

Individual Exhibitions  
Centurion ~~PAMPHLET~~  
1950 ~~P-0057~~

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# CENTURION

BROOKLYN COLLEGE LIBRARY



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N6537  
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1950

SEVERAL months ago I found Centurion working in seclusion and isolation. Living amongst the barest of elements, the scene was dominated by the astonishing output of his work. It seemed as if this three time Guggenheim Fellowship holder had withdrawn from the world to find an inner self. His work revealed immense fertility of invention. These multivarious phases of Centurion could not be the result of complete internal musing and as subsequent facts of his life were made known to me this was brought out. He was born in Biesig, Silesia, in 1902 and attended Kirschner College and the Royal University at Berlin. During his schooling he developed his theory of Cromorfism, or color-form plays in the constructive, fantastic and imaginative categories. He traveled widely in Europe and after a two year stay at Helsingfors, Finland, came to America in 1926. He spent the following years in Chicago and other cities in Illinois, where he helped supervise the Southern Illinois branch of the Federal Art Project. The first buyers of his works were Mrs. Frank G. Logan of Chicago, and the visiting Lord and Lady Hastings of London. He lectured on his theories at Northwestern University. In 1938 he became associated with the S. R. Guggenheim Foundation, Mr. Guggenheim acquiring several of his Cromorfias Constructivas for his personal collection. In 1942 Centurion severed his professional connections and came to Brooklyn to work in complete quietude. Between that year and the present he has produced an amazing quantity of works. The time has come for him to show some of them in the city in which he has made his home. Brooklyn College is the logical place for this event. Centurion is always interested in the vitality of youth, and is happy that the College has made these works available to its students and visitors, and appreciates the assistance which the Library has given him. In presenting this exhibition the College Library takes no stand concerning modern art, but reveals itself as an institution interested in presenting new ideas. For the function of the metropolitan university is not only to acquaint its students with the traditional knowledge acquired in the past, but lay before them examples of contemporary thought and expression.

ROBERT GEORGE REISNER  
Fellow, Brooklyn College

## 77 Watercolors and Gouaches

February through March, 1950

Brooklyn College Library, LaGuardia Hall, Main Reading Room  
9-11 Monday to Friday; 2-6 Saturday

CC—Cromorfia Constructiva  
CF—Cromorfia Fantastica  
CI—Cromorfia Imagina  
G—Gouache  
P&I—Pen and Ink

WC—Watercolor  
H—Horizontal  
V—Vertical  
Dimensions in inches

CC 1940	No. 1	Piccola #1, H, WC & P&I, 5x7
	2	Piccola #2, H, WC & P&I, 5x7
	3	Piccola #3, H, WC, & P&I, 5x7
1945	4	Centurion Space Machine #1, H, WC & P&I, 8x10
	5	Electronic Machine for Counting the Heartbeat of Lovers, H, WC, 12x16
1946	6	Illinois Memory Construction #2, V, WC, 8x10





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- 1947 7 Artists Building #1, V, G WC & P&I, 15x18  
 8 Artists Building #2, V, G WC & P&I, 15x18  
 9 City Night, V, G, 15x18  
 10 City Space, V, G, 15x18  
 11 City Spaced for Joy, V, G, 15x18  
 12 Crowded City, V, G, 15x18  
 13 Shooting Gallery, V, G, 15x18  
 14 Signals, V, G, 15x18 (On Loan from Robert G. Reisner)  
 15 Steel City Tower Tops, V, G, 15x18  
 16 Steel Work, V, G & WC, 15x18
- 1948 17 Calm Factory, V, G, 15x18  
 18 Factory Blues (For Peter Paul Ott), V, G, 15x18
- 1949 19 Aquatic Triangulation, H, WC, 15x19 (On Loan from Dr. B., Boston)  
 20 Blue City with Bright Signs, V, WC, 15x19  
 21 Brooklyn City Sunset Song, V, WC, 13x18  
 22 City of Sun-Bright Wealth, V, G & WC, 15x18  
 23 City Serenade, H, WC, 13x17  
 24 City Sounds, H, WC, 15x19  
 25 Electrical City, V, G, 14x18  
 26 Green City Swift and Up, V, WC & P&I, 14x18  
 27 Horizontal Construction with See-Saw Beams, H, WC, 13x17  
 28 Horizontal Lay of the Land in Brooklyn, H, WC, 15x19  
 29 Horizontal Synchronormia about a City Spreading Out, H, WC, 13x17  
 30 Machine Tempo in Green, H, WC, 13x17  
 31 Mechanical Man in Desolate World, H, WC, 13x17  
 32 Park Avenue Classique Moderne, H, WC, 15x19  
 33 Proud City Verticale, V, WC & P&I, 13x18  
 34 Soft City Blues, V, WC, 13x19  
 35 Speed Machine, H, WC, 15x19  
 36 Strong City, V, WC, 15x18  
 37 Subway Speeding Through My City, H, WC, 15x19  
 38 Swing of the Big City, H, WC, 15x19  
 39 Waterfront, H, WC, 15x19
- CF 1946 40 Anxious Man, H, WC & P&I, 8x10  
 41 Sailor Home from the Sea, H, WC G & P&I, 14x18
- 1947 42 Cactus Desert, H, WC & P&I, 12x16  
 43 Fisherman and Wife, H, WC G P&I, 13x17  
 44 Man With Eye in Back of His Head, V, G & P&I, 15x18
- 1948 45 Seated Green Nude, H, G, 13x17  
 46 Woman and Warrior, V, G, 14x18
- 1949 47 Amazon, V, WC, 15x19  
 48 Black and White Beach, H, G, 14x18  
 49 City Breakfast (The Terrace Dweller), H, G, 15x19  
 50 Coney Island Lovers, H, G, 13x17  
 51 Couple, V, WC & P&I, 18x25  
 52 Facial Inscriptions (King and Queen #2), H, G, 15x19  
 53 General de Gaulle, V, G & WC, 15x19  
 54 Head of Man, V, G, 15x18  
 55 Lovers, V, WC, 15x19



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- 56 Lovers in Red and Green, V, WC, 15x19 (On Loan from Stanley T. Lewis)
- 57 Man and Woman Seated, H, G, 16x23
- 58 Man Thinking Woman, V, G & WC, 14x17
- 59 Nude at Garden Table, V, WC, 15x18
- 60 On the Beach, H, G, 14x18
- 61 La Reine, V, G, 15x19
- 62 Samuel Kootz, V, G, 14x18
- 63 Solemn Man, V, WC, 15x19
- 64 Stern Stony Head, V, WC & G, 15x19
- 65 Woman at Dark Table, H, G, 15x19
- 66 Synchronormia in Grey, H, WC & P&I, 13x17 (On Loan from Miss Ellyn Kaiser)
- 67 Plaisance Petite, H, WC & P&I, 7x9
- 68 Tempo-Tempus-War, H, WC & G, 14x16
- 69 Cornfed Synchronormia around Thanksgiving Time, H, G, 12x16
- 70 Sunbleached Hills, H, G, 14x16
- 71 American Seascape, H, WC, 14x18
- 72 Days of Fury, V, WC, 15x19
- 73 Mountain Feeling, H, WC, 14x19
- 74 Rocks, V, G & WC, 18x25
- 75 Sea Forms, G & WC, 18x25
- 76 Synchronormia of Birds in the Bush, H, WC, 13x17
- 77 Woods, V, G & WC, 18x25

CI 1944  
 1945  
 1947  
 1949  
 1949-50

**C**ENTURION is a symbol—lone, but at the same time significant. He represents the extreme position of today's artist. Avoiding the commercial routine of the professional he has devoted his life to the development of a personal means of expression. Without patron or sponsor, his works have been appreciated by a small and limited audience. His striving for personal integrity led him to leave his position as Assistant to the Director of the Museum of Non-Objective Painting. His isolated position and his own introspective sincerity caused him to develop a personal system of symbols. His concern with this independent world, which his art forms, stems not only from the artist's personality but from the breakdown of genuine cultural patterns of expressional means. In the true artist, however, the instinct to express monumental conceptions is still present, and in Centurion's work we see these themes presented in highly individual terms. "Sailor Home from the Sea" of 1946 is a depiction of the return of the modern Odysseus-hero from a complex and impersonal war to a confused, mechanistic world. "Fisherman and Wife", 1947, presents a mythological conception of the relationship of man and nature, but his interest in the Classical stems not from romanticism but is used metaphorically; it comes from the artist's trying to find a new way of interpreting the world which he sees about him. He has reached his expression through the various avenues of modern art. Painting abstractly while attending the Royal Friedrich-Wilhelm's University at Berlin in 1922, he came under the influence of Der Sturm and Krater expressionists, and also the Bauhaus group. The elements of these traditions are seen in his work, as well as a lyrical surrealism which often stirs his dreamy figures in their industrialized maze. But Centurion's eclecticism is not an indication of lack of individual expressiveness. Rather, he is reorganizing the configurations of his changing civilization. These varied phases are parts of a world, a many-sided world of poetry, intellectualism and mythical heroism, but always dominated by modern dynamic sensation.

**STANLEY T. LEWIS**

The exhibition was sponsored by Mr. Robert George Reiserer.  
 The display was arranged by Mr. Stanley T. Lewis.

*Handled*