

QUOTATION BY OR ABOUT **WILL HENRY STEVENS**

"Will Henry Stevens should be on everyone's list of the top 10-15 underrated artists in America in the first part of the 20th Century." —

David Houston, Director of Curatorial, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, May 2011

"Mr. Stevens...reveals a striking sense of design and ability to use deep rich color and subtlety of tone in pastels, which range from the fluency of watercolor to the full-bodied effects of oils. Stevens makes use of non-rubbing chalk of his own devising and his pictures are delightful. In subject matter he turns from almost sheer abstract form and solid construction to feathery representations at times suggestive of oriental prints. It is an auspicious debut." —□(**Howard Devree, *The New York Times*, Sunday edition March 2, 1941**

"I myself and a number of us have enjoyed your paintings □very much. But it has proved also here that many laymen □are either unable or unwilling to appreciate pure paintings. It will take time and we have to work. I am impressed with your sensitive musicality for color and your ability to handle a multitude of forms and to combine them to an organic whole. In my painting class, we have discussed and analyzed these qualities, not too often respected in modern painting, and I am sure that our students have learned something from you and that many artists could learn from you about color and composition." — **Joseph Albers, Black Mountain College, NC, 1942**

"...there is reason to believe many Orleanians will have their eyes opened to something splendid ...What Stevens' painting do above all is to weave a spell around the spectator, with gossamer lightness; with inter-stellar spaces of globes and semi-abstract shooting stars; with a submarine quality of flowing greens and blues ...All told this artist does melodies with colors. Each picture sings its color song." — **New Orleans Item, April 25, 1946**

"The best thing that a human can do in life is to get rid of his separateness and hand himself over to the nature of things - to this mysterious thing called the universal order that any artist must sense. To put yourself in the way of that thing so that you become a vehicle of it - that will be your only merit - to put yourself in that way. But that only merit is something very difficult to attain because of our self-consciousness. —□**Will Henry Stevens to Lemann, p.4**

"Stevens, who continued to work objectively throughout his life, saw abstraction as a means to further his goal of approximating an Emersonian oneness with nature and expressing universal values. (Symbols expressive of cosmic values) were adapted from Kandinsky's Bauhaus vocabulary of circles, lines and triangles, reinvented and animated by Stevens' own intense feelings for nature

and the universal order.— **Theme & Improvisation: Kandinsky & the American Avant-Garde** by Gail Levina and Marianne Lorenz.

"Stevens' was, and is, essentially a poet. And all that his brush touches becomes the visual stuff of poetic metaphor... There is not brutality in Stevens' world, but serenity only, and harmony. to him nature -- which he loves with a passion of devoutneww -- can never be squalid or ugly, stupid or base, as so amny of his contemporaries have fount it." — **Arthur Moran, art critic, Shreveport, LA. 1944**□

Stevens was an artist who placed himself in the way of the world so that some aspect of totality might be known through his work — known by him, known by us. — **Thomas W. Styron, *Will Henry Stevens*, Greenville County Museum of Art**