

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

11 WEST 53 STREET, NEW YORK 19, N. Y.

TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900

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LIPCHITZ' MONUMENTAL SCULPTURE, "BIRTH OF THE MUSES," TO BE
SHOWN IN VARIOUS STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

An unusual opportunity to observe an artist's work in progress will be offered in an exhibition based on Jacques Lipchitz' "Birth of the Muses," to be shown in the Auditorium Gallery of the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, from July 18 through August 19. The show consists of a revealing set of photographs of the artist at work taken over a period of 9 months by the well-known photographer William Vandivert, and in addition 5 sculptured models in bronze. The selection was made by Andrew C. Ritchie, Director of the Department of Painting and Sculpture. This is one of the Museum's Circulating Exhibitions which, after its showing in the Museum, will be available to travel to other parts of the country. The layout of the panels for circulation as well as the installation in New York was designed by Carlus Dyer.

Jacques Lipchitz, one of the great sculptors of our time, executed the large "Birth of the Muses" in bronze for installation over the fireplace of Mr. and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller III's guest house in New York City. The exhibition traces Lipchitz' interest in this theme back to a "transparent" sculpture in the form of a Pegasus executed in 1929. Five models of later date show subsequent versions of the Pegasus theme. The first, as a decoration for a projected museum building at Yale University, shows Pegasus in full profile, his wings in violent motion, his hoofs striking a rock on Mount Olympus and thus, according to legend, giving birth to the Muses. One of the first of the photographic sequence shows the artist working with a photostat of this early model blown up to scale for the space over the fireplace. A fusion of the various models formed the design for the final piece. Other photographs, mounted on 20 panels, continue the series, revealing not only the interesting techniques of this outstanding artist but also his most creative moments.

41

Lipchitz was born in Lithuania in 1891. In school he at first studied engineering, but his desire to become a sculptor led him to Paris in 1909 where, after academic beginnings, he came under the influence of the cubist movement. By the early 1930s he had turned away from these investigations towards a more naturalistic expression of his reactions to an increasingly tortured world. In 1941 he left Paris, where he had acquired an international reputation, and came to live in New York City.

Mr. Ritchie says of him:

"He has a truly great sculptor's sense of the dynamic interplay of forms in relation to light and draws on a rich sculptural experience to achieve this end. In his mature work, such as the "Birth of the Muses," there is a baroque vitality and an explosive romantic sentiment. It is a magnificent example of the intensity of feeling and the majestic power which are characteristic of Lipchitz' sculpture at its best."