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INDONESIAN AND FRENCH ART (by Dorothy Adlow).

New York.

"Modern Painting of Indonesia" is an exhibition title that tempts an insatiate gallery trotter. There (John Heller Gallery) are new names and perchance new ideas to broaden our perspective of art in this century.

It would be unintelligent to judge the art range of Indonesia by the 30 pictures shown, for this is a small display. But there are samplings enough to indicate proclivities of painters of the younger generation. Some of them share the enthusiasm of painters from other centers in the Far East for European styles. The manner of performance is revolutionary, since they have been bred to age-long traditions under pervasive cultural influences of India.

Artists Reached.

The national revolutions in Asia have reached and roused artists. Some painters have willfully promoted ancient native styles in the spirit of intense nationalism. Others have assimilated revolutionary art procedures from Europe. Others still are straining impatiently toward a distinctly new and native idiom.

Lembaga Kebudayaan Indonesia (Indonesian Cultural Institute) is fostering the modern movement in literature, music and art. Persagi is the Association of Indonesian Pictorial Artists. The painters are young, and most of them perform with an exuberance that is generally associated with youth.

The pictures consist of portraits, landscapes, and descriptions of native customs. Emiria Sunassa, eldest of the group, painted "Dayak Wedding," a graphic, decorative illustration. Sudjojono, concerned with the relationship of art to the people, is an advocate of social significance.

Affandi is the expressionist. He has painted "Bare Rice Fields" by unloading generous brushfuls of colors in scrolls and undulations. There is no link with Asiatic sources. This is European expressionism after Vincent Van Gogh's Saint-Remy manner, personal, passionate, and immoderate.

Striking Contributor.

Otto Djaya is one of the more striking contributors. His "Dream" was painted with brilliant intensities and rich decorative detail. There is a link with Gauguin; there is also a link with early Indian miniature painting. Paul Gauguin sought and discovered in the Pacific Islands a primitive simplicity and tropical luxuriance pleasing to his romantic temperament. Some Oriental artists seem to have rediscovered their opulent atmosphere and heritage by means of Paris.

There is no evidence in this exhibition that the more intellectual procedures of modern art have reached or stimulated the Indonesian advance guard. There are no traces of cubism or abstraction.

European

European Influence.

What the native artists acknowledge from Europe are ideas of emancipation and self-expression. They enjoy the release to which primitive modes seem conducive. Disciplines involved in formalized trends require time and concentration. When national history is in a state of change, artists incline to more facile, more restless modes of communication.
