and no one answered.' Mrs. Traveller
is weekending at the home of a friend,
Mrs. Gowen Under."

After the editor had read the three
stories, he smiled and reached for his type-

Democracy Of Art

ARNOLD WAJENBERG

Many people today, both artists and
laymen, believe that art is essentially aristo-
cratic. Some artists admit readily that their
work is not for the "masses." The "masses,"
on the other hand, often regard art as some-
thing strange and dull, reserved for eccen-
trics who live in an imaginative half-world
of their own. Usually the artists who boast
that their work is for the upper two percent
will also add that "the common man" is
incapable of appreciating "real art." This
gives rise to the question of what "real art"
is.

In this theme, I shall consider as art
that which is beautiful. Apparently, this
definition leaves much to be desired. First,
beauty is a purely relative quality, for what
is beautiful to one person is not necessarily
beautiful to another. Yet the same thing is
ture of art. Many cultured persons con-
demn the work of Moussorgsky, and their
condemnations usually include the state-
ment that his compositions are not art. Yet
other equally cultured people defend and
enjoy his music; to them it is art. Another
complaint which might be raised against
my definition is that no mention is made
of messages or great truths or ethical
themes. It is true that many indeed most
great works of art contain at least one
fundamental truth. Yet so do most scienti-
ic, philosophical and theological treatises.
To the extent that art expresses truth, it
becomes science, philosophy or theology,
but there is undeniably a difference between
these studies and art, however slight that
difference might sometimes be. That funda-
mental characteristic which separates art
from other academic pursuits is beauty.

This concept extends art beyond its
traditional though ill-defined boundaries,
for there are many kinds of beauty: sensu-
os, emotional, imaginative and intellectual.
The enjoyment of cool sheets on a hot sum-
mer night, delight in the delicate scent of a
violet, the pleasure of a tasteful meal—all
of these are on a primitive, physical plane,
the appreciation of art. Similarly, the joy
one might find in reading a beautiful
thought beautifully expressed in Aristotle's
Poetics would also be the appreciation of
art. In a sense, then, art is extremely
exclusive, for everyone has a slightly dif-
ferent concept of it. However, everyone
who enjoys a good meal or a walk in the
sun has some concept of art. Therefore,
we might well say that art is so exclusive it
is democratic.