THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
11 WEST 53 STREET, NEW YORK 19, N. Y.
TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900

No. 53

Press Preview: Tuesday
May 31, 1955: 2-5p.m.

Members' Preview: Wednesday
June 1, 1955; 5-11 p.m.

Opens to the public
Thursday, June 2, 1955.

FOR RELEASE: THURSDAY
JUNE 2, 1955.

PAINTINGS FROM PRIVATE COLLECTIONS AT MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

As the culmination of its 25th Anniversary Year celebration, the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, is presenting to the public an exhibition of almost 160 modern paintings selected by Alfred H. Barr, Jr., from 59 private collections. PAINTINGS FROM PRIVATE COLLECTIONS, on view from June 2 through September 5, complements the opening Anniversary Year exhibition PAINTINGS FROM THE MUSEUM COLLECTION. The first show was a report on the Museum's holdings arranged as a systematic review of modern painting. The current exhibition is much smaller, "less ambitious in scope, less formal in arrangement and more exacting in standards of quality," Mr. Barr, Director of Museum Collections and organizer of both shows, explains in his introduction to the catalog.

Twenty-five paintings, including works by Cézanne, Delaunay, Gauguin, Gris, Manet, Miro, Picasso, Rousseau and Utrillo, have never been shown before in this country and several have only very recently come into American collections. Fifty-one artists, European and American, are represented, some by a dozen or more works each.

During the course of the exhibition, Mr. Barr said, the Museum will announce a number of gifts to its own collection of important pictures now in the exhibition.

As the Museum Collection is weak in late 19th century pictures, almost one third of the paintings in the current show are from that period. The fourteen Cézannes in PAINTINGS FROM PRIVATE COLLECTIONS, for example, magnificently supplement the Museum's five Cézannes shown last Autumn. Van Gogh, represented in the Collection by only one oil, is here shown in seven famous canvases, including Night Cafe,(1888) Self Portrait (1889) and Portrait of Dr. Gachet (1890), who was the artist's physician during the last weeks of his life.

Six Gauguins in the current exhibition, including three which have not been seen before, two paintings by Degas and five early Vuillards (1892 - 1900) also provide important supplements to the Museum's works by these 19th Century artists shown last Autumn. Three paintings by Seurat, who is only represented by one painting and some drawings in the Museum Collection, are on view including two shown for the first time in this country: L'Ile de la Grande Jatte (1884), used by the French artist as

more .....

a study for the large composition, A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte, and Boats at Grandcamp.

Two famous French masters, Manet and Renoir, not represented at all in the Museum Collection, are seen here in superb works. Manet's Still Life with a Brioche is on view for the first time in this country and Renoir is represented by four paintings including the famous and popular Little Margot Bérard and the Moulin de la Galette. 19th century American artists, Homer, Eakins and Ryder, also not in the Museum Collection, are represented by one painting each.

In his introduction to the catalogue, Mr. Barr points out that the Collection is weak in the 19th century period largely as a result of the Museum's original policy of relinquishing some of its older paintings in the interests of acquiring more recent ones. This policy was changed only a little more than two years ago when the Museum Trustees stated that the Museum "now believes it essential for the understanding and enjoyment of its entire collection to have permanently on view masterpieces of the modern movement, beginning with the latter half of the 19th century... outstanding paintings and sculptures which it considers have passed the test of time .... The creation of a permanent core within the collection constitutes a radically important departure from the Museum's past policy...."

In deference to THE NEW DECADE exhibitions, currently on view elsewhere in the Museum and next door at the Whitney Museum of American Art, no European and only two American painters of post-war reputation are included.

Twenty paintings by Picasso and fourteen by Matisse are included in the current exhibition because the Museum Collection lacks early or late examples of work by these masters. Among the early Picassos are the large Boy Leading a Horse and Woman Combing Her Hair; his late style is to be seen in the imposing First Steps (1943), a winter landscape of Vallauris, and the overpowering Charnel-house, a huge oil which Picasso began in the summer of 1945 as a reaction to the publication of photographs of the just-captured concentration camps. This is the first time Charnel-house has been shown in this country. Similarly Matisse is represented by several early fauve paintings and by three brilliant still lifes of the 1940s.

Other 20th century artists of international significance inadequately represented in the Museum Collection but shown in this current exhibition are Bonnard, represented by three interiors and a landscape; Rouault, represented by three oils and a watercolor and pastel; Feininger, represented by one of his recent pictures, Lunar Web, 1951; Marin, whose famous Lower Manhattan is shown here; Delaunay, represented by Windows (1912); five Braques including two later pictures, Still Life with Flowers (1946) and Studio (1949), the latter shown for the first time; and eight paintings by the Spaniard, Juan Gris, including three painted during the last years

more.....

of his life. Paul Klee, the Swiss artist who worked in Germany, is represented by nine pictures, including four oils. Other paintings in the exhibition being shown for the first time include one by Utrillo, a brilliant landscape of the fauve period by Derain and a small, charming landscape by Rousseau.

Among the 20th century American paintings selected for the exhibition are Charles Burchfield's Night Wind, Marsden Hartley's Portrait of Albert Pinkham Ryder, Ben Shahn's Liberation and Jack Levine's Election Night, painted in 1954, and abstractions by Pollock, Tomlin and Gorky.

Three small pictures have had extraordinary artistic consequences. Nudes, a gouache painted by Picasso in the Pyrenees in the summer of 1906, is apparently the first intimation of one of Picasso's crucial paintings, Les Demoiselles D'Avignon, now in the Museum Collection. Matisse's first figure composition, Luxe, calme et volupté, painted in 1904 at St. Tropez, served as a study for the large and influential canvas of the same name shown at the Salon des Indépendants of 1905. Matisse's Music, a study done in 1907, anticipates in color, style and certain details the two great compositions, La musique and La dance, commissioned by Sergei Shchukin of Moscow and completed in 1910.

NOTE: Catalog and photographs available upon request from
Elizabeth Shaw, Publicity Director
Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53 Street
New York City

A list of lenders to the exhibition is attached.

LENDERS TO

PAINTINGS FROM PRIVATE COLLECTIONS

Dr. and Mrs. Harry Bakwin

Mr. and Mrs. Walter Bareiss

Mr. and Mrs. Armand P. Bartos

Mr. and Mrs. William A.M. Burden

Mrs. Gilbert W. Chapman

Walter P. Chrysler, Jr.

Stephen C. Clark

Miss Pamela T. Colin

Mr. and Mrs. Ralph F. Colin

Armand G. Erpf

Diane Esmond

Mrs. Edsel B. Ford

Mr. and Mrs. Victor W. Ganz

Philip L. Goodwin

A. Conger Goodyear

Mr. and Mrs. Ira Haupt

Dr. and Mrs. F.H. Hirschland

Joseph H. Hirshhom

Mr. and Mrs. Alex L. Hillman

Ittleson Collection, New York

Mr. and Mrs. William B. Jaffe

Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Jaretzki, Jr.

Mr. and Mrs. Siegfried Kramarsky

Mrs. Phyllis B. Lambert

Mrs. Albert D. Lasker

Miss Loula D. Lasker

Mrs. Gertrude Lenart

Dr. and Mrs. David M. Levy

Mr. and Mrs. Alex M. Lewyt

Mr. and Mrs. Milton Lowenthal

Mr. and Mrs. Samuel A. Marx

Mr. and Mrs. Jean Mauzé

Mr. and Mrs. William S. Paley

Mr. and Mrs. Charles S. Payson

Henry Pearlman

Mr. and Mrs. Bernard J. Reis

Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Resor

Mr. and Mrs. Stanley R. Resor

Mr. and Mrs. David Rockefeller

Mr. and Mrs. Laurance S. Rockefeller

Nelson A. Rockefeller

Mr. and Mrs. Peter A. Rübel

Mr. and Mrs. John L. Senior, Jr.

Frederick C. Shang

Mr. and Mrs. Leo Simon

Mrs. Louise Smith

Mr. and Mrs. James Thrall Soby

Mr. and Mrs. Nate B. Spingold

Mr. and Mrs. Francis Steegmuller

Louis E. Stern

G. David Thompson

Mr. and Mrs. Edwin C. Vogel

Dr. Herschel Carey Walker

Mr. and Mrs. Edward M.M. Warburg

Mr. and Mrs. Keith Warner

Mrs. Lloyd Bruce Wescott

Mr. and Mrs. John Hay Whitney

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Zadok

In addition several of the lenders prefer to remain anonymous.