# Sheldon Cheney: Crusader for Modernism

SUSAN NOYES PLATT

*hen you say that you were one of the wilder men, what did you do in terms of being wild?*

*ıELDON CHENEY: Well, I wrote about modern art; that was wild enough.* (Interview, November 1979)

Sheldon Cheney, c. 1941, courtesy John Cheney, Washington, D.C.

IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY, modern art was promoted with crusading fervor by the initiated few who understood the principles of abstraction. Katherine Dreier, founder and director of the Société Anonyme, the leading organization in support of modern art in the 1920s, was a committed writer on the subject. Henry McBride, Forbes Watson, Alfred Stieglitz, and Paul Rosenfeld supported modern art in various books and articles.[1] Sheldon Cheney (1886-1980) was one of this group of writers who dedicated their lives to explaining the principles of art since Cézanne to the uninitiated public. He alone has not been examined by historians.[2]

Yet of all the writing on modern art in the 1920s, only

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Cheney's remained continuously in print until the middle of the 1960s. They form a tangible link between the first generation of analysis of modern art and later developments in modernist criticism. As recently as the early post-World War II era, they were used as important references. Clement Greenberg has stated that Sheldon Cheney's writings were an important introduction to modern art in his early career.[3] Also significant are the generations of college students for whom Cheney's books provided the first, and sometimes the only, explanation of modern art. Beyond that, Cheney's books have always had a wide appeal to the general public.

Cheney's popular reputation, however, helped lead to his neglect. His translation of complex ideas into language understandable to the general public has caused historians to overlook his real achievement as a synthesizer of avant-garde theory. The interdisciplinary character of his writings may be another factor. Cheney wrote pioneering books on avant-garde theatre and architecture as well as on avant-garde visual art. He became a writer on visual art only after making a considerable contribution to the literature on modern theatre in the late teens.

As an undergraduate at the University of California, Berkeley, in the early years of the twentieth century, Cheney studied the principles of architecture and performed in the innovative outdoor Greek theatre.[4] The study of architecture gave Cheney the background to understand the significance of avant-garde modern architecture later in his career. Cheney's work with the theatre group soon led to an interest in the avant-garde principles of Gordon Craig, the prophet of modern stage design. It also impressed on Cheney the impact of presenting culture to a mass audience, certainly the purpose of his own writing throughout his career.

Cheney's concern for the relationship of art to the average person was initially encouraged by a study of the writings of Leo Tolstoy. He was profoundly affected by Tolstoy's essay "What is to Be Done?," an analysis of the causes of poverty in Moscow slums.[5] Tolstoy's book *What is Art?* suggests that art as practiced (in the nineteenth century) was meaningless to the general public because it failed to communicate a feeling based on experience.[6] Tolstoy suggested that art needed to be purged of the meaningless idea of beauty, in order to create a more direct expression of life. This same concept permeates Cheney's writing throughout his career. Cheney, however, never embraced the masses in the same way as Tolstoy. He was equally influenced by an important theorist of early modern art, Willard Huntington Wright, who adopted a more Nietszchean approach suggesting that art was the creation of the exceptional individual.[7] Cheney's goal was to uplift the masses by educating them to modern art. Tolstoy's goal, by contrast, was to bring himself in touch with the revitalizing simplicity of the masses. Thus, although Tolstoy inspired Cheney at a crucial early period of his development, he provided only a point of departure for Cheney's commitment to modern art as a source of spiritual renewal. He felt that society needed renewal by purging what he perceived as the deadening influence of the status quo. In an interview just before his death, Cheney recalled the conservatism that he sought to counter, both at the University of California and in New York City.[8] The desire to be a source of revitalization for the individual and for society permeates all of his writings.

Open-air Theatre at Berkeley, c. 1908, courtesy Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

Cheney first approached the avant-garde in 1913 by writing a study of the new movements in the theatre, with a focus on the pioneering role of Gordon Craig. Craig advocated the elimination of traditional scenery and an emphasis on the formal components of light, color, space, and rhythmic movement. These principles laid the foundations for both expressionist and constructivist stage design in the teens and twenties.[9] Cheney's understanding of the principles of abstract art in the theatre supported his later study of expressionism in the visual arts. As editor of *Theatre Arts Monthly* in the teens, Cheney introduced the radical new stage designs of the expressionist theatre to America. He moved the magazine to New York in 1917, and by 1919 he was writing of interconnections among the various avant-garde art forms in an exhibition of painting and sculpture representing modern dance. In the catalogue to the exhibition, Cheney states that "the essential thing in life is the creative, the inspirational—the spontaneous expression that goes beyond creeds, conventions and outward semblances."[10] He contrasts this type of creative expression to the "sentimental and amusing," which he considered superficial and insignificant.

A small pamphlet of 1921 documents his early thinking on the interrelationships of avant-garde theatre and visual arts. He compares the rejection of representation in stage design to the movement toward abstraction in modern art:

> *The general trend of modern art is unmistakably toward abstract or non-representative means. In the theatre there are these parallels: the use of the mask in acting, or better still the actor's consciousness of his body and face as an emotional mask; the use of words not only literally but tonally, musically; the use of line and color, in the background for emotional reinforcement, without purpose to imitate actuality or suggest reality; and a frankly theatrical approach, abandonment of any effort at illusion. . . . I wish not to overlook the close connection between progress on stage and progress in the painter's studio. What is generally called 'modern art'? In its negative aspect it is a revolt against the representative basis in painting[,] against descriptive painting, illustrative painting. . . . In its constructive aspect it is creation as contrasted with imitation, expression as contrasted with representation. It is concerned with . . . the rhythm or essential reality or structural truth of nature . . . and then with the artist's emotion and his individual emotional way of conveying what he has felt or divined.*[11]

In the same essay Cheney introduces the phrases "significant form" and "aesthetic emotion," terms taken from the lexicon of the popular formalist theories of Clive Bell.[12]

Cheney's awareness of Bell's work resulted from his contact with the Société Anonyme and another important early supporter of modernism, the head of the Société Anonyme, Katherine Dreier. Dreier, too, sought to educate the uninitiated into the mysteries of modern art as a virtually religious cause. At the Société Anonyme, which Cheney joined at its inception in 1920, Dreier created a series of exhibitions of recent art, accompanied by brochures and publications on the artists. Cheney, as part of the library committee of the organization, had access not only to the public exhibitions, but also to the most sophisticated library on modern art in New York in the early 1920s.

The importance of the Société Anonyme for Cheney emerged clearly in a November 1979 interview; as he talked, he revealed the stratified character of the modern art environment in New York and his status as something of an outsider in that world.

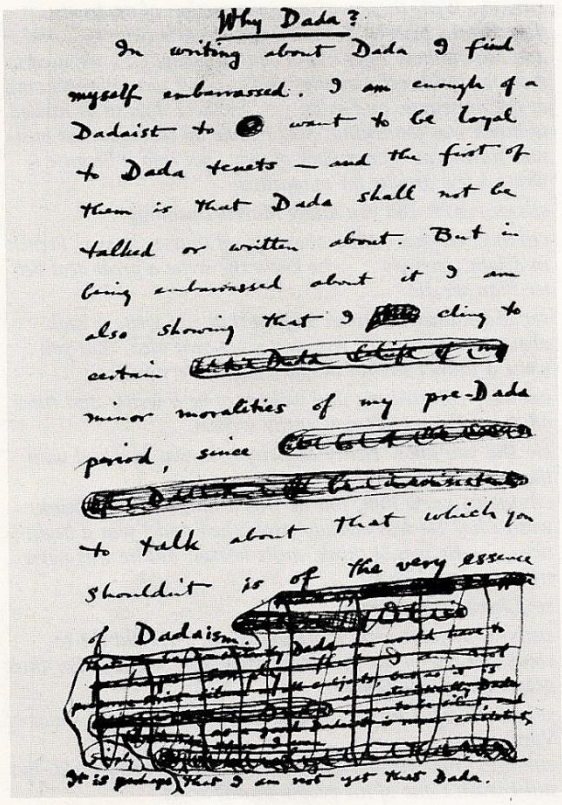
> CHENEY: *Well, there was an organization of modernists, they formed in New York, the Société Anonyme . . . and I don't know how I got into it, but anyway, . . . we used to meet for lunch occasionally, and . . . we were not welcome at the museums, and so on . . . in those days to be invited to lunch was something. See, I came up through that business having no money back of me. I got into it because I wrote a few articles for magazines.*
>
> SUSAN PLATT: *Did you know Marcel Duchamp?*
>
> CHENEY: *He was rather above us, of course; he was French in origin, anyway . . . he knew the scene a great deal better than we did. . . .*
>
> SP: *Did Katherine Dreier suggest that you write a book about modern art, or was that your own idea, that you write a primer so that people could understand?*
>
> CHENEY: *I started out and wanted to be a writer and those other people weren't necessarily writers. . . .*
>
> SP: *Did you know Henry McBride? He was involved with that group.*
>
> CHENEY: *I knew him, but he was a little earlier, I think, wasn't he? He was already established and I was a beginner. . . . He was, I think, quite liberal, but he was not a crazy modern like me. . . .*
>
> SP: *Christian Brinton?*
>
> CHENEY: *He was more conservative. . . . He did the reviews, for one of the more conservative magazines. For these people I was a wild man.*
>
> SP: *What about Frank Crowninshield who was the editor of* Vanity Fair*?*
>
> CHENEY: *That was up above us. I knew Crowninshield, but still I wasn't one of his people in any sense.*
>
> SP: *So, it was kind of a social thing, when you say he was up above you? They were a little private world of the elite?*
>
> CHENEY: *Yes, and they had connections with the big magazines and a person like me had to be content to sell to the little magazines.*[13]

So Cheney first published articles on modern art in "little" magazines, although in his case they were often commercial. His first published essay on art, for the movie magazine *Shadowland*, focuses on the principle of expressionism, or the importance of emotion in art of all types, as well as on the principle of aesthetic form. The title, "Expressionism: Art's Latest Revolution, How It Threatens Our Theatres as Well as Our Exhibition Halls,"[14] lent a note of drama. The term "expressionism" referred to "all currents flowing against the centuries old realistic tradition."

Alfred Stieglitz, the pioneer supporter of modernism in America, wrote to Cheney as a result of the article:

*September 14, 1921*

Shadowland, *October was sent to me a day or two ago. . . . In poking through it I ran across your paper on "Expressionism." I read it aloud to Miss O'Keeffe. We both enjoyed it greatly and felt it was the best thing we had read on kindred subjects since Willard Huntington Wright's articles in* The Forum *five or six years ago. We enjoyed the genuinely free spirit and the fine toleration. . . . I do hope we'll run into each other in the near future for we certainly have common interests.*[16]


Why Dada?

In writing about Dada I find myself embarrassed. I am enough of a Dadaist to want to be loyal to Dada tenets — and the first of them is that Dada shall not be talked or written about. But in being embarrassed about it I am also showing that I cling to certain minor moralities of my pre-Dada period, since

to talk about that which is

should it is of the very essence of Dadaism.

It is perhaps that I am not yet true Dada.

Manuscript page from the "Why Dada?" article Cheney wrote for *The Century* magazine. Published in May of 1922, the article was subtitled "An Inquiry Into the Connection Between War's Ruins, Peacetime Insanity and the Latest Sensation in Art."

Cheney and Stieglitz continued their correspondence, and Stieglitz became an important source of inspiration for Cheney.[17]

Cheney's most radical article, "Why Dada?," appeared in one of the most conservative journals of the twenties, *The Century*, with the subtitle "An Inquirty into the Connection Between War's Ruins, Peacetime Insanity and the Latest Sensation in Art." Cheney relished the opportunity to spread distress among the bourgeois audience of the magazine by describing the extravagant anarchism of the Dada artist. He surveyed recent literary and theatrical events as well as those at the Société Anonyme with the overall purpose of spreading revolutionary impulses:

*Art is no longer an expression of life; it has become a theocracy and a priesthood, cultivated like a religion. . . . The man who dares to seek out new forms of beauty and express them nakedly is made an example and outcast. . . . We need a Dada to destroy our whole mechanized system which has blindly clamped the acquisitive supply-and-demand principles of business over the realms of art and spiritual life. . . . This is Dada's virtue, that it goes beyond all other iconoclasts. Destroying images is not enough. It is necessary to go on and destroy iconoclasm.*[18]

Shortly after the completion of "Why Dada?," Cheney persuaded the publisher Horace Liveright to give him a five-hundred-dollar advance to write an introduction to modern art.

Cheney spent the winter and spring of 1922 in Europe. A diary from the trip records visits to cities in England, Germany, France, and Northern Italy. During his travels, he evaluated art in terms of emotional expressionism and formal sophistication,[19] and although the main purpose of the trip was to conduct research on avant-garde visual arts, Cheney's wide-ranging interests led him to inspect museum installations, attend performances by Sarah Bernhardt and the followers of Loie Fuller, visit the school of dance run by Isadora Duncan's sister, Elizabeth, and observe modern architecture. While stranded in Berlin for six weeks, he studied German Expressionism both in the visual arts and in the theatre. One comment from his diary on visiting the British Museum suffices to establish his perspective throughout the trip and the perspective

A page from Cheney's European diary containing an annotated program of *Masse Mensch*, courtesy John Cheney, Washington, D.C.


Preis 50 Pfennig.

Volksbühne

Theater am Bülowplatz

Direktion: Friedrich Kayßler.

Donnerstag, den 2. Februar 1922, abends 7½ Uhr

Masse Mensch

Ein Stück aus der sozialen Revolution des 20. Jahrhunderts in 7 Bildern von Ernst Toller.

Regie: Jürgen Fehling.

Musik: Heinz Tiessen.

| | |
|---|---|
| Sonja Irene L. | Mary Dietrich |
| Der Begleiter ihr Mann | Christian Bummerstadt |
| Der Offizier | Hanns Neuling |
| Der Priester | Hans Rehmann |
| 1. Gefangene | Lilli Schönborn |
| 2. Gefangene | Hertha Wolff |
| Der Namenlose | Ferdinand Alper |
| Arbeiterinnen | Johanna Koch-Bauer, Lennie Vogel, Dora Gerson |
| Arbeiter | Ferdinand Steinhofer, Walter Bußse, Hans Schulze, Veit Harlan |

Arbeiter, Arbeiterinnen, Soldaten.

Rauchen in allen Räumen des Theaters streng verboten!

Die Schlüsse sind abgeschlossen, Zuspätkommende erst nach dem ersten Akt einzulassen!

F. W. GLENDE

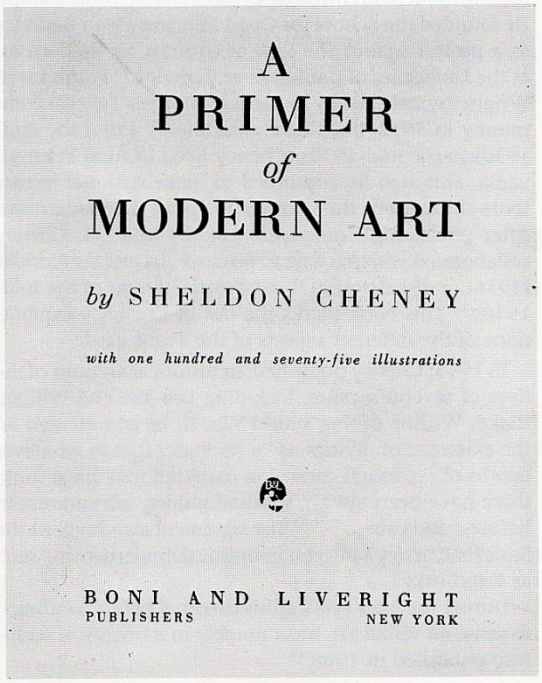
Württembergische Metallwaren, Tafelgeräte, Solinger Stahlwaren, Eßbestecke :: Preiswerte Geschenke in großer Auswahl :: Mitglieder erhalten 5% Rabatt

KÖNIGSTRASSE 46-47 (AM RATHAUS)

of the book that resulted from it. It illustrates Cheney's impatience with realism and his search for meaningful expression in an art based on the principles of form and expression:

*It is becoming clearer where the fallacy of later art originates—the clever mind, reproducing and decorating . . . the . . . surface clearly molded, correct portraiture, detail decorative (sometimes formalized nicely which gives another sort of art of pleasure) . . . but form . . . and aesthetic expression are gone.*[20]

Cheney completed *A Primer of Modern Art* by October 1923. It was published in early 1924, virtually simultaneously with Katherine Dreier's survey, *Western Art and the New Era*, and Walter Pach's *Masters of Modern Art*.[21] In contrast to the serious, pedantic style of these two books, Cheney's *Primer* sets a casual yet aggressive tone on the first page in discussing a self-portrait of Oscar Kokoschka:




Title page from *Primer of Modern Art,* published in 1924.

*This is an example of Modern Art. It is a good example. It has all the earmarks. It is not in the least photographic. Almost any student of drawing could copy the outlines and shading. It is not prettily finished—indeed it is very rough. . . . Let me right out with it. Not to be able to appreciate Kokoschka's paintings just because they seem rough and unphotographic argues plain ignorance.*[22]

The blunt style paired with comprehensive discussions of modern art and theory proved an appealing formula to the general public. Cheney also used modesty and dedication:

*Now please don't think that I am setting up as less ignorant than you on most questions. God forbid that I should so forget my place. But in this one little matter of art appreciation I have worked myself out of something that I look back to as a sort of prison. I should like to help clear the way for you, take down a bar or two, help you to blow some of the dust off your mind.*[23]

Following its didactic and aggressive opening, the *Primer* presented the theory and history of modern art with the same informal but persuasive tone. Dada was included with Futurism in the chapter titled "Schools, Fads and Sensations," with much of the material taken from his "Why Dada?" article. In addition to its personal style, the *Primer* was remarkable for its use of one hundred seventy-five illustrations juxtaposed to appropriate passages. Reproductions in art books in the early 1920s were typically skimpy, hard to see, or clustered together in a special section. In addition, Cheney's interdisciplinary approach included theatre and architecture as well as painting and sculpture. The *Primer* included one of the earliest English-language discussions of the architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright and the Bauhaus.

Most important, though, was Cheney's combination of French and German art and theory. Although Katherine Dreier's book focused on Kandinsky and Pach's book on the new French aesthetics, only Cheney elucidated the full range of modern art by bringing together his knowledge of Gordon Craig's writings, German Expressionist theory, and formalist aesthetics.

The first edition sold out immediately, and by 1929 the book had gone through five editions. The sales of the book increased even in the midst of the Depression. Critical praise spread from coast to coast, from New York art critic to small-town journalist.[24] Cheney had succeeded in reaching the mass audience he sought to enlighten. Alfred Stieglitz captured the spirit of the crusade for modern art in his letter to Cheney:

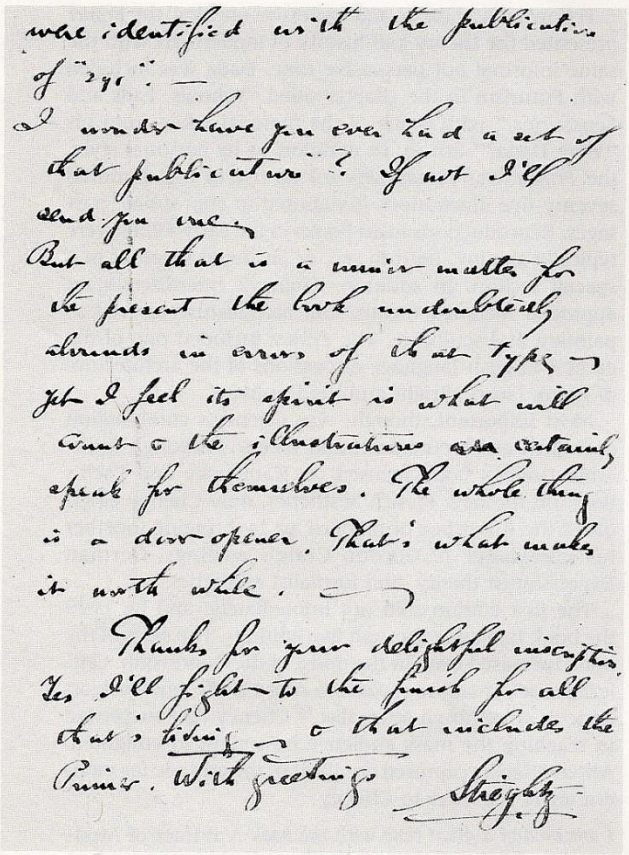
*I am having a great time with the book* A Primer of Modern Art. *It is certainly most timely and most entertaining. . . . I am only glad that some one has dared what you have dared. . . . Thanks for your delightful inscription. Yes, I'll fight to the finish for all that is* Living *and that includes the Primer.*[25]

Stieglitz's enthusiastic support for Cheney's book suggests that despite its popularizing approach and purpose, ordinarily an anathema to Stieglitz, Cheney was able to explain difficult concepts in simple terms with complete accuracy.

In the early 1930s, Cheney wrote a second introduction to modern art. While the *Primer* was a survey of the new movements in the visual arts with an emphasis on the chronological sequences of events, *Expressionism in Art* followed a more conceptual approach based on the theories of Hans Hofmann. Cheney gained access to Hofmann's concepts through his friendship with Glenn Wessels in Berkeley, who translated Hofmann's recently completed manuscript from German in 1931. With Hofmann's permission, Cheney included significant segments of Hofmann's theory of "picture building" in the

1934 book.[26] Cheney continued to use the term "expressionism" to identify modern art in general, but he now linked that term to the ideas of the foremost theoretician of expressionist art in America.

By the mid-1930s, as a result of the efforts of the Museum of Modern Art and its scholarly catalogues and the



Letter from Alfred Stieglitz to Cheney supporting the *Primer*, Sheldon Cheney Papers, Archives of American Art.

proliferation of other books on modern art, the pioneering and exploratory excitement of the early writings by Cheney and others had passed. Cheney's *The Story of Modern Art*, published in 1941, already reflected the new, more objective historical approach to modern art.[27] Rather than a revolutionary treatise, this is a college textbook. Yet even in this ponderous format, Cheney enlivens the details, writes engagingly, and presents complex material in understandable language.

While Cheney is best known for his books on modern visual art, he continued throughout his career to write on other aspects of the avant-garde. In 1928, following the death of Isadora Duncan, Cheney edited her writings into a book he titled *The Art of the Dance*.[28] In the same year, he published a survey of stage decoration that included the most recent developments in constructivist and expressionist designs from the 1920s as well as an examination of Gordon Craig's important role in the development of stage design.[29] In 1930, a book on the history of the theatre included an overview of drama, acting, and stagecraft.[30]

Another contribution to the historiography of modern art is Cheney's 1930 study of modern architecture, *The New World Architecture*.[31] In this book he examined Frank Lloyd Wright's work and developments in the 1920s in Europe, including buildings by Dutch, French, and German architects. Cheney's book preceded the Museum of Modern Art exhibition defining the International Style by two years, and provided, from the perspective on early modern architecture today, a more comprehensive explanation of its rise during the 1920s.

During the early 1930s, Cheney was active in promoting modern art through lectures and informal groups. He founded the School for Open Mindedness in Berkeley as a protest against the lack of concern for modern art at the University of California at Berkeley.[32] Frank Lloyd Wright invited Cheney to participate in his Taliesin community in 1932, but Cheney declined.[33] From the mid-1930s to the mid-1970s, Cheney lived in rural Pennsylvania, although he continued to make national lecture tours throughout the country to speak on modern art. After publishing *Expressionism in Art* in 1934, Cheney collaborated with his wife to produce *Art and the Machine* (1936), a discussion of the industrial design of the mid-1930s.[34] This book marks the last of Cheney's explorations of the different aspects of the avant-garde.

In 1945, Cheney published an historical account of the lives of several mystics, including Lao-Tse and William Blake. Writing during World War II, he commented on the existence of mystics as "a reminder that in whatever depths of . . . moral confusion mankind may have sunk, there have been always spiritual guides, adventurers in holiness and calm. . . ."[35] The statement also suggests the basis for Cheney's interest in mystical modern artists such as Kandinsky.

During the later years of his career, Cheney continued to write on visual art, most notably in a history of sculpture published in 1968.[36]

Sheldon Cheney made a significant contribution to the understanding of modern art in America both in his informal, confessional work of the 1920s and early 1930s and in the more art historical works of his later career. His development as a writer echoes the shift in the way people saw modern art—from eccentric and inaccessible avant-garde experiment to accepted art history—also reflected in the evolution of art writing from subjective interpretation to more objective recounting of fact. Cheney was important not only for what he wrote but also for how he wrote it, for his continuing receptiveness to modern art, and for his success in explaining the difficult principles of modernism to a wider audience than perhaps anyone else in the twentieth century. Even in the year before his death in 1980, he spoke of modern art with a sense of excitement:[37] For those of us who, as teachers, still seek new ways to convey the unique vision of twentieth century art, his achievement is impressive.

## NOTES

This article is dedicated to the memory of my father, Rutherford Platt, who wrote on nature in the same spirit that Sheldon Cheney wrote on modern art.

I would like to express my particular appreciation to John Cheney for his assistance in various aspects of the research, particularly in arranging the interview with his father. Thanks also go to Marjorie Becker and Anne Beyers for their assistance in typing.

1. For a complete statement by Katherine Dreier, see *Western Art and the New Era* (New York: Brentano's, 1923). A selection of essays by Henry McBride is in Daniel Catton Rich, *The Flow of Art: Essays and Criticism of Henry McBride* (New York: Atheneum, 1975). Alfred Stieglitz's ideas were recorded by Herbert Seligmann, *Alfred Stieglitz Talking: Notes on Some of his Conversations, 1924-1931* (New York: Yale University Press, 1966).

2. Robert L. Herbert, Eleanor S. Apter, and Elise K. Kenney, *The Société Anonyme and the Dreier Bequest at Yale University* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984). See also Ruth Bohan, *The Société Anonyme's Brooklyn Exhibition* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1982); Peninah R. Y. Petruck, *American Art Criticism 1910-1939* (New York and London; Garland, 1981); William Homer, *Alfred Stieglitz and the American Avant-Garde* (Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1977); Paul Rosenfeld, *Port of New York*, with an introductory essay by Sherman Paul (Urbana and London: University of Illinois Press, 1966); and Wanda Corn, "Apostles of the New American Wave: Waldo Frank and Paul Rosenfeld," *Arts Magazine*, February 1980: 159-163. A recent article on Walter Pach is Sandra S. Philips's "The Art Criticism of Walter Pach," *The Art Bulletin*, (March 1983): 106-121. Walter Pach has been little studied due to the unavailability of his papers. For one discussion of the criticism of modern art in the 1920s see Susan Noyes Platt, *Modernism in the 1920s* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1985).

3. Interview with Susan Noyes Platt, San Francisco, July 1, 1984.

4. Interview with Platt, Berkeley, November 18, 19, 1979, Archives of American Art; also, Sheldon Cheney to Susan Noyes Platt, June 15, 1980.

5. Sheldon Cheney, "The Value of Tolstoy's 'What is to be Done?' to the Present Rebuilding of the Social Structure," *University of California Prize Essays*, 1912, pp. 55-122. Around this time Cheney also created a pageant in the Oakland Auditorium, which he called "Redemption, A Masque of Racial Betterment." Tolstoy was an ongoing inspiration for Cheney as evidenced by his 1920 play based on Tolstoy's *The Light that Shines in the Darkness* preserved in the Cheney Archives at the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. See also Sheldon Cheney, "The Open-Air Theatre," *The Craftsman* (August 1916): 435-437, 519. The subtitle of the article was "Seeing Our Plays Out-of-Doors: What this May Do to Create a Healthful Civic Sense."

6. Leo Tolstoy, *What is Art?* (New York: Thomas Crowell, 1899), p. 43.

7. Willard Huntington Wright, *Modern Painting, Its Tendency and Meaning* (New York: John Lane, 1916).

8. Interview with Platt, November 18, 19, 1979.

9. Sheldon Cheney, *The New Movement in the Theatre* (New York: Kennerley, 1914), esp. pp. 302-303. See also Sheldon Cheney, *The Open Air Theatre* (New York: Kennerley, 1918) and *The Art Theatre* (New York: Knopf, 1917). The writings by Gordon Craig that Cheney consulted were cited in these books.

10. Sheldon Cheney, "The Dance and Modern Art," *Exhibition of Paintings and Sculpture Representing the Dance in Modern Art* (Tarrytown: Elizabeth Duncan School and the Bourgeois Gallery, 1918), p. 15.

11. Sheldon Cheney, *Modern Art and the Theatre. Being Notes on Certain Approaches to a New Art of the Stage with Special Reference to Parallel Developments in Painting, Sculpture and the other Arts* (Scarborough-on-Hudson: The Sleepy Hollow Press, 1921), pp. 4, 9.

12. Clive Bell, *Art* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1913; New York: G. P. Putnam and Sons, 1968). Bell's aesthetic terminology is laid out in Chapter I, "The Aesthetic Hypothesis."

13. Interview with Platt, November 18, 19, 1979; edited by the author.

14. Sheldon Cheney, "Expressionism: Art's Latest Revolution," *Shadowland*, (October 1921): 59-61.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 51.

16. Alfred Stieglitz to Sheldon Cheney September 14, 1921, Sheldon Cheney Papers, Archives of American Art.

17. Sheldon Cheney, "Pioneer of Modern Art," *Wings* (December 1934): 10-12, 26.

18. Sheldon Cheney, "Why Dada?," *The Century Magazine* (May 1922): 29. The article was completed the previous fall.

19. The unpublished European diary, 1922, is currently in the collection of John Cheney, Washington, D.C.

20. Excerpt from European diary, 1922, unpaginated.

21. Sheldon Cheney, *A Primer of Modern Art* (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1924); Katherine Dreier, *Western Art and the New Era, An Introduction to Modern Art* (New York: Brentano's, 1923); Walter Pach, *Masters of Modern Art* (New York: B. W. Huebsch, 1924); see also Elie Faure, *Modern Art*, trans. Walter Pach (New York: Harper Bros., 1924).

22. Cheney, *Primer*, p. 3.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

24. For the response of a New York critic, see Henry McBride, "Modern Art," *The Dial* (November 1924): 444, and for a popular journalist's discussion, see "What Do You Know About Modern Art," *Columbia South Carolina Record* (June 22, 1924).

25. Alfred Stieglitz to Sheldon Cheney, February 24, 1924, Sheldon Cheney Papers, Archives of American Art.

26. Sheldon Cheney, *Expressionism in Art* (New York: Liveright, 1934). See especially chapters vi-x and the introduction, p. ix. The manuscript for Hofmann's essay "Creation in Form and Color: A Textbook of Instruction in Art," is preserved at the Archives of American Art, microfilm roll 1355.

27. Sheldon Cheney, *The Story of Modern Art* (New York: The Viking Press, 1941).

28. Isadora Duncan, *The Art of the Dance*, ed. Sheldon Cheney (New York: Theatre Arts, 1928).

29. Sheldon Cheney, *Stage Decoration* (New York: John Day, 1928).

30. Sheldon Cheney, *The Theatre, Three Thousand Years of Drama, Acting and Stage Craft* (New York: Longman, Green and Co., 1930).

31. Sheldon Cheney, *The New World Architecture* (London, New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1930). The book also included earlier architecture and a discussion of the importance of the machine's impact on architecture. It omitted discussion of Russian developments, the importance of which were still only little known. The Museum of Modern Art exhibition by Henry Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson, *The International Style* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1932), dominated our understanding of modern architecture for decades.

32. John Cheney to Susan Noyes Platt, November 3, 1985.

33. Frank Lloyd Wright to Sheldon Cheney, February 24, 1932.

34. Sheldon Cheney with Martha Candler Cheney, *Art and the Machine* (New York: Whittlesey House, 1936).

35. Sheldon Cheney, *Men Who Have Walked with God* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1985), p. 384.

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