

# THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## EXHIBITION OF ORIGINAL ILLUSTRATIONS FOR CHILDREN'S BOOKS

### OPENS IN YOUNG PEOPLE'S GALLERY OF MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Original drawings and paintings by illustrators and well known artists, as well as the books themselves, will be included in a small exhibition Original Illustrations for Children's Books opening in the Young People's Gallery of the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, on Wednesday, April 17, to continue through June 2. Material in the exhibition is limited to books published within recent years including a few not yet published. The selection, made from hundreds of books on publishers' lists, has been chosen by the Educational Program of the Museum, under the direction of Victor D'Amico.

The Museum's object in showing the exhibition is to stimulate better illustration for children's books that have both child appeal and a high esthetic standard. The books are not shown for their literary value or content.

In a note on the exhibition, Mr. D'Amico writes:

"Pictures in books are the child's introduction to art. They make an indelible impression on him and constitute a continuous avenue of appreciation as the child grows up with books. Because they deal with the child's love for both reality and fantasy they become firmly rooted in the child's heart and mind.

"There is no such thing as a cheap book if one values the creative growth of the child, that is, if cheapness means a low standard of art. A book that uses cheap art to keep the cost down may prove costly to the child."

The exhibition consists of a lively selection of subjects dear to the hearts of children. Many books, for example, deal entertainingly with animals such as Susanne Suba's The Gentle Giraffe and The Elegant Elephant; Glen Rounds' Flipper, the playful sea lion; Tom Funk's Spaniel in the Lion's Den; and Ludwig Bemelmans' Fifi, the adventures and escapades of a white be-ribboned French poodle. Another exciting subject is depicted in The Big Fire by Elizabeth Olds, a gay and informative book, with a cross-section of a firehouse complete to firemen sliding down the brass poles, the arrival at the scene of the fire, even old-fashioned horse-drawn fire engines historically correct and charts of present-day fire fighting equipment.

Included also are modern versions of such familiar and long-loved children's books as Aesop's Fables, filled with decorative

black-and-white wood engravings by Boris Artzybasheff and Helen Rennie's colorful Mother Goose.

Still others are by contemporary modern artists who have been successful in a field with which they are not usually identified. Jean Charlot has, for example, illustrated with color lithographs A Child's Good Night Book for younger children, and the Brazilian painter, Candido Portinari, is represented with a gaily illustrated book Maria Rosa.

Books for all age levels are included and range from cloth printed books for the very young such as Eleska's I Eat--washable, color-fast and harmless--to books with a touch of romance for girls of sixteen as Sabina, illustrated by Susanne Suba.

In almost all cases original drawings, paintings and even preliminary sketches are shown as well as the finished book. A few of the books are not yet published; therefore only original drawings are shown. Twenty-nine books illustrated by twenty different artists are included. They are as follows:

Artzybasheff, Boris	<u>Aesop's Fables</u> (Viking)
Bemelmans, Ludwig	* <u>Fifi</u> (Simon & Schuster) * <u>The Golden Basket</u> (Viking)
Bloch, Lucienne	<u>Keep Singing, Keep Humming</u> (Young Scott Books)
Bothwell, Dorr	<u>Rainbow Street</u> (illus. only; not yet published)
Charlot, Jean	<u>A Child's Good Night Book</u> (Young Scott Books)
Chrestien, F. H.	<u>The Rajah's Cornfield</u> (Hyperion--Fall 1946)
du Bois, William Pène	<u>Harriett</u> (Viking) * <u>The Flying Locomotive</u> (Viking)
Duvoisin, Roger	<u>The Christmas Whale</u> (Knopf) <u>Donkey Donkey</u> (Whitman)
Edwards, Ethel	<u>The Happy Prince</u> (illus. only; not yet publ.)
Eleska	* <u>I Eat</u> (Eleska)
Elliott, Gertrude	<u>Golden Dictionary</u> (Simon & Schuster)
Funk, Tom	<u>Spaniel in the Lion's Den</u> (Hyperion--Fall 1946)
Gorecka-Egan, Erica	<u>Russian Fairy Tales</u> (Peter Pauper)
Kepes, Juliet	<u>My Animals</u> (illus. only; not yet published)
Olds, Elizabeth	<u>The Big Fire</u> (Houghton Mifflin)
Portinari, Candido	* <u>Maria Rosa</u> (Doubleday, Doran)
Rennie, Helen	<u>Mother Goose</u> (Crown--Fall 1946)
Rounds, Glen	<u>Flipper</u> (Holiday House)
Suba, Susanne	<u>The Elegant Elephant</u> (Rand McNally) <u>The Gentle Giraffe</u> (Rand McNally) * <u>The First Christmas</u> (Dutton) * <u>The Little Cat who Could Not Sleep</u> (Dutton) <u>Sabina</u> (Lothrop, Lee & Shepard) <u>String and the No-Tail Cat</u> (Houghton Mifflin)
Weisgard, Leonard	<u>The Indoor Noisy Book</u> (Young Scott Books) <u>Red Light, Green Light</u> (Doubleday, Doran)

\*Book only; no original drawings shown.