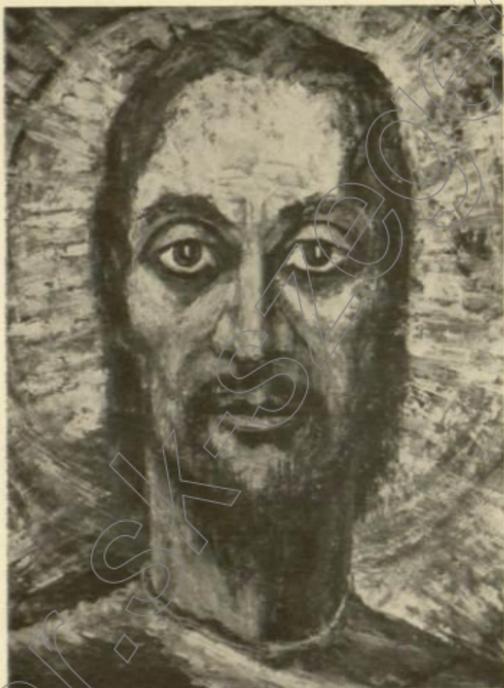


BODNAR Bertalan b. 1909-



"The Head of Christ"

Paintings and Prints

by

**BERTALAN BODNAR**

Exhibition from May 2nd to May 17th, 1950

GEORGE BINET GALLERY

67 EAST 57TH STREET, NEW YORK, N. Y.

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Bertalan Bodnar was born in 1909 near Tokay, Hungary, the son of peasants. His talent in art came to him from nowhere. He started to paint at the age of four before he ever saw a painting. His "media" were the bluing his mother used in her laundry, and juices of fruits, leaves, and grass. At six he covered a forty-yard long wall of the squire's stable with biblical scenes.

During the Roumanian invasion of Hungary in 1918 his childhood home was burned down. It was on those charred walls that he saw tragic faces that have since haunted him, and found expression in his exhibition "The Visions of the Soul", held in Budapest in 1937.

At sixteen Bodnar's talent was discovered and he was sent to Budapest where the well-known painter, Rudnay, undertook his instruction. Later he studied abroad, and his first solo exhibition in 1935 was a success netting him a small fortune. In 1939 he won the Hungarian Academy of Arts award, and in 1941, the scholarship of the Board of Education.

As Bodnar progressed in art he became irresistibly drawn to the spiritual, religious and mystical which transpires in his work. Several times he retired to a monastery and prepared to become a monk. It was during one of these periods that the Archduke Joseph Francis—a nephew of the late Hapsburg monarch—visited the monastery. Deeply interested in the arts

and a writer himself, he met the young painter. The prince and the painter became close friends and Bodnar was invited to live at Joseph Francis' palace.

In 1947 Bodnar went to Paris and had an exhibition two years later which was very well received by the French art world. For the past year he has lived in Cuba and has exhibited in Havana.

In his paintings Bodnar's spiritual interests expressed in the visionary heads and compositions of deep religious feeling are enhanced by the painter's rich colors and powerful forms.

In his graphics, during the past ten years Bodnar developed an entirely new method of printmaking. He started out to find a method in the graphic arts where materials readily available and inexpensive could be used by the artist. At the same time he sought greater freedom for experimentation and improvisation with a more simple, spontaneous and creative expression which were withheld by the older media of engraving, etching, or lithography. Now his new and revolutionary method is perfected and the first examples to be shown in this country are included in the exhibition. The first five prints listed in this catalogue are executed in the clay-leadcast process which we have termed pélography (from the Greek word "pélos" meaning clay), a process which is Bodnar's invention and original contribution to the graphic arts.

