

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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No. 103

FOR RELEASE:

Wednesday, December 7, 1955

PRESS PREVIEW:

Tuesday, December 6, 1955 2-5 p.m.

8TH NEW TALENT EXHIBITION ON VIEW AT MUSEUM

Metal sculptures by Martin Craig, etchings by Leander Fornas and oils by Nora Speyer are on view in the 8th New Talent Exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art from December 6 through January 22. This informal series of exhibitions, selected by Andrew Carnduff Ritchie, Director of the Department of Painting and Sculpture, was initiated in 1950 as a means of showing little known work that merits the attention of the New York public. Although all three artists represented live in New York and the sculptor and the printmaker have exhibited abroad, none has had a New York one-man show.

The exhibition has been hung in the Museum's 6th floor Penthouse overlooking the Museum Garden and Rockefeller Center. Ordinarily reserved for Museum members, for whom lunch and tea are served there daily, during the course of the New Talent Exhibition the public will be admitted from 3 to 7 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday afternoons beginning December 12. Most of the works are for sale at prices beginning at \$25 for the etchings, \$200 for the paintings and \$275 for the sculptures. The Museum takes no commission on the sales which are limited to Museum members while the exhibition is on view.

Craig's sculptures, a hammered lead relief Cellist and four welded steel pieces are of people - a man having his hair cut, subway figures, a beach figure and Moses. The oldest of the artists - he was born in 1906 - he worked as a sculptor of the Federal Art Project in the '30s, and designed for the New York World's Fair in 1939 and has had one-man shows in Paris. Originally a chemist and physicist, and at one time a researchist at the Bell Telephone Laboratories, Mr. Craig was in charge of instrument design and one of the electro-chemical laboratories of the Division of War Research at Columbia University during the war. He now teaches sculpture at Cooper Union and the Brooklyn Museum Art School.

"Martin Craig cuts, shapes and welds sheet metal with unusual respect for the linear and textural character of his material," Mr. Ritchie points out, "and the patining and various polychroming of his surfaces are extremely sensitive. His imagery, based on movements or aspects of the human figure, reveals a highly personal vision, fantastic and even humorous."

Another artist in the exhibition also better known abroad than here, is Leander Fornas, who was born in Gardner, Massachusetts of Finnish parents in 1925.
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After graduating from Pratt Institute he studied in Zurich and then worked for three years at the Ateneum, Fine Arts Academy of Helsinki under Aukusti-Tuhka, the "father of Finland's contemporary graphic art." He has exhibited in the Graphic Artists Society of Finland, national and European shows, and has had several one-man shows in Finland. After his return to this country in January of 1955 his work was included in a number of group shows and he received a print award from the Springfield Art League. He now teaches at Pratt and lives in Brooklyn.

"The line etchings of Leander Fornas, aside from technical brilliance in printing are all concerned in theme with the battle of good and evil," Mr. Ritchie says.

"They have an eerie, northern gnomic quality. As one passes from etching to etching, the lyrical inexhaustible fluency of their line and the poetic suggestiveness of their content are at once apparent. Here one feels is a young printmaker who has not become submerged in technique for technique's sake."

Nora Speyer, the only woman artist in the show, was born in Pittsburgh in 1923. Her early interest in painting was encouraged by her mother who was also an artist. During the war she worked as a photographer to earn her living, but continued to paint. She came to New York 1948 where she now lives. She has exhibited in Philadelphia, in Woodstock, New York and in group shows in New York.

"Nora Speyer's paintings are almost all concerned with the human figure - reclining, struggling, fleeing - and in each there is a more than experimental grasp of the spatial and coloristic problems of picture making," Mr. Ritchie says. "Her sense of design is strong and her palette and brushwork notably rich and clean."

Since the New Talent Series of exhibitions was inaugurated in 1950, work by 22 artists has been shown. Of the 195 works of art in these shows, almost 1/3 were sold during the exhibitions for a total value of more than \$10,000. More than half of the artists whose work was introduced to the New York public through these showings have found New York dealers and several have experienced outstanding success in sales and awards in all parts of the country after their Museum showings.

In the brochure accompanying the exhibition, Mr. Ritchie says: "In the past the Museum has sponsored many artists not widely known. This series of smaller, informal exhibitions, initiated in 1950, was planned as an additional means to show little known work which, in the opinion of the Department of Painting and Sculpture, merits the attention of the Museum's members and the New York public. By 'new' the Museum means artists who have not received a major one-man showing in New York City. It does not exclude artists whose work is known in other parts of the country or who are known for work in different fields. Neither does it imply an age limit."

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Artists who have been included in the past New Talent Exhibitions are:

- April, 1950: Seymour Drumlevitch, painter. b. 1923 in New York City.
William D. King, sculptor. b. 1925 in Jacksonville, Florida.
Raymond Parker, painter. b. 1922 in South Dakota.
- November, 1950: Louis Bunce, painter. b. 1907 in Lander, Wyoming.
Ynez Johnston, painter and printmaker. b. 1920 in Berkeley, California.
Ernest Mundt, sculptor. b. 1905 in Germany.
- May, 1951: Henry Di Spirito, sculptor. b. 1898 in Italy.
Irving Kriesberg, painter. b. 1919 in Chicago.
Raymond August Mintz, painter. b. 1925 in Clifton, New Jersey.
- May, 1952: Philip C. Elliott, painter. b. 1903 in Minneapolis.
Gorman Powers, painter. b. 1921 in Chicago.
Walter R. Rogalski, printmaker. b. 1923 in Glen Cove, Long Island.
Carol Summers, printmaker. b. 1925 in Kingston, New York.
- November, 1952: Byron Goto, painter. b. 1919 in Hilo, Hawaii.
John Hultberg, painter. b. 1922 in California.
Louise Kruger, sculptor. b. 1924 in California.
- November, 1953: Keith Monroe, sculptor. b. 1917 in California.
Ira Schwartz, painter. b. 1922 in Brooklyn, New York.
Robert Sowers, stained glass maker. b. 1923 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.
- April, 1955: Tom Benrimo, painter. b. 1887 in San Francisco, California.
Richard O. Tyler, printmaker. b. 1926 in Lansing, Michigan.
Hugh R. Townley, sculptor. b. 1923 in West Lafayette, Indiana.

Photographs and additional information available from Elizabeth Shaw, Publicity Director, Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53rd Street, New York City, Circle 5-8900.