



Albert Pels (1910-1998)

Albert Pels was an art educator and painter of figures, genre scenes, urban and rural images, and illustration. He also did murals and worked in the mediums of oil, fresco, and watercolor. He was born on May 7, 1910, in Cincinnati, Ohio and died at the age of eighty-eight on January 25, 1998 in New York City.

While in Ohio, Pels attended the Cincinnati Art Academy in 1931 where he won several scholarships. After moving to New York, he continued his education at the Art Students League, Beaux Arts and the American School. At the Art Students League, Pels studied under Thomas Hart Benton, Kenneth Hayes Miller, and Alexander Brook. Under the tutelage of these mentors, Pels evolved his technique and style.

Pels was a member of the National Society of Mural Painters, the Salmagundi Club, and the Society of Independent Artists. He was on the board of directors of the Arts Students League in 1939, as well as, on the board of the WPA Artists. One of the most important murals done by Albert Pels was for the Normal, Illinois, Post Office's lobby, which was a product of an assignment under the Section of Fine Arts. Unlike the WPA, artists in the Section of Fine Arts had to compete for the individual projects. The mural is entitled *Development of the State Normal School*. Pels chose the subject of the Normal Schools, which were colleges that specialized in the education of teachers.

Pels took his sculptural approach even further in his exhibition at the Laurel Gallery in Jan. 1949, where his figures seemed to pop out from the background creating a trompe l'oeil effect. Pels continued to embrace this sculptural style, evident in his subsequent exhibitions, such as his October 7th, 1949 show at Arthur Brown's Gallery in New York City.

Albert Pels had also shown in a number of additional galleries, museums, and one-man exhibitions. Some of them included the Macbeth Galleries, 1939; Babcock Gallery, 1941, 1945-46, 1949; Pulitzer Gallery, 1951; International Gallery, 1953; Laurel Gallery, 1955; Cincinnati Museum; Denver Museum; Butler Art Institute, Youngstown, Ohio; and Rachel Davis Fine Arts, Cleveland, 1996.

He exhibited in group shows at the Babcock Gallery, New York City; Albany Museum, Albany New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York City; Philadelphia Museum, P.A.; Butler Art Institute; Art Students League; and Southern Art Museum.

Source: askART.com