

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

11 WEST 53 STREET, NEW YORK 19, N. Y.

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Press Preview

Monday, August 14,

11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

ROADS, NEW EXHIBITION AT MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

The first exhibition of the art of roadbuilding will be presented at the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, from August 15 through September 17, prior to a tour of museums throughout the country. Elevated roads, multi-lane highways, interchanges, airport runways and roads incorporating buildings and towns will be shown in approximately 70 enlarged photographs, some of them mural size. The exhibition is directed by the architect-engineer Bernard Rudofsky in collaboration with Arthur Drexler, Director of the Department of Architecture and Design.

As Mr. Rudofsky and Mr. Drexler point out in the introductory text, the exhibition "illustrates the complexity of recently built highways and suggests that we may presently see a wholly new kind of architecture, road-inspired and road-conditioned....In Europe road engineers have now been joined by architects, and there is reason to hope that highways will no longer be allowed to destroy cityscapes and landscapes alike, but will be brought within the discipline of the humane arts. Indeed, the true utopia may be a road for pedestrians."

The integration of roads and architecture is shown in photographs of a test-speedway built on top of Fiat's plant in Turin in the 1930's; a highway and "endless" building with parking and garage facilities as well as shops, restaurants, offices and warehouses in the heart of Tokyo. The most recent example of this trend is the Helicoid now under construction in Caracas. Designed by the architects Gutiérrez, Neuberger and Bornhorst, it consists of a spiral road which envelops an entire hill, providing automobile access to a continuous chain of shops. Other forms of road-towns are Frank Lloyd Wright's proposal for the Pittsburgh Civic Center and Edgar Chambless' 1910 project for a continuous concrete house with trains in the basement and a pedestrian road on the roof.

The exhibition includes many examples of elevated roads: a sketch by Leonardo da Vinci, one of the first to conceive of roads at roof level; New York's West Side Highway, the San Francisco and Los Angeles Freeways; a highway through the Atchafalaya Swamp in Louisiana, and one traversing Rome, designed by Pier Luigi Nervi and a group of architects.

Several photographs of traffic circles, clover leaf intersections, and multi-level interchanges such as those in Fort Worth, Hollywood, and Chicago, demonstrate the complexity of urban traffic arteries which in recent years have come to dominate the cityscape.

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The beauty of serpentine mountain roads is shown in views of the approaches to the St. Gotthard Pass in Switzerland and in a section of the Burma Road consisting of two dozen switchbacks. Also included in the exhibition is a reproduction of the so-called Peutinger Table, the oldest road map known. The original map dates from the third century A. D.; on view is a photostat of a 16th century copy showing the roads radiating from ancient Rome to England and the mouth of the Ganges.

The exhibition will be sent around the country by the Museum's Department of Circulating Exhibitions with the aid of a grant from the CBS Foundation, Inc., the organization through which the Columbia Broadcasting System makes contributions to educational and cultural institutions.

For photographs and additional information please contact Nancy Reed, Assistant Publicity Director, Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, N. Y. CI 5-8900