ON CONTEMPORARY EXPRESSION

Collins Talks At Hanszen College

By DOUG JOHNSON

Lowell Collins, director of the Houston Museum of Fine Arts, and honorary member of Hanszen College, lectured last Thursday night at a Hanszen college night on "Contemporary Expression" before an interested, if not always appreciative, audience.

Mr. Collins roughly traced the development of art from primitive to contemporary techniques, by illustrating with slides the works of some of the more important masters in the development.

BEGINNING WITH a painting by Edward Hix, a detailed primitive, he moved to the impressionists, such as Claude Monet. He described the impressionists as "gaining from without," whereas the expressionists, such as Edward Monk, "gained from within;" the expressionists paint with emotion.

Mr. Collins showed several examples of non-figurative art — such as works by Pete Mondrian, who paints negative space, and Paul Clay, who was described as "a sophisticated primitive" in that he wished to capture the truth of children in his art.

THE PAINTINGS of the prolific Picasso were followed through his various periods; he explained his laconic, or three-quarter view, which amuses "laymen."

Mr. Collins stressed the various techniques, explaining that art is not the objects on the canvas, but what goes into the make-up of the objects — what a man has to say is not as important as how he says it. A modern artist eliminates the non-essentials.

Though Mr. Collins has little sympathy with many of the more eccentric modern artists and their "splattering" techniques, he criticized the average layman's remark, "I've got a child who can do this."

A TRUE ARTIST can paint anything, and only becomes abstract by evolution. He believes that holding modern art up to public scrutiny is a bad blow to the cause of art.

The other oft-heard remark, "I don't know why but I like it," is just as foolish to Mr. Collins; to appreciate art one must know why he likes it.

A talent to Lowell Collins is only trained. "Speaking French when you only understand English is talent," he explained. Though Mr. Collins considers sculpture the true art, he prefers to paint; one of his recent works is presently on display in the Hanszen College commons.