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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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following the conclusion of the Juan Gris exhibition, which runs through Sunday, June 1, the trustees of the Museum of Modern Art have agreed to undertake a modernization program for the 19-year old building at 11 West 53 Street. Because of the extent of these improvements, planned for the galleries, auditorium, service workshops and library, the Museum will be closed to the public. Re-opening date will be announced as soon as possible.

Other changes include replacing the glass brick in the garden facade with clear glass and construction of a circulation stairway on the ~~west~~^{east} end of the building, projecting onto the garden terrace. Air conditioning improvements, begun earlier this year, will be completed and new movable gallery walls installed on three gallery floors.

Additional office and storage space, urgently needed, will be made available by remodeling the former Theater Guild building at 23-25 West 53 Street, purchased by the Museum in 1956 for this purpose. Office space on the fourth and fifth floors of the main building and in the annex at 21 West 53 Street (constructed in 1951) will be rearranged accordingly.

The changes are designed to improve the Museum's services and facilities for its growing public and membership. Since the main building was constructed in 1939 attendance has more than doubled, reaching over 600,000 in 1956-57. Membership, now more than 25,000 has increased eight times. The number of paintings and sculptures in the Collection has doubled since 1942 while the number of prints has doubled in the past 9 years.

An important new addition will be a well equipped conservation laboratory where paintings can be re-lined, stretched or cleaned. This will eliminate the hazardous and expensive task of moving works of art to another part of the city when this kind of service is necessary.

Enlargement of the library space has been particularly urgent. In 1939 the library contained 6500 books and pamphlets and about 3100 slides. Today it has approximately 115,000 items including almost three times as many books, seven times as many slides as well as 50,000 photographs and 10,000 clipping files. It is used by students and teachers and art scholars from all over the world.

Provision of additional storage space will enable the Museum to decrease the amount of space now leased in commercial warehouses.