

PAINTINGS BY TROVA AT LONDON GALLERY

By ERIC DEFTY

LONDON, April 25—The Hanover gallery, known internationally for its support of such artists as Reg Butler, Francis Bacon and Marino Marini, has added works of Americans Louise Nevelson and Ernest Trova to its ranks.

Trova's introduction is an exhibition of 18 paintings in his "Falling Man" series. Earlier productions in the series were enthusiastically received in the Pace galleries at Boston and New York last year—both sell-outs—and were first shown at the H. Balaban Carp gallery in St. Louis.

The Hanover gallery, one of the few in London that can exist on private patronage, is in itself unassuming. It is on George street, in the heart of the West End section that bears the architectural imprint of John Nash.

Unlike most of the newer art galleries, the Hanover's architecture is practically nonexistent. It is a simple two-story gallery, with a utilitarian skylight that illuminates the interior but could be improved on for lighting the pictures.

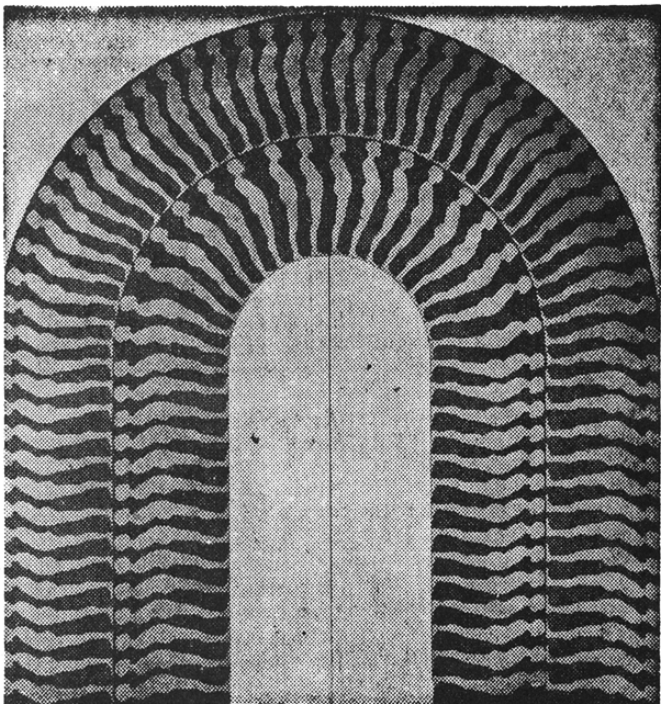
Artist on His Own

The artist here is asked to fend for himself, or take the consequences. Into this environment, Trova has brought his recent works, and judging by the reception and support that he has received already, it can be realized that his acclaim at the three previous shows was real.

The "Falling Man" is the St. Louis painter's own statement about man in the twentieth century. Because this is only a general statement, its boldness must be questioned, but the execution into visual terms in which he presents this image cannot be questioned. Nervousness in perceiving his forms spinning, slithering and somersaulting in their confined spaces, is offset by reassurance as the figures fall in perfect control and dignity, with a little humor tossed in.

The control of space, the subtle merging together of paint and the natural linen color of the canvas, and the thrust of rich reds as punctuations suggest a conscious architectonic vision that is visually satisfying.

The paintings are in two cate-



On Display in London

"Study: Falling Man Series No. 83," from the exhibition of Ernest Trova paintings in London.

gories of form, some utilizing the full circle with the figure creating decreasing circles, the other placing the man image within a square or triangle. The texture of the canvas always is apparent, with the colors other than red flatly painted monochromatic browns and blacks in subtle tone modulations.

Architectural Content

Because the architectural content of each painting is so pronounced, it is apparent that the finished canvas was fully designed before painting. The structure and spatial content are readily comprehended, and the colors are well conceived. The same question that applies to much of architecture today can be asked of this mode of painting: Does the finished work have sufficient vitality?

Like many of his contemporaries, Trova has emphasized the swing away from mood-painting, and he suggests a conscious inherent anonymity, in direct contrast to abstract expressionism. The show is remarkable in its freshness and technique, but it might be wondered how long Trova can carry his imaginative qualities in this vacuum. Even the "Falling Man" can only fall so far without becoming facile, repetitive and dull.

The London opening was in di-

rect contrast with Trova's spectacular New York opening last October. Dignity and restraint were the order of the day. Many architects were among the guests, and the artists present included Jean Tinguely, the French sculptor of mechanically animated objects, and Larry Rivers, the American painter. Mr. and Mrs. Richard Weil represented St. Louis. The show runs through May 12.