

The Museum of Modern Art

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

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The Taste of a Connoisseur: The Paul J. Sachs Collection, a memorial exhibition of more than 75 drawings and 20 prints, will be on view at The Museum of Modern Art from December 21 through February 26. Presented in cooperation with the Fogg Art Museum of Harvard University, the exhibition is a tribute to the late Professor Sachs and his long association with The Museum of Modern Art.

William S. Lieberman, Director of the Department of Drawings and Prints at the Museum, who selected the exhibition, was a graduate student of Professor Sachs before joining the Museum staff in 1944. As he notes in his introduction to the exhibition, "Paul J. Sachs was passionately interested in prints and drawings and, as this exhibition suggests, people. The selection here indicates the wide range of his gifts to the Fogg Art Museum as well as his lesser but important gifts to The Museum of Modern Art, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and the Metropolitan Museum. The earliest works in the exhibition are prints and drawings by Flemish and Italian masters of the last quarter of the 15th century, the most recent are drawings by the American painter Ben Shahn."

Among the works on view are drawings by the 15th and 16th^{century} masters Pollaiuolo, Mantegna, Dürer, Holbein and Clouet, as well as by Rubens, Rembrandt, Watteau, Boucher, Fragonard, Tiepolo, Goya, Géricault, Delacroix and Corot. Three painters, Degas, Ingres, and Picasso, are represented by larger groups of drawings. Contemporary artists^{also} include Matisse, Moore, Rivera, and Sheeler.

Wilder Green, Program Co-ordinator of the Museum, designed the galleries for the exhibition.

Professor Sachs, who was one of the seven founders of The Museum of Modern Art in 1929, died at the age of 86 in February, 1965. His first service to the Museum was to nominate Alfred H. Barr, Jr., as its first Director. A young man, whose chief scholarly work lay in the field of quattrocento drawings, among them the

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Fighting Nudes by Pollaiuolo included in this exhibition, Mr. Barr was then teaching the history of art at Wellesley College, where Mr. Sachs had begun his own teaching career.

That same year, Professor Sachs gave the Museum its first acquisitions -- drawings and prints -- among them the portrait of Anna Peter by George Grosz. Ten years later when the Museum opened its main building on West 53rd Street he delivered the principal address, stressing the importance of scholarship, connoisseurship and standards. He also conceived that "the museum of the future ... a treasure house... should be a comprehensive and enduring community of scholars, embracing in addition to traditional ... museum functions - those of study, teaching and research."

For three decades, he continued to be a Trustee, wise counsellor and generous friend to the Museum. In 1962 a special committee was named in honor of Professor Sachs to be specifically concerned with the complex of drawings and prints, and in 1964, the Museum named its new galleries for drawings and prints in his honor.

At his death, Paul Sachs was Professor Emeritus of Fine Arts at Harvard University. He had been Associate Director for more than 20 years of Harvard's Fogg Museum, where he initiated and taught a notable museum course whose purpose was to produce what he described as the connoisseur-scholar. His students now serve as directors and curators in museums across the country including the National Gallery of Art, the Metropolitan Museum, The Museum of Modern Art, and the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

Agnes Mongan, now Assistant Director as well as Curator of Drawings of the Fogg Art Museum, had been intimately associated with Professor Sachs, his collection of drawings and their publication since she joined the staff of the Fogg in 1928. In the catalog of a memorial exhibition prepared by Miss Mongan for the Fogg Museum, she writes, "The exciting quality of Paul Sach's teaching, his contagious enthusiasm, his instantaneous reaction to an object of quality, no matter of what school or place, and his capacity to make his students see and feel that quality, a long generation of former students knows without being told."

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Paul Joseph Sachs began to acquire drawings and prints before he entered Harvard as a student in 1896. After graduation, he became a partner in one of the country's leading banking houses, but retired after a few years to become the Assistant Director of the Fogg in 1915. He taught his first course in 1916-17 as "Lecturer in Art" at Wellesley and in 1917, was appointed an Assistant Professor in the Department of Fine Arts at Harvard. His double association as a museum administrator and as a member of the Department of Fine Arts continued until his retirement in 1945. He became the Associate Director of the Fogg in 1923, a full professor of Fine Arts in 1927 and Chairman of the Department in 1933. Meanwhile, he continued to build his famous private collection, most of it destined for the Fogg Art Museum. At his death he was an internationally renowned authority on drawings and prints.

Photographs and additional material available from Elizabeth Shaw, Director, and Lynn Traiger, Assistant Director, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019. Circle 5-8900.