

November 1938 to early 1940, part 7

FACTS

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November 1938 to early 1940, part 7

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Danish National Gallery

Creator/key person:
Ernest Mancoba

General comments:
Rules of transcription:
Spelling errors kept, followed by
correction as [sic: corrected spelling]
Necessary insertion of missing
punctuation marks added as [.]
Necessary paragraph breakage as
[/P]
Illegible words indicated with
[illegible]
Scratched out letters and words not
transcribed

SUMMARY

This Mancoba diary covers Mancoba's first months in Paris. He is enrolled at L'École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs in Rue d'Ulm. He has befriended the Danish ceramicist Christian Poulsen whom he abbreviates as "Xtian" and various other students whom he variously identifies as "Pultzer/Pulzer/Bulzer", "the Algerian", "Chargo/Chago/Chayo" and "Roser" (amongst others). He has a visit with a South African identified as "Mall". The diary likely ends at the end of December 1938 or January 1939.

TRANSCRIPTION

[continuing from previous page, Mancoba is with Christian Poulsen and someone described as Roser] Germany & Paul says he does not like Jews though is French – I am surprised [,] I call him a Nazi [,] he says no [,] Luxembourgeois is happy & speak of the Jewish evil in Luxembourg [,] Paul explains too simply why he does not like Jews – Roser is furious – We go away together to his rooms – play the radio & meet his two friends [,] they ask me to a restaurant [,] Greek [,] & afterwards coffee – We return & talk [,] very fine fellows [,] I like them – We try to get to the meeting on Raciats at Sorbonne – [illegible] I go to sleep –

// School – morning – afternoon I go to Bank & after I go to look at modern paintings at Simons Galleries [probably Galerie Simon] – I think it better than Braque – although I still think it is an escape from reality – The lady there very courteous "certinement" [French: certainly] she says when I ask to see the pictures.

I go to take Metro at Opera then I go to see again Rossi.

He has a friend & they talk Italian [,] I don't understand – Rossi very hospitable [,] shows me his casts & then he produces the English book [,] he wants to learn English & I French – I am amazed at the contrast a man who can make such wonderful work in art to be so stupid in learning English – we do prepositions [,] very difficult – He arranges we should go to eat together at Montparnasse on Friday – I go back to Select

// At school meet Roser & work together [,] He is promoted to superior class – In afternoon I go to see Xtian [sic: Christian Poulsen] - He asks me about his marks [,] I don't tell him he got 12 – I take tea with the Danes & Putzer laughs [illegible] the time – I go to school in afternoon & make [illegible] [,] Paul arrives & thinks I have been wicked to [illegible] him by 10 marks for he also had [illegible] the same design [,] The Egyptian lies

too [,] had the same design [,] I work on & we go away together with Roser – At his rooms I meet his two friends I like [,] the lunch back home more [illegible]. He tells me he is socialist so I in

[page or pages may be missing?]

Algeria – Constantia – we play the Radio and go to Capulade for Super [sic: supper] – we go out & at door we get out with blind woman with dop hunchback courteous – We promenade to Rue [illegible] & the prefecture of the fellow goes [illegible] (he has lost his wallet) – We return & take coffee – Then back to rooms – Hunchback tells us of the colonial administration in France – Algeria 3 districts (departments) – with 3, 4, 3 deputies. France unlike Britain [,] had soldiers & police of the Population of Colonies (except India) – He is shocked with conditions in South Africa [,] No work, no deputies – on Martinique he lets be a black deputy - [chart in margin]

We talk of the Italian demand of Corsica [,] Tunis [sic: Tunisia] – He is agitated & thinks outrageous [illegible] may as well demand Paris.

He tells of the Exams Engineering [,] 15 out of 200 to pass – I am surprised other [illegible words] – He makes a queer gesture with his foot to show kicky – I feel very sorry for him [,] he shows his diagrams of the radio which I cannot understand – We talk of [illegible] Ghandi [sic: Mahatma Gandhi], Tolstoy [Leo Tolstoy], etc – I go to sleep

[/P] School [insertion:] – a fellow's 'father' is dead – queer feeling & then afternoon drawing at Grand Chaumiere – Roser arrives – woman has round back – Man is beautiful – an old fellow in front keeps coughing in queer way & the model tries to control herself from laughing – We buy paints afterwards & [illegible] & canvas [,] I want to paint – I go [,] to Select supper then Confessions of Rousseau – So warm & well-done.

[insertion in margin:] I buy paint & brushes

// Saturday School and lunch with Roser his friends at Capulade [,] The hunchback is going to write exams in the afternoon [,] He is restless & I am sorry for him – We go to take coffee afterwards & I promise to call but woman is nasty so I return to hotel eat there & go to Xtian [sic: Christian Poulsen] & go together to Montparnasse – I go to see Gary Cooper in Mr Deeds Goes to Town [reference: "Mr Deeds goes to Town" Columbia pictures, first released 1936] – I could not quite understand why the film was made as it is a direct attack of the capitalist system. Of course it

could have the effect opposite ie the capitalist also think for the poor – but this is too daring –

Afterwards meet Xtian [sic: Christian Poulsen] at Dome [sic: Le Dôme restaurant] [.] I tell him I liked the film and that I had to travel 6000 miles to see it as I could not see it in Johannesburg – Paltzer has been dining with friends but I am not impressed when I see them as when Xtian told me about the [illegible] [.] The woman is [illegible] plain and wears a stupid lace-like affair on her breast – The Swedish girl also is here and she has a brown “hat” with a dead bird on it [.] horrible taste [.] We start talking and the man asks me about South Africa – He tells me he knows the terrible state of affairs in that country (There is a fight, a fellow become too drunk is chucked out by garcon [sic: garçon; French: male server] a little scene)

We go to Bal Negre it's very cold – Xtian tells me he will be going away to Italy for a spell & that he is happy it's not London as living too expensive there – Xtian is too inexperienced too simple – I tell him I should like to speak to the ladies but I cannot speak Danish or Swedish – He blurts it out to them I am embarrassed – We pass the Sphinx bordel & (bordel for women) [sic: bordello]

Bal Negre we pay 7 fr [sic: francs] 2 fr for coat & hat – find a little place & sit down [.] Xtian & I drink grog [.] women coffee – the Sight is very strange & incomprehensible to me – white women & coal black negroes dancing to the strains of a very strange music [.] much tom tom effect – Beautiful uniform if French Army & Navy – Pultzer & I do not dance [.] After – There such abandon and suggestiveness in the gestures of the dancers & nobody minds [.] Pultzer meets a friend & they drink upstairs later he comes to fetch me & ascend & he introduces me to a German Prince & a African princess with her daughter - & some beautiful man – we drink wine together

[in margin sketches of piano, two people dancing, banjo and other object]

& talk – The girl is very fine & well educated [.] she is professor at a girls school in Paris – teaches English & German - She knows a great deal of South Africa – She wants to go & see it, but not to stay as she feels it's brutal the way colonies have been run both by the French & the English – She is happy when I tell her she speaks very good English – Her mother is a very gracious air – She lives now apart from her husband & consorts with the German Prince – In their company is a young fellow in glasses [.] he is at the bureau of Airplane factory & I remark war is terrible – we laugh

– He speaks very intelligently on Surrealism & relations with Freudianism
– [illegible] of leading Surrealists today – He asks me to meet him at a
Cafe in Rue St Germain – Pultzer is frigid & soon asks permission to go
down again. dance goes on and a demonstration of Martiniquan dances
by 3 couples strange mixture [,] an oldish negro with his French wife [,] the
tall negress with long arms and a young negro – and two malatto [sic:
mulatto] girls – the music is queer and it reminds me of Mabokwe &
Marabi in Africa S [reference to forms of jazz performed in South Africa,
source: Michael Titlestad, Jazz discourse and black South African
modernity, with special reference to 'Matshikese', published in "American
Ethnologist, vol.32, no.2 (May 2005), pp.210-221]. [illegible] contortive
dark eyes & we go many types of negroes as we pass through the door –
we go to Le Dome & have coffee [,] we go home

Sunday – I go to Xtian [sic: Christian Poulsen] again & go to eat at the
Russian restaurant [reference the Russian Tea room] [,] Pultzer tells of his
adventures in [illegible] before the war [illegible] – He & a companion
travelled in Spain & at a little town got drunk & mixed with communists &
Anarchists – Marched to the elective station singing International [,]
managed to drag himself away & slept in a gutter – Strange contrast
himself afterwards mixing up with the elite in England –

I restrained two girls looking for pleasure [,] beautiful [,] next to us – the
drawings in the ball strange –

Germany Paul says he does not like
Dad though he pretends. In summer
Dad will be a Nazi he says no
Ludendorff is happy & speak of
the Jewish evil & such things Paul
explains too simply that he does not
believe - Rose is furious - we go
away together to the rooms - play the
radio & meet his two friends & the
ask me to a restaurant & drink &
afterwards coffee - we return & talk
many fine fellows I like them - we
try to get to the left or Racialists
at Sorbonne but too full - I go to
sleep -

School - morning - afternoon I go to
Bank after I go to look at modern
paintings at Simons Galleries - I
think it better than Braque -
altho I still think it is an escape
from reality - The lady there very
courteous "Certamen" at the steps
where I ask for the pictures.

I go to the metro at Opera then I
go to see again Rossi.

He has a friend & they talk

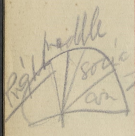
Nathan's Idont understood - Rossi very
hospitable shows me his coats &
then he produces the English book
he wants to learn English & French -
I was amazed at the contrast
a man who can make such beautiful
work is not to be so stupid in
learning English - he does pronunciation very
difficult - He arranges he should go
to eat together at Montparnasse on
Friday - I go back to school.

I school meet Roser & work together
He is promoted to superior class - I
afternoon I go to see Khan - He asks
me about his marks I don't tell him
he got 12 - I take tea with the Dames
& they laugh for some time - I go
to school in afternoon & make good
Paul arrives & tells I have been
sacked & promoted to by 10 marks
for he also had had to do the same design
The Egyptian lies to bed the same design
I work on & we go away together with Roser -
At his room I meet his two friends
I like the bunch back more more
He tells he is socialist not in

KILDER TIL
DANSK
KUNSTHISTORIE

NY CARLSBERGFONDET

Algeria - Constantin - he plays the Radio
and goes to Capulade for Super - he
goes out at door he goes out with fluid
to ^{get} ~~buy~~ ^{buy} hand back Coaction - he
proceeds to the Jardin + the prefecture
the fellow goes beyond the la lot his
pallet - he returns + later coffee
the back rooms - Hand back with
me of the colonial administration of
France - Algeria 3 districts with
3, 4, 3 deputies France ^(deputies) in like Britain
led soldiers + police of the population
of colonies (except India) - He is
shocked with conditions about gov
work in deputies - of Martineque tells
he is black deputy -
he talks of the Abbey demand of Coica
Paris - He is agitated + the is outrageous
situation he is hell desert Paris -
He talks of the exams in France
15 out of 200 to pass - I am surprised
other friend country etc - He takes
a great of time but has felt before
kicker - I feel in some part
he shows he degrades of the radio which
I cannot understand



feeling
Strong
Paint
brushes

be talk of Henry Gaudin, Tolstoj, etc. - I go
to sleep - a fellow's father is dead - goes
feeling good to school, after an afternoon
drawing at Grand Champsiers -
Rose arrives - Rose has mud
back - Man is beautiful -
an old fellow in front keeps coughing
in your way & the model tries
to get out of the way for laughs -
buying paint, brushes & brushes
& canvas & water & paint - I go
to select supper then Cafeteria
of Rousseau - So turn & sell
home -
Saturday school and lunch
with Rose & his friends at Capulede
The lunch back is going to write
exams in the afternoon there he is
restless & I am sorry for him -
we go to take coffee afterwards & I
promise to call but Roman is
nearly so director Hotel eat there
& go to Khan & go together to Mont-
parnasse - I go to see Gary Cooper
in Mr Deeds Goes to Town - I could
not quite understand why the film

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NY CARLSBERGFONDET

film was made as it is a direct
attack of the capitalist system.
Of course it could have the effect
opposite in the capitalist also think
for the poor - but is too daring -
Wladimir went to see it at Rome
I told him I liked the film and
that I had to travel 6000 miles
to see it as I could not see
it in Johannesburg - Palkey has
been dining with friends but I am
not impressed when I see them is
what Khan told me about the movie
The woman is very plain and has
a stupid face-like affair in her
breast - The Swedish girl also is here
and she has a broom "hat" with a
dead bird on it horrible taste
We start talking and the man
asks me about South Africa - He tells
me he knows the terrible state
of affairs in that country (there is a
fight a fellow became too drunk is
chucked out by guards a little
scene)
We go to Bal Nege it is very

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NY CARLSBERGFONDET

old - Khan tells me he will be
going away to stay for a spell & that
the happy it is just down as being
too expensive there - Khan is too
unexperienced to sleep - I tell him
I should like to speak to the ladies but
I cannot speak Danish or Swedish -
He blinks at it & then I am
embarrassed - he says the Sphinx
boudel & boudel for women
Bal. Negre before 7 p.m. 24 of water
bat - find a place to sit down
Khan & drink long wine after - ~~see~~
~~regard~~ the sight is very strange &
disagreeable to me - white
women & coal black negroes dancing
to the strains of a very strong music
such Tom Tom effect - Beautiful uniform
of French Army & Navy - Pulchre &
I do not dance after - There such
abandon and suggestion in the
gestures of the dancers & such wild
dances sheets spread on the dirt upstairs
late he comes & tells me I succeed
in introducing him to a German
Prince & an African Princess
with her daughter - I soon a beautiful
man - he drink wine & etc.

Stalk - The girl is very fine & well
educated. She is professor at a
girls school in Paris - teaches
English & German. She knows a
great deal of South Africa - She
wants to go & see it but not to stay
as she feels it is brutal the way
colonies have been run both by
the French & the English - She is
happy & she tells me she speaks very
good English - Her mother is a
very gracious air - She lives now
apart from her husband & consorts
with the Queen Prince - In the
Company is a young fellow glasses
he is at the head of the glass
factory & speaks his terrible
French - He speaks very
intelligently on Surrealism & relations
with Surrealism - Anthony has
already Surrealist today - He
asks me to meet him at a cafe
in Rue St Germain - Pultze is
frigid & soon asks permission
to go down again - dance goes on
and a demonstration of Montaigne

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KUNSTHISTORIE

NY CARLSBERGFONDET

dances by 3 couples strange mixture
an oldest negro with his French wife
the tall and negroes with long arms
and a young negro - and two Malatto
girls - the music is queer and it
reminds me of Mubokwe & Marabi
in Africa. Many things interesting
dark eyes & we go many different
types of people as we pass through the
door we go to be done & have coffee
we go home -

Sunday - I go to the office again
go to eat at the Russian restaurant
Pulitz tells of his adventures in
Spain before the war and - He & a
company trapped - Spain was a
little too hot for him & mixed with
Communists & Socialists - He left
the electric station sign & intended
paraph to drag himself away
& slept in a gutter - Street without
himself afterwards making up with the
elite in England -

I returned the girls looking for
pleasure beautiful next day - the
dresses a la ball strap -