

Modern art? Surrealism? Ah, terrible, terrible!"

M. Andre Durenceau, brilliant, 34-year-old Paris-born artist, runs a nervous hand through his wispy hair and makes a gesture of annoyance.

"Everybody has bad dreams, no?" he demands. "But do they put them in frames and call it art?"

M. Durenceau is sitting in a paint-daubed smock. The place is his studio at 19 W. 56th st.

PAINTINGS EVERYWHERE.

There are paintings on the walls, ceiling, floor; rolled canvasses stick out of corners; what obviously was once a carpet is now the covering of what obviously was once a dining table, and Durenceau happily uses it as one of his work tables.

"Modern art is all a mess," he says. "But it is a good mess. You know what I mean? Out of such a mess comes great art eventually. Your artist works and struggles and must find his way. Chaos before order. Confusion before peace."

M. Durenceau, who prefers to be called Andre when he can be enticed away from a drawing board, is, in the opinion of many critics, one of the greatest muralists in the country.

His murals decorate the home of Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney, among others, and four giant 40 by 50 feet Durencean murals will decorate the outside of the Metals Building at the World's Fair.

Andre's ideas on art are succinctly put: "You must work. You cannot be an artist in five years. A lifetime is better. You must know the fundamentals. That is the trouble with so many modern artists—they start crazy. You must start traditional—and then branch off.

"We are free here from dictatorial chains. If we could be free from the time clock—you know?"

Andrew shrugged his shoulders. "They spend six months talking about a design, committees and committees and committees—and then they give the artist 10 days to do it!

"We shall have a real Renaissance of art in America. We have new blood, vitality. Artists are thinking daring thoughts. They will do great things. If the artist and the architect, now, would plan together, what wonderful public buildings we would erect! "They would not simply be a roof over a pile of stone, but artistic unities, something to yield aesthetic satisfaction to the visitor as a symphony or a great canvass does. People would come to America to visit our public buildings as they now go abroad to admire St. Mark's Cathedral or the Sistine Chapel."

WORKS IN ALL MEDIUMS.

Andre works in every medium he can find—water color, pen and ink, oils, even sculpture. Recently he began portraiture, but sometimes he is harder to please than the persons he paints.

On one occasion he disliked the lace on a sitter's dress and insisted upon designing an entirely new lace pattern and placing that in the portrait. His subject loved it.

When he grows tired, he leaps into a new medium—wood, saws, nails.

"Soft brushes, paint—I put them down and grab a saw and hammer and sweat and work like a carpenter. It is real relaxation." says Andre.