

HAVE YOU SEEN
AMERICA'S BEST LOVED
PICTURE
"THE SONG OF THE LARK"?



MRS. ROOSEVELT UNVEILS THE SONG OF THE LARK

ON JULY 10, 1934 MRS. FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT unveiled the picture voted the most beloved by the American public.

NOT ONLY was this fact proven by a campaign conducted by the Chicago Daily News in which the painting received the largest number of votes, but during the forty-one years it has hung in the Art Institute, it has been the picture most eagerly sought after and loved by visitors. As one person said, "Every time I go to the Art Institute, I pay homage to 'The Song of the Lark'."

MORE REPRODUCTIONS of this picture have been made than any other painting in America.

IT IS TO BE FOUND in nearly all the Public School books of certain grades in the United States.

IT WAS PAINTED by Jules Breton, French, born 1827 died 1906.

BRETON'S PLACE in the world of art occupies a middle ground between French Classic painting and the poetic realism of Millet.

AT THE MORGAN SALE in New York in 1886 his painting of "The First Communion," brought the astonishing price of \$45,500.

THE SONG OF THE LARK was not in A Century of Progress Exhibition at the Art Institute last year. Neither was it included in the Exhibition this year.

THE PUBLIC WANTED TO SEE IT! So persistent was the request that the painting be shown that a local paper, the Chicago Daily News, conducted a campaign to find just where it stood in the hearts of the people. Ten famous pictures were balloted on, five selected by Dr. Harshe, Director of the Art Institute, and five by the Daily News. When the ballots were counted "The Song of the Lark" led all the rest. Batowski's "Pulaski in Battle at Savannah" was second in the balloting, because it had the solid backing of the Polish people. El Greco's "View of Toledo," Spain, was a good third. "Washington Crossing the Delaware" and Rosa Bonheur's "Horse Fair" each had its following.

WHY IS THE SONG OF THE LARK so well liked? That is a question difficult to answer. It is a picture without dramatic appeal. The coloring is quiet—not at all exciting. It has but one figure, that of a stalwart peasant girl who possesses, in the jargon of today, no sex appeal. The answer as to why it is so well liked may be because this peasant girl, walking proudly erect, with a figure made muscular and strong by heavy toil, lifts herself out of her sordid surroundings when she joins her song with the melody of the lark. It is a brief interlude in her day's toil, possessing the lyric quality of a beautiful poem.

WHAT IS SAID ABOUT THE PICTURE!

Some say it is sentimental, outmoded, not in step or in the tempo of the present day. On the other hand, people have come hundreds of miles to see it. When in storage for want of hanging room, hundreds, even thousands, of requests have been re-



THE SONG OF THE LARK—JULES BRETON

ceived to have it again placed on exhibition. Marius Vacon writes as follows of the type of girl who posed for "The Song of the Lark": "The peasant women of his pictures are more beautiful in their frank rusticity. The skirts of wool let us see their vigorous limbs; their open corsages of cotton show robust chests; their sleeves of brown linen are tucked up upon beautiful arms of bronze; and the wind disorders the hair above their vigorous necks, tanned by the rays of the sun."

QUESTION. Does the painter show us a morning or an evening scene? Is the sun, which is painted so brilliantly over the green trees and shrubbery, rising or setting? Is the girl going to her work in the morning or coming home in the evening? This question has long been debated, and it has even been argued in a book published some years ago.

COME AND SEE THE PICTURE. Study its color, its poetic beauty and its general appeal, and tell or write the Art Institute what you think about it! In other words, what is its appeal to you?

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WHAT YOU WILL SEE AT THE ART INSTITUTE

FORTY-THREE GALLERIES of world-famous paintings and sculpture, containing:

SEVEN HUNDRED AND FORTY-FOUR PAINTINGS.

ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-ONE PIECES OF SCULPTURE.

These constitute the principal part of A Century of Progress Exhibition, and are installed on the Second floor, to visit which a fee of 25c is charged.

THE EXHIBITION OF PRINTS, containing 412 entries is on the First floor. Admission is free.

FREE TO THE PUBLIC, are the seventy galleries on the first and ground floors—filled with the great permanent collections of the Art Institute: Oriental Art, the ten fascinating Period rooms, Classical Antiquities, Egyptian Art, Children's Museum, Cathedral Architecture, Japanese Prints, Decorative Arts, Antiquarian Collection, Rare Laces and Rugs, Swedish and Norwegian Art. Gunsaulus Hall alone contains 13 Galleries filled with Ceramics, Glassware, Pewter, Pottery, Etc.



A TOUR OF THE ART INSTITUTE GALLERIES is equal to a month spent in the art centers of Europe.

YOU WILL SEE \$75,000,000 worth of Art Treasures.

YOU WILL SEE masterpieces of painting never before exhibited in a museum in America.

YOU WILL SEE a magnificent collection of religious paintings, covering a period of 700 years.

YOU WILL SEE a whole gallery filled with paintings by Whistler.

YOU WILL SEE five great masterpieces purchased by Americans from the Soviet Government, three from Catherine the Great's famous collection in the Hermitage, Petrograd, and two of them direct from Moscow.

YOU WILL SEE a painting worth between one and two million dollars—the greatest Spanish work of art in America—El Greco's "Assumption of the Virgin."

Hours: Week Days, 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; Sundays, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.