

27-4-36

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

NEW YORK

11 WEST 53rd STREET
TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900
CABLES: MODERNART, NEW-YORK

SARAH NEWMAYER, PUBLICITY DIRECTOR

COPY OF MIMEOGRAPHED LETTER

December 20, 1941.

TO City Editors
News Photo Editors
Motion Picture Editors
Feature Editors

Dear Sirs:

You are invited to come or send a representative to

The Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53 Street

Monday afternoon, December 22
from 3 to 5 P.M.

to see a program of civilian defense motion pictures
which show citizens what to do and what not to do
in modern warfare. The program, consisting of almost
a dozen short films, will be run continuously from
3 to 5 P.M.

Also to receive information on what the Museum has done
and plans to do for air raid precautions. These prepara-
tions at present are very modest in scale but they in-
dicate what will finally be worked out.

For further information please call me at Circle 5-8900.

Sincerely,

(Signed)

Publicity Newmeyer
Publicity Director

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART TAKES AIR RAID PRECAUTIONS

AND SHOWS CIVILIAN DEFENSE FILMS

Protection for its visitors, its staff and its art is being organized by the Museum of Modern Art, its Executive Vice-President, John E. Abbott, announced yesterday. Mr. Abbott also announced two film programs Safety for the Citizen to be shown alternately at 3 P.M. daily except Sundays, in the Museum's auditorium beginning today, Tuesday, December 23, and continuing through the period of their usefulness to the public.

Each program, forty-five minutes in length, is composed of six short films made in England to show citizens what to do and what not to do in the modern warfare which has turned the great cities of the world into battlefields and front-line trenches. These programs are being shown in addition to the Museum's regular four o'clock film programs.

Much of the Museum's art not now on exhibition will be removed to a place of safety outside the Museum but in New York City. The paintings and objects which may be on display when an air raid alarm is given will be immediately removed to safety within the Museum.

In addition to taping the Museum's vast expanse of glass which forms its front and rear walls, stirrup pumps, water buckets and buckets filled with sand have been placed on all floors to extinguish incendiary bombs or other fires. Axes, bars, ropes, shovels, steel helmets, flashlights and first aid kits are now in place at strategic points throughout the Museum to be ready for use in all emergencies. The staff of the Museum has been organized in squads, the leader of each equipped with full instructions and authority to carry them out in blackouts, alarms, or actual air raids.

When an alarm sounds the doors of the Museum will remain open for five minutes, after which they will be closed and no one else will be admitted. This is in accordance with current official instructions that people should be under cover within five minutes after an alarm sounds. The Museum will use as air raid shelter for its own personnel

and its visitors the auditorium floor which is on the sub-basement level. This floor is equipped with toilet facilities, telephone, seating for more than five hundred people and other conveniences useful in air raids or alarms.

Mr. Abbott announced that Douglas L. Baxter, the Museum's Production Manager, has been appointed Building Control Director by Blair Taylor, Zone Warden for the district which is bounded by 50th Street and 59th Street from Fifth to Twelfth Avenues.

"In these difficult times," Mr. Abbott said, "the Museum is extremely fortunate to have a man of Mr. Baxter's ability and experience in charge of its air raid precautionary program. He is a retired captain of the British army, in which he served twenty-three years. During the World War he was stationed in France, Italy, Egypt and the Sudan. He equipped all of Colonel T. E. Lawrence's expeditions into Arabia.

"Mr. Baxter, now an American citizen, came to this country in 1923. In 1925 he was engaged as a consulting expert for a film on Arabia by the Fox Film Company. For eleven years he was art director and chief of research for Fox-Twentieth Century Film Company. In 1936 he came to the Museum of Modern Art and in 1939 was made Production Manager, supervising the installation of all the Museum's exhibitions. Mr. Baxter is a man not only of great resourcefulness but of remarkable organizing and executive ability. Within twenty-four hours of our declaration of war he had supplies on hand for many emergencies and had already drawn up plans for dealing with wartime dangers for which we must all be prepared even though we fervently hope that none of these preparations will ever be needed. It is better to be prepared perhaps unnecessarily than to risk the loss of one life."

Two of the films on the Safety for the Citizen programs have just arrived from England and will have their first public showing at the Museum on Tuesday. These are Citizen Army and Shunter Black's Night Off. Others such as Ack Ack, Mr. Proudfoot Shows a Light, Stop That Fire, and Goofer Trouble have never been shown at the Museum. Four of the films, Neighbors Under Fire, War and Order, A Job To Be Done, and Musical Poster No. 1 were shown as part of the Museum's

Britain At War exhibition in the spring and summer of 1941. The film programs are as follows:

Program I

ACK ACK

The organization and routine of a typical British anti-aircraft gun-crew, its work in detecting enemy aircraft, in the prevention of accurate bombing and in bringing down planes.

NEIGHBORS UNDER FIRE

How volunteer organizations provide temporary shelter and food for Londoners when they are bombed or blasted out of their homes.

WAR AND ORDER

A first-hand account of the day-to-day duties of the police in wartime, and of the training of police recruits drawn from all walks of civilian life.

MR. PROUDFOOT SHOWS A LIGHT

The pompous Mr. Proudfoot is very casual about air raids, with results that point the moral of obedience to the rules about blackouts and air raid precautions.

STOP THAT FIRE

A straightforward demonstration of the proper way to deal with incendiary bombs both in the streets and at home.

MUSICAL POSTER NO. 1

This gay little kaleidoscopic picture has its own war-time message - that discretion about one's war work and other people's war work is an excellent thing.

Program II

A JOB TO BE DONE

How Britain enlists its civilian man-power for munitions work: told in terms of the people it actually affects.

THEY ALSO SERVE

The ordinary housewife also plays her all-important part in wartime.

CITIZEN ARMY

Organization and duties of the Home Guard, England's new citizen army.

GOOFER TROUBLE

The "goofer" thinks that air-raid precautions were not made for him. An airman gives another view of the matter.

SHUNTER BLACK'S NIGHT OFF

A railwayman off duty deals with some incendiary bombs.

MUSICAL POSTER NO. 1

See Program 1, above.