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FINE ART

Circulating Pictures

***You pay ten per cent of a picture's value and keep it six month –
Commercialism! – Mercy, no!***

Have you a coming Corot, a modern Millet, a potential Paul Potter or a Toronto Titian temporarily adding whatever the new art adds to your home? If not it is possible to obtain one of the finest works of the moderns for a limited time for a mere fraction of its value.

The Circulating Pictures movement had its genesis in Toronto with Mrs. W. Gordon Mills of 63 Farnham Avenue, who last spring approached one of the foremost Canadian artists with the proposition that she might borrow a picture or two for the summer months. The artist, who is one of those that have introduced anger into art, readily consented and together they discussed the possibility of starting a circulating picture gallery. A number of young married women of Toronto enthusiastically took up the idea and now a gallery of circulating pictures is in full swing, or rather circulation.

According to Mrs. Kenneth T. Young, of 152 Bloor Street West, the circulating gallery is at present a very close corporation. After being asked by a writer for the Star Weekly for a story on the new application of Harvey's principle of circulation, she talked it over with the other circulatees and they decided that the publication of their names or the names of the artists would give a taint of commercialism to the entire scheme which would quite spoil it. It wouldn't be nearly so enjoyable to have one or two colorful joyous pictures in your home if you knew that any other responsible person might have them too. Imagine the élan to be derived from the public library if only a dozen or so persons were allowed to make use of it.

The reporter learned, however, that the principle under which the circulating gallery is operating is this: the young matrons select the pictures they wish from the rich, semi-starving or impecunious artists, depending upon the degree of the artist's modernity and his facility with advertising, and pay ten percent of the picture's assessed value. They then have possession of it for six months. The present scheme has been for each of the young women to have two pictures and after their kick—to use a slang phrase—has worn off, or after it has become so intensified as to make an exchange advisable, to trade with her nearest fellow member of the gallery.

For example, a picture by one of the artists, who, to quote Mrs. Mills, "has introduced anger into art," might be so potent if hung in the living room that it might be exchanged after only a few days, perhaps at the husband's request.

Another might be so powerfully pastoral in motif that the husband might be as easily controlled by it as the cobra by the fakir's pipes. Such a picture might remain in the home indefinitely, doing yeoman service on the occasion of such domestic incidents as teething, the purchase of spring hats or the discovery of an overdrawn account.

Then there is the painter's side of it. By this arrangement he receives something at least. His pictures are viewed by many more people and at the end of six months he receives them back ready for sale. But commercialism must not enter in.