

Art of the Sculptor

3rd April 1958

While many people went to the sea and country over Easter, thousands at Blackpool were looking at this - it's "Genesis" - one of the most controversial works of art in the world.

The Blackpool seafront may hardly seem the place for art, yet it was here, years ago, that Sir Jacob Epstein's "Adam" was unveiled by the great sculptor himself. After 27 years in cold storage, Adam's spiritual Mother, "Genesis", was recently sent to a London sale room. Her owner, Sir Alfred Bossom, decided that one could hardly share a flat with a bit of homework like Genesis. Art critics, as she went through the London streets, had divided opinions on her merits. ~~(BRING UP)~~ Some even preferred the Albert Memorial. ~~(BRING UP)~~ Some critics have called Genesis "grotesque and disgusting". Others have praised her as a masterpiece of symbolism. If you prefer more conventional treatment - then "Christ in Majesty" - the aluminium centre-piece of Llandaff Cathedral is a superb example of Epstein's work.

The new Trade Union Congress ~~Headquarters~~ in London is the setting for his latest figure. It's a memorial dedicated to Trade Unionists who died in Two World Wars. Hence ~~Epstein's~~ ^{the} conception of "Mother Earth carrying her dead" ~~(BRING UP)~~. Epstein once fashioned a bust of a literary giant, George Bernard Shaw. But these two ^{controversial figures} ~~men of learning~~, ~~(around whom controversy has always raged)~~ - couldn't agree on what is art.

~~and~~ ^{This was recorded in the early days of 'talkies': (SOUND)} ~~(BRING UP)~~ SOUND. When Genesis, the "Mother of creation" came under the auctioneer's hammer, bidding was brisk. Would she decorate a lily pond, a museum, or remain "Miss Understood of 1958" ~~(BRING UP)~~ SOUND. At four thousand guineas, Genesis went to Mr. Cartmell, - representing the Art Exhibition on Blackpool promenade. So Genesis now rivals "the fat Lady" and "What the Butler saw" as a holiday attraction. Recently, Provincial Art Galleries complained that London gets the cream of the Nation's art treasures. But Genesis joins other famous Epstein ~~sculptures~~ in a commercial exhibition at the seaside. ~~(BRING UP)~~ UP) Mr. Cartmell was expecting ten thousand visitors a day over Easter.

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He now has seventy statues and etchings that cost £20,000, but bring in
a million customers a year. City art galleries attract a few thousand/.
Should our National Art treasures be transferred to Southend and
Brighton; Blackpool and Scarborough - on the theory that holiday-
makers have more time to appreciate them? ... Art for the millions.
The city or the sea-front. Well - what do you think? (BRING UP)