



Mr. Louis Maurice with the figure of Lot's wife, carved in yellowwood; which is one of the works of sculpture he is exhibiting in Cape Town. Mr. Maurice is largely self-taught.

## Coloured man's progress as sculptor

Opening an exhibition of sculpture by Mr. Louis H. Maurice in the South African Association of Arts Gallery yesterday, Prof. L. W. Thornton-White, Dean of the Faculty of Fine Art and Architecture at the University of Cape Town, referred to the progress Mr. Maurice had made since he took up sculpture seriously seven years ago.

Because he is a Coloured man, Mr. Maurice had some difficulty in getting advanced tuition in art. It is usual for separate arrangements to be made for non-European students in the practical classes at the Michaelis School of Art, but at the time Mr. Maurice applied for admission restrictions on space and finance made this impossible.

### TRAINED AS TEACHER

Mr. Maurice said: "I wanted originally to be an architect, but that could not be, so I trained as a primary school teacher."

His artistic talents were not to be suppressed, however, and he became interested in sculpture about seven years ago. He has found his own way with the help of books and the encouragement of other artists.

## Better to be shocked than bored the art of today

*The Cape Argus* 14-9-50.  
By THE ART CRITIC

"HOW original!" applied as a mark of praise to a painting or sculpture, is something quite new in thought about art. There was a time when originality in art was thought a very grave disadvantage.

When the 18th-century connoisseur peered through his quizzing-glass at the latest Hogarth or Boucher, Reynolds or Canaletto, he was little concerned with originality.

What he demanded above all was that it should comply with all the rules of all the schools which had gone before it, that even the mellowness of its surface (cracked varnish and all!) should remind him of the old Italian masters he was so confident never could and, in his opinion, never ought to be surpassed.

### Horror of anything new

THIS horror of anything new has, of course, always loomed large in the general public's views on art — especially among those who always have and (to the crack of doom) always will proudly boast that "Although I know nothing about art," etc., but in the general attitude of the more knowing minority the tide of opinion has set all the other way.

Originality is now firmly established on the list of qualities to look for and to admire.

This cuts both ways. When originality was unpopular it meant at least that you knew exactly where you stood. You knew the inflexible rules for picture and statue-making by heart. So did the artist. There were few pleasant surprises; but, on the other hand, fewer nasty shocks. The danger of the system was the encouragement it gave to boring mediocrity.

### Mediocrity remains

YET now that the rules of art-making are relaxed and we are in a "free-for-all" period, it does not mean that the mediocre artist has disappeared. Far from it. Like the poor, bad art will always be with us until the last picture has been painted and the last statue carved.

What does, however, nowadays rather watch, is that the same old thing. He is, indeed, amusing.

It has often been those who believe be only one more generosity of the passion for normal charlatanism: the artist can only his shortcomings fashionable observations, tectly true.

### Charlatanism

BUT charlatanism is another art. In the past it was to spot a bad today, when among the charlatans and more a specialist.

As for the public, originality advantages, if better for us even shocked.

direct to me  
*Cape Times*  
Sale of "Old Masters"

FROM Charles Marais, of Hout Bay, now travelling abroad comes the following interesting letter from Holland.

"You've heard of H. A. van Meegeren, that painter who took the works of Vermeer and other masters. He was imprisoned and made bankrupt and while in prison the experts made him paint from memory with his self-made paints, one of these old masterpieces. He did it while they watched him. Afterwards they took the picture away and hid it. But the public demanded that it be shown. The painter's

wife and daughter helped the agitation.

"Now, yesterday, at Amsterdam, his house on the Kaisergracht was sold for an incredible sum and to-day all his paintings are being auctioned. People are expecting to hear of tremendous sums. Later, the radio has come the announcement that the sale of his pictures realized only £10,000 in spite of the crowd trying to get into the auction! Yet who, in 100 years, will be able to tell if these are fakes or old masters?"