

AMONG THE LOCAL SHOWS

FROM academic garden pieces to squatty modernity ranges the annual group sculpture exhibition at the Arden Galleries (till Feb. 15). Richmond Barthé's sensitive head of a Negro child, Cornelia Van A. Chapin's "Penguin" and "Hare," Peter Dalton's graceful "Dancer," Paul Manship's three bears, Brenda Putnam's decorative wall panel, Concetta Scaravaglione's "Girl Sunning Hair" and Mahonri Young's "Burro and Foal" are outstanding among the two score pieces in this highly diversified show.

Sculpture by blind women of the "Lighthouse Recreation Department" of the New York Association for the Blind is being exhibited this week at Carroll Carstairs Gallery. Among the small pieces which especially reveal feeling for the medium might be singled out Anna Leaven's "Man in Overalls," a head by Bessie Levin, an elephant by Clare Crampton and a figure by Bertha Kienle.

* * *

THREE of the week's exhibitions may be grouped as exotic if not definitely bizarre. James Guy at the Ferargil appears as a dual personality: his gouaches, called "Fun in Ghost Town," present amusingly phases of life in an all but deserted Western mining center; but his big canvases present an eclectic and bewildering jumble of Picasso distortions, Miro particles in centrifugal flight and reminiscences of Lurçat. The largest, "Homage to the Mighty Moron," caused more than one visitor to wonder if Mr. Guy is blaspheming Picasso. Otherwise, the show rouses little except amazement at the quantity of scrambled surrealism.

Max Jimenez of Costa Rica, whose paintings stir one to pronounce his name phonetically, has followed the Picasso of one phase a long way down the pathway of distortion, to the point at which most of the figures in his paintings are afflicted with elephantiasis, with apparent goitre and other ailments also involved. He is having another show at the Gallery of Georgette Passedoit. Cultural relations with some of our sister republics involve some curious problems.

Four painters are represented in a small group show at the Pina-cotheca Gallery—Oronzo Gasparo, Irving Lehman (I hope these are earlier works), Gerome Kamrowski (whose "Still Life Fish" is a misnomer: the finny incumbent is one of the most extensively extinct specimens I've seen) and Max Schnitzler, across whose canvases the Van Gogh shadow falls with undue explosiveness and emptiness. And that's that.

* * *

Lush greens, blue skies and the fresh feel of the open are characteristic of the paintings by Charles Mager currently being shown at Marie Harriman's. Something both "modern" and "primitive" is fused in his work. It is simple, forthright work with the appeal of sylvan settings shut in by greenery. The pictures companion one like a vacation in camp. A supplementary group of pastels with greens dominant takes one farther into Summer. Till Feb. 22.

* * *

"Executed with deep respect for the simple dignity and unconscious

humor of childhood, these works are put forth to carry joy to those prepared to grasp their import," writes Nura in the foreword to her own catalogue of recent paintings now on view at the Bonestell Gallery. That she has carried out her idea is evident from such of the canvases as "Slumber" and "Protection," and how well she has penetrated the realm of childlike fantasy is further evidenced by "Pleasure Island." Nura taps an age-old strain of juvenile make-believe and in the new work her numerous admirers will find no cause to revise their opinions.

* * *

A certain naïveté backed by emotion and strength makes up no small part of the appeal of the bright-hued canvases by Corrinna de Berri now being shown at the Wakefield Bookshop Gallery. Van Gogh has perhaps been an early admiration. These still-lives and flower pieces and landscapes, like "Early American Cemetery," are forceful, strong, original. Her "Sleep" with a figure on a bier surrounded by flowers and candles is one of her more impressive conceptions and is saved from the innate grimness of the subject by bright patterning of color. Till Feb. 21.

* * *

Portraits and still-lives by Leslie Randall are on view at the Montross along with a group of fresh and fluent water-color landscapes. She obtains character in her portraits, although some of them seem to me not fully mature and not up to the level of her water-colors. It is sound, earnest work which augurs well for later exhibitions.

* * *

THE group show at the Downtown Gallery includes Peter Blume's familiar "Eternal City" with its jack-in-the-box Mussolini; one of Julian Levi's excellent and characteristic beach moods; a Sheeler industrial plant interior; Katherine Schmidt's "Mr. Broe Waits His Turn," and representative paintings by Kuniyoshi, Karfiol, Niles Spencer and several of the younger group associated with the gallery—Mitchell Siporin (his "Night Piece" seen recently in the Whitney Annual), Raymond Breinin, Rainey Bennet and others.

* * *

A half hundred artists are represented in various media in the group show at the Vendome Galleries. Water-colors by Mary Drake Coles, Beth Creevy Hamm and Clara Sewell and a still-life (oil) by Leo Quanchi might well be singled out. Till Feb. 15.