

*Local general*

# THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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FOR WEDNESDAY RELEASE

## MUSEUM'S PAINTINGS AND SCULPTURES FROM MRS. SIMON GUGGENHEIM FUND TO FORM MAJOR EXHIBITION

Works of art purchased over the past fifteen years with funds provided by Mrs. Simon Guggenheim will be shown from Jan. 30 to Mar. 23 at the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street. Among the new accessions are two paintings never before shown in this country: Night Fishing at Antibes, 1939, one of the largest and most beautiful in color of Picasso's recent canvases; and The City Rises, a famous early composition by the leader of the Italian Futurists of 1910, Umberto Boccioni. Two important sculptures have also been recently acquired, Mother and Child by Jacques Lipchitz and Caryatid by Modigliani. The other artists represented in the exhibition are: Peter Blume, Georges Braque, Marc Chagall, Charles Despiau, Edward Hopper, Gaston Lachaise, Roger de la Fresnaye, Fernand Léger, Richard Lippold, Aristide Maillol, Joan Miro, Henri Rousseau, Pavel Tchelitchew.

Mrs. Guggenheim's purchase funds have been given to enable the Museum to acquire great works of art, in the conviction that they are essential sources of present and future artistic development. She feels that the Museum, in order to fulfil its functions of stimulating the study, enjoyment and development of art, must have in its collection painting and sculpture of superlative quality. For these reasons, Mrs. Guggenheim has expressed the wish that the Museum would use her purchase funds to acquire works of the highest excellence. She believes that only such works have permanent value and that they are, therefore, indispensable to the Museum.

In speaking of the Mrs. Simon Guggenheim Fund, Nelson A. Rockefeller, President of the Museum of Modern Art, said: "It was in the fall of 1937 that Mrs. Guggenheim first contributed funds for the purchase of works of art for the Museum Collection. Early in the following year Picasso's Girl before a Mirror was acquired, the first of a score of works among which we believe are some of the truly great paintings and sculptures of our time. The Museum of Modern Art

is deeply indebted to Mrs. Guggenheim not only for her recurring gifts but for her wise counsel and her challenging objective that the works should be only of the highest quality and importance. The present exhibition constitutes a report to the public on how the Museum has discharged the responsibilities so magnificently created by Mrs. Guggenheim."

Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Director of the Museum Collections, who organized this exhibition, states: "Mrs. Guggenheim's generosity has confronted the Museum with a welcome and at the same time difficult problem: that of buying modern works of art which shall because of their 'excellence' have 'permanent values.' We cannot yet be sure of the survival capacity of even the oldest of the twenty-four works in the collection, Rousseau's Sleeping Gypsy, painted fifty-four years ago. As for the most recent, Richard Lippold's wire construction Variation No. 7 finished in 1950, though we can feel fairly confident that it is among the best of its kind, its kind is so new that its immortality rests perhaps in double jeopardy. Yet taking such risks is inherent in the Museum's program, and they are taken by the Trustees and staff with the full encouragement of Mrs. Guggenheim herself."

LIST OF WORKS EXHIBITED:

NEW ACQUISITIONS:

Pablo PICASSO: Night Fishing at Antibes. 1939. Oil on canvas,  
81 x 136". Acquired 1952.

Night Fishing at Antibes was painted in August 1939 just before the outbreak of World War II. Europe was already in crisis and intimation of coming events may have lead Picasso, by reaction, to paint a subject that is unique in his work: a moonlit harbor with two men in a boat spearing fish by lantern-light; to the right on a stone jetty two girls are watching, one of them with a bicycle and a double ice cream cone. The moon above casts its spiral reflection on the dark water and to the left are the dim towers of the town. The forms, though they are freely drawn and vigorously distorted, are subordinated to the romantic mood and to a resonant color harmony perhaps unsurpassed in Picasso's art.

Umberto BOCCIONI: The City Rises. 1910. Oil on canvas, 78 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 118 $\frac{1}{2}$ ".  
Acquired 1951.

The City Rises, one of the earliest Futurist paintings by Umberto Boccioni, the leader of the Italian Futurists, was painted in 1910 before the artist had begun to assimilate cubist influence following his first trip to Paris in 1911. The broken color of his painting Boccioni derives from Segantini, the great Italian "divisionist," but,

with his Futurist enthusiasm for movement, Boccioni tears the divisionist veil of dots into ribbons of color somewhat as van Gogh had done with Seurat's technique in 1889. The painting, though designed for a grand effect, is also interesting close up for its rich and intricate texture.

As a Futurist, Boccioni was of course devoutly convinced of the beauty of machinery. Yet, when he came to paint this hymn to industrial Milan, he used immense draft horses - a romantic motif - to express the energies of the rising city. Men toil beside the horses whose power they can scarcely control. Only in the background can one discern such modernisms as a puffing locomotive and a street car.

The City Rises was shown in the famous Futurist show which toured Europe in 1912-13. In Berlin it was bought by the pianist and composer Ferruccio Busoni from whose family the Museum acquired the painting. Boccioni's bronze sculpture, a striding figure called Unique Forms of Continuity in Space, is also in the Museum Collection.

Jacques LIPCHITZ: Mother and Child, II. 1941. Bronze, 50" high.

Acquired 1951.

The first designs for this sculpture were drawn in Paris during 1939-40, the period of the cold war. The idea was carried further in Southern France and then in New York, where Lipchitz came as a refugee in 1941. It was only some time after he began these studies of a woman's torso that he suddenly recognized in them a resemblance to the head of a bull. He developed the bull's head further until he achieved a balanced double image which then took final form in the sculpture.

Half way through this development he also recognized the probable source of the woman's figure: once, several years before, on a rainy night, he had heard the loud, hoarse voice of a woman singing in the street. When he came nearer he saw her in the light of a street lamp. She had lost both legs so that her body rested low on a little cart. She was singing with her arms outstretched, her face raised to the light and her long hair hanging wet in the rain. The almost apparitional figure of this courageous beggar woman impressed him deeply.

The double image of the woman-bull's head, Lipchitz interprets as an expression or symbol of the mixed despair and hopeful energy of conquered Europe during the dark years of occupation.

This, the second version of the Mother and Child, was begun just after the first was cast in 1942. Mother and Child, II was cast in 1945.

Amadeo MODIGLIANI: Caryatid. c.1914. Limestone, 36 $\frac{1}{4}$ " high.

Acquired 1951.

About 1914 Modigliani made scores of studies for a kneeling caryatid figure. His friend, the sculptor Jacques Lipchitz, remembers that when the war broke out Modigliani found some building stones on the Boulevard Montparnasse near a half completed structure which had been abandoned when the workmen were called up. From one of these stones Modigliani carved the Caryatid, one of his two life-size figures. Later the figure was pushed over and broken but was mended without alteration by Lipchitz at the request of the architect Pierre Chareau in whose garden it remained until 1939.

Though the surface is uneven, the grand lines of the Caryatid make it one of the artist's strongest works in any medium.

Pablo PICASSO: Still Life with Tube of Paint. 1909. Oil on canvas, 32  $\frac{1}{8}$  x 25  $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Acquired 1951.

The Tube of Paint demonstrates the degree of abstraction reached by Picasso's cubism in 1909. All the objects, the bottle at the left, the paint tube, the glass at the right, the ceramic cock and the background drapery are so merged into a continuous play of facets that they are no longer easily recognizable. The colors of the objects are similarly reduced to alternations of green and ochre, the depth is suppressed. The lines, planes and colors of objects are thus transferred into angular surface rhythms, rough in texture, staccato and intense. The Tube of Paint was done in Horta de Ebro, Spain, in the summer of 1909.

## PAINTINGS ACQUIRED 1938-50

(Note: Two large paintings by Matisse - The Red Studio, 1911, and The Piano Lesson, 1916 - cannot be shown because they are included in the Matisse exhibition now on tour.)

Peter BLUME: The Eternal City. 1934-37. Oil on composition board,  
34 x 47 7/8". Acquired 1942.

Georges BRAQUE: Woman with a Mandolin. 1937. Oil on canvas, 51 1/4 x 38 1/4"  
Acquired 1948.

Marc CHAGALL: I and My Village. 1911. Oil on canvas, 75 5/8 x 59 5/8".  
Acquired 1943.

Edward HOPPER: Gas. 1940. Oil on canvas, 26 1/4 x 40 1/4". Acquired 1943.

Roger de LA FRESNAYE: Conquest of the Air. 1913. Oil on canvas,  
91 1/2 x 77". Acquired 1947.

Fernand LÉGER: Three Women (Le grand déjeuner). 1921. Oil on canvas,  
72 1/4 x 99". Acquired 1942.

Joan MIRO: Dutch Interior. 1928. Oil on canvas, 36 1/8 x 28 3/4".  
Acquired 1945.

Amedeo MODIGLIANI: Reclining Nude. 1919? Oil on canvas, 28 1/2 x 45 7/8".  
Acquired 1950.

Pablo PICASSO: Three Musicians. 1921. Oil on canvas, 79 x 87 3/4".  
Acquired 1949.

Pablo PICASSO: Girl before a Mirror. March 1932. Oil on canvas,  
63 3/4 x 51 1/4". Acquired 1938.

Pablo PICASSO: Seated Bather. 1929. Oil on canvas, 64 1/4 x 51".  
Acquired 1950.

Henri ROUSSEAU: The Sleeping Gypsy. 1897. Oil on canvas, 51 x 79".  
Acquired 1939.

Pavel TCHELITCHEW: Hide and Seek. 1940-42. Oil on canvas,  
78 1/2 x 84 3/4", Acquired 1942.

## SCULPTURES AND CONSTRUCTIONS ACQUIRED 1938-50

Charles DESPIAU: Assia. 1938. Bronze, 6' 3/4" high. Acquired 1939.

Gaston LACHAISE: Standing Woman. 1932. Bronze, 7'7" high. Acquired  
1948.

Richard LIPPOLD: Variation No. 7: Full Moon. 1949-50. Nickel-chromium  
wire, stainless steel wire and brass rods, 10' high.  
Acquired 1950.

Aristide MAILLOL: The River. c.1939-43. Lead, 7'6" long, 53 3/4" high.  
Acquired 1949.