

PEYTON WRIGHT

237 East Palace Avenue
Santa Fe, NM 87501

800 879-8898
505 989-9888
505 989-9889 Fax
fineart@peytonwright.com

Lloyd R. Ney

(American Painter, 1893-1965)



Lloyd Raymond Ney was an American non-objective artist. Known as Bill Ney, he was born in Friedensburg, Pennsylvania March 8th, 1893, the son of William W. Ney and Sadie Maidenford. He studied at the Pennsylvania Museum School of Industrial Art and at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia. In 1918 he won a Cresson Fellowship to study in Europe.

In the 1920s Ney traveled to France where he studied and painted in Paris among the vital European modernist community. He lived at the Hotel de Versailles, 60 Boulevard Montparnasse. During this period Ney created his major work, "The Drinkers." Later, the artist wrote extensively about the process of developing this work and the transforming experience of integrating the Modernist ideal he had witnessed in Paris.

After returning to the United States, Ney settled in New Hope, PA, an established art community between New York and Philadelphia. Unlike more New Hope artists who followed impressionism in the early 20th century, Ney embraced a more expressive contemporary style including non-objective works. He was among a group of artist known as the "Independents," who challenged the traditional subject matter of regional artists. They formed a new exhibition group. Ney was part of the "New Hope Modernist School," for most of his life as a painter.

During the period of the Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.) in the early 1940s, Lloyd Ney was commissioned to paint a mural for the New London, Ohio, post office. The documentation of the controversy over this mural and its modernist style was the subject of numerous letters between Ney and the Director of the Federal Arts Project. It was finally reconciled when the citizens of New London, petitioned Washington to allow Ney to execute the first abstract mural in a government post office. The original cartoon for this mural is in the collection of the Michener Museum of Art, New Hope, PA. The documents over this controversy are in the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C. along with much of Lloyd

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Ney's original writing and correspondence, including the original manuscript, *Art Appreciation For The People, How To Look At Paintings, What Constitutes A Work Of Art, 1949*.

Ney's career included fifteen years of exhibitions at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, and three of his paintings are in the museum's permanent collection. His works were exhibited abroad in France, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy during his lifetime. Posthumously, the James A. Michener Museum in Doylestown, PA, mounted a major exhibition of the "New Hope Modernists," featuring Ney and his contemporaries, C. F. Ramsey, Charles Rosen, B.J.O. Nordfeldt, Lee Gatch and R.A.D. Miller.

The prolific career of Lloyd Ney encompassed over fifty years, painting in Paris, the Isle of Capri, Key West, and Martinique, Mexico and, of course, New Hope, PA. He was passionate about his work and unrelenting in his vision. Lloyd Raymond Ney died on May 10th, 1965. Ney's career also included fifteen years of exhibition at the Guggenheim Museum, with three of his works kept in their permanent collection.