Special Exhibition of Drawings and Watercolors by

WILLIAM M. HEEKING

Syracuse University - School of Art
Class of 1908

Arranged in honor of the
Fiftieth Anniversary of the Class of 1908
In the Gallery of the
Joe & Emily Lowe Art Center
Syracuse University
Notes on the Artist:

Mr. Hekking is represented in 22 private collections in 10 states. In addition he is represented in Adelaide, Australia; Tokyo, Japan; Manchester, England; and Zoist, Holland.

He is represented in the permanent collections of the Mr. Farnsworth Art Museum, Rockland, Maine, Fogg Art Museum, Harvard, Albright Art Gallery, Buffalo. He is at present represented with loan exhibitions at the Fawcett Art Museum, South Hampton, Long Island, and the Sheldon Swope Art Museum, Terre Haute, Indiana.

The artist has spent a good deal of his life as a teacher and lecturer at James Millikin University, and the Universities of Missouri and Kansas. He taught painting and drawing at Syracuse University from 1942 to 1950. He has lectured for the Carnegie Foundation at the Universities of Michigan and Toronto.

He has spent eleven years as Art Director of the Columbus Art Gallery, Columbus, Ohio, the Albright Art Gallery, Buffalo; and the Los Angeles Museum.

He was chairman of the California Committee representing Painting at the Treasure Island Exposition in San Francisco, 1939 and for Sculpture at the New York World's Fair, 1939. He was also on the Fine Arts Committee for the Sesquicentennial at Philadelphia.

For over 30 years he has followed the sea as a major painting interest.

His has been a long and distinguished career both as a creative artist and a teacher. It is with the greatest pleasure that we present this exhibition as a tribute to the class of 1908 and one of its outstanding members.

Laurence Schmeckebier
Director

June 1958

Notes on the Artist (cont'd)

The drawings of Labrador Eskimos by William Matthews Hekking were made from field sketches by the artist over a five-year period and many thousands of miles of travel along the Labrador coast. During his various excursions he had a unique opportunity to observe the every-day activities of the natives of the far north and to capture expressions and characteristics of the circumpolar peoples. Among his drawings may be seen portraits of young children, of mothers and babies, and older folk all engaged in their rigorous daily chores or completely relaxed. Mr. Hekking's drawings have a spontaneity and simplicity that tell the complete story of the subject at hand. Mr. Hekking is in an element that he enjoys and understands, and consequently, these drawings reveal the pleasing results of the artist at work.

William Hekking, a former director of the Albright Art Gallery of Buffalo, New York, has for over a period of twenty-nine years been a summer resident of Monhegan Island, Maine, where he has made a continuous study of the sea in all its various moods. Upon his retirement from active museum work he has made Monhegan Island his permanent residence, leaving it occasionally to travel in the North Atlantic regions to make further studies of the sea under varying conditions. The resulting seascapes, both in oil and watercolor, from his intense study over a period of many years, have been recognized by various museums throughout the United States and are included in their permanent collections.
Press Comments on the Artist:  April 19, 1941

Mr. Hekking, who was once director of the Albright Art Gallery in Buffalo, and later of the Los Angeles Museum, brings to his task a practiced eye for effects and a very real feeling for the sea, especially when great combers hurtle over reefs. His work is rather frankly picturesque, with the power of the cold green water rather studiously dramatized. His compositions are sound and his color seems to be excellent.  NEW YORK TIMES

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Hekking's subject is the sea, the pounding of mountainous waves on jagged rocks, the tides at dawn, the Grand Banks in March. His approach is humble, as it must be for one who really loves the sea. In all its prodigious powers, but he hasn't let himself be overcome by it as so many marine painters are. His canvases are freer than Waugh's, his colors are more subtle, his brushwork broader. But essentially the approach is the same. WORLD TELEGRAM

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The bulk and power of the sea are qualities forcefully presented in the marine paintings which William M. Hekking, painter and former director of the Albright Gallery in Buffalo, is showing in his exhibition at the Arthur U. Newton Gallery. Possibly because he knows so well the tremendous power of his subject, and feels more deeply its grand tragedy, Mr. Hekking limits himself chiefly in his major subjects to turbulent, off-shore Effects, such as the big "Ground Swells" and the smoky "Surf, Monhegan." Well in the American tradition, these paintings show great vigor. Also on display are drawings and "field notes," which illustrate further keen interest in the region of the sea.  HERALD TRIBUNE

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Mr. Hekking paints the sea and paints it with a knowledge and power. At times his art seems to be the thunderous weight of breaking seas; that Winslow Homer caught; again it is the more detailed sculptured form of waves under varying lights that appealed to Waugh. Which is perhaps by way of saying that Mr. Hekking knows his sea in all its moods and paints it with authority. THE SUN