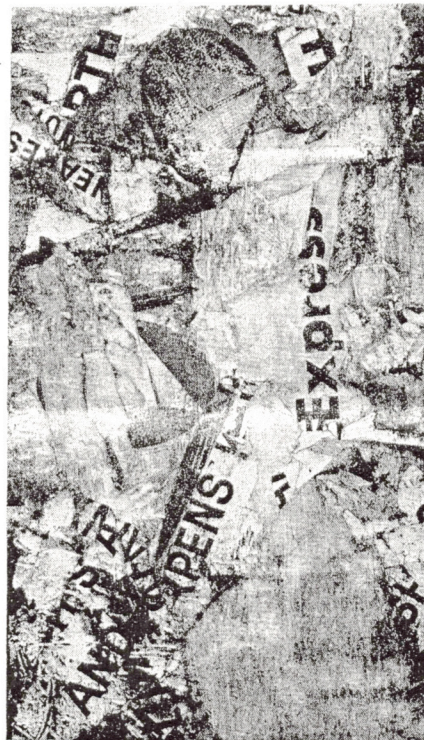


ARTnews

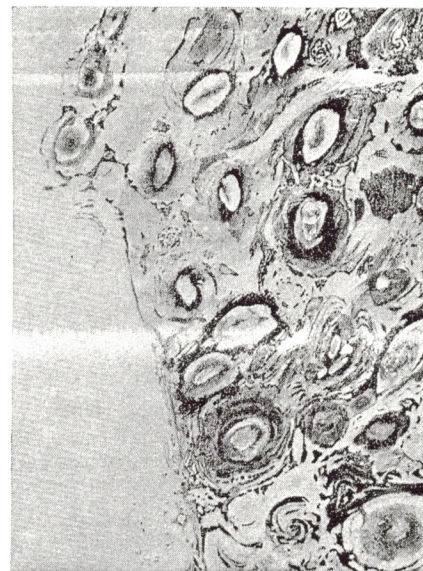


Ernst-Wilhelm Nay: *Silent Blue*, 63 3/4 inches high.

2/1964
art news



David Porter: *Super Chief*, c. 1961, 7 ft. high.



Pat Adams: *Within the Wind*, 1959, gouache, 15 3/4 inches high.

Reviews and previews continued

Ernst-Wilhelm Nay [Knoedler; to Feb. 8], 62 years old, has become a prominent figure in postwar German art. His worst paintings combine a melodramatic Expressionism of acid colors with an Action sloppiness of ill-drawn forms. His best work is almost monochrome: the forms (big "eyes" repeated to boredom) lose their prominence, the color becomes tonal and even creates a mood, and the paint application looks more like variety than willfulness. c.r.s.

David Porter [Royal Athena; Feb. 4-29] ran a gallery in Washington, D.C., twenty years ago, and promoted avant-garde American art. He has also been a successful art director. In recent years he has concentrated on painting. This is his fifth show in New York. He makes collages (he prefers to call them paintings) out of torn-up posters with lettering an important element in the design. Sometimes he works over these papers with ink, watercolor or oil, or does things to them to produce textures. Since he glues these "paintings" to linen or board, and coats them with liquid lucite, they are virtually damageproof and need not be shown under glass. They are often very large, and this, too, makes sense out his desire to think of them as paintings. In appearance, they are bold, gaudy, worn, speckled, weathered, foxed, crumbling, Venetian—a kind of RKO art whose next-door neighbor, on the American scene, is Milton Goldring. L.C.

Pat Adams [Zabriskie; to Feb. 15] has a show that delves into the past ten years of her work and comes up with a quietly delightful array of intense, poetic oils and gouaches. The paintings evolve with the same organic logic that concerns the artist in her forms: waves of concentricity that trace orbits of growth. The image expands from the earliest rounded squares of deep glazed color to the encysted gem-like ovoids that remind you of Colette's collection of paperweights, to larger, sparser undulating waves. Her recent work uses a harder edge, and is lighter, with an assurance that allows it the freedom of doing the unexpected, whether angling a hard-edged stripe of colors across the corner of an explosive little painting, or blacking out a large area. Paintings from a series based on the *Book of Kells*, (an apt prototype), and from her *World Song* series are included. Her work has to do with the edges of the seashore and the edges of the universe; it resembles the processes of nature without being descriptive. K.L.

Philipp Weichberger [Internationale] is the virtuoso of science-fiction. A painter of the soon-to-be universe, his works show meshing gears, synchronized bodies in motion, pale steel, torsion beams, rockets rattling in their sonic boom. He leads us to a future of scientists and mechanics where that which is worshipful is the

dull hum of precision parts, and beyond, to a world inherited by fugitives after the lid blows off. The power contained in the turbines and tubes, the painter suggests, is too much to remain in critical balance and the computers that feed the orders suddenly destroy the works. Zap! Weichberger's difficulty in portraying this theme is that he competes with the stereotypes of comic books and T.V. and even his superb draftsmanship cannot always save his works from bathos. R.C.

Whitney annual [Whitney Museum; to Feb. 2] of American painting is about as good a museum's-eye-view of the scene as can be made, given the local ground-rules, which emphasize fair-play and a soft heart over any ideas, and bearing in mind that the Whitney's building is so ingeniously constructed that everything must look its worst. Willem de Kooning's *Rosy Fingert Dawn at Louse Point* ("Louse Point" is not a joke, but a popular bathing beach in East Hampton, for the information of the art critic of *The New Yorker*, who appended an angry "ha, ha" to this title) is one of the best paintings of the past decade; at the Whitney, its colors look washed out, its flesh-pinks and sun-golds seem to have been skinned. Works by Raymond Parker, Philip Guston, Esteban Vicente, Adolph Gottlieb, Sam Francis, Al Held, Robert Goodnough, Grace Hartigan—all of them strong, intellectual paintings—are swamped in combinations of terrible light and seedy neighbors. Pictures with sharply realist images—such as Paul Georges' *Self-Portrait* or Isabel Bishop's *Women Walking*—fare better. A made-up face is equipped to fight the facelessness of the exhibition. Given a little elbow room, Barnett Newman's *Noon-Light* (white stripe defined in black on bare canvas) comes into its own and dominates the downstairs gallery. But upstairs, even the souped-up Pop images of Rosenquist and Indiana fail to come across. Mediocre works look downright embarrassing in such a setting. Ben Shahn's homage to the Supreme Court is a new low in sycophantic social-primitivism; Andrew Wyeth's watercolor looks like an illustration from the old *Sat. Post* with only the title of a short story by Adela Rogers St. John missing from its format. Georgia O'Keeffe seems to think that clouds lie on top of each other like puppies. Morris Broderson's *The Rape* could be the cover of a drug corporation's stock holders' report, except it is less fanciful. . . . The much-attacked new Breuer building for the Whitney has to be an improvement. T.B.H.

Paul Wunderlich [Wittenborn; Feb. 3-March 2], Berlin-born artist now living in Paris, is represented by seven lithographs from a portfolio published recently in Heidelberg. They are mostly anatomical motifs of bones, joints, vertebrae, cranial parts and teeth, utilized with an instinct for interesting juxtaposition.