

141

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

NEW YORK 19

11 WEST 53rd STREET
TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900
CABLES: MODERNART, NEW-YORK

SARAH NEWMAYER, PUBLICITY DIRECTOR

November 9, 1946

TO Art Editor
City Editor

Dear Sir:

You are invited to come or send a representative to

Press Preview of

Recent Acquisitions

61 lithographs by Toulouse-Lautrec

31 illustrations by Picasso
for "Histoire naturelle" by
Comte de Buffon

Tuesday, November 19
2 to 6 P.M.

at the Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53 Street

For further information please telephone me at Circle
5-8900.

Sincerely yours,

Sarah Newmeyer

Sarah Newmeyer
Publicity Director

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE EXHIBITION OF THESE RECENT ACQUISITIONS HAS BEEN POSTPONED ONE WEEK: FROM WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13 AS ORIGINALLY ANNOUNCED TO WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20. THE PRESS PREVIEW IS, OF COURSE, THE PRECEDING DAY, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, AS ABOVE STATED.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MRS. JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER, JR. GIFT OF TOULOUSE-LAUTRECPRINT COLLECTION EXHIBITED BY MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

The most important accession to its Print Collection in recent years has been given the Museum of Modern Art by Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. It consists of a group of 61 lithographs by Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec and constitutes probably the third largest collection of prints by that artist owned by any American museum. Mrs. Rockefeller has also given the Print Collection one of the greatest illustrated books of modern times, the Histoire naturelle by the Comte de Buffon, with 31 aquatints by Pablo Picasso. An exhibition of both gifts will open in the auditorium galleries of the Museum November 20 and continue on view through January 12.

Alfred H. Barr, Jr., the Museum's Director of Research in Painting and Sculpture, comments on the gift of Toulouse-Lautrec prints as follows:

"The fifty-six lithographs in the gift (not counting duplicates) handsomely represent almost the entire range of Lautrec's lithography. Here are vignettes of the boulevards, the begoggled automobilist, the black-stockinged little girl, glimpses of the race course, the courtroom, and the salon. And here are the fin-de-siècle music hall and cabaret scenes at the Moulin-Rouge and Folies-Bergère; the famous chanteuses and comédiennes such as May Belfort (who used to sing with a little black cat in her arms), the great Yvette Guilbert, the serpentine Jane Avril gowned in a serpent, and the sinister La Goulue waltzing with her eccentric, top-hatted dancing partner Valentin le Désossé.

"Among the single lithographs in the gift, two works of exceptional quality and rarity may be singled out: Au Moulin-Rouge of 1892, the artist's first color-lithograph, and La Clownesse au Moulin-Rouge. These were designed and published primarily for print collectors. More utilitarian were the book jacket for the novel Babylone d'Allemagne; the color lithograph of the Irish and American Bar, designed as a poster for the Chap Book, an American magazine; and the cover for Les vieilles histoires, an album of songs by Lautrec's friend, the bassoonist, Desiré Dihau, seen leading by the nose the writer of the lyrics, Jean Goudezki, whom Lautrec has transformed into a bear.

"The collection boasts two of the most important series of Lautrec's lithographs. Portraits d'acteurs et d'actrices includes characterizations of the great people of the Paris stage during the 'nineties, among them Cléo de Mérode, Coquelin, Marcelle Lender, Lucien Guitry, Sarah Bernhardt. The album of eleven lithographs entitled Elles (The Girls) is as remarkable for ingenious composition as for its delicate, merciless observation of the human animal. It is surely one of Lautrec's greatest works in any medium."

Commenting on the gift of the thirty-one aquatints by Picasso

which illustrate the Buffon book, Mr. Barr said:

"Picasso is rarely thought of as an artist interested in animals. Yet he has always been surrounded by pets: cats and kittens, a monkey, pigeons, and a succession of remarkable dogs of whom the Afghan Kazbek is the present favorite. Many of these have appeared from time to time in his painting and sculpture together with circus horses and, of course, the animals of the bull ring. Indeed it is the bull and the horse who as protagonist and antagonist dominate Picasso's greatest canvas, the Guernica of 1937.

"It was during the year following the Guernica that Picasso began the series of etchings illustrating Buffon's Histoire naturelle. Some of the Buffon illustrations reveal a latent facet of Picasso's art, a concern with descriptive realism; others, more abstract, present only the essential character and action of the animal. The crayfish is drawn with the most delicate naturalism; the horse with a rather conventional romantic dash; the ostrich with spectacular, bouncing humor; the ass with a rough affection which well supports Buffon's eloquent 18th century defense of this animal's dignity and virtue. Certain creatures Picasso fumbles badly: the ponderous butterfly, for instance, and the lion, which he reduces to a mild puma; but the ram is masterly and so is the gray wolf fading into the gray night.

"In technique the etchings vary almost as much as they do in style and spirit. Two simply bitten areas of aquatint suffice for The Vulture. Subtly graded tones give the leaves in The Pigeon the character of Japanese brush-and-ink painting; the roses in The Butterfly suggest finger painting; The Ram shows a variety of delicately etched lines weighted by tones smudged in with thumbprints.

"This sumptuous Buffon was originally undertaken in 1937 by the publisher and friend of Picasso, Ambroise Vollard, who in 1931 had published Balzac's Chef-d'oeuvre inconnu, with Picasso's illustrations. Vollard died in 1939. Three years later the Buffon was published by Martin Fabiani, but it remains Vollard's conception. The Buffon and the Balzac volumes together form a monument to the collaboration of two men who are often considered the greatest living artist and the greatest publisher of illustrated books in our time."

144

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RECENT ACQUISITIONS: 61 LITHOGRAPHS BY TOULOUSE-LAUTREC AND 31 AQUATINTS BY PICASSO FOR BUFFON'S "HISTOIRE NATURELLE," GIVEN TO THE PRINT DEPARTMENT OF THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART BY MRS. JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER, JR.

Exhibited Nov. 19, 1946--Jan. 12, 1947

Henri de TOULOUSE-LAUTREC: 61 Lithographs

Au Moulin-Rouge (La Goulue et sa soeur). 1892. (Delteil 11). The artist's first color lithograph

Cover and Frontispiece for Les vieilles histoires. 1893. (Delteil 18)

Ultime Ballade (from Les vieilles histoires). 1893. (Delteil 23)

Etude de femme. 1893. (Delteil 24)

Au Moulin-Rouge: Un rude! Un vrai rude! 1893. (Delteil 45) (Not exhibited)

Folies-Bergère: Les pudeurs de M. Prudhomme. 1893. (Delteil 46)

Brandès et Leloir, dans Cabotins. 1894. (Delteil 62)

Une redoute au Moulin-Rouge. 1894. (Delteil 65)

La Goulue. 1894. (Delteil 71)

Cover for Babylone d'Allemagne. 1894. (Delteil 76)

Mlle Marcelle Lender, en buste. 1895. (Delteil 102)

Mlle Marcelle Lender, debout. 1895. (Delteil 103)

Lender de face, dans Chilperic. 1895. (Delteil 105) (Not exhibited)

Miss May Belfort (au Irish and American Bar, Rue Royale). 1895. (Delteil 123)

La Goulue devant le Tribunal. (Delteil 148)

Portraits d'acteurs et d'actrices. Series of 13 lithographs. About 1895

Sarah Bernhardt dans Cléopâtre. (Delteil 150)

Subra de l'Opéra. (Delteil 151) (Not exhibited)

Cléo de Mérode. (Delteil 152)

Coquelin aîné. (Delteil 153)

Jeanne Granier. (Delteil 154)

Lucien Guitry. (Delteil 155)

Marcelle Lender? (Delteil 156) (Not exhibited)

Yvette Guilbert? (Delteil 157)

Jeanne Hading. (Delteil 158) (Not exhibited)

Duplicate of the above with letters, cover label of the original portfolio.
(Delteil 158) (Not exhibited)

Polin. (Delteil 159) (Not exhibited)

Eva Lavallière. (Delteil 160)

Emilienne d'Alençon. (Delteil 161)

Cassive. (Delteil 162) (Not exhibited)

Souper à Londres. 1896. (Delteil 157) (Not exhibited)

Elles. Series of 10 lithographs. 1896.

- Frontispiece for Elles. (Delteil 179)
- Wrapper for Elles. (Delteil 179)
- Duplicate of the above. (Delteil 179) (Not exhibited)
- Clown (La clownesse assise) (Mlle Cha-U-Ka-O). (Delteil 180)
- Femme au plateau (Petit déjeuner) (Mme Baron et Mlle Popo). (Delteil 181)
- Femme couchée (Reveil). (Delteil 182)
- Femme au tub (Le tub). (Delteil 183)
- Femme qui se lave (La toilette). (Delteil 184)
- Femme à glace (La glace à main). (Delteil 185)
- Femme qui se peigne (La coiffure). (Delteil 186)
- Femme au lit, profil (Au petit lever). (Delteil 187)
- Duplicate of the above. (Delteil 187) (Not exhibited)
- Femme en corset (Conquête de passage). (Delteil 188)
- Duplicate of the above. (Delteil 188) (Not exhibited)
- Femme sur le dos (Lassitude). (Delteil 189)

Procès Arton (Déposition Dupas). 1896. (Delteil 191) (Not exhibited)

Procès Arton (Déposition Ribot). 1896. (Delteil 192) (Not exhibited)

Procès Arton (Déposition Soudais). 1896. (Delteil 193) Arton was tried for his part in the scandalous collapse of de Lesseps' Panama Canal project.

L'Automobiliste. 1896. (Delteil 203)

La clownesse au Moulin-Rouge. 1897. (Delteil 205)

La gage. 1897. (Delteil 212) (Not exhibited)

Cover for La tribu d'Isidore. 1897. (Delteil 215)

Le vieux cheval. 1898. (Delteil 224)

Au Hanne-ton. 1898. (Delteil 272)

Le jockey. 1899. (Delteil 279)

Promenoir. 1899. (Delteil 290)

Au Bois. 1899. (Delteil 296)

Mme le Margouin, modiste (Mlle Renée Vert). 1900. (Delteil 325) (Not exhibited)

Napoléon. 1895. (Delteil 358) (Entered in a competition for a poster for a book, Histoire de Napoléon Ier)

Irish and American Bar, Rue Royale (A poster, before lettering, for The Chap Book). 1896. (Delteil 362)

Jane Avril (A poster, before lettering). 1899. (Delteil 367)

Note: The following lithographs by Toulouse-Lautrec, acquired previously, are in the Print Collection of The Museum of Modern Art. They were given by Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

Babylone d'Allemagne. 1894. (Delteil 351). Poster

La troupe de Mlle Eglantine. 1893. (Delteil 361). Poster

L'Aube. 1896. (Delteil 363). Poster

Pablo PICASSO: Illustrations for Buffon's "Histoire naturelle"

Histoire naturelle by the Comte de Buffon (Georges Louis Leclerc) with 31 etchings with aquatint by Pablo Picasso. Paris, Martin Fabiani, 1942.

This publication was originally undertaken by Ambroise Vollard. The etchings were begun in 1937.

Only 225 copies of the Histoire naturelle were printed, of which this is copy 53 on Montval paper.