

54

# THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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

TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900

No. 23

FOR RELEASE:

Wednesday, March 21, 1956

TO: Radio and Television Public Service Departments.

FROM: Elizabeth Shaw, Publicity Director, Museum of Modern Art.

Toulouse-Lautrec's famous portraits of the circus performers, singers, café figures and actresses who entertained in the Montmartre in Paris in the 1890's will be on view in a spectacularly installed exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, through May 6. The exhibition will be open to the public from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. weekdays and from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. Sundays. These new gallery hours coincide with the opening of the show on Wednesday, March 21.

More than 20 posters have been hung on 14-foot-high kiosks built in the Museum gallery, while 76 book illustrations, song sheets, magazine covers and other color lithographs are shown on special display tables and more than 100 famous paintings and drawings hung on the gallery walls.

Lautrec cast an aristocratic eye on Paris low life in the 90's and the list of characters assembled at the Museum includes such famous people as the dancer Jane Avril; the celebrated, black-gloved diseuse, Yvette Guilbert; café owner and singer Aristide Bruant; photographer Paul Sescau; the scandal-gossip journalist, M. Boileau; the Clowness Cha-U-Ka-O; and the jeweler and designer of medals, Henry Nocq.

Andrew Carnduff Ritchie, Director of the Museum's Department of Painting and Sculpture, who assembled the show, says: "The record of what Lautrec's eye selected to see will always remain one of the most piquant and arresting in the history of art....He enjoyed the garish vulgarity of the music hall and delighted in the dash and humor of the circus. We may romanticize his personal life and the life he depicted. The point is, he never romanticized himself or the world about him. This is what gives his astonishing hand and eye their power and penetration and gives to his art a significance and value above and beyond its popular documentary appeal."

---