, Austria, Germany and the U.S.S.R. Participated in the famous *Arsenal Exhibition of Young Painters* in Warsaw in 1955 and had his first one-man show there the same year. Had further one-man shows in Warsaw in 1957 and 1959 and has been included in most important Polish group shows there and abroad during the last five years.

In 1957 he exhibited in Belgrade, Ljubljana and Zagreb. He participated in *5 Pittori Polacchi d'Oggi* in Milan and Turin in 1958 and in the *Ausstellung Polnischer Künstler* in Wuppertal. He was included in the *Mostra di pittura polacca contemporanea* in Venice in 1959 as well as in *Neue Malerei aus Polen* which traveled to nine German museums. During the same year he showed in Amsterdam and was represented in *First Biennale of Paris* and in *V Bienal* in São Paulo. In 1960 he took part in *Confrontations 1960* organized for the 7th Congress of the International Art Critics Association in Warsaw. In the spring of 1961 he contributed to the exhibition, *Douze Peintres Polonais Modernes* at the Musée National d'Art Moderne in Paris and had a one-man show at the Galerie Lacloche there. He was introduced to the United States by the Galerie Chalette, New York, in its exhibition, *Six Contemporary Polish Painters*.

Stefan Gierowski is president of the Council of Artists, painting section of the Association of Polish Artists. He lives in Warsaw.

- *15 *Number 50*. 1958. Oil on canvas, 63¼ x 51½". Galerie Chalette, New York. Ill. p. 22
- *16 *Number 74*. 1959. Oil on canvas, 52¾ x 37". Galerie Chalette, New York. Ill. p. 23

- *17 *Number 75*. 1959. Oil on canvas, 53½ x 58¾". Galerie Chalette, New York. Ill. p. 24
- 18 *Number 84*. 1960. Oil on canvas, 31¼ x 23½". Galerie Chalette, New York
- *19 *Number 99*. 1960. Oil on canvas, 53½ x 39¾". Galerie Lacloche, Paris. Ill. p. 25

TADEUSZ KANTOR

Born 1915 in Wielpol, near Cracow. Studied art and stage design at the Cracow Academy of Fine Arts. Organized a puppet theater and joined the avant-garde *Group of Cracow* in the late thirties. During the war and Nazi occupation he founded and directed a clandestine vanguard theater group and was also active as a writer. In 1947 he went to Paris for the first time and was greatly interested in surrealism and made contact with many of the younger French artists. He returned to Cracow in 1948, where he helped organize the important *1st Exhibition of Modern Art*. Was appointed professor of the College of Decorative Arts in Cracow. In 1954 in an exhibition of the *Group of Cracow*, Kantor appeared as one of the first abstract painters in Poland's younger generation. Became founder and director of *Cricot II*, an avant-garde theater, experimenting in the surrealist and abstract idioms. Did pioneer work in stage design from 1954 until 1958. Went to Paris in 1955 and met painters of the *informel* group around Michel Tapiès. Returned to Cracow and visited Paris again in 1959.

Kantor exhibited in Prague in 1949 and had his first one-man show in Warsaw in 1956, followed by one in Cracow in 1957 and in Stockholm (Galerie Samlaren) in 1958. In 1959 he had a one-man show at the Galerie Le Gendre in Paris and an important retrospective at the Kunstverein in Düsseldorf. He was also represented in *The Art of the 21st Century* in Charleroi, Belgium in 1958 and in *II Documenta* in Kassel in 1959, as well as in group shows in Oslo and Stockholm. In 1960 he was included in the *XXX Biennale* in Venice. His first one-man show in the United States was at the Saitenberg Gallery, New York in 1960. Kantor is presently living in Hamburg where he is professor at the Hochschule für Bildende Künste.

- *20 *Mumbo Jumbo*. 1957. Oil on canvas, 47¼ x 59½". Collection Mr. and Mrs. G. David Thompson, Pittsburgh. Ill. p. 26
- 21 *Untitled*. 1957. Oil on canvas, 32 x 39¼". Collection Mr. and Mrs. Milton A. Gordon, New York.
- *22 *Rori*. 1957. Oil on canvas, 59¼ x 47½". Collection Mr. and Mrs. Marc M. Spiegel, London. Ill. p. 27
- *23 *Alalaba*. 1958. Oil on canvas, 79 x 53". Larivière Collection, Montreal. Ill. p. 28
- 24 *Number 5*. 1959. Oil on canvas, 35¾ x 27¾". Collection Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Zimmermann, New York

25 *Untitled*. 1959. Oil on canvas, $31\frac{3}{4} \times 39\frac{1}{4}$ ". Saidenberg Gallery, New York

*26 *Untitled*. 1960. Oil on canvas, $28\frac{3}{4} \times 36\frac{1}{4}$ ". Larivière Collection, Montreal. Ill. p. 29

BRONISLAW KIERZKOWSKI

Born 1924 in Lodz. Studied at the College of Fine Arts in Lodz under Wladyslaw Strzeminski during 1946-47 and then continued his studies in Sopot and at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw in 1951 under Eugeniusz Eibisch. His first one-man show was in Warsaw in 1956, followed by others there and in Szczecin (Stettin) and Gdansk (Danzig). In 1959 he took part in the 3rd *Exhibition of Modern Art* in Warsaw and the following year in *Confrontations* 1960, organized for the 7th Congress of the International Art Critics Association in Warsaw.

He participated in an exhibition of Polish painting in three Yugoslav cities in 1957 and was represented in the *First Biennale of Paris* in 1959 as well as in *Pologne, 50 Ans de Peinture* in Geneva. In the spring of 1961 he was introduced to the United States by the Galerie Chalette, New York, in its exhibition, *Six Contemporary Polish Painters*. Kierzkowski lives in Warsaw.

*27 *Textured Composition Number 111*. 1958. Painted cement, perforated metal and fiber, $24 \times 28\frac{3}{8}$ ". Collection Mr. and Mrs. G. David Thompson, Pittsburgh. Ill. p. 30

*28 *Textured Composition Number 150*. 1958. Perforated metal and cement, $20\frac{3}{8} \times 26\frac{1}{8}$ ". Galerie Chalette, New York. Ill. p. 30

*29 *Textured Composition Number 402*. 1959. Painted cement, iron and steel, $46\frac{1}{4} \times 37\frac{1}{2}$ ". Collection N. Richard Miller, New York. Ill. p. 31

*30 *Composition Number 1*. 1960. Gouache, $23\frac{1}{8} \times 16\frac{1}{4}$ ". Collection Mr. and Mrs. G. David Thompson, Pittsburgh. Ill. p. 32

31 *Composition Number 2*. (1960). Gouache, $25\frac{3}{8} \times 18\frac{3}{8}$ ". The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts

32 *Composition Number 3*. 1960. Gouache, $23\frac{1}{4} \times 15\frac{7}{8}$ ". Galerie Chalette, New York

*33 *Composition Number 400*. 1960. Oil on canvas, $55 \times 44\frac{3}{8}$ ". Galerie Chalette, New York. Ill. p. 33

33a *Composition Number 318*. 1961. Oil on canvas, $53 \times 43\frac{1}{2}$ ". Collection Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Zimmermann, New York

ALEKSANDER KOBZDEJ

Born 1920 in Olesko. Painter and architect. Studied architecture and sculpture at the School of Polytechnic in Lwow until 1946 and painting at the Academy of Fine Arts in Cracow where he received his diploma in 1951. Has taught since 1945. Since 1951 Kobzdej has

been professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw where he is now Dean of Faculty. Has traveled widely in different European countries, in China, Vietnam, the United States and Mexico.

Kobzdej began exhibiting in 1945. In addition to his exhibitions in Poland, where he received State Prizes in 1952 and 1954, his work has been seen in the U.S.S.R., France, Switzerland, Germany, Hungary, China, Belgium, Holland, India, Sweden, Denmark and Italy. In 1954 he had an important one-man show in Warsaw of drawings from Vietnam and China. In the same year he participated in the XXVII *Biennale* of Venice. In 1959 he was represented in the V *Bienal* in São Paulo, where he received a purchase prize.

Kobzdej was first shown in the United States in a one-man show at French and Company, New York in the spring of 1960. In the fall of the same year he had his second American one-man show at the Gres Gallery in Washington. In 1961 included in the exhibition *Douze Peintres Polonais Modernes* at the Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris and Gres Gallery's *Contemporary Polish Painting and Sculpture*. Lives in Warsaw.

*34 *Southerly*. 1959. Oil on canvas, $53\frac{1}{8} \times 39\frac{3}{8}$ ". Gres Gallery, Washington, D. C. Ill. p. 34

35 *Blue*. 1959. Oil and cloth on canvas, $53 \times 23\frac{5}{8}$ ". Collection Mrs. John D. Rockefeller 3rd, New York

36 *United*. 1959. Oil on canvas, $53 \times 39\frac{1}{4}$ ". Collection Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Zimmermann, New York

*37 *Conflict*. 1959. Oil and paper on canvas, $39\frac{1}{4} \times 28\frac{3}{4}$ ". The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Blanchette Rockefeller Fund. Ill. p. 35

*38 *Traverse*. 1959. Oil and paper on canvas, $31\frac{1}{4} \times 53$ ". Collection Mr. and Mrs. G. David Thompson, Pittsburgh. Ill. p. 36

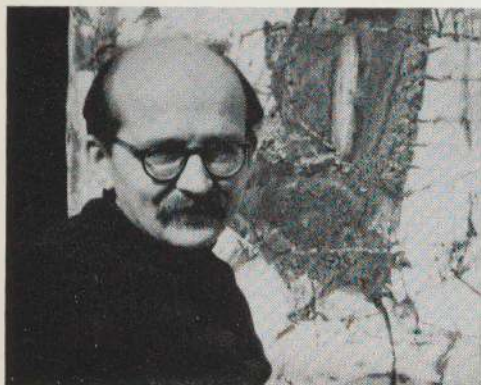
*39 *Ragged*. 1960. Oil on canvas, $80\frac{1}{2} \times 52\frac{3}{4}$ ". Gres Gallery, Washington, D. C. Ill. p. 37

40 *Black Island*. 1961. Oil on canvas, $76\frac{3}{4} \times 51\frac{1}{8}$ ". Gres Gallery, Washington, D. C. (Exhibited in New York only)

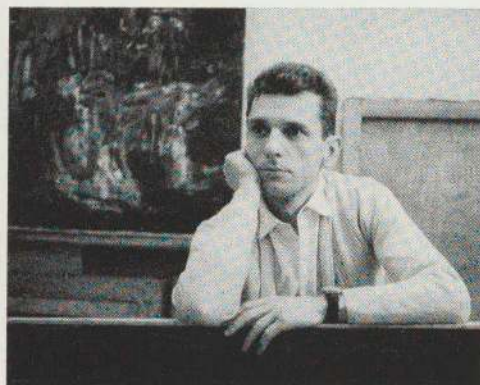
JAN LEBENSTEIN

Born 1930 in Brest-Litovsk. Studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw and has been exhibiting since 1954. Took part in the *Arsenal Exhibition of Young Painters* in 1955. Two one-man shows in Warsaw in 1956 and 1958. Prize winner at the 2nd *Exhibition of Modern Art*, Warsaw, 1957. Participated in the *Salon de Mars* exhibitions in Zakopane in 1958 and 1959.

Lebenstein has been included in Polish shows in Germany in 1956, Yugoslavia in 1957, and Italy, Belgium, Holland, Finland, Sweden, and Switzerland in 1958. He was selected for the *Guggenheim Award Exhibition* in 1958. In 1959 he was shown in the II *Documenta* in Kassel and in the V *Bienal* in São Paulo. In 1959 he also took the *Grand Prix de la Ville de Paris* in the *First Biennale of Paris*.



Tadeusz Brzozowski



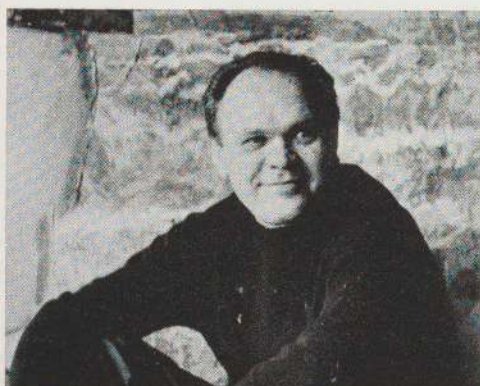
Tadeusz Dominik



Wojciech Fangor



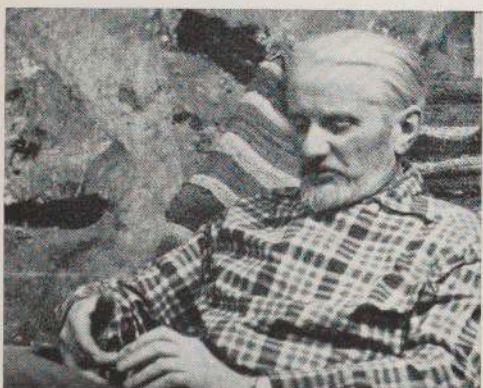
Bronisław Kierzkowski



Aleksander Kobzdej



Jan Lebenstein



Piotr Potworowski



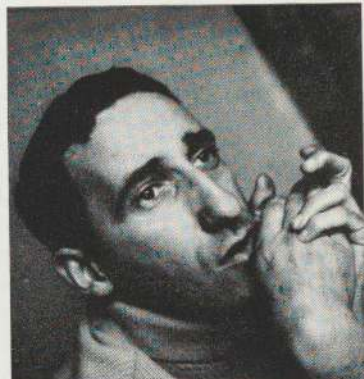
Teresa Rudowicz



Henryk Stazewski



Stefan Gierowski



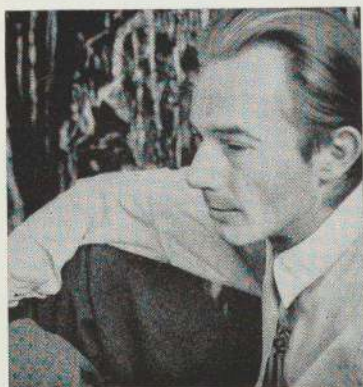
Tadeusz Kantor



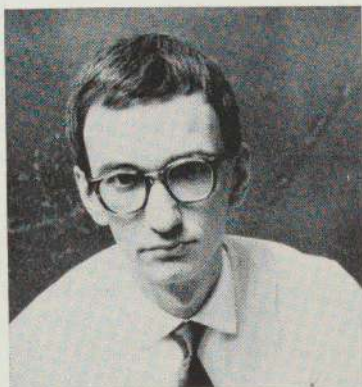
Jerzy Nowosielski



Teresa Pagowska



Jerzy Tchorzewski



Marian Warzecha

Photographers of the artists

Bennett & Pleasant, New York: *Kobzdej*

Marek Holzman, Warsaw: *Lebenstein*

Jarochoowski, Warsaw: *Potworowski*

K. Karpusko, Chicago: *Dominik, Gierowski,
Kierzkowski, Nowosielski*

Tadeusz Rolke: *Fangor*

W. Werner, Zakopane: *Brzozowski*

He has had one-man shows in Paris at the Galerie Lambert and at the Galerie Lacroche. He participated in the Paris *Salon de Mai* in 1960 and the *Salon Comparaisons* in 1961 as well as in the exhibition *Douze Peintres Polonais Modernes* at the Musée National d'Art Moderne. In the spring of 1961 he was included in the Galerie Chalette's exhibition *Six Contemporary Polish Painters* in New York.

Lebenstein's work is in the permanent collections of many Polish museums, the Musée d'Art Moderne, Paris, the San Francisco Museum of Art and The Museum of Modern Art, New York as well as in museums in Belgrade, Amsterdam, Venice and Stockholm. Lebenstein, who presently lives in Paris, will have a large retrospective at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris in the autumn of 1961.

- *41 *Personage*. 1959. Gouache, 22 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 17". Collection Lorin Bernsohn, New York. Ill. p. 38
- *42 *Axial Figure Number 6*. (1959). Oil on canvas, 71 x 26 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Collection Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Zimmermann, New York. Ill. p. 38
- 43 *Axial Figure Number 11*. (1959). Oil on canvas, 70 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 27". Collection Joseph Alsop, Washington, D. C.
- 44 *Axial Figure Number 20*. (1959). Oil on canvas, 70 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 26 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Collection Mr. and Mrs. William Lincer, New York
- 45 *Axial Figure Number 46*. 1959. Oil on canvas, 54 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 38 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Collection Mr. and Mrs. G. David Thompson, Pittsburgh
- *46 *Axial Figure Number 48*. 1960. Oil on canvas, 51 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 30 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Collection Mr. and Mrs. G. David Thompson, Pittsburgh. Frontispiece
- *47 *Axial Figure Number 50*. 1960. Oil on canvas, 51 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 38". Collection Mr. and Mrs. Jan Mitchell, New York. Ill. p. 39
- 48 *Axial Figure Number 76*. (1960). Oil on canvas, 79 x 27 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Joseph H. Hirshhorn Collection, New York
- *49 *Axial Figure Number 109*. 1960. Oil on canvas, 51 x 38 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Galerie Chalette, New York. Ill. p. 40
- *50 *Axial Figure Number 110*. 1961. Oil on canvas, 85 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 46 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Galerie Chalette, New York. Ill. p. 41
- 51 *Axial Figure*. (1961). Gouache, 26 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 27". Galerie Chalette, New York

JERZY NOWOSIELSKI

Born 1923 in Cracow. Studied at the Institute of Plastic Arts in Cracow 1940-42 and at the Academy of Fine Arts there under Eugeniusz Eibisch until 1945. Joined the vanguard *Group of Cracow* and exhibited with them in Cracow in 1945 and 1946 and in Warsaw in 1947. Participated in the *1st Exhibition of Modern Art* in Cracow in 1948 and the *2nd Exhibition of Modern Art* in Warsaw in 1957, as well as the *Salon de Mars* in Zakopane in 1958 and 1959.

In addition to easel painting Nowosielski is known for his murals for Orthodox churches.

First one-man shows in Lodz and Cracow in 1956, followed by one-man shows in Lodz and Warsaw in 1957, Cracow, Wroclaw (Breslau) in 1960.

Nowosielski has shown widely outside of Poland: Prague 1946; Berlin 1956; Venice: *XXVII Biennale* 1956; Yugoslavia 1957. In 1959 he took part in the *V Bienal* in São Paulo and was included in group shows in Venice, Geneva, Amsterdam and Copenhagen. In 1960 he was part of the *Guggenheim International Award* exhibition in New York. In December 1960 he held a one-man show at the Galerie Lambert, Paris and in April 1961 he was one of six Polish painters included in the exhibition at the Contemporary Art Gallery in Chicago.

Nowosielski lives in Lodz where he is professor of art at the College of Plastic Arts.

- *52 *Dressing*. (1956). Oil on masonite, 39 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 26 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Contemporary Art Gallery, Chicago. Ill. p. 42
- *53 *Landscape*. (1958). Oil on canvas, 25 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 30 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Collection Mr. and Mrs. T. Barry McNulty, Glencoe, Illinois. Ill. p. 44
- *54 *Nude*. (1958). Oil on canvas, 28 x 20". Contemporary Art Gallery, Chicago. Ill. p. 43
- *55 *White Landscape*. (1958). Oil on canvas, 24 x 30". Contemporary Art Gallery, Chicago. Ill. p. 45

TERESA PAGOWSKA

Born 1926 in Warsaw. Studied at the National College of Fine Arts in Poznan from 1945 to 1949. Took part in the *Arsenal Exhibition of Young Painters* in Warsaw in 1955 and in the *2nd Exhibition of Modern Art* there in 1957. Exhibited in the *Salon de Mars* in Zakopane in 1958 and 1959 and is a regular contributor to the *Festival of Art* exhibitions in Sopot. Has had one-man shows in Sopot in 1956 and 1960.

Miss Pagowska has exhibited outside of Poland in group shows in Moscow in 1954, Berlin and Brussels in 1956 and was included in the *First Biennale of Paris* in 1959 as well as in the exhibition *Pologne, 50 Ans de Peinture* in Geneva. In 1960 she had a one-man show at the Gallery La Nuova Pesa in Rome and in May 1961 at the Galerie Lambert in Paris. She was introduced to the United States by the Contemporary Art Gallery, Chicago in 1961.

Teresa Pagowska teaches at the National College of Fine Arts at Gdansk under Piotr Potworowski.

- *56 *An Event*. (1959). Oil on canvas, 57 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 44 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Collection Mr. and Mrs. David C. Ruttenberg, Chicago. Ill. p. 46
- *57 *Greek Sea*. (1960). Oil on canvas, 57 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 44 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Contemporary Art Gallery, Chicago. Ill. p. 47

PIOTR POTWOROWSKI

Born 1898 in Warsaw. First studied architecture in Warsaw (1921), and then painting at the Academy of Fine Arts in Cracow under J. Pankiewicz. In 1920 went to Paris with the *Kapist* (Komitete Paryski) group and stayed in Paris until 1933. Studied there with Fernand Léger, 1924-25. Returned to Poland (Poznan) in 1933 and took part in many exhibitions of the important *Kapist* group. First one-man show in Warsaw in 1938. During the war, after a brief stay in Sweden, Potworowski settled in England, where he stayed from 1940 to 1958, and participated in the exhibitions of the *London Group*. In 1946 he had his first one-man show in London at the Redfern Gallery and thereafter showed regularly at Gimpel Fils (five one-man shows). Appointed professor at the Academy of Bath in 1948. Returned to Poland in 1958 and accepted a professorship at the National College of Fine Arts in Gdansk. Major one-man shows at the National Museum of Poznan and at the National Museum of Warsaw in 1958. Participated in exhibitions of Polish painting in Geneva, Brussels, Amsterdam, Stockholm in 1959, as well as in II *Documenta* in Kassel. Prize winner at the XXX Biennale of Venice, 1960. Included in *Douze Peintres Polonais Modernes* at the Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris, 1961. Lives in Sopot on the Baltic Sea.

- *58 *Stromboli*. 1957. Oil and collage on canvas, 12 x 19 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Collection Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Zimmermann, New York. Ill. p. 48
- *59 *Fishing Boats at Reva*. 1959. Oil and collage on canvas, 20 x 37". Collection Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Zimmermann, New York. Ill. p. 49
- *60 *Electronic Brain*. 1960. Tempera on paper, 28 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 39". Collection Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Zimmermann, New York. Ill. p. 50
- *61 *The Prisoner Devoured by Lice (Auschwitz)*. 1960. Oil, tempera and collage on plywood, 61 x 23 $\frac{3}{8}$ ". Owned by the artist. Ill. p. 51
- 62 *Grey Nude*. 1960. Oil on canvas, 39 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 53 $\frac{1}{8}$ ". Owned by the artist
- 63 *Torun Landscape*. 1960. Oil on canvas, 57 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 39 $\frac{3}{8}$ ". Owned by the artist

TERESA RUDOWICZ

Born 1928 in Torun. Studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Cracow. Began exhibiting in Cracow in 1956 and showed there again with the *Group of Cracow* in Warsaw in 1955, in Poznan in 1958-59 and in Cracow in 1960. Participated in 2nd *Exhibition of Modern Art* in Warsaw in 1957 and in the 3rd *Exhibition of Modern Art* there in 1959. Took part in the *Salon de Mars* in Zakopane in 1958 and 1959. First one-man show in 1958 in Cracow.

Teresa Rudowicz has shown in Yugoslavia in 1957 and in Paris in 1959 (*Sept jeunes peintres polonais*). She is represented at the Gal-

leria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Rome, and by the Galleria L'Obe-lisco, Rome, and the Felix Landau Gallery, Los Angeles. Mme. Rudowicz lives in Cracow.

- *64 *Number 54*. 1959. Collage, 18 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 13 $\frac{5}{8}$ ". Felix Landau Gallery, Los Angeles. Ill. p. 52
- 65 *Number 36*. 1960. Collage, 11 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 21". Felix Landau Gallery, Los Angeles
- *66 *Number 76*. 1960. Collage, 14 x 18 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Felix Landau Gallery, Los Angeles. Ill. p. 53
- 67 *Number 78*. 1960. Collage, 19 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 27 $\frac{3}{8}$ ". Felix Landau Gallery, Los Angeles

HENRYK STAZEWSKI

Born 1894 in Warsaw. Painter, designer and art critic. Studied at Warsaw Academy of Fine Arts 1914-1920. Founded with Strzemiński, Kobro and others the avant-garde group *Blok* in 1923, which was the first movement of non-objective art in Poland, much under the influence of Constructivism and Suprematism. The art review *Blok* of which Stazewski was one of the editors had close contact with journals such as *De Stijl*, *Farbe und Form*, *Der Sturm*, *Ma*. Visited Paris in 1925 and formed friendships with Mondrian, Arp, Seuphor, van Doesburg, Vantongerloo. Returned to Warsaw and became founder of *Praesens*, the successor of *Blok*, which included architects and designers as well as painters. Met Malevich in 1927 and became his friend and collaborator. One of the founders of *a.r.* (*Artistes Revolutionnaires*) in 1930 in Lodz, a group which sponsored the International Gallery of Modern Art, dedicated to the work of artists such as Arp, Ozenfant, van Doesburg, Léger.

Outside of Poland, Stazewski participated in the Paris exhibitions of *Cercle et Carré* in 1929 and *Abstraction-Création* in 1932. He showed in the United States as early as 1926 in an international exhibition of stage design and in 1927 in the *Machine-Age Exposition* in New York.

After the second World War Stazewski was included in many of Poland's international shows. He had retrospective exhibitions in Rome in 1956 (Galleria d'Incontro) and in Warsaw in 1959. In 1957 he participated in the important *Precurseurs de l'art abstrait en Pologne* at the Galerie Denise René in Paris. In 1960 he took part in *Construction and Geometry in Painting* at the Galerie Chalette, New York. The Galerie Chalette also included his work in *Six Contemporary Polish Painters* in the spring of 1961. Stazewski lives in Warsaw.

- *68 *White Relief*. (1960). Painted wood on corrugated board, 21 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 15". Collection Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Maremont, Winnetka, Illinois. Ill. p. 54
- *69 *Red Relief on White and Gray Ground*. (1960). Painted wood and celotex, 27 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 20 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Galerie Chalette, New York. Ill. p. 54

- 70 *Composition with Blue and Yellow*. (1960). Painted wood on celotex, 15 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 19 $\frac{5}{8}$ ". Galerie Chalette, New York

JERZY TCHORZEWSKI

Born 1928 in Siedlce. Studied at Academy of Fine Arts in Cracow from 1946 to 1951. While still a student participated in the 1st *Exhibition of Modern Art* in Cracow in 1948. In 1957 he contributed to the 2nd *Exhibition of Modern Art* in Warsaw. First one-man show in Warsaw in 1957. Has participated in the important group exhibitions in Poland in Warsaw, Zakopane, Cracow and Lublin.

Since 1956 Tchorzewski has participated in numerous Polish exhibitions abroad. In 1956 he was included in group shows in Berlin, New Delhi, Mexico, Lugano; in 1957 in four Yugoslav cities; 1958 in Bruges; in 1959 in eight German cities, in Venice, Paris, Geneva and Reykjavik. In 1959 he was also among the Polish representation at the *V Bienal* in São Paulo. In 1960 he participated in *Confrontations* 1960, organized for the International Association of Art Critics in Warsaw. He had one-man shows in Warsaw and Lodz in 1957 and at the Galerie Furstenberg, Paris in 1960. He was introduced to the United States by the Galerie Chalette in its *Six Contemporary Polish Painters*. Tchorzewski lives in Warsaw.

- *71 *Composition Number 20*. (1958). Gouache, 27 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 38 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Galerie Chalette, New York. Ill. p. 55

- 72 *Composition Number 12*. 1960. Gouache, 38 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 27 $\frac{3}{8}$ ". Galerie Chalette, New York

MARIAN WARZECHA

Born 1930 in Cracow. Studied stage design as well as painting at the Academy of Fine Arts in Cracow. Participated in the 2nd *Exhibition of Modern Art* in Warsaw in 1957 and in the exhibition, *Symbolism and Surrealism* in Cracow in 1958. Showed with the *Group of Cracow* in Poznan in 1958-59 and in Cracow in 1960.

Warzecha is represented at the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Rome, and by the Galleria L'Obelisco, Rome, and the Felix Landau Gallery, Los Angeles. He lives in Cracow.

- *73 *Number 37*. 1960. Collage, 14 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 25 $\frac{1}{8}$ ". Felix Landau Gallery, Los Angeles. Ill. p. 56

- *74 *Number 50*. 1960. Collage, 13 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 21 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Felix Landau Gallery, Los Angeles. Ill. p. 56

- 75 *Number 3*. 1961. Collage, 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 18 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Felix Landau Gallery, Los Angeles

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The Library of the Museum of Modern Art is in the process of assembling documentation on contemporary Polish artists, but as they have only recently risen to prominence outside of Poland it would be premature to publish a bibliography at this time. However, the Library contains numerous pamphlets and catalogues in the Polish language, which students are invited to consult. The limited amount of material in English and French can be located through "The Art Index" and similar references. B. K.

The Museum of Modern Art



300190115

