

Stanton Macdonald-Wright in front of one of the panels (all of which are oil on plywood) of the Santa Monica Public Library mural, 1935. Depicted in this panel at left is the mayor of Santa Monica, William H. Carter; at the center are two massive figures symbolizing the positive and negative currents of electricity; and at the right are scientists James Clerk Maxwell and Michael Faraday, pioneers in the fields of physics and electricity. Photograph courtesy of Lisa Hampton-Rhodes.

INVENTION AND IMAGINATION:

Stanton Macdonald-Wright's Santa Monica Library Mural

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Though best remembered and studied most thoroughly as an early modernist, Stanton Macdonald-Wright (1890–1973) continued to paint for a phenomenal sixty years, most of it spent in his home state, California,



Prologue: Technical and Imaginative Pursuits of Early Man (detail, three of seven panels), from Stanton Macdonald-Wright's Santa Monica Public Library mural *Invention and Imagination*, 1934, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C., transfer from the City of Santa Monica, California.

where after nearly nine years in Paris and New York the artist returned in 1918. There, Macdonald-Wright established himself as the central figure in the promulgation of modernist painting in the West and painted a now all-but-forgotten Depression-era mural that summarized his vision of art's function and future.

In 1932, the Depression deepened, despite President Herbert Hoover's hopes to the contrary. The newly elected president, Franklin D. Roosevelt, was sympathetic to proposals made to try to meet the needs of artists, and in December 1933 a short-lived economic relief program called the Public Works of Art Project (PWAP) was established.¹ Under the direction of Edward Bruce, PWAP was organized into sixteen regional divisions, each manned by museum administrators and volunteers. One of the program's objectives was to employ artists to decorate non-federal public buildings and parks, and it was under the auspices of the PWAP that Macdonald-Wright painted his mural *Invention and Imagination*, which he dedicated to his father and the city of Santa Monica.

Merle Armitage, a local art impresario and friend of Macdonald-Wright's, was appointed regional director for the PWAP in Southern California. Within one month of its establishment, a hundred and six artists were put to work for PWAP in the region extending north from San Diego to San Louis Obispo. It was Macdonald-Wright's own idea to execute murals for the Santa Monica Public Library (located at Fifth Street and Santa Monica Boulevard, about ten miles west of downtown Los Angeles),² and he may have proposed it directly to Armitage. Whatever administrative route

the mural proposal initially took, the idea was advanced before an open meeting at the Santa Monica city hall on 24 January 1934.³

At this meeting, Mayor William H. Carter, Armitage, and numerous interested citizens registered overwhelming support for the mural project. Among the advocates were muralist Hugo Ballin (who later worked on PWAP) and the art patron Joseph Lippman. In what was described as "a burst of spontaneous enthusiasm generated by the prospect of obtaining a mural of outstanding importance for this city,"⁴ \$968.50 was raised that afternoon to defray the costs of materials needed for the project. Macdonald-Wright himself addressed the meeting, taking the opportunity to explain that the purpose of his proposed mural was "not to show Fulton's first trip up the Hudson, or to create a picture gallery in which future residents of Santa Monica may recognize their ancestors, but to create a work that will have a meaning for people from every country of the globe."⁵ He then described to them his subject matter: the intellectual and spiritual development of humankind. Significantly, given his own financial difficulties at the time, he volunteered to work for free in order to allow support personnel to be funded by PWAP.

Macdonald-Wright conceived the murals in a typically ambitious fashion:

The subject matter may be described as depicting the two streams of human development: one technical, the other imaginative. They coalesce and fuse in what perhaps holds the greatest potentialities for art expression invented by man—the medium of the moving picture. Those who

have been in a moving picture stage and laboratory during the filming of a picture know what a great role the inventions along the lines of precision machinery, chemistry, and electricity, play in the process.⁶

All of Macdonald-Wright's writing, personal and otherwise, all of his lectures, and the bulk of his works (so he felt), were linked by a genuine desire to unify himself with the fundamental order he believed permeated all things. His conception of this fundamental order might best be understood as the power in nature that balances opposites such as winter and spring, man and woman, mind and matter. For the artist, Macdonald-Wright believed, all seeming opposites are part of a larger unity, and art is a process by which an individual's consciousness could be led to a realization of that unity.

A passionate devotee of psychology who was reading voraciously in the field at this time, Macdonald-Wright had found something of an intellectual model in Carl Jung (1875–1961). In its conception and indeed in the manner in which Macdonald-Wright discussed the project, then and later, the library murals echoed Jungian ideas. The contrast of technological and imaginative development as the mural's theme, for example, recalls one of Jung's conclusions in his commentary for the *Secret of the Golden Flower*: "Western consciousness is by no means consciousness in general, but rather a historically conditioned, and geographically limited, factor, representative of only one part of humanity. The widening of our own consciousness ought not to proceed at the expense of other kinds of consciousness . . . just as the East cannot do without our technique, science and industry."⁷ Macdonald-Wright later included Jungian concepts in the courses on aesthetics he taught at the University of California at Los Angeles.

The physical scheme of the mural panels, with technology opposed to imagination on separate walls of the main reading room, was arranged as a visual dialogue between scenes of the rational conscious and the spiritual unconscious, and Macdonald-Wright discussed the mural in terms similar to this. The merging of the two strains of psychic activity at the end of the mural can likewise be understood as the representation of the attainment of a higher, healthier state of awareness, the desired mental state in Jungian psychology, envisioned as necessarily more complete and whole than either strain by itself. When Macdonald-Wright sent an open letter of appreciation to Mayor Carter thanking him for the support of the city, he wrote: "Perhaps we have unknowingly become the children of a new era; perhaps the hand of some rhythmical destiny has moved us all to envision a wider psychic realm."⁸

Macdonald-Wright was intrigued from his earliest days with the idea of harmony, the idea that the classical rhythms of the Greeks and Michelangelo had a place in modern painting, and the idea that color, form, movement, and solidity could all be unified in a com-

position. His study of Eastern thought, especially of the Chinese philosophy of Tao as a way of understanding the ultimate unity of the universe, increasingly confirmed and broadened these ideas for him and came to inform his work. Macdonald-Wright's study of Eastern philosophy began in 1913 in Paris and intensified on his return to California in 1919, when he began to incorporate methods from Chinese landscape painting into his work, using them with his Synchronist palette and California subjects.⁹

Macdonald-Wright's mural is a conscious and deliberate attempt to balance the seeming opposites of technology and pure imagination, and he intended to show that these polarities could (and eventually would) be unified. He planned the mural so that a *Prologue* depicting the ancient impulses toward both technology and imagination was visible from the entrance as one entered the reading room. As originally installed in the library, this *Prologue* established movement in two directions (both leading back to the entrance): to the left, primitive man was shown inventing the wheel (in Macdonald-Wright's words, "the first epoch making invention of mankind"), while other primitives were shown attempting to subdue a great sea monster symbolizing the forces of nature. This scene established movement through the mural sections describing technological achievement. To the right, a scene of another group of prehistoric people depicted a primitive artist carving a reindeer horn as another figure cowered before images of monsters in the sky, symbolizing belief in deities. This scene established movement through the mural sections describing the creative and imaginative history of mankind. Above both of these scenes at the start of the mural proper was a lunette (designed to fit the existing architecture, as was the entire mural) depicting the meeting of ships at sea and caravans on land, intended to symbolize the wide dissemination of knowledge. Here, Macdonald-Wright included Mongol, Chinese, Persian, and Egyptian figures.

Moving left away from the *Prologue*, in the direction of technological development, Macdonald-Wright depicted ancient philosophers on whom the Western intellectual tradition is grounded: Aristotle, Socrates, Alexander, and the Stoic Zeno. Not only did these figures represent for him the pure intellect that formed the basis for abstract mathematics, but they also represented "Occidental man's necessity of giving himself rational answers to irrational questions."¹⁰ Continuing on, the subject of the next panel was the Roman aqueduct at Nîmes, France, as an example of progress and the magnificent feats of technological thinking.

In subsequent panels, Macdonald-Wright depicted some of the great men of science (elaborating on their achievements in a written catalogue): Roger Bacon, Copernicus, Galileo, Newton, William Herschel, Michael Faraday, and James Clerk Maxwell. Also represented are a modern city, a coal miner, a steel worker, a modern motor, an airplane, and two huge

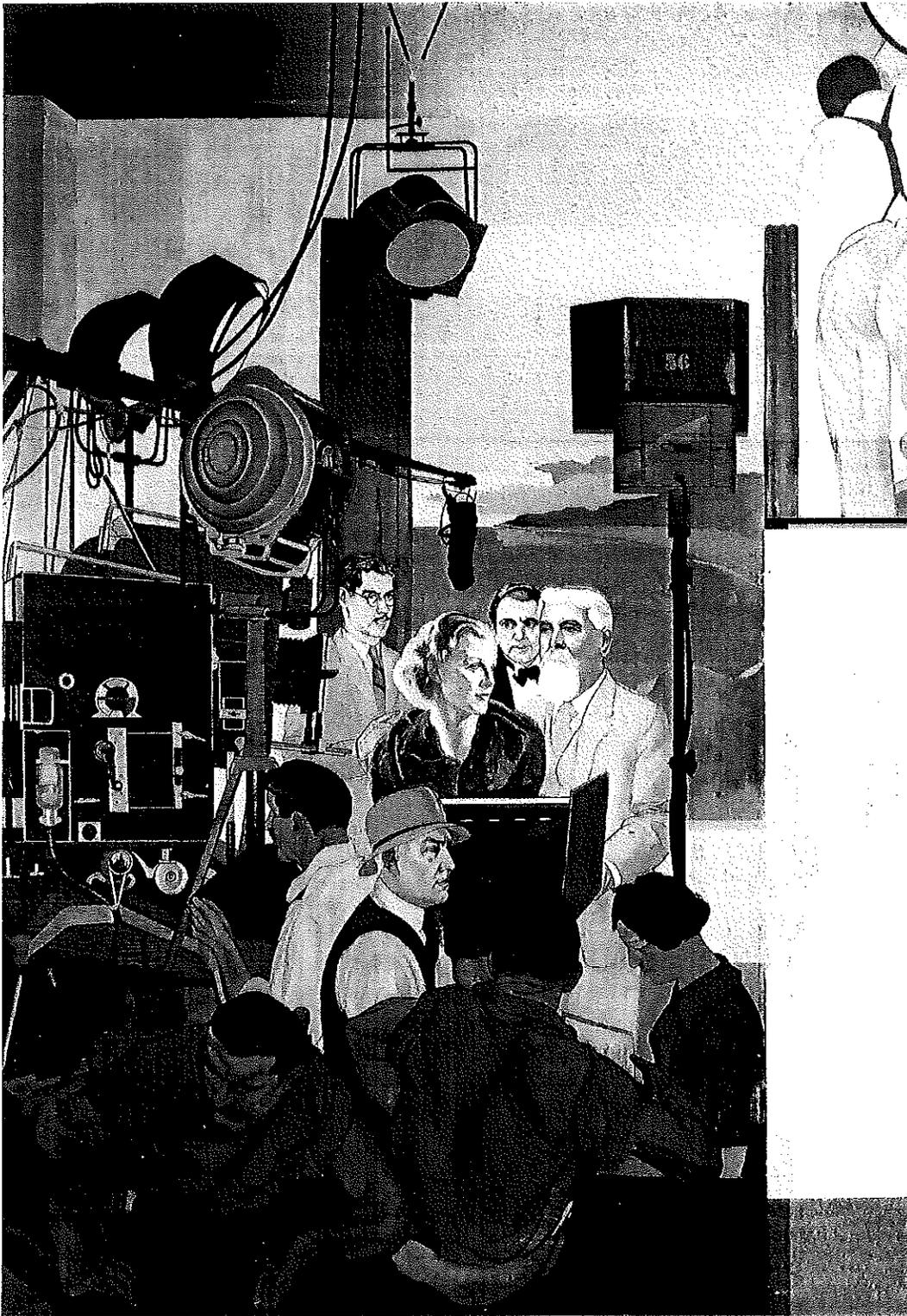


Panel depicting the Royal Mosque at Isfahan, from *Invention and Imagination*, 1934, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C., transfer from the City of Santa Monica, California.

heroic figures representing the positive and negative currents of electricity.

Moving toward the right, away from the *Prologue* and away from the prehistoric artist carving, two ancient

Oriental deities appeared: the eagle god of the Assyrians and the Hindu god Shiva, the Creator and Destroyer. Noting in the illustrated brochure printed about the mural that because "most of our imaginative



Panel depicting a motion picture studio, with actress Gloria Stuart at the center, from *Invention and Imagination*, 1934, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C., transfer from the City of Santa Monica, California.

design and our faiths have come to us from the East," Macdonald-Wright positioned Confucius, the Buddha, and Lao Tzu after the gods. Again, Macdonald-Wright wrote in the mural catalogue about the contributions

of the historical figures represented. Of Lao Tzu, he wrote that his book *Tao Te Ching*, "remains one of the profoundest works of the human mind."¹¹

Continuing to the right, Macdonald-Wright depicted



Interior of the Santa Monica Public Library, ca. 1935. Photograph courtesy of the author.

a panel of legends, including the Fox Spirit, the Chinese Dragon ("whose varied attributes are too manifold for so short a description"), Europa and the Bull, Pegasus, a nymph and satyr, and ghost fires rising from a steaming ravine. In the next panel was the Royal Mosque at Isfahan, followed by a pastoral scene with the figure of Boccaccio (which includes a self-portrait of the artist as troubadour, playing a lyre).

The next panel featured Michelangelo carving one of his *Slaves* and also represented the great poet Dante descending the stairs of a villa. Behind the figure of Dante were represented two contemporary citizens, Harry H. Gorham and Robert P. Jones, nephews of Senator Jones, the founder of Santa Monica.¹²

Following after Dante came the composers Bach,

Beethoven, and Wagner. The next panel depicted a fantasy of the Rhine operas of the latter, complete with Rhine maidens. Macdonald-Wright's father, Archibald Wright, was represented on the next panel as both a young man of nineteen and as a painter at an easel. On another slim panel there appeared the figure of a dancer on stage, followed by a panel of famous musical virtuosos, including Karl Muck, then the conductor of the Boston Symphony.

Both sides of the mural came together at the entrance to the library in a large panel depicting the shooting of a motion picture. Actress Gloria Stuart, a native of Santa Monica, was the central portrait. Above the arch over the front door, two final figures served to represent the dual impulses of the imaginative and the

technological: Edgar Allen Poe and Lee H. De Forest, inventor of the audio amplifier and a pioneer in talking motion pictures, whose studio was then in Hollywood. Macdonald-Wright provided in his catalogue the essential meaning of this odd coupling at the mural's end: "The artist in bringing these two men together has attempted to indicate the technical necessity felt by the imaginative artist and the imagination necessary to the profound technician." Nowhere, he felt, could the complementary talents of artist and technician (who contain within themselves aspects of their opposite) be more effectively joined than in the medium of film.

Macdonald-Wright labored on the library murals for eighteen months without pay. When it was done, he had painted over one hundred sixty figures, including forty-six portraits, and had covered approximately two thousand square feet. Macdonald-Wright painted the entire mural himself, though he did have two technical assistants, funded by the PWAP, who helped cut, dowel, and prepare the white pine sections that form the support for the variously sized mural panels. He was fully aware that the library would not last forever and made certain his mural at least stood a chance of preservation.¹³ In these murals, the artist summarized his own eclectic philosophy and his attitude toward technology, tradition, and religion. In the process, he also managed to include a number of personal and aesthetic references (some veiled).

In the mural, the great figures of science are represented as heroes who went beyond the conventional wisdom of their times—though Macdonald-Wright felt science could never demonstrate nature's mysteries. This is made clear in the *Prologue* panel of the mural, where two prehistoric men attack a Makara, which in Vedic mythology is a sea monster ridden by Varuna, a god of universal power symbolizing the blind forces of nature. It is Varuna, along with the god Mitra, who maintains universal order. Their power is magical and absolute. For man to attempt to control the Makara, as they do here with bow, arrow, and noose, is futile.¹⁴

In this scene, Macdonald-Wright also commented on the limitations of the most popular form of painting then current—the American Scene. The prehistoric man throwing the lariat was a likeness of Thomas Hart Benton.¹⁵ Macdonald-Wright's intentions here were several. He was complementing Benton's personal heroism (acknowledgment of Benton's fight for a kind of art he believed in), but also equated Benton's pursuit with the pursuit of science—noble and useful, but inherently limited. The problems with topical art were considered at length by Macdonald-Wright two years later in an unpublished article, "Art and the Topical":

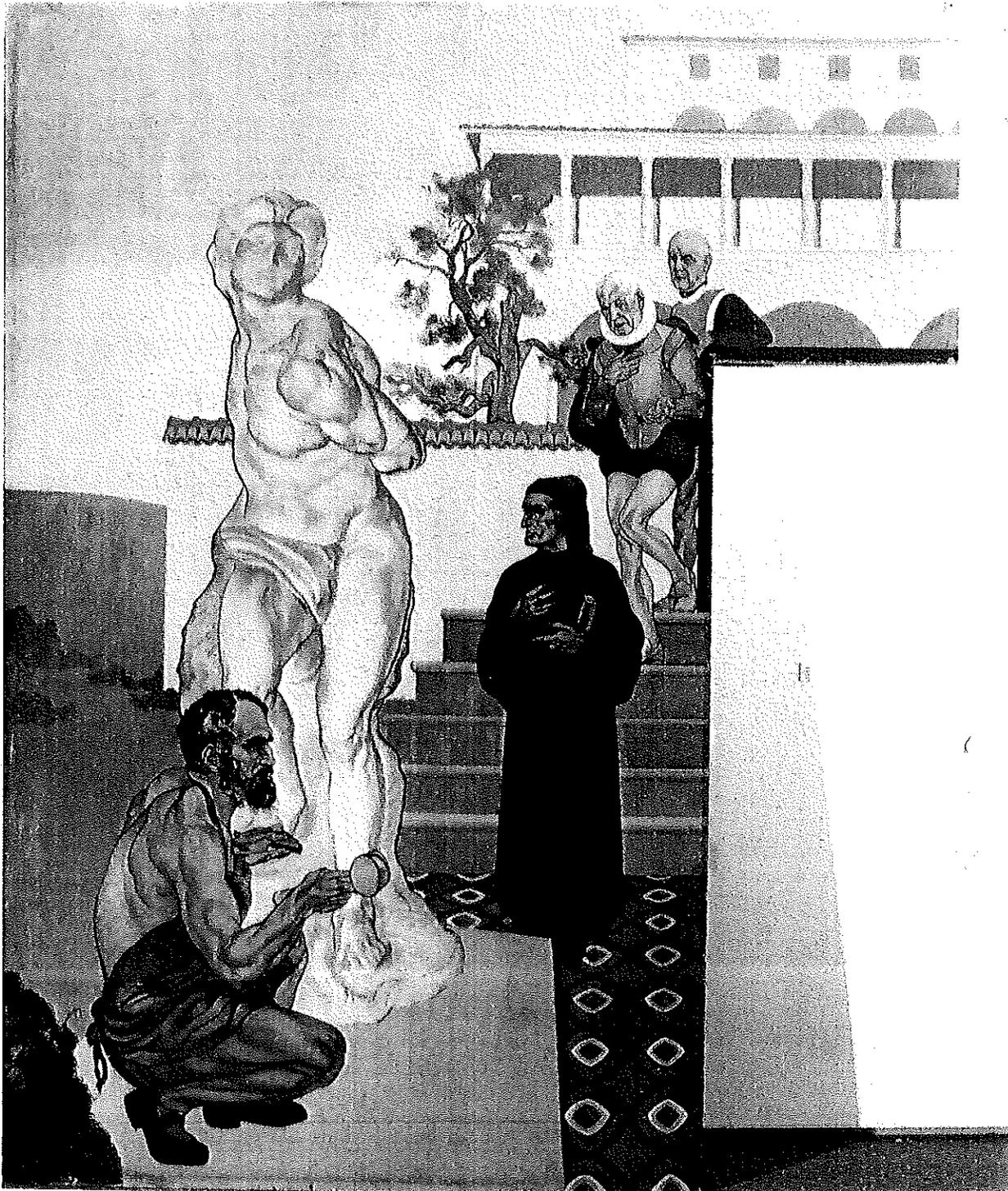
It will some day become evident to the Topicalists that not subject matter, which is only a symbol when not a fake, but content is the expressive, the psychically significant element for consideration. This content can never be anything but contemporaneous; the fact that many men feed

themselves on what one might call the past does not mean that they are not of the present day. All the motivations they receive from past arts are transliterated in the process of admiration into contemporaneous considerations, and this could never happen unless the stable quality of past art encompassed in its universality the ideals of the present day. These ideals are what might be called "psychic practicality" and have little to do with the ephemeral slogans of one or two generations.¹⁶

Macdonald-Wright reiterated at length in this essay what he had written in one paragraph for exhibit at An American Place in New York in 1932: that subject matter only symbolized content, content that could only express one thing, the author.¹⁷ If the author were an American, his work, if truly art and not a "fake," would show his Americanness. For Macdonald-Wright, American Scene paintings of farmers or strikers were "ephemeral slogans" about life in the United States. An individual American artist, he felt, necessarily dealt with the more difficult problems of transcending time and place in art, while at the same time inevitably revealing an American temperament because he had no choice, if expressing himself honestly, except to reveal it, no matter what he painted. Another author, for example, a Chinese or African or Persian, would necessarily reflect something of his own cultural "temperament." In another essay of about 1930, Macdonald-Wright argued that "racial temperaments" were an "accomplished fact."¹⁸ Varying racial temperaments in his opinion accounted for the differences between Chinese and Persian art, which in turn are so different from Renaissance art, and so on.

For Macdonald-Wright the existence of temperament was far from the most important aspect of either a culture or a work of art. Common to *all* temperaments, he believed, is the fundamental "order-principle," the recognition by humanity of eternal recurrence (of the seasons, of the cycle of life and death) and of the interdependence of all things around him, for example, of earth, air, and water. For Macdonald-Wright, ethics and morality were only efforts to achieve a similar fundamental harmony. Indeed, his own library mural was an effort to express the order-principle. As for the American Scene painters, most failed, in Macdonald-Wright's opinion, to see or feel beyond their subject matter to find an expressive content. He did admit that topical creations could have content and that topicalism had succeeded often in the past (he cited Zola as an example) both to document contemporary life and suggest something of the universal, but he gave no examples of who in America in the 1930s might have been capable of such a synthesis in painting.

Among many personal references in the cycle is the inclusion of Michelangelo carving his one of his two *Slaves*. The work was critical to the development of Synchronism, and Macdonald-Wright and Morgan



Panel depicting Michelangelo carving one of his *Slaves*, from *Invention and Imagination*, 1934, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C., transfer from the City of Santa Monica, California.

Russell both did painted versions of Michelangelo's various sculptures.¹⁹ Michelangelo's influence was, in fact, alive and well in the library murals themselves, especially in such figures as the heroic allegories of positive and negative energy.

Macdonald-Wright also depicted the figure of Edgar Allen Poe (a favorite since childhood) portrayed as

modern in all respects, wearing modern clothes and represented in a modern interior. On the wall behind Poe is a painting in the style of Morgan Russell.²⁰ The implication is that Poe and Russell were of like mind and equal modernity, if not kindred spirits.

Local reception to the library murals was entirely positive in the press. In fact, work on the individual

sections received coverage as they were completed.²¹ Macdonald-Wright received the familiar accolades of "Modern Master"²² and "Renowned Artist,"²³ and the murals themselves were an object of genuine interest, curiosity, and appreciation. When the murals were finally dedicated on 26 August 1935, a large crowd filled the Santa Monica Library to listen to the artist interpret them.²⁴ Merle Armitage presented the murals to the city on behalf of the PWAP, and Mayor Carter formally accepted them for the city of Santa Monica.

Nationally, the dedication of the murals received ample coverage. Both *Art Digest*²⁵ and the *Christian Science Monitor*²⁶ (drawing heavily on Arthur Millier's reporting) printed extensive descriptions of the murals, noting that they were the largest murals to be done under the PWAP. *Time* magazine did likewise, adding that the Santa Monica Public Library was now home to "the gaudiest main reading room on the Pacific Coast."²⁷

Though he was no doubt fully aware of the limited influence the library murals might initially have, there was also no doubt in Macdonald-Wright's mind that he had created a great mural. In a letter to Morgan Russell, Macdonald-Wright described both the extent of his labors and his assessment of the mural's quality:

I am sending this letter in the envelope with a folder or brochure of my mural, unveiled August 25th. . . . The work was a job, at the besogne every morning, work all day till dark and many, many days after dark and at night. The fact that it's the best mural in the U. S. doesn't satisfy me and I feel that if I had it to do again I'd do better. However, I might do worse, and it was all done under the most hideous pressure from practically every point. For weeks I dragged my legs like a bug that has been stepped on, half-paralyzed thru nervousness, at other times influenza made me fall off the scaffolding and pass out of consciousness. At other times I was driven half mad by conferences with lawyers, and on top of it all there was money to get—taught, lectured when I could and had to study up on many subjects, build a house, Well, Christ I can't even begin to enumerate everything.²⁸

Macdonald-Wright's elevated estimation of his own work was not shared by later historians of American art. In fact, none of the major studies devoted to American mural painting or art of the 1930s has discussed the Santa Monica Library murals. The murals were an anomaly within American painting of the period and do not fit into studies of American Scene painting, Social Realism, or 1930s abstraction. To dismiss or ignore them because of this neglect, or worse as mere illustration, is to overlook an attitude and world view that defined Macdonald-Wright's sense of modernity in the 1930s.

The library murals were, in summary, a carefully crafted visual sermon on the wisdom of expanded thinking designed to advocate not only the acceptance of world views other than Western (including ancient,

Eastern, and mythologizing world views), but their assimilation as well. The artist spoke of the need to balance psychic needs with the physical, and he attempted to reflect that need for balance in the dual nature of the mural's narrative. What Macdonald-Wright proposed visually was, in effect, an alternative way of thinking about life, culture, and the future. In his advocacy of change and evolution (by always building on but not imitating the past) and in his rejection of conventional social standards as sufficient guides to living fully, Macdonald-Wright was thoroughly modern. His futuristic vision of the fusion of technology and imaginative work in art was farsighted—and from computer imaging to virtual reality, it is now difficult at times to distinguish between art and science in late-twentieth-century art forms.

In 1964, the Santa Monica Public Library moved from its location on Fifth Street to a new facility on Sixth Street, and the original building became a shopping center before being demolished in 1973. An unsuccessful effort was made by the city to find another location for the murals, but in 1966 they were donated to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., where they are now a part of the permanent collection of the Smithsonian American Art Museum.²⁹ □

NOTES

1. The literature on the role of the arts during the Depression is vast. A most useful introduction is Richard D. McKinzie, *The New Deal for Artists* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973). On Section murals specifically, see Karal Ann Marling, *Wall-to-Wall America: A Cultural History of Post-Office Murals in the Great Depression* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982) and Marlene Park and Gerald E. Markowitz, *Democratic Vistas: Post Offices and Public Art in the New Deal* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984). The author dedicates this article to Professor Park for her past and ongoing guidance in the study of American art.
2. For a general history of the library, see Ellen Braby and Janet Hunt, *The Santa Monica Public Library, 1890-1990* (Santa Monica: Santa Monica Public Library, 1990).
3. "Library Mural Work to Begin in Week's Time," *Santa Monica Evening Outlook*, 25 January 1934.
4. "Library Mural Work to Begin."
5. "Library Mural Work to Begin."
6. Stanton Macdonald-Wright, *Santa Monica Library Murals* (Los Angeles: Angelus Press, 1935), unpaginated.
7. See Richard Wilhelm, trans., *The Secret of the Golden Flower: A Chinese Book of Life* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., 1931), p. 137, for commentary by Carl Jung.
8. "Wright Lauds Cooperation," *Santa Monica Evening Outlook*, 14 February 1934.
9. See Stanton Macdonald-Wright, "Lectures to the Art Students League of Los Angeles," recorded and transcribed by Mabel Alvarez circa 1924-1925, p. 31. A transcript is available in the Mabel Alvarez papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution (copy in the Museum of Modern Art Library, New York [with thanks to Pauline Khuri-Majoli for letting me read her xerox copy]).
10. Macdonald-Wright, *Murals*, unpaginated.

11. Ibid.
12. Macdonald-Wright did not explain the inclusion of these two individuals, who were probably there for political reasons.
13. Macdonald-Wright to Morgan Russell, 1934, Stanton Macdonald-Wright letters to Morgan Russell, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm reel 1266, frame 115 (hereafter Macdonald-Wright letters): "Eh bien, as the Library building will not last forever, or even close to forever, I decided to do the mural so that it could be removed and placed elsewhere when the time comes to tear down the building and so am doing it on wood" (Access restricted, used by permission of Mrs. Jean Macdonald-Wright).
14. Macdonald-Wright's in-depth knowledge of mythology comes into play here: in Indian mythology, the noose and the bow and arrow have additional meaning, the noose as a symbol of knowledge and of intellect that can make objects known, and the bow as a symbol of the mind (the five arrows it fires in the mural correspond to the five senses). See Heinrich Zimmer, *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974).
15. See Arthur Millier, "Huge Mural Being Installed in Santa Monica's Library," *Los Angeles Times*, 18 August 1935: "Clausen poses for Wright and Thomas Benton, rated No. 1 painter of 'The American Scene,' whose likeness appears in the mural as a primitive man apparently trying to rope the neighboring dragon with a lariat."
16. Macdonald-Wright, "Art and the Topical," unpublished, 1934, courtesy of Mrs. Jean S. Macdonald-Wright.
17. Macdonald-Wright, statement in "S. Macdonald-Wright Exhibition," brochure written for An American Place Gallery, New York, 3 to 19 October 1932, Macdonald-Wright papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm reel LA 5, frames 303-304.
18. Macdonald-Wright, "The Structure of Art," unpublished, ca. 1930. Courtesy of Mrs. Jean S. Macdonald-Wright.
19. See for example Macdonald-Wright's copy, now lost, of Michelangelo's *Dying Slave*, reproduced in the exhibition catalogue *Ausstellung der Synchronisten: Morgan Russell, S. Macdonald-Wright* (Munich: Der Neue Kunstsalon, June 1913), unpagued.
20. See Macdonald-Wright, *Murals*.
21. See "First Mural Unit Finished," *Santa Monica Evening Outlook*, 2 April 1934; "Murals for Library Developing Under Guiding Hand of Wright," clipping, Macdonald-Wright papers, microfilm reel LA 5, frame 304; "Second Unit of Library Mural Draws Praise From Art Critics," *Santa Monica Evening Outlook*, 24 July 1934; and an untitled clipping from *Los Angeles Saturday Night*, 18 August 1934, Macdonald-Wright papers, microfilm reel LA 5, frame 304.
22. "Murals for Library Developing" (Macdonald-Wright papers, microfilm reel LA 5, frame 304).
23. C. S. Warren, "Interesting Personalities," *Santa Monica Evening Outlook*, 7 March 1934.
24. "Wright Tells Murals Story: Large Crowd Entertained At Library Ceremony by Noted Artist," *Santa Monica Evening Outlook*, 26 August 1935: "Wright mingled the language of erudition humorously, with everyday talk, as he made the subject matter of the murals easy to understand. From the solemn heights of science and art he dropped once to the word 'lousy,' said by Vicki Baum to be one of Hollywood's two pet words. The other one, 'swell,' he did not use. But several of his auditors said the word described his remarks."
25. "Wright's Huge Mural, 200 Figures, Is in Place," *Art Digest*, 1 October 1935.
26. Arthur Millier, "Invention and Imagination," special to the *Christian Science Monitor*, 24 August 1935.
27. "Synchronist," *Time*, 2 September 1935.
28. Macdonald-Wright to Morgan Russell, 8 September 1935, Macdonald-Wright letters, microfilm reel 1266, frame 137 (access restricted, used and published with permission of Jean S. Macdonald-Wright).
29. Since the murals were removed from Santa Monica and transferred to the Smithsonian American Art Museum, there have been several attempts by interested citizens to have them returned to Southern California. See Ken Fanucchi, "Tug of War for Famous Murals," *Los Angeles Times* (13 June 1974); and Anne Morgenthaler, "SM Murals may return home," *Santa Monica Evening Outlook* (23 November 1987). I thank Roger Genser, one of the most recent activists attempting to retrieve the murals on behalf of the city of Santa Monica, for sharing his file of correspondence on the issue.

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