

The Museum of Modern Art

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RECENT ACQUISITIONS

Through January 10, 1989

On the eve of the sixtieth anniversary of The Museum of Modern Art, its six curatorial departments, library, and archive have collaborated on an exhibition of significant recent additions to the collection. Organized by Riva Castleman, deputy director for curatorial affairs, RECENT ACQUISITIONS reveals how new additions to the collection, both gifts and purchases, have broadened and strengthened the Museum's representation of the modern arts. The exhibition is on view through January 10, 1989.

Richard E. Oldenburg, director of the Museum, writes, "Through this small exhibition the curators hope to illustrate several aspects of museum collecting, and to demonstrate how today's choices extend our understanding of choices in the past and give them new meaning."

The variety of works represented in the exhibition demonstrates a continuation and expansion of the scope of artistic expression. Included are over twenty paintings, sculptures, drawings, prints, architectural models, design objects, photographs, and books, as well as recently acquired archival materials that refer to the Museum's history. In addition, curators have provided statements explaining the importance of these acquisitions and how each enhances the collection.

Sculptures acquired by the Department of Painting and Sculpture display critical aspects of two important artists' careers. Henri Matisse's voluptuous Large Seated Nude (1923-25) is his largest and arguably most arresting free-standing sculpture. A product of his years in Nice, it bridges the gap

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between Matisse's early and later work. An untitled 1967 wall piece by Richard Serra, made of vulcanized rubber and neon tubing, suggests the need for a fresh look at the complex legacy of Minimalism. Also on view are the first paintings by Franz Marc and Malcolm Morley to enter the collection: Marc's Die Weltenkuh (1913) and Morley's 1977 The Day of the Locust.

New acquisitions by the Department of Drawings include an outstanding drawing by Giorgio de Chirico from the period when his influential "metaphysical paintings" were made (1917-19); an excellent example (1908-10) of Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's work from the time of his involvement with the group Die Brücke (The Bridge); and a rare 1912 pencil sketch from Fernand Léger's Cubist period. Among acquisitions by the Department of Prints and Illustrated Books is Pablo Picasso's Paris, July 14, 1942 (1942-45), an etching and engraving made during the Nazi occupation of Paris, and David Smith's etching Horse and Rider (1937), the only remaining documentation of a sculpture made for the Work Projects Administration and later destroyed.

Photographs from the very beginning of the medium's origins have lately been acquired by the Department of Photography. These include an elegant albumen-silver print of 1863 by Francis Edmond Currey and an ambitious, mammoth-plate landscape print of 1872 by Eadweard Muybridge. Recent photographs such as a limited edition gelatin-silver print of 1974 by Robert Cumming and a color instant print diptych of 1988 by William Wegman demonstrate the department's commitment to contemporary photography.

The Department of Architecture and Design reveals the breadth of its collection in the display of such diverse items as a poster, Symphony of a Great City (1928), by Georgii and Vladimir Stenberg; floor tiles from the Casa Milà by Antoni Gaudi (1905-07); the "Nomos" dining table (1988) by Norman

Foster; and a wood, plastic, and plaster model of the Winton Guest House (1983-86) by Frank Gehry.

Among the unusual types of material held in the collection of the Celeste Bartos International Film Study Center and the Film Still Archive are unpublished scripts, film stills, press books, and set design and animation sketches. On view are a set design by Boris Leven for Josef von Sternberg's The Shanghai Gesture and drawings by I. Klein for the 1937 Walt Disney cartoon Magician Mickey. Recent additions to the Museum archive include a 1946 letter from Gala Dali--who writes that her husband Salvador Dali has been working with Walt Disney. The library has contributed rare publications such as a catalogue of the 1908 Georges Braque exhibition that prompted a French critic to describe a painting as reducing its subject to "some cubes," thus giving birth to the term "Cubism."

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