ure that is not broad, pluralistic, even international, becomes rather lame. This is especially so today with the instant global communication and interchange of ideas flowing throughout the world.

Throughout history each culture drew from other cultures. If we examine the various great chapters in the history of art we see a great interplay of influences. This was so with Egyptian and Greek art. It was similarly so with Christian art and especially African art. This was not so with any endeavor that could have been called Jewish art. No aspect of art done by Jews, which could have been called "Jewish art" was ever unique and at the same time, influential on the general development of art. This does not mean that there weren't Jews who were major figures in the world of art. Of course there were. But their influence was as individuals and not as part of a genre that could be called "Jewish art."

In all the arts nowadays, Jews are among the leading exponents. It wasn't always so, especially in the visual arts — probably because of the biblical injunction against "graven images." This imposition was generally heeded by Jews until the advent of the *Haskala* period in the 19th century, when many Jews began to observe the letter of religious law with less diligence than before.

We are influenced by a general universal culture. We are touched by all the major artistic trends prevailing today. This is because we live in an age of close and often immediate global communication. Simultaneously, we are affected by local cultural influences as well as social, political, climatic, religious and nationalistic factors.

People for whom traditional values are especially important, are usually wary of contemporary culture. The very term suggests change. And change is anathema to tradition. It follows that tradition can restrict cultural development. But, as I mentioned earlier, a locally developed culture is a vital aspect in the building of a Jewish national home, which is what is happening here now.

Actually most people — including artists — are traditionalistic or conservative in their ideas and attitudes. We tend to cling to our viewpoints and tastes. Thus we find the music of Bach easily appreciable and enjoyable. But this does not stop contemporary musicians from creating modern classical music. But we do realize the importance of the development of contemporary music, and in the same way that it develops, so too does our ability to appreciate and enjoy it. It is the same with painting and sculpture. Not