

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART EXHIBITS LOREN MACIVER MURALS COMMISSIONED FOR AMERICAN EXPORT LINES.

The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, will exhibit three murals, each 13 feet by 3 feet 2 inches, by the American painter Loren MacIver, executed for the American Export Lines to be installed in the dining salons of trans-Atlantic ships. The murals, which portray various items of cargo brought to the United States by these ships, will be on view from July 8 to September 12 in the Museum's Auditorium Gallery.

The commission for four murals - of which only three can be exhibited at the Museum due to space limitations - was given to Miss MacIver 8 months ago at the instigation of the firm of Henry Dreyfuss, the Supervising Designers of the ships' interiors. The four ships are to be known as The 4 Aces and will transport cargo and also 125 passengers each to Mediterranean ports. They will be called S.S. Excalibur, S.S. Exeter, S.S. Exochorda and S.S. Excambion. The murals are designed to relate to the ports of call of the ships.

Miss MacIver has represented such cargo items as Italian, Greek and Spanish wines, cheeses, olives, herbs, Oriental lanterns and rugs, corks, chutney, figs, dates, Jordan almonds, an Arabian horse, a giraffe and an elephant. The murals are painted in pastel colors representative to the artist of the atmosphere of the ports to be visited.

On several previous occasions the Museum of Modern Art has exhibited the work of Loren MacIver: in New Horizons in American Art, 1936; New Rugs by American Artists, 1942; Twentieth-Century Portraits, 1943; Romantic Painting in America, 1944; and Fourteen Americans, 1946. Her work was circulated by the Museum in a one-man exhibition in 1941-42 and has been included in a number of other circulating exhibitions.

Loren MacIver was born in New York City in 1909 and received all her brief training at the Art Students League as a child of ten. James Thrall Soby, in his forthcoming book "Contemporary Painters" to be published in the fall by the Museum of Modern Art, has written of Loren MacIver:

"She has developed into one of the most knowledgeable of living American painters, a slow, skilled, eloquent master of craft. But it was as a child that she first wanted to be an artist, and her painting has never lost the intensity of childhood longing for expression and communication. Even in youth, MacIver's

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aptitude for discovery and concentration must have been unusual. I imagine she was the child who stayed behind and stared at a blossom or a stone, while her companions scattered in changing, forgetful excitement....Hers is an art of magic awareness, discovery after discovery: a shy, tiptoe art through which she recaptures childhood's ecstatic peering. MacIver makes us look for what she herself customarily sees, a sure sign of the artist.... We cannot easily predict what will catch her attention, and when we think we know the limits of her response, she opens new corridors quietly."

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In connection with the ships' murals by Loren MacIver on view in the Museum of Modern Art, the artist was asked how she happened to include an elephant in one panel. She said the elephant had been of particular interest to her because of a story about a previous experience of the American Export Lines in transporting elephants for American zoos. The elephants caught cold and their sneezes shook the ship, so the officers fed them medicinal rum grog. The colds disappeared, and the elephants arrived in port in excellent shape except that they had dreadful hangovers.

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