

# THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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

500720 CIRC 48 8900

FOR WEDNESDAY RELEASE

## NEWLY ACQUIRED WORKS BY 15 ARTISTS TO GO ON VIEW

Recently acquired works by 15 artists will be on view on the first floor of the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, from July 26 through November 5. The 18 works of art, 17 of them recently added to the Museum Collection and 1 on extended loan, include 13 oil paintings, 3 watercolors, 1 sculpture and 1 construction.

Seven of the artists are well-known Europeans: Picasso, Léger, Mondrian, Beckmann, Klee, de Chirico, Pevsner. Four prominent Americans are represented: Charles Burchfield, Charles Demuth, Rico Lebrun and Morris Graves; while 3 of the remaining 4 American artists are newcomers to the Museum Collection and its public: Richard Lippold, J.M. Hanson and Richard Pousette-Dart. Jimmy Ernst is already represented in the Collection with an earlier painting.

Picasso's Harlequin was painted in 1915, in an atmosphere of general gloom owing to the war and personal distress because of the mortal illness of his mistress. It may be that there is a reflection of the artist's state of mind in the Harlequin with its gaily colored figure ironically placed against a sombre black background. In a letter to Gertrude Stein, lent to the show by the Yale University Library, he wrote: "I have done a painting of a harlequin which in the opinion of myself and several others is the best thing I have done" - an unusually strong statement from Picasso, yet not exaggerated, for this picture is perhaps the most important of his cubist paintings between 1914 and 1921. Acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest.

Giorgio de Chirico's Disturbing Journey (1913) is a compellingly dream-like image, one of the paintings which became a principal inspiration for the surrealists of the 1920s and '30s. Acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest.

Three canvases by Piet Mondrian span a large part of his career: Composition in Brown and Gray, c.1914, and Color Squares in Oval, 1915, date from the important period of his development from cubism to his later abstract style. Victory Boogie Woogie, his famous last work left unfinished at his death in 1944, is the culmination of a less severe and more complicated style developed after he came to N.Y. in 1941. This is lent from the Miller Company's "Painting toward Architecture" Collection.

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Fernand Léger's 2 large painted decorations with their free flowing forms are an interesting contrast to his early cubist work and his post-cubist machine-inspired forms. Gift of Gerald Murphy.

Still Life with Candles is a late and powerful work by the German expressionist painter, Max Beckmann, painted in 1949, 2 years after he came to the United States.

A brilliant little oil by Paul Klee, Equals Infinity, 1932, reveals the power and freshness of Klee's use of color. Acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest.

The sculpture by Antoine Pevsner, Developable Column, 1942, is one of his best recent works. It is made in oxidized metals by a process unique with the artist.

Among the American works acquired are excellent watercolors by Burchfield - Pippin House, East Liverpool, Ohio, 1920, gift of Mr. and Mrs. Alex Hillman; by Demuth - Vaudeville, 1917; and by Graves - Bat Dancing for a Slug, 1943. Lebrun's Figure in Rain is a distinguished example of his recent painting. Of it he says that he wishes to use symbols that are intelligible, contemporary and universal, depicting the general "human condition." Gift of Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss.

An almost incredibly delicate construction, Variation No. 7: Full Moon, by Richard Lippold (born 1915) is made of nickel chromium wire and thin brass rods. Of this work, the artist says that its visual and technical structure depends on the unity of diversity in tensions, so characteristic of our age, a unity to which the work is dedicated in spirit. "The firmer the tensions within it, the more placid its effect"

J.M. Hanson, born in England, 1900, came to N.Y. in 1939. He says of his Nocturnal Encounters: "The painting has no topical or symbolic meaning, but is simply what I considered to be a poetic, musical expression of a certain phase of night life, that of drifting, accidental encounters executed in terms of 'empty space.'" Richard Pousette-Dart, a self-taught American painter born in 1916, calls his painting No. 7 with subtitle A Presence, perhaps expressing his feeling that a painting is whole and mysterious, like a person, and that it defies explanation. Jimmy Ernst, born 1920, son of the well-known surrealist painter Max Ernst, says of his picture A Time for Fear: "The finished painting suggested to me an unfamiliar yet ominous object with a time mechanism to set it in motion."