

# The Museum of Modern Art

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## THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

### FACT SHEET AND SHORT SELECTED CHRONOLOGY

Non-profit, membership organization whose dues and contributions support the Museum's International Program of exchange in the visual arts.

Membership: approximately 150 art patrons and leaders from 17 states and the District of Columbia as well as 17 other countries.

Purpose: to extend the Museum's program in all the visual arts to a broad international public.

Chairman of the Board: Alfredo Boulton

Vice Chairman of the Board and Chairman of the Executive Committee: Mrs. Donald B. Straus

President: Mrs. Alfred R. Stern

Director of International Program: Waldo Rasmussen

While The Museum of Modern Art has been concerned with 20th-century visual arts of all nations since it was founded in 1929, and began to send shows abroad in 1938, it was only in 1952 that a formal International Program was established. The International Council was founded in 1953 and in 1957 assumed sponsorship of this program.

The program was founded largely in response to the need to provide a way for U. S. participation in international exchange in the visual arts, since there was no cultural ministry or other government agency charged with this function. This seemed particularly important with the revival of the Venice Biennale after World War II and the rapid increase in the number of recurring international exhibitions in other parts of the world patterned after it. For the first decade of the Program's existence, the Museum assumed responsibility for U. S. participation in many such exhibitions, most frequently upon the direct invitation of the foreign sponsors.

The coincidence of the establishment of the Museum's International Program and the emergence of American art of greater international significance than ever before

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was especially important for the American art community in the 1950s. The first major American exhibitions organized by the Museum were for museums in Europe where little recent American art had been shown. As American art became known there, interest spread to other parts of the world, and today the Council and the Museum receive requests for exhibitions of American art from all over the world.

However, from the beginning, the International Program concerned itself with cultural exchange in a very broad sense. For example, in 1961, the Children's Art Carnival was sent to India; in 1965 the Overseas Library Project was begun in Asia at the request of Asian institutions and is now operating in Latin America.

In 1962 the Museum announced that it could no longer assume the responsibility for representing the U. S. at international biennales as it felt this was properly a governmental function, provided selection could be assigned to professional organizations. Financing was a major factor in this decision; the Museum and the Council felt that priority should be given to exhibitions which could circulate more extensively than those prepared for one event. During the 60s more emphasis was also placed on bringing exhibitions from abroad to this country such as NEW SPANISH PAINTING AND SCULPTURE (1960-61) and NEW AFRICAN WORKSHOP-SCHOOL (1968-69). By the mid sixties emphasis had shifted from Europe to Latin America, India, Japan, Australia and Africa.

Now in the 70s the International Program is putting increasing emphasis on exhibitions and other projects which are international in content, and on the exchange of artists, curators and other professionals.

Among the future projects now under discussion in addition to conventional exhibitions are teaching aids and related materials, foreign distribution of Museum publications, increased assistance to overseas libraries, intern training as well

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as more exchanges of people. Other proposals being considered include some which might aid countries in various stages of transition to modern technology -- not only exhibitions but publications, symposia and research programs. An increase in the number of incoming foreign exhibitions is also being stressed by the Council.

To date under Council sponsorship more than 150 exhibitions of paintings, sculpture, drawings, prints, architecture, design, photography and film have been sent to 79 countries, and 11 exhibitions from other countries have circulated in the United States.

#### A SAMPLING OF REPRESENTATIVE ACTIVITIES 1953-72

- 1953 12 Modern American Painters and Sculptors. First show prepared for circulation in Europe.
- 1953-1963 Sponsored U. S. representation for such international exhibitions as International Art Exhibition of Japan, São Paulo Bienal, Brazil and the Venice Biennale.
- 1953 Kuniyoshi Memorial Exhibition shown in Japan.
- De David à Toulouse-Lautrec: Masterpieces from American Collections was shown at the Musée de l'Orangerie in Paris as part of the "Salute to France."
- 1955 Modern Art in the United States, selections from the Museum collection, shown in 8 European cities. First exhibition showing the range of American arts, (including painting, sculpture, printmaking, architecture, design, photography and film)
- 1956 20th-Century Design in Europe and America, selections from the Museum Collection, sent to Japan. First of its kind in that country.
- 1957 Jackson Pollock: 1912-56 was first presented at the IV Bienal, São Paulo, and afterwards circulated to European cities. Other one-man exhibitions sent abroad include Mark Rothko, Ben Shahn, Lyonel Feininger, David Smith, Willem de Kooning, Helen Frankenthaler, Claes Oldenburg, Frank Stella.
- 1958 The New American Painting toured 8 European cities before New York showing in 1959. First major showing of American Abstract Expressionists abroad.
- 1960-1970 Art in Embassies Program sent 41 collections of contemporary art to residences of U.S. ambassadors in Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America.

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1961 Children's Art Carnival toured India; presented to Children's Museum in New Delhi in 1963.

1963 Steichen the Photographer began European tour; has since been seen in 33 cities in 21 countries.

1964 Council initiated concentrated exhibition program in Latin America; 18 exhibitions have toured in Latin-American countries during past seven years.

1965 Modern Sculpture: U.S.A. shown in France and Germany. First major showing of American sculpture abroad.

Visionary Architecture began tour of Latin America.

The New Japanese Painting and Sculpture began two-year tour of the United States.

1966 Library Overseas Program initiated to establish and strengthen art sections of libraries abroad. Directed by Bernard Karpel, Museum Librarian. Began 5-year pilot project of sending extensive individual selections of study materials and books to approximately 20 libraries in Asia; in addition, approximately 10 Asian institutions currently in receipt of 5-year Museum memberships from the Council. In 1970 program extended to Latin America where 23 institutions have been selected to receive materials; 6 major publishers are cooperating by offering substantial discounts in the acquisition of art materials for the program. Research now being undertaken regarding its extension to Africa.

Architecture without Architects toured New Zealand and Australia; has since been shown in 14 European countries.

Two Decades of American Painting toured Japan, India and Australia. First major showing of recent American art in the Far East.

1967 25 Contemporary American Artists as Printmakers began tour of nine African countries.

1968 Cézanne to Miró shown in Argentina, Chile and Venezuela. First show of 20th-century masterworks to be sent to Latin America.

1970 The Experimental Film began tour of 14 European countries.

Latin-American Design Project announced. 20th-century Industrial Design.

Alexander Calder opened at the Museo de Arte Moderno in Bogotá as the first showing of its Latin American tour.

Program of classic American silent films circulated in Asia.

1971 II Indian Triennale. Four artists went to India to create new works as part of the American exhibition: Andre, Saret, Sonnier, Gilliam, Hesse, Ryman, Rohm, Serra.

Spring meeting in Japan. From Cézanne through Picasso: 100 Master Drawings from The Museum of Modern Art shown at The National Museum of Western Art in Tokyo.

1971 Surrealism began Latin American tour.

1972 Universitas symposium to be held at The Museum of Modern Art, co-sponsored by the Council and the Brionvega Corporation.

African Textiles and Jewelry to be shown at The Museum of Modern Art before beginning national tour.

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