

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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

TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900

No. 146

For Release:

Wednesday,
December 21, 1960

Press Preview:

Tuesday,
December 20, 1960
11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

VALUABLE AND COMPREHENSIVE ACQUISITION SHOW ON VIEW AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

The most valuable additions to The Museum of Modern Art Collections acquired in any year since 1931 will be on view in a special exhibition from December 21 through February 12, 1961. As all curatorial departments are represented, including Painting and Sculpture, Prints and Drawings, Architecture and Design, Photography, and Film, this is also the most comprehensive exhibition of recent acquisitions ever held by the Museum.

In addition to serving as the Museum's annual acquisition report to its public, this year's exhibition also demonstrates the scope and scale of the Museum's riches which, because of lack of gallery and storage space, cannot be seen until the current building and endowment fund drive is completed.

A separate gallery is devoted to the most important gift received by the Museum, five superb paintings by great masters of modern art, Cézanne, Degas, Seurat, Toulouse-Lautrec and Picasso, donated by the late Mrs. David M. Levy, Vice President of the Museum.

A panoramic 20-foot mural by Claude Monet never before shown anywhere is installed in a special gallery opposite the three-panel 42-foot mural shown last year. All four were purchased with the Mrs. Simon Guggenheim Fund.

Other "old masters" of modern art include paintings by Pissarro, Vuillard, Sickert, Klee and Balla, and sculptures by Bourdelle, Rosso, Matisse and Duchamp-Villon.

Contemporary painting and sculpture includes realist and expressionist figure paintings from the United States, Africa and Australia; geometrical abstract art, both American and foreign; and international abstract expressionism including capital works by members of "The New York School."

The gallery of newly acquired drawings and watercolors presents 12 works from the John S. Newberry Collection, including 5 drawings by Picasso. Burchfield's most famous early watercolor and a great drawing by Miró are among the gifts of other donors.

The print section includes one of the rarest and most famous 19th century lithographs, The Shriek, by Edvard Munch, as well as other lithographs, woodcuts

Acquisitions to the architecture and design collections comprise the magnificent Joseph H. Heil Collection of almost 150 works by Louis Comfort Tiffany, internationally the most famous American craftsman; the model and large montage for a colossal Convention Hall in Chicago by Mies van der Rohe; furniture by Le Corbusier, Aalto and Eames, and a group demonstrating contemporary industrial design and craftsmanship. Twenty posters from 7 countries added to the poster collection are also shown.

The photography acquisitions are represented by 60 prints by photographers from 9 countries, ranging in age from Man Ray (b. 1890) to the 22-year old Key L. Nelson. An eight-foot paneled composition by Lennart Olson of Sweden is also shown.

Acquisitions to the Museum's Film Library are represented by a group of stills from 14 films acquired in 1959-60. These include 3 famous films of the past by Herbert G. Ponting (England), Eisenstein and Alexandrov (U.S.S.R.), and Jean Benoit-Levy (France); and the Museum's first important group of films from the 1950s, including Italian, Swedish, Japanese and American works.

In pointing out the Museum's desperate need for space, Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Director of Museum Collections, cites the Monet gallery as an example. "This beautiful gallery of the Water Lilies, unique outside of Paris, will be dismantled when the current exhibition closes and only one of the four great panels can be kept on view. The others will return to storage outside the Museum where they will not be visible even to students.

"Very few of the 250 other paintings and sculptures, prints and drawings, design objects and photographs in the exhibition can be shown in the already crowded galleries on the second floor where selections from the collections are permanently on view. The rest will be sent to storerooms which range from the uninviting to the inaccessible.

"Until we are able to build a new wing providing additional exhibition and accessible storage space, the great majority of works in our collections will have to remain 'invisible.'"

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The most valuable group of additions to the Museum of Modern Art Collections acquired in a single year since 1931 will be on view in a special exhibition from December 21 through February 12. All curatorial departments are represented making this the most comprehensive acquisition show ever presented by the Museum. In addition to serving as the regular annual report to the public, this year's Acquisition show also demonstrates the scope of the Museum's richness which cannot be seen by the public until the 30th Anniversary Drive for building, program and endowment funds is completed.

The section of the exhibition devoted to acquisitions to the architecture and design collections includes a large architectural model by Mies van der Rohe for a Convention Hall in Chicago accompanied by a collage illustrating the interior, an outstanding group of vases and other objects designed by Louis Comfort Tiffany, including a stained glass window from Booth Tarkington's house, important additions to the Museum's chair collection of furniture by Le Corbusier, Aalto and Eames, recently designed household and office accessories from here and abroad and twenty posters.

Other acquisitions on view include paintings, sculpture, photographs, prints, drawings, ... and a group of stills from a dozen films acquired during 1960.

Alfred H. Barr, Jr. is Director of Museum Collections. The architecture and design acquisitions on view were selected for the exhibition by Arthur Drexler, Director of the department, and Greta Daniel, Associate Curator of Design and Mildred Constantine, Associate Curator of Graphic Design.

(A fuller description of this section of the exhibition is attached.)

For additional information please contact Elizabeth Shaw, Publicity Director, Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, N. Y. CI 5-8900.