

# THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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## REPORT ON ACTIVITIES OF MUSEUM OF MODERN ART'S INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION PROGRAM

A visual report on the activities of the International Program of circulating exhibitions of The Museum of Modern Art from its inception in 1952 to the present was shown at the Manhattan Storage and Warehouse, Seventh Avenue and 52nd Street, on Tuesday and Wednesday May 1 and 2. It was arranged in conjunction with the 2nd annual meeting of the International Council, a group of community leaders from all parts of the United States formed at the Museum to promote projects dealing with cultural exchange. The display was also shown to a number of invited guests including trustees of the Museum, members of its Junior Council, officials of other museums, members of the United States government agencies and other organizations active in the international field, cultural representatives of other governments, artists whose work has been included in these circulating exhibitions, collectors and dealers who have lent works of art for these shows, and members of the press.

Since its establishment in 1952 through a 5-year grant of \$125,000 annually from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, the Museum's International Program under the direction of Porter McCray has organized 33 exhibitions which have been seen in 21 countries in Latin America, Europe and Asia and has presented within the United States 9 exhibitions consisting of material derived from 15 countries. These exhibitions have traveled as far north as beyond the Arctic Circle in Norway and south as far as São Paulo in Brazil, eastward to India and Japan, and westward to most of the European countries this side of the Iron Curtain.

The present display was arranged to show something of the circumstances under which these exhibitions have been organized and presented, the reception they have met with in the various countries where they have been seen and some of the technical procedures involved in their preparation. Photographs of the works of art and their installation in museums around the world, personalities involved in the opening ceremonies and other events arranged in conjunction with the exhibitions, and public attendance at the shows was accompanied by catalogs, posters and announcements, invitations, and magazines and press clippings documenting the critical comment both favorable and unfavorable that the shows have received in this country and abroad.

The report is divided into 5 sections showing respectively exhibitions organized by the International Program to constitute the United States' representation in international exhibitions and competitions, other typical exhibitions sent abroad

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under the International Program, an exhibition in preparation, incoming shows prepared for domestic circulation within the United States and exhibitions organized in cooperation with United States government agencies.

Exhibitions arranged by the Program to serve as the United States' participation in such major international art events as the Biennale at Venice, the Bienal of the Museu de Arte Moderna in São Paulo, Brazil and the II International Art Exhibition held in Japan in 1953 are shown in the first section, as well as the American sections of the International Sculpture Competition on the theme of the "Unknown Political Prisoner" organized by the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London in 1953 and of the international exhibition PAINTERS UNDER 35 organized last year by the Congress for Cultural Freedom and shown under its auspices in Rome, Brussels and Paris.

Recognition accorded to American artists selected for inclusion at these events is evidenced by the number of important prizes which have been awarded to them by international juries, such as the acquisitions prize received by Alexander Calder at the II São Paulo Bienal, Ben Shahn's top prize for international drawing awarded to him at that Bienal and the top purchase prize he received at the Venice Biennale in 1954. West Coast artist Ralph Du Casse was awarded the purchase prize in the U. S. representation at the III Bienal which on invitation of the Museum of Modern Art was arranged by the San Francisco Museum of Art with the assistance of a subsidy from the International Program. Three prizes were awarded to the American artists Naum Gabo, Richard Lippold and Alexander Calder out of the total number of 12 received by sculptors from 6 countries in the International Sculpture Competition at London, and John Hultberg was awarded a prize in last year's YOUNG PAINTERS exhibition in which 48 artists from 8 countries were represented.

In the second section of the report, representative exhibitions sent abroad under the International Program include its first large-scale exhibitions organized for showing abroad, TWELVE MODERN AMERICAN PAINTERS AND SCULPTORS, which traveled for over a year from 1953 to 1954 and was seen in 6 countries, France, Switzerland, Germany, Sweden, Finland and Norway. In most of these countries it constituted not only the first major exhibition of contemporary art from the United States, but also the first comprehensive show of American painting and sculpture of any kind that they had ever seen. MODERN ART IN THE UNITED STATES which is still traveling in Europe and which in addition to painting and sculpture includes a cross-section of works from other collections of The Museum of Modern Art--prints, architecture, industrial and typographic design, photography and the film--is shown as it was originally presented at the Musée National d'Art Moderne in Paris under the title 50 ANS D'ART AUX

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ETATS-UNIS as part of the "Salute to France" program of cultural events last Spring, and as it has been seen subsequently in Zurich, Barcelona, Frankfurt, London and The Hague. This coming Saturday, May 5 it is scheduled to open at the Secession Galerie in Vienna. René d'Harnoncourt, Director of The Museum of Modern Art is flying to Austria to be present for this occasion.

In addition to the MEMORIAL EXHIBITION OF THE WORKS OF YASUO KUNIYOSHI held in Japan in 1953, other exhibitions in this section include 3 shows in the fields of printmaking, architecture and photography, respectively, designed to travel throughout an indefinite period rather than being arranged for a special event or tour of limited duration. Still in circulation, these shows are THE SKYSCRAPER U.S.A., THE AMERICAN WOODCUT TODAY and CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHY, all of which have already traveled extensively and are currently in circulation in France and Austria. The International Program's participation in DE DAVID A TOULOUSE-LAUTREC, the exhibition of 19th century French masterpieces organized by a nationwide committee under the chairmanship of William A. M. Burden, President of The Museum of Modern Art, which constituted the outstanding success of the "Salute to France" program in Paris last Spring, is also included in this section of the report as well as photographic and printed evidence of the overwhelmingly enthusiastic reception accorded this show by the French press and public.

The only actual works of art included in the visual report are in the third section, "An Exhibition in Preparation," where 3 sculptures are shown in their packing cases ready for shipment to France later this week. Together with works by 8 other sculptors they constitute the American section of an important international exhibition of contemporary American sculpture which will be shown in the garden of the Musée Rodin in Paris this summer.

Representative incoming exhibitions organized by the International Program to present within the United States the art achievements of other areas of the world make up the fourth section. In addition to the highly successful TEXTILES AND ORNAMENTAL ARTS OF INDIA and LATIN AMERICAN ARCHITECTURE shown in New York during the past season as part of the 25th Anniversary program of The Museum of Modern Art, this section also includes two exhibitions, THE MODERN MOVEMENT IN ITALY: ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN and THE ARCHITECTURE OF JAPAN, which have been on tour continuously since 1953 and each of which has been seen in 15 institutions in the United States and Canada.

A number of exhibitions prepared by the Museum's International Program for the United States government for circulation by its agencies abroad comprise the fi-

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nal section of this visual report. Some of these have been specially assembled for particular purposes at the government's request, for example AMERICAN DESIGN FOR HOME AND DECORATIVE USE, a large exhibition of more than 300 mass-produced or hand-crafted objects including furniture, fabrics, rugs, ceramics, glass, household utensils and jewelry by about 150 American designers which, between October 1953 and June 1955, traveled to 16 cities in Finland, Sweden, Norway, Belgium and Italy. Also included are exhibitions organized by the International Program currently being circulated abroad by the United States Information Agency: an Italian version of BUILT IN U.S.A.: POSTWAR ARCHITECTURE and several copies of THE FAMILY OF MAN, the overwhelmingly popular photographic exhibition which in the countries of Latin America, Europe and Asia, where it has been seen thus far, has evoked the same enthusiastic public response and drawn the same record attendance as during its presentation at The Museum of Modern Art last year.

Periodicals and newspaper clippings reporting on International Program exhibitions throughout the world, with comments ranging from highly laudatory to disparaging and varying widely from country to country and from individual critic to critic, were among the material available for display together with summaries of the press reaction on selected representative exhibitions. Albums containing photographs of works of art included in the shows, samples of actual catalogs printed in a wide variety of countries and languages on the basis of information and photographs provided by the International Program, and copies of books issued by the Museum or other relevant publications on American art which in many cases have been sent overseas to supplement the exhibitions were also available for inspection. Publications of the Museum or Modern Art printed in various languages and in different countries under another of its international activities, the International Publications Program, directed by Monroe Wheeler, was also on view.

THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL of The Museum of Modern Art was formed under the Chairmanship of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller 3rd, a Trustee of The Museum of Modern Art. Its purpose is to enlist the aid of community leaders from all parts of the United States interested in promoting cultural exchange. From time to time the International Council has made generous contributions to special projects of the International Program of circulating exhibitions.

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