

KATE STEINITZ RETROSPECTIVE 1889-1975

April 7 - May 2, 1976

L.A. Louver Gallery
55 North Venice Blvd.
Venice, California 90291
Tel: (213) 396-6633

L.A. LOUVER is proud to be presenting a memorial exhibition of the work of the late KATE TRAUMAN STEINITZ on behalf of her family. Her position and role as one of the twentieth century's leading scholars of Leonardo da Vinci was established, fortunately, within her lifetime. Her devotion to the creation of the Elmer Belt Library of Vinciana and her wealth of original research, led to her being honored by the Italian government and invited to present a lecture on da Vinci in his home town, a tribute paid to only seven scholars before her. Her insurance of the Belt Library's safety by securing the protection of UCLA, her efforts to preserve the Watts Towers, and other cultural contributions to the local Southern California community, led to her being honored by the City of Los Angeles. Her important comrade association with the artists of the historic dada, constructivist, suprematist and expressionist revolutions in art history led to her being honored by the German government, and an exhibition of her art collection being

- o -



held at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. All of these tributes were bestowed upon Kate Steinitz in 1969. It was her eightieth birthday and recognition of a life that was a work of art.

In memory of Kate we have assembled an exhibition which will give focus to the source of her lifetime dedication and devotion to the arts, her own art practice. She once recalled visiting an art museum in 1902 and said that from that moment there was nothing more important in her life than art. "At fifteen I tried to persuade my grandfather that Manet's lilacs and Cezanne's apples were better painting than Boëclin's and Feuërbach's allegories." She went on to study art under Kaethe Kollwitz and Lovis Corinth, and art history under Heinrich Woëlfelin.

Upon moving from Berlin to Hannover she became a founding member of the Kestner Society which supported contemporary art in Germany, and opened her home to artists, dancers, musicians, philosophers, architects and designers; people caught up in the new spirit of their day, shaping their environment. Her art was exhibited by the Society and the Herbert von Garvens Gallery in Hannover, two one person shows were presented in Berlin, and other exhibitions were

- o -



held at the Brooklyn Museum and Arden Gallery in New York City. Katherine Dreier also collected her work during the 1920's, for the Society Anonyme, now housed in Connecticut at Yale University.

In the ninety drawings, water colors, prints, paintings, collages and photographs assembled for this memorial exhibition, we can see the search she made for a personal style that would transcend the academic salons of her day. In her typographic experiments, with fellow collaborators Kurt Schwitters and Theo Van Doesburg, we can see the contribution she made to the worlds of typographic design and good humor. In the selected representation of Kate's scholarship we made a choice from over 350 manuscripts, reviews and books written and published during her lifetime.

"We came to the U.S. late in 1935. New York took my breath away. I had not realized that modern art was becoming of age, surpassing its European predecessors. I spent a year studying and observing and used every opportunity to learn more."

Her home once again became a salon for discussion between visiting artists from all disciplines and nationalities, and American scholars. In New York she organized the

- o -

"Refugee Art Exhibit," at the 1939 World's Fair.

Kate Steinitz who, during the 1920's, became Annette Nobody, short story teller and art reviewer, went on, through journalism and photography, to embark upon a new career as scholar and art historian. This path led her to Los Angeles, Elmer Belt and a new life in a new community at fifty two years of age. She was fortunate to have had two full lifetimes, and we may consider ourselves fortunate that she chose to spend one of those in Southern California.

In her list of priorities she stated that she would like to be remembered first as an artist, second as a scholar, and third as a librarian. This exhibition will articulate that statement.

It is hoped that this memorial exhibition will be expanded and developed into an institutionally sponsored show that could travel across the U.S.A. to Europe. The main exhibition will therefore not be for sale. However, a selected number of drawings, watercolors, and paintings, will be available for purchase upon request in order to defray some of the costs incurred in assembling this exhibition.

Peter Goulds
Gallery Director
L.A. Louver