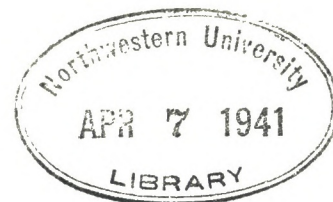


FEDERAL WORKS AGENCY
WORK PROJECTS ADMINISTRATION

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FOUR WPA ARTISTS CONGRATULATED ON WINNING MAJOR AWARDS

Four "graduates" of WPA art projects who were among the winners of major awards in recent weeks were congratulated today by Howard O. Hunter, Acting Commissioner of Work Projects, on achievements demonstrating "the increasing importance of American art and the growing influence of art on American life."

Two of the artists, Bruce Mitchell and Leonard Pytlak, were among the Guggenheim Fellowship winners announced this week. A third was Miss Ruth Reeves, just awarded a continuation of her Guggenheim Fellowship to continue her study of ancient and modern textile designs in South America and prepare an exhibit to be brought to this country. The monetary award to each winner is about \$2,500.

The fourth was John Heliker, who recently received the Corcoran gold medal and first W. A. Clark prize of \$2,000 for the landscape "Vermont Farm," now on exhibit at the Corcoran gallery in Washington. He was one of the youngest artists ever to receive the first award in this, the Biennial Exhibition of American Oil Paintings.

After congratulating the artists individually, Mr. Hunter said:

"The continued success of artists who have helped and been helped through the WPA Art Program naturally is gratifying to those charged with administering WPA, but it has a broader and deeper

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significance to the nation. To see such talent preserved and developed until its priceless rewards are returned to the people is all too rare in the world today, when older nations, richer in their heritage of art, see creative effort wasted in war or confined in political straitjackets.

"The young artists this program has been able to help, like many of its musicians and writers, have been in the forefront of the advance in their fields. Their work demonstrates the increasing importance of American art and the growing influence of art on American life."

Mr. Pytlak and Mr. Mitchell are represented in a group of prints and paintings which have just been allocated to the New Utrecht High School in Brooklyn by the New York City WPA Art Project, with which they were associated until recently. Both have had their work widely distributed among schools and other public institutions.

Mr. Mitchell's work is in the permanent collection in the Metropolitan Museum, the Whitney Museum of American Art and several private collections. Now a resident of Cornwall-on-the-Hudson, he expects to return to his native Pennsylvania to paint. He was born in Pittsburgh.

Mr. Pytlak has exhibited at the National Academy, the Paris Fair of 1937, the Montclair Museum of New Jersey and at Seattle, Wash. His award, for creative work in painting and color lithography, will enable him to continue experiments with silk screen prints, a process

which was developed for fine arts printing in the graphic work shop of the New York City WPA Art Project. He is a native of Newark, N. J., and now lives in New York City.

Miss Reeves, already a noted textile designer, was supervisor of the poster division of the New York City WPA Art Project last September, when she received her first Guggenheim award to study textile designs, from ancient Inca and Peruvian culture to the present, in South America. Previously she had been associated with the mural division and the Index of American Design of WPA in New York City. She is now in Quito, Ecuador.

Mr. Heliker has produced several works which have been distributed to public buildings in New York. His paintings, "The Farm" and "Landscape No. 2," have been acquired by the James Madison High School; "Perth Amboy" and "Cold Spring" by the Children's Aid Society. Three Heliker water colors are in the exhibit section of the WPA Art Program offices in Washington.

Except for 18 months training on WPA and three months of previous study with Thomas Hart Benton, Mr. Heliker is entirely self-taught. His paintings are represented in permanent collections of the Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Mass., and others at Denver, Brooklyn and San Francisco. For three successive years he exhibited at the Chicago Art Institute and in 1938 held a one-man show at the Walker Gallery in New York City. He lives in New York.

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