

An Artist From Hungary

THE WORK OF MR. DEZSO KOENIG

QUIETLY pursuing his work in a spirit of reverence and sincerity, striking no attitudes and attiring himself in no outlandish garb, there is an artist in Johannesburg who has been doing notable work since the time he came here, nearly six years ago. He is Mr. Dezso Koenig, of Hungary.

A modest man, simple and unaffected, his is the real, warm-hearted Bohemian nature. A Jew by birth, he is Jewish also in spirit. Unlike so many of our "Jewish" artists, he does not feel that his race "restricts" him. He knows the eternal values of the people to which he belongs and you will find in the warm humanity of his work a firm note of faith, and reverence for life, which has come from the symphony of his people.

Despite an extensive training in sculpture, Mr. Koenig has worked in South Africa chiefly on canvas. His painting defies one's first instinctive attempt at classification. Dezso Koenig is neither a classicist nor an ultra-modernist — simply an artist, painting in various styles, and following always the bent of his own heart. As yet, he has painted little of South Africa. His work tells chiefly of his native Hungary, and of France, Holland and the other coun-

tries of Europe in which he has lived. By nature, he is a romantic. He delights in fantasy. Many of his paintings—scenes in ancient towns, characterisations, landscapes—are lovely fantasies. You will not find their counterpart directly in reality, for the artist has transformed reality, pressed together the petals of many scenes and impressions, and taken their rich essence for his theme.



"The Patriarch"—A fine example of Mr. Koenig's work

He loves trees. I saw two beautiful tree studies by him the other day. The trees were living things, fresh and exuberant, springing out of the living earth, rearing their forms joyously to the sky. And in the background, behind the leafy screen of the foreground, a living sun shed its rich golden lustre over the forms of other trees that seemed almost to be dancing in the distance.

Mr. Koenig was born in Budapest early in this century. He received his first training in art in his native city, and then for many years studied extensively in various art centres of Europe—in Vienna, Milan, Munich, Berlin and Paris. To him fell the distinction after his studies of working under Mark Wedres, perhaps the



"The Card Players"



"The Old Street"—A study by Mr. L. Koenig

greatest of the modern Hungarian sculptors, and Rypl Ronai, the famous Hungarian impressionist and colleague of Matisse. He also worked for some time with Professor Alberto Dressler, the noted Italian sculptor.

Leaving Europe in 1931, he came to this country, where he has been living and working consistently since then. He likes South Africa. He has known many difficulties here and, far removed from the art life of Europe and the deep interest in art there taken by men of culture and standing, has found his path in South Africa no easy one. But he has consistently refused to take shelter in the refuge of the artistically weak and become "arty-arty" and assume queer airs and dress in weird style. He believes in work, and not in attitudes. And an artist with such a code cannot go far wrong.

E.B.

Fine Concert by Musical Society

The Bollelwyn String Quartet, assisted by Cav. Lorenzo Danza, presented an excellent concert on Wednesday last at the Library Theatre. The quartet, a group of women, make a fine combination and Cav. Danza's abilities as a finished artist even when subordinated in ensemble playing, lost none of its individuality. The blending of pianist and strings were pleasurable in both the Dohnanyi and Cesar Franck Quintets.

The "Biscay" Quartet was handled in a delicate and vivacious manner. The third movement was delightful and the last really refreshing. It was in Dohnanyi's Quintet that the ensemble proved its perfect control and balance. The beauty of the melodic line was heard to advantage. Cesar Franck's F Minor Quintet was treated exceptionally well, the performance being worthy of the master.

The hall was crowded and the discriminating audience responded in an enthusiastic manner.

H.F.

JOHANNESBURG WOMEN'S ZIONIST LEAGUE

Kensington Branch.—The general meeting of the branch took place on the 3rd inst. at the residence of Mrs. I. Radus. Friedgut presided over an exceptionally large gathering. Reinhold and Mrs. P. A. Coen present and were welcomed by chairman, Mrs. Chachelson. Mrs. Chachelson addressed the meeting on the importance of the Shekel and her remarks made a deep impression.

Mrs. Reinhold after addressing the gathering, presented Mrs. N. Berg with a tree certificate for her newly born baby daughter of the Kensington branch. Mrs. Bloomberg suitably responded.

The following were elected to office: Chairman, Mrs. A. B. vice-chairmen, Mesdames G. and Ch. Sand; secretary, Mrs. Smith; treasurer, Mrs. H. C. Committee: Mesdames A. Am. M. Beder, L. Benjamin, S. B. Black, J. Goldblatt, M. G. Carrol, R. Lipkin, R. S. O. Diamond, I. Radus, I. Sch. Saltzman, J. Whiteson, and Zinn.

Southern Suburbs.—A stimulating literary and social afternoon was held on the 3rd inst. at the residence of Mrs. Morris Abrams. There was a record attendance.

Mrs. Leftwich delivered an interesting lecture on "Messiah in Jewish History," and musicals were rendered by Mrs. L. Snee. Misses Saidel and Lease and Dickman. The sum of £1 13s. was realised for the National Fund.

Mrs. Dr. Lewis proposed a vote of thanks to the speaker, art hostess.

This branch held a meeting recently during the "Hebrew" at which Mr. Berg, of the Council, addressed the gathering.

Hillbrow Branch.—An evening and well-attended literary affair was held on the 16th ult., at the residence of Mrs. I. Balkin.

The lecturer was Mr. A. hams, who spoke on "Hebrew" and then showed a film of pioneers and workers of Palestine. This interesting film depicted an active part taken by women in social, industrial and agricultural life of Palestine.

A paper on current events was read by Mrs. R. Melzer. Proposals were made to Mrs. F. J. (formerly Lurie) on the occasion of her marriage and tree certificate were presented to the mother of three new babies—Robins, H. and Melzer.

A vote of thanks to the speaker and Mr. Abrahams was proposed by Mrs. Cohen.

Saxonwold Branch.—The general meeting of this branch will take place on Monday, March 22, 3 p.m., at the residence of J. Hayman, "The Angles," 11 Smuts Avenue. Apart from the business of the meeting, a most interesting afternoon is assured. Mrs. Ben Yehuda will address the meeting and afterwards tea will be served in the garden.

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