

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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

TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900

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MARK TOBEY by William C. Seitz. 112 pages; 86 plates (12 in color); boards, \$5.50; paper, \$3.50. Published by The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Distributed by Doubleday and Co., Inc. November 16, 1962.

Mark Tobey by William C. Seitz will be published by the Museum of Modern Art November 16. Based on a long familiarity with Tobey's painting and on recent conversations with him, the 112-page monograph is the first detailed study of the painting and thought of this leading American artist. Eighty-six reproductions, including twelve full-page color plates, illustrate the development of Tobey's work during the past four decades. The book is on sale at the Museum, 11 West 53 Street, for \$5.50 hard-bound; \$3.50 paper. It will be distributed nationally by Doubleday and Co., Inc.

According to Mr. Seitz, Tobey (b.1890) "holds a unique and important position among the artists of the United States and Europe." He achieved recognition on the West Coast in the early 40's and by 1944 began to gain a national reputation. Since his first one-man show in Paris in 1955, his international fame has grown rapidly. He received a major prize at the 29th Venice Biennale (1958) and was the first living American to be given a major retrospective in the Musée d'Arts Décoratifs in Paris (1961).

The opening chapter of the book is devoted to a discussion of the religious and philosophical principles behind Tobey's art. Since 1918, when Tobey was converted to the Bahá'í World Faith, his work has been strongly influenced by Bahá'í ideas of unity humanity and progressive revelation. As a consequence of his belief in the "oneness of humanity," Tobey has long recognized the cultural significance of America's location between Europe and the Orient. He is the first painter to successfully fuse Western subject matter with calligraphic painting techniques of China and Japan.

The text continues with an analysis of the forms, themes and subjects of Tobey's mature work. Since 1935 he has painted in a linear, abstract style known as "white writing." Mr. Seitz studies the important stages in Tobey's development which led to the formation of this unique style--his childhood in the Midwest; sojourns in New York where the spiritual influence of Bahá'í and the dynamism of the city played an important part in his reaction against traditional concepts of space; his "personal discovery of cubism," the outcome of his experience teaching in a Seattle art school; lessons in Chinese calligraphy; visits to the Orient; residency at Dartington Hall, a progressive English school where he met other artists and intellectuals interested in the fusion of Eastern and Western ideas.

The book includes a biographical chronology, a list of Tobey's major exhibitions from 1917 to the present, a bibliography of over two hundred entries and a catalog of the large Tobey retrospective organized by Mr. Seitz. The exhibition, presented at the Museum of Modern Art from September 12 through November 4, will open at the Cleveland Museum of Art on December 11 and will later be shown at the Art Institute of Chicago.

Mr. Seitz, Associate Curator of the Department of Painting and Sculpture Exhibitions, is author of articles on many aspects of the arts, two books on Monet and a recently published study, The Art of Assemblage.

Photographs and review copies available from Nancy Reed, Assistant Publicity Director, Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York 19, New York. Circle 5-8900.