

ART By Eleanor Jewett:

Nielson Paintings on View at the Palette and Chisel

THERE is at the Palette and Chisel club an exhibition of paintings by Peter Nielson. Remembering the recent exhibit of Karl Ouren's work hung in the same gallery, I went this week in the hope of finding in the present pictures some of the haunting beauty of spirit that pervaded the former. But in this hope I was a little disappointed.

It may be because Nielson is an older man, and older at the trade of artist, but the young witchery that charmed the gaze of Humboldt park for Mr. Ouren is lacking in the sterner stretches of mountain and river and plain that follow each other in quick succession the round of the canvases from Mr. Nielson's brush.

For the most part these pictures deal with the California coast. There is, it is true, a group of winter scenes showing a stream flowing dully over its thin coat of ice between banks of snow, where trees make purple shadows on the white. But the most impressive paintings are of the mountains and coast line of the Pacific.

Particularly beautiful is the little bay where the sands are golden, and where the red-brown rock cliffs rise oblivious to the sea's approach. On the beach flutter gulls. The blue water sweeps itself with a rolling, eddying, whirling movement nearer and nearer to land, and suddenly dies, motionless, in the cusp of the inlet. Over it all is the blue bend of the sky.

A snatch of a broad river, fringed with bushes and overhanging willows, gliding majestically through and over the rocks that would stay the untamed course of the tiniest ripples, brings close the days of June when the cows go down to the water and the bees are heavy in the honeysuckle.

Another brilliantly light canvas is the painting of an emerald green island, closed into the lap of a greater float, accented by the slender lines of a single boat at anchor under the rays of the glowing tropical sun. There are two other colorful glimpses of water and woods at sunset. The molten reflection of the sun makes a gold splash on the stream and the flickering light plays hide and seek among the leaves.

"The Rainy Season" gives the purple mountain ranges hazy against the sky. In the hollows the mist is like a sea, but about the summits it floats like streamers or the swirling reds of the hours that people gladly see the finer solitudes of a great god's temple.

On a further wall is seen a lonely little grove where the wind cries itself to sleep, and on the gray grass toward the dead leaves lie. A road trails by, dragging its weary length over the hill, abandoned by people. Lizards sun themselves on its sands, and in the deep worn ruts crickets and tiny green frogs at dusk lift their voices in chorus.

One last picture is perhaps worth mention. It is of a woman and child on the dock at sunset watching a boat put out to sea. A red glow in the sky, and redder still is the flame of a fire low down on the shore across the harbor. The child sits contented on the dock, but the mother strains to see each dip of the little vessel that carries with it, under the freshening breeze, her man out to the unchartered waters.

There opened this week at the Chicago Camera club an interesting exhibition of prints by B. J. Morris and George H. High. Mr. Morris shows a splendid portrait of a man and an attractive print of a chubby child leaning over a low fountain's edge and dabbling gleefully in the water. An unusual effect is secured in his print of trees in winter reflected on the smooth surface of an ice-cased river. Another charming sketch is the dancing girl fallen, exhausted by her play, to rest a moment where the flowers and grass grow thickest. "The Domino" is a clever print of a woman in the costume of masquerade with high hat and veil.

Among the pictures shown by Mr. High are several that are of artistic value. "Wyoming" is especially beautiful. One stands at the summit of a high mountain peak and looks off into the distance of the sky where other mountains roll on ridges. Directly below the ground breaks away into a deep cañon. On the near peak stands a horse, his rider a slender girl, beside him, mounted against the dusky sky and rocky vastnesses. The atmosphere of the west, softened perhaps and sentimentalized a bit, is strongly felt.

On Thursday at the Art Institute there will open the annual exhibition of paintings by artists of Chicago and vicinity. Among the pictures there will probably be shown a group by Mrs. Maurice Tassencourt, a former student of the Art Institute. I saw a few of her paintings a short time ago. They are, some of them, rather appealing. One stands at the summit of a high mountain peak and looks off into the distance of the sky where other mountains roll on ridges. Directly below the ground breaks away into a deep cañon. On the near peak stands a horse, his rider a slender girl, beside him, mounted against the dusky sky and rocky vastnesses. The atmosphere of the west, softened perhaps and sentimentalized a bit, is strongly felt.

Mrs. Tassencourt has been awarded a medal at the Paris salon and at the salon at Amiens.



Low Tide Coast of California by Peter Nielson at the Palette and Chisel Club

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