

critical public. This uneasiness can be partly resolved by examining Wyeth's work in the context of traditional American transcendentalism where "universal intelligibility" and democratic faith are intimately joined to spiritual mysticism; but the uneasiness can be further resolved by viewing Andrew Wyeth as a contemporary member of one of America's most characteristic schools, the Plaine School. Wyeth's art put us back on a track—not the only track, and not a dead-end spur of a main line, but a track which is American, though not naïvely or chauvinistically so. Stuart Davis once said "An artist who has lived in a democratic society has a different view of what a human being really is than one who has not." That "different view" is the subject of the Plaine School painters, and one quality which makes their painting great is that the subjects are treated with seriousness and with affection for the abstract ideas which they imply. A cynic can easily satirize the inconsistency of a materialistic society that reveres ideals which are self-evident in their patent simplicity: it takes a thoughtful man to see that the paradox is the essence of the American experience, and it takes a true artist to make us see it.

MY BROTHER CONRAD

Dora M. Pettinella

His paintings, subtle riddles
 to decipher, decorate one wall;
 a woman's naked skeleton
 with embryo of infant;
 an eyeless mask as sculpture;
 a lamppost with hanging head.
 A flask of chianti wine unopened,
 designs crisscrossed like thick barbed wire;
 splashes of colour unlike sun,
 a downcast snake flaring its tail,
 a Paisley countryside wind-blurred,
 an Indian symbol, a canoe,
 a dagger and a broken sword—
 who knows what all these objects mean?
 Oh Conrad! Tell me I am wrong!