

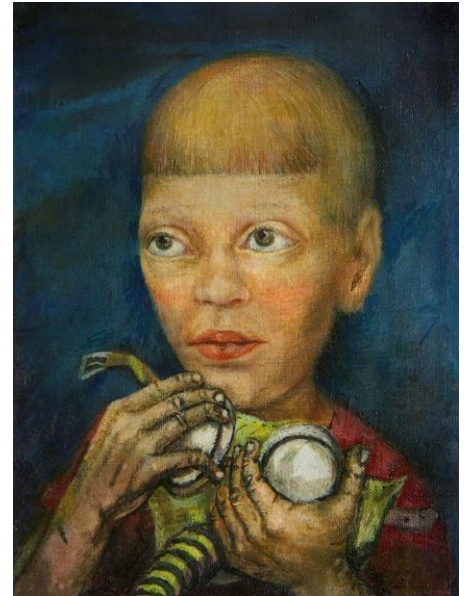


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Robert Fishko, *Director*

PHILIP EVERGOOD
(1901-1973)

Innocent Abroad, 1938
oil on canvas
10 7/8 x 8 1/2 inches
signed verso center: "*EVERGOOD*"
titled verso center: "*Innocent Abroad*"



Provenance

The Artist
Collection of Bella Fishko, New York, NY
Forum Gallery, New York, NY

Exhibited

20 Evergood Years, ACA Gallery, New York, NY, April 1946

Radical Views: Philip Evergood and George Grosz, Forum Gallery, New York, NY,
January 17 – February 21, 1998

American Social Realism: 1920-1950, Forum Gallery, New York, NY,
January 18 – February 24, 2007

Literature

20 Evergood Years, ACA Gallery, New York, NY, April 1946, p. 48, Illustrated.

Radical Views: Philip Evergood and George Grosz, Forum Gallery, New York, NY, 1998,
p. 9, Illustrated.

Note

Philip Evergood was born Philip Howard Blashki in New York City in 1901. His father, Miles Evergood Blashki, an Australian poet and artist of Polish descent, changed the family name to simply "Evergood" soon thereafter in an effort to disassociate from the "foreign" sounding last name. Following his upbringing in New York, his British mother campaigned for the young Philip's education to be conducted in England, where he attended the

boarding school Eton, and then Cambridge University. During the years of the First World War, Evergood began to develop an interest for imaginative depictions of biblical scenes and historical battles. He went on to develop his art studies at London's Slade School of Art before returning to New York to study at the Art Students League with George Luks and William von Schlegell and then to Paris to attend the Académie Julian briefly where he studied with André Lhote.

On his homecoming to New York in 1931, Evergood found an America reeling from the Great Depression. He was aghast at the poverty and the physical and emotional distress he witnessed, and his painting style changed accordingly. Though tempered by fantasy, wry humor, and an obscure personal symbolism, social criticism characterizes what today is regarded as his most significant work. Evergood's typical themes include political oppression, racial discrimination, coarse life among the urban poor, and the mundane amusements of people uninspired or oblivious to nobler pursuits.

In the 1930s, Evergood became close friends with social realist painter John Sloan, who was instrumental in helping Evergood launch his career. He soon won the recognition of collector Joseph H. Hirshhorn, who purchased several of his paintings, and following Sloan's introduction to Juliana Force, director of the Whitney Studio Club and regional director of the Public Works of Art Project, Evergood was assigned to work on various WPA mural projects from 1934 to 1937. However, with his connection to leftist organizations, and his focus on labor themes, Evergood gained notoriety and much of his work stirred up controversy.

Philip Evergood viewed his background as a detriment to his success. He believed that his Eton and Cambridge education miscast him as an effete intellectual, a role at odds with his political commitment and his work. He adopted a style of simplicity and clarity as a means of expressing his social intent, which often involved a naïve stance. Evergood's *Innocence Abroad*, painted in 1938, conjures pacifist themes in the image of a young boy with large incredulous eyes grasping a gas mask, the exaggerated features serving Evergood's pointed view of morally depraved world.

During his lifetime, Evergood was criticized for obscenity and indecency, barred from national service because of his participation in peace demonstrations, and accused of disloyalty by the House Un-American Activities Committee. He used his work as a forum for social conscience to support class struggle and to criticize the inconsistencies in their societies. In his paintings, Evergood depicted scenes with a biting eloquence, and, as in *Innocence Abroad*, he often incorporated children as hopeful signs for the future in works that still resound as they did when they were created.

Works by Philip Evergood are included in many important museum collections, including the Brooklyn Museum of Art, Museum of Modern Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art and Whitney Museum of American Art in New York; the Smithsonian Museums in Washington, D.C.; the Columbus Museum of Art in Ohio; the Tate Gallery in London; and the Vatican Museum in Vatican City, Italy.