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# THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

NEW YORK 19

11 WEST 53rd STREET  
TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900  
CABLES: MODERNART, NEW-YORK

SARAH NEWMAYER, PUBLICITY DIRECTOR

July 3, 1945

To City Editor  
Art Editor  
Drama Editor  
Film Editor

Dear Sir:

You are invited to come or send a representative to the

Press Preview of  
STAGE DESIGNS BY JOAN JUNYER

Tuesday, July 10  
2 to 6 P.M.

at the Museum of Modern Art  
11 West 53 Street

The exhibition, which will open to the public Wednesday, July 11, and will continue through September 16, will be the second exhibition to be held in the small gallery on the Auditorium floor of the Museum assigned as permanent exhibition space to the Department of Dance and Theatre Design.

On Wednesday, July 11, a new model house by John Funk, San Francisco architect, will be added to the exhibition TOMORROW'S SMALL HOUSE now being shown on the first floor of the Museum. Unfortunately, the new model will not be ready for display until Wednesday. It is therefore suggested that those who can, wait until Wednesday to see the Junyer designs and the model house together. If it is necessary for review purposes, however, to see the Junyer exhibition before, it will be ready for preview Tuesday.

For further information please telephone me at Circle 5-8900.

Sincerely,

*Sarah Newmayer*  
Publicity Director

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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EXHIBITION OF THREE-DIMENSIONAL STAGE DESIGNS AND  
PROJECTS BY JOAN JUNYER OPENS AT MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

An exhibition which presents an original approach to the problems of scene and costume design, emphasizing the relation between the performer and his scenic environment, will open at the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, on Wednesday, July 11, in the small gallery set aside as permanent exhibition space for the Department of Dance and Theatre Design. This second exhibition to be held in the new gallery, Stage Designs by Joan Junyer, will include a selection of stage projects and designs by the Catalonian painter, consisting of one dance composition in high relief, four plaster models for plastic settings, and seven costume designs in a new relief technique. Mr. Junyer, instead of making the scenic design an entity in itself without reference to the actor, considers his design in relation to the human form, which thus becomes an integral part of the setting. The exhibition will continue on view through September 16.

George Amberg, Curator of the Department of Dance and Theatre Design, who has directed the exhibition, comments on it as follows:

"This exhibition is the first public presentation of Joan Junyer's most recent stage projects. They suggest a significant reform in scenic art and call for a radical break with the traditional picture perspective painted on flats, drops and wings of canvas. Like other progressive scenic artists Junyer conceives the stage as 'dramatized space' rather than as a framed painting. Space and movement, color, light and structure with Junyer are the elements with which he works, creating out of them a three-dimensional reality of strong architectural and sculptural feeling.

"Junyer sees the need of a new orientation or re-evaluation of volume forms in art. In Dance Composition his 'painting' is actually polychrome high relief--a fusion of painting and sculpture. Lines, shapes and colors burst out from the plane surface of the solid wall, and the object immediately gains additional interest. It profits from accidental and incidental circumstances, such as the changing positions of the spectator, or shifting lights and shadows playing over the curved and broken surfaces. Such emphasis on three-dimensional values is not rare with modern painters; Degas, Matisse, Picasso have all created sculptures in a similar exploration of actual space.

"These theatre projects are the application to the stage of a principle for which Junyer claims general validity. In a sweeping conception of esthetic universe he visualizes painting as essentially a complement to architecture and construction, dance, drama, music. Painting should be socially and functionally integrated with every creative expression of our time, placing the painter on an equal or equivalent level with architect and engineer, choreographer, composer, director and playwright. This, in essence, is truly a return to Renaissance ideals.

"The theatre, owing to its social influence and immediate popular appeal seems the obvious place to promote new ideas and ideals--or to revive forgotten ones. Actually, however, the scenic arts are the least progressive of all: the theatre, with scarce exceptions, is resolutely and consistently conservative. European Expressionism and Russian Constructivism passed over the American stage without so much as leaving traces in the stage dust. Norman Bel Geddes, alive and active though he is, is merely remembered in some models of almost historic dignity. In fact, the triumph of today's ballet decor is a victory of tradition, despite the modernism of its foremost designers. In modern dance, however, some noteworthy attempts in new directions have been made. The high sensitivity of modern dancers to spatial tensions and relations has called forth the collaboration of modern designers and sculptors. Martha Graham in particular has shown courage as well as imagination in commissioning artists like Arch Lauterer and Isamu Noguchi to design settings for the dance stage. There is every reason to hope and to expect that the stage of the modern dance will further serve as proving ground for experiments of weight and value, such as the projects by Junyer."

Jóan Junyer, who had been living in New York for the past five years, was born in Barcelona, Spain, in 1904. His father was an art critic and collector of antiques and his uncle, the painter Sebastian Junyer, was his first art teacher. At thirteen he began his formal art training at the Escuela de Artes y Oficios and later attended the Academia de Bellas Artes. His first exhibition was held in 1921.

At the age of nineteen he moved to Paris where he kept his residence for sixteen years. He also travelled and exhibited his paintings extensively in Europe--in Sweden, Denmark, England, Switzerland, Germany and Holland. From 1936-39 he was Consultant of Art for the Department of Arts of the Spanish Government. During the Spanish Civil War, he worked at the Department of Culture of the Republican Government. In 1939 he went to England and from there to South America. He came to this country in 1941.

Junyer has had one-man exhibitions of his paintings in Paris, Barcelona, Havana and at the Museum of Modern Art in Madrid, as well as exhibiting in many important group exhibitions here and abroad. His designs for the ballet include scenery, costumes and lighting for Lorca's The Cuckhold's Fair for the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, and also for La Nuit de la Saint Jean, Col. de Basil Russian Ballet, in London, 1939 (unproduced because of the war), and for Argentinita's Old Madrid. Theatre designs include modern settings and costumes for the classical theatre in Barcelona in 1934-35. Junyer has also illustrated numerous books of poems published abroad.