

Chrysler Museum Gives Provincetown A New Lease as Art Stronghold

By FRANK FALACCI

The Provincetown wind was as cold as a dagger in a Dali drawing. The gray sky shrouding the slender Pilgrim Memorial threatened rain.

In a chilly, century-old church on Commercial st., several carpenters were banging and buzzing with hammers and saws. Crowbars ripped stubborn boards apart and nails screamed from their fastenings.

The inside of the old church was being torn apart. Ornate, colored-glass windows had been removed from their frames. The sharp cold whipped through the openings. There was no heat in the building.

Watching the workmen with the intentness of a man who wants the job done right was Walter P. Chrysler Jr., heir to the auto empire. He was here to personally supervise Provincetown's first move toward art supremacy in the United States.

Art Museum Planned

When fitted together again the roomy, clapboard church, purchased March 24 by the financier for \$40,000, will be the Chrysler Art Museum of Provincetown, Inc. Masterpieces of the wondrous world of arts and culture will find a place in this two-story structure.

Not a mile away on soft Summer beaches, the famed and also some unknown Provincetown painters will be at work. Their creations on canvas could eventually find their way across the Chrysler museum's threshold.

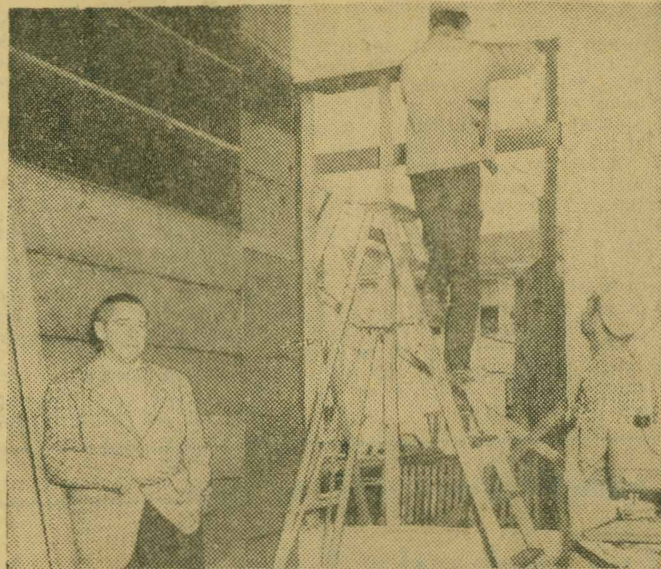
All this has excited Cape Cod. Few Coddors will admit it, but many have realized that the Cape's cultural corners were showing signs of surrender to commercialism.

Provincetown in particular, needed a needle in its arts and crafts

The new Chrysler Museum will strengthen its legitimate bearing as a leading art colony. The coming Provincetown Arts Festival this Summer will greatly increase prestige to this community's creative atmosphere. The festival promises to be an unusual display of new works in the art field.

Opening Due in Mid-June

Exhibits from the fabulous Chrysler collection will inaugurate the museum's beginning. The first exhibition is scheduled to open some time between June 15 and July 1st. It may be an entry of exhibits entitled, "Provincetown, Past and Present," or else a general selection from the col-



WALTER P. CHRYSLER JR. inspects renovation work of Provincetown Church which he will turn into museum.

lection. The museum will gradually accumulate its own collection of art treasures.

It was raining now and an icy dampness had invaded the premises. Chrysler turned up the collar of his tailored sport coat. He lit a cigarette and talked about the museum.

The first floor will be completed and opened year-round commencing in June. It will contain three principal galleries and eight smaller ones. The second floor, to open later, will house an elaborate main gallery where the church auditorium was formerly located.

The museum will be equipped with the most modern and efficient lighting available, including incandescent as well as fluorescent.

The incandescent lights will be mounted on a track so that they can be placed at any number of points. Three levels of brilliance may be obtained.

Ceilings will be done with a translucent frosted plastic, designed to prevent shadows anywhere in the galleries. Walls will be painted a bleached burlap. Floor surfaces are to be finished with vinyl cork. The exterior of the building will not be changed at present.

Occasionally as Walter Chrysler spoke, he looked about the scattered timbers, tools and work benches as if seeking still another way to improve the interior. He has been painstaking in his plans for this museum.

at the Atlantic House. Both offers were quietly turned down by the connoisseur.

Art Colony Growing

With Chrysler's immense influence in the art circle, Provincetown undoubtedly is destined to become New England's show-center for many outstanding collections that tour the country. And interest here is high!

Already real estate agents in Provincetown and neighboring Truro report a jump in rentals and sales inquiries from persons connected with the arts. Chrysler himself is building a Summer home in Wellfleet. It could mean an artistic rejuvenation for Cape Cod.

Not Limited to Paintings

The exhibits will not be limited to paintings. Every aspect of the arts will be shown; sculpturing, records of arts, priceless porcelain furniture, silver, exquisite vases and many others.

Authorities on the various subjects will be invited to deliver lectures in their respective fields. Programs will be arranged to give patrons further benefit of each exhibition's contents.

Chrysler announced that Albert Chung-wuen Sze of New York has been appointed consultant for the museum in oriental art. Yeffe Kimball has accepted a similar appointment as consultant for pre-Columbian and primitive arts.

Exhibitions will be shown from time to time during the year. Scheduled for a Fall showing is the Robert Manning collection of Old Masters' Drawings. However, for the moment, the museum will feature exhibits from Chrysler's private collection, which is valued at more than \$10 million.

Paintings by Picasso, Van Gogh, Titian and a host of other masters, too many to name here, will be shown at the former Provincetown Methodist Church.

A Texan once offered Chrysler \$350,000 for a Picasso. Only last season, the flamboyant Mike Todd was ready to sign a check for \$225,000 in return for the Van Gogh self-portrait, showing

Chrysler Art Museum Opens Tomorrow After A Week Of Special Receptions

After this week's festivities, which will be long remembered in Provincetown, the Chrysler Art Museum will be opened to the public tomorrow morning at 10 o'clock.

The first gala event, given by Walter P. Chrysler, Jr., took place on Monday evening when a buffet supper for 125 persons was served to all men who had worked on the construction of the building, and their wives. On Tuesday evening, Mr. Chrysler entertained members of his family, 60 Museum officers, directors, consultants and out of town museum personnel at dinner; and last night, gave a dinner for 100 Provincetown and Cape dignitaries. This afternoon a reception is being held for town residents, from 4 to 7 p.m.

Gratitude Expressed

At Tuesday evening's dinner, Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Garbisch of New York, sister and brother-in-law of Mr. Chrysler, and his niece

and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Ray French of New York and Nantucket were present. The guests were seated at long tables in the three main galleries, the tables beautifully decorated with arrangements of fruit and flowers, pineapples with delphinium, yellow African daisies and yellow Fuji chrysanthemums. Mr. Chrysler spoke briefly and paid a touching tribute to his wife, who has helped him with the work of establishing the museum. Town Manager James V. Coyne, Jr., and Selectman John C. Snow expressed on behalf of the town and the Cape, sincere gratitude to Mr. and Mrs. Chrysler for the wonderful contribution they have made to Provincetown.

Last night, Provincetown and Cape guests, seeing the interior of the museum for the first time were "overcome", as one said, by its beauty, and by the fabulous collection of paintings and sculpture in the inaugural exhibition. Five centuries of art looked down on the guests as they moved through the foyer, with its floor of Vermont White Cloud marble, and through the three main galleries which have walls of bleached burlap and floors of vinyl cork. The lighting, soft but clear, is the most modern approved for museums, a blending of various col-

ored fluorescent lighting and incandescent flood lighting which is adjustable for any exhibition area in each gallery. Unusual plants from all over the world lend an exotic touch to the interior, and in the foyer is a ten-foot tall cactus, a Cereus Tetragonus, which is 150 years old, and came from Rio de Janeiro. It is one of the tallest plants to be seen out of its native environment.

As on Tuesday night, guests were seated at exquisitely decorated tables in the three main galleries.

Many Priceless Works

There are 76 paintings from the 15th century through the present day, and many pieces of sculpture from Mr. Chrysler's collection, with a total value of around \$1,100,000. Many of the most famous old masters in the world are to be seen, including Tintoretto's "Flora," being shown for the first time in this country. There is Roualt's masterpiece, "Tete de Christ"; Reuben's "Portrait of the Archduchess Isabella," and the marvellous "St. Thomas," by El Greco. Other famous paintings are by Rembrandt, Renoir, Matisse, Van Gogh, Van Dyke, Cezanne, Mabuse, Ricci, Strozzi and Gainsborough, to mention but a few. An extraordinary abstraction, "Into Outer Space," by Provincetown's Hans Hofmann which was painted only last Fall, is also in the exhibition.

Fine Sculpture

Among the pieces of sculpture is "La Petite Danseuse," by Degas, reputedly the first cast; and one of the few pieces of sculpture done by Paul Gauguin, a female Tahitian figure, which Mr. Chrysler said "is probably the only stone sculpture done by Gauguin that we know." In addition to Rodin's "Eve," on the terrace of the Museum, there is his "Age of Bronze," and the marble "Hands of God". Mailloil is represented by a three-quarter length female figure in bronze; and there are a pair of unique Renaissance bronzes by Girolamo Campagna. One of the most exquisite pieces is a 14th century Gothic marble "Madonna and Child." In the foyer is a third century B. C. Greek torso in marble.

In addition to the paintings and sculpture, there are several uni-

