

Dear Kan:

I guess my geography was a bit twisted, but I was pretty sure though Flushing was a garbage dump. In fact I was told they had dumped the whole fair in the garbage dump. Well, I guess it's just another of those anti-publicity stories circulated by the fair officials here. I'm sure it must be a w-o-n-d-e-r-f-u-l place. Can't imagine though why an architect like you should pick a dump like Flushing. There I go again. Excuse pliz. Enough for the ribbing.

I guess you have pretty well settled down by now. How about the school? And have those German couple been feeding you sauerkraut and weenies?

I see you are thinking of changing your camera. Have you had your present one long enough to give it a good trial. That rolleiflex is a darn good camera, seems to me; a compromise for snap-shooting and more serious picture taking. But if you really want to do some serious work I suppose you'd prefer a somewhat bigger camera, and one in which you can see in the ground glass exactly the picture you are taking. But on the contrary I guess you'd find screen-focusing camera which you set up on tripod and view through the ground glass on the back a little too bothersome, though for really serious work I think one needs to go to some such extent to ~~get~~ a good picture. But that would limit the pictures mostly to still subjects. There are somany angles that no one camera will cover the field. There is a comprehensive list of all the cameras in the May issue of Popular Photo. you might be interested in. The camera you choose will all depend on the kind of pictures you want to take. I agree with you that the only advantage of minicam is that it's easy to lug around, provided you don't carry too many accessories. I still feel a bit prejudiced about its size, though they yield remarkably good pictures. Ordinarily 8x10 seems to be the top limit for minicam enlarging. I mean to compare minicam enlargement to 4x5 and 8 x 10 with contact prints of these sizes. If a subject matter requires sparkle and brilliance and fine details, and if enlarging from minicam yields a print little more lacking in these qualities than contact print can give, than he is not a true artist and a craftsman, so methinks. It's like using an etching for a subject suited for oil color. I've been deciding on a camera for myself and I suppose I'm in somewhat of a same fix as you, only I already possess two lenses, but no shutter, and a couple of cameras, both viewing type, $6\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{1}{2}$ and a 4x5. Before deciding on the cameras, I wanted to know what I'd use them for, so I've been pondering what ~~was~~ the function of photography was. I don't quite believe in trying to imitate painting; nor do I strictly adhere to that school which confines photography to realistic representation of external world, using very fine diaphragm opening and absorbed almost wholly with accurate representation. The latter has its definite place in photo. as witness pictures of Weston. But I think on the other hands photography is also suited to catching, not stark realism, but more elusive quality like a fleeting expression, or an action that tells a story better than any painting. It seems that this attempt at catching that elusive something in art has degenerated into candid photography on the one hand and a use of diffusion on the other. My idea was to try to see what qualities of art could best be portrayed by camera. It

seems to be that photography is best suited for rendering: texture and fine details; fleeting expressions and actions; and story telling. This last named is really covered by the first two. I've seen a picture of an old fence which was a superb piece of photography. You knew at once that it was an old weather beaten fence; you felt as if you had seen the very fence; you could feel that something which only an old fence can impart. Or what can better portray a fast and furious actions of two boxers slugging at each other than a well timed photo snapped at just the right moment? So I've decided I'd need both of my cameras-- the larger for still photography, chiefly landscapes; and the smaller for mostly actionshots. For the latter work, if the minicam comes up to my expectations, I might use it instead of the 4x5. As for still photography, I might end up by using the 4x5 instead of the larger one if it can do the work of the larger camera. Then of course there's no sense in lugging around a heavy camera. Well, enough for photography for the present. By the way, did you see recent issue of Life in which there is a photo. attempt to portray Degas' paintings? Perhaps a good illustration of what I've been talking about.

I've started mortaring the bricks on the sides of the pond. Also drove down to Stanford and incidentally looked over the creek back of the campus. Found some river rocks; grey color and nothing to rave about; but I think they will do for secondary roles. One of the camellias bloomed alright. The flowers were bigger than last year's, but lasted only about a week. Maybe too water-logged; I don't know. Cherries are blooming; the rhododendron buds are swelling. Those cypripediums I planted are growing--might bloom this year. The garden as a whole is turning out to be Japanese-American. Tendency for a beginner seems to be to plant too many, contrary to Japanese scheme.

Your brother had an ad in Examiner about the peonies--appears they are blooming now.

The fair here is quieting down a bit; getting down to routine. And the nihonmachi just got over a lot of excitement and a headache over selecting a Japanese queen for the fair. Contest turned out to be more controversial than expected--family pride and all that and bak fence politiks. If this had been a feudal time, there would have been drawing of swords to uphold the family name. But this is 1939 and things are tame. Some of the Nisei, including the editor of the local, are squawking as usual, because it seems issei more or less controlled the affair. Seems every time they open their mouths they let out a belch. Some day they will grow up and behave like gentlemen, like you and I, eh Butch? By the way this ed. at N.W.S. is a little squirt, little shorter than me, and that means a squirt. Ought to see him with cutting up, with a big pipe in his mouth, taking big long strides across the floor with his chunky legs. Don't think he's as important as he makes out to be. A Napoleonic complex, from being cooped up in a little burg. Cure? Go to New York.

(continued to next letter.)

I.M.

429 Spruce St.
San Francisco, Calif.



Kan. Domoto, Esq.
135-01 Cherry Ave.
Flushing, New York.