



An Artistic Joke

YES ART, which will burst upon us all at the Fitzgerald Gallery tomorrow, is one of the most serious expressions possible to the aesthetic impulse, that is, a joke.

Robert Cenedella Jr., the yes school's master painter, was assembling his treasures Saturday and paused with affection over a collage of rubberized table mats, shaped and colored like peaches.

"That's a Dillon Dillor," he explained. "Dillon works only with placemats. Restricted, some might say. But . . ."

A stranger who had wandered from the street looked at the Dillon and seemed about to say something, to be hanging indeed at the point of a genuinely revolutionary outburst in the postwar history of American art. Could an American customer really be about to ask an American artist just what the hell he thought he was doing? And then the stranger bowed his head, as if embarrassed by the impulses to subversion, and went away.

The great source from which yes art flows is Andy Warhol, whose muse, having first instructed him to paint a hundred perfect Campbells beef noodle soup labels in ranks of 10, has since pressed him on to similar excitements with Brillo boxes.

Warhol is, of course, our reigning academician, and yes art pays him the homage of various experiments with the incorporation of his breakthrough into older revolutionary classics. There are, as an instance, a "Brillo Descending the Staircase" and a "Brillo Seurat," the last a pointilliste Brillo box next to the lady with the parasol from "La Grande Jatte."

The Fitzgerald Gallery, as part of its splendid print collection, will also offer for sale Brillo boxes, donated by the company, in three different sizes. Any patron can feel the intimate experience of creation until now reserved for the artist.

"If a yes artist folds your Brillo box, it will cost \$6.75," Cenedella explains. "If you fold it yourself, it costs \$5.75."

The yes art show will be the first to give away Green Stamps with every purchase.

"If you want a fine oil painting by a master painter, the Green Stamp folks will give you one if you purchase enough yes art.

"S. and H. has made available to the gallery their newest neon sign, one which is given only to prestige establishments."

The Fitzgerald Gallery proudly displayed this symbol in its window all last week. This caused a certain confusion among the aware; passersby in search of new breakthroughs kept knocking on the door to ask if the Green Stamps sign was a piece of sculpture.

The critic dispatched by Art News came in the other day for a preview of Cenedella's assemblage, and paused in apparent confusion before an enlargement of a typed sheet of paper.

"That," Cenedella said, "is a Rip Kamp. He dictates his paintings. Never touches them."

The Art News man confessed that he didn't think a piece of typing was art. Cenedella suggested that we all remember what critics used to say about Van Gogh. It is, of course, the reply to which there has been no rebuttal for 20 years.

Yes art is a very serious business, at least as serious as *dada* was. The difference is instructive. *Dada* was nonsense aimed to shock and upset the *bourgeoisie* and allow the artist to go about his business. By now the *bourgeoisie* is so cowed that it dare not object to anything the artist does.

The revolutionary's job is not to *epater* the *bourgeoisie* but to *epater* Andy Warhol. The artist's enemy is now only the artist. It takes serious men to accept a world where no one else will take on that job and to set joyfully out to do it.