

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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GERMAN ART OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY by Werner Haftmann, Alfred Hentzen, William S. Lieberman, edited by Andrew Carnduff Ritchie. 240 pages; 178 illustrations (48 in color). Published by the Museum of Modern Art, distributed by Simon and Schuster, New York. \$9.50.

German Art of the 20th Century has been published by the Museum of Modern Art in connection with its major fall exhibition. In this, the first comprehensive survey of German art to be published in English, painting, sculpture and prints have each been separately chronicled by an outstanding authority. The book was edited by Andrew Carnduff Ritchie who selected the exhibition at the Museum.

Ever since the first group of German expressionist was formed in Dresden Germany has played a vital role in the development of modern art, except for the period during the Nazi regime when all creative activity was halted. Today the Federal Republic of Germany is aiding in the re-establishment of the German tradition in modern art, chronicled in this book, and German artists are once more free to create works of art.

Dr. Haftmann, probably the most widely read art historian in Germany today, points out that the German contribution to European painting has been diversified. "By their powers of conviction Kandinsky and Klee brought the various lines of development in abstract painting to a flowering which fertilized all of European painting. But there were also Beckmann's transcendental realism, Kokoschka's dramatic impressionism, Kirchner's hieroglyphics, Klee's cultivation of a plastic alphabet that seemed to make possible the erection of a bridge between the poles of a great reality and a great abstraction," he says. He places this contribution against the background of social and intellectual forces at the turn of the century and describes in detail the aims of each succeeding group of German artists from Die Brücke through the Blaue Reiter, the New Realism and the Bauhaus. The destruction of creative activity under Hitler is described and recent work touched upon briefly.

In the section on sculpture, Dr. Alfred Hentzen, Director of the famous Hamburg Museum, discusses the great works by Lehbruck and Barlach, the two artists who marked the beginning of new German sculpture in the early part of the century as well as lesser known figures. Writing of Gerhard Marcks, the best known living German sculptor, he says, "the paths struck out by Barlach and Lehbruck unite in him in a new style, and his influence in turn, extends over the entire artistic scene in Germany. Each of the artists contemporary with him or younger has had to reckon with his work. He is still today the center of German sculpture."

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Print making played a particularly vital role in German art and a section of the book, by William S. Lieberman, Curator of Prints at the Museum of Modern Art, is devoted to graphic work. From the outset of the first group of expressionists, the Brücke, Mr. Lieberman points out, print making was as important as painting in their program. Mr. Lieberman relates this interest to Dürer and earlier tradition in art and follows the development up to the present day.

German Art of the 20th Century was hand set and printed in Germany under the Museum's supervision.

Both Dr. Hentzen and Dr. Haftmann are now visiting this country. Dr. Haftmann will speak at Goethe House on Monday, October 7.

For additional information please contact Elizabeth Shaw, Publicity Director, Museum of Modern Art, N. Y. CI 5-8900.