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Liverpool Echo

MONDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1966

Artist accused of showing two obscene pictures in exhibition

An artist was alleged by Mr. G. C. Cox, prosecuting at Leeds Assizes to-day, to have had two pictures on show at a Leeds exhibition which were obscene.

Stavinos Paraskos, aged 33, of Lucas Street, Leeds, pleaded not guilty to two summonses.

The first alleged that on April 28 this year he wilfully exposed to view in a public place, the Leeds Institute of Art, an obscene picture, a coloured picture entitled "Lost Love", under Section Four of the Vagrancy Act, 1824, as amended.

The second summons alleged that on the same date he exposed to view in the same place an obscene picture, a drawing, signed "Stass", dated July 2, 1963.

Mr. Cox said: "The test to be applied here is whether or not these pictures are likely to deprave or corrupt those who are likely to come into touch with them."

The two pictures were displayed with numerous other paintings and drawings in an exhibition of paintings and drawings by Paraskos at the Leeds Institute Gallery from April 25 to May 12 this year.

"Lovers and Romance" title

The exhibition pamphlet was entitled "Lovers and Romance" and contained 41 items. Among them were the two pictures mentioned in the charges, said Mr. Cox.

It was fair to say that all but four of the pictures in that exhibition were for sale at prices ranging from 200 to £3, but the majority of them were over £25, so clearly it was not a case where pictures were being displayed for some trifling sum or for any purpose other than sale in an artistic gallery.

Mr. Cox said that police officers went into the exhibition on the afternoon of April 28 and during a very short time seven people entered. They included two schoolgirls who were wearing school uniforms and carrying satchels.

The pictures which were the subject of the charges were on display for all to see, and there appeared to the officers to be no supervision as to who did or did not go into the room.

Couple kissing

Mr. Cox, referring to the two pictures, said that one of them was a colour picture which showed on one side of it a man and woman. The couple appeared to be kissing. Also in the picture there appeared to be depicted a male person looking towards them. There were also the heads of another man and woman in the same picture.

The second picture was a drawing. In fact, there were three drawings within the one frame. The one referred to was again a picture of a man and a woman kissing.

Mr. Cox said: "These, in my submission, are matters which in themselves are obscene if they are likely to come before the general public including children, even if they be children of a more adult age."

(Proceeding.)