

CONDITIONS OF USE FOR THIS PDF

The images contained within this PDF may be used for private study, scholarship, and research only. They may not be published in print, posted on the internet, or exhibited. They may not be donated, sold, or otherwise transferred to another individual or repository without the written permission of The Museum of Modern Art Archives.

When publication is intended, publication-quality images must be obtained from SCALA Group, the Museum's agent for licensing and distribution of images to outside publishers and researchers.

If you wish to quote any of this material in a publication, an application for permission to publish must be submitted to the MoMA Archives. This stipulation also applies to dissertations and theses. All references to materials should cite the archival collection and folder, and acknowledge "The Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York."

Whether publishing an image or quoting text, you are responsible for obtaining any consents or permissions which may be necessary in connection with any use of the archival materials, including, without limitation, any necessary authorizations from the copyright holder thereof or from any individual depicted therein.

In requesting and accepting this reproduction, you are agreeing to indemnify and hold harmless The Museum of Modern Art, its agents and employees against all claims, demands, costs and expenses incurred by copyright infringement or any other legal or regulatory cause of action arising from the use of this material.

NOTICE: WARNING CONCERNING COPYRIGHT RESTRICTIONS

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specified conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be "used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research." If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of "fair use," that user may be liable for copyright infringement.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

The Junior Council of the Museum of Modern Art held its first meeting on Tuesday, February 8, 1949, at the home of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, III.

Present were: Mrs. Rockefeller, Chairman; Mr. Allwood, Mr. Bach, Mr. Braden, Mrs. Clark, Mrs. Erskine, Mr. Goldman, Miss Hochschild, Mr. Ireland, Mr. Knittel, Mrs. Lockwood, Mrs. Meyer, Mrs. Noyes, Miss Resor, Mrs. Rumbough, Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Straus, Mr. Swope, Mr. Warren.
Museum Trustees: Mr. Clark, Mr. Nelson Rockefeller, Mr. Soby, Mr. Wheeler.

Mrs. Rockefeller welcomed the members of the Junior Council and the Museum Trustees who were present.

The purpose of the Council, she explained, is to bring together a group of younger people who have a common interest in the arts and a desire to see them fostered soundly and liberally in this country.

Specifically, the group will study the broad range of activities undertaken in various fields by the Museum of Modern Art, will help to further these activities, and will apply its knowledge and understanding of them toward the constructive criticism of the Museum's work and the friendly interpretation of that work to the public and the art world.

She asked the members present to consider themselves a permanent organization, although she pointed out that she thought it would be well eventually to set an upper age limit to membership in order to keep the group young, and she asked the members to be on the lookout for younger people with promise and intellectual attainment.

She explained that the members of the Council will be appointed technically by the President of the Museum, and that, later on, various of the members may be asked to serve in rotation on other committees within the Museum.

The Chairman suggested that the group meet on Tuesdays once every three weeks, and the group agreed that 5:00 would be the most convenient hour.

Mrs. Rockefeller then said that she had planned an agenda for the rest of this year on the assumption that the members would want to acquaint themselves thoroughly with the Museum's history and accomplishments before undertaking a program of their own. She suggested that the next meeting

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

-2-

should be led by the director of the Museum Collection, Mr. Alfred Barr, Jr., whose consecutive supervision of the Collection has helped to earn the Museum its renown. Mr. Barr, she said, is the one man in the world most qualified to answer questions, not only about modern painting and sculpture, but about the purpose of the Museum, its role in society, and the philosophical implications of that role.

She thought that members of the group might want to ask him about the Museum's general history and program, and that Mr. Barr might be called in again to devote his time more specifically to the story of the Museum Collection.

After that, she said, meetings might be devoted to the work of separate departments within the Museum. Mrs. Rockefeller suggested one on Architecture, with Mr. Philip Johnson, one on Photography, with Mr. Edward Steichen, and one on the Film Library, with Miss Iris Barry.

The members of the Council were in accord with this suggested agenda.

The Chairman then introduced the President of the Museum, Mr. Nelson A. Rockefeller.

Mr. Rockefeller said that this was a very exciting moment to him. Nineteen years ago, he said, he had joined with several others to form a Junior Advisory Council, consisting primarily of those who had been interested in art while at college. Some of these members later became Trustees of the Museum and some joined the Museum staff. In the meantime, over a period of twenty years, the Museum itself had grown from a three room apartment in the Heckshire Building to an institution tremendous in scope, its activities and point of view exercising an influence on the taste and ideas of the nation and even of the world. There is, he said, quite a little catching up for the Council to do.

But one of the constants in the Museum's growth has been its receptivity to new ideas. The Museum is adaptable to new ideas now. It should take chances, he said, should learn to do new things, should never lose its drive and fervor in largeness of organization. He called upon the members of the Council to present their view points and ideas to members of the staff of the Museum and to its Trustees. Museum policies, he said, organization and techniques will be open to members of the Council. He hoped that, in return, members of the Council would feel free to criticize, and he asked only that they criticize not as outsiders but as responsible and understanding participants.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

-3-

The Chairman then introduced Mr. Soby, the Chairman of the Department of Painting and Sculpture.

TWENTIETH CENTURY ITALIAN PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

Mr. Soby told the Council that some time next summer the Museum hopes to stage a huge exhibition of twentieth century Italian painting and sculpture. Last summer he and Mr. Barr visited Italy to select works for this show and, incidentally, to see whether they could learn the answer to the question which the art world in general was asking:

The question was this: Can the post-war Italian generation produce works of art of international interest after twenty years of Fascism and the destruction of war.

Mr. Soby said that he and Mr. Barr had learned the answer to this question and that it would become apparent in what he had to say. At the time they had gone abroad, no one in America knew very much about what was going on in Italian art. There had only been rumors. Illustrating his remarks with slides, Mr. Soby made the point that it had been difficult for the Italian artists to assert themselves under the immense weight of their own past. He pointed to the contrast between the Colleoni statue by Verrocchio, in celebration of a Renaissance commander's personal valor, and the work of Marino Marini, Italy's greatest sculptor of today, which shows the despair of modern man faced with the almost anonymous destructiveness of modern war.

Mr. Soby showed the work of de Chirico and Modigliani, two painters of international importance, whose work was already well known, as examples of early twentieth century painting. De Chirico, he said, had founded surrealism, one of the important movements of our time, and had injected into his work the quality of eerie dreamlight and a sense of infinity, at the very time the Cubists were flattening out their pictures. Mr. Soby said that he and Mr. Barr could count on the quality of the work of these two painters but wondered what else they would find, especially by younger men.

Mr. Soby then showed the work of a great many artists; notable among these were:

1. Boccioni, the main figure of the futurist school both as sculptor and painter.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

-4-

The futurists were nearly abreast of the most advanced art in Paris at the time of Italy's entrance into the First World War. The individual artists in the movement were vehemently pro-Allied. When the war came, the movement broke up, and Italian art tended to become reactionary again, with notable exceptions.

2. Morandi, whom every Italian critic, collector and artist agrees is Italy's best painter of today.

Mr. Barr and Mr. Soby were skeptical of Morandi's work at first because he seemed to them monotonous in subject matter. In the end they found him completely authentic, his integrity and quality beyond question. Fascism had encouraged artists to adopt a pompous neo-classicism; nevertheless, the twenties and thirties were probably the high point in Morandi's career. He successfully resisted the warriors and cumbersome nudes which Mussolini liked and painted still lifes in a manner reminiscent in purpose though not of style of Cezanne.

3. A group of middle generation painters, for the most part with very little relationship to one another.

Among these were Sironi of Milan, an expressionist related to Rouault in intensity; de Pisis of Venice, whose interest in color and light is typical of painters of that city; Rosai of Florence, who, like the American Ben Shahn, was interested primarily in workers, realistically and stylistically drawn; and Casorati of Turin, whose studio pictures seem far removed from the reality of Europe today.

Mr. Soby said that Italy has no New York or Paris as the center of its art world but rather a separate school for each large city, as during the Renaissance. Artists from a given city until recently were isolated from those of other cities and from the outside world.

4. Scipione and Mafai, two protestants against the pomposity of Fascism, the first of whom began a return to religious subject material and might have emerged as a great figure but for his early death in 1933.

Mafai painted dead flowers and burnt buildings in Rome during the very years when Mussolini was proclaiming Rome eternal. These two painters, standing out against the tendency toward over-blown neo-classicism, attracted disciples. Their influence is strong today.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

-5-

5. Marino Marini, forty-seven, is, in Mr. Soby's opinion, the best portraitist since Despiiau and the creator of magnificent large-scale works.

Mr. Soby said that when he saw Marini's work he thought it remarkable that after such a long period of despair the Italians could produce anything so fine.

6. Manzu Mr. Soby called the second best sculptor in Italy. He was born in 1908 and has tried to create a religious art comparable to that of the past, in an idiom not conspicuously modern but reminiscent of the sculpture of impressionism.
7. Muccini, Vespignani, the girl Graziella, Pirzzinato and especially Guttuso whose anti-German drawings were published during the war and whose paintings have tried to combine abstraction and realism - were among those whom Mr. Soby thought particularly representative of a new Italian generation.

This generation Mr. Soby thought admirable for its courage and remarkable for its achievements. The answer to the question about Italian artists, he said, was a strong affirmative. He found especially encouraging the fact that many of the younger Italian artists are really young, whereas in France they are described as "young" when many are between forty and fifty.

It was interesting to find that many Italian painters had the idea that representatives from the Museum of Modern Art would not look at the work of Communists. Guttuso was typical of those who did not understand the American attitude. "It is very simple," he said. "In America, all painters are abstractionists; in Russia, they are all realists." Mr. Soby and Mr. Barr tried to make clear that all American painters are not abstractionists and that when Americans said freedom of expression, they meant that the artist must be at liberty to paint in any style he finds valid.

The Communist party on the other hand has recently issued a directive against abstract art, to the sorrow and consternation of Italian Communist artists who had supposed, naively enough, that they could continue to paint what they felt and not what they were told.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

JUNIOR COUNCIL - MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Mr. Martin Allwood
New York City

Mr. Lee Ault
New York City

Mr. Julian Bach
New York City

Princess Laetitia Boncompagnie
New York City

Mr. Thomas Braden
New York City

Mrs. Alfred C. Clark
New York City

Mrs. Richard Deutsch
Greenwich, Connecticut

Mrs. Albert Erskine
New York City

Mr. Lee Goldman
New York City

Miss Patricia Hochschild
New York City

Mr. Robert L. Ireland, III
New York City

Mr. Robert Knittel
New York City

Mrs. John Lockwood
New York City

Mr. Alastair B. Martin
New York City

Mrs. Walter Maynard
New York City

Mrs. Mathew Mellon
Greenwich, Connecticut

Mrs. Thomas Noyes
New York City

Mrs. Walter H. Page
Long Island, New York

Mr. Charles Parkhurst
Princeton, New Jersey

Mr. Ogden R. Reid
New York City

Miss Ann C. Resor
New York City

Mr. David Rockefeller
New York City

Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, III
New York City

Mr. Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr.
New York City

Miss Anne Ruml
New York City

Mrs. Stanley Rumbough, Jr.
New York City

Mrs. Carleton Sprague Smith
New York City

Mrs. Donald Straus
New York City

Mr. David Swope
Tarrytown, New York

Mr. George Warren, III
New York City

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

General File ①

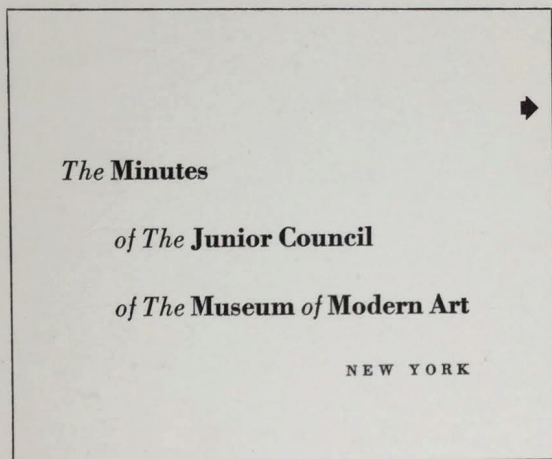
JUNIOR COUNCIL
Of The Museum of Modern Art

Minutes of the Meeting
February 8, 1949

Personal

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1



► Confidential. Not for publication

..... Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Guest

March 8, 1949

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

The Junior Council of the Museum of Modern Art held its second meeting on Tuesday, March 8, 1949, in the penthouse of the Museum.

Present were: Mrs. Rockefeller, Chairman; Mr. Barr, Mr. Allwood, Mrs. Braden, Mr. Braden, Mrs. Clark, Mrs. Erskine, Mr. Goldman, Miss Hochschild, Mr. Knittel, Mr. Martin, Mrs. Maynard, Mrs. Mellon, Mrs. Noyes, Miss Resor, Mr. Rockefeller, Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Straus, Mr. Swope.

Mrs. Rockefeller urged strongly that every member of the Junior Council who is not a member of the Museum join in order to receive the publications and keep up-to-date in Museum activities. She said that Mr. Braden will send membership blanks to those who have not yet joined, and called the members' attention to the book, "Painting and Sculpture in the Museum of Modern Art," which was distributed to those present.

Mrs. Rockefeller called upon Mr. Barr to tell the Council about the early history of the Museum.

Mr. Barr said that he had "not prepared a discourse" but would be very glad to answer specific questions.

A digest of the questions and Mr. Barr's answers follows:

Question: Who were the individuals who started the Museum and why was it organized?

Mr. Barr: In a sense, the epoch-making Armory Show was the real beginning of the Museum; everyone thought and hoped that the exhibition of over a thousand paintings and sculpture held in a New York Armory would be the beginning of a permanent institution. But, possibly because of the war in Europe, possibly because New York was not ready, no such institution developed.

Two other forerunners of the Museum in New York were the Société Anonyme, organized by Catherine Dreier, assisted by Wassily Kandinsky, and Marcel Duchamp; (the Société actually used as its subtitle, "The Museum of Modern Art" later adding the sub-title "1920.") The Gallery of Living Art in the Washington Square branch of New York University started by Albert Gallatin, a collector, about 1925 was also valuable though quite limited. We should not forget Alfred Stieglitz's gallery, half commercial, half institutional, which showed Matisse, Cezanne, Picasso even before the Armory Show.

Three women, Mrs. Cornelius J. Sullivan, Miss Lizzie P. Bliss, and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., who had been particularly impressed by the Armory Show and were influenced by the artists who had organized it, got together and took advantage of the strategic moment when Frank Crowninshield and a number of collectors were

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

- 2 -

trying to persuade the Metropolitan Museum to lend its galleries for an exhibition of modern French painting - an idea toward which the Metropolitan was not cordial. The three ladies asked the help of Stephen Clark, A. Conger Goodyear (President), Paul Sachs of Harvard, Sam Lewisohn, Mrs. W. Murray Crane, and Mr. Crowninshield (Secretary). Together, during the summer of 1929, they organized the Museum of Modern Art.

Question: Was the Museum's first exhibition organized by those who had organized the Armory Show?

Mr. Barr: No, the Museum's first exhibition, held in 1929 in a few rooms in the Heckscher Building, was made possible by these first eight sponsors and friends they had interested. Mr. Goodyear traveled to Europe to borrow paintings by the four artists, Seurat, van Gogh, Gauguin and Cézanne; I borrowed American owned works. The Armory Show of 16 years before was organized entirely by artists, who raised the money, found the place, chose the paintings, and ran the exhibition. (Mr. Barr passed around the table a scrap book of photographs of paintings that were in the Armory Show.)

Question: Who were the artists behind the Armory Show?

Mr. Barr: The most important single figure was Arthur B. Davies, a man of great energy, an organizer, painter and fighter. Others were Walt Kuhn, Walter Pach, and John Quinn, a fighting Irish lawyer, who helped to raise the money and bought many of the paintings after they had been exhibited. (Mr. Barr pointed to several Armory Show paintings from the Museum collection which had been hung specially in the Trustee's room -- Derain's The Window on the Park, bought in memory of Mrs. Sullivan, and two Redons, Silence and Roger and Angelica, bought by Miss Bliss.)

Question: Was the public reaction against the Armory Show particularly strong?

Mr. Barr: The Armory Show was one of the greatest sensations in the history of American culture. It took people completely by surprise. They were scarcely used to the early work of John Sloan and George Bellows, which had been attacked for its shabby and tough subjects, but which, as painting was derived from the French radicals of 1860 like Manet. What upset people chiefly about the Armory Show paintings was, of course, not the subjects, which were fairly conventional, but the radically different way in which they were painted. (Mr. Barr indicated a photograph of Duchamp's Nude Descending the Staircase.)

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

- 3 -

Question: Had Duchamp's painting been exhibited abroad before the Armory Show?

Mr. Barr: Yes, the Nude Descending the Staircase was exhibited in a private gallery on the rue de la Boetie a few months before the Armory Show. Early in 1912 Duchamp had sent it to the Salon des Independants. Several of Duchamp's cubist friends tried to persuade him to change the title, which they felt was "non cubist," whereupon Duchamp withdrew it. This is a curious contradiction of the popular theory that cubists care nothing about the titles of their paintings. Duchamp obviously felt very strongly about this title and so did his fellow cubists.

Question: What contact had the American public with modern painting before the museum opened?

Mr. Barr: There were occasional dealers -- Durand-Ruel during the 80's had a show of French painters which was quite successful. The Metropolitan bought two Manet's in the 80's before the Louvre would show Manet, but after that little new but one Cezanne, bought out of the Armory Show as a concession to advanced taste. There were also the World's Fairs which were given over almost entirely to recent, but rarely modern, art -- the St. Louis Fair of 1904 with its advanced industrial design exhibition sent by the Germans, and the exhibition of Italian futurist paintings which was included by a fluke in the Panama Pacific Exhibition. Publications were definitely not acquainting people with what was going on, except by way of scandal. Modern painters were often called anarchists then.

Question: Hasn't the Museum run into a good deal of trouble during its nineteen years?

Mr. Barr: Yes, particularly in two exhibitions, Cubism and Abstract Art and Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism.

Question: Aren't the artists which the Museum first showed accepted everywhere by now?

Mr. Barr: The last of the full dress articles attacking Cezanne as incompetent appeared in The Atlantic Monthly within the last ten years. (Mr. Barr read excerpts from a Boston newspaper article of 1926 attacking van Gogh and Seurat.)

Question: Did those who founded the Museum foresee that it would be a storm center?

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

- 4 -

Mr. Barr: The founders were motivated chiefly by the sense of injustice and neglect awarded the living generation of painters and the generation just before them. The Metropolitan, New York's leading museum, was reluctant in the 20's to exhibit paintings by Seurat, Gauguin or van Gogh, all of whom had been dead for more than 40 years, although these painters had been acknowledged all over Europe as well as in London and Chicago. This created a serious vacuum in the cultural life of New York City, which was in 1929, the most backward big city in the world in its knowledge of contemporary art and the art of the recent past.

Question: When did you join the staff of the Museum?

Mr. Barr: During the summer of 1929 I was asked to do some articles and to write a plan for a proposed museum which was intended to fill this serious gap.

Question: What departments were there in the Museum when it started?

Mr. Barr: At first there was so much important catching up to do that only painting, sculpture, and the graphic arts were shown. Other departments were added gradually. The Department of Architecture was started in 1932 and exhibited the work of Wright, Le Corbusier, and Mies van der Rohe. (Mr. Barr pointed to the model of Mies's house at Brno.) This model which now seems rather sober and conventional seemed scandalous to many people when it was first exhibited. Everyone asked what would happen if it snowed on the flat roof, and yet from the Heckscher Building one could see only one pitched roof, that of the new Sherry Netherlands Building. All the other roofs were flat!

The first exhibition of industrial design was held in 1933. (Mr. Barr pointed to an example of turn of the century Art Nouveau design of about 1900, a silver box given the Museum by Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and in contrast, a chair by Mies van der Rohe, both shown in this first show.) During the next year came the first large show, Machine Art.

Question: What was the term "modern" meant to signify?

Mr. Barr: The word "modern" was used deliberately. Contemporary means the present minute or the last few years. The term modern is both more elastic and more loaded with feeling. "Modern" might be defined as since the fall of Constantinople or since the French Revolution, but in general, modern art means the art which seems new and progressive at any given period. The Museum meant by modern art the art which was challenging and which had not yet had a fair

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

- 5 -

chance. In 1929, for instance, there were still debates as to whether van Gogh and Cézanne were artists or incompetents; our main concern however was with contemporary, that is, very recent modern art.

Question: Is there much disagreement within the museum on what pictures should be acquired for the collection?

Mr. Barr: The most difficult problem is, of course, to decide what is good. There is always a great deal of argument over each acquisition and its price. I am always asked whether I have recommended a picture because it is historically important or because I like it.

Question: Why not include works which are primarily historical documents?

Mr. Barr: It's too expensive. Usually a photograph will do. The Museum has bought only five or six paintings purely because they are important in the development of painting. For historical documentation one may fall back on the Metropolitan Museum, the Natural History Museum, or the Brooklyn Museum. As a matter of policy the Metropolitan's print room acquires anything that is a print, sometimes only for its documentary value, without insisting upon aesthetic value. The ancient and classical collections of the Metropolitan also present an interesting problem. These departments collect a great body of minor and "subartistic" material from the East Mediterranean or the Mesopotamian valley merely because these areas are sanctioned by tradition. The Metropolitan does not, on the other hand, collect the masterpieces of Mexican or Inca cultures because these are outside this classical field.

The Museum of Modern Art judges purely on the basis of whether or not a particular painting or sculpture is a work of art. I, personally, am very liberal in my ideas of what is a work of art. For instance, in the Industrial Design Department there are examples which are not considered works of art in the usual sense, such as machine made glass tumblers. The Film Library was started with the conviction that the film can be a work of art, though at the time artistically minded people doubted this.

Question: What were the first paintings bought by the Museum?

Mr. Barr: That is not easy to answer. The Museum when it started had no money for purchases, and had to rely on the Trustees to buy paintings and sculpture and then lend or give them to the Collection.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

- 6 -

The first painting I can remember recommending was Peter Blume's Parade; then, The Gourds by Matisse, both bought for the Museum by Mrs. Rockefeller. The first painting acquired by the Museum was Edward Hopper's The House by the Railroad, a gift of Stephen Clark; the first sculpture was Maillol's Ile de France, given us by Conger Goodyear. The Museum's purchase fund in 1936 was the first money that could be used without first persuading someone to buy the object.

Question: Had Miss Lizzie Bliss always intended to leave her collection to the Museum?

Mr. Barr: Miss Bliss had not spoken to anyone on the staff about it, but when she died she left the bulk of her best paintings to the Museum on the condition that \$1,000,000 be raised as evidence that the collection would be properly cared for. \$600,000 was finally raised in 1934, the very depths of the depression, and the executors accepted this as evidence of the Museum's good intentions. The Bliss collection was the nucleus of the Museum's collection and made it important. At first, it was pretty much ignored because of the great demand for loan exhibitions, but in 1946 the Museum finally set aside nearly one third of its gallery space to keep a part of the collection permanently on display.

Question: Isn't the reaction against modern art particularly violent now?

Mr. Barr: Yes, reaction now is more violent than at any time since the Museum began. But in the course of the last 30 years there have been many reactions. In 1918-1921, just after the First World War, the artists themselves reacted. There was a kind of neo-classic reaction started by Picasso; a back to Courbet and Corot movement started by Derain; the realist reaction of the "precisionists" like Charles Sheeler, Preston Dickinson, and Georgia O'Keeffe, who painted immaculate realist pictures; the "studio art" reaction of Kuhn and Karfiol, and later, the chauvinistic regionalist painting of men like Thomas Hart Benton and Grant Wood. Left wing painters such as Ben Shahn, Jack Levine, and William Gropper reacted toward political satire. As the 30's went on criticism took on the color of chauvinism, fascism and communism. When war broke out again, paintings by Benton and Grant Wood began to lose prestige. Modern art, the kind of art the public understands and likes only slowly, is now criticized by conservatives and reactionaries in the press, in some museums and by some academic artists. The conflict is greater now after the Second World War than in the time of Harding, and the breach is wider between the spirit of the times and the spirit

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

- 7 -

of the artist. Aesthetic problems of form and abstraction, attacked before 1920, are being revived together with bolder and more original problems involving poetic or symbolic abstraction.

Question: Was the Museum from the beginning intended primarily as an educational institution?

Mr. Barr: The Museum was always educational in that it exhibited pictures, but the present elaborate program of lectures, publications, and traveling exhibitions was not foreseen when the Museum started. No one dreamt that in a short time the Museum would be the largest publisher of art books in the world, and have 50 traveling exhibitions a year circulating throughout the United States and the world. The Diego Rivera exhibition of 1930 was the first to go on tour.

Question: Did the Museum intend to give contemporary artists a chance to express themselves and win public acclaim?

Mr. Barr: The question of the Museum's relation to the artist comes up over and over again. Certain organizations in the city such as the Whitney Museum were founded explicitly for the benefit of the artist. The Museum of Modern Art was founded for the benefit of the general public as a whole. The public can be divided into three groups, the general public, the artist, and the collector, dealer, historian, and expert. The Museum was founded first for the general public, second for the artist, and last for the specialist.

The American artist has resented the showing of work from abroad, Indian arts, cave paintings, Italian old masters and other exhibitions from which he did not directly profit.

Question: Has the Museum an ideal collection in mind?

Mr. Barr: When the Museum started it had 50 years time to make up, and would have had to pay a great deal for late 19th Century masterpieces. With the exception of the Ensor, Tribulations of Saint Anthony, the van Gogh Starry Night, and the Rousseau Sleeping Gypsy, the Museum has not bought any 19th Century paintings, since prices were already out of reach. Yet, if the Museum had had the purchase funds even in the early 30's that it has now, it might have three times the Collection, in terms of quality. As far as an ideal collection for the City of New York is concerned, the only way that these gaps can be made up is by the Metropolitan and the Frick or by bequest.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

- 8 -

The Metropolitan, the Frick and the Museum of Modern Art have serious gaps in the last 50 or 60 years. There is no first-rate Gauguin, no important Seurat at all, in a public collection in New York. The only Seurat is the Museum's small Fishing Fleet at Port-en-Bessin; the only van Gogh is the Museum's Starry Night. Of the important Cézanne landscapes in the New York museums' collections, four were painted within a few years of 1885. Three figure paintings date around 1868. The answer is, of course, that there has been no planning. New York has deplorably less than Chicago and Washington so far as European 19th Century painting is concerned. In the Twentieth Century art we have done better in quality.

It is interesting to wonder how the Museum would have chosen had it been in existence in 1880. Would we have chosen Degas or Manet? I do not know. I think the Museum is probably buying the right painters; I think it is possibly buying the right paintings by these painters. But I am not sure. These are the chances which a museum takes.

Question: How do you decide which paintings in the Collection to trade or sell?

Mr. Barr: "Disposables" can be divided into different categories. There are paintings which are inferior, and can be traded for better paintings, or perhaps an earlier or later work by the same artist. There are the works of definite quality but which are already too old. Finally, there are works which are too nearly duplicated elsewhere in the collection. Trades are made to make the collection more representative. The small Cézanne Portrait of Choquet, a minor Lautrec, a weak Degas pastel, were swapped for van Gogh's Starry Night. The Museum's Daumier was too old and is now in the Metropolitan. Pictures are often accepted that will go directly into the market for something which the Museum needs - with the donor's full consent.

Question: Is there any systematic attempt to cover foreign art?

Mr. Barr: The collection is very unequal. In the Scandinavian field the Museum has tried to get a first-class Edvard Munch, but prices are prohibitive. The French collection is quite good; we have the beginnings of a good German collection; only pre-revolutionary Russian paintings; only a half dozen Italian paintings, no ex-British India paintings. The purposes of the Museum will, of course, never be finally accomplished; time moves and values move.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

- 2 -

Mr. Barr urged the members of the Council to see the American Show which closes March 13th, and give him their reactions to the paintings. To make it more concrete, he suggested that they choose their ten favorite paintings and the ten they like least. He further suggested that they read the first few pages of Painting and Sculpture in the Museum of Modern Art.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

General File ③

The Minutes
of The Junior Council
of The Museum of Modern Art
NEW YORK

▶ *Confidential. Not for publication*

.....
The Museum Collections - Alfred H. Barr, Jr.
.....

April 5, 1949

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

The Junior Council of the Museum of Modern Art held its third meeting on Tuesday, April 5, 1949, in the penthouse of the Museum.

Present were: Mrs. Rockefeller, Chairman; Mr. Barr, Mrs. Bragazzi, Miss Dorothy Miller, Guests; Mr. Allwood, Mr. Ault, Mr. Bach, Mr. Braden, Mrs. Deutsch, Mrs. Erskine, Mr. Ireland, Mrs. Lockwood, Mrs. Maynard, Mrs. Mellon, Mrs. Noyes, Mrs. Page, Mr. Parkhurst, Miss Resor, Mrs. Rumbough, Mrs. Straus, Mr. Swope, Mr. Warren.

Mrs. Rockefeller introduced Miss Dorothy Miller and Mrs. Olive Bragazzi, Mr. Barr's two associates in the Division of the Museum Collections. Miss Miller, the Curator, like Mr. Barr, is an expert in the field of modern painting and sculpture, especially in the work of American artists. Mrs. Bragazzi, Secretary of the Museum Collection, Mrs. Rockefeller said, will be glad to arrange for members of the Council to see painting and sculpture from the collection which may not currently be on display.

Mr. Barr briefly outlined the program for the meeting; first, a short account of the Museum's collections; second, a discussion, illustrated with slides, of "most" and "least" preferred paintings in the recent American exhibition as chosen by Trustee members of the Committee on the Museum Collections, newspaper critics, and staff members; third, a tour of the Film Library and private projection room, the Print Room, and the second floor painting and sculpture storage room; and fourth, a look at the Museum's two most recent acquisitions, Maillol's The River and Matisse's The Red Studio, which are on view for the first time.

The Museum collections, Mr. Barr said, are not confined to painting and sculpture, but contain material from many other fields, and include photographs, prints, drawings, architecture, industrial design, and films. The collections differ widely in their content and the frequency and adequacy of their exhibition as well as in the public to which they appeal. The cynical have often remarked that the Museum draws its large attendance because of the daily film showings. However, a census, taken over a period of weeks, to determine why people came to the Museum and what in the Museum most interested them, revealed that most visitors come to see the paintings. Films and architecture tied for second place (a special exhibition of architecture was held at the time of the poll). The next most popular were photography, the theatre arts, industrial design, and finally sculpture - in America the least popular and least understood

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

-2-

of the arts.

Painting, sculpture, prints, watercolors, drawings and photographs can all be included in the collections in the original, and the same is true for industrial design, within the limits of space. Architecture cannot of course be shown in the form of actual buildings except occasionally. (A model house by Marcel Breuer has lodged in the garden and will be open on April 12.) For the most part, the architecture collection must consist of photographs, plans (which are half way originals) and models, the form most easily understood by the public in the absence of the building. Architectural films help to amplify the material.

The problem of the theatre collection is even more difficult. Theatre and the dance come to life, like the film, only in performance. But while the Museum can present the films in its collection as original and complete works of art, the theatre and dance can ordinarily be represented visually only by designs for costumes and settings (the only original material), by models, or by photographs and films of actual performances. The Museum has an extensive collection of dance and theatre material, especially ballet designs.

It is interesting, Mr. Barr said, to compare the Museum collections with what we assume to be the American public's chief "art" interests. In spite of the Museum's poll, painting is a comparatively special interest. Architecture and industrial design excite a good deal more attention from the public as a whole, as people have to live in houses, use furniture, and domestic utensils. Men seem to be most interested in automobile design. Each year we feel that we must do something about automobile design, because each year it seems worse than ever. So far, however, we have had to leave the job to The New Yorker magazine. But when we can get to it, we will do a grand retrospective on the automobile, with some prophecies.

Photography and the film are, of course, very popular. Photography, in fact, is the most popular "creative" art in this country. When the Photography Department started there were perhaps 40,000,000 cameras in America. Amateur photographers do not consciously create works of art when they take a snapshot, but there is an element of esthetic selection and composition involved in posing and grouping a family picnic. Mr. Steichen has done much to raise photography to the level of an art and to insist on the artistic validity of photography at its best.

Twenty years ago the trustees were skeptical about including the film in the Museum collections. But the Museum's Film

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

-3-

Library, almost in spite of the supreme indifference of Hollywood in terms of support, has helped to give the films both a history and a conscious status as an art.

These are the broad problems of content in the various departments. Of course, other problems, chronic and unavoidable, face the Museum as a whole - personnel, money, and space (for exhibition as well as storage).

It has been the Museum's policy that the collections as exhibited should be the authoritative indication for the public of what the Museum stands for in each of its departments. They should constitute a permanent visible demonstration of the Museum's essential program, its scope, its canons of judgment, taste and value.

This is practically impossible at the present time. Of the various collections only sculpture and the film are adequately exhibited. The cycle of film shows running throughout the year, plus the special showings in the fourth floor projection room, are almost sufficient for the exhibition of the collection.

The industrial design and architecture collections are very inadequately exhibited. Ideally we would like to keep on view from each of these departments a few original objects which seem of typical or classic quality. A selection of the most important buildings of the last few years and examples of fine industrial design would provide the public with a gauge of quality and explain visually the Museum standards.

The painting collection has the most continuous space for exhibitions, but even so, only one-eighth of the collection can be shown at a time. The other seven-eighths is in storage or on tour or loan. The sculpture collection has the garden and a permanent gallery on the third floor.

The Museum's print collection, which until now could not be available to the public, will have a special room, open to the public after May 12.

Mrs. Rockefeller said that some of the heads of the departments Mr. Barr had mentioned will shortly report to the Council in greater detail. She mentioned particularly Miss Iris Barry of the Film Library, Mr. Edward Steichen of the Photography Department, Mr. William Lieberman of the Print Room, and Mr. Philip Johnson of the Architecture Department.

Mr. Bach asked Mr. Barr what percentage of space is left open for future acquisitions and how the space problem was tackled when the Museum was built. Mr. Barr said that there was no way of anticipating exactly the Museum's enormous growth,

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

-4-

the numerous additions to the original collection, or the development of entirely new departments and collections. Up to 1945 there was no permanent space scheduled for consecutive exhibition of even a part of the Museum's collection of painting and sculpture. The trustees did the best they could with the money at hand when the Museum was built. At present the Museum faces serious shortages both of exhibition and of office space.

Mr. Barr was asked whether any attempt is made to reduce the size of the collections from time to time. He replied that the collection is "weeded" from time to time. By the process of adding new works and eliminating old ones the Museum attempts to keep the collections within a period of the previous fifty or sixty years. This naturally occasions complaints from artists and collectors to whom the word museum implies the fixed and permanent. A donor, who is considering leaving a valuable painting to the Museum sometimes hesitates because of this condition of change. The Museum, however, cannot avoid this condition so long as it attempts to remain modern. But it has recently made an agreement with the Metropolitan Museum which greatly furthers the continuity of the best elements in its collection.

According to this agreement, the Metropolitan will buy certain of the Museum's most valuable works as they mature. The Museum of Modern Art has sold the Metropolitan several Cézannes, Seurat drawings, two Picassos, a Maillol and a Gauguin, the funds from which have been set aside for the purchase of new paintings which will bear the name of the original donor. Thus, if Mrs. X bequeaths a van Gogh to the Museum of Modern Art, the painting will continue to bear her name when it is sold to the Metropolitan. New paintings will be bought with the proceeds and the process will theoretically repeat itself endlessly.

Mr. Barr was asked what happens to a painting that is more than fifty years old which the Metropolitan does not buy. He answered that the painting may be offered to other museums, swapped, sold or returned to the donor. Ordinarily donors bequeath their paintings unconditionally and take a chance on posterity - but, naturally, the donor may propose conditions before he makes a gift or bequest.

However, the rate of eliminating "disposable" paintings is slowed by simple human factors, as painters, donors, and staff members live twenty or forty years after a painting enters the collection. Fortunately, this dovetails with the hesitancy of the Metropolitan to buy paintings which still seem "modern."

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

-5-

When disposing of gifts, the Museum tries to keep in touch with and consult the donor or his children. Usually, when the proposition is put to them, they are pleased to have the picture exchanged for a better one which will bear their name.

Mrs. Erskine asked Mr. Barr what he includes in the term quality, how much contemporaneity and originality enter in. Mr. Barr replied that there are other considerations besides that of quality alone. Contemporary relevance and modernity are two other factors. Mr. Barr pointed to two paintings from the Museum's collection, Greenwich Village, by Paul Cadmus and an abstract composition, ("bebop") by Glarner. The latter, he said, could only have been painted in the 20th century, in fact, only in the 1940's. In that sense it's most relevant. The importance of the Cadmus, on the other hand, is as a strong, or at least as a vivid, example of reaction - the conscious reaction of a painter who has looked at modern painting and has decided he wanted to return to Hogarth or 15th century Italy.

Even though they may be untimely, unfashionable, or against the currents of the decade, the Museum doesn't turn its back on such paintings. Hopper's House by the Railroad was painted in 1923, ten years after cubism, 15 after fauvism, and 30 years after van Gogh and Gauguin had reached their heights. If one thought only of the vanguard, one would ignore the paintings of Hopper and Cadmus.

Occasionally a painting is included in the collection which is frankly not good in terms of quality alone, but which illustrates some phase of painting's development. Thus an occasional mediocre work may have primarily historical or technical value and is put in the study collection.

Principally the Museum tries to acquire works which have followed the line of the vanguard, but includes also such paintings as the Levine, which also has a value, an element of satire and social comment well absorbed into its quality as a painting. If we had had the money at the time we would have bought Grant Wood's Daughters of the American Revolution, which reveals Wood torn between satirical comment against the women in Iowa who had done him dirt and latent admiration for their character.

Mr. Barr said that during the recent exhibition of American paintings from the Museum collection ten staff members and three members of the Committee on Museum Collections selected what they considered the ten "best" and the ten "worst" paintings in the show. Counting also the opinions of five critics from New York City newspapers, the following poll was prepared. Junior Council members as well were asked to contribute their opinions, but only three found time to submit lists.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

-6-

This poll, Mr. Barr felt, has a certain interest, although the rather superficial results should be taken with a grain of salt.

As the votes were in many cases spread over two or more paintings by one artist, Mr. Barr. simplified the results by showing slides of the paintings by the eleven artists whose work had received the most votes.

Artists - "Best"

Charles Demuth: 13 votes plus
Stairs, Provincetown
At a House in Harley Street
Acrobats

Morris Graves: 11 votes plus
The Individual State of the World
Owl of the Inner Eye
Little Known Bird of the Inner Eye

Edward Hopper: 12 votes plus (15 plus and 3 minus)
Gas
New York Movie
House by the Railroad
Night Windows

Jack Levine: 12 votes plus
The Passing Show
Feast of Pure Reason

John Marin: 11 votes plus
Camden Mountain Across the Bay
Buoy, Maine

Peter Blume: 9 votes plus (13 plus and 4 minus)
Eternal City
Parade

Lyonel Feininger: 9 votes plus
The Steamer "Odin"
Viaduct

Marsden Hartley: 9 votes plus
Boots
Evening Storm, Schoodic, Maine

Maurice Prendergast: 9 votes plus (12 plus and 3 minus)
April Snow, Salem
The East River

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

-7-

Ben Shahn: 8 votes plus

Handball

Welders

Max Weber: 9 votes plus (10 plus and 1 minus)

The Geranium

The Two Musicians

Five single paintings: which received many votes were:

Joseph Stella: 7 votes plus (8 plus and 1 minus)

Factories

Stuart Davis: 7 votes plus

Eggbeater #5

Willem de Kooning: 7 votes plus

Painting, 1948

Jackson Pollock: 6 votes plus

The She-Wolf

Alton Pickens: 5 votes plus (6 minus 1)

The Blue Doll

The Council adjourned to the balcony of the penthouse for an aerial view of Maillol's statue The River on display in the garden below.

After a brief tour of the fourth floor private projection room, the Print Room, and the second floor storage room, the members of the Council walked out into the garden to look more closely at the Maillol. Commenting on the statue Mr. Barr said:

"Maillol's most characteristic figures are calm, reposeful, even static. Even when they represent violent muscular strain, there is little movement; the action is self-contained, the arms bound behind the back, as in Chained Action, the torso of which may be seen in the Museum's sculpture galleries. Maillol was aware of his avoidance of movement; he even remarked to Judith Cladel as late as 1937, 'For my taste, there should be as little movement as possible in sculpture.'

"Yet within a year or so afterwards Maillol had conceived The River, a work of astonishing, almost reckless movement.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

-8-

Not only is the huge figure turning and twisting, her arms and legs outflung, but Maillol has balanced her on the very edge of the pedestal, a second radical departure from his usual architectural monumentality.

"We know that originally in designing this figure as a monument to Barbusse, Maillol had intended her as a dying figure stabbed in the back. The name The River is therefore an afterthought which scarcely explains the tragic violence of the pose. Yet the idea is not entirely new in Maillol's art. Going back to the mid-90's when Maillol was a painter, not a sculptor, we find that figures of women tumbling in the waves was the subject which most interested him. The River, a personification of moving water, is therefore a reversion in subject matter as well as symbolic content to the work of Maillol's early maturity 40 years before.

"The River is probably Maillol's last completed work, a final magnificent flowering of bold invention and creative energy on the part of a man who was, in his generation, the world's greatest sculptor."

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

General File

The Minutes
of The Junior Council
of The Museum of Modern Art
NEW YORK

► Confidential. Not for publication

.....
The Film Library and Department of Photography

May 24, 1949

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

The Junior Council of the Museum of Modern Art held its fifth meeting on Tuesday, May 24, 1949 in the penthouse of the Museum.

Present were: Mrs. Rockefeller, Chairman; Miss Iris Barry, Mr. Edward Steichen, Guests; Mr. Allwood, Mr. Bach, Princess Boncompagni, Mr. Braden, Mrs. Clark, Mrs. Cutting, Mrs. Deutsch, Mrs. Erskine, Mr. Goldman, Mr. Knittel, Mrs. Lockwood, Mrs. Maynard, Mrs. Mellon, Mrs. Noyes, Mr. Parkhurst, Miss Resor, Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Straus.

Mrs. Rockefeller reminded the committee that the final meeting on June 7 will be devoted entirely to a discussion of the Council's plans for next year, and asked each member to consider whether he or she would care to serve on the exhibitions, architecture, or collections committees, or to work on the lecture program, the Museum's quarterly bulletin, or an out-of-town membership committee.

Mrs. Rockefeller introduced Miss Iris Barry, Director of the Film Library and Mr. Edward Steichen, Director of the Department of Photography.

Photography, Mr. Steichen said, is a sprawling, sometimes obnoxious and noisy medium from which not only the literate but the illiterate population of the United States gets its prevailing ideas of moonlight and roses, love and crime. Science bases many of its conclusions on information gleaned from photographs; in the field of education photography is just beginning to develop its future role.

Although the medium is only 100 years old there are 25,000,000 amateur photographers in America and 9,000 camera clubs in our high schools today. Its success demonstrates that it comes nearer to being a universal language than anything the world has ever known. But the Museum of Modern Art is the only institution in the world which has frankly recognized photography's potentialities as an art medium. The exhibition "Roots of Photography" downstairs in the auditorium shows its magnificent beginnings and comes as an antidote to the last exhibition, "The Exact Instant," which showed the role of photography as a means of communication. The next exhibition, Mr. Steichen said, will be a mouthful. Its theme will be "Human Rights" - the visual image of the concept of human rights.

As to the daily work of the Department - quite as important as the planning of exhibitions are the interviews with young photographers. Mr. Steichen estimated that he sees on the average nearly a dozen a week, and feels grateful if one is reasonably hopeful. Several, whom he has recently seen, will prove a great asset to the Museum's future projects.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

-2-

According to the Eastman Kodak Company most amateur photographers begin by photographing their children, friends and families. They start right, but when they come under the influence of the so called pictorial they lean towards the "arty." But Mr. Steichen felt that there are already several promising amateur groups such as the one at Irving-on-the-Hudson which has organized itself to photograph the community. Further developments in this direction might give America with its 25,000,000 amateur photographers a folk art the like of which the world has not yet known.

Mr. Steichen said that everyone asks him to be an authority, but after 50 years working with photography, he still feels that one must accept no single theory, for all theories soon become dogmas. The current major interest among young photographers is abstraction, which too often is a falsification of the medium of photography. No one has yet proved that abstractions cannot be done far more logically in painting, a medium over which the artist has greater control.

The next exhibition, on the theme of human rights, will be a difficult one for which most of the photographs will probably have to be made. Mr. Steichen hoped that it would be one which could be sent to Europe.

Mr. Steichen invited the Council to visit the exhibition "Roots of Photography" which he said contained some of the finest portraits ever made.

Miss Barry said that she hopes next fall to prepare a film program for the Council which will show graphically the variety and scope of the Museum's film collection.

Motion pictures, though younger than photography, were included in the Museum at an earlier date. In 1935 no other Museum in the world has thought of including films in its collection, but from the outset Mr. Barr's conception of this museum of contemporary art included motion pictures as an art form. The public relations people of the motion picture industry had long boasted of the importance of films to posterity, but nothing had been done to secure their preservation and in 1935 it was impossible to see any films that were more than one or two years old. Although 40 years of film making had elapsed, and the industry was flourishing internationally, films of the past were quite invisible.

In establishing its Film Library, the Museum was fortunate in obtaining a considerable sum from Trustees, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the industry itself - fortunate because films

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

-3-

are a perishable medium, expensive to acquire, to keep, and to work with. The Library set up its first quarters on Madison Avenue, as there was then no room for it in the old brownstone front at 11 West 53 Street, and only moved into the new building in 1939. In the intervening years, a considerable proportion of the most important and most representative films of the past have been restored to view by the Film Library and are available for study in universities, colleges and other museums.

Many misconceptions regarding films had to be combatted. Just as in the early days of movie-making it was thought specially meritorious to film "classics" such as Shakespeare or the Bible or Ben Hur, so even now there is often the feeling that motion pictures are most admirable when they are based on plays or books. In fact, they are best when they are unlike either, but are purely cinematic in form. Now, through the Museum's collection, we can look back on fifty years of film history and see how this new medium has developed in many countries - how, for example, early farces made in France developed later in America into slapstick, culminating in the silent comedies of Chaplin, which in turn influenced the later work of Rene Clair and Preston Sturges, and the Bing Crosby-Bob Hope pictures.

It is often said that the Museum is concerned primarily with old films. This is not true. The Film Library aims to have the collection representative of the typical and outstanding rather than "best" films of the entire past fifty years. With films available for study and re-enjoyment, the art of the motion picture is provided with a conscious past. Films no longer vanish after their release, leaving behind only recollections and opinions. The Museum has recently advanced to the acquisition and showing of new films, and its students include not only film-students but film makers as well.

The Library acquires films in several ways. Some are obtained, under severe restrictions, from the industry. Just yesterday Pascal promised the Museum prints of his MAJOR BARBARA and PYGMALION. Some films have been bought from the collections of film companies which are going out of business; some are deposited on loan by actors themselves, such as Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks. Fortunately the Curator and Director went to Europe in 1936 and 1938 to pick up key films in France, Germany and Russia before they were dispersed by the war.

Films, as an instrument for seeing better, are extremely valuable in portraying social and economic conditions. The Quiet One, one example of an outstanding new documentary, was first discovered and shown by the Museum. Primarily, however,

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

-4-

the Film Library is trying to collect study material which will enable students to criticize the entire history of film making, and to encourage and develop such a critical attitude in the general public. When people go to the movies, it is surely good that they should celebrate.

Miss Barry said that it is easy, but extremely expensive, to reproduce films. Their condition often depends more on the workmanship that went into their processing than on their age.

The fact that there are not more good educational films is not simply a question of money, but rather that no one has yet found a means of bringing together the pedagogue and the film maker. The last time the Museum persuaded a scholar to write the commentary for an 8 minute film, the script took 11 minutes to read. Even after it had been cut painstakingly by the writer, the narrator was forced to read so fast that he could scarcely be understood. The demands of the medium are very exacting.

Mr. Flaherty, Miss Barry said, is now experimenting with what the camera can do in looking at paintings and other works of art. Several interesting art films have already been produced, such as MICHAELANGELO which will be shown publicly in the autumn. Other films exist on Bosch, Rubens, and Giotto.

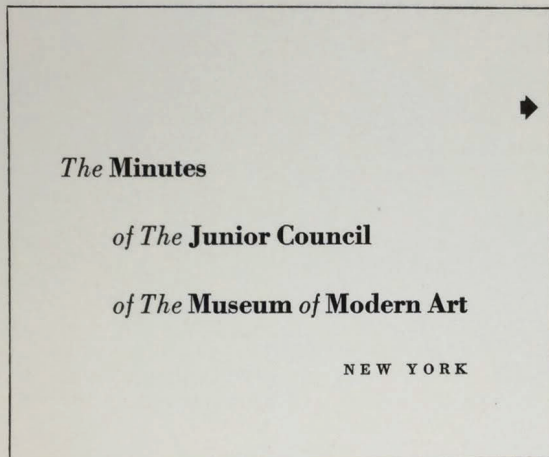
Princess Boncompagni suggested that the Museum might show an Italian film on contemporary Italian sculptors and painters in connection with the forthcoming Italian show.

Miss Barry recommended the newly published Museum bulletin called "Film Notes."

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

General File (3)



► Confidential. Not for publication

Final spring meeting

June 7, 1949

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

The Junior Council of the Museum of Modern Art held its sixth meeting on Tuesday, June 7, 1949 in the penthouse of the Museum.

Present were: Mrs. Rockefeller, Chairman; Mr. Allwood, Princess Boncompagni, Mr. Braden, Mrs. Clark, Mrs. Cutting, Mrs. Deutsch, Mrs. Erskine, Mr. Ireland, Mr. Knittel, Mrs. Lockwood, Mrs. Maynard, Mrs. Noyes, Mr. Parkhurst, Miss Resor, Mrs. Smith, Mr. Swope, Mr. Westerman.

Mrs. Rockefeller described for the Council various committees within the Museum, composed of Trustees and staff members, on which the Council might next winter be represented by one or more members. These meetings take place about once a month so Mrs. Rockefeller suggested that members of the Council might serve in rotation for terms of six months, not voting but merely sitting in on the meetings.

The Committee on Museum Collections, composed of six Trustees, approves all acquisitions to the Museums Collections, whether of painting, sculpture, prints, films, photographs, industrial design, or architectural material, and from time to time weeds out works which are no longer considered contemporary. Matters of policy concerning the Collections, their scope, space, and funds, etc. also come under the jurisdiction of this committee.

The Exhibitions Committee, composed of staff and Trustees, prepares a balanced exhibitions program from the proposals made by the heads of the various departments. All Trustees are also free to propose exhibitions for the consideration of this committee. Exhibitions are, of course, a primary function of the Museum and perhaps its most important contact with the public.

At present, Mrs. Rockefeller explained, there is no standing architecture committee, but Mr. Johnson is eager for one to take shape. Whether this committee is temporary or not, Mrs. Rockefeller thought that one member should represent the Council.

Mrs. Rockefeller hoped an interesting series of lectures might be planned by a committee composed of three or four members of the Junior Council working in close conjunction with members of the staff. To date lectures have been occasional and unplanned. It would be for the lecture committee to plan whether the series would be at an expert level, would include films, or, in part, consist of debates or forums. The Museum should properly be more of a center for discussion, drawing in new groups, and stimulating a more active appreciation of contemporary art.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JC	I.A.1

-2-

The Museum's quarterly bulletin was also discussed and it was generally agreed that the issues were sporadic, and as Mr. Knittel pointed out, related to each other in format only. Paid for by membership dues, with a guaranteed circulation of 7,000, not including individual sale over the front desk, the bulletin could, in Mr. Knittel's opinion, be made into a magazine with very little increase in expense or staff time.

The Council discussed the possibility of creating an out-of-town, and possibly an international, committee which would meet two or three times a winter to stimulate interest in the Museum's work and to extend its influence. Mrs. Smith suggested that a reception committee be appointed to entertain visitors from out of town and to show them around the Museum.

Mrs. Maynard hoped that Mr. Steichen could be persuaded to lecture on photography again next winter to a larger group than the Junior Council, and that the lecture series might include further, expanded talks by Museum department heads.

Mr. Braden suggested that after each Council member has submitted his or her preferences for committee membership for next winter, Mrs. Rockefeller make the appointments. Mrs. Rockefeller asked for all summer addresses so that members can be informed of their assignments by the beginning of September, and asked each member to submit the names of any friends who would be interested in joining the Junior Council.

The meeting adjourned into the garden for tea.