Pictures for the Home and School

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Pictures for the Home and School

Joanne M. Hansen

Art is no longer a subject in which but few are interested. Everyone who has some degree of culture desires to know as much of art as of fine music, literature and the drama. Since we are still a young nation and have not vast treasures of original works of art at our very doors, as have the Europeans, we may at least derive the joy and benefits from the study of exhibits of fine reproduction, and the occasional opportunity of studying an exhibit of originals.

The Iowa State College Art Committee appointed by President Hughes has as its aim to bring such exhibits before the students and friends of the college, thus creating the desire to know fine prints; and to own several according to individual needs.

A picture that is to be framed and hung upon the walls of a home or school should first of all be worthy! It should make a lasting appeal and be of universal interest. It will then be considered as interesting a number of years hence as upon the day of its purchase. A picture should be selected for a particular room and for a certain space, in order that it may be appropriate in subject, size and shape.

A picture may express an ideal in nature—a landscape or a marine. It may be an interesting phase of life or of man's achievement. It may be an interpretation of some poem, legend, or story from literature; of some historical event; of some strong or interesting personage; some phase of science, education, religion, or sociology; or of some splendid example of architecture. Many of the finest pictures ever painted are religious in character. A number of these are better adapted to churches, picture galleries and museums than they are to homes and schools. Pictures which express sadness, fear, pain or discomfort are not conducive to happiness and cheerfulness, hence they are not desirable for daily contact with life. We need to be happy in both home and in school, during work, or play.

Whatever the subject of the picture, it should satisfy some desire or need. It may be restful or comforting, elevating or uplifting, inspiring or beautiful.

A fine picture usually conforms to the accepted standards of composition or arrangement in line, mass and color. If well composed, it will not violate the fundamental art principles, proportion, rhythm, subordination, balance, and unity. It will be good in the relation of values and harmonious in color.

A picture may be an indication of the taste or personality of the owner or express an ideal which the owner is striving to reach. Pictures, as well as music, if well chosen, may raise one's standards of taste to such a degree that poor art will make no appeal.

Suitability to Age and Period of Development. Pictures should be suitable to the age and period of human development. This is an important consideration in their choice.

Quality rather than quantity is important in the choice of pictures. It is far better to possess one fine print than a number of mediocre originals or poor prints. Few can afford to possess good original paintings, but the average home may hope to own several good reproductions. Frequently too many pictures are hung in a room. This gives an unrestful effect. Thru a process of elimination those unsuitable in subject, in reproductive processes, in framing or in relation to (Continued on page 14)
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other pictures in the room, may be
discarded or moved to a suitable place.
Then the best pictures remaining may
carry their message without distur-
bi ng influences. Frequently the diffi-
culty is that of having too wide an
assortment of subjects and too much
variety in the mediums used. Archi-
tecture, sculpture, landscape, por-
traits, interiors, figure compositions,
and photographs cannot be hung pro-
miscuously and still give the appear-
ance of unity to a room. Neither can
oil paintings, water colors, etchings,
pastels, crayons, prints, chromos and
calendars, live together amicably. A
room in which one lives should not
appear like a picture gallery.
Pictures should be chosen for their
suitability to particular rooms. Pictures
for the living room should make a
general appeal, since not only the en-
tire family, but guests and strangers
have access to this room. Family por-
traits, unless by famous artists, are
more suitable for private rooms. Most
of the crayon portraits are very
unsatisfactory. If they are poor in
execution, they should be discarded. If
badly framed, they should be improved
by reframing in simple, unostentatious
frames. A photo of one’s father and
mother or near relative may be framed
in an artistic, simple frame, that will
look well on the desk or table of a
private room.

A library for general family use
may have pictures that express some
interesting phase of literature or his-
tory. For a study or office a profes-
sional man may choose pictures re-
lated to his work.

A dining room is a formal room
and any pictures should, as in the liv-
ing room, have a general appeal, and
be appropriate to the particular style
of the room. If the room is old Colonial
and has figured wallpaper, no pictures
should be used. A modern Colonial
room with plain walls might have a
fine color reproduction from an old
master. A dining room in English
style might appropriately have several
hunting scenes or English portrait
prints.

A gay breakfast room with painted
furniture and attractive cretonne hang-
ings would look well with several
prints or more brilliant colors, that
harmonize with the color scheme.

Greater freedom may be used in the
selection of pictures for sleeping

Approved Home Economics
Methods
Employed Thruout

MEMORIAL UNION

Commons—
Cafeteria style food service, soda bar
and grill

Oak Dining Room—
Table service, luncheon and dinner

Party Service—
For any group from 4 to 500, any
meal, any price.

J. W. LINDER
For expert shoe repairing. Prompt service—the work done as
you like it.
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EXPERT WATCH, CLOCK &
JEWELRY REPAIRING
Oldest Established Jewelry Store in
Campustown
Two Watchmakers
ALL WORK GUARANTEED

Fur Coats, various styles and prices
Cloth Coats in dress and sport styles.
Rothnior, Schumann, Redfern

THE RIEKENBERG SHOP
West Ames

PARNOS’S
Jewelry Store
CRANFORD BLDG.
rooms, since they are more personal in character.

Mats are not used for pictures as frequently as formerly. Etchings, however, should not be framed close nor should certain water colors or prints in very light, delicate colors. A Japanese print may be framed close in a gray or black frame, or it may be preferable to mount it on a piece of silk interesting in texture and harmonious in color.

In framing a picture, a frame should be a "bit of silence" around a picture. An elaborate or ornate frame is not in good taste, since it calls attention to itself rather than to the picture. The correct frame repeats the middle tone of the picture in value, or in dark or light. It may repeat the color of the middle tone if the color is not too strong in chroma. One accustomed to the use of oil paints may stain a simple natural wood frame, of not too decided a grain, with a mixture made of oil paint and turpentine. After the desired color is secured and after the stain is rubbed and dry, the frame may be waxed so as to secure a soft, dull finish. Old frames, good in design, may, after removing the varnish and sandpapering, staining, and waxing, be refinished in an attractive manner.

Wide moldings are best for pictures having strong color, or rather large objects in them. Narrow moldings are best for pictures with small details. Soft colors in moldings are necessary for pictures that are quiet or restful in subject. A black molding brings out the color in a print and assists in harmonizing in colors. The bright gilt frame is trying to most pictures; however, a simple gold frame which is dull and soft may be used to a good advantage.

A band of soft color, repeating one of the colors in a picture, may enhance its beauty, if repeated in the frame. Oil paintings are frequently more beautiful in painted or stained wood frames. Sometimes a natural wood frame of indistinct grain may be waxed and used successfully upon certain prints.

A picture requires a proper background. A wall is by structure flat in appearance, hence any paint, paper or textile applied as a background should give a flat appearance, even though the texture may be rough rather than smooth. A two-toned paper that has the appearance of flatness is good, but a figured paper is too spotty to serve as a suitable background. It calls attention to itself rather than to the picture. One should therefore have plain walls if one desires to have pictures. The colors that serve best as backgrounds are creams, soft buffs, warm light grays, and soft gray-greens. Strong dark colors, such as browns, greens and blues, are not so pleasing and tend to make the room appear smaller. Fortunately there has been a great improvement in the selection of wall coverings as well as in pictures and frames.

Besides the pictures on the walls, a real art lover will make a collection of reproductions, which may be kept in a portfolio and used as would be a favorite book of poems, enjoyed in the moments of leisure. It is fascinating, once you begin! Visit galleries, museums, exhibits, art stores, art departments and studios. Learn the art of your own country, America. Show your appreciation of the best in American art by having in your home several fine color reproductions of American paintings as well as of the old masters. American art needs to be fostered and encouraged to reach its highest development and the American home needs to have for its boys, girls and adults the fine influence that well selected pictures will surely give. A free exhibit may be secured thru the Iowa Library Commission in Des Moines by writing to Miss Robinson. The American Federation of Arts, the Federation of Women's Clubs and many commercial firms also send out exhibits. Every small town has, therefore, the opportunity of having an exhibit.