

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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

TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900

104 v.

306

Chronology Of A Few Highlights Of Museum Of Modern Art, 1929 - 1959

1929

Spring - Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Mrs. Cornelius J. Sullivan, Miss
Summer Lillie P. Bliss form Committee of Organization, with A. Conger Goodyear as Chairman.

Space rented at 730 Fifth Avenue for galleries and offices.

Alfred H. Barr, Jr. named Director.

Nov. 7 Opening exhibition, Cézanne, Gauguin, Seurat, van Gogh.
Attendance - 47,000 first month.

Dec. 12 Second exhibition, Paintings by Nineteen Living Americans.

1930

Jan. First painting acquired, House by the Railroad (1925) by Edward Hopper, gift of anonymous donor.

1931

May Memorial Exhibition: The Collection of the late Lillie P. Bliss; conditionally bequeathed in 1931, was formally accessioned in 1934 and immediately gave importance to the Museum Collection.

1932

Feb. Modern Architecture: International Exhibition, opening presentation of Department of Architecture; first exhibition other than painting and sculpture, first to be circulated.

May Move to brownstone on West 53 Street, more exhibition space Murals by American Painters and Photographers.

Summer Library founded in converted attic room. 2,000 books.

1933

Department of Circulating Exhibitions established.

Feb. Poster Competition

March Typography Competition

April Objects 1900 and Today. First design show of furniture and decorative arts.

Nov. First one-man photography show: Walker Evans

1934

March Machine Art, the precise, geometric, largely anonymous, exquisitely finished objects characteristic of machine production; included not only housewares, but tools and machine parts.

May Whistler: Portrait of the Artist's Mother, first loan from the Louvre.

1935

June The Film Library organized "to trace, catalog, assemble, exhibit and circulate a library of film programs so that the motion picture may be studied and enjoyed as any other one of the arts is studied and enjoyed."

Nov. Vincent van Gogh exhibition.

more...

1936

- March Cubism and Abstract Art, first comprehensive survey of European artists comprising these movements.
- Dec. Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism, first comprehensive survey.

1937

- New York City High School Program founded (at present over 130 exhibitions, slide talks, teaching models or portfolios are circulated to 58 high schools each month).
- June Temporary quarters in Time-Life Building.
- June Project for a Community Center by Architects, Painters and Sculptors Collaborative.
- Fall Pilot educational project begun.

1938

- April Masters of Popular Painting.
- Summer Three Centuries of Modern Art, exhibition at Musee de Jeu de Paume, Paris, assembled by Museum of Modern Art at invitation of French; the first comprehensive review of American art sent to Europe.
- Sept. Useful Household Objects under \$5.00.
- Dec. Bauhaus: 1919 - 1928, work of the school in Germany which was the focal point in the integration of design with the machine age.

1939

- May 10 Opening of new building, 11 West 53 Street. Philip L. Goodwin and Edward D. Stone, architects.

"The standards of American taste will inevitably be raised by bringing into far-flung communities results of the latest and finest achievements in all the arts...." President Franklin D. Roosevelt broadcast dedication ceremonies.

Art in Our Time, exhibition and publication, achievements of living artists and important masters of the past in painting, sculpture, graphic arts, architecture, furniture, photography and motion pictures.

- Nov. Picasso: Forty Years of His Art, exhibition and publication. Attendance in 54 days - over 100,000.

1940

Photography Department established.

- Jan. Italian Masters, lent by the Italian government, 28 works from period 1400 - 1750, including Botticelli's Birth of Venus, Raphael's Madonna of the Chair, and a Michelangelo sculpture.
- May Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art.

1941

- Jan. Indian Art of the United States.

- April to June 1945 War activities: Film contracts with C.I.A.A., Army, Navy, Air Forces; welfare of artists; use of artists in wartime; exhibitions and competitions related to defense and war; Armed Services Program; canteens and servicemen's parties; Veterans Art Center, etc.
- Sept. Organic Design in Home Furnishings, competition open to North and South American designers for furnishings of complete room; several designs later produced commercially; Eames-Saarinens molded plywood chair led to later Eames version called "one of the truly original innovations in twentieth century design."

more...

1941 (continued)

Nov. Two American Pioneers: Frank Lloyd Wright, Architect
D. W. Griffith, Film Master

1942

Jan. Americans 1942, first of a continuing series of exhibitions of American painting and sculpture.

National Committee on Art Education formed, sponsored by the Museum to develop a sound philosophy of creative education and to improve teaching methods from pre-school through college; 1,200 members have now joined throughout the United States.

March First Children's Carnival of Modern Art (subsequently given annually at Christmas time; has also been presenged in Milan and Barcelona, 1957, and in U.S. Pavilion of Brussels World's Fair, 1958).

Epring Museum's Armed Forces program set up as wartime activity.

May Road to Victory, photography exhibition directed by Edward Steichen.

July Bambi: The Making of an Animated Sound Picture.

Oct. Buckminster Fuller's Dymaxion Deployment Unit erected in garden.

1943

Jan. Brazil Builds

Feb. Americans 1943: Realists and Magic-Realists

March Virgil Thomson's Five Serenade Concerts.

1944

May Art in Progress, 15th Anniversary exhibition.

1945

War Veterans Art Center established on Fifth Avenue.

Power in the Pacific, Steichen photography show.

1946

Jan. Arts of the South Seas.

March New Furniture Designed by Charles Eames.

Sept. The History of the Motion Picture, 1895 - 1946.

1947

Museum Collections established as separate department.

Sept. Mies van der Rohe, exhibition and publication.

1948

Nov. Timeless Aspects of Modern Art, exhibition and publication showing the integral relationship between modern art and art of past periods.

Veterans Art Center becomes People's Art Center.

May Pierre Bonnard exhibition.

1949

Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Print Room inaugurated.

Master Prints from the Museum Collection

more...

1949 (continued)

March Georges Braque
Junior Council of the Museum founded, about 60 young men and women who operate the Art Lending Service, sponsor exhibitions and special presentations related to the Museum program.

June Twentieth Century Italian Art

Summer Complete house by Marcel Breuer erected in Museum garden.

Oct. Modern Art in Your Life, exhibition and publication, showed that the appearance and shape of countless objects of our everyday environment are related to or derived from modern painting and sculpture.

Oct. Rene d'Harnoncourt named Director (Had joined staff in 1944 as Vice President in charge of Foreign Activities and Director of Department of Manual Industries.)

1950

May Prize Designs for Modern Furniture, international competition.

Good Design, first exhibition, both at Museum and Chicago Merchandise Mart, a selection of the best progressive design in home furnishings newly available each year to the American consuming public (continued annually through 1955.)

1951

Jan. Abstract Painting and Sculpture in America

Summer Grace Rainey Rogers Annex opened, 21 West 53 Street, Philip C. Johnson, Architect.

Aug. Eight Automobiles, an exhibition concerned with the esthetics of motorcar design, included Mercedes, Cistalia, Bentley, Talbot, Jeep, Cord, MG and Lincoln Continental.

Oct. Art Lending Service established.

Nov. Matisse Retrospective, exhibition and definitive publication of 591 pp.

1952

Jan. Masterworks Acquired through the Mrs. Simon Guggenheim Fund.

International Program initiated by five-year grant from Rockefeller Brothers Fund.

April Fifteen Americans

Oct. Les Fauves

Oct. Olivetti: Design in Industry, an exhibition to encourage our industries in the battle for good integrated design by illustrating the excellence of the Olivetti program.

Through the Enchanted Gate, T.V. series, 13 half-hour programs sponsored by the Museum and N.B.C., an experiment in teaching art to children (repeated in 1953, with teaching for parents as well as children.)

1953

Jan. Built in U.S.A.: Postwar Architecture, exhibition and book.

Spring Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden opened, designed by Philip C. Johnson.

"When the Museum of Modern Art was founded in 1929, Mrs. Rockefeller and the other trustees agreed that the approach of the Museum to the visual arts of our time should be international. The exhibition in this Sculpture Garden representing as it does the work of artists of many countries is a worthy monument to that ideal. In the United Nations this same spiritual ideal is the hope of the world for peace and understanding amongst nations." ...Trygve Lie, first Secretary General of U.N. at opening.

more...

1953 (continued)

April Sculpture of the Twentieth Century

Oct. Léger exhibition.

Oct. Premium Toys Designed for Industry.

Purchase of privately-owned United States Pavilion at Venice Biennale.
U.S. Representation: II Bienal, São Paulo, Brazil.

1954

Jan. Ancient Arts of the Andes

June Japanese Exhibition House in the Garden (Again in 1955).

Masters of Modern Art, publication, a selection of more than 300 works from the various collections of the Museum of Modern Art, 240 pages.

Garden restaurant opened, Philip C. Johnson, Architect.

Oct. 19 25th Anniversary, paintings from the Museum Collection on three floors.

Dwight D. Eisenhower says: "...On this meaningful anniversary of a great museum of art in America...let us resolve that this precious freedoms of the arts, these precious freedoms of America, will, day by day, year by year, become ever stronger, ever brighter in our land."

Dag Hammarskjöld, Secretary-General of the U.N., says: "It is a museum for 'modern art' - that is, for you and for me, a museum for the art which reflects the inner problems of our generation and is created in the hope of meeting some of its basic needs."

Robert F. Wagner, Mayor of New York City, says: "...Our Museum of Modern Art is constantly on the alert for the new challenge, the new idea, the new concept that may improve on the old. It is busy, it is frequently crowded - as a favorite visiting place for New Yorkers and out-of-towners - but above all it is always true to its own standards of quality, not afraid of controversy, not afraid of growing."

1955

First annual summer art classes for children and adults established on eastern Long Island.

Jan. The Family of Man, 500 photographs by 273 photographers from 68 countries, created by Edward Steichen. (Still being circulated, recently at the Moscow Fair; has been seen by 7 million people in 37 countries).

April Textiles and Ornamental Arts of India

May The New Decade: 22 European Painters and Sculptors

Latin American Architecture Since 1945, exhibition and book (circulating version, in United States, Canada, Mexico, Latin and South America, still on view).

1956

Feb. The Films of Samuel Goldwyn.

March Toulouse Lautrec

Aug. Textiles U.S.A.

Nov. Recent Drawings U.S.A., sponsored by Junior Council.

Dec. Jackson Pollock

more...

1957

- Feb. Buildings for Business and Government
- May Picasso Seventy-Fifth Anniversary Exhibition.
- July International Council at Museum of Modern Art formed to sponsor International Program.
- Twentieth Century Design in Europe and America; selections from the Museum Collection sent to four cities in Japan.
- Oct. German Art of the Twentieth Century
- Nov. Seventy Photographers Look at New York

1958

- March Seurat Paintings and Drawings
- April 15 Fire in the Museum.
- May 1 First floor reopened.
- June 1 Building closed for alteration.
- Oct. 8 Museum completely re-opened, including Theater Guild building, 23 West 53 Street.
- Oct. Jean Arp: A Retrospective
- Dec. Twentieth Century Design from the Museum Collection.

1959

- March Joan Miro
- April Marlene Dietrich: Image and Legend, film series
- May Recent Sculpture U.S.A., sponsored by the Junior Council.
- May The New American Painting (after showings in 8 countries during 1958-59 under the auspices of the International Council at the Museum of Modern Art; organized at request of European institutions for an exhibition of American abstract expressionism.)
- Sept. The Package
- Sept. Structures by Buckminster Fuller in Museum Garden.
- Sept. New Images of Man
- Design Today in America and Europe, now in India on tour of 8 cities U. S. Representation, Documenta II. 90 paintings and sculptures by American artists; retrospective of Jackson Pollock, Kassel, Germany.