

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

11 WEST 53 STREET, NEW YORK 19, N. Y.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRELIMINARY ANNOUNCEMENT

EXHIBITION OF WORK OF DEMUTH AND WATKINS TO BE HELD MARCH 8 THROUGH

JUNE 11, 1950

The Museum announces a forthcoming exhibition of work by two Philadelphia painters, Charles Henry Demuth and Franklin Watkins, to occupy the third floor galleries from March 8 through June 11, 1950. The exhibition will be organized by Andrew C. Ritchie, Director of the Museum's Department of Painting and Sculpture.

Demuth and Watkins are distinguished products of Philadelphia. Although neither can claim birth in that city (Demuth was born in Lancaster, Pa., Watkins in New York), both were trained at The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. As students of that august institution they have come to take their place in one of the oldest and finest traditions of American painting beside such predecessors as Benjamin West, Charles Wilson Peale, Thomas Eakins and Mary Cassatt. Yet neither artist is a traditional conformist.

Demuth, who died in 1935, explored a highly individual vein of sensibility. Despite his association with the cubist movement in its early stages, his watercolors and temperas always expressed a very private temperament of a delicacy and sensitiveness akin to Henry James, some of whose short stories he illustrated. The exhibition will attempt to cover as definitively as possible the whole range of his work, including his illustrations to such authors as James, Balzac, Zola and Poe, his vaudeville and night club subjects, the "architectural" pictures and his exquisite still life and flower pieces.

Watkins, who is still very much alive, is generally accepted as one of this country's best living painters. He has developed and enriched his personal style through long study of the art of the past. But all his study is subordinated and blended to reinforce, never to dominate, what is essentially his own. "Influence," he once said, "is inevitable, so best find good company for a little while - you'll be alone soon enough." This point of view is at the root of Watkins' failure to fit any of the more striking "ism" categories. Gifted with a vision that embraces the familiar and the supernatural, he has been successful in portraiture, mural compositions, stage design, landscape and still life, in addition to the general theme of the human being in action. The exhibition will be a complete retrospective of his work.