

KURT LAUBSCHER

was born in Zurich in 1944 and painted the first pictures already at the age of ten. Attendance at the School of Arts and Crafts was followed by years of study abroad. Driven by the love of art, he copied Leonardo da Vinci, Rembrandt, Rubens and studied their style and their colours.

Resulting from his accomplished renderings of the old Masters an entry was made in the Lexicon of the Superlative. (Munich 1984).

But that was only the beginning of his remarkable career. He started to realize his own ideas in painting. Pro Juventute art cards followed, a gold medal from the European Art Circle in Baden-Baden and successful exhibitions at home and abroad. A number of his works have their place in famous collections.

Although the accuracy of his brushwork, the colouring, the materials, the drapery are reminiscent of the old Masters of the visual arts, his works are clearly related to the times, he is alive. His pictures are the final product of a thought process which ensures that each one of Laubscher's works, particularly his figural creations, has its place somewhere between image and symbol. All his paintings reveal his way of seeing, experiencing and creating things. His conception and manner of creation frequently lead to ordinary things appearing in an extraordinary light; things which, for example, achieve unconstrained order in apparently disordered still life, or give the impression of merging into landscapes. Again and again his pictures are attempts at penetrating the secrets concealed behind everything visible, to fathom the unfathomable. But one can sense the artist's joy in being able to observe, to capture, to say something personally; one is conscience of the ecstasy he experiences when a theme, a motive has gripped him. The strawberry is considered and experienced, in detail, in exactly the same way as the broad landscape; the nature of a human model is pursued with the same devotion as the architectural expression of a church. Thus, it is possible for malformations to mix without constraint: In one view, the still life enables a landscape to be portrayed, or a landscape orders the components of which it is composed into the semblance of still life. The penetration is com-

plete, the result convincing.

It is the small world of still life which fascinates him beyond all else. Fruit, flowers, vases, dishes and other objects from the immediate surroundings which he displays imaginatively to the observer and which reflect, in mostly warm colours, domesticity and security. It is the landscapes which provide the experience. Shapes and colours of the Liechtenstein surroundings, like a visionary glimpse into classical regions. But the landscape is often a component of the still life and the fruit, books, dishes and glasses are objects which attract our eye away into the distance, through a window which gives us a view and at the same time provides the barrier between indoors and out of doors and keeps the elements at bay.

It is very evident from his portraits that the more important the object, the more difficult the task, the more he approaches the great classical models and derives from them those impulses which, from the abundance of his perception and ability, he is able to embody in the work.

The multitude of shapes which nature provides is manifest above all and in greatest abundance in its smallest creations.

Nothing seems trifling or trivial to Kurt Laubscher. With almost obstinate accuracy his brush lovingly records the smallest detail, he paints light and shade in a masterly fashion and derives pleasure from a triviality such as a broken Walnut or a dried leaf. It is as though nature's every detail should be comprehended with all energy. There exists a mutual pervasion of nature and his own special poetry. Laubscher does not paint only for the present. In his pictures he seeks that which endures, which is constant. Beside the drive of technology and appearance his pictures radiate peace and the joy of life, as well as beauty, the ability to enthuse is also present. For him, art is an essential part of life, an indispensable piece of human goodness. Out of this awareness he produces creative oil paintings and his ambition drives him repeatedly to probe his strength and to apply himself even to finished pictures until they please him. But then, people who are attracted by harmony and beauty will be susceptible to his appeal.

Harald Wanger