

"The persons who separate themselves from nature have to live every minute of their lives without the power, joy, and freedom of nature. And we, who apparently suffer grave sanctions from such persons, betray on our faces that we are drawing on forces of nature."

"But in fact the case is like the distinction in theology between the Old Law and the New. In the Old Law all are guilty, in the New they may easily be saved. We see that in fact everybody who still has life and energy is continually manifesting some natural force and is facing an unnatural coercion. And so, in some apparently trivial issue that nevertheless is the key, he draws the line! The next step for him to take is not obscure or difficult. It presents itself at once, it is even forcibly presented by the Society! Will he not soon develop in contrast to the habit of coercion, a habit of freedom? And positive natural acts bloom like the flowers."

For all the radical talk, Goodman opposed revolution for the hell of it. "I have always thought tearing up by the roots was senseless," he said. He chastised the radical young for lacking a sense of history, for trying to force social change in the manner of a Leninist putsch, for failing to imagine viable alternatives to the status quo. Goodman and the young parted company when for young people politics became a rite of moral purification. For Goodman, politics was simply the activity of attempting to "remedy institutions that hinder experience from occurring." Always Goodman only demanded from society the right to be himself, to be autonomous, to be able to "initiate a task and do it one's own way" — though this of course had radical implications.

In fact, Goodman would probably have been right at home in Jeffersonian America. Indeed, He saw his own political convictions as representative of a truly American strain, continuing the kind of "peaceful community, anarchy, spiced by mutinies that were hardly punished," which he believed characterized America in the early eighteenth century. But he was no reactionary, and looked ahead to the creation of peaceful anarchy through decentralism. "My own bias," he said, "is to decentralize and localize whenever it is feasible, because this makes for alternatives and more vivid and intimate life. It multiplies initiatives."

Personal, practical, concrete, eminently sensible— these characteristics carried over into Goodman's many other interests. He was a founder, with Fritz Perls, of the Gestalt therapy movement, with its emphasis of the creativity latent in everyone, creativity that will automatically manifest itself as soon as the crutch of anxiety is given up. He was an advocate of free schools when educational reformers like John Holt were still chasing degrees, and he recommended abolition of schools in favor of apprenticeships on a medieval model when no one had heard of Ivan Illich. Fresh out of graduate school, teaching at the University of Chicago and later at experimental Black Mountain College, he spoke openly of his homosexual inclinations — and was eased out of both campuses.

Paul Goodman's writings represent a wealth of insight that will continue to be significant long after his death. Little of his work has yet had the wide, serious readership it deserves — perhaps one day



it will. In any event, I suspect that Goodman's work will be best remembered only in relation to Goodman himself. For all the value of his work, Goodman's uniqueness consists in the example he set as an engaged intellectual. "Knowledge must be pursued for its own sake, as part of the human adventure," he wrote. Yet no one has more clearly shown the inherent relevance of sustained, rigorous thought in coping with social, political and personal life. Goodman's was a paragon of the inspected life, his mode of being was a tested decision based on an acute critical knowledge of himself.

Art critic Harold Rosenberg told this story recently in *Dissent*: "Many years ago Paul Goodman called me on the phone. 'How are you?' I asked. 'Right this minute,' he replied, 'I feel lousy. Underneath, though, I'm all right. Below that there is, of course, the usual nagging. At bottom, however, I'm really fine.'"

How intense. Can anyone really be that aware, that sensitive, all the time? I'm inclined to believe Goodman was, that he was perfectly serious in answering Rosenberg the way he did. This suggests a certain obtuseness in Goodman with regard to the binding expectations of social interaction; what a way to answer such a routine question. But his answer showed such a knowledge of himself, expressed his knowledge with such directness. And this can be said of almost all his work.

He was so intensely himself. And he was a pain in the neck, for he was a constant reminder that it is possible not to succumb to a hundred little hypocrisies and cozenages in order to get by, not to stop asking critical questions or demanding radical re-thinking once we get past thirty, and not to stop trying to be oneself.

—Barry Mitzman

Art

Morris Graves:

Rooted Deep

Morris Graves is a Northwest artist with a profound sense of place; like William Carlos Williams' spring trees, he roots down to waken. He is also an intensely religious man, one who has said he wants his art "to clarify the spirit." His ability to infuse the senuously physical with a mystic energy has brought him international recognition.

The Museum of Art at this University has been fortunate enough to have acquired at least 12 of Graves' major works, and an archival group of 490 drawings, paintings and sketches, representing over 40 years of studio accumulation.

What Barcelona is to Picasso, the University Art Museum is to Graves. The museum has now opened a permanent Graves Gallery, which will



Indian Bird

feature a rotating selection from this compilation of work.

Those visiting this gallery should be prepared to approach Graves slowly. His work is deceptively simple; a cursory glance will reveal nothing. Jung once wrote that the symbol can make the divine visible. That is what Graves can do, if you give his paintings time, if you stand still, think nothing and just look.

"I paint," said Graves, "to evolve a changing language of symbols, a language with which to remark upon the qualities of our own mysterious capacities which direct us toward ultimate reality." Thus the light streams down in "Hold fast to what you have already and I will give you the Morning Star," and a diagonally rising, half-veiled serpent uncoils from a Chinese vase, holding a flower in "Effort to Bloom."

The selection of Graves' work now on display contains many bird sketches—one of the most powerful of these is "Indian bird," reproduced above. In "The Visionary Painting of Morris Graves," Kenneth Rexroth speaks of the sense of ominous, impending meaning that Graves' birds generate: "It is as if these human-eyed birds were judging the spectator, rather than he them, and in terms of a set of values incomprehensible to our sensual world."

The Graves Gallery is on the second floor of the museum in a little room bordering the stairs. Visit it when you are ready not just to evaluate but to respond. "The artist is only half the canvas," said Graves to a friend. "The viewer must respond. This is the joy of painting."

—Regina O'Neil