



Pascin  
(Montparnasse-Atelier)

Up on another angle Henri Rousseau had rounded out his own exquisite life, and beautiful passages out of his years, days and hours, were to be learned orally from those who were fortunate to be in on that rare and ennobling vision.

All this esthetic excitement hovered around the edges of, and inside the Cafe du Dome itself.

I was not a frequenter of the Dome. I was not interested in the arts of billiard playing as exposed by the highly subsidized American students, or in the subtle variations of physical debauchery

one could read so glibly from the green and grey and yellow faces assembled there. I was never conscious in my quick tours through the Dome where my patronage consisted of buying postage stamps and the always bad French cigarettes, that there was ever a day in Paris, a day with sunlight, fresh fruits, and good body feelings. I always inhaled the stench from foul and fierce tropics with rare and unsympathetic orchids hanging in mid space, feeding on the best air that Paris had to offer, returning the saddest fragrances that flowers ever had to exhale. It was a dark and forbidding place for me, this Cafe du Dome. There was a healthy looking bunch I did observe daily however, as I passed. It was the stately coterie of Fiori, Levy, et Cie. I did not know whom the others were at the time, but it is since been proven that two of them must have been Purmann and Moll, for it is these three painters who have since shown what the preoccupations were between Liebermann and the then very riotous modernists composing the Blaue Reiter group, of which Kandinsky, Marc, Macke, were the leading lights, and it was with this group that I made my own appearances in Germany as a painter, being the only strictly American painter to exhibit with this society at the time, and probably in its whole career. And it is the shade of history which these painters create here in Germany which adds one of its best notes, and certainly one of its very best painters from the standpoint of pure painting, namely Rudolph Levy. I speak of the paintings of Levy with special praises because Levy proves for me that he is perhaps the single one of all Matisse's followers who understood him best and who by his own careful judgements and deductions has since created a personal expression of great charm and of really special distinction.

Time always works little miracles and we may speak of Rudolph Levy as one of the special prestidigitations of his time as well as of the present, certainly here in Germany and Berlin, where so much respectable talent fails by reason of its penchant for symbolism, for decadence, and for private historical registration.

The pictures of Rudolph Levy come up clear to the surface of esthetic relationships, and have a specific value because Levy himself has shown a particular veracity toward the idea of art itself. It is not an art of extreme sensation. It is an art of average sensation. That is the finest compliment I could personally pay to a fellow Artist. There is nowhere in Levy's paintings the least tendency toward bizarrerie and uncouth experience, and this alone makes him a rarity in Germany where for so long a time outside the late realists Trübner, Leibl, and the impressionism of Liebermann, much that is vulgar and terrible has been perpetrated in the line of peculiar personal confessionism. We have the everlastingly condemned ghosts of Böcklin, Stück, Klinger and their followers to thank for this, and strange to say, it still lingers in some of the wilder fauves of Germany, they having taken advantage meanwhile of the visiting shades of Gauguin and Van Gogh. We find in this sense to what dreadfully unesthetic passes art can come in the efforts of the now conspicuous fantasistes Kokoschka, Kubin, and the others, with that distracting vision of Klinger's Beethoven in several kinds of marble and bronze behind them.

Art when it is real is after all a matter of „safety first“ intelligence. It is infinitely more to the credit of an artist to have built himself on the logic of omission, than all the amount of private personal erotic history he can pour into it. Every artis