

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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

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No. 63

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON TEXTILES USA

More than 180 fabrics manufactured by 111 firms and craftsmen have been selected for the exhibition TEXTILES USA, which will be on view at the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53rd Street, from August 29 through November 4. The selection was made by a seven member jury from more than 3000 entries submitted by firms in all parts of the country. The exhibition will be a tribute to American design in this important field. All fabrics were produced within the past ten years.

Apparel fabrics, home furnishings textiles and industrial fabrics were selected by the jury on the basis of esthetic qualities. Examples were drawn from the workshops of handweavers as well as from the giant plants of the industry serving a mass-market. Brilliantly colored cottons, silks, and fine woolens are included as well as fabrics demonstrating the versatility of many synthetics and the new fibers. Of particular interest should be fabrics used in industry which are seldom seen by the general public.

Notices have gone out to all manufacturers whose fabrics were selected asking them to send samples for the catalog of the show which will be sold at the Museum and also published in the Fall issue of American Fabrics Magazine. Letters from the Museum requesting lengths of the fabric for the exhibition itself will be sent out by the Museum as soon as installation plans are completed.

Bernard Rudofsky is designing an unusual installation which will take up the entire first floor galleries as well as a garden terrace. The exhibition is under the direction of the Department of Architecture and Design. Greta Daniel, Associate Curator, is Project Director. The original announcement and request for entries was sent out January 20, 1956.

The exhibition will present a selection of beautiful and significant American fabrics," Greta Daniel says. "We have not attempted to present a complete cross-section of the industry, nor to include examples of all types of materials, but have emphasized the characteristic beauty of American textiles. Within the three categories established in the original announcement--apparel, home furnishings, and industrial uses--the jury has chosen the best it could find from the point of view of quality and esthetic appeal.

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Although the Museum of Modern Art has exhibited contemporary fabrics in many exhibitions, such as the Useful Objects shows and the Good Design series of exhibitions, as well as rare old textiles in "Textiles and Ornamental Arts of India" and "Ancient Art of the Andes," this will be the first major show devoted entirely to modern American textiles. It is hoped that the exhibition will travel after the New York showing.

Jury members who selected the fabrics for the exhibition were René d'Harnoncourt, Arthur Drexler, Philip C. Johnson, William C. Segal, Anni Albers, Claire McCardell, and Mary Lewis.

They were assisted by technical advisors including Ann Mullany, Women's Wear Daily; Ralph M. Gutekunst, Hollwig Dyeing Corporation; Milton Rubin, American Silk Mills; and Walter Scholer, American Viscose Corporation.

During the past few months, an Industry Committee, headed by Daniel Fuller, President of Fuller Fabrics, has been actively engaged in obtaining the widest possible support in the industry for the show. At a luncheon meeting on April 18, held for the Industry Committee, Mr. Fuller said:

TEXTILES USA is the first attempt to my best knowledge and belief to secure public recognition as an industry. This attempt is being made under the best possible auspices. The previous exhibits of the Museum of Modern Art have a notable success record...It is difficult to over-emphasize the importance of this kind of public presentation, and its far-reaching influence. To start with, TEXTILES USA is national, not local. It is a completely non-commercial, non-profit project. It glorifies the fabrics of America in a way that is far beyond the capacity of individual mills or groups of mills. It focuses the attention of all manufacturers and merchants on the importance of fabrics in American life. Above all it gives the consuming public, at long last, a picture of the great fabric world.

The following, all from New York City unless otherwise noted, will be represented in the exhibition: Alamac Knitting Mills, Inc., Albany Felt Company (Albany, New York), Allied Hosiery Sales Co., American Silk Mills, Inc., Amerotron Corp., Anderson Studio of Handweaving (East Gloucester, Mass.), Anglo Fabrics Co., Inc., Argonaut Mills (Milwaukee, Wisc.), William L. Barrell Co., Inc., Bates Fabrics, Inc., Thelma Becherer (West Franklin, N. H.), Arthur Beir & Co., Inc., Sonja A. Belir Inc., Monica Bella Broner, Burlington Mills, Callaway Mills, Inc., Bill Carter and
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Dodie Childs (Chicago), Catoir Silk, Inc., Celanese Corp. of America, Arundell Clarke, Cohn-Hall-Marx Co., Collins & Aikman, Miss Franklin Colvin, Cone Mills Inc., Crompton-Richmond Co., Inc., Deering Milliken & Co., Inc., and Miliun Division of Deering Milliken & Co., Inc., Ducharne, Inc., Everfast Fabrics, Inc., Fab-Lace, Inc., Fablock Mills Inc. (Irvington, New Jersey), Fair~~Tex~~^{Tex}, Fazakas Fabrics, Inc., The Felters Co. (Boston), Forstmann Woolen Co. (Passaic, New Jersey), Frank & Stessel, Inc., Fuller Fabrics, ^{Corp} Geraldine Funk (Lancaster, Pennsylvania), Galey & Lord, Roy Ginstrom (Cedar Falls, Iowa), Golding Decorative Fabrics, Goodman & Theise, Inc., Haartz Auto Fabric Co. (Newton, Massachusetts), Hanora Fabrics Co., Inc., William Heller, Inc., Ria Herlinger Fabrics, Inc., Hess, Goldsmith & Co., Inc., G. Hirsch Sons, Inc., Lilly E. Hoffmann (Concord, New Hampshire), Industrial Rayon Corp., Lloyd Kiva (Scottsdale, Arizona), Knoll Textiles, Inc., Boris Kroll Fabrics, Inc., Jack Lenor Larsen, Inc., Laverne, Inc., H. B. Lehman-Connor Co., Inc., Dorothy Liebes Textiles, M. Lowenstein & Sons, Inc., McCampbell & Co., L. Anton Maix, Inc., Maxwell Textile Division, Herman Miller Furniture Co. (Zeeland, Michigan), Moodus Net & Twine Inc. (Moodus, Connecticut), Moss Rose Mfg. Co. (Philadelphia), National Mallinson Fabrics Corp., Native Laces, Marie Nichols Fabrics, Novik & Co., Onondaga Silk Co., Pacific Mills, Pellon Corp., Perspectives, Inc., Plymouth Cordage Co. (Plymouth, Massachusetts), Princeton Knitting Mills, Rabun ^{Weavers} ~~Studios~~, Raeford Worsted Corp., Rancocas Fabrics (Burlington, New Jersey), Reeves Brothers, Inc., Robaix Fabrics, Inc., William Rose, Inc., Ross-Zeldin, Inc., Rowen, Inc. (Konwiser Fabrics Collection), Rubber Fabrics Co., Scalamandrè Silks, F. Schumacher & Co., Isabel Scott Fabrics Corp., Skillmill Inc., William Skinner & Sons, Hel^A Skowronski (Bellvue, Washington), Springs Mills, Inc., J. P. Stevens & Co., Inc., Pola Stout, Inc., Strathmore Woolens, S. Strook & Co., Inc., Switzer Bros. (Cleveland), Angelo Testa & Co. (Chicago), M. & W. Thomas Co., J. H. Thorp & Co., Inc., D. D. & Leslie Tillett, Inc., Turner-Halsey Co., Inc., United Elastic Corp. (Littleton, Massachusetts), United Merchants Industrial Fabrics, U. S. Rubber Co. (Textile Division), Volveray Corp., Wamsutta Mills, Wellington-Sears Co., Inc., Julius N. Werk Fabrics, Inc., Window Shade Manufacturers Assoc., Worumbo Mfg. Co., ^{The} Dorothy and Roberts Tapley (New Hope, Pennsylvania).