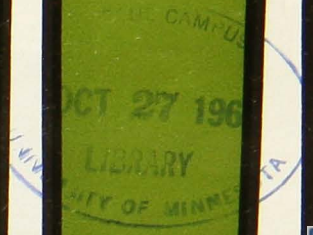


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SELECTING PICTURES

MYRA B. ZABEL and RACHEL F. MUNSON

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SELECTING PICTURES

Myra B. Zabel and Rachel F. Munson

Pictures and Your Family	2
The Appeal of Pictures	2
Composition	3
Color	3
Content	3
Pictures and Rooms	4
In Place of Pictures	5
Where to Get Pictures	5
Cost	5
Work of Well Known Artists	6-7

If a picture gives you pleasure or inspiration it is one you can live with and enjoy. You can easily own good pictures, and you needn't be an expert to select them.

Pictures and Your Family

The pictures in your home reflect your family's interests—they help to make your house a home. Pictures can add beauty and character to each room and they can express the individuality of each family member.

Each of us grows and changes, both physically and mentally. As you meet with new experiences, you may change your mind about what you like. For this reason, some of the pictures you select may have only temporary value; others you will enjoy for a lifetime.

Pictures for homes are usually either graphics or paintings. Graphics include drawings, etchings, engravings, lithographs, woodcuts, and silk screen prints. Paintings include oils, water colors, and caseins.

The Appeal of Pictures

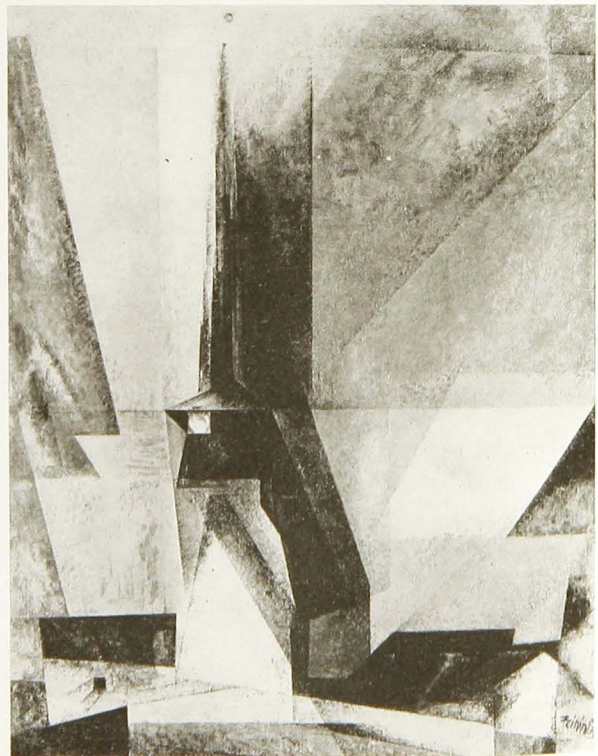
Pictures appeal to people for different reasons. You may like a picture because it tells a story or because it reminds you of an experience. Others may appeal to you because of their color or pattern. But whatever the appeal, a picture should stimulate your imagination if you are to enjoy it.

A good picture expresses the artist's personality. It reflects him as an individual and the time in

which he worked. His work is not necessarily an attempt to duplicate anything real. Rather, it is an interpretation of how he feels about what he sees. Through his pictures, the artist expresses his imagination and his individuality.

Each of us responds differently to the work of different artists. Since each artist works according to his own style, you will probably enjoy some

Figure 1. Church at Gelmeroda—Lyonel Feininger
The Metropolitan Museum of Art,
George A. Hearn Fund, 1942



styles and dislike others. For your home, choose those pictures you can understand and enjoy.

A worthwhile picture has these qualities:

- ◆ Good composition
- ◆ Interesting color
- ◆ A well interpreted idea

Composition

The composition or design of a picture is the arrangement of its shapes and colors. All its parts fit together to make the picture complete. If the composition of a picture is pleasing, your eyes will move easily from one part to another (figures 1 and 2). The distribution of light and dark areas is also a part of composition (figure 3).

Color

Color is probably the most enjoyed quality of pictures. Quiet restful colors or gay stimulating ones have their own appeal. An artist interprets colors as he does forms, and he does not necessarily try to duplicate what he actually sees.

Content

Most pictures have a theme or portray an idea (figures 4 and 5). Some common picture subjects are scenery, animals, people, maps, architecture, historical incidents, and "still lifes"—arrangements of flowers, fruit, or inanimate objects. Remember that

Figure 2. *The Starry Night*— Vincent van Gogh

Acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest
Collection of the Museum of Modern Art, N.Y.



Figure 3. *The Milkmaid*— Jan Vermeer
Courtesy of the publishers, (c) Donald Art Co., Inc., N.Y.
Collection of Mrs. Albert D. Lasker

a picture is the expression of an artist's feelings toward his subject. It does not necessarily duplicate the real object.

Some contemporary pictures have no direct relation to what you actually see. They are called abstract pictures (figure 6). Artists of abstract pictures try to convey a feeling, idea, message, or mood.

Figure 4. *The Music Lesson*— Thomas Hart Benton

Courtesy of Associated American Artists, N.Y.





Figure 5. White Roses— Vincent van Gogh
 Courtesy of the publishers, (c) Donald Art Co., Inc., N.Y.
 Collection of Mrs. Albert D. Lasker



Figure 7. Le Gourmet— Pablo Picasso
 Chester Dale Collection

Pictures and Rooms

All of the pictures in a room should belong together. They should be similar in color and feeling and should fit in with the room and its furnishings. They should express the interests of those sharing the room. If you have several pictures appropriate for one room, use only a few at a time.

Pictures you select for your living room should be those both you and your family and friends can enjoy. Family photographs and other sentimental pictures are better displayed in more personal rooms

of your home than in your living room. However, photographs can sometimes be attractively displayed within one large frame. Or, put them in an album where they can be shown easily.

Pictures for children's room should be colorful without much detail (figure 7). Let your children choose the pictures they find interesting. Offer them a wide assortment of pictures to choose from.

Figure 6. Still Life— Georges Braque



Figure 8. A Snowy Morning— Currier and Ives



A child's own artwork may sometimes be temporarily displayed for the whole family to view.

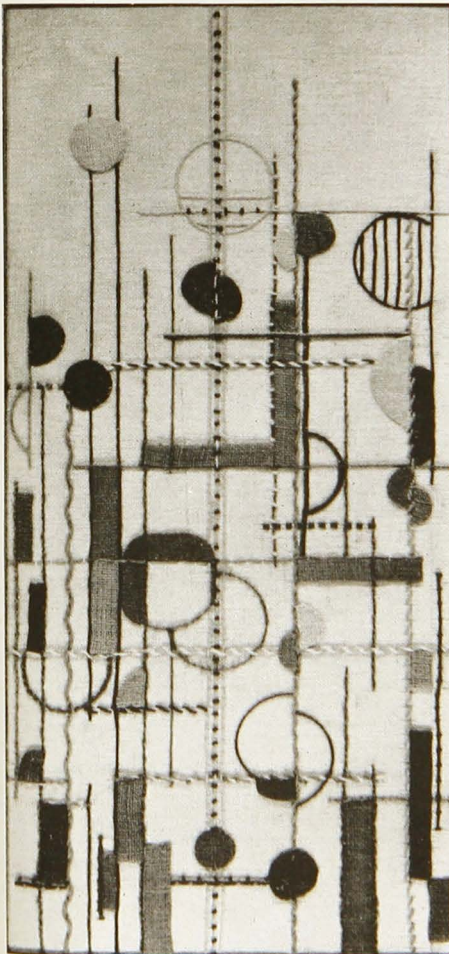
Calendars are not appropriate as decorative hangings. However, some calendar pictures may be framed (figure 8).

In Place of Pictures

There are textiles you can purchase by the yard that make excellent wall hangings. They, like pictures, need good composition, texture or pattern, and color. Attach a rod or pole at the top and bottom to keep the hanging straight.

If you have talent, **your own designs** may make good wall hangings. Mosaics, stitchery (figure 9), weavings, appliqués, or stained glass can be transformed into hangings that express your ideas. These same techniques are used by many artists and craftsmen who sell their work.

Figure 9. Hand stitchery on burlap.



Bulletin boards can be useful and decorative in kitchens, dens, children's rooms, or halls. For variety, change the displays on them periodically. A bulletin board is a good place for temporary display of family snapshots and photographs.

Where to Get Pictures

Originals and reproductions are available in many Minnesota towns and cities:

- ◆ Members of art groups throughout the state frequently hold exhibits or fairs for showing and selling their work.

- ◆ Large cities have sales galleries where you can purchase original paintings and graphics. Works in a gallery's current show are usually for sale. Often, such galleries also have a substantial stock of un-displayed artwork that is for sale and which, with permission, you may look through.

- ◆ Reproductions can be purchased at picture framing and art supply shops.

- ◆ Museums usually have sales and rental galleries. You can rent paintings and graphics from them and if you decide to buy a work the rental fee can usually be applied to the purchase price. Most museums also sell reproductions of their famous paintings.

- ◆ The Minnesota Town and Country Art Show, held each spring at the University, is an exhibit of work by Minnesota artists. Many of the paintings and graphics in this show are for sale.

- ◆ Magazines sometimes contain color reproductions suitable for framing.

Cost

Valuable originals painted by famous artists can cost thousands of dollars. However, many talented young artists sell their work at reasonable prices. These prices will vary according to the locality, talent, and experience of the artist. Some may be as low as \$10 or \$15.

Good low cost reproductions range in price from \$1 to \$15 unframed. Reproductions vary greatly in color and pattern quality. The best reproductions include the brush strokes and duplicate the true colors of the original.

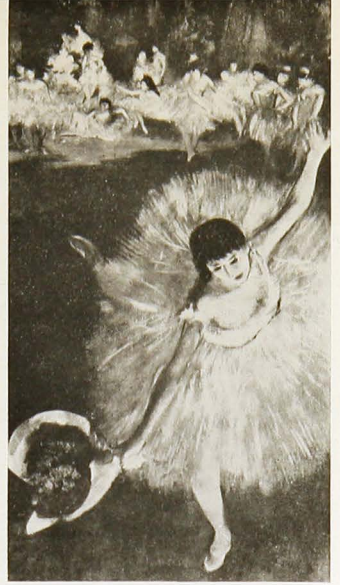
Work of Well Known Artists



Winter in Paris—

Maurice Utrillo

Courtesy of the publishers, (c) Donald Art Co., Inc., N.Y.
Collection of Mrs. Albert D. Lasker



Dancer With Bouquet— Degas

Louvre, Paris; Penn Prints, N.Y.



Threshing—

Thomas Hart Benton

Courtesy of Associated American Artists, N.Y.



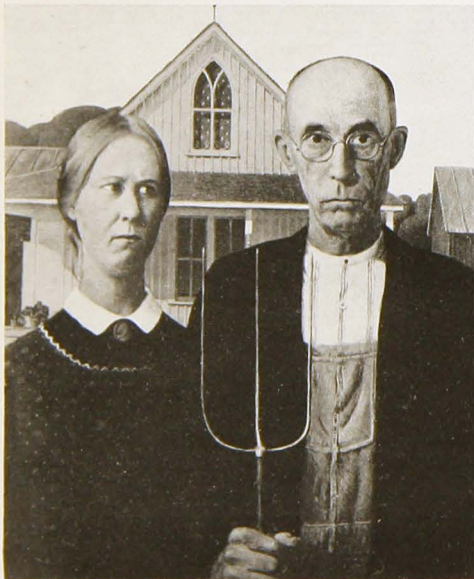
Praying Hands— Albrecht Dürer

Courtesy of Artext Prints, Inc.,
Westport, Conn.

American Gothic—

Grant Wood

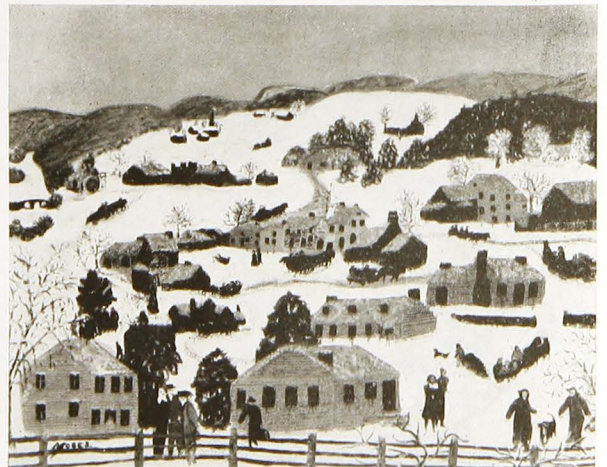
Courtesy of the Art Institute of Chicago

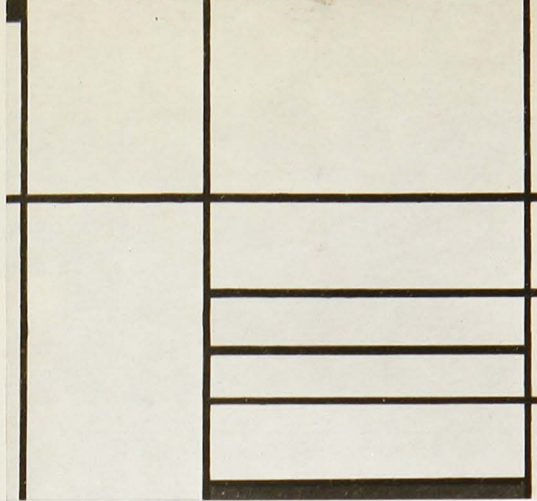


Winter Twilight—

Grandma Moses

Copyright, Grandma Moses Properties, Inc., N.Y.





Composition in White, Black and Red— Mondrian
Collection of the Museum of Modern Art, N.Y.



Yachts at Deauville— R. Dufy
Courtesy of Artext Prints, Inc., Westport, Conn.



Autumn— Kunisada



Tabac Royal Henri Matisse
Courtesy of the publishers, (c) Donald Art Co., Inc., N.Y.
Collection of Mrs. Albert D. Lasker

Mont Ste. Victoire— Paul Cezanne
Cone Collection, Baltimore Museum of Art



Lady Sewing— A. Renoir
Courtesy of the Art Institute of Chicago



Look at Your Pictures

- ◆ Pictures should interest and inspire your family.
- ◆ They should fit in with their surroundings.
- ◆ They should stimulate the imagination and bring enjoyment to your family.
- ◆ Pictures should be removed, at least temporarily, if they cease to give satisfaction.
- ◆ Children should be allowed to make some picture selections.
- ◆ Pictures of personal interest, such as family photographs, are best used in personal rooms.
- ◆ Pictures should complement your decorative scheme.
- ◆ Pictures well chosen, appropriately framed, and carefully hung will give lasting dividends in enjoyment.

Myra B. Zabel is associate professor and extension specialist, home furnishings; Rachel F. Munson is instructor and assistant extension specialist, home furnishings. Acknowledgement is gratefully given to Glinda B. Leach and Louisc Woodruff, University of Missouri Agricultural Extension Service, for illustrations and basic format used in Missouri Extension Circular 710.

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