

By messenger to TV, Eugenia Sheppard ^{interad} Tschun,
Charlotte Curtis, ~~Texas~~, A.P. U.

The Museum of Modern Art

11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019 Circle 5-8900 Cable: Modernart

No. 33
Monday, March 21, 1966
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sir Patrick Dean, British Ambassador to the United States, and Lady Dean head the list of distinguished guests who will attend a black tie preview of the exhibition of paintings and watercolors by J.M. W. Turner from the British national collection, on Monday evening, March 21, at The Museum of Modern Art.

Norman Reid, Director of the Tate Gallery, and Lawrence Gowing, Keeper of British Painting at the Tate, have come from London for the opening. Other dinner guests include Roger Stevens, Chairman of the National Council on the Fine Arts, and Mrs. Stevens; Thomas P. Hoving, New York City Commissioner of Parks, and Mrs. Hoving; sculptor Jacques Lipchitz and Mrs. Lipchitz; and painter Mark Rothko and Mrs. Rothko. Among The Museum of Modern Art Trustees present will be Gardner Cowles, Philip Johnson, Mrs. John D. Rockefeller 3rd, Monroe Wheeler, director of the exhibition with Mr. Gowing, and Mrs. Bliss Parkinson, President of the Museum.

The dinner guests will have a special preview of the exhibition from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Dinner will be served at 8 p.m. in the Founders' Room. Sir Patrick Dean will speak on behalf of the British government. Ralph Colin, Vice President of the Museum's Board of Trustees, will welcome the guests.

The Museum's 3,000 contributing members have been invited to see the exhibition beginning at 8 p.m. Regular Museum members will view the show from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. on Tuesday, March 22. The exhibition, TURNER: IMAGINATION AND REALITY, opens to the public on Wednesday, March 23 and remains on view through May 22.

The exhibition consists of 40 oils, 59 watercolors and three sketchbooks. Fewer than half the oils were exhibited during his lifetime; some of the watercolors selected from the 19,000 he left the British collection at his death in 1851 have never before been exhibited anywhere.

Additional information available from Elizabeth Shaw, Director, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019. CI. 5-8900

Turner

Imagination and Reality

Turner died a hundred and fifteen years ago, but some of his pictures look as if they were painted yesterday. These pictures, from the last twenty years of Turner's life, reveal potentialities in painting that did not reappear until our time. They tell us something about the inner nature of a whole pictorial tradition, of which recent American painting is an integral part.

Turner not only saw the world as light and color; he isolated an intrinsic quality of painting and revealed that it could be self-sufficient, an independent imaginative function.

The essayist Hazlitt called his paintings "pictures of nothing—and very like." We are now accustomed to pictures of nothing, but the cosmic breadth and force of Turner's vision are still unfamiliar and surprising.

This exhibition has been organized in collaboration with The Tate Gallery, with the support of the British Government. It includes many works which have never left the national collection, to which Turner bequeathed them; a number of them have not been exhibited before. Assembled with them are masterpieces from American collections; together they give a comprehensive view of Turner's astonishingly original achievement. His entire range in his final years is presented—the paintings exhibited in his lifetime and those which were kept in his studio, the watercolors, the intimate sketch-books and the notes of his technical researches—with a few earlier works to place them in perspective.

Turner's most audacious experiments transcend the limits of romantic art and reach out into a region of elemental purity.

More than any other master, perhaps, he shows us the borderland between representation and abstraction. These pictures reflect both the poetic serenity and the tumult of an extraordinary imagination.

Lawrence Gowing and Monroe Wheeler
Directors of the Exhibition