

An Art Axiom Cracks in Suburbia

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THERE is a school of thought among artists which maintains that the artist, if he comes from suburbia, must get out if he is to do his best work.

The school further maintains that suburbia is, at best, far from the most desirable environment and at worst, certain death for the artist and his work.

Route of Survival

In order to survive as a creative entity, as an artist, its esthete must become an expatriate, he must leave for other parts and for another, more provocative, milieu.

Such has been said rather pointedly about Kansas City and its suburbs, in particular.

But that a good and successful artist does not have to leave the Kansas City environment and its suburbs in order to do her best work and survive as an artist is disputed by the instance of Rita Blitt—Mrs. Irwin J. Blitt in private life, of 5720 Lockton lane, Fairway.

The mother of one daughter, Connie Blitt, 9, Mrs. Blitt has lived and painted in suburbia all her life, and has come into her own as an established, individual, and respected artist in Kansas City.

It was in Kansas City that she studied art. She was awarded, at the age of 10 years, a scholarship to study at the Kansas City Art Institute.

The Help She Needs

It has been in Kansas City that Mrs. Blitt has constructed friendships with other artists—who not only understand art, but who also give her at times highly needed encouragement to prevent her stopping her painting out of despair.

And it is in Kansas City that she has continued to find subject matter for her art.

Mrs. Blitt and a friend, Mrs. Clara F. Bikales, 5810 High drive, Mission Hills, often go together to paint the Kansas City suburban scenery, concentrating on Northeast Johnson County.

Mrs. Bikales, for her part, combines her interest in art with a private practice as a psychologist and social worker, and also is an accomplished classical pianist and the mother of our children, Bruce Bikales, 20; Gina Bikales, 15; Eric Bikales, 13; and Vida Bikales, 10.



UNLIMITED MATERIAL—On one of her numerous forays to paint the Kansas City suburban scenery, Mrs. Irwin Blitt, 5720 Lockton lane, Fairway, sits on the grass at West Sixty-third street and Wenonga road, Mission Hills. Mrs. Blitt says she has yet to exhaust the subject matter to be found in the city for her painting.

Both women find Kansas City and Northeast Johnson County replete with appropriate subject matter for their painting, especially now with the countryside resplendent in fall's melancholy splash of color.

"There is for me an endless supply of subject matter here," Mrs. Bikales says. "It is quite stimulating to paint in different parts of the country, but I always return."

Mrs. Blitt agrees that it is good to paint in other parts, but insists there is still enough here to keep her palette busy.

She says simply, "You can find exciting things all over. An artist can paint anywhere. There is inspiration in areas like this. I can see beauty and formation all over."

Mrs. Blitt considers herself a

blend of the impressionistic and expressionistic schools of painting.

But she says she is neither 19th century impressionistic nor 20th century expressionistic, but rather a combination of the two.

"Everything I paint comes from reality," Mrs. Blitt says.

"It is trying to say something I feel about something I have seen. It is my response to my feelings."

And even in Kansas City and its suburbia, there are people who do understand her painting.

"Artists are limited in Kansas City as to the number of people who understand art. But I am fortunate to be in contact with other people who do understand art," she says.