

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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LARGEST AMERICAN MODERN ART EXHIBITION EVER SEEN ABROAD OPENS IN PARIS

A reception at the American Embassy in Paris, given by the U.S. Minister to France, Theodore C. Achilles, on Wednesday, March 30, is the first of a series of special events arranged for the opening of AMERICAN ART OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY, the largest exhibition of modern art from this country ever sent abroad. The exhibition, which inaugurates the Salute to France program of cultural events being presented in Paris this spring at the request of the French government and under the auspices of the American Embassy, will be on view at the Musée d'Art Moderne from March 31 through May 15. William A. M. Burden, President of the Museum of Modern Art, is chairman of the visual arts section of the Salute to France Program, which includes two large art exhibitions. The performing arts section, under the chairmanship of Robert W. Dowling, will include ballet, music and theater performances.

The first exhibition, consisting of more than 500 paintings, sculptures, prints, architectural photographic enlargements, stereo-realist slides and models, examples of typographical design, industrial design, photography and films, from the collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, has been installed in galleries larger than the entire New York Museum by Rene d'Harnoncourt, Director of the Museum of Modern Art with assistance from members of his staff now in Paris.

The press view will be held on Thursday, March 31, beginning at 11 a.m. Paris time. On Friday, April 1, French and American officials will see the exhibition and on Saturday, April 2, a reception will be given for artists and cultural leaders by members of the Museum of Modern Art's International Council.

AMERICAN ART OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY has been organized and sent to Paris by the Museum of Modern Art under its International Exhibitions Program, directed by Porter McCray. After the Paris showing, the painting and sculpture section will be shown in other countries.

An illustrated catalog is being published in Paris at the time of the opening. Holger Cahill, well-known art authority and scholar, has written an essay on the painting and sculpture section of the exhibition which was selected by Dorothy C. Miller, Curator of the Museum Collections. Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Director of the Smith College Museum of Art and well-known architectural historian, and Arthur Drexler, Curator of the Museum's Department of Architecture and Design, have contributed the text for the architecture section of the exhibition. Other sections

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of the exhibition are discussed by the Museum of Modern Art Curators who made the selections: William S. Lieberman, Curator of Prints; Greta Daniel, Assistant Curator of Design; Mildred Constantine, Associate Curator of Graphic Design; Edward Steichen, Director of the Department of Photography; and Richard Griffith, Curator of the Film Library.

In installing the exhibition, which is the equivalent of several major New York Museum shows, Mr. d'Harnoncourt, Director of the Museum of Modern Art, has been assisted by Arthur Drexler and Dorothy C. Miller. Two artists represented in the show and who are now in Paris also have helped set up their own particularly complicated sculpture. Isamu Noguchi personally installed his Even the Centipede, and Richard Lippold has been on hand to supervise the complicated installation of his delicate six-foot-tall wire sculpture, familiar to New York Museum visitors, Variation Number 7: Full Moon.

The 108 paintings and 22 sculptures by 70 artists in the exhibition have been selected by Dorothy C. Miller, Curator of Museum Collections, to reveal four or five principal directions of American art over a period of approximately 40 years. The first section is devoted to the older generation who worked in Europe and who founded the modern movement in the United States. Three pictures by Maurice Prendergast painted before the famous New York Armory Show of 1913 which he helped to organize are included as well as paintings by John Marin, Max Weber, Charles Demuth, Stuart Davis and Yasuo Kuniyoshi, and sculpture by William Zorach, Gaston Lachaise, and Elie Nadelman. The next sections are devoted to the realist and romantic traditions, as found in painters of the American scene such as Edward Hopper and Charles Burchfield, in Andrew Wyeth's work, in paintings by Loren MacIver and Hyman Bloom, and in the mystic images of Morris Graves. The development of the last decade in the field of abstract art is illustrated by the work of Mark Tobey, Arshile Gorky, Willem de Kooning, Jackson Pollock, William Baziotas, Mark Rothko, Franz Kline and others. Paralleling the work of these painters is sculpture by Theodore Roszak, Ibram Lassaw, David Hare and Seymour Lipton, and the highly original work done by Alexander Calder as early as the 1930's. A small section of the painting and sculpture show is reserved for the modern "primitives" -- naive or self-taught artists like Joseph Pickett and John Kane.

Eighty-two prints were selected by William S. Lieberman, Curator of Prints, from the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Print Room of the Museum and supplemented by a few loans. This section surveys the extraordinary renaissance of American printmaking

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today as illustrated in work done since 1940 by about 48 artists from all parts of the United States. These examples demonstrate three characteristics of recent American prints: use of color and textures, emphasis on large-scale prints, and technical innovation. All traditional graphic media are represented as well as new media such as serigraph (silk screen) and the cellocut (plastic), developed and perfected in the United States. An historical introduction to the print section is made up of the work of six painters who were also active as printmakers between 1900 and 1925: Maurice Prendergast, John Marin, Lyonel Feininger, Max Weber, George Bellows and Edward Hopper.

Modern American architecture, selected by Arthur Drexler, Curator of the Department of Architecture and Design, is being represented by 17 buildings designed since 1946, shown in large-scale photo enlargements, plans, models, and three-dimensional color slides in adjustable stereoscopic viewers. Office buildings, a factory, a research laboratory, houses, a hospital, a school and a chapel were chosen for their excellence as works of art and their significance in the development of American architecture. The United Nations Secretariat Building in New York by Wallace K. Harrison and Consultants; the General Motors Technical Center in Detroit by Saarinen, Saarinen and Associates; and Lever House, New York, by Skidmore, Owings and Merrill are among the buildings included. Models of Mies van der Rohe's Chicago apartment house, of Philip C. Johnson's glass house in Connecticut, and of a house by Marcel Breuer and one by Richard Neutra, are being shown.

Posters, book jackets, record album covers, newspaper and magazine advertisements, brochures and announcements, packaging, street signs, and street letters have been selected by Mildren Constantine, Associate Curator of Graphic Design. The more than 70 examples, all executed since the war, place special emphasis on new ideas in typography. Alvin Lustig, Leo Lionni, Herbert Bayer, Noel Martin and Paul Rand are among the noted designers whose work was selected.

More than 150 objects manufactured by modern techniques of mass-production comprise the industrial design section of AMERICAN ART OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY, selected by Greta Daniel, Assistant Curator of Design. A special feature is a group of modern chairs selected as particularly illustrative of the application of modern industrial technology to American design. Other furniture, as well as lighting equipment, glassware, china, cooking utensils and kitchen equipment, tools, toys and radio sets is also shown. A wide range of materials, including synthetics, is represented. This exhibition also demonstrates that esthetic merit is independent of price and that a 5-cent pill box may deserve recognition as a well-designed

object. All items included in this section are drawn from the unique industrial design collection of the Museum of Modern Art.

The American contribution to modern photography is represented in almost 100 examples selected by Edward Steichen, Director of the Museum's Department of Photography. Ranging from documentaries to abstract images, this section of AMERICAN ART OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY presents a cross-section of the work of mature and widely-known photographers as well as the work of younger men who have only recently found recognition.

The American film is symbolized in the Musée d'Art Moderne exhibition by two panels of still photographs, one group selected from narrative films and the other from documentary and experimental films. This section is under the direction of Richard Griffith, Curator of the Film Library. Since this medium cannot be adequately presented in an exhibition hall, a concurrent series of seven film programs is being held at the Guimet Museum, each program stressing a particular aspect of the striking contribution made by the United States to the art of the motion picture and tracing the history of the American narrative, documentary and avant-garde film.

In addition to AMERICAN ART OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY, the visual art section of Salute to France, under the chairmanship of William A. M. Burden, will also feature an art exhibition of 19th Century French Paintings lent by American Museums and private collectors to be shown at the Orangerie, beginning April 20. This is being organized by a special committee.

All expenses in the United States for Salute to France are being met through private sources in this country, while the French Government is making a substantial contribution to cover the expenses incurred in France. Salute to France has the personal endorsement of President Eisenhower, who in letters to Co-Chairmen Burden and Dowling has expressed the belief that the project will contribute substantially to the furtherance of friendship, understanding and esteem between the United States and France. Arrangements in France for the two art exhibitions have been entrusted to the Association Française d'Action Artistique, an organization responsible for the exchange of art exhibitions between France and other nations, and have been worked out in conjunction with the United States Embassy in Paris.