

The Museum of Modern Art

50th Anniversary



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GIFTS OF DRAWING

Eighty recent additions to the Drawings Collection of The Museum of Modern Art will be on view in the Museum's third-floor Sachs Galleries from August 9 through November 13. GIFTS OF DRAWING, directed by William S. Lieberman, is divided into two parts: recent bequests of European drawings from four close friends of the Museum and a smaller miscellany of recent acquisitions of American drawings.

The four donors represented in the European portion of the exhibition are the late James Thrall Soby, Pierre Matisse in memory of the late Patricia Kane Matisse, the late Mrs. George Acheson, and the late Lester Avnet. James Thrall Soby joined the Museum in an advisory capacity in 1937 and subsequently became a member of the staff as well as a Trustee. Patricia Kane Matisse was the wife of the distinguished New York art dealer Pierre Matisse. In her memory, Mr. Matisse has given to the Museum her personal collection of paintings and drawings of which the latter are shown here. Mrs. George Acheson, a friend of Mr. and Mrs. Matisse, was a devoted volunteer in the Museum's Library and also a friend of many members of the Museum staff. Lester Avnet formed a collection of drawings with The Museum of Modern Art specifically in mind. His

drawings shown in this exhibition supplement those previously exhibited in A TREASURY OF MODERN DRAWING: THE JOAN AND LESTER AVNET COLLECTION. Among the artists represented in the four bequests are Bonnard, Dubuffet, Klee, Miro, Moore, Redon, Rouault, Tanguy, and Tchelitchew.

Additional drawings by several of these artists are also on view and these too were acquired by the Museum during the past year. A pair of drawings by Amedeo Modigliani are gifts of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Rodgers. One of these, the drawing The Family, is unique in Modigliani's art for its grouping of three figures. A drawing in the exhibition by Alexander Vesnin, the Russian Constructivist painter, sculptor, architect, and stage designer, is "the most important of any of his surviving works" observes Mr. Lieberman. A drawing of Vesnin's planned decoration of Red Square for the third Comintern Congress of 1921, it was acquired through the bequests of Mrs. Harry Lynde Bradley and Katherine S. Dreier. A charcoal study by Balthus for his painting Nude With a Cat complements a second study of the same subject also in the Museum's John S. Newberry Collection. Pavel Tchelitchew's small composition for his painting Phenomena, from the Soby bequest, complements a larger study given to the Museum in 1974.

The American drawings in the exhibition evidence "a healthy variety of styles," according to Mr. Lieberman. They range from a Georgia O'Keeffe watercolor, Train at Night in the Desert, one of five drawings acquired with matching funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, to a large brush and ink still-life by Jasper Johns, a gift of The Lauder Foundation.

Two gifts are commemorative: Robert Mangold's sequence of eight Circle Drawings, gift of Mr. and Mrs. Ronald S. Lauder in honor of J. Frederic Byers III, who was a Trustee as well as a Vice President of the Museum; and Morris Graves' stark Crow, gift of Marjorie and Robert Graff in honor of the Museum's Junior Council of which they were founding members. Among the American acquisitions, several are from the Soby bequest including André Masson's Pasiphaë drawn in New York in 1945. Other artists featured include Byron Browne, Arthur B. Davies, Burgoyne Diller, I. Rice Pereira, Morgan Russell, and Ben Shahn, among others.

The Museum's overall exhibition program is supported in part with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts.

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