

CONGRESS: Exhibits, Concerts, Meetings..



*Rt. Rev. Mgr. Jonas Balkunas Chairman of
the Organizational Committee of the
World Lithuanian Congress.*

Photo by V. Maželis

During the World Lithuanian Congress, held on August 28-31 in New York City, a number of cultural events took place demonstrating creative efforts of Lithuanians in exile.

The vitality of Lithuanian art was displayed by a representative exhibition at the Riverside Museum, which opened August 28 and continued through September 21. Twenty-six participants from the United States, three from Canada, two from Australia and one each from France and South Africa (a total of thirty-three) exhibited 102 works of art.

The exhibition was favorably reviewed by the two leading dailies: The New York Times and The New York Herald Tribune, as well as the periodicals Arts, Art News and others.

Stuart Preston, art critic of The New York Times, in his review "Opening Guns of Season" (Sept. 7) commented:

"Its breeding-ground having been swallowed up by the Soviet Union, Lithuanian art is an art of exile which, as the Riverside Museum's exhibition demonstrates, still manages to cling, consciously or not, to its roots. Most of the artists represented here studied either in France or in this country but, on the whole, their work has a flavor that can only be considered national. This flavor, a literary one, takes the form of a poetic apprehension of human and nonhuman forces. It turns away from abstraction to illustrate, humorously or unhappily, the world and its ways, and always with a certain sense of

uneasiness."

"Lithuanian artists appear to be particularly strong as print-makers and the graphic arts make up the best single department in the present show."

In the opinion of Mr. Preston, the outstanding artists were Paulius Augius, Albinas Elskus, Vytautas Jonynas. Petras Kiaulenas, Mykolas Paškevičius and Romas Viesulas.

The art critic of The New York Herald Tribune Carlyle Bur-oughs thought that Lithuanian art still maintained some of its specific mood, but the majority of the works exhibited clearly represented more modern and international styles rather than a narrow nationalism. Mr. Burroughs particularly notes A. Elskus, A. Galdikas. V.K. Jonynai, V. Ka-šuba and V. Petravičius.

On the occasion of the exhibition an illustrated catalogue was published, which contained an article by art critic A. Rannit on the evolution of Lithuanian art and some of the more famous artists. The publication also included a list of books and articles on Lithuanian art published in Lithuania, United States, France, Germany, Sweden and other European countries.

A chamber music concert was also presented at the Riverside Museum. Violinist I. Vasiliūnas and pianist A. Kuprevičius were featured on the program.

Carnegie Hall was the site of a concert of choral music, which was performed by a joint choir, consisting of four separate musical ensembles from various locations on this continent. Soloists J. Krištolaityte (soprano), A. Stempužiene (mezzo soprano), A. Drazis (baritone) V. šalna (tenor) and the Symphony of the Air orchestra also participated in the program. The poem "Mano pasaulis" (My World) by the composer V. Jakubenas may be considered as the highlight of the event. The spectators of the sold out auditorium enthusiastically applauded the better performed works.

During the congress, Hotel Stat-ler, where all meetings were held, was the sight of an exhibition of Lithuanian books and periodicals. Between 1945 and 1949 a total of 884 publications appeared in Europe, while during the next eight years 1371

additional works were published throughout the free world. Of these 940 appeared in the United States, 254 in Europe, 28 in Argentina, 21 in Brazil, 69 in Canada, 39 in Australia and 20 in other countries. Obviously not all of these publications could have been placed on exhibition, but the representative sample shown was indicative of the creative efforts of Lithuanian writers.

On the occasion of the congress, the Lithuanian Community in the United States awarded a prize of \$1,000.00 donated by the Society of Lithuanian Physicians in Ohio, to the editors of the Lithuanian Encyclopedia, currently being published in Boston, Mass.

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