

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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PRESS PREVIEW:

Thursday, June 27, 1963

11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

An exhibition of 15 paintings and 11 drawings and prints by André Derain (1880-1954) sampling his fauve period, the more austere work done in reaction to the early paintings and his late superficially old masterish pictures will be on view at the Museum of Modern Art from June 28 through the summer. Most recent in a series of small exhibitions drawn entirely from the Museum's own collections*, the Derain show is also one of the Museum's 60 circulating exhibitions which tour the country with the aid of a grant from the CBS Foundation, the organization through which the Columbia Broadcasting System makes educational and cultural contributions.

"Forty years ago, in the 1920s, André Derain was often spoken of as one of the great triumvirate of painters who dominated modern art in Paris and, consequently, throughout the western world," Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Director of Museum Collections points out in the introductory label. "The other two were Matisse and Picasso. Yet when he died in 1954 Derain's work of his last thirty years was regarded with condescension, sometimes with contempt; and often it still is."

The neo-traditional art of Derain, he continues, may prove "exemplary and perhaps cautionary for younger artists working in a realistic and traditional style, and for their public."

The exhibition includes four "brilliant, spontaneous, semi-abstract fireworks of his fauve period (1905-06)," three good works from his greatest period, from about 1910 to mid-1914 when he painted in sober reaction against his fauve style, and five paintings of the decade after the war when Derain's art began gradually to decline toward an easy charm.

Commenting on the early paintings, Mr. Barr says "Derain and Matisse painted at Collioure on the Riviera in the summer of 1905. That fall, when they showed their paintings together with those of Vlaminck and Rouault, they were attacked as 'invertebrates,' 'incoherents' and later as fauves, wild beasts. Critics called their daring, unrealistically colored compositions 'formless confusion,' 'unspeakable fantasies,' 'barbaric and naive sport of children.'

"During the years 1910 to 1914 Derain developed a powerful style, austere, sombre in color, sometimes melancholy in feeling. Cézanne's influence is clear

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*Earlier exhibitions in the series were Léger, 1960, America Seen Between the Wars, 1961, and Modern Allegories, 1961.

in the Valley of the Lot and the Window on the Park, both of 1912. The Mourning Woman owes a good deal to Derain's interest in Italian 14th century frescoes.

"In 1918, when Derain returned from the War, he found Paris eager for his leadership in reviving reassuring, traditional styles. At first he retained his pre-war sobriety and sense of discipline but soon developed a new sensuality of form and surface which eventually led to a facile charm and technical virtuosity. The differences in style between the Valley of the Lot 1912, the Three Trees 1924, and the Landscape, Southern France, are symptomatic."

Drawings and prints include a red crayon nude of 1920, three drypoints, woodcuts illustrating Ballade du pauvre Macchabé mal enterré by René Dalize, and a 1927 lithograph.

Photographs and additional information available from Elizabeth Shaw, Director, Public Information, Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York 19, N. Y. CI 5-8900.