

OBITER

CATHOLIC ARTISTS' EXHIBITION. This year's London exhibition of the Guild of Catholic Artists and Craftsmen was held at the Tea Centre in Regent Street, a convenient and elegant setting that gave a proper importance to the work that was shown. It may be that the label needs some justification: is a landscape by a 'Catholic artist' more appropriately included than a Crucifixion by an unbelieving painter? But the exhibition was the responsibility of a Guild which exists in the first place to 'bring together Catholic professional artists and craftsmen in spiritual fellowship', and last month's show was eloquent proof of the seriousness of the Guild's purpose and of its growing support.

Among the paintings catholicity of style was certainly the note, ranging as they did from the carmine splendours of Simon Elwes' portrait of Cardinal Hinsley to the abstractions of Victor Galliano. That is as it should be, and the grave naturalism of Michael Leigh's Stations of the Cross was an agreeable reminder of a tradition which later fashion has not rendered invalid. As might be expected (for the influence of Gill is still profound) sculpture was prominently displayed, and the work of the Lindsey Clarks, father and son, as well as that of Joseph Cribb and Anthony Foster, was proof of how established is this idiom of carved innocence. One missed the sculpture of the Guild's secretary, David John, which, like that of Arthur Pollen, reflects a perhaps more restless, but none the less authentic, understanding of what an image should seek to convey. Among the watercolours and drawings, the cool depths of Mary Short's 'Orchard' and the inspired observation of Paul Harris's drawings of animals were grateful oases. The stained glass revealed the special difficulties of this medium, and here the narrative realism of Edward Nutgens seemed harsh at close range. Textiles and silver might have been more generously treated, for 'crafts' are essentially employed in every church however small, and this exhibition, it might be hoped, could do much to inform taste (and inspire commissions). Adam Kossowski's Altar Crucifix (for St Alban's Church, Pontypool) was an excellent example of a wise use of unexpected materials. Gaily coloured ceramic set in ebony made of this a shining declaration of faith which, one imagines, will do much to enliven the Gothic gloom of a church in a mining valley in Wales.

The exhibition was an encouraging proof of the vitality of the Guild and it is to be hoped that such exhibitions could be arranged in the provinces as well. But it was a serious omission to have neglected any

examples of architectural design. Without invoking any hierarchy of the arts, it is yet very plain that the plastic artists can only work within the buildings they are told to adorn. Too often a carving or a painting is betrayed by the dead or derived architecture of the church in which it is seen, and some hint of the work of the many young Catholic architects who are well aware of the work they have to do (and which unfortunately they are too rarely asked to do) would have been welcome.

THE INTERNATIONAL CINEMA. The latest issue of the *Revue Internationale du Cinéma*, the quarterly review of the International Catholic Film Office (obtainable through the Catholic Film Institute, 157 Victoria Street, S.W.1; 5s.), is principally devoted to a report of the International Congress of Filmology (if such a word be permitted in English) held in Paris last February. In this country we are perhaps not acclimatized to so theoretical an approach to the Cinema (one finds summaries of lectures on the sociology and psychology of the film, another on the cinema's capacity 'to enrich and to cultivate the human personality', and of course there is a UNESCO contribution on 'Research into Filmology'). But behind the abstractions there is much valuable information of a serious sort on the Cinema as a formative medium in the contemporary world. The same issue also contains a useful description of the work of the newly established Pontifical Commission for the Cinema, Radio and Television. A survey of recent British films by the Rev. J. A. V. Burke provides evidence of the Catholic Jury's special commendation at the Cannes Festival of the work of the British studios for its 'good moral and spiritual standards'. Stills from Georges Rouquier's new documentary on Lourdes encourage us to hope that this film (made by the director who was responsible for *La Nuit Pascale*) may soon be seen in England. Perhaps the Catholic contribution to British television may receive a necessary stimulus from its methods.

CORRECTION

In the July-August issue of *BLACKFRIARS* (p. 295) the author of *Great Britain and the United States* (Odhams Press, 45s.) was given as H. C. Young. This should be 'H. C. Allen', and we apologize to Mr Allen and the publishers for this inadvertent mistake.