

Imitation + Design 5A

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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CHILDREN'S ART WORK TO BE EXHIBITED TO SHOW RANGE OF CLASSES OFFERED THIS SUMMER FOR FIRST TIME

A full summer session of art classes for children, parents and adults will be offered this year for the first time by the People's Art Center of the Museum of Modern Art, 21 West 53 Street. Registration starts immediately for the courses which will be held from June 9 through July 31. To introduce parents to the methods of teaching at the Center, an exhibition of children's work will be on view at the Museum, 11 West 53 Street, from April 30 through June 8. A cross-section of paintings, collages, mobiles, constructions and clay work done by students aged 3 to 18 will indicate the range of work produced in classes during the past year.

Classes for children are organized by age level, not by special aptitude. Adult classes are graded in difficulty to meet the varying experiences of the students; the specific courses offered will be described in a subsequent release. Classes in which parents can enroll with their children will also be offered.

Students may register for either one or two classes a week for the entire 8 weeks or for 4 weeks in June or in July.

The exhibition will be on view in the Young People's Gallery on the first floor of the Museum. It has been organized by Victor D'Amico, Director of the People's Art Center who says of the work shown and the teaching methods employed, "Progress and growth, as reflected in these examples of art work are based on natural development. Traditional methods of teaching, such as drawing from still life or color exercises are not employed because they are harmful to the child's creative growth. Copying and all forms of imitation are likewise discouraged. On the other hand, the Center does not subscribe to the trend toward letting the child completely alone. Guidance is based on the evident and discoverable needs of the child, his concepts and interest."

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Among the paintings in the exhibition illustrating imaginative ideas is one by a 3-year-old child who explains her design by saying that the moon peeked through clouds and said to her "Oh, you have made a picture of me." A painting by a 7-year-old boy shows a television picture coming through the air. Paintings by older children reveal greater experience with art media and more complex composition as they attempt landscapes, intricate abstract designs, and portraits, such as one by a 12-year-old child called "Four Generations."

The mobiles, constructions and collages to be on view are a special development of the classes at the People's Art Center. Collages are made by pasting different kinds of materials - colored paper, wool, fur, feathers, cellophane, printed fabrics - on a heavy paper background. Constructions are three-dimensional objects built of colored straws, wire, pipe cleaners, etc. on a cardboard, clay or wood base. Mobiles are constructions that move.

Collages to be shown illustrate how very young children in the Center classes first make designs of textures by combining different materials, whereas later they combine both texture and visual appeal. In the constructions the child is concerned with how the material feels, looks and moves. More complicated constructions are shown, done by older children who are able to devise more intricate balances and arrangements. One by an 8-year-old boy is called "An Atomic Bomb Plant on Another Planet."

Clay work, which in the Museum school is introduced to very young children because of their interest in tactile sensations, illustrates the development of the child's ability at various age levels. Simple shapes gradually develop into clay sculpture and ceramics. These are glazed and fired in the kilns at the Center.

Application blanks for summer classes may be obtained from the Department of Education, Museum of Modern Art.