

The Museum of Modern Art

West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019 Circle 5-8900 Cable: Modernart

No. 142

FOR RELEASE:

Tuesday, November 22, 1966

PRESS PREVIEW:

Monday, November 21, 1966

11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

ART IN THE MIRROR, an exhibition of 41 paintings, constructions, collages, drawings, and prints in which art itself, and its place in twentieth century society, is used as subject and as point of departure, will be shown at The Museum of Modern Art from November 22 through February 5. The exhibition has been selected by guest director, G. R. Swenson. It was organized by the Museum's Department of Circulating Exhibitions to travel throughout the United States after its New York showing.

In his introduction Mr. Swenson writes, "These works direct questions, insults and homages toward art; they often have an untraditional and witty air about them, from Marcel Duchamp's mustachioed Mona Lisa to Andy Warhol's silk-screened Mona Lisa as movie star....

"The range of artists' attitudes toward art defies the many dogmatists who today claim to define them. This show is a small personal selection; it does not include any work without an image of art, that is none whose subject is 'pure' paint or color or line. Yet, the scope of a single painter, Robert Rauschenberg, here encompasses the ironic 'de Kooning Erased ..., the beautiful yet amusing Mona Lisa drawing, and the large, even grand, painting with Rubens' own metaphorical comment on the goddess of beauty and love contemplating her own image."

The exhibition includes works by Gris, Indiana, Hirshfield, Picabia, Picasso, Schwitters, Sheeler, Warhol, and Wesselmann. Duchamp's Boite-en-Valise in which the artist made reproductions of his own works and collected them in a box, is described by Mr. Swenson as "a rather impertinent forecast of ready-made art history."

The young Canadian artist, Les Levine, incorporates a print, mechanically reproduced, made from a photograph of his own work, and the American artist, Robert Morris, includes a photograph of the work itself in his Box with Photo of Door. Other works include Adolph Gottlieb's three painted postcards, Salvador Dali's Portrait of Gala after the Angelus of Millet, and Miró's Personage in the Night.

(more)

Mr. Swenson concludes, "Today the mass media, museums without walls, and a bourgeois awe of artists have (an)...abrasive effect...We must, in other words, take care that the boredom we may feel in the presence of familiar artists and images is not in ourselves and our own careless visual habits. In this sense familiarity is dangerous, it puts us out of focus. A moratorium on photographs, literature about art, even exhibitions might refresh us and make us responsive again. Without it, however, one way to approach art is through the eyes of artists; Rauschenberg may clarify the myth of Leonardo, and Lichtenstein the clichés surrounding Picasso, thereby improving our focus on painting of both the past and the present."

Photographs, checklists, and additional information available from Elizabeth Shaw, Director, and Lynn Traiger, Assistant Director, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019. Circle 5-8900.