

THE HOME OF GEORGIA O'KEEFFE.

Like two major qualities of her painting, beauty of spacing and simplicity of design dominate the home of Georgia O'Keeffe.

Some ten years ago, following years of negotiation, Miss O'Keeffe purchased an old "hacienda" at the edge of the little Spanish village of Abiquiu, New Mexico. The village tops a small mesa protruding into the valley of the Chama River, with Miss O'Keeffe's place at the very rim overlooking the entire lower valley. This old house, or rather group of buildings, like most building in New Mexico is constructed of adobe bricks. Adobe is like clay in the hands of a sculptor;- it can be remodeled, added to, subtracted from, changed in many ways. All of the original walls are still in tact. Some roofs needed repair or replacement, some doors and windows have been changed, nichos added, and of-course, the surfaces both indoors and out have been re-coated.

from an automobile sized terrace, the entrance is through a wide gate into a large patio. On the right is one building containing a very large studio and Miss O'Keeffe's bed room. Through large windows, these rooms overlook the cottonwood tree-studded valley and

the river flowing to the Rio Grande whose distant valley can been seen at the foot of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, a view which has inspired many a painting.

To the left of the entrance gate is a guest room and a "zaguan", a covered passage-way between adobe walls, leading to a smaller completely surrounded patio. Through an old original door there is another entrance from the outside. Other doors open into the living and dining rooms and the working part of the house, while another zaguan leads to a spacious adobe walled garden. Simplicity of arrangement, as well as the simplicity of her life, is the essence of the house of Georgia O'Keeffe. She lives alone and has no telephone. Two faithful native Spanish-Americans minister to her needs, a man for the garden and a woman for the house though in reality she is thoroughly independent. An avid gardener, she raises much of her own food supply. Fruit of all sorts, vegetables-herbs. A large deep freeze, (there is electricity in the village) keeps her well supplied throughout the year.

The dining room is small with adobe colored walls and a native fireplace burning upright wood is nearly always in use. Opposite the patio door of the dining room is a large window looking into the " roofless " room. This was once a storeroom with a caved in roof. During the remodeling, Miss O'Keeffe noticed

the remodeling Miss O'Keeffe noticed the play of light and shadow from the few remaining "vigas" or roof beams. So with gravel in place of a floor, white walls, two small evergreen trees and an old stump, she produced an everchanging still life in depth to watch from the dining table. The floors of both the dining room and living room are adobe, soft to walk on and as easily responsive to the vacuum cleaner as any other floor material. The long, cool, white walled living room is partially lighted by three overhead skylights. White unbleached muslin curtains cover bookcases and the patio door. There is a built in "banco" and a wall fireplace at one end of the room, a window looking into the garden at the other. Two long tables, in reality wide shelves, are set into the walls. Aside from one or two of her own paintings and an African Mask, her decorative objects are chiefly nature's own:- bits of weathered wood, beautiful stones, shells, bones- the simple elements of life. The impression of the house is one of quiet contemplation, not that conversation cannot be extremely lively when guests arrive. Wonderful books, the finest of recordings, two superb Blue Chow dogs are Miss O'Keeffe's daily companions at home while out of doors is all the magnificent landscape of New Mexico.

Most of life's petty frustrations are eliminated from Miss O'Keeffe's existence. She has reduced her life to fundamental essentials and those things that mean the most to her. The very objects with which she surrounds herself take on an added beauty by the way she arranges and places them. Such is the home- the life- the work of ~~xxx~~ Gorgia O'Keeffe, one of America's great painters.