

September 23, 1929.

Mr. Frank R. Fraprie  
American Photography

Boston, Mass.

My dear Mr. Fraprie:

Ever since the July issue of the magazine arrived it has been my desire and intention to answer Mr. Haz' article regarding the 3rd International Salon of the P.P.A. Mr. Haz has made some very unfortunate mis-statements concerning this. I know he was informed by the authorities and I feel that it only fair that the other side should receive the light of day. For instance, all of the Russian work and a great deal of the foreign work was received some ten days after the jury had voted upon the rest of the exhibition. As I was present with the director of the Salon at the time this work was received I can speak for this with positive first-hand information. I am sure your magazine is most fair-minded and I have no question but that you will publish this.

I regretted my inability to submit any work for your competition this year but I have been so exceedingly busy that all the exhibitions whose closing dates have been during the summer I have had to forego for this year. However, I hope to send you something next year.

F.R.P. #2

I thought the reproduction of my  
flower garden was a very excellent one and I was  
pleased to have it in your magazine.

Wishing you every success, I am

Very sincerely yours,

P.S. Will you please put me down for a copy of  
the German Annual when it arrives?

The 3rd International Salon of the Pictorial Photographers  
of America. In answer to Mr. Haz.

Owing to an exceedingly busy summer, this answer to Mr. Haz' article in the July Issue of American Photography has been long delayed. As a member of the jury of the aforesaid exhibition, and as Mr. Haz has made many statements with which I disagree, it seems fitting that "I take my pen in hand" and present another point of view.

Let us take Mr. Haz' article from the beginning. He heads his article the "3rd International Salon of the Pictorial Photographers of America" and at once plunges into a discussion of the Annual to be issued by this organization in the fall. The Annual is important of course, but it contains not the whole exhibition, only a portion thereof. To call the Salon a failure judged from the angle of choice for the forthcoming book is hardly the way to judge the exhibition. Let us wait until the book appears before its merit is so severely judged.

His next statement refers to the Japanese workers. Just why does he object to the Japanese? I think we can only be justly proud of them judging from their work. As there were no entries from Japan, I presume that Mr. Haz refers to the American Japanese. They live in America and doubtless are naturalized Americans. We also, have other nationalities in the photographic world, Bohemian, German, Russian, Italian and others. We are not judging nationalities but photographs and the best ones win. It is this blending of different nationalities that makes American work interesting.

Next we have the statement that the "show was very aristocratic, reserved, cool, solemn and haughty". I don't know about the haughty, but I say, Good to the rest. We need a show like that. It will do us good.

We come to Sports. Mr. Haz suggests that the jury declined to accept prints whose subjects were baseball, football, tennis, golf, swimming, horse and auto racing, dogs, cats, and other pets, the zoo and aviation. I can only recall a very, very, few of such that were submitted, and if they are not submitted what can the jury do about it? We certainly did not reject any such subjects.

Next he assails the jury. Very well, lets have a look at us. "Four out of the seven are devoid of knowledge of the whats and whys of amateur photography and also of salon experience." "Two are good commercial photographers. One a fine painter and photographer, but not a salonist". Well lets begin with the last first. This is Mr. Charles Sheeler, an eminent artist in three mediums, painting, lithography, and photography. He may not have exhibited at some of the photographic salons, but for the merit of his work and his standing in America as an artist we may well be proud that we were

able to have him on our jury. Next the two commercial photographers. I am somewhat at a loss here. Because Anton Bruhel and Robert Waida earn their living by doing most superlative work in advertising for which they are paid a very high price, does Mr. Haz call them "commercial"? Then so is Mr. Steichen, and all others who earn their living by their photography. My humble self is included here too and I believe Mr. Haz also earns his living by such a means. Next we have the ones "devoid of knowledge of the whats and whys of amateur photography". (By the way, the print committee instructed me to judge the prints as works of art. Where does the amateur come in?) and also of Salon experience. Doubtless I belong to this group. True that I have not served before on a jury for an International Salon, We must all have a first time. It is not, however, my first jury experience. I have been on photographic juries and even juries that judged painting and sculpture. It is quite possible that this is also true of the others to whom Mr. Haz refers. That "none of them may know much of the doings in the amateur fields" seems to me a foolish statement. How does Mr. Haz know what we know and don't know? We had also as members of the jury four names that all Salon exhibitions know well and need no further recommendation. Also we had Mr. Newman, an art critic of distinction and print collector and dealer.

Now regarding the method of selection. First let me state Mr. Haz has received false information. True it is that the jury met together to go through the entire group for a preliminary selection. We naturally picked out the outstanding work. But it is not true that the prints which were not included in this first selection went out for good. Quite to the contrary. It was distinctly understood that we were to look through the rejected pile and take out any number of prints that we felt worthy for further consideration. Speaking for myself I looked again at every print and moved at least ten from this group to the group which were finally voted upon. More than this, I saw with my own eyes five other members of the jury do the same thing. This first selection was simply to eliminate the prints that were out of it without question. When group #2 had been carefully examined a second time, then group #1 was ticketed with the ballots and voted upon. Group #1 at this time contained some 700 prints which were individually studied and voted upon by each member of the jury. Having served on juries that made their selection by other methods and having been on the committee to assist others which I have watched, I do not hesitate to say that I have never seen a method that seemed to me so fair or one that involved such careful study of each individual print as the ballot method used at this exhibition. It is easy to say "all right put that in" after listening to a perhaps too long discussion regarding a picture in question, and it is quite another to sit in silence with a picture before you, and write down whether you give that picture a mark of 1, 2, or 3. All ones highest ideals are thus called into play, the only influence being the worth of the picture. People are often influenced by other personalities, often without knowing it, in such cases. I have it happen. That some of the greatest salons of painting have found this to be true is shown by rather similar methods of selection.

where the jury sit in a row and press an electric button which signifies to someone behind the screens the vote of that individual.

Mr. Haz was not present when this jury did its work. Just how he received so much information that is quite untrue is a mystery, but things carried by word of mouth often become sadly distorted. Now we come to work by well-known pictorialists who were turned down. Perhaps they did not send their best work. A number of well-known salonists did not send at all. Some sent things that had been shown many many times and had been reproduced many many times and there was interesting new work to take its place. There were many very hackneyed subjects, such as dancing girls, sickly nudes, sentimental landscapes, and "meaningless compositions" that evidently the majority of ~~the~~ jury decided to decline. Surely it is time that true virility displayed itself with greater force. After careful study of several of the leading European Salons, several years ago, I decided at that time that the Europeans were our masters in technique but that American ideas were far more stimulating and interesting. After viewing the final selection of the 3rd P.P.A. salon I was still of the same opinion, save that our technique was reaching a much higher level.

Mr. Haz takes exception to Martin Bruehl's prize fighter which he calls a peak. Just let me say that this was one of six prints which received the highest score in the entire show. "A fighter without arms and legs". Yes he was resting and didn't need them at the moment! He needed his brains instead. It is a most worthy picture as a work of art and a magnificent piece of photography technically.

In closing his article Mr. Haz says "It is too bad that the governing policy was not better fitted to attract more friends, members and co-operators. Well, better luck next time." Because the policy does not meet with Mr. Haz' approval it does not mean that everyone agrees with him. One cannot help feeling a strain of "peeve" through Mr. Haz' article. I have seen work of Mr. Haz' that I liked very much. It was too bad that his selection for this salon did not better fit the taste of this particular jury. Better luck next time Mr. Haz.

And one word more, may I add the hope that America photographers are thinking more seriously, as to just what photography is and can do as an art medium and that the days of imitating other mediums will soon be gone, and photography will stand only for itself.