

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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MUSEUM TO SHOW IMAGINATIVE AND EXPERIMENTAL WOVEN TEXTILES

BY ANNI ALBERS

An exhibition of textiles by Anni Albers, one of the most imaginative and daring of modern weavers working in the United States, will be on view in the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, from September 14 through October 30. Assembled by the Museum's Department of Architecture and Design with the help of Mrs. Albers, the show will be a selection from her enormous creative output covering a wide range of expression including educational experiments using paper, corn, grass and string to produce textile effects; her famous drapery, upholstery and dress materials, and pictorial tapestries.

An indication of her experimental initiative in the use of materials for which she is particularly noted may be seen in the drapes to be shown which were woven with such materials as black cellophane, copper cherille and a combination of cellophane and cotton. Her screens are made of black raffia and cord, wood strips and dowels, black and white raffia on linen and natural linen and cellophane. While the artistry of her work places her high among modern weavers, her analytical approach to her craft is an important aspect of the overall movement in modern design.

Trained at the famous Bauhaus school in Weimar and Dessau, Germany, at which her husband, Joseph Albers, was a master, Anni Albers has from the start subjected the technique and the materials of weaving to a close investigation. Rather than achieve superficial effects with surface pattern and color, Mrs. Albers carefully analyzes the elements that make up a beautiful textile. She then analyzes the structure of her weave and varies it in density and depth to achieve subtlety of texture. To add lustre and color to her weave, Mrs. Albers uses threads of plastic, of fine metal foil and of many other materials that might serve her purpose.

Her intimate contact with the craft of weaving has enabled her to vary and to extend the usefulness of textiles far beyond the traditional. Apart from curtain fabrics, rugs and upholstery materials, she has experimented with almost everything from woven paintings to stiff woven screens designed as architectural elements for modern

buildings. Her background has given her a clear understanding of the principles of modern architecture and has thus enabled her to produce textiles that are an integrated part of modern living space. After leaving Germany in 1933, she became Assistant Professor of Art at Black Mountain College, North Carolina, where she worked until very recently. Her teaching has influenced a whole generation of modern textile designers.