

#A0173-6
THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
11 WEST 53RD STREET, NEW YORK
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART OPENS EXHIBITION OF ITALIAN
MASTERS AND EXHIBITION OF MODERN MASTERS

The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, opens to the public Friday, January 26, two related exhibitions: an Exhibition of Italian Masters and an Exhibition of Modern Masters. The Italian works, from the Italian Renaissance and Baroque periods, have been lent by the Royal Italian Government. The modern works are from American and European collections and from the Permanent Collection of the Museum of Modern Art. Both exhibitions will remain on view through Sunday, March 24.

The Honorary Committee sponsoring the Exhibition of Italian Masters is composed of the following:

His Excellency, Prince Ascanio Colonna, Royal Italian
Ambassador
Commendatore Gaetano Vecchiotti, Royal Italian
Consul General
Professor Cesare Brandi, Delegate of the Ministry
of National Education
Commendatore Eugenio Ventura, Responsible Trustee
of the Royal Italian Government
The Honorable Fiorello H. LaGuardia, Mayor of New York
Dr. Cyrus Adler, President of the Jewish Theological
Seminary of America
Bernhard Berenson
Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler, President of Columbia
University
Dr. George A. Buttrick, President of the Federal
Council of the Churches of Christ in America
Dr. Harold G. Campbell, Superintendent of Schools,
New York City
Dr. Harry Woodburn Chase, Chancellor, New York
University
Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, Minister, The Riverside
Church
Samuel H. Kress
The Right Reverend William T. Manning, Bishop of the
Episcopal Diocese of New York
The Most Reverend Francis J. Spellman, Archbishop
of New York.

The lenders to the Exhibition of Modern Masters are:

Edward G. Robinson, BEVERLY HILLS, CALIFORNIA
Miss Gertrude B. Whittemore, NAUGATUCK, CONNECTICUT
Phillips Memorial Gallery, WASHINGTON, D. C.

The Brooklyn Museum, BROOKLYN, NEW YORK
Stephen C. Clark, NEW YORK CITY
A. Conger Goodyear, NEW YORK CITY
Dr. and Mrs. David M. Levy, NEW YORK CITY
The Lewisohn Collection, NEW YORK CITY
Miss Ann Resor, NEW YORK CITY
John Hay Whitney, NEW YORK CITY
The Ferargil Galleries, NEW YORK CITY
Wildenstein and Company, Inc., NEW YORK CITY

The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, PHILA-
DELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

René Gaffe, BRUSSELS
Marcel Fleischmann, ZURICH
Miss Sally Ryan, LONDON
The Tate Gallery, LONDON

The Italian masterpieces to be shown in the Exhibition will never be permitted to leave Italy again. Even in Italy, however, it would be necessary to visit Florence, Naples, Palermo, Turin, Venice, Milan, Rome and other cities in that country to see all of these masterpieces--twenty-one paintings and seven sculptures.

In the preface to the catalog of the Italian masters, Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Director of the Museum of Modern Art, writes:

"Botticelli's Birth of Venus, Titian's Paul III, a Michelangelo marble (the first ever exhibited in New York), Raphael's Madonna of the Chair, Verrocchio's David, Bernini's Costanza Buonarelli, Masaccio's Crucifixion: that these should be brought together in a single exhibition is a memorable event, but that this exhibition should be in New York is an unexpected miracle.

"What art museum would not be glad to assist in this miracle? For these world famous masterpieces can and should claim the hospitality even of a museum devoted to the art of our day.

"For the Renaissance and Baroque art of Italy stands at the very heart of the great tradition of European art and its American branches -- the tradition which looks back to Greece and forward through El Greco, Poussin, Rubens, Rembrandt to Ingres, Delacroix, Manet, Renoir and then to masters of our own days as widely separated as Picasso and Diego Rivera. Cézanne above all recognized this when he said he wanted to paint 'something solid and enduring like the art of the museums,' which meant to him the art of the great Venetians and Florentines and their French descendants."

In the foreword to the catalog of the Modern Masters, Dorothy C. Miller, Assistant Curator of Painting and Sculpture, writes:

"When the Museum of Modern Art agreed to exhibit the masterpieces which had been lent by the Italian government to the Golden Gate International Exposition last summer, it was decided that a group of distinguished modern painters and sculptors should be shown in the illustrious company of the Italian masters. The Museum has therefore brought together a number of works of high quality by some of the foremost artists of the last third of the nineteenth century and the first third of the

twentieth.

"The roll of the Italian exhibition includes some of the greatest names of Italian art, although it is in no sense intended as a survey of the field. The desire to balance the Italian exhibition of twenty-nine pieces has necessarily limited the modern works in number. It is felt that this small group makes possible a direct and stimulating comparison with the Italian masters.

"Imaginary contests between the heroes of antiquity and their modern counterparts have always had a certain fascination. Here, within the Museum of Modern Art, some such trial of strength may actually take place, for the Museum, believing in the power and quality of the modern artist, has not hesitated to accept the challenge made possible by its act of hospitality toward the Italian masters. Whichever side, the old or the new, seems to triumph, one fact is sure: the great indebtedness of the modern masters to the work of their ancestors of the Italian Renaissance and Baroque--a debt that is continually being paid not only by the explicit homage which modern artists so often offer to the past but by the ever-changing illumination which the art of the living throws upon the art of the dead."

To accommodate the public, many of whom find it difficult to visit museums during the day, the Museum will extend its hours during the period of these two exhibitions. The Museum will be open from 10 A.M. to 10 P.M. every day, including Saturdays. On Sundays it will be open from 12 noon until 10 P.M. Because of the great additional expense of the Italian Exhibition, a change in the price of admissions will be in effect also. Admission to the entire Museum, with the exception of the galleries devoted to the exhibition of the Italian masters, will be 25 cents daily and Sundays. Admission to the Exhibition of Italian masters will be an additional twenty-five cents except between the hours of 10 A.M. and 12 noon on weekdays, including Saturdays, when the special fee for that exhibition will be omitted. Children up to the age of sixteen will be admitted to the Museum for 10 cents weekdays and Sundays but will be required to pay the special fee of 25 cents for the Exhibition of Italian masters, except during the two hours when this fee is omitted.

Simultaneously with the two exhibitions the Museum will publish a separate catalog for each exhibition. The catalog for the Exhibition of Italian masters contains six reproductions in full color including a color reproduction on the cover. It has 46 half-tone plates reproducing each of the works together with many enlarged details. Its sixty-four pages include a preface by Alfred H. Barr,

Jr., with short biographies of the artists and notes on each work. The catalog for the Exhibition of Modern Masters has a full color cover and frontispiece and 28 half-tone plates. Its forty-two pages include a foreword by Dorothy C. Miller. The catalog of the Exhibition of Italian Masters will be on sale at the Museum for fifty cents; the catalog of the Exhibition of Modern Masters for thirty-five cents.

NOTE:

Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Director of the Museum of Modern Art, installed the Exhibition of Italian Masters, assisted by Commendatore Eugenio Ventura, Responsible Trustee of the Royal Italian Government, and Professor Cesare Brandi, Delegate of the Italian Ministry of Education.

Professor Clarence Kennedy of Smith College designed the special lighting for the Italian sculpture.

Dorothy C. Miller, Assistant Curator of Painting and Sculpture of the Museum of Modern Art, installed the Exhibition of Modern Masters.