

A Note on the Drawings of DAVID SMITH

Though David Smith is known primarily for his metal sculpture which has earned him top place among the American sculptors of his generation, he began his career in the Twenties as a student of painting. In fact, his sculpture grew out of his experimental approach to painting when he found that he could only satisfy his desire for form by building his pictures outward through the use of actual objects fastened to and moulded upon the canvas. One of the notable features of Smith's sculpture has been frequently referred to as his "tracery", that is, the way he often constructs his pieces as if they were drawings in space.

It is not surprising, then, to discover Smith's drawings to be those of a master hand in this medium, executed with the same exuberant punch and toughness which characterize his best sculpture. In these two dozen drawings (sometimes virtually paintings) selected from the hundreds he has produced in the recent decade, Smith proves himself a truly consummate artist and a rich personality whose "oeuvre" will never be limited to a single means of expression.

Included in the exhibition are three vertical paintings created somewhat in the manner of the photogram by masking areas of the canvas before the paint is sprayed in various ways over the surface. This is the first time these new paintings have been shown and they represent but a tiny portion of the many more which Smith is now working on in his studio in Bolton Landing, New York.