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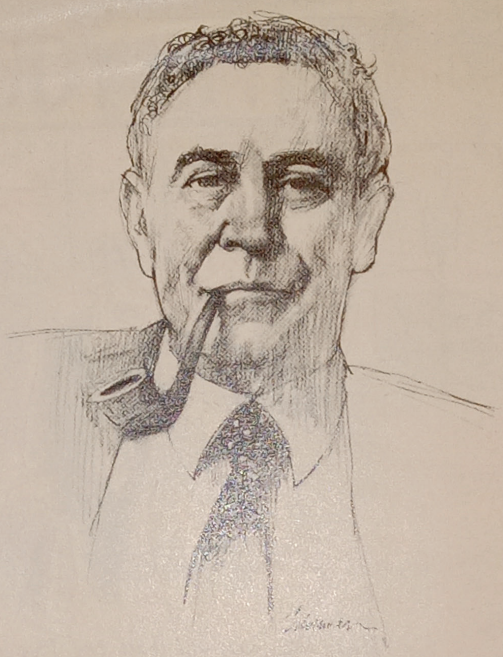
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PROFILES

SHARPENING THE EYE

THE Museum of Modern Art came out of the mind of Alfred H. Barr, Jr. Hired at the age of twenty-seven to form and guide the development of an institution that had no counterpart in the world, Barr repaid the confidence of his wealthy and socially prominent employers a thousandfold. His exhibitions and his lambent catalogue essays defined modern art for generations of initially suspicious Americans; his passionate integrity glorified the entire enterprise, sponsors included. In 1943, when, after fourteen years, the wealthy and socially prominent trustees decided to fire Barr, in part because of his shortcomings as an administrator, they found they couldn't do it. Barr simply refused to leave. Banished to a tiny office in a corner of the library, he continued to serve as the guiding spirit and principal intelligence of the place, tacitly for a few years and then overtly, when the trustees capitulated and gave him a new title—director of museum collections. René d'Harnoncourt, that extravagantly diplomatic man who was the museum's administrative head from 1950 to 1968, used to say that his essential function, as he saw it, was to "preserve and nourish the genius of Alfred Barr." Until Barr's retirement, in 1967, his genius was MOMA's, and vice versa.



William S. Rubin

Before he retired, Barr chose his own successor. Having no real administrative authority, he could not dictate the choice of a replacement for d'Harnoncourt, who was going to step down a year after he did. Barr's authority was moral and intellectual. It applied to the museum's collections, and it applied in particular to the collection of painting and sculpture. Although Barr had insisted from the start of his career that painting and sculpture were not the only aspects of visual culture—had seen to it that the museum should also encompass modern architecture, films, prints, drawings, photographs, and industrial design—it had always been clear that his interest lay primarily in painting and sculpture, and that he considered the painting-and-sculpture collection, which was unmatched anywhere in the world in depth and quality, his principal legacy. One day in 1966, Barr asked William S. Rubin, a thirty-nine-year-old art-history teacher at Sarah Lawrence, to come in for a chat. Rubin had been spending a good deal of that year at the museum, as guest curator of an exhibition called "Dada, Surrealism, and Their Heritage." As Rubin recalls the meeting, Barr said that he would be retiring the next year, and that he was particularly concerned to find the right person to take over the care and feeding of the painting-and-sculpture collection. "He said there were three things the job required. The first was 'eye;' the second was art-historical scholarship; and the third was a knowledge of the art market. He'd thought it over, and he felt I was the man for the job."

The proposal, which came as a great surprise to Rubin, astonished and dismayed a number of others with close ties to the museum. Seen in retrospect, however, Barr's choice looks characteristically prescient. While no one could be less like Alfred Barr in manner, personality, or temperament, Rubin has consistently and energetically continued Barr's work, according to the concepts that Barr laid down. Rubin's writings, although by no means as elegant as Barr's, have maintained a high level of clarity and scholarship, and several of his major exhibitions—notably "Cézanne: The Late Work" (1977) and "Picasso: A Retrospective" (1980)—have been landmarks in the interpretation of modern art. Even more to the point, Rubin has strengthened and refined the painting-and-sculpture collection by every means at his disposal, including gifts of his own making. He has brought in such key works as Picasso's revolutionary 1912 sculpture "Guitar," Matisse's cut-paper mural "The Swimming Pool," Miró's painting "The Birth of the World," and a whole galaxy of pictures by Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, and other leaders of the postwar New York School. Rubin estimates that at current market levels the total value of his acquisitions for the museum through purchases, gifts, or promised gifts over the last eighteen years would come to more than seventy million dollars, and he sees no need for false modesty on this score. "That was what Alfred brought me in here for," he said to me recently, "and I think he was right in saying it's the most important thing."

At the museum's gala reopening last year, in its totally renovated and expanded quarters on West Fifty-third Street, the permanent collections were the focus of attention. Many promised gifts were on display, along with all the old favorites and some dazzling recent acquisitions, and to some MOMA-philes the painting-and-sculpture collection, on the museum's second and third floors, had never before looked so radiant. New Yorkers are fiercely possessive about MOMA, however, and there were also a lot of complaints. Contemporary artists and their dealers tended to grumble, as they invariably do, that the museum was slighting contemporary art. (The large "International Survey of Recent Painting and Sculpture," which inaugurated the new temporary-exhibition galleries, pleased almost no one; the feeling was that Kynaston McShine, the curator

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who organized it, had opted for a potpourri—a hundred and ninety-five works by a hundred and sixty-six artists—in which the bad cancelled out the good.) A number of people were aghast to find that paintings by Cézanne, van Gogh, and others whom Barr established as precursors of modernism had been taken out of their old frames and installed in simple, narrow modern ones. This apparent insult to tradition was compounded, the critics felt, by the autocratic and (to some people) claustrophobic layout of the new second- and third-floor galleries, for which Rubin was solely responsible. Instead of a series of rooms that opened out from one another, as in the old museum, the new layout takes the visitor on a one-way circuit of the entire floor, with each room leading exclusively to the next, in chronological progression. To Rubin's detractors, this reflects the man's dogmatic and heavy-handed approach to modern art: instead of being able to wander freely in the garden of modernism, sampling and comparing the flora according to personal inclination, the viewer is taken firmly in hand at the start and directed to see certain objects in certain ways. Philip Johnson, the architect, who has been for many years one of MOMA's most influential trustees, made no secret of his distaste for the reinstallation. He objected to the closed-circuit layout, to the dimensions of many of the rooms, and to what he called Rubin's "two-slide mentality" when it came to hanging pictures—his tendency, that is, to emphasize art-historical connections that have more to do with the lecture room than with the visual requirements of museum installation.

Rubin is not insensitive to criticism from the right people. He listened carefully to Johnson's complaints and suggestions, and, rather to Johnson's surprise, he is making a number of changes—some that Johnson suggested and some that he did not. Self-doubt is not one of Rubin's problems. If he thinks a mistake has been made, he does something about it; if he does not think a mistake has been made, on the other hand, he has no trouble brushing criticism aside. The reframing of the older pictures, Rubin insists, is justified both historically and aesthetically. The Impressionists and the Post-Impressionists put their own paintings in simple, uncarved frames, he points out. "Those big, carved frames were put on them by the millionaires who eventually bought them, to go with their Louis Quinze furniture—and rightly so, because a frame mediates between a painting and its environment. But those frames were wrong for the neutral spaces of the museum, and they were wrong for the museum's view of them as paintings that lead the way into twentieth-century art." In five years, Rubin says, people would be even more shocked to see them put back in the old, ornate frames.

Now fifty-eight, Rubin is a man of medium height, with a squarish, powerful-looking head and a fondness for boldly colored striped shirts. Although he walks with a cane, as a result of a skiing accident that damaged a disc in his upper back (it has required two major operations), there is nothing frail about him. He can be distressingly articulate. He tends to lecture, rather than to engage in conversation, and his command of fact and detail is so sure that he rarely fails to make his point. Some years ago, when a television reporter was preparing to tape an interview with him, Rubin asked how much airtime the interview was likely to get. "Don't worry," the man said. "We'll just talk awhile, and they'll edit it down." Rubin would have none of that. He insisted on knowing how long the interview would run, and on being told that it would run about a minute and a half he said everything he wanted to say in a minute and a half. People who recall Alfred Barr's shy, birdlike presence and the preoccupied silences that sometimes preceded his observations tend to find Rubin uncomfortably direct. He can be brusque, or even rude at times; paying court to wealthy collectors is not his line. The curators and other members of Rubin's large staff at the museum find him intimidating, and sometimes terrifying. He is subject to spectacular temper tantrums when small things go wrong. (When big things go wrong, he is usually more understanding.) Rubin maintains a house near Saint-Tropez, in the South of France, where he spends a good deal of time—he does most of his writing there, and the museum pays his salary while he does it, and his expenses over and back as well. Richard Oldenburg, who has been the museum's director since 1972, considers this arrangement eminently satisfactory, considering the vast amount of work that Rubin gets done on both continents. Rubin's staff often wishes he would relax a little more when he is away; he telephones the museum nearly every day, they say,

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with long lists of questions, requests, and instructions. Kynaston McShine, who has been at the museum a little longer than Rubin, and who disagrees with him about many things, says nevertheless that they have an excellent working relationship. Rubin is never devious, according to McShine. He says what he thinks, he is basically fair, and he does not care for acolytes —you can argue with him, if you have the energy.

While Barr was often perceived as a saint, an ascetic dedicated to what he once described as "the conscientious, continuous, resolute distinction of quality from mediocrity," Rubin is looked upon by most of his colleagues as an unsubtle egotist, a man whose immense drive and formidable intelligence have made him the most influential curator in the field of modern art.

WHAT Rubin originally wanted to be was an orchestra conductor. Born in Brooklyn in 1927, the first of three sons of a textile merchant whose own parents had immigrated from Europe, he became seriously interested in music when the family moved to Riverdale and he entered the Fieldston School, a first-rate private academy near their home. The clarinet was his instrument, and at first he cared only for jazz. He kept a signed photograph of Artie Shaw pinned to a wall of his bedroom. Music did not interfere with a normally vigorous boyhood. All three Rubin brothers played on the Fieldston football team, and all three made captain in their senior year. By then, William's main extracurricular interest had shifted from jazz to classical music, principally opera. He was studying piano, and was also going downtown several afternoons a week to study conducting with Cesare Sodero, one of the Metropolitan Opera's resident conductors, who specialized in the Italian repertory.

Rubin continued his studies with Sodero when he entered Columbia, in 1945. The following year, he was drafted into the postwar Army, sent to Rome, and assigned to the 245th Army Ground Forces Concert Band, where he came "as close to fulfilling my dream as I'll ever come." The band played regular concerts at the Foro Italico, formerly the Foro Mussolini, a vast complex of buildings on the Tiber that had been turned into a rest center for the Fifth Army. The conductor, a warrant officer who had studied with Nadia Boulanger before the war, took a liking to Rubin, and soon had him standing in to conduct rehearsals. Eventually, he had a special uniform made for Rubin and let him conduct some performances. Rubin vividly recalls the first piece he ever conducted in public—a concert arrangement of "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes." "There was that incredible feeling of moving your arm and having seventy musicians respond and all that sound come out—even on that level, it was magical."

Back at Columbia after his discharge, though, Rubin came to the jarring discovery that there were a number of other young music students who were more talented than he was. Realizing that he would probably never make it to the top as an orchestra conductor was the greatest disappointment of his life, he told me. "But in a sense it was like an inoculation. No questions of failure or success after that could really bother me as much." Rather than settle for becoming a second-rate conductor, he decided to choose another career.

First, he gave the family business a whirl. His father made all the decisions there, however, and so, after a trip to Australia to visit some sheep ranches, he came home and told his father that he wanted to go back to school. "My father was a generous man," Rubin said. "He always said we could do whatever we wanted, as long as we did something, and he was always willing to help us out financially." Rubin reëntered Columbia, and spent the next year working for a master's degree in history. And during this period, while writing his thesis on Jules Michelet and the cult of medieval studies in the Romantic period, he came under the spell of Meyer Schapiro. Schapiro's field was art history, but he knew more about Michelet than anyone else at Columbia. He knew more about almost anything than anyone else, in fact, and the way he communicated his knowledge inspired countless students. Rubin transferred to art history, and completed the requirements for a master's degree in that department. He also studied with Millard Meiss, the great historian of early Italian painting, and he audited lectures or seminars given by Erwin Panofsky, Richard Offner, and the other notable art historians who were teaching at New York University's Institute of Fine Arts. But it was Schapiro who had the biggest effect on him. "I've met a lot of great men in

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my life, but Meyer is the most extraordinary," Rubin told me. "He replaced Artie Shaw as my hero."

Schapiro's two main art-historical areas were medieval studies and modern art. Very few art historians in those days knew or cared about the modern period. Schapiro not only cared about it but was friends with most of the artists who made up what would come to be called the New York School. He visited their studios, wrote about their work, and occasionally invited them to his seminars at Columbia. All this was heady stuff for Rubin, who absorbed from Schapiro the sense that something momentous and hugely exciting was going on at that moment in the studios and the small galleries around Tenth Street. Rubin gave some thought to becoming a specialist in Early Christian art, but the appeal of modernism soon prevailed. And then the ideal job fell into his lap: as he was finishing up the semester at Columbia, in June, 1952, he was offered a position teaching art history at Sarah Lawrence, an academically adventurous women's college only forty minutes north of Manhattan by car. He was just twenty-four then. "A nice age to begin on a girls' campus," he says.

He taught there for the next fifteen years—very happily, on the whole. There was no other art-history teacher when he began—he was the whole department—and the course he taught was his own invention. It encompassed the history of art from ancient Egypt to the present, but at all stages Rubin had his students compare older works with modern ones—an Egyptian painting of spearfishing, for example, with Picasso's "Night Fishing at Antibes." The point was to observe the differences—cultural, religious, and ethical as well as aesthetic—rather than the similarities. Art history was popular at Sarah Lawrence, and since Rubin's course was usually overregistered he had his pick of the brightest students. One of them remembers him as a stimulating but demanding teacher, who would ask for your opinion in class and then make you defend it. "Students often went into his classroom quaking," she recalls. "There wasn't much room for dissenting opinions. But the course was so well organized and his lectures were so brilliantly orchestrated that it was all pretty exciting—quite theatrical, really. Bill is, among other things, a consummate actor."

Rubin did not live on campus. He

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lived in Manhattan, in a bachelor apartment in the East Sixties, and commuted in a Jaguar convertible. In 1955, he also started teaching a couple of days a week at the Bronx campus of Hunter College—more advanced art history, at the graduate level. The combined salary from the two jobs was minuscule, but he continued to draw income from the family firm, and his father continued to be generous, so he could afford a few indulgences. The Jaguar was one; contemporary art was another. Rubin had bought his first picture when he was still in high school—a Rouault lithograph. He has been buying art ever since, on a modest scale, often selling an earlier acquisition to get something better. He bought pictures by the European Surrealists and Expressionists, and contemporary works by artists of the New York School, many of whom he had come to know. He bought a painting by Jasper Johns just after Johns' first show at Leo Castelli's, in 1958. (Alfred Barr bought three from that show for the museum.) When Frank Stella surfaced, in 1959, Rubin bought one of his black paintings, and he arranged for several of the artist's subsequent works to be sent to his brother Lawrence, who became Stella's European dealer as a result. Larry Rubin, the youngest of the three brothers, having graduated only recently from Brown, had decided to become an art dealer. He established a gallery in Paris with financial backing from Richard Rubin, the middle brother, who by this time was making a good deal of money from his own textile business. (Richard sold his business in 1963 and is now teaching political science at Swarthmore.) Larry got a lot of advice from his brother Bill, who recommended several artists to him besides Stella.

As time went on, Bill Rubin's collecting interest centered more and more on postwar American art. Buying, selling, and trading, he acquired major paintings by Pollock, Rothko, Kline, and others of the first generation of Abstract Expressionists while continuing to buy the work of younger artists such as Stella, Kenneth Noland, George Segal, and Ellsworth Kelly. Prices were still relatively low in the nineteen-fifties—under a thousand dollars in the case of the younger artists. There was also an occasional picture thrown his way by Larry in exchange for help in having pictures consigned to him. Rubin was not getting rich, as his brother Richard was

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(and as his brother Larry eventually did), but he was having a very good time. He thoroughly enjoyed teaching at Sarah Lawrence and taking an active part in the exfoliating New York art scene. Married, divorced, and remarried (his first wife had been a Sarah Lawrence student), he had moved downtown to a big loft apartment on lower Broadway, where his Abstract Expressionist canvases coexisted with large paintings by Stella and other contemporaries. No conceivable job offer could have made him think of giving up his academic career, he says, except the one that came from Alfred Barr.

THE Museum of Modern Art had figured prominently in Rubin's life ever since his student days at the Fieldston School. Victor D'Amico, the chairman of Fieldston's Art Department, was also the director of education at the museum; Rubin, being one of D'Amico's pet students, had worked with him on a MOMA publication and other projects, and had spent a lot of time at the museum when he was growing up. At Sarah Lawrence, he had been instrumental in getting Barr to come and lecture, and Barr had made it possible for Rubin to bring his students down for occasional seminars in the museum's galleries. Rubin had been guest curator at the museum for a small show in 1957 of work by the Chilean painter Matta, about whom both Barr and Rubin were enthusiastic at the time—Rubin still feels that Matta's work of the nineteen-forties was superior to almost anything being done in Europe then by an artist of his generation. He knew the museum's collection backward and forward. As a collector, he was in close touch with the art market. He was also a serious art historian. When Barr proposed that he become his successor, Rubin had just been appointed to the faculty of the New York University Institute of Fine Arts (where he still teaches one graduate seminar a year), and a forthcoming book of his on "Dada and Surrealist Art" had led to his becoming guest curator of the "Dada, Surrealism, and Their Heritage" show at MOMA. Rubin had the three main qualifications that Barr was looking for, and he was also a fervent admirer of Alfred Barr. Without much hesitation, he resigned from Sarah Lawrence and Hunter, and on July 1, 1967, became MOMA's curator of painting and sculpture, with, according to the trustees' announcement,

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"primary responsibility for recommending acquisitions, documentation, research, and writing on the subject of the Collection."

What Rubin did not know about then was the plague of rivalries, jealousies, and internecine politics that afflicted staff operations at the museum. Several of the curatorial department heads had been there so long that they had achieved a sort of feudal status within the museum; they were referred to as "Chinese warlords," and each of them had close alliances on the board of trustees. The Department of Painting and Sculpture, by contrast, was virtually leaderless. William Seitz and Peter Selz, the two most active curators, had recently left the museum to return to teaching—Seitz at Brandeis, Selz at Berkeley. Dorothy Miller, Barr's longtime associate, was retiring at the end of 1968. Having relinquished two tenured professorships to take a museum job for which there was not even a written contract, Rubin suddenly found himself caught up in a series of power struggles that racked the museum for the next four years. The director appointed to succeed d'Harnoncourt, Bates Lowry, was fired after only ten months on the job. John Hightower, the trustees' next choice, lasted a year and a half, and was succeeded in 1972 by Richard Oldenburg. When the smoke of battle eventually cleared, Rubin was a warlord in his own right. He had triumphed over his chief rival and nominal superior, William S. Lieberman, who was named director of the Department of Painting and Sculpture in 1969 but who withdrew two years later to run the newly designated Department of Prints and Drawings. (Lieberman left the museum in 1979, after thirty-four years' service, to become head of the Department of Twentieth Century Art at the Metropolitan.) In 1973, Rubin was named director of the department. By then, his acquisitive energy had made such an impression that some European museum people assumed, as they still occasionally do, that he was the director of the museum.

Rubin's first major coup, which he pulled off before officially joining the staff, was to persuade Sidney Janis, who had been a leading dealer in blue-chip modern art for twenty years, to give MOMA a hundred and five works from his own collection. No real persuasion was necessary, according to Rubin. He simply made the suggestion, and Janis agreed. An unspoken bias against dealers which affected some members of Barr's generation at the museum may have kept Barr and his colleagues from approaching him earlier. During the next few years, Rubin's efforts went mainly into filling what he considered the principal gaps in the museum's collection, starting with Abstract Expressionism. Although Barr had bought works by Pollock, de Kooning, and the other first-generation Abstract Expressionists in the nineteen-fifties, and Dorothy Miller had put them in group exhibitions that did much to bring about the movement's international recognition, Rubin felt that the museum had not given this "American renaissance" the prominence it deserved in the collection. Since works by first-generation New York School artists were quite expensive by this time, and the museum had only about two hundred and fifty thousand dollars a year in purchase funds, Rubin used two methods that Barr had depended on heavily: soliciting gifts from the artists (or from wealthy benefactors), and selling older works from the collection. He solicited only from artists whose work was already in the collection, and frequently he was offered his pick of the paintings in storage. Rubin buttressed his pitch by making a major donation himself. The museum did not own an important sculpture by David Smith, so he gave it his own "Australia," a welded-metal piece that had been turned down when it was offered to the museum in 1957 for twelve thousand dollars; it is worth more than a million today. He also invented a new technique of selling from the museum's collection. The furor that erupted a few years back about the Metropolitan Museum's "de-accessioning" policy has tended to obscure the fact that, for many American museums, selling from the collection has been a basic necessity. Barr did it constantly at MOMA. Picasso's "Les Demoiselles d'Avignon" was bought with money realized from the sale of a Degas oil, "The Race Course;" two Cézannes and a Toulouse-Lautrec were sold to pay for van Gogh's "The Starry Night." Barr usually consigned the works he was selling to a single dealer, who received a commission. Rubin's innovation was the closed-bid auction. He would invite ten or more dealers to come in at different specified times on a certain day; each would view the offered work in private, make

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a written bid, and leave without seeing his colleagues. The results often confirmed Rubin's suspicion that the "market" for any work of art is highly subjective, and that if dealers can't get together and discuss prices their estimates can vary enormously. It is a matter of pride to Rubin that his "deaccessions" have never been publicly criticized.

Within a few years of his arrival at the museum, Rubin had acquired sixteen major Abstract Expressionist paintings, including key works by Pollock, Rothko, and Kline. The two other big gaps that he saw in the collection were examples of Matisse's late, cut-paper paintings and Picasso's Cubist sculpture. Alfred Barr had not been enthusiastic about Matisse's late work. Rubin was, and he managed to buy two magnificent découpages—"Memory of Oceania," and "The Swimming Pool," a fifty-four-foot-long mural that had hung in the dining room of Matisse's apartment in Nice. Getting one of Picasso's Cubist sculptures was a trickier proposition, and Rubin loves to tell how he did it. Only one of these constructions, whose influence on twentieth-century sculpture was so immense, had ever left Picasso's own private collection; the artist had given it to his friend Paul Éluard, the poet, who later sold it to Roland Penrose, who eventually sold it to the Tate. For years, Barr had yearned to acquire one, but it was obvious that some special inducement was required. Picasso certainly didn't need money. It occurred to Rubin, though, that he might like a Cézanne. Although he had never met Picasso, he knew that the artist had a deep feeling for Cézanne. And MOMA happened to own a Cézanne painting, called "L'Estaque," that Barr had suggested might someday be used to finance a major purchase. It was not a great Cézanne; it had never been on exhibition at the museum, which had better examples of his work in this period; but it was a Cézanne all the same. In 1970, Rubin sent word through the European dealer Ernst Beyeler, who knew Picasso and was going to visit him in the South of France, that MOMA would like to exchange its "L'Estaque" for a Cubist construction. A few days later, Picasso sent word back through the same emissary, saying, in effect, "Come bearing the Cézanne."

Rubin immediately flew to Nice, and, accompanied by Walter Bareiss, a trustee who was chairman of the museum's committee on painting and sculpture, took the painting to Picasso's house in Mougins. This first visit lasted for five hours. Rubin speaks fluent French, and he and Picasso hit it off right away. In time, they got around to discussing Rubin's list of the Cubist constructions that the museum would most like to acquire. The list was headed by "Guitar," a very early (1912) sheet-metal-and-wire piece, whose radical, openwork fabrication represented a dramatic break with the whole tradition of carved or modelled sculpture. At the end of five hours, Picasso told Rubin and Bareiss to come back two days later for his answer.

When they rang the doorbell at the appointed time, Picasso opened it himself—a highly unusual gesture, which Rubin later decided was an example of the artist's penchant for playacting. "He looked sad as all getout," Rubin recalls. " 'Sit down,' he said. 'I have bad news for you. I cannot take your Cézanne.' Long pause. 'But—I am giving you the "Guitar" ! ' " There was a time when he would have given anything to own a Cézanne, Picasso explained, and over the years he had acquired a few. But to take this one would make him feel like a "*collectionneur*"—the way he rolled the final "r" indicated terminal contempt. Later, Rubin heard that Picasso had told a friend it really wasn't a very good Cézanne. MOMA got the "Guitar," at any rate, and a few years afterward Rubin was able to use the same Cézanne as part payment to Walter Chrysler for Picasso's "The Charnel House," the great anti-war painting whose acquisition helped to offset the inevitable loss of "Guernica," which was returned to the Spanish government, in accordance with Picasso's wishes, in 1981. Rubin visited Picasso many times after that first meeting, and his friendship with the artist and his wife, Jacqueline, led to a continuing series of gifts to the museum.

RUBIN's triumphs of acquisition solidified his warlord status at the museum. He got along fine with Richard Oldenburg, the director, whose steady hand and low profile put an end to the organizational turmoil. Recognizing that administration was not Rubin's strong point (any more than it had been Barr's), Oldenburg let him run his department in his own way, even if that meant running it from the South of France part of the time. Old-

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enburg also smoothed Rubin's relations with the trustees, who under the present regime have tended to stay out of the museum's day-to-day operations. It is sometimes said that Rubin intimidates both Oldenburg and the trustees, few of whom like to oppose him, for example, in the matter of acquisitions. All this does not endear Rubin to the other department heads, toward whom Rubin sometimes exhibits a rather lordly disdain. "God damn it," he once complained to Hightower, "I'm sick of the prima donnas in this place. I'm a prima donna, but I *deserve* to be one."

Outside the museum, Rubin's career is viewed with awe and occasional resentment. His position at MOMA automatically makes him one of the most powerful figures in the field of modern art. No one else, it is conceded, could have put together the gigantic 1980 Picasso retrospective, which included loans from museums and private collectors throughout the world, and no other curator could have commandeered the entire Museum of Modern Art to install it in. (Dominique Bozo, the director of the Musée National d'Art Moderne at the Centre Pompidou in Paris, and the Picasso exhibition's coörganizer, wields less clout in the matter of loans, simply because he is relatively new to his job.) Rubin's additions to the MOMA collection have been consistently brilliant, and his exhibitions have been greatly admired for their scholarly focus. At the same time, he has had to absorb much of the blame for what the international art world sees as MOMA's failure during the last twenty years to pay enough attention to contemporary art. This is a very old and complicated issue at the museum. Barr and his associates believed that the museum should stay "a respectful distance" behind the contemporary artist; they also believed that their responsibility extended to the whole history of modern art, which now goes back (in MOMA's collections, at least) nearly a hundred years, and that to give too much emphasis to new work in the exhibition program would distort the museum's purpose. Rubin has made it clear that he shares this point of view. His critics maintain, however, that since he came there the museum has virtually turned its back on new art, and has accorded the art of the period from 1965 to the present far less than its due.

Some of these critics were extremely surprised recently to learn that Rubin agrees with them. "I think that I slipped in a certain sense," he told a reporter for the *Times* last February. "One has only so much time in life, and I've been so fascinated by the problems I was addressing that I didn't guarantee that the department adequately cover the current eclectic scene." He went on to say that he intended to schedule many more contemporary shows in the future, as soon as the backlog of commitments delayed by the museum's rebuilding program had been dealt with, and he also said that his department was about to hire a new curator whose particular responsibility would be contemporary art. It was subsequently announced that this new curator would be Linda Shearer, a former student of Rubin's at Sarah Lawrence, who after eleven years on the curatorial staff of the Guggenheim Museum had become the executive director of Artists Space, one of the earliest and most enterprising of the nonprofit, "alternative" galleries that have been such a prominent part of the downtown art scene during the last decade. Shearer will join the staff in January, 1986, and Rubin has vowed to support her even when he does not agree with her ideas and recommendations. The museum, he says, must do once again what it used to do, and what the hundreds of private galleries cannot do—"provide a beacon through what I would call an art scene of effervescent eclecticism."

Rubin concedes that he is not personally enthusiastic about much of the new painting. "The last really intense conviction I felt was for Stella, Johns, and a few others of that generation," he told me. Part of the problem, he feels, is the aura of promotion and publicity that surrounds the "hot" new artists. When the *Times*, in a recent article on Julian Schnabel, stated that "the Modern has not yet acquired" one of his pictures, Rubin instantly fired off a letter of correction. The *Times*' wording "might seem to imply a future intention and/or that we are remiss," he wrote. "I think the phrase should have read: 'The Modern has

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not acquired one.' " This sort of reaction tends to confirm a widespread rumor that Rubin thinks modern art stops with Stella and Johns.

The apartment that Rubin now lives in, on the forty-eighth floor of a high-rise in the East Fifties, is dominated by Stella—four paintings, from four different periods (one is on loan from the artist)—and by primitive sculpture, which he has been buying for the last five or six years, selling off his large Abstract Expressionist pictures in order to do so. Rubin did a major Stella show at the museum in 1970, and he is planning another one for 1986. This and the fact that his " 'Primitivism' in 20th Century Art" was one of the museum's major exhibitions in 1984 have given rise to talk that there may be too close a connection between his private collecting and his position at the museum. This is the sort of talk that Rubin brushes aside. "Collecting permits a sharpening of the eye that cannot be matched in any other way," he told me. "Collecting is also a passion, of course, but since I came here all that got transferred to collecting for the museum. Doing it on a grand scale for the Museum of Modern Art is infinitely more exciting than doing it for yourself. I've bought hardly any modern paintings in years, and collecting primitive sculpture provided a terrific tool for learning about it quickly." Oldenburg says that there has never been a hint of impropriety in Rubin's personal dealings with the art market. Larry Rubin, who now runs M. Knoedler and Company in New York, has been able to sell only two works of art to MOMA in his career—an "Ocean Park" painting by Richard Diebenkorn and a bronze sculpture by Nancy Graves—because of his brother's scrupulous desire to avoid any appearance of conflict of interest. (Neither purchase was recommended by Rubin, who abstained from discussing or voting on them when they came before the acquisitions committee.) The real key to Bill Rubin, according to Larry, is that he has no children—the museum and its collection have taken the place of family in his life.

The "Primitivism" show, which Rubin and Kirk Varnedoe, of the New York University Institute of Fine Arts, worked for five years to organize, was widely praised and also heavily criticized by art historians, some of whom thought that it exploited and misrepresented tribal objects by placing them in a "formalist" art context. Rubin replied in print to two of these attacks. The critics, he charged, either missed or ignored the main premise of the show, which was to demonstrate the effect of tribal objects on modern artists. He was particularly annoyed by Thomas McEvilley's polemical article in *Artforum*, which accused Rubin of (among other things) using primitive art to "revalidate" the modern movement. "That's just ludicrous," Rubin said to me at the time. (He said the same thing in a lengthy letter of rebuttal to *Artforum*, which led to an acrimonious further exchange in those pages between the two combatants.) "As somebody who gets exhilarated several times a week walking through the collection of the Museum of Modern Art, the last thing that would enter my mind is that the art from Cézanne to the present needs revalidations, by primitive art or anything else." Rubin also objected vigorously to McEvilley's description of him as a formalist art historian and to the museum as "the temple of formalist modernism." "The notion that you can look at a work of art as pure form strikes me as idiocy," Rubin told me. "If the work comes at you, it comes with everything it's got, all at once. You can't not be aware of the psychological, or the poetic, or all its other aspects, and you can't separate them from the structural aspects of the work. I must tell you that where I part company with McEvilley and with many others, including Clement Greenberg, whom I was close to at one time, and who influenced my thinking to a degree, is in my conviction that all this critical wordplay is utterly insignificant next to one good picture. That's the perspective that I think it's healthy to hold on to. Fifty years from now, the paintings are going to be here, but nobody's going to give a damn what you wrote about them. I have no illusions about myself as an art historian. I think I'm a very good one, but I'm no Meyer Schapiro. I think I put on some great shows, but I don't believe that any of these activities matter very much in the end. To me, the most important thing I can do at the museum has to do with strengthening the collection and filling it in historically. It's an immense responsibility, because what's in the MOMA collection has a lot to do with establishing our image of art history."

It is not hard to picture Alfred Barr giving those words his guarded approval. "I certainly think of myself as continuing the work that Alfred started," Rubin said to me. "Alfred

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established the concept, which was for a synoptic art-historical collection that is always moving forward in time and in which all schools and all nations and all artists are equilibrated according to our judgments of their quality and importance. On that idea there is an absolute identity between Alfred and me. On the question of the judgments within that concept, I think that, as a dwarf standing on a giant's shoulders, I can maybe see a little farther with respect to certain things, such as the relative importance of the Pollock generation. But the concept was Alfred's, and the hardest work was done by Alfred, and we will be profiting for years to come from his work."

Some people feel that Rubin has been too faithful to the founding concept. Robert Rosenblum, an exceptionally gifted art historian and teacher who also serves on MOMA's aquisitions committee for painting and sculpture, believes that a thoroughgoing revision of twentieth-century art history is long overdue. The modernist canon that Rosenblum and the rest of us learned in the galleries of the Museum of Modern Art must be broadened, he feels, to include such overlooked or underrepresented areas as turn-of-the-century Symbolism and realist painting between the two world wars. "The Modern is in danger of becoming a sort of Frick Collection, frozen in its period," Rosenblum said recently. "It is a modernist museum in the post-modern era."

The kind of historical revisionism that Rosenblum favors is not likely to occur there in the foreseeable future, however. At the ripe old age of fifty-six, MOMA still hews firmly to the synoptic gospel of modern art which Alfred Barr laid down and passed to his chosen successor—with more success than he might have thought possible. Revising the concept, as Rubin is well aware, could prove to be even harder than firing Alfred Barr.

—Calvin Tomkins

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(1) Australia – offered to museum
paid $32,000 for it
Offered to museum for 12,000 or 18,000
Heard MOMA proposed to Nelson & buy it,
he said no.
But don't say Alfred didn't want it.
Truth was they didn't want to pay that
much.

(2) Alfred – at end
Barr was genius & I'm not.
Instead, "Alfred was something of a
genius; I'm not."

(3) Self-interest problems:
In case involved of Pfs from
Rubin, Rosenkranz, I didn't
approve – obstained.
Eldefield "Ocean Park"
exclusive contract with
Larry.

Primitive Art market – the minute you
buy, it's worth 50% of that. No resale
value. Tryon to sell work he bt for
(20,000, can't get 50,000. Very narrow
market, few collectors many fakes
anonymous. Ask Merton Simpson (988-6290) Salon (Paris + N.Y.)
772-5410)

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Collecting of Primitive Art was an important help to me in sharpening my eye — as much as mod art.

Market a non-resale market.

German collects it — clad cts. with him.

Mike Olivier (794-2783) — one of best young dealers in African art. (Merit's daughter)

Sheldon Solow, [illegible] collector of modern + primitive — ask abt nature of market.

→ Second thing purchased for Larry: sculpture by Nancy Graves (also exhibited w/ Larry)

Australia

$12,000 David Smith — Barn means "I'm not bowled over by the U.S."

Letter to Soby from Sam Hunter: "Alfred doesn't seem to be bowled over by Australia..." Price listed as $12,000.

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Works sold

Johns: Wanted to buy "Grey Letter" out of first show, not "Numbers." Bought it right after show, for $800. This picture sold to pay for reconstruction of Paris apt. (Pollock for house in France). Either 1960 or 1961, went into Leo in Paris – Leo said why not sell Johns? Had a client willing to pay $5,000 for Grey Numbers. (It was Scull).

Vanderbe – adjunct curator of Mfg. & sc.

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Bill Rubin

Larry Rubin – 794-0550
Dick Oldenburg – 708-9400
Meyer Schapiro – 280-2860
Kynaston –
Bill Liberman – TR 9-5500
John Hightower (203) 838-1488
Liz Swan – 794-1491
Leo Steinberg ?
Linda Shearer – 226-3970
Kirk Varnedoe
Walter Barrios – MU 7-3361
Wilder Green
Bob Rosenblum
Caroline Lanchner
Dominique Bozo
Bates Lowry

Bill Rubin – 708-9651
home – 758-0988

bijuous fragment is of course
s, whose ~~jokes~~ 'works'
tier between meaninglessness
ucaine."

and their Heritage." Rubin's
tions. "Somewhere inside
classicist yearning to
ture of D-S ideology and
l number of works and
lecture 'the main premise

t have licked his lips and
devoured Schwarz."

art, leading to anti-art.
breed disorder, thwart
of individual freedom
me as in science.

p. 70 "La Blague – the great joke, that new form of French wit..." Christo's running fence a great spoof.

p. 76 Originality carries art in a self-destructive direction – "the cul-de-sac of dead end hypothesis." Anti-art

p. 80 "an act of desperation provoked by an impasse."

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Shattuck

p. 39 "The great master of the ambiguous fragment, is of course the other Marcel: Marcel Duchamp, whose ~~jokes~~ 'works' or 'jokes' flutter on the frontier between meaninglessness and deep metaphysical significance."

The D-S Expedition

p. 45 Breton and Duchamp

p. 46-49 Rubin's "Dada, Surrealism and their Heritage." Rubin's uneasiness with anti-art implications. "Somewhere inside Rubin lurks a half-suppressed classicist yearning to criticize the entire superstructure of D-S ideology and to salvage from it a limited number of works and individual talents assimilable within 'the main premise of modern art.'"

p. 56-60 Duchamp/Schwarz. "He must have licked his lips and whiskers for days, for he had devoured Schwarz."

The Demon of Originality

p. 67 "Experiment" as a method in art, leading to anti-art. "Artistic experiment sets out to breed disorder, thwart determinism, and open up a space for individual freedom and consciousness." Not the same as in science.

p. 70 "La Blague — the great joke, that new form of French wit..." Christo's Running Fence a great spoof.

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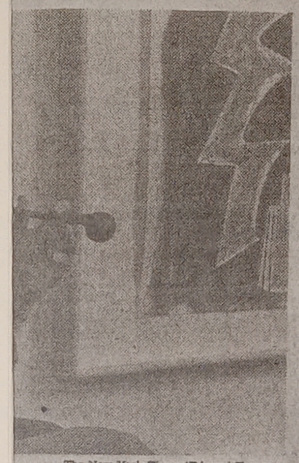
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HE NEW YORK TIMES, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 198

to Stress New Works



The New York Times/Edward Hausner

useum of Modern Art.

Rubin said. "We've got to have some-
ne with eye, conviction and belief.
The person we are going to hire is pre-
isely someone who is committed to
ew art and has strong convictions
bout it. I might personally be blind
o the particular quality of any given
rtist that curator will propose. But
hether I like the art or not, I will
upport the curator.

"I am very interested in some
spects of the contemporary scene,"
Ir. Rubin added. "But it would be
ishonest of me to say that any of the
ew painters interest me as much as
asper Johns, Frank Stella, Roy
ichtenstein, or other artists of their
nd earlier generations."

The "Primitivism in 20th Century
rt" exhibit, which traced the impact
tribal objects on artists of this cen-
ry, has also stirred up a new con-
overy around Mr. Rubin. While
ailed by some critics as a landmark
thibition, the show has been
rongly criticized in some quarters
the art world and prompted an ex-
ange of long and vehement maga-
ne articles.

A focal point of the exchange was
article by the art critic Thomas
cEvilley in the November issue of
rtforum, which called the show a
splay of "Western egotism" that
retends to confront the Third
orld while really co-opting it and
ing it to consolidate Western no-
ns of quality and feelings of superi-
ty."

Mr. Rubin replied in a three-and-
alf page letter to the editor of Art-
um, published in the February
ue, in which he chided Mr. McEvil-
for getting several facts wrong in
article, and charged him with
ssing the entire point of the show.

The museum, of course, had no in-
tention of confronting tribal cultures, or even tribal objects as such (i.e., in their own terms), much less the whole Third World," Mr. Rubin wrote. "To have done so would have hopelessly confused what the Museum was in fact doing — namely, studying the reception of tribal objects by Western artists."

Another critic of the "Primitivism" exhibition is Hilton Kramer, the editor of the conservative cultural magazine, The New Criterion. In an article in the December issue, Mr. Kramer took Mr. Rubin to task on several matters, accusing him of "political" motives for putting quotation marks around the word "Primitivism" in the show's title.

Mr. Rubin, Mr. Kramer wrote in the review, "does not want it to be thought that he is one of those terrible people who regard Western civilization as somehow 'superior' to the cultures of primitive peoples."

In the interview, Mr. Rubin stated his antipathy to the views of both Mr. McEvilley and Mr. Kramer.

"These critics are firing at each other through the medium of the exhibition," Mr. Rubin said. "My attitude about it is, a pox on both your houses. A lot of people are grinding their own political axes, and while I'm not blaming them for that — gung ho, let them do it! — I ask only that they get their facts straight."

Yet Mr. Rubin said he resented the Mr. McEvilley's implication that the "Primitivism in 20th Century Art" exhibition showed a condescending and even oppresive attitude toward tribal peoples.

"Letting tribal art at its very best speak loud and clear is itself a contribution," Mr. Rubin said. "We are an art museum, and we show art. You can't simultaneoulsy have a show about 'primitivism,' and an ethnological show. Art is one of the great contributions of the Third World to the cultural development of the West, and the 'Primitivism' exhibition shows it."

Peter Hofmann to Sing 'Meistersinger' at Met

Peter Hofmann, the German tenor, will return to the Metropolitan Opera this season to sing the role of Walther von Stolzing in Wagner's "Meistersinger von Nürnberg." He will replace the originally announced Edward Sooter in the performances on Feb. 22, Feb. 26 and March 2. Mr. Sooter will still sing the March 6 performance.

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'THE BREAKFAST CLUB' IS DEFINITELY THE BEST IN ITS CLASS."
-Joel Siegel, ABC TV - GOOD MORNING AMERICA
'THE BREAKFAST CLUB' IS A CINEMATIC BREATH

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Rubin of

By DOUGLAS C. Mc

As part of a new and wi
plan to emphasize the wor
artists, the Museum of M
will shortly appoint a cura
temporary art in the Depa
Painting and Sculpture, ac
William Rubin, the depart
rector.

The plan is designed to c
for a "failing," Mr. Rubin
long interview earlier t
While pointing out that h
ment — the museum's la
most prestigious — had do
exhibiting important mo
from the late 19th century t
early 1960's, Mr. Rubin sa
neglected to give consisten
to the work of younger cont
artists.

"I think that I slipped in
sense," said Mr. Rubin,
headed the Department of
and Sculpture since 1973.
only so much time in life,
been so fascinated by the p
was addressing that I didn
tee that the department a
cover the current eclectic

There has been "renewe
in the art of painting," Mr. I
in explaining the decision to
contemporary curator.
much more new work being
being shown than 10 or 12 y
There's more to take note

Controversial Exhibition

Yet while acknowledgi
comings in his policy towar
artists, Mr. Rubin — a forc
better known for scoring p
admitting mistakes — stead
fended himself against
" 'Primitivism' in 20th-cent
the major exhibition he mo
fall. The show, which closed
ary and is touring the cou
provoked high praise and in
troversy.

Mr. Rubin, 57 years old,
for his brilliant scholarship
in conceiving and presentir
tions, is one of the most pow
ures in New York's art wo
the past decade, Mr. Rubin
an indelible mark by
hugely successful exhibitic
filled the entire museum wi
so's work for the retrospecti
— and by shaping the perm
lection.

His directorship of the n
largest department ha
prompted comments, larg
contemporary artists and cr
the Museum of Modern Ar
creasingly turned its back
artists and become an archi
historical period of Modern

The appointment of a nev
of contemporary art, Mr. Ru
will be announced within the
eral weeks and will be on
many steps taken to correct
His department will also inc

Main Entrance: 11 West 53 Street

Group Entrance: 18 West 54 Street

Hours: Daily 11:00–6:00, Thursday 11:00–9:00. Closed Wednesday.

Admission: Members free. General admission $4.50; full-time students (with current identification) $3.00; senior citizens $2.00; children (under 16 when accompanied by an adult) free. Thursday 5:00–9:00, pay what you wish. Group rates are available.

General Information: Current exhibitions, film screenings, gallery talks, and lectures are listed in the monthly calendar, available in the Lobby; or call 708-9480 for current exhibitions and 708-9490 for daily film screenings. Other information: 708-9500. TDD (Telephone Device for the Deaf): 247-1230. Telex: 62370 MODART.

Groups: Groups are welcome, by appointment only (708-9685). Museum lecturers can be engaged for tours of the Museum and for slide lectures at other locations. Lectures can be presented in foreign languages upon request.

Disabled Visitors: Wheelchairs available in Lobby.

Lost and Found: See Lobby security supervisor.

Cameras: Photography is permitted only with hand-held camera and electronic flash in Permanent Collection galleries. No photographs taken in the Museum may be reproduced, distributed, or sold without permission from the Museum.

Smoking: Smoking is permitted in the Lobby, restaurants, and Theater Gallery.

Checkroom: All umbrellas, parcels, bags, and purses larger than 14 inches must be checked. Wheelchairs and baby carriers are available.

The Garden Café: Open 11:00–4:30 weekdays, Thursday 11:00–8:00.

The Members Dining Room: Daily 12:00–3:00, Thursday 5:00–8:00. Closed Wednesday. Members may make reservations (708-9710).

The Museum Store: 7 West 53 Street. Hours: 11:00–5:45 daily, Thursdays 11:00–8:45.

The Museum Store Annex: 37 West 53 Street. Hours: 11:00–5:45 daily (708-9700).

Library and Study Centers: Appointments are required for the Library and all Study Centers (708-9400).

Education Center: Guides to the collection (in English and foreign languages), video orientation, and education program information available in the Education Center.

Gallery Talks: Weekdays 12:30 and 3:00; Thursday evenings 5:30 and 7:00. Information is available in the Lobby and Education Center.

Films: Films are shown in the Roy and Niuta Titus Theaters. Tickets (included in the price of admission) are available at the Information Desk. Advance tickets are a privilege extended to Family/Dual and higher membership categories.

Membership: Benefits of members include free admission to the Museum; discounts on items in the Museum Store, lectures, and special events; and subscriptions to members' newsletter and monthly calendar. For more information, inquire at the Lobby Information Desk or call 708-9500.

The Information/Plan is made possible in part by a grant from the Gerald and May Ellen Ritter Memorial Fund.

8/84

New Works

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CLUB' IS DEFINITELY
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GOOD MORNING AMERICA
B' IS A CINEMATIC BREATH

Legend

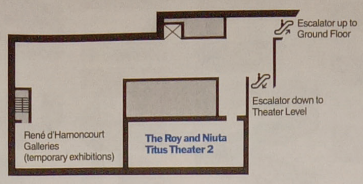
- Men's Room*
- Ladies' Room*
- Telephone
- Elevator*
- Escalator
- Stairs
- Fire Stairs
- Access for Disabled Visitors
- Nonpublic Area

*Accessible to Disabled Visitors

Lower Level

The Roy and Niuta Titus Theater 2

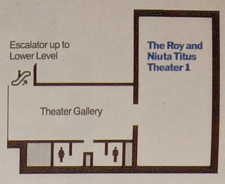
René d'Harnoncourt Galleries (temporary exhibitions)



Theater Level

The Roy and Niuta Titus Theater 1

Theater Gallery



Ground Floor

International Council Galleries (temporary exhibitions)

The Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden

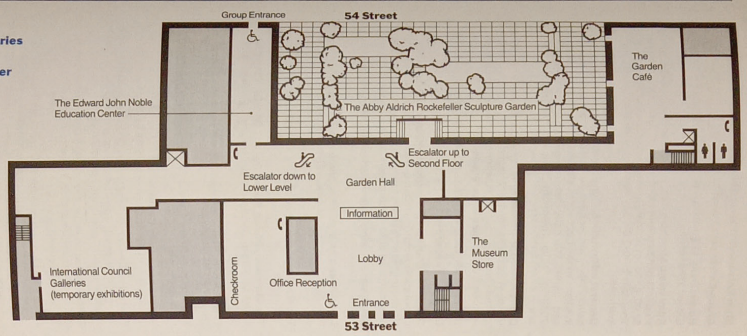
The Edward John Noble Education Center

The Garden Café

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Museum Lobby

Checkroom

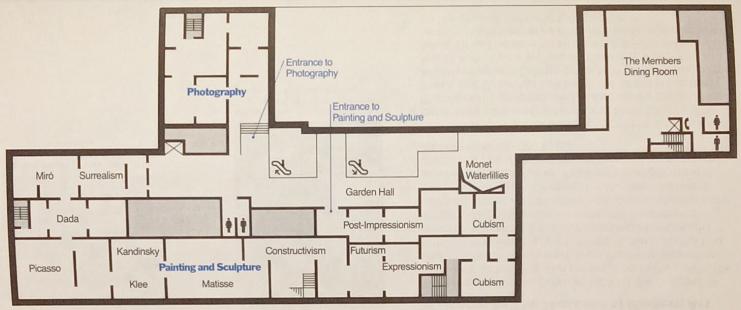


Second Floor

Painting and Sculpture Collection

Photography Collection

The Members Dining Room

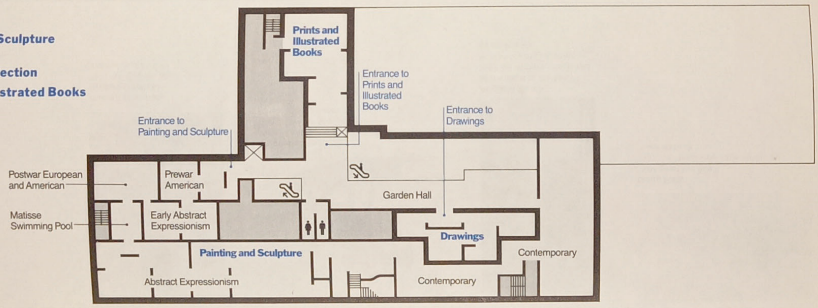


Third Floor

Painting and Sculpture Collection

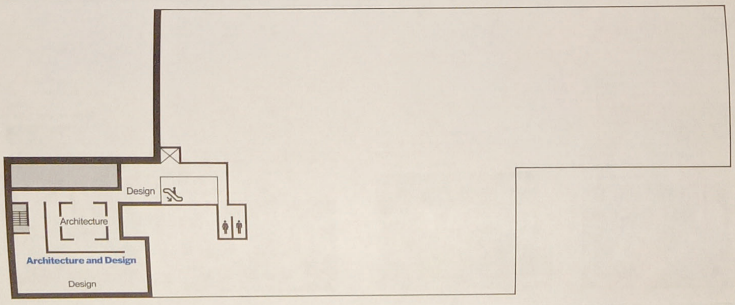
Drawings Collection

Prints and Illustrated Books Collection



Fourth Floor

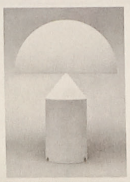
Architecture and Design Collection



Fourth Floor



Gerrit Rietveld, "Red and Blue" Chair. 1918. Painted wood. Gift of Philip Johnson.



Vico Magistretti, "Atollo" Table Lamp. 1977. Aluminum with Nextel finish. Mfr.: O-Luce Italia S.p.A., Italy. Gift of the manufacturer.



Pinin Farina, Cisitalia "202". 1946. Aluminum body. Mfr.: Carrozzeria Pininfarina S.p.A, Italy. Gift of the manufacturer.



Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Friedrichstrasse Office Building. Competition project, Berlin, 1921. Perspective, north and east sides. Charcoal and pencil on paper. Gift of the architect.

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Third Floor

Roy Lichtenstein, Drowning Girl.
1963. Oil and synthetic polymer paint on canvas. Partial purchase and gift of Mr. and Mrs. Bagley Wright.

Jackson Pollock, Untitled.
1950. Ink. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Lauder in honor of Eliza Parkinson Cobb.

Edvard Munch, Madonna.
1895-1902. Lithograph printed in color. The William B. Jaffe and Evelyn A. J. Hall Collection.

Frank Stella, Abra Variation.
1969. Flourescent synthetic polymer paint on canvas. Gift of Philip Johnson in honor of William Rubin.

Second Floor

László Moholy-Nagy, Head.
1926. Gelatin-silver print. Anonymous gift.

Henri Matisse, Dance.
1909. Oil on canvas. Gift of Nelson A. Rockefeller in honor of Alfred H. Barr, Jr.

Vincent van Gogh, Starry Night.
1889. Oil on canvas. Acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest.

Joan Miró, Hirondelle/Amour.
1933-34. Oil on canvas. Gift of Nelson A. Rockefeller.

Ground Floor

Barnett Newman, Broken Obelisk.
1963-67. Cor-ten Steel. Given anonymously.

Pablo Picasso, She-Goat.
1950. Bronze. Mrs. Simon Guggenheim Fund.

Auguste Rodin, Monument to Balzac.
1897-98. Bronze. Presented in memory of Curt Valentin by his friends.

Doug Hall, "Songs of the 80s."
1983. Still from videotape. Photo by Jules Backus.

Lower Level

Mickey Mouse in **Steamboat Willie.**
Walt Disney, 1928. The Museum of Modern Art Film Stills Archive.

Lillian Gish in **Broken Blossoms.**
D. W. Griffith, 1919. The Museum of Modern Art Film Stills Archive.

Welcome to The Museum of Modern Art

The Museum was founded in 1929 for the purpose of acquiring, exhibiting, and introducing to the public the finest works of modern art, from Post-Impressionism through contemporary art. Alfred H. Barr, Jr., the first director, envisioned a multidepartmental museum, which today possesses an unrivaled collection of painting and sculpture, drawings, prints, photography, film, architecture, and design of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. From an initial gift of eight prints and one drawing, the collection has grown to include over 100,000 items.

The Painting and Sculpture collection is arranged chronologically on the second and third floors. The Photography galleries are located on the second floor; Prints and Drawings can be found on the third; the Architecture and Design collection galleries are on the fourth floor. Films are shown daily in the two Roy and Niuta Titus Theaters. In addition to the Permanent Collection, the temporary exhibition galleries are located on the ground floor and the lower level.

The Museum of Modern Art

Information/Plan

Main Entrance: 11 West 53 Street

Group Entrance: 18 West 54 Street

Hours: Daily 11:00–6:00, Thursday 11:00–9:00. Closed Wednesday.

Admission: Members free. General admission $4.50; full-time students (with current identification) $3.00; senior citizens $2.00; children (under 16 when accompanied by an adult) free. Thursday 5:00–9:00, pay what you wish. Group rates are available.

General Information: Current exhibitions, film screenings, gallery talks, and lectures are listed in the monthly calendar, available in the Lobby, or call 708-9480 for current exhibitions and 708-9500 (TDD) for daily film screenings. Other information is available 10:00–4:30 daily. (Telephone Device for the Deaf) 247-1230. Telex: 62370 MODART.

Groups: Groups are welcome, by appointment only (708-9685). Museum lecturers can be engaged for tours of the Museum and for slide lectures in the Auditorium. Lectures can be presented in foreign languages upon request.

Disabled Visitors: Wheelchairs available in Lobby.

Lost and Found: See Lobby security supervisor.

Cameras: Photography is permitted only with hand-held camera and electronic flash in Permanent Collection galleries. No photographs taken in the Museum may be reproduced, distributed, or sold without permission from the Museum.

Smoking: Smoking is permitted in the Lobby, restaurants, and Theater Gallery.

Checkroom: All umbrellas, parcels, bags, and purses larger than 14 inches must be checked. Wheelchairs and baby carriers are available.

The Garden Café: Open 11:00–4:30 weekdays, Thursday 11:00–8:00.

The Members Dining Room: Daily 12:00–3:00, Thursday 5:00–8:00. Closed Wednesday. Members may make reservations (708-9710).

The Museum Store: 7 West 53 Street. Hours: 11:00–5:45 daily, Thursday 11:00–8:45.

The Museum Store Annex: 37 West 53 Street. Hours: 11:00–5:45 daily (708-9700).

Library and Study Centers. Appointments are required for the Library and all Study Centers (708-9400).

Education Center: Guides to the collection (in English and foreign languages), video orientation, and education program information available in the Education Center.

Gallery Talks: Weekdays 12:30 and 3:00, Thursday evenings 5:30 and 7:00. Information is available in the Lobby and Education Center.

Films: Films are shown in the Roy and Niuta Titus Theaters. Tickets (included in the price of admission) are available at the Information Desk. Advance tickets are a privilege extended to Family/Dual and higher membership categories.

Membership: Benefits of membership include free admission to the Museum, discounts on items in the Museum Store, lectures, and special events, and subscriptions to members' newsletter and monthly calendar. For more information, inquire at the Lobby Information Desk or call 708-9500.

The Information/Plan is made possible in part by a grant from the Gerald and May Ellen Ritter Memorial Fund.

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Rubin of Modern Museum to Stress New Works

By DOUGLAS C. McGILL

As part of a new and wide-ranging plan to emphasize the work of living artists, the Museum of Modern Art will shortly appoint a curator of contemporary art in the Department of Painting and Sculpture, according to William Rubin, the department's director.

The plan is designed to compensate for a "failing," Mr. Rubin said in a long interview earlier this week. While pointing out that his department — the museum's largest and most prestigious — had done well in exhibiting important modern art from the late 19th century through the early 1960's, Mr. Rubin said he had neglected to give consistent attention to the work of younger contemporary artists.

"I think that I slipped in a certain sense," said Mr. Rubin, who has headed the Department of Painting and Sculpture since 1973. "One has only so much time in life, and I've been so fascinated by the problems I was addressing that I didn't guarantee that the department adequately cover the current eclectic scene."

There has been "renewed vitality in the art of painting," Mr. Rubin said in explaining the decision to appoint a contemporary curator. "There's much more new work being made and being shown than 10 or 12 years ago. There's more to take note of."

Controversial Exhibition

Yet while acknowledging shortcomings in his policy toward younger artists, Mr. Rubin — a forceful man better known for scoring points than admitting mistakes — steadfastly defended himself against critics of "'Primitivism' in 20th-century Art," the major exhibition he mounted last fall. The show, which closed in January and is touring the country, has provoked high praise and intense controversy.

Mr. Rubin, 57 years old, renowned for his brilliant scholarship and flair in conceiving and presenting exhibitions, is one of the most powerful figures in New York's art world. Over the past decade, Mr. Rubin has made an indelible mark by mounting hugely successful exhibitions — he filled the entire museum with Picasso's work for the retrospective in 1980 — and by shaping the permanent collection.

His directorship of the museum's largest department has also prompted comments, largely from contemporary artists and critics, that the Museum of Modern Art has increasingly turned its back on living artists and become an archive of the historical period of Modernism.

The appointment of a new curator of contemporary art, Mr. Rubin said, will be announced within the next several weeks and will be only one of many steps taken to correct the lapse. His department will also increase the amount of gallery space and time given to contemporary painting and sculpture as compared with earlier periods of modern art history. The department will also seek to shorten the necessary planning time from several years, which is common for large shows, to less than a year for shows of art from the last 15 years.



The New York Times/Edward Hausner

William Rubin in his office at Museum of Modern Art.

Middle-Aged Artists a Priority

The showing of artists in their middle age will also become a new priority for the department of painting and sculpture, Mr. Rubin said.

"There are some artists in their 50's, who have had a retrospective and then somehow been dropped out of art world consciousness," Mr. Rubin said. "They are overlooked by the publicity mill and the museum mill and art-magazine mill, which are always looking for what's new. But they're still working, and in some cases what they are doing may be better than the work of new young artists. We should have the format to accommodate medium- or small-sized shows to update them."

A major exhibition of contemporary art last fall was the first since 1970, when the museum mounted two large shows called "Information" and "Spaces."

'Strong Convictions'

The 1984 show, "An International Survey of Recent Painting and Sculpture," marked the reopening of the museum after being partially closed for more than three years for renovation and expansion.

The soon-to-be-announced curator, Mr. Rubin said, will exercise total control over the artistic choices for exhibitions.

"Every succeeding phase of modern art deserves an advocate," Mr. Rubin said. "We've got to have someone with eye, conviction and belief. The person we are going to hire is precisely someone who is committed to new art and has strong convictions about it. I might personally be blind to the particular quality of any given artist that curator will propose. But whether I like the art or not, I will support the curator.

"I am very interested in some aspects of the contemporary scene," Mr. Rubin added. "But it would be dishonest of me to say that any of the new painters interest me as much as Jasper Johns, Frank Stella, Roy Lichtenstein, or other artists of their and earlier generations."

The "Primitivism in 20th Century Art" exhibit, which traced the impact of tribal objects on artists of this century, has also stirred up a new controvery around Mr. Rubin. While hailed by some critics as a landmark exhibition, the show has been strongly criticized in some quarters of the art world and prompted an exchange of long and vehement magazine articles.

A focal point of the exchange was an article by the art critic Thomas McEvilley in the November issue of Artforum, which called the show a display of "Western egotism" that "pretends to confront the Third World while really co-opting it and using it to consolidate Western notions of quality and feelings of superiority."

Mr. Rubin replied in a three-and-a-half page letter to the editor of Artforum, published in the February issue, in which he chided Mr. McEvilley for getting several facts wrong in the article, and charged him with missing the entire point of the show.

"The museum, of course, had no intention of confronting tribal cultures, or even tribal objects as such (i.e., in their own terms), much less the whole Third World," Mr. Rubin wrote. "To have done so would have hopelessly confused what the Museum was in fact doing — namely, studying the reception of tribal objects by Western artists."

Another critic of the "Primitivism" exhibition is Hilton Kramer, the editor of the conservative cultural magazine, The New Criterion. In an article in the December issue, Mr. Kramer took Mr. Rubin to task on several matters, accusing him of "political" motives for putting quotation marks around the word "Primitivism" in the show's title.

Mr. Rubin, Mr. Kramer wrote in the review, "does not want it to be thought that he is one of those terrible people who regard Western civilization as somehow 'superior' to the cultures of primitive peoples."

In the interview, Mr. Rubin stated his antipathy to the views of both Mr. McEvilley and Mr. Kramer.

"These critics are firing at each other through the medium of the exhibition," Mr. Rubin said. "My attitude about it is, a pox on both your houses. A lot of people are grinding their own political axes, and while I'm not blaming them for that — gung ho, let them do it! — I ask only that they get their facts straight."

Yet Mr. Rubin said he resented the Mr. McEvilley's implication that the "Primitivism in 20th Century Art" exhibition showed a condescending and even oppresive attitude toward tribal peoples.

"Letting tribal art at its very best speak loud and clear is itself a contribution," Mr. Rubin said. "We are an art museum, and we show art. You can't simultaneoulsy have a show about 'primitivism,' and an ethnological show. Art is one of the great contributions of the Third World to the cultural development of the West, and the 'Primitivism' exhibition shows it."

Peter Hofmann to Sing 'Meistersinger' at Met

Peter Hofmann, the German tenor, will return to the Metropolitan Opera this season to sing the role of Walther von Stolzing in Wagner's "Meistersinger von Nürnberg." He will replace the originally announced Edward Sooter in the performances on Feb. 22, Feb. 26 and March 2. Mr. Sooter will still sing the March 6 performance.

The cast for "Die Meistersinger" also includes Mari Anne Haeggender, in her company debut, as Eva; David Rendall as David; Dieter Weller as Beckmesser; Franz Ferdinand Nentwig as Hans Sachs, and Gwynne Howell as Pogner. The German conductor Christof Perick will also make his Met debut.

"FUNNY, FUNKY, [illegible]ING!"

"THE BREAKFAST CLUB' IS DEFINITELY THE BEST IN ITS CLASS."
-Joel Siegel, ABC TV · GOOD MORNING AMERICA

[illegible]E BREAKFAST CLUB' IS A CINEMATIC BREATH

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Advance Schedule January–February 1985
The Museum of Modern Art Bimonthly for the Press
11 West 53 Street, New York, NY 10019 (212) 708-9750

PLEASE RETAIN UNTIL THE MARCH - APRIL 1985 ISSUE

FURTHER INFORMATION ON INDIVIDUAL EXHIBITIONS IS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

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Current Exhibitions.....Page 3
What's Coming Up.....Page 4
Gallery Talks.....Page 6
Lectures.....Page 7
Ongoing.....Page 7

*****WHAT'S OPENING*****

PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

December 20, 1984–
February 12, 1985

LEE KRASNER: A RETROSPECTIVE

Totaling approximately 50 works from the years 1946-80, the exhibition is the first full retrospective of the paintings of Lee Krasner. It recognizes her achievement as a leading first-generation Abstract Expressionist and chronicles the development of a career that remained vital for more than half a century. Although Krasner's reputation has long been obscured by that of her husband, Jackson Pollock, the paintings on view proclaim the strength, individuality, and innovation of her work. Organized by Barbara Rose for The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; installed by William Rubin, Director of the Department of Painting and Sculpture, The Museum of Modern Art. (International Council Galleries, ground floor)

VIDEO

January 3–
February 26, 1985

VIDEO FROM VANCOUVER TO SAN DIEGO

A survey of the best recent work from Western Front, Vancouver; Focal Point Media, Seattle; Bay Area Video Coalition and the San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco; the Long Beach Museum of Art; and the University of California at La Jolla. Among the works to be shown are Chip Lord's Easy Living, Ilene Segalove's The Riot Tapes, and Jane Finley's I Saw Jesus in a Tortilla. (Video Gallery)

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FILM

SCREEN GEMS--FIFTEEN FILMS FROM COLUMBIA PICTURES 1930-1960

February 8-
February 28, 1985

This brief, eclectic program surveys the rise of Columbia Pictures over three decades. Organized with the cooperation of Dennis Dolf of Columbia Pictures' Non-Theatrical Division. (Roy and Niuta Titus Theater 1)

FILM

SINCLAIR LEWIS CENTENARY

February 8, 1985

In honor of the 100th anniversary of the birth of Sinclair Lewis, the Department of Film will screen William Wyler's 1936 adaptation of Dodsworth, with a screenplay by Sidney Howard, starring Walter Huston, Ruth Chatterton, and Mary Astor. (Roy and Niuta Titus Theater 2)

FILM

JOSEF FENNEKER: CINEMA POSTERS FROM BERLIN

February 14-
March 10, 1985

An exhibition of some two dozen posters by the master graphic artist Josef Fenneker (1895-1956), drawn from his most prolific period during the golden age of German silent film. These rare, original posters are on loan from the Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek. (Lobby Gallery/Titus Theater 1)

FILM

BERLIN EXILES

February 15-
March 10, 1985

A series of some dozen films, dating from 1916 to 1933, representing the work of directors, writers, actors, composers, and producers who fled Germany after the Nazi takeover, shown in conjunction with the wall exhibition JOSEF FENNEKER. Among the exiles represented in the series are Fritz Lang, Billy Wilder, Ernst Lubitsch, Dolly Haas, Conrad Veidt, and Paul Andor. (Titus Theater 2)

PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

HENRI ROUSSEAU

February 21-
June 4, 1984

Approximately 60 works by Rousseau, dating from the outset of his documented career in 1886 through his last finished work, The Dream of 1910, will be presented in this exhibition. The nucleus of HENRI ROUSSEAU is formed by the unparalleled collections of the two sponsoring institutions, The Museum of Modern Art and the Reunion des Musées Nationaux de France. Most of the paintings in the collection of the Reunion have never been seen in America. The same is true of many of the paintings on loan from important public and private collections in Switzerland, Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Japan. The exhibition has been organized by Carolyn Lanchner, Curator, Department of Painting and Sculpture, and William Rubin, Director of the Department of Painting and Sculpture, The Museum of Modern Art, and Michael Hoog, Conservateur, Musée de

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de l'Orangerie, Chargé du Palais de Tokyo, Paris.
(d'Harnoncourt Galleries, lower level)

DRAWINGS

February 28-
May 14, 1985

THE DRAWINGS OF HENRI MATISSE

This is the first comprehensive survey of the drawings of Henri Matisse ever to be presented in New York. Approximately 150 works on paper are featured, nearly a third of which have never been on public view before. The exhibition's many masterpieces, shown in combination with works only recently discovered or in collections inaccessible until now, confirm that the drawings of Henri Matisse are among the greatest in modern art. Directed for the Arts Council of Great Britain by the art historian John Golding with the assistance of Catherine Lampert of the Arts Council, in collaboration with John Elderfield, Director of The Museum of Modern Art's Department of Drawings, with the assistance of Magdalena Dabrowski, Assistant Curator in the Department of Drawings. (International Council Galleries, ground floor)

VIDEO

February 28-
March 31, 1985

VIDEO: RECENT NONFICTION

A group of new documentaries, including a profile by Ideas in Motion of the San Francisco saxaphone group Rova's tour of the Soviet Union and a discussion of the arms race by Vivian Verdon-Roe, Eric Thierman, and Ian Thierman, What About the Russians? (Video Gallery, ground floor)

*****CURRENT EXHIBITIONS*****

FILM

Through January 6, 1985

RECENT FILMS FROM WEST GERMANY

A new season of the best of Das Neue Kino, presenting works that have been made in the past two years. (Titus Theater 2)

PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

Through January 15, 1985

"PRIMITIVISM" IN 20TH CENTURY ART:
Affinity of the Tribal and the Modern

This groundbreaking exhibition brings together masterpieces of modern painting and sculpture with tribal art of Africa, Oceania, and North America, demonstrating the remarkable parallels that exist between the two. Some 150 primitivist works by Gauguin, Picasso, Matisse, Brancusi, Klee, and extending to those of contemporary artists will be presented together with over 200 tribal objects drawn from museums and collections worldwide. Organized by William Rubin, Director of

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the Department of Painting and Sculpture, in collaboration with Professor Kirk Varnedoe of New York University's Institute of Fine Arts. (d'Harnoncourt Galleries, Lower Level/West Wing; Third Floor/ East Wing; Lobby/ Garden Hall)

FILM

MICHAEL BALCON: THE PURSUIT OF BRITISH CINEMA
Part One of BRITISH FILM

Through February 5, 1985

A survey of the work of the producer whose career paralleled that of British film as a whole for four decades. The final programs in Part One of BRITISH FILM will concentrate on Balcon's post-war work at Ealing Studios and will conclude with his last production, Sammy Going South. (Titus Theater ?)

PHOTOGRAPHY

FROM THE GILMAN COLLECTION: PHOTOGRAPHS PRESERVED IN INK

Through February 26, 1985

Photographs from one of the world's distinguished private collections, and extraordinary photo-offset reproductions of these original works are displayed--original prints juxtaposed with their reproductions. Thirty two works from the Gilman Collection, including photographs by Roger Fenton, Mathew B. Brady, Edward Weston, Lewis Carroll, Constantin Brancusi, and Man Ray are on view, spanning almost 90 years of photographic history. (Edward Steichen Photography Center, 2nd floor)

*****WHAT'S COMING UP*****

FILM

SOME ACADEMY-NOMINATED FILMS

March

A program of short works (animated, live-action fiction, and documentary) and feature-length documentary works nominated by the members of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences for Oscars. (Titus Theater 1)

PHOTOGRAPHY

THE WORK OF ATGET: ANCIEN REGIME

March 14-
May 14, 1985

ANCIEN REGIME, part three of this four-part series THE WORK OF ATGET, consists of 120 photographs taken between 1901 and 1927 in the regions surrounding Paris where many of the most venerable monuments of the old French aristocracy are located. Among the relics Atget photographed were the chateaux and parks of the French kings and noble families, and in particular, the historical gardens of Versailles, Saint-Cloud, and Sceaux. As a

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group, these pictures of lyrical garden vistas, quiet reflecting pools, and enigmatic sculptural motifs form a natural counterpart to Atget's photographs of the art and architecture of Old Paris. (Edward Steichen Photography Center, 2nd floor)

PHOTOGRAPHY

March 14-
May 14, 1985

THE WORK OF ATGET: MODERN TIMES

Paris at the start of a new age is the subject of MODERN TIMES, the final exhibition in the four-part series THE WORK OF ATGET. In 117 pictures taken in the years 1898-1927, the exhibition presents photographer Eugène Atget's view of the broad center of Parisian society as it moved into the 20th century. With their emphasis on work and the working class, these pictures are far removed from the rarified reflections of France's aristocratic past in THE WORK OF ATGET: ANCIEN REGIME. (International Council Galleries, ground floor)

John Szarkowski, Director of the Department of Photography at The Museum of Modern Art, organized both exhibitions, which will be on view concurrently.

FILM

March 15-
March 22, 1985

LARISSA SHEPITKO

A series of four films by the outstanding Soviet director. One of the few women to gain prominence in the Soviet film industry, Shepitko flourished in the 1960s and 1970s and won international acclaim in 1977 with The Ascent. (Titus Theater 2)

FILM

March 15, 1985-
late 1986

BRITISH FILM--PART TWO

A comprehensive survey of nine decades of British cinema history, organized in collaboration with the National Film Archive of the British Film Institute. This section of the exhibition will cover every period and genre of British film, encompassing not only feature-length fiction but also short works, documentaries, animated films, and the avant-garde. BRITISH FILM is made possible through the support of Pearson, Goldcrest Films and Television, and Thorn EMI Screen Entertainment, with additional support provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts, and the British Council. (Titus Theater 2)

FILM

March 23, 1985

CO HOEDMAN

A program of short films by the Dutch animator, presented in co-operation with the National Film Board of Canada. (Titus Theater 2)

FILM

March 29-
April 11, 1985

NEW DIRECTORS/NEW FILMS

The 14th season of the annual spring series of discoveries, presented in collaboration with the Film Society of

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Lincoln Center. (Titus Theaters 1 and 2)

FILM — CHINA FILM WEEK

April 19-
April 25, 1985

Five films (four recent and one from the pre-revolutionary period) from the People's Republic of China. Organized by Larry Kardish, Curator of Film Exhibitions at The Museum of Modern Art, and shown in cooperation with the American Film Institute. (Titus Theater 2)

PHOTOGRAPHY — PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE COLLECTION OF PAUL F. WALTER

May-
June 1985

The exhibition will be comprised of approximately 70 photographs ranging in date from the 1840s to the 1930s. Included will be works by Atget, Brassai, Man Ray, Strand, Sudek, Sander, Nadar, Le Gray, Marville, Cameron, and Degas, among others. Organized by John Szarkowski, Director of the Department of Photography. (Edward Steichen Photography Center, 2nd floor)

DRAWINGS — KURT SCHWITTERS

June 8-
October 1, 1985

Approximately 50 assemblages, 100 collages, 15 sculptures, 20 drawings, as well as prints and examples of Schwitters' books, typography, and design work, along with documentary photographs of his environmental projects and other lost works, will be presented. This will be the first Schwitters exhibition to present works from both American and European collections, including works to be lent by the artist's son, many of which have never been seen in the U.S. Organized by John Elderfield, Director of the Department of Drawings. (International Council Galleries, ground floor)

DRAWINGS — NEW WORK ON PAPER 3: SIX AMERICANS DRAW

June 27-
September 3, 1984

These six artists, Robert Morris, Bruce Nauman, James Rosenquist, Robert Ryman, Pat Steir, and Robert Wilson, have in common the continuing avant-garde nature of their work, involving a high level of experimentation and risk taking. Of the approximately 50 works to be shown, all will be either created especially for the exhibition or be very recent works. Organized by Bernice Rose, Curator in the Department of Drawings. (d'Harnoncourt Galleries, lower floor)

*****GALLERY TALKS*****

Gallery talks are given each weekday (except Wednesday) at 12:30 and 3:00, and Thursday evenings at 5:30 and 7:00. The talks are free with Museum admission and no advance registration is required.

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Gallery talks are given by lecturers, all of whom are advanced graduate students in modern art history. Talks cover all aspects of the Museum's Permanent Collection including the galleries for Painting and Sculpture, Architecture and Design, Photography, Drawings, and Prints and Illustrated Books, as well as temporary exhibitions such as THE DRAWINGS OF HENRI MATISSE.

Although no gallery talks will be given in the "PRIMITIVISM" IN 20TH CENTURY ART exhibition, slide presentations will be held in the Education Center on this special show.

A daily listing of gallery talks topics is available at the Lobby Information Desk.

*****LECTURES*****

LECTURE — LEE KRASNER AND THE ORIGINS OF ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONISM

January 22, 1985
8:30 p.m

Barbara Rose, Curator of 20th Century Art at the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, Texas, will be giving a lecture in conjunction with the exhibition LEE KRASNER: A RETROSPECTIVE. (Titus Theater 1)

LECTURE — MATISSE

March 5, 1985
8:30 p.m.

In conjunction with the exhibition THE DRAWINGS OF HENRI MATISSE, there will be a lecture by Jack Flam, Professor of Art History, Brooklyn College. (Titus Theater 1)

LECTURE — ATGET LECTURE SERIES

March 19, 1985
March 26, 1985
April 2, 1985

In conjunction with the exhibitions THE WORK OF ATGET: ANCIEN REGIME and THE WORK OF ATGET: MODERN TIMES, a series of lectures will be held.

*****ONGOING*****

FILM — FILMS FROM THE ARCHIVE

Beginning
January 8, 1985

The return of a regularly scheduled series of screenings drawn from the Film Archive of The Museum of Modern Art. Showings will be held each Tuesday in Titus Theater 2.

FILM — A HISTORY OF FILM

Beginning
January 17, 1985

A cycle of approximately 100 programs tracing the development of the art of film. This cycle, prepared by Herbert Reynolds, focuses on the use (or avoidance) of camera movement. (Titus Theater 1)

more/

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FILM	CINEPROBE
Through June 1985	A Monday-evening forum for the independent and avant-garde filmmaker, now in its 17th season. Upcoming programs will feature Guvnor Nelson, Barbara Hammer, Roberta Cantow, Tony Buba, and Billy Woodberry. (Titus Theater 2)
FILM	WHAT'S HAPPENING
Through June 1985	The 14th season of this series of independently made films on social and political issues will henceforth be shown on Thursdays, so that the audience may take advantage of the Museum's pay-what-you-wish evening. (Titus Theater 2)
VIDEO	VIDEO VIEWPOINTS
Through June 1985	A Monday-evening series in which videomakers show and discuss their work, now in its seventh season. (Titus Theater 2)

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The Museum's collection of modern painting, sculpture, drawing, prints, architecture, design, photography, and film is the most comprehensive in the world. It offers an unrivaled review of the modern masters and movements that have made the period from about 1885 to the present one of the most varied and revolutionary in the entire history of art. The collections provide an essential background for the Museum's temporary loan exhibitions.

Museum Hours: Daily: 11:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Thursday: 11:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.
CLOSED WEDNESDAY

Museum Entrance: 11 West 53 Street

Admission Fees: Adults $4.50; Full-time students with current ID $3.00; Senior citizens $2.00; Childen under age 16 (accompanied by adult): Free; Members: Free. Thursday from 5:00 - 9:00 p.m.: Pay what you wish.

The Museum of Modern Art's exhibition program is made possible in part by public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency whose funds are recommended by the governor and appropriated by the State Legislature.

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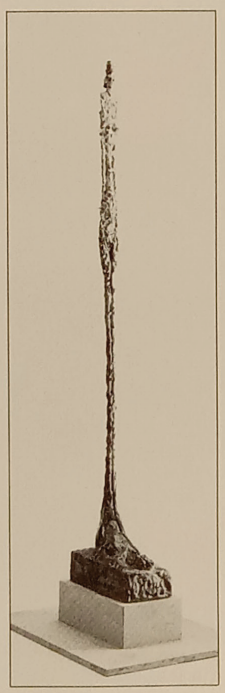
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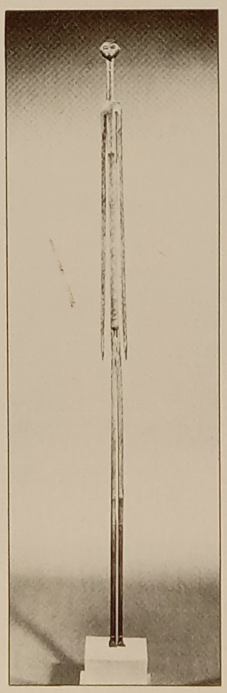
AROUND THE BLOCK

MoMA curator throws his weight against French magazine.

DROIT DE RÉPONSE

By and large, the critical response to the recent exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, "'Primitivism' in 20th Century Art: Affinity of the Tribal and the Modern," has been positive. But the very first critique of the show—which appeared in an article by Michael Peppiatt, a Paris-based English art critic, in the September, 1984 issue of the French magazine *Connaissance des Arts*—has created a seething snit on both sides of the Atlantic. Peppiatt's major criticism of the show, aimed largely at William Rubin, director of MoMA's department of painting and sculpture, was that Rubin had represented suppositions as facts. For example, writes Peppiatt, the show's catalogue states that Giacometti had "probably" seen the tall, thin figure from Nyamwezi, Tanzania against which Giacometti's *Grand Personnage* is dramatically juxtaposed. As neither this nor the existence of a possible "influence" on the modern artist has been proven, "the show suggests as an actual fact something which in reality is nothing but an 'assumption,' creating a dangerous misinterpretation," wrote Peppiatt. While Peppiatt is essentially flattering to the museum and acknowledges the importance of the show, he also indicates that it poses (rather than answers) questions: "A visitor who is not warned could accept as established facts the hypotheses that are proposed, and draw completely false conclusions." Next, Peppiatt writes that the show has "motivated a certain reservation from a great number of experts"—whom he leaves nameless. His point is not that the experts disliked the show (they hadn't seen it—it hadn't opened) but that defining circles of greater or lesser influence of primitive art was tricky. And, despite Rubin's awesome scholarship, it remains so. Okay. Peppiatt criticized a show which has since been recognized as a *succès populaire* and a *succès d'estime*.





Rubin juxtaposes Giacometti's Grand Personnage *with a figure from Nyamwezi.*

The plans for this article began long ago, when Rubin sent *Connaissance des Arts* a portion of the two-volume catalogue-to-be and various slides. Peppiatt's story, "Sujet Tabou: Exposition Risquée," was published intact, neither edited by the French magazine nor approved by the American museum.

When Rubin saw the article, the trouble began. "The article touched a raw nerve at MoMA, to say the least," remarked Robert Weiner, one of the two partners from the firm of Berger, Steingut, Weiner, Fox & Stern who handle the magazine's interests. "Because they were the only 'show' in town, I cared immensely," said Rubin. "If the same story had been in a U.S. magazine, I would have let the matter go. Many lenders and visitors made a point of expressing their horror at the article. It seemed good to propose a reply." Which he did.

"My request to rebut stemmed from the journalistic straightforwardness we had every right to

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expect," Rubin continued. "I felt it missed the point. Our French lenders took Peppiatt's article to mean we set up direct influences, one-to-one correspondences, throughout the show. . . . When they saw the show they were shocked by the misrepresentation, so I asked—I made this exceptional move—to rejoin. Here I spent five years on the exhibition, I broke my back to make observations in scholarly ways, and some fellow used the show as an excuse to say we presented suppositions as facts."

Rubin telephoned Paris and talked to Philip Jodidio, editor-in-chief of *Connaissance*, and his father, Dimitry, the president of the company which publishes the magazine. According to Jodidio père, "Rubin was screaming, ranting, and raving for the first 15 minutes. He was going to emasculate the world. He explained his outrage and demanded an answer. My son said 'Yes.'"

Rubin wrote his rebuttal in French in the small hours of the mornings the week of the show's installation and shot it off to Paris in order for it to appear in the November issue. But *Connaissance* didn't publish it. The magazine had decided that Rubin's reply, which bordered on the libelous in "any" language, according to Peter Stern, the co-counsel for *Connaissance*, did not conform to the *règle du jeu*. Under the French *droit de réponse* one taken to task in print has a legal right to space for a rebuttal, but the reply must be couched in legally acceptable language. "I didn't ask for confirmation by letter that my reply would come out," said Rubin. "In this business you take someone's word." Philip Jodidio countered, invoking the *droit de réponse*, "Rubin demanded that we run an article as long as he wished and with 14 color illustrations. The text he gave us was judged libelous. He used steamroller tactics from the beginning. We found the whole thing shocking."

Rubin believed that since the magazine had promised to publish, and he was willing to prune pure slams—and there were some good ones—from the text, the magazine had a good-faith obligation to rush the reply into print. *Connaissance des Arts*, on the other hand, legally was bound only to publish a 200-line, moderately worded reply. At first, Philip Jodidio endeavored to edit Rubin's text, but when, according to Philip Jodidio, Rubin mandated that the reply come out in its original form, Philip, at the advice of his lawyer, broke off communication.

Rubin tells it differently. "We cut the reply by 40 percent and completely removed the portion by Kirk Varnedoe [professor at NYU's Institute of Fine Arts], which was expository," he said. "Then, like that, with no warning, they broke off."

"Rubin stated that he would force the press to write about the show in a favorable way," Dimitry Jodidio insists. "We've all been threatened beyond belief. Rubin said he was going to pressure us as

Correction: *Several inaccuracies were printed on page 127 of the November 1984* ART & AUCTION, *in the preview of Sotheby's November 17 French and Continental furniture sale in New York. The tabourets consigned by Mrs. Wrightsman were painted, not giltwood. The Jean-Pierre Latz régulateur was consigned to Sotheby's London in July 1984, as was the transitional commode commissioned by Gilles Jourbert. The latter was bought in at Sotheby's London on December 9, 1982 for £75,000.*



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To The Editor:
I would like to compliment you on your article "Art Advisors, A New Profession" by Henry Korn which appeared in the October 1984 issue of your magazine. Art advising has become a serious field and I think it merits this type of media attention. I realize that it is somewhat of a departure from your usual subject matter, but I feel it was an excellent focus for your magazine.
Regina A. Trapp
New York, N.Y.

much as he could. Our French lawyer told us that this is tantamount to muzzling of the press, absolutely, which is something that the French press frowns upon." Once Rubin threatened the publication with a lawsuit, they decided not to have any further conversations and referred the matter to their French counsel.

Rubin's potentially libelous reply—entitled "L'Arroseur Arrosé," a cinematic reference to everyone getting sprayed by a garden hose ("I felt we got hosed down and he deserved hosing back," said Rubin)—is now the issue. According to Rubin, Peppiatt's article was a polemical critique that totally misrepresented the exhibition, presented facts in error and demonstrated bad faith so outrageously that the journalist's integrity was in question. And Peppiatt had seen neither the completed catalogue nor the show itself.

The lawyers for *Connaissance des Arts* insist they don't know what riled Rubin so intensely. Dimitry Jodidio, too, is puzzled. "*Entre nous* I'm curious why it's so important to Rubin. He *made* it important. He has attached such enormous significance to *us*." And whereas Rubin's lawyers say Rubin is prepared to make further changes in his reply, *Connaissance* holds to the French approach that the *réponse* should be publishable in its entirety, with no editorial changes by the magazine.

"The dispute is not over a review," says Richard Oldenburg, director of MoMA. "Bill's concern was they had all the help of advance notice and then went ahead and misrepresented the show. Then they refused to publish the rebuttal. Any curator who worked so long is angry when misrepresented. Bill may be unduly angry but the fact is that all he demanded was they publish his article. I think he was right to get the record straight, and his anger was legitimate. They encouraged him to do the piece, and dealt with him shabbily." Oldenberg added that the magazine's use of the French *droit de réponse* in all its technicality was unnecessary. "We'd have been happy to settle it in a gentlemanly fashion."

For their part, *Connaissance* seems equally as concerned with Rubin's high-handedness and arrogance as with the actual content of the reply, yet the magazine is still prepared to publish a *publishable* text. "But right now Rubin has commanded his side to sue, if required," Dimitry said. "We can't work with Rubin now—a pity." —*Jane Merrill*

AFTER HOURS AT THE GUGGENHEIM

Last October, the Art Dealers Association of America sponsored, for the third year, a series of panels, "Behind the Scenes with the New York Art World," at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum.



"Still Life with Meerschaum Pipe, Book, Mug, and Match"
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The opening next month of the vastly expanded Museum of Modern Art caps modernism's transition from vanguard to establishment.

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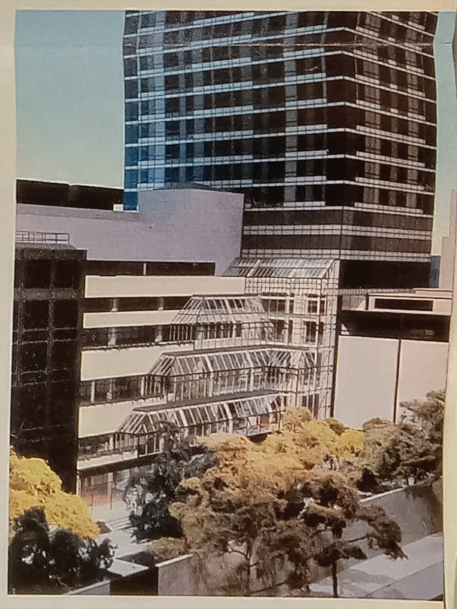
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The New MOMA

By Paul Goldberger

WHEN 7,000 PEOPLE IN FORMAL dress pushed their way through the doors of 11 West 53d Street on the evening of May 10, 1939, they were coming to inspect a brand-new building that seemed, to a great many of them, not a little odd as the home of a major cultural institution. The building, designed by Philip L. Goodwin and Edward Durell Stone, offered a stark, blunt facade of marble, translucent glass and metal to 53d Street, breaking through the ornate, textured streetscape of brownstones and Beaux-Arts town houses the way a streamlined car might burst through a row of horse-drawn carriages.

The building was the Museum of Modern Art, and its new quarters could not have symbolized its status better. The museum had been created 10 years earlier to celebrate the new, the art of the years from the late 19th century onward that, in 1939, many people still found brash, if not shocking. It had first been housed in rented space in the Heckscher Building, on Fifth Avenue, and later in a town house owned by the Rockefeller family on West 53d Street. But this building was the first erected solely for the museum's purposes. And just as the new museum building broke with the architecture of its staid neighbors, the exhibitions inside it challenged established taste in art. The museum's curators had been trying to tell people for a decade that there was a new way of seeing, and now its architects were providing the most dramatic proof of all.



Early next month, almost 45 years to the day since that May night when the museum first showed off its new home, the Museum of Modern Art will open another new building on West 53d Street, and once again the block will be clogged with thousands of elegantly dressed celebrators. But this time, the Museum of Modern Art will not be a startling and intrusive presence on a block whose other architecture seemed to symbolize the bourgeois values of old New York. Almost all of those older buildings are gone, and the new museum, housed in a structure of gray, blue and white glass designed by Cesar Pelli, runs for nearly 300 feet along the north side of the street and

Paul Goldberger is the architecture critic of The Times and the author, most recently, of "On the Rise: Architecture and Design in a Post-Modern Age."



LEFT: ANGEL FRANCO/VISION FOTOS; RIGHT: WOLFGANG HOYT/ESTO

Above, left to right: Richard E. Oldenburg, director of MOMA; Blanchette Rockefeller, the museum's president, and William S. Paley, chairman of the board of trustees, with "One (Number 31, 1950)" by Jackson Pollock. Right: Architect's model of the new garden hall.

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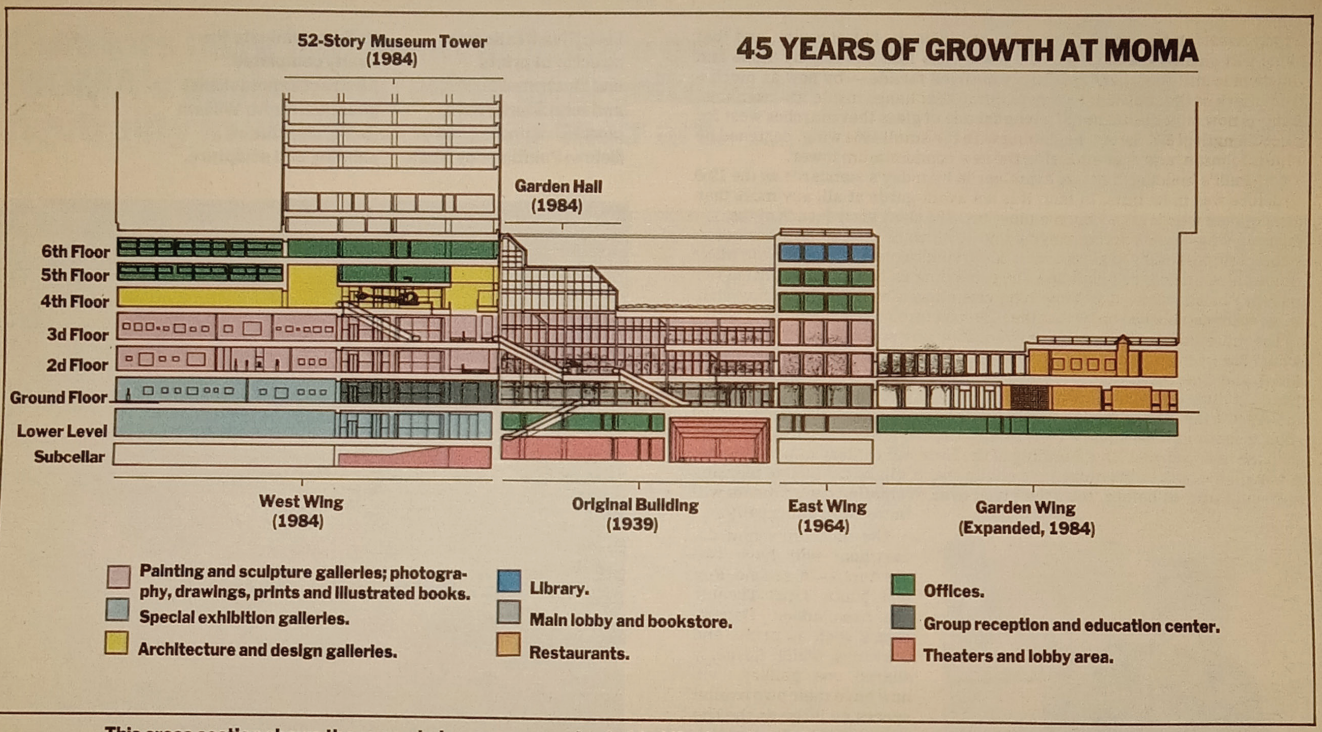


LEFT: ANGEL FRANCO/VISION FOTOS; TOP: CESAR PELLI ASSOCIATES; RIGHT: WURTS BROTHERS

While celebrating its permanent collection of masterworks from the modernist period, the museum will continue to exhibit the new.

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This cross section shows the expanded museum complex behind the facades of 53d Street. Part of the original, six-story edifice (center) has been removed to show the glass-enclosed garden hall behind it. Not shown is the north wing on 54th Street.

contains a condominium apartment tower on its roof that rises 52 stories into the sky. The Museum of Modern Art no longer muscles its way onto 53d Street; it dominates the street altogether.

The museum's new presence proclaims the triumphant success of modernism as surely as the museum's 1939 building was a sign of modernism's eagerness to do battle with the forces of the past. Now, both modern art and modern architecture have become the establishment of our culture; no longer radical, they are by many standards even conservative today, and their power to shock has become virtually nil.

As the Museum of Modern Art prepares to move into its vastly expanded new quarters, it is the protector of a tradition as much as the leader of a revolution. It is as central to the cultural life of the United States as such institutions as the Metropolitan Museum or the National Gallery of Art (a museum that is, in fact, 12 years its junior), and no one denies it a place among the great museums of the world.

But to call the Museum of Modern Art a great institution is to overlook a certain quality it has always had that sets it apart from the likes of the Metropolitan. Whether it comes from the museum's out-of-the-mainstream beginnings, or from the nature of the art within it, the Modern has always given the impression of being intimate, casual and unusually accessible. Its president, Blanchette Rockefeller, has been known to refer to it as "our little museum," and she is not trying to be ironic, any more than the museum's chairman, William S. Paley, is when he speaks of the museum in terms of "we" and "us" instead of "it." Richard E. Oldenburg, who has been director of the museum since 1972, likes to describe the Modern as "a place where you can see the whole development of the modern movement, but which you feel you can still capture, at least remotely, on a single visit."

In this sense, the Modern is like no other museum anywhere. It combines a permanent collection that is awesome in its scope — there is no collection of 20th-century painting, sculpture, drawings, prints, photography, film and artifacts of architecture and design to equal it anywhere — with a feeling of openness and ease. It is no accident that people speak of museums like the Metropolitan and the Louvre in terms of respect but of the Modern in terms of deep affection. Its Cézannes and Picassos and Braques, which so startled the museum's early visitors, have now become the way many people make their first contact with the art that they come to love the most.

All of this makes the challenge of the Modern's new building, in planning for seven years and in actual construction for five, all the more difficult. The dedication of the Museum of Modern Art's expansive new facility on May 7, and its opening to the public on May 17, are events of great importance for the cultural life not only of New York but of the world. They mark the largest, and perhaps the final, step in the gradual movement of modernism from the role of outsider in our culture to that of insider. With this large and lavish new building, all possibility that modern art could be out of the mainstream disappears.

The difficult problem facing those in charge of the museum will be to make sure that the special qualities always associated with this museum — that remarkable feeling of passion, of energy, of intimate involvement with extraordinary works of art — do not disappear at the same time. The greatest danger, then, is not just that this museum will grow old and tired, though that is part of it; it is that the qualities of greatness and intimacy, so long in balance, will no longer be able to coexist.



THE MUSEUM THAT WILL REopen next month will inevitably be a different institution from the one that was conceived 55 years ago — and even from the one that existed until 1982, when the old building closed to be renovated and joined to the new structure. For one thing, the new building, designed by Cesar Pelli & Associates along with

Left: A Bell-47D1 helicopter designed by Arthur Young being installed in the new architecture and design galleries. Right: The museum in 1939. The stark lines of the Stone and Goodwin building wedded the International Style with American picturesqueness.

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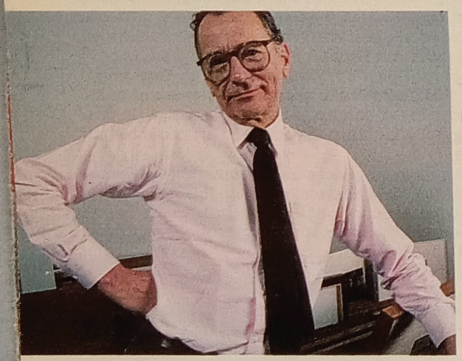
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Gruen Associates, is more than twice as big as the old museum, and that alone will change the nature of the place. The 1939 building by Stone and Goodwin is still there, and its crisply outlined facade — by now as much a trademark of the museum as any painting that hangs inside it — remains. But it is now only the anchor of a long facade of glass that marches west for a good length of 53d Street, beginning with the small 1964 wing, designed by Philip Johnson, and encompassing the new condominium tower.

Mr. Pelli's building is not as avant-garde by today's standards as the 1939 structure was in its time. In fact, it is not avant-garde at all, any more than most of the modern art within the museum. The sleek glass facade of the new museum wing and its accompanying tower, which might best be described as a compositional essay in glass panels of varying colors and sizes, on the whole exudes a contented, self-satisfied air, reminding us how big and settled this museum has become. It is something else altogether from the daring challenge to the established order that the 1939 structure represented.

The museum does not, technically, occupy any space in the tower itself, which has been constructed by a private real-estate developer, Charles H. Shaw and The DeMatteis Organization, and is legally a separate entity from the museum below it. But the new, six-story museum building, called the West Wing, is big enough to expand the total gallery area from 40,500 square feet to 87,000 square feet, giving the Modern more display space than the new and vast East Building of the National Gallery in Washington. Although the bulk of the museum's public space will be devoted to painting and sculpture, as before, the area given over to smaller departments will increase dramatically.





The museum's film department will have two theaters — a second Roy and Niuta Titus Theater has been added. Departments such as prints and drawings, which formerly shared one gallery, will now have their own exhibit spaces as large as the one they jointly occupied before. The department of architecture and design has emerged from the expansion with perhaps the richest prize of all, a two-story gallery that is nearly four times the size of its old galleries and, for the first time, contains separate sections for architecture and design. The restaurants, bookstore and lobby have grown enormously, and — probably most striking of all from the public's standpoint — escalators have been inserted into a glass structure something like a greenhouse that climbs up the back of the original museum building facing the sculpture garden.

It is only this greenhouse structure, which museum officials refer to as the garden hall, that is the really new element in Mr. Pelli's design, and the one aspect of the museum that breaks noticeably from the traditional feeling of the Museum of Modern Art. It is a startling space, and if it is different from the characteristic Museum of Modern Art interior, it is just as different from the department-store interiors that some observers feared, initially, the museum would resemble. What is most astonishing about the garden hall is the degree to which it pulls not only the museum's sculpture garden, but views of surrounding buildings, right into the museum. From high up on the glass-enclosed escalator, the University Club and the St. Regis Hotel and the new A.T.& T. building join spontaneously to make a great urban room, and the visitor feels as if he were rising right through the middle of it.

The new structure received mixed reviews when its design was made public in 1979, and more attention was given to the unusual notion of the museum's selling off its air rights for an apartment tower than to the specifics of the architecture, either of the museum's own expanded galleries or of the condominiums. The exterior of the whole complex was designed by Mr. Pelli; the interior of the condominium tower was designed by the firm of Edward Durell Stone with Jacquelin T. Robertson. But Mr. Pelli's

Left: Riva Castleman, director of prints and illustrated books, and John Szarkowski, director of photography. Below: Paintings by Mark Rothko dominate the nearly completed Abstract Expressionist galleries. Right: William Rubin, director of painting and sculpture.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANGEL FRANCO/VISION FOTOS

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Curators have had great influence over MOMA's design, fostering an architectural neutrality in which to display their art.





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design for the interior museum spaces gives every sign of managing the rather remarkable trick of feeling like the old Museum of Modern Art. It is not so much a different building as a much bigger one, extending the museum more than changing it. The galleries continue to have both their traditional strengths — they are intimate — and their traditional weaknesses — they can seem tight and convoluted.

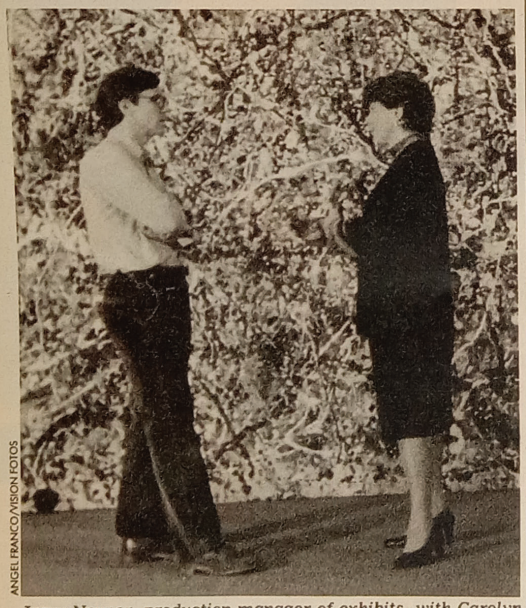
This comes partly from certain structural necessities. Since the original building at 11 West 53d Street and the 1964 addition by Philip Johnson both remain, though they have been largely rebuilt, the most logical way of adding to the museum was to maintain the existing floor heights. The ceilings are just under 12 and 14 feet, depending on the floor, which is low indeed by the standards of most museums and major public buildings. It is a height that works fine in most of the smaller galleries, where the proportions seem natural; the larger temporary-exhibition galleries, however, feel a bit low-ceilinged.

Nowhere in the new Modern is there a great expanse of open space, as there is in, say, Edward Larrabee Barnes's Dallas Museum of Art, no atrium as there is in Richard Meier's High Museum of Art in Atlanta, to mention but two of the most recent new museums built around the country. There is the garden hall, but that is there mainly to provide relief from the long procession of relatively small, enclosed galleries and not to be an architectural centerpiece.

There really is no architectural centerpiece in the new museum, as there was none in the old. That is essential to what might be called the MOMA philosophy of museum design, which is a far cry from the present trend toward giving architects wide latitude. Curators still hold much of the design power at MOMA, as they did in the old days. The Modern's curators have always chosen to see the museum's own architecture more as a neutral presence deferring to the needs of the art than as an experience in itself. So it is much more than structural requirements that keep the museum's galleries small and intimate.

"We have a particular character, an ambiance, a tradition," says William Rubin, who has been director of the department of painting and sculpture since 1972, and who has done much to set the tone the museum has taken in recent years. "We wanted a building that would be true to our character, that would feel intimate in scale and not give you the feeling that you were in a large public space.

"What is often forgotten about modern art is that it is essentially domestic in scale," he continues. "It was never intended as a collective, monumental art, as Baroque or Renaissance art was. The average size of a Delacroix is bigger than a Pollock, contrary to what



ANGEL FRANCO/VISION FOTOS

Jerry Neuner, production manager of exhibits, with Carolyn Lanchner, a curator of painting and sculpture at the museum.

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people think. So the ideal size space for showing most modern art is an apartment or a small studio, and this is what I like best about the scale of this museum — from beginning to end it permits an essentially private mode of addressing art."

Mr. Rubin and his fellow curators all profess to be happy with the new facilities. It is a truism in the museum business that every curator fights for more space, and more space is exactly what all of these curators have now been given. Typical is the comment of John Szarkowski, head of the department of photography, who says: "I feel as if I've been fighting a battle as long as Grant. But we cannot say any longer that we are handicapped by lack of space or equipment or technology — we have enough exhibit space, storage space and study space, so that our primary problem now is love, talent, energy and passion."

□

These last qualities are certainly ones the Museum of Modern Art has never lacked for. How they came to be part of the institution in the first place tells us much about the role of the museum in the life of New York, and of the likelihood that it will be able to sustain its special identity as it moves into successful and self-assured middle age.

The museum was never entirely the radical place that its early reception might suggest, for while the pictures themselves were unusual, the people behind the institution were the very essence of New York's social and cultural establishment. Abby Aldrich Rockefeller, the wife of John D. Rockefeller Jr., joined with two of her equally well-connected friends, Lizzie P. Bliss and Mary Sullivan, to found the museum. Both Nelson A. Rockefeller and John Hay Whitney occupied the museum's presidency in its early years, and today another Rockefeller, Blanchette, the widow of Abby Rockefeller's son John D. Rockefeller 3d, serves as the very active president. William S. Paley, chairman of the board, is the former CBS Inc. chairman. It is not, to say the least, an institution of outsiders and never has been.

"The ladies," as Mrs. Rockefeller, Miss Bliss and Mrs. Sullivan were known, were all collectors of modern art in a time when such works were considered a bit outrageous for anyone to bother with, let alone women of high social standing. Mrs. Rockefeller kept her pieces secreted away on a high floor of the West 54th Street town house she shared with her husband, who was most unsympathetic to modern art; there she retreated, often with her children, to contemplate the works of Georgia O'Keeffe, Charles Burchfield and others that she enjoyed more than her husband's European paintings and Oriental objects that filled the main rooms of the house.

Miss Bliss, whom the author Russell Lynes described as "a shy woman with no airs and graces, complex within, yet natural without," was an heiress to a textile fortune. She lived in a Park Avenue penthouse decorated mostly with traditional furniture, but she was a deep believer in contemporary art. After the Armory Show of 1913, the first major exhibition of modern art in New York, she began actively purchasing paintings. By 1929, when she joined with Mrs. Rockefeller and Mrs. Sullivan to found the museum, she had assembled what was probably the finest collection of modern paintings in New York — a group of Picassos, Cézannes, Matisses and Seurats that years later was to form the core of the Modern's permanent collection. Mrs. Sullivan, the wife of a successful lawyer, had been following the avant-garde art scene in Europe since the beginning of the century and, like Miss Bliss, had assembled an impressive collection in the years following the Armory Show.

The three women were acting as much in the spirit of noblesse oblige as anything else — they believed deeply in the postimpressionist and cubist art that had been produced in Europe over the previous decades, and they were disturbed that it was so little appreciated in New York. They were less interested in shocking the New York art world than in bringing some enlightenment to it. And they went about their mission with determination.

They quickly enlisted a man none of them had met, A. Conger Goodyear, an industrialist who lived in Buffalo and in New York. They had heard he was forced out of the presidency of the Albright Gallery in Buffalo because his fellow trustees refused to exhibit modern art. And to round out the founding committee, they gathered Paul J. Sachs, a distinguished professor of art history at Harvard who was a member of the founding family of the Goldman, Sachs investment bank-

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ing house; Frank Crowninshield, the editor of the magazine Vanity Fair, and Josephine Boardman Crane, a philanthropist who had helped found the Dalton School. It was the sort of group that, in the New York of the late 1920's, seemed able to do anything.

What really shaped the museum, however, was not this group but the first employee they hired — Alfred H. Barr Jr., a professor of art history at Wellesley who was not yet 30 years old. Mr. Barr was a serious scholar, but he cast his net wide; he was interested not only in art that had proven itself over time, but in the latest work on the freshest canvases. He was also deeply interested in architecture, "industrial art" — the design of objects — theater, music and film. His vision of the museum posited a place that would celebrate all the arts of the 20th century and their effect on daily life. He saw no contradiction between the museum's role as a showcase for the very newest things and as a guardian of the greatest works that had been produced over the length of the modern period.

Mr. Barr was the museum's first director, a post he held until 1943, when he and the museum's then president, Stephen C. Clark Jr., had a falling-out over what Clark considered the radical nature of some of Mr. Barr's esthetic choices. It was a dispute that might be considered the first sign that the museum had already begun to take on a slight tinge of the academy. It was Clark's belief that the art of the museum's early years, the paintings by the likes of Matisse and Picasso *that formed the core of the permanent collection, possessed a dignity that some of the new works* Mr. Barr was putting on exhibit lacked; he could not abide the continued enthusiasm for the new that Mr. Barr displayed. Barr eventually won.

Though he never got his title back, he returned as curator of the museum's collections, a position he held until his retirement in 1967, and his power over the museum remained considerable. Clark, for his part, grew more distant from the museum, and when he died in 1960, he left it not a single painting from his impressive collection.

So it was the combination of Barr's passionate vision of the museum as a scholarly, but avant-garde, institution and the financial and social backing of a board of trustees of impeccable credentials that gave the museum its early success. In this sense, the Museum of Modern Art was like no other major cultural institution in New York. Most institutions as committed to the vanguard have been the product not of a group but of a single benefactor's vision, as the Whitney Museum was Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney's and the Guggenheim Museum was Solomon W. Guggenheim's. And most institutions as well-tied to the city's social structure have been fundamentally conservative, like the Metropolitan Museum or the Metropolitan Opera. The Museum of Modern Art fit into neither of these categories: Its founders were a group that was characterized by a remarkable balance between devotion to the new on the one hand and connections to the city's established lines of power on the other.

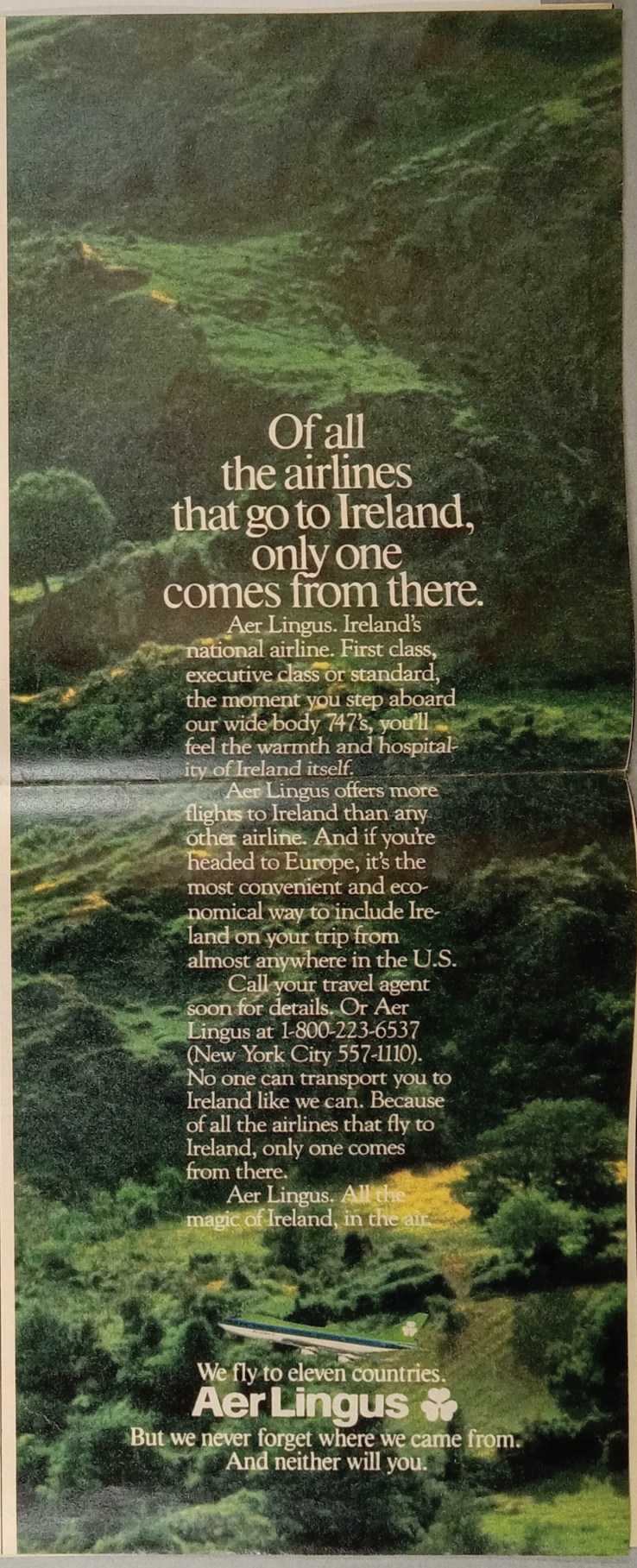
If this odd mix of avant-garde and establishment temperaments gave the Modern its basic direction, the museum's 1939 building by Stone and Goodwin played a crucial supporting role. Not only were the building's stark lines and strong presence an important symbol of the seriousness with which the museum's founders viewed modern art, but the art was there, right up close, in rooms that might have been more austere than those at home, but not necessarily bigger, and certainly not intimidating.

Not that the 1939 building was the product of indifference toward architecture. Far from it. The museum's trustees were well aware that the Modern's exhibition of 1932, "Modern Architecture: International Style," organized by Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson, had been a powerful polemic in favor of European modernist architecture, and they had no intention of stepping off their own bandwagon. But neither were Alfred Barr nor the trustees particularly comfortable with the idea of enlisting most of the modern masters whose work they had showed so admiringly — in large part because they feared losing control of their own building. Mr. Barr did hope that the trustees would consider inviting Mies van der Rohe to design a facade for the museum, but, in the end, a very different partnership was arranged — *between Philip Goodwin, a middle-of-the-road architect who was a member of the museum's board, and Edward Durell Stone, a young architect suggested by Nelson Rockefeller who had worked on the interiors of Radio City Music Hall and had a decided sympathy toward modern design.*

The result was a building that gave everyone more or less what he wanted. The facade was a sleek composition that stood as a clear enough symbol of the International Style to look, to untrained eyes, like a factory. But the style's European rigor was actually softened with more than a bit of American picturesqueness. The facade was topped by a cornice with a series of round holes, and its base sported a marquee with a swooping curve that prefigured the form of a 1950's coffee table.

It was a happy coincidence that the International Style, even in this relatively diluted form, yielded fairly neutral interior spaces, reducing the potential for clashes between the demands of architecture and the demands of art — to make a good International Style building was to make simple, straightforward interiors. To make, in other words, just the sort of building Alfred Barr had hoped for. He placed the sculpture in the garden behind the building and masterminded the gallery layouts. His influence over the building process was so substantial that he was able to persuade the trustees to abandon the original plan to use white marble for the entire fa-

(Continued on Page 68)



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MOMA

Continued from Page 49

cade and use instead a translucent white glass that would allow light into the galleries — a material that ultimately let in too much light and had to have a solid wall placed behind it.

□

The visitor to the new and rebuilt Museum of Modern Art will enter from more or less the same point on West 53d Street as before; but from the front door on, it will be clear that much has changed. The lobby is now so much bigger than it was in its 1964 renovation by Philip Johnson that it seems to sprawl like an airport concourse, albeit an unusually well-detailed one. The gray granite that characterized the old lobby is still there, this time played against pale woods — a gesture, of sorts, to the recent fashion of softer materials. Most important, however, is the fact that the lobby will lead directly into the garden hall at the rear of the original building, and thus will bring a view of the sculpture garden right into the lobby.

Circulation was primarily vertical in the old museum, thanks to a pair of congested and slow-moving elevators. The escalators in the garden hall will mean that most movement through the building will now be more pleasant — visitors will glide up through the glass enclosure, with a view of the outdoor sculpture garden and the city on one side and the indoor galleries on the other.

Most of the second and third floors of the main building will be devoted to 800 works from the museum's permanent collection of painting and sculpture, which Mr. Rubin has arranged in roughly chronological fashion, moving clockwise on the second floor and counterclockwise on the third. Numerous works that have been in the permanent collection but not on display will be shown for the first time, including paintings left to the museum in 1979 by Nelson Rockefeller and many of the classic works of modern art with which the museum has long been identified — Monet's "Water Lilies" triptych, Cézanne's "The Bather," Mondrian's "Broadway Boogie-Woogie," Picasso's "Les Demoiselles d'Avignon."

There will be rooms devoted entirely to the work of both Brancusi and Matisse, including a gallery that will contain "The Swimming Pool," the Matisse cutout that has been shown rarely. Most of the rooms will be painted white and will contain a gray carpet nearly identical to the carpet that for years covered the floors of the museum's galleries, though visitors with good memories will note that the new carpet has a slight touch of blue in it and is a bit crisper in tone.

The galleries containing more contemporary works, beginning with the period following Abstract Expressionism, will have a wood floor instead of carpeting, and the sequence will culminate in the only large interior space other than the garden hall — a huge gallery that fills the third floor of the 1964 Johnson wing, which had formerly been chopped up with partitions. This space, so close to the proportions of a loft that one expects to see a view of Broome Street or West Broadway outside the large plate-glass windows, will be an ideal home for recent, large-scale works.

The tone will be altogether different in the drawings galleries, also on the third floor, whose inward-looking rooms will be lined with linen. John Elderfield, head of the department of drawings, who describes his galleries as "a kind of artificial, extended living room," says he very much sought a sense of enclosure: "I feel comfortable looking at art not only when there is a wall in front of me, but a wall behind me." The drawings on exhibit — among them Braque's "Clarinet" and Seurat's "Stone Breakers, Le Raincy" — will change frequently, in part because even these expanded facilities can house but a fraction of the museum's holdings, and in part because the drawings must be protected from continuous exposure to light.

Prints and illustrated books, Riva Castleman's department, will be displayed in the north wing. There will be a linen-lined section for older prints and a white-walled gallery for contemporary works. The works here range in style from Toulouse-Lautrec's "The Seated Clowness" to Jasper Johns's "Ale Cans." The prints sequence will open with a vestibulelike room that will show illustrated books.

The photography galleries, which will also be in the north wing, will consist of seven rooms, each devoted to a chronological period; photographs such as Man Ray's "Nude" and Berenice Abbott's "The Daily News Building" will be hung. But to act as a counterpoint to the formal wall hangings, Mr. Szarkowski has designed standing vitrines that will contain more casual groupings of photographs that can be changed frequently. "It is the kind of thing we always wanted to do and couldn't until now," he says. "I love the idea that our regular customers will be able to come every month and see something different. I think it is important that just because we have two and a half times the space we used to, we do not simply do two and a half times the same thing we did before."

The architecture gallery, which was completed a short while ahead of the rest of the display space in the new museum, was dedicated on April 3 to Philip Johnson, whose name has been intimately associated with the museum for years, first as the director of its department of architecture and design and later as a donor, trustee and museum architect. Mr. Johnson was rather more public than he might have been expected to be in expressing his unhappiness that his fellow trustees decided not to commission him to do the design of the new museum buildings in 1979, and went instead to an architect who had had no prior connection with the museum. It is generally thought that the decision to name the architecture gallery in his honor was intended as a sort of peace offering.

In any event, it is an unusual room that now carries Mr. Johnson's name — a space roughly 50 feet square, with a gray tile floor in the center surrounded by a banquette, outside of which is a gray-carpeted perimeter walkway. A pair of gently gurgling fountains provides a continuous background sound, and there are speakers set into the wall for occasional recorded music. It is less a conventional gallery than an expression of the taste of Arthur Drexler, the head of the department of architecture and design, who seemed intent on creating a room that would give the collection a presence that would distinguish it from the other museum departments.

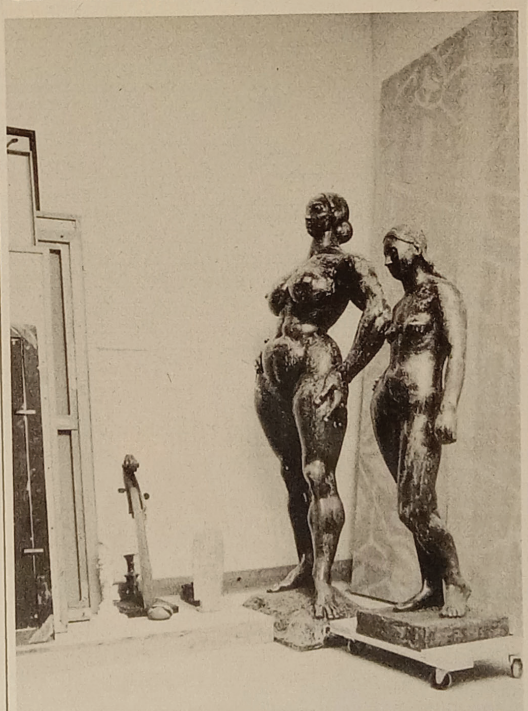
The architecture and design department's suite is reached from a vestibule at the top of the escalator, over which hangs a Bell helicopter, a new acquisition that gives a tour of the design collection a surprisingly technological beginning. The Johnson Gallery contains examples from the museum's collection of architectural models in its tiled central area, including the architecture and design department's new prize — a remarkable model, built especially for the new gallery, of Fallingwater, the great Frank Lloyd Wright house in Bear Run, Pa., of 1936. The model is brilliantly crafted and includes everything but a real waterfall — although the background noise of the small fountains seems to take care of that.

Around the perimeter is a selection of drawings that ranges from familiar pieces by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Le Corbusier to recent drawings by Michael Graves, Aldo Rossi and John Hejduk. Wrapping around the Johnson Gallery will be the new Philip Goodwin Gallery, the room containing the museum's collection of furniture and objects that, as in its smaller incarnation in the old building, was named for the museum's original architect.

□

Given the determination of the museum to follow its tradition and allow its curators a major say in the building's design, it is not surprising that in choosing an architect the trustees said no, not only to Philip Johnson, but also to Richard Meier and Romaldo Giurgola, to name two architects who were given serious consideration. But it would be wrong to think that Mr. Pelli, who is the dean of the school of architecture at Yale and also has the now-rising group of skyscrapers at Battery Park City to his credit, was chosen as an architect who would not exercise a strong hand. However deferential Mr. Pelli was to the wishes of the curators, he has left his mark on the Museum of Modern Art in a manner far more conspicuous than any of his predecessor

Paintings and sculptures are arranged in chronological fashion on the second and third floors.



"Standing Woman," by Gaston Lachaise, left, and "Freya," by Gerhard Marcks, await placement in new sculpture spaces.

ADAM BARTOS

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architects. For Mr. Pelli has not only given shape and form to the exterior, it is he who performed the major conceptual task of reorganizing all of the museum's internal spaces.

The effect of all this is a subtle, but powerful, change. The museum was formerly a medium-size building that faced 53d Street and had a pleasant backyard. Now, thanks to the creation of the garden hall and to the relocation of the museum's restaurants at the east end of the sculpture garden, it is a U-shape complex that is oriented toward 54th Street and the sculpture garden. Fifty-third Street, though it is still the formal front door, is really now the museum's back. Its front is its own exquisite garden, with the view across the street to the eclectic and gracious architecture of 54th Street — a streetscape very much like the one that 53d Street itself presented before the museum grew so big.

Mr. Pelli's exterior is equally important, though not the certain success that the new orientation of the building is. For some years, Mr. Pelli has been concerned with using the forms of modern architecture toward more picturesque ends than they were put to previously, and he is particularly interested in creating abstract compositions in colored glass. The facades of the museum and of the apartment tower are set in a pattern of Mr. Pelli's design that looks something like a gargantuan Mondrian.

The idea of extending and commenting on modern architecture, which is essentially what is being done here, is a logical enough thing for the Museum of Modern Art to be doing at this moment in history. It is, after all, more or less what the museum likes to think of itself as doing from a curatorial point of view. And what were the architectural alternatives? It would have been impossible to have tried to create a modern building in precisely the spirit of the 1939 building. To have gone in the other direction, breaking away from modernism altogether and following the current trend toward historical revival, would have resulted in a structure at the cutting edge in the 1980's. But for the Modern to inhabit a building with the mock-classical sensibility of current postmodernism would have yielded an institutional symbol that would have been schizophrenic at best, foolish at worst. Plenty of architects are working in what the writer Charles Jencks has called "late modernism," an attempt to evolve a less stark, more varied style out of modernist sleekness, and it seems reasonable enough for the museum to have selected an architect allied with that approach.

But the result of Mr. Pelli's work as it stands amid its midtown neighbors is rather more bland and dull than one might have expected, particularly given the panache of much of his other work. The gray, blue and whitish colors of the glass, chosen in part to be compatible with the metal and limestone of so many New York skyscrapers, are so similar to each other that the variation and abstract pattern that were supposed to bring such life to these exteriors are hardly visible at all.

The whole complex, from the museum facade all the way up the 52 floors of the tower, reads as neutral more than anything else, and it looks not a lot different from numerous skyscapers of less ambition. The small setbacks at the top give a hint of 1930's profile to the tower, but they do nothing to enliven the new building from the street. Ironically, the spruced-up facade of the original 1939 building is the freshest part of the 53d Street facade right now; it still radiates a kind of pent-up, committed energy that the new sections cannot seem to equal.

Critics of the museum's expansion took considerable issue with the decision to build a midblock tower in the first place. Though the museum's 1939 building was not an official city landmark, it is respected as one, and the museum's decision to alter it with so enormous an addition caused no small stir in the city's architectural circles. Particularly at a time when public pressure against more midtown Manhattan construction was mounting, it seemed inappropriate for the



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of these extremes. He wanted the museum to span the entire history and scope of the modern movement, and to be active both as a collector of new art and as an exhibitor of more established works of modernism. Indeed, it was Barr's belief that one of the greatest roles the permanent collection could fulfill would be to provide a kind of artistic context within which newer works could be seen and judged.

That is essentially the view that the museum's staff and curators continue to maintain. "The museum has an obligation to the whole history of the modern movement," says Richard Oldenburg, who sees no contradiction between the museum's roles as a keeper of the old and an exhibitor of the new. "That movement was 50 years old when the museum was founded, and that did not make the new work being produced in the 20's and 30's less important. Now modernism is 100 years old, and the obligation is the same."

It is with this in mind that the museum has mounted a show called "An International Survey of Recent Painting and Sculpture," organized by Kynaston McShine, the senior curator of painting and sculpture. From next month's opening through August, it will fill the temporary exhibition galleries in the basement and first floor with 150 new works of art on loan from 16 countries. It is a clear bid to stay current and to provide a counterpoint to the now-classic works that will occupy the new permanent galleries on the upper floors.

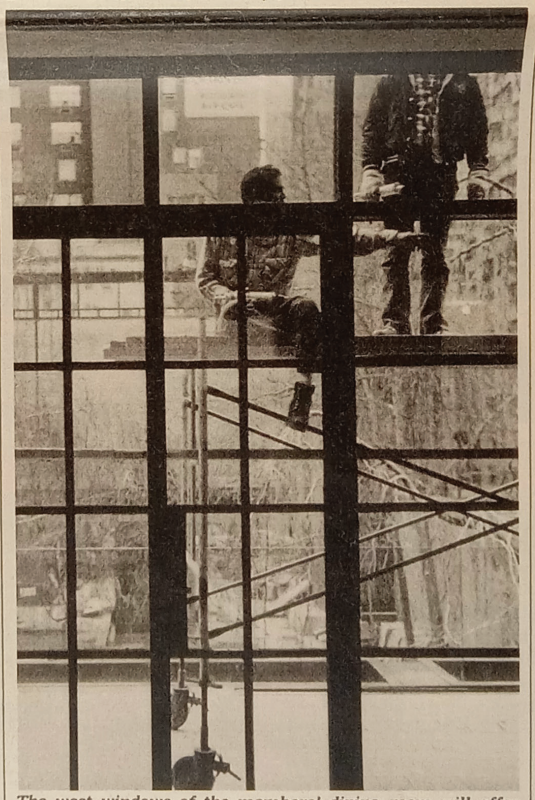
But for all the good intentions of this exhibition, it cannot have the meaning of the museum's epoch-making early shows. However much contemporary work may be a part of the overall development of modernism, the sense of urgency of modernism has passed, not only that of the modernism of the 1920's, but even of the Abstract Expressionism of the 1950's. The idea of modern art is no longer a new and radical thing, and that is the great difference between this moment and the earlier phases of the museum's history. The art is new, but the idea of newness is no longer new at all. Indeed, it is all about us — there are dozens of museums and galleries in New York showing the very latest art, as opposed to the museum's early years, when it stood alone as the only place in the city devoted to the new.

For some time now, the Modern has been an essentially conservative institution, and that is bound to continue. The spirit behind epoch-making exhibitions of a previous MOMA has been replaced with an attitude that more resembles the connoisseurship of older museums. The painting and sculpture department, for example, is planning a future exhibition on the theme of the influence of primitive art on modernism. The architecture department is looking ahead to exhibitions of the furniture of Alvar Aalto and the buildings of Mies van der Rohe, all of which are important but far from breaking new ground.

What is striking, however, is how little public objection there seems to be today to the museum's basic conservatism — indeed, how much this conservative strain seems to respond to a need at this moment. Art seems to have lost the urgent quest for an overt social purpose that led, 10 or 15 years ago, to calls to transform museums into more "relevant" institutions. Today there seems to be more contentment with the notion of the museum as a storehouse of cultural treasures — *a position that the MOMA of today is clearly happy to occupy.*

And, as the works in the permanent collection that will always form the heart of the museum become icons of our culture, they are less and less the sharp, powerful statements they once were. Modernism is now all about us; there are more modern paintings, more other museums, more modern objects than any of the museum's founders could have envisioned in 1929. The museum that enshrines these icons for us is inevitably going to appear to be a somewhat conservative force in a postmodern time. So the Museum of Modern Art is in some ways a victim of its own success.

The age in which modernism would become a fully accepted part of the culture — an age its founders claimed to hope for but may well have believed would never arrive — has in fact come. The most difficult problem facing the Modern right now is not whether to think of itself as new or old, current or passé, but to provide an environment that will continue to stimulate, and thus prevent the great works that it possesses from ever appearing quaint. ■

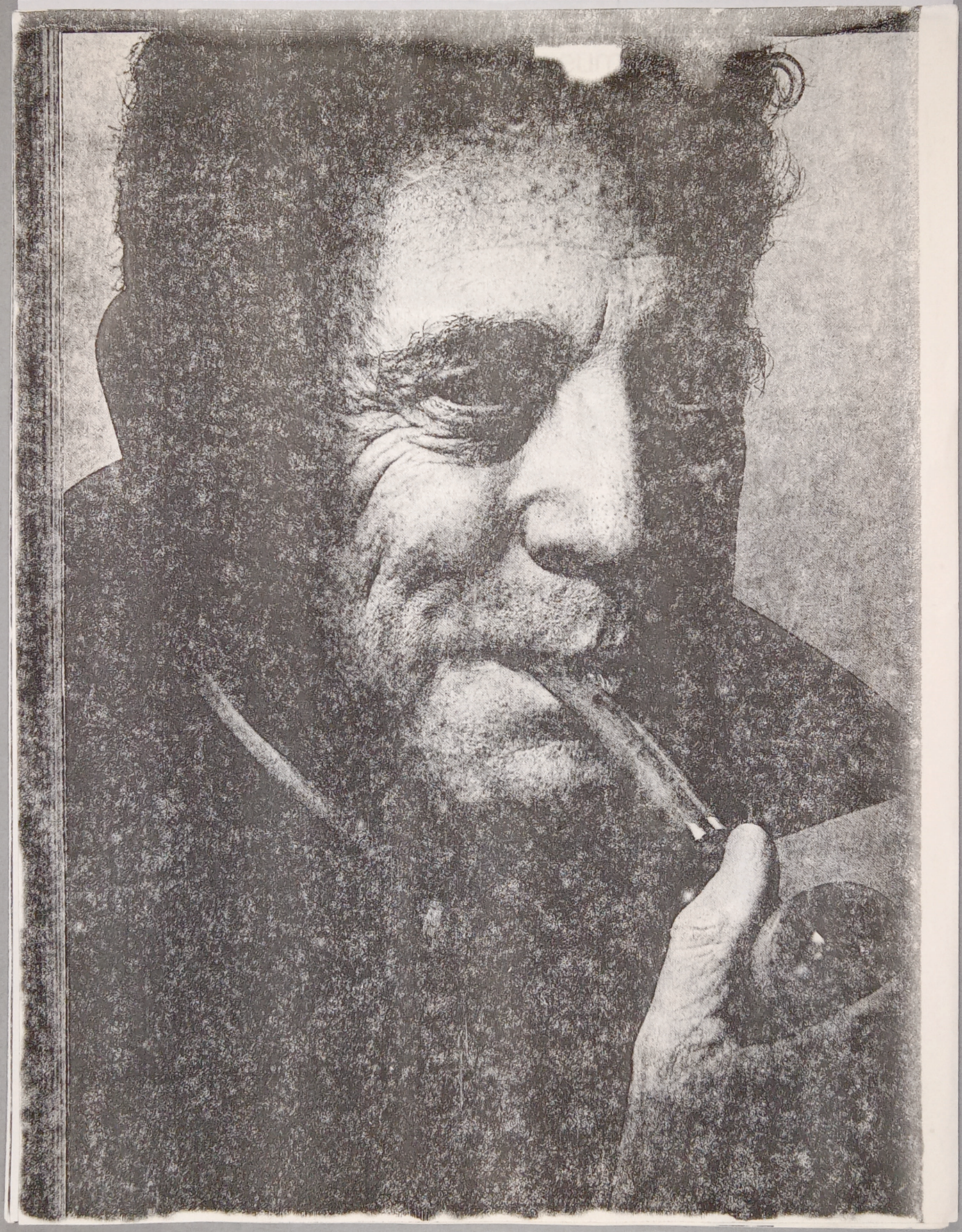


The west windows of the members' dining room will offer a good view of the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden.

ANGEL FRANCO/MISION FOTOS

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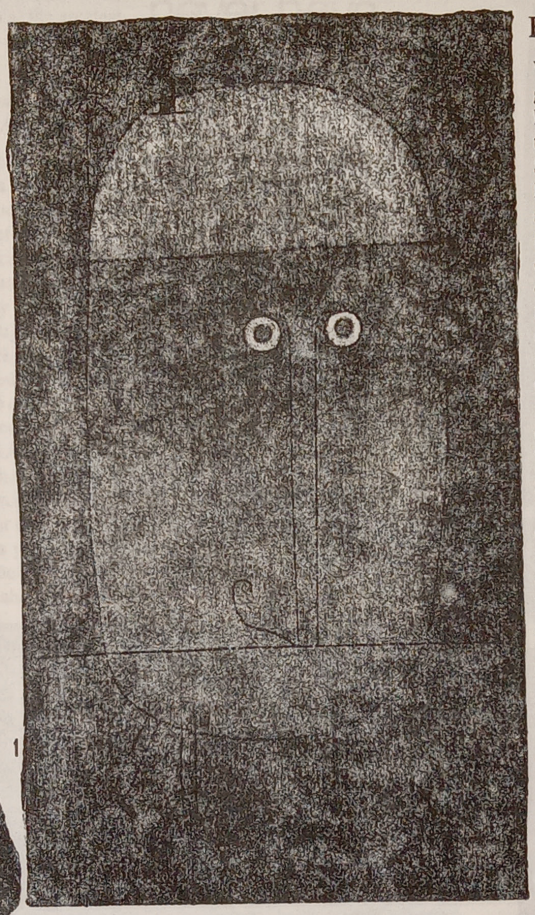


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At NYC's Museum of Modern Art, William Rubin detects the uncanny affinities between primitive and modern works



BY BARBARA ROSE

When brilliant, energetic, aggressive art historian William Rubin took the job of director of the Department of Painting and Sculpture at NYC's Museum of Modern Art in 1973, he assumed the crucial role of curating the museum's permanent collection—a task that had occupied Alfred Barr's entire lifetime. Barr, MoMA's first and only director until his retirement in 1967, had codified the various "isms" of the European modern movements in a series of encyclopedic shows and catalogues, defining modernism for generations to come. Like Barr, Rubin has a definite conception of the mainstream of modern art. His imminent blockbuster exhibition, *"Primitivism" in Twentieth-Century Art: Affinity of the Tribal and the Modern,* brings modernism full circle: back to its origins, early in the century, in the discovery of tribal art and forward to the present involvement of contemporary artists with the issues of personal myth, shamanism, and deliberately "uncivilized" modes of expression. Daring, thought-provoking, and timely the show is sure *(Continued)*

the man from moma

"Tribal art was the most important non-Western influence on the history of twentieth-century art," says William Rubin, opposite. He holds that Paul Klee's "Mask of Fear" (1), a 1932 oil on burlap in the collection of The Museum of Modern Art, was influenced by a befeathered painted-wood figure of a Zuni war god (2), made in Arizona or New Mexico. The Zuni figure has been in Berlin's Museum für Völkerkunde since 1880, and Klee might have seen it there on a visit between 1906 and 1930.

Penn

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Rubin: "I could never have prepared the Primitivism show had I not begun to collect African art years ago and lived with it"

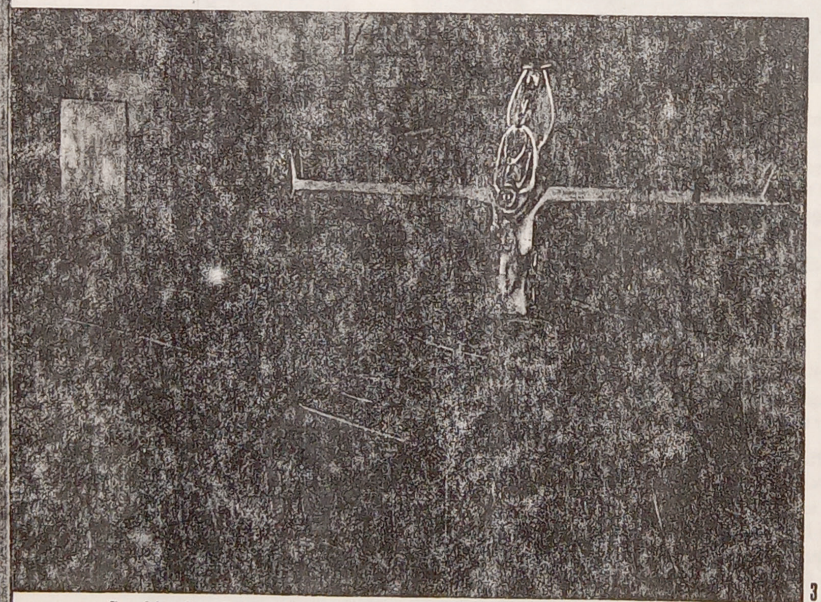
(Continued) to cause lively controversy.

In this interview with Barbara Rose, Rubin speaks of MoMA's past, present, and potential future—whose direction he is certain to have a powerful hand in shaping. He talks of his decisions, his personal taste, and his conception of MoMA as the greatest repository for the art of this century in the world.

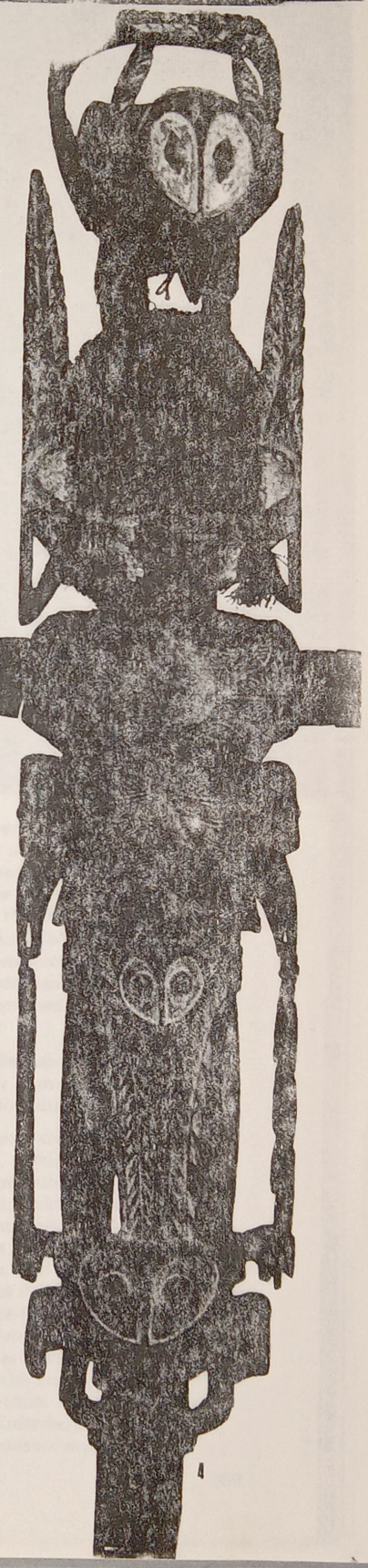
Barbara Rose: *How did your association with the Museum of Modern Art begin?*

William Rubin: Late in 1966, I was invited to curate an exhibition on Surrealism, which ended up as *Dada, Surrealism and their Heritage*. Some time before that exhibition opened, Alfred Barr called me into his office. He told me then that he felt very good about my "eye" and my art-historical writing, and that even though he didn't agree 100 percent with my choices among younger painters, he wanted me to take over the responsibility for the collection. In 1959, I had written an article called "Younger American Artists," published in *Art International*, and Alfred felt that the group I chose to discuss held up extremely well. I wrote about Jasper Johns, for example; he had only been showing for a year. I mentioned Frank Stella—it was before his first one-man show. I also wrote about Richard Stankiewicz, Robert Rauschenberg, Morris Louis, Kenneth Noland, Helen Frankenthaler, Ellsworth Kelly, Jack Youngerman, and Joan Mitchell as important up-and-coming artists. As I look back on that list, I feel proud of my choices. In any case, Alfred made me his choice for the job of curating the MoMA collection he had formed.

I had come to MoMA as a guest curator,



3



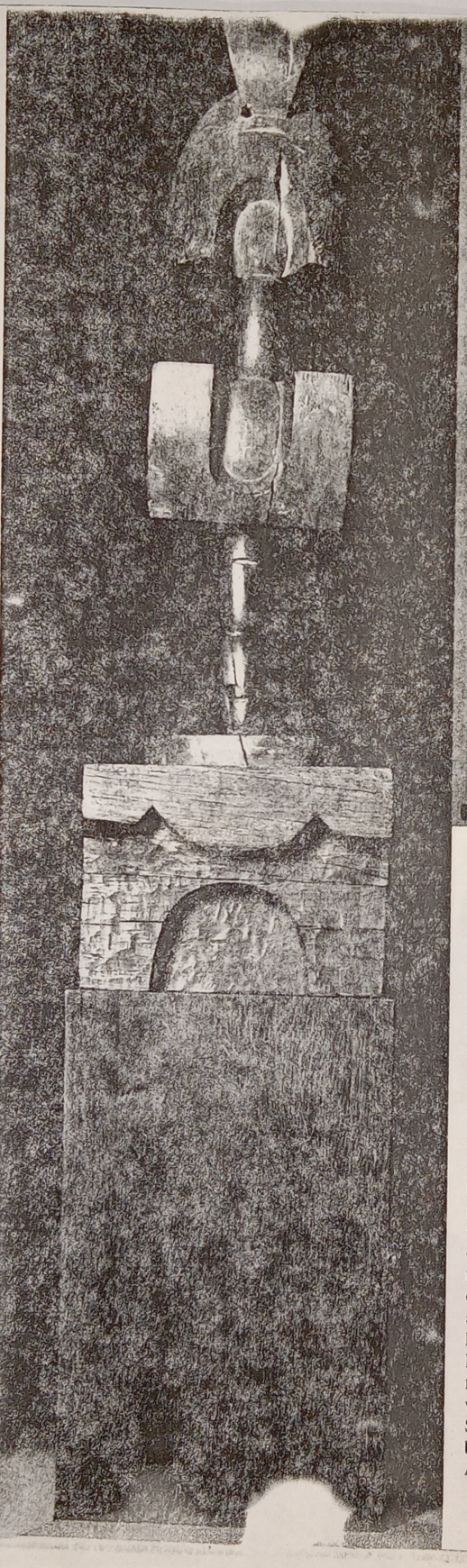
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Surrealist painter Matta avidly collected Oceanic art, similar to this wood Malanggan figure (4) from New Ireland, an island in the West Pacific. In his essay, Rubin points out parallels between such carvings and the elongated openwork anatomy of the figure in Matta's "A Grave Situation" (3), a 1946 oil.

(3) Promised gift to the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, from the Mary and Earle Ludgin Collection; (4) Collection of Serge Brignoni, Bern; (5), (6) Private collection

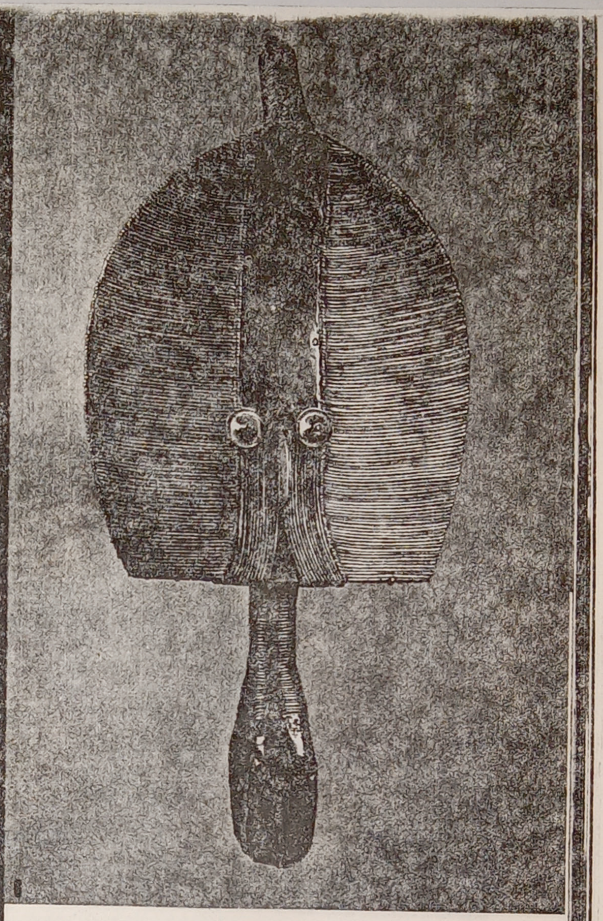
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Many art historians have noted parallels between Constantin Brancusi's reductivist sculptures and African art, but most believe that he never adapted specific forms from Negro sculpture. By contrast, Rubin asserts that the shape of the head and the elongated neck in Brancusi's "Madame L.R." (5), a 1914-18 work in carved wood, derive from Hongwe reliquary figures such as this wood, brass, and copper piece (6) from Gabon.



having spent sixteen very happy years as an art history professor at Sarah Lawrence College and in the graduate school of the City University of New York; I had just begun some teaching at New York University's Institute of Fine Arts. Though it meant sacrificing two life-tenure professorships, I could not refuse Alfred Barr's offer—although I had never envisioned working in a museum.

BR: *I'd like to talk a little about the notion of connoisseurship. Is connoisseurship of contemporary art really possible?*

WR: It's very difficult to choose well instantaneously, that is, as things happen. I grew up with the generation of artists I wrote about. As I said, I think my choices of that time hold up very well. I would like to believe I still can make comparable choices. But, whereas I felt very strongly about the generation of Pollock and Rothko, and about the color-field painters, and Minimalist, and certain Pop artists, my feelings simply aren't as intense about what went on beginning with conceptual art. Subsequently, I saw artists I liked much better, such as Susan Rothenberg and Alice Aycock. I think we *(Continued on page 361)*

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(Continued from page 359) bought one of the first museum pictures by Rothenberg. Since I haven't had as much passion for what has happened since conceptual art, I have been perfectly willing to focus my attention on the historical shows.

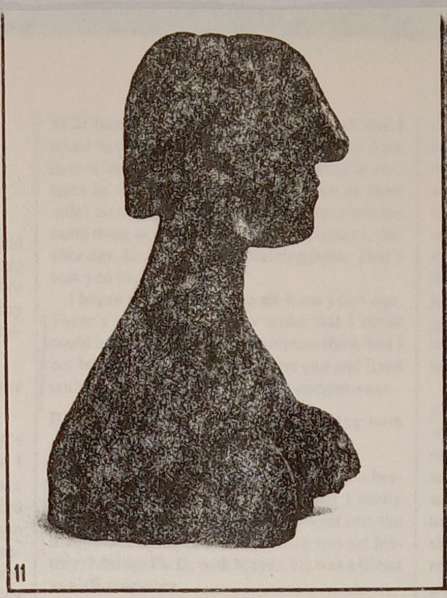
BR: *What has MoMA collected in recent art?*

WR: Our contemporary holdings have been largely invisible. We don't have the space to show new art in depth because this museum's collection covers one hundred years of art. Since the "outer edge" is, after all, covered widely by hundreds of galleries in this city, and by other museums—I can't quite see taking down the Picassos, Kandinskys, the Pollocks and the Johnses to show very new art in depth. Because we have the only synoptic, reasonably complete collection of modern art in the world, I think we have an obligation to make it visible—and to do so in a better way than we have in the past. Our new space permits us, for example, to show the early work of the Abstract Expressionists—of which we have great examples that have never previously been in our galleries. Also, many bequests have come to us in recent years from Nelson Rockefeller, James Thrall Soby, and others—great twentieth-century masterpieces that have never been shown as part of the collection.

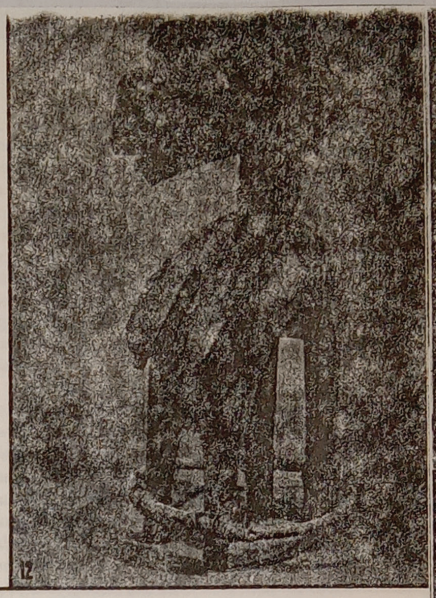
The mature work of the Abstract Expressionists is now visible in some depth. Previously we showed two Rothkos; we are now showing five. Where we had two Newmans, we now have four. This is the first chance to see the "American Renaissance," as I like to think of it, in its full splendor on a permanent basis.

BR: *What are the earliest and latest objects in the new installation?*

WR: The first works will certainly be the Cézannes of the late 1880s and early 1890s, such as the "Bather." The last quarter of the space is devoted to the (Continued on page 416)



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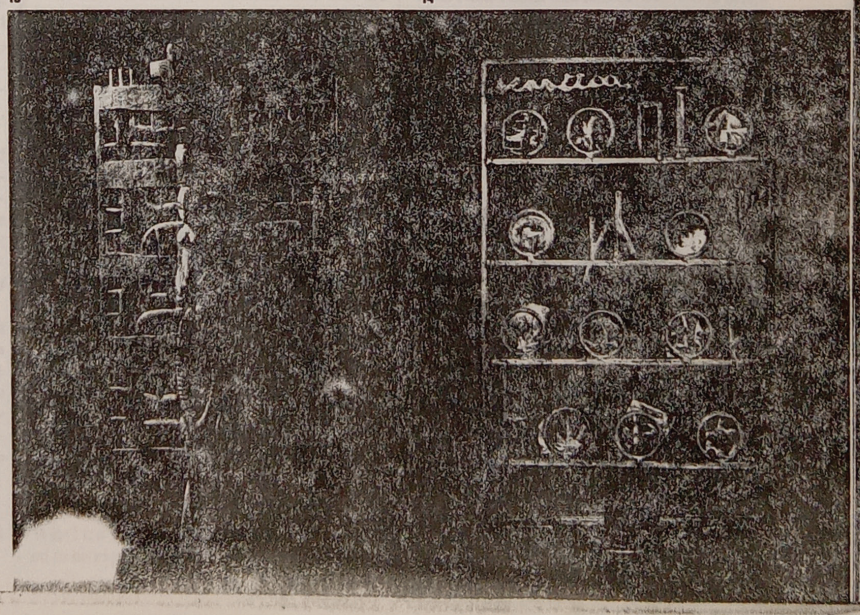
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Picasso's "Bust of a Woman" (11), a 1931 bronze, was influenced by the wood-and-fiber Nimba mask (12), from Guinea in West Africa, owned by the artist. Picasso probably acquired the mask in Paris during the late 'twenties, and he held onto it all his life. According to Rubin, the "salient nose, and large prominent breasts would have certainly reminded Picasso" of his mistress of that era Marie-Thérèse Walter, also the model for "Girl before a Mirror" (8).

There is no direct influence between the Senufo wood headdress (13) from the Ivory Coast, and David Smith's "The Letter" (14), a 1950 welded bronze. One of Rubin's examples of an "affinity," each work is distinguished by its openwork, see-through structure.

Some art historians look for art objects to illustrate their ideas. I prefer to start with the object, and see where that leads me"

13 14



Picasso's "Girl before a Mirror" (8), a 1932 oil, suggests a correspondence with a Kwakiutl mask (7) from British Columbia. Both have profiles that evoke a psychological duality. "Picasso could almost certainly never have seen a 'sliced' mask" such as this one, Rubin says, but it "points up the affinity of his poetic thought" to the myths that the tribal object illustrates. Rubin sees another, more macabre affinity between Emil Nolde's "Still Life of Masks, I" (9), and a human trophy head (10) from Brazil. Nolde may have seen the head on a visit to Berlin.

(8) The Museum of Modern Art, New York City; (9) Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri; (7), (10), (13) Museum für Völkerkunde, Berlin (11), (12), Musée Picasso, Paris; (14) Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute, Utica, NY

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MAN FROM MOMA

(Continued from page 361)

decades following Abstract Expressionism and is intended to be re-hung every three months so as to give more artists a shot at being seen. We also hope to do a certain number of temporary shows of contemporary art drawn from the collection to show certain tendencies in depth.

BR: *Do you have a sense of a mission? I sense you do.*

WR: What had been accomplished by MoMA's "founding fathers" was so extraordinary that I wanted both to extend it into time and to make certain "corrections" which I felt were called for. For example, MoMA was the first museum to buy a Pollock, and while the Abstract Expressionist generation was better represented here than anywhere else, those painters were in fact far from adequately represented. I made a big push in this area between 1967 and 1970.

We bought the very large Pollock called "One," the black painting named "Echo," and the transitional one, "Shimmering Substance." I went to Mark Rothko and got my choice of any eight pictures from out of all his work—at home, in the studio, and in the warehouse. We also got gifts from Gottlieb, Newman, Motherwell, Ad Reinhardt's widow, Rita, and others. We also bought first-rate works by Kline, Gorky and others, thus building up the Abstract Expressionism collection immensely.

I would say that four out of five Abstract Expressionist pictures hanging in the new galleries would have been purchased since I joined the museum. That was the major revision.

BR: *I have heard you say you feel Abstract Expressionism is the greatest moment in art.*

WR: To me, that had to be put on the same level as the first Cubist period, 1908 to 1914. Alfred never quite adjusted to treating American artists on the same level that he treated Europeans. David Smith, for example, was particularly, I thought, poorly represented. I tried to make up for that in part by giving "Australia" to the museum. The museum had a chance to buy "Australia" for a very low price some years earlier, but didn't.

There were of course other things that Alfred *did* try to get, but didn't manage to, such as Picasso's construction sculptures. In this connection, we were able to get the "Guitar" and the big linear piece in the garden. I was trying to put the finishing touches—and some additional perspective—on the incredible accomplishment of Alfred's generation in launching the collection.

Launching something is always the hardest thing. It's much easier to come in and say, this and this and this is out of kilter; let's rearrange that, and so forth. But I don't think that I ever had the feeling that I wanted to change the basic attitudes or style. My conception of art history is basically, in museological terms, similar to Alfred's.

BR: *Before you were a curator of the collection, you collected art. Do you think that collecting is important in developing an eye?*

WR: Immensely important. I don't think that I could have done whatever kind of job I've done here without having collected. Looking at pictures in museums, walking past them at three miles an hour, or in galleries, is simply not the same thing as sitting and staring at pictures, day after day, hour after hour. Draining them. That's how you build your eye.

I began to collect African art some years ago. There's no question in my mind that I never could have prepared the *Primitivism* show had I not begun to collect that art years ago and lived with it. You have to dig in, make comparisons.

BR: *Can you talk about your training with Meyer Schapiro?*

WR: My original ambition was to be an orchestral conductor. I finally realized that I really couldn't be a great conductor so I went into the thing that I loved next best, which was art history. I did my Ph.D. with Meyer. He was a friend as well as teacher.

Meyer, teaching, had the most perfect balance of interest in history and iconography with "eye" and connoisseurship: he was the perfect mentor. I never cease getting insights into things which are, in a certain sense, extrapolations of insights that Meyer had given us in those years. Like Meyer, my first commitment is to the object as an artistic object, but I'm fascinated and interested in all the other implications of it.

What interests me most, however, is simply the emotive quality of works of art. I start from that and spread out from there to all of the ideas—some of them poetic, some of them historical—that follow from that.

I think there are some art historians who are basically cultural historians, who look for art objects to illustrate their ideas. I prefer to start with the art object, and see where that leads me.

BR: *As a curator, what are your proudest moments?*

WR: Even though temporary shows can be very exciting—the late work of Cézanne, the big Picasso show, the Stella retrospective—for me the lasting contribution is the further formation of the collection. It is an anonymous activity. Nobody will know who brought these things to the museum, any more than young people today know whether it was Alfred Barr or Jim Sweeney or Jim Soby who brought this or that object in the early days. Unlike a book—or even a show—it doesn't have your name on it. But I feel good knowing that the great Pollocks, certain Picassos and Mirós, such as "The Birth of the World"—objects I personally searched out and acquired—are in the collection. These are the things that count, because they're the lasting ones.

BR: *Tell me about your primitivism show.*

WR: I felt that primitivism was a topic that needed to be explored. In fact, I think that, of all the crucial topics in the history of modern art, it has been the least explored, and for understandable reasons—since one needs to know something about tribal as well as modern art. It has the least literature, and nobody has ever done a big show on this subject. So I thought it would be worth exploring. It's a risky show. It's much riskier than Cézanne or Picasso. One has seen these objects separately, but they've never been put together. It's a test of relationships that may or may not prove impressive when we bring everything together.

The show is divided into four parts. The first part is called "Concepts." By juxtaposing works, we're going to deal with certain ideas and interrelationships involving tribal and modern art—such as the difference between an influence and an affinity. The second part is called "History." There, we will give a thumbnail historical sketch of the direct influence of tribal on modern art. The third part, "Affinities," is a big mix of gorgeous modern and tribal work; here we're not proposing any direct linkage but emphasizing an underlying set of common denominators, which one hopes will give a sense of the kinship between primitive and modern art. The last part, "Contemporary Explorations," is what one might consider conceptual primitivism, that is, earthworks, shamanistic paratheater, environments, etc.—work by younger artists, who are, broadly speaking, associated with the idea of primitivism but do not relate to it on an object-to-object basis.

> Primitivism—it's a risky show, much riskier than Cézanne or Picasso. It's a test of relationships that may not prove impressive

BR: *To what do you attribute the resurgence of interest in primitive art?*

WR: I don't think that interest ever really disappeared because the Surrealists carried it into the 'fifties.

BR: *Yes, but it seems greater today than it has for forty or fifty years.*

WR: I suppose that's true. The involvement with primitive art has something to do with a sense of crisis, and also with a sense of a broad need to renew the tradition. If there is a radical break within the history of modernism, it takes place in the last fifteen years, when you shift into earthworks and other kinds of things that don't belong to the same history that links Monet and, let us say, Pollock. Wherever you have a break like that, there is always a searching for new roots, and inevitably you look backwards as well as forwards.

People look back now in the same way that they did in the turn-of-the-century break that led to the "Demoiselles d'Avignon"; in the primitivism of that work, Picasso was looking backwards and forwards at the same time. I think that for the last fifteen years we have been in—and are in now—one of those periods of break and transition. That is why the current exhibition is so apposite. ▽

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ARTnews MAY 1984

The New MoMA

The reopening this month of the Museum of Modern Art marks the culmination of the most ambitious expansion in its history. When the museum first opened its doors, in 1929, it was a stronghold of modernism in a city that was still culturally provincial compared to the great capitals of Europe. Today, thanks in large part to the museum's influence, New York is the center of the art world.

MoMA has been successful beyond the dreams of its founders, but that success creates problems as well as opportunities. For the visitor, the expanded museum will offer twice as much gallery space, more special exhibitions, enhanced film and video programs and improved study facilities. But for its leaders, the expansion has brought basic questions into focus about the role of their institution in an era that has embraced the ideals the museum was founded to disseminate. In the following interviews, the director and key staff members of the new Museum of Modern Art reflect on these and other matters.

A New Era?

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Director MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Richard Oldenburg

'Faced with the choice between a director who runs a marvelous program and gets great acquisitions but still winds up with a deficit and a director who runs a tight ship with a balanced budget but has programs of no distinction and an unremarkable collection, I don't think anyone would choose the latter'

Milton Esterow: Tell us how you see the new Museum of Modern Art.

Richard Oldenburg: That's a rather large question to begin with. I've been living with the idea of expanding the museum for a very long time. The need for it was recognized early on in my tenure as director of the museum; in fact, it was recognized long before that. When I became director in 1972, one of the main problems for the immediate future was how we were going to get space for a number of things—for the collections, for temporary exhibitions, for people to move around the museum. Of course all of this was being realized at a point when we also had severe money problems supporting the facilities we had. Out of all the discussion came a very complex plan that made it possible for us to expand the facilities as well as create some new income sources that would help to carry them. The present excitement, of course, comes from the fact that after so many years at it, we're finally seeing the change come to pass. It's exhilarating . . . a little frightening. But I think it's going to work out very well.

We struggled with the plans for the building, consulted with all the departments and services and made the best compromises we could. The fact that it has worked out quite fairly is, I think, evident. Each curatorial department has just about doubled its space; in some cases, even better than that. We've improved the back-room facilities for most departments and also the visitor amenities.

ME: Have you equalized some of the disparities between departments in terms of gallery space?

RO: One example of inequality was the situation of the drawings department and the prints and illustrated books department, which, unlike other departments of the museum, had to share a single gallery space. Now each department has its own space, and each space is larger than the combined area was before.

In the old museum, if you went into the painting and sculpture galleries, you were lucky if you penetrated to the back and found the photography and prints and drawings galleries on one floor and architecture and design on the other. It really wasn't very clear that those other departments existed, much less how they related to each other.

The way the new circulation is set up, it's very clear. For example, you come up on the landing of the second floor and to your right is the photography section. Similarly, on the next floor, on the right is prints and illustrated books, and on the left is drawings. Painting and sculpture will have a separate entrance. And the equivalent new space for the film department is an additional theater, plus a large gallery area outside the theater where we can have film-related shows. And the video program will have better facilities.

The big challenge now is how to use the spaces we've created. We're in a temporary lull at this point, having achieved the initial goal of building the new museum. But the real purpose of the change is in what we do with the new facilities. That's why I'm not looking forward to an easier time; far from it—I think it will be much harder now because expectations will be higher and excuses fewer.

ME: What are the expectations for the new museum? Will there be a different philosophy to go along with the new building?

Milton Esterow is editor and publisher of ARTnews. *Sylvia Hochfield is managing editor of* ARTnews.

INTERVIEWED BY MILTON ESTEROW AND SYLVIA HOCHFIELD

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RO: There will be a lot of changes, but whether they will add up to one large philosophical difference I can't say and I rather doubt. I suppose it's some sort of tribute to this museum that people are always asking us questions they don't ask other museums. Does anyone really say to the Metropolitan, "You just covered half of Central Park with your expansions; what's your new philosophy?" People expect a lot of this museum. They expect us to come up with some kind of completely new definition because of the expansion. In my mind, to continue to be a very great museum, to do the things you've done very well even better, is not such a bad thing.

It seems that the perceptions of this museum will continue to be somewhat special, reflecting specific shows or programs that have formed a record that has built up this museum's reputation and garnered respect. Our challenge is to maintain that record and keep the standards as high as they have been. That doesn't necessarily mean that we should declare a totally new course. I don't know of other museums doing that, and I don't think we're that much smarter than anyone else to be able to predict what's going to be the new thrust of the museum for the next 25 or 50 years.

ME: What, then, do you see as the goals of the museum?

RO: I think that the museum's overall obligation is dual—one, an obligation to survey the history of modernism, and two, a responsibility to the present and future, to decide what's important now and how modernism's history is being re-formed.

With the larger museum, we will certainly be in a better position to balance those obligations rather than to go for an either/or situation, which used to be the case in all the galleries. In the temporary-exhibition galleries we could do only a few shows at a time, highlighting one or the other aspect, either historical or contemporary. And in the collection galleries, where we needed all the space we could get, more and more of it was being taken up by the classic works of the collections, particularly as promised gifts were received. There was little room left for contemporary work.

Now we've eased the problem, but it's only a matter of degree since as our collections grow—and we expect them to continue to grow— there will always be a need for more space. It's not something we can solve perfectly.

But now we'll have the opportunity to do a lot of new things. The architecture and design gallery, for instance, has been restructured. For the first time we will have an architecture gallery, where we expect to have on permanent view drawings and models from the architectural collection. Up to now, we had very rarely even shown them. We would also like the the galleries to become a center not only for showing works from the collection but also for seminars or other intellectual activities that could cluster around the particular aspect of the architecture and design being displayed.

ME: What are some of the shows in the works, aside from the ones we know of—Kynaston McShine's show of international painting and sculpture and William Rubin's major show on primitivism?

RO: In photography there will be a big retrospective, up to the most recent work, of Irving Penn. We'll have a Lee Krasner show, a Richard Serra show, a Rousseau retrospective, an exhibition of Matisse drawings, a Schwitters retrospective, another in the "New Work on Paper" series in the drawings department, a British film retrospective. Further along we have a Morris Louis show and a Mies van der Rohe centennial. There've been a lot of shows backing up since we've been going through this period of a reduced schedule. I'm not even mentioning a lot of the smaller shows, of course, that will be taking place. I think it's a pretty rich schedule, one that shows the kind of balance I've been talking about—a balance of various mediums and a range of time, spanning both recent work and historical overviews.

Sylvia Hochfield: Will there be any more museumwide shows like the Picasso show?

RO: I would doubt it, but less because of a strict policy than because it's hard to think of anything that would necessitate or justify that kind of show. We now have a much larger temporary-exhibition space so we could hold a very large show, if we wanted to devote all of the space to it, which we are in fact doing with our opening show.

In theory, I suppose, we could someday have a show that would require additional space taken from the collection galleries, but it's highly unlikely. It's certainly hard to think of a single artist who could warrant that kind of attention. It would be an awfully big show, and sometimes I think exhibitions are better off when they're more selective.

The Picasso show came about from a very special combination of events. Not only was there the possibility of getting those loans before the Picasso Museum was set up, there was also the fact that since we were changing the museum so radically anyway it was possible to justify making the adjustments necessary to show the Picassos.

ME: Are you planning new programs for educating or orienting visitors?

RO: Yes. We now have a special "education center" where we'll be able to receive groups—schoolchildren, adult groups, senior citizens, whatever—and give them some kind of preparation for what they're going to see. And we're experimenting with various other things. Just to throw out one of the ideas that are still being worked on, we hope to use a very brief video newsreel to orient visitors to what's going on, to provide background and preparation. If we were having a show of a living artist, perhaps we would include a short interview. But we don't want to spend too much time preparing people for what they want to see; we want to present what they want to see as soon as possible.

Another thing we're working out is a system of self-guiding materials, possibly individual cards on individual works of art that could be assembled in various groupings. If you wanted to take a tour, for example, of Cubist works, you could use one set of cards, or if you wanted to see Picasso or compare different movements you could use another set. You could put together a self-guided tour.

ME: Would these cards be in place of extended labels?

RO: Well, yes. And this relates to a greater issue. A lot of things in the museum, like the prejudice against written texts in the galleries, will remain exactly as they've always been because of the philosophy of the museum. We would like to have as little text as possible, and preferably before you enter the gallery rather than once you're inside.

On the other hand, we have to recognize that people really want some kind of system to plot their way, so we have to offer that, and I think that's fine. Sure, we all hope that the cards will be read at home before or after looking at the art, but even if viewers read them as they guide themselves through the galleries, that creates involvement with the work. I don't mean to single this out as any particularly important aspect. It's one of a lot of things we could do.

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ME: In thinking about serving the visitor, I'm sure you and your staff addressed the issue of cultural consumerism, the problem of visitors thronging to huge shows like the Picasso exhibition here or the Manet exhibition at the Metropolitan.

RO: I think that's something that worries all of us, but some of that worry seems to be based on a fallacy. There's almost a kind of guilt or embarrassment when a show is a huge success, though a successful show isn't necessarily a bad thing. We all know there are good blockbusters and bad blockbusters. The kind of show that we've always taken pride in and that I would like to see us continue doing is the kind that gives you something that you'll never see again, either because it draws together works from disparate places or because it makes an important esthetic point or provides an art-historical insight.

Everyone wonders what the visitor takes away from that kind of show. I'm convinced that in many cases they take away more than people think. I certainly felt that with the Picasso show. Admittedly, a lot of viewers were lured to the show because the artist was a most glamorous, successful figure. But I was amazed at the number of people who really seemed to get much more out of it. Many said they now understood the style of Picasso's art better than they ever had, and I'm talking about people who are not sophisticated at all. We reached people on other levels too—artists, for instance, who thanked us because they had been given the opportunity to see the work in a completely new context and thus assemble a different understanding. That was true of the show of Cézanne's late works also. But when you have a big show with thousands of people coming through there is a danger that some of them are coming because it's the thing to do, the show to see.

It seems to me that the museums have a responsibility to help visitors get whatever they can out of viewing shows. In all the discussion of I. M. Pei's pyramidal entrance for the Louvre in Paris, forgetting the relative merits or weaknesses of the architect's design, what has emerged is the necessity of responding to the hordes of people who go there. That's not something you can shove aside. One of the biggest problems in helping people to get the most out of a show like the recent Manet exhibition is to control the crowding. When we had the Picasso show, we could have let a lot more people in if we had completely sacrificed the idea that anyone should be able to see anything. But we limited the crowds by saying that we just couldn't take any more people on a given day.

More important, though, than what people get or don't get out of these blockbuster shows is the question of the distortion of the meaning of museums. The attention given to these shows builds the expectation that you go to a museum only when there's a special event rather than to renew contact with the collection and to achieve some understanding of what the works mean.

I would like to see the museums themselves put a greater emphasis on their collections, or at least more than they've been putting on special exhibitions. I think that policy will eventually come to be a financial necessity.

ME: Do you have any projections for the number of people who will be coming to the new Modern? Will it be substantially different from the number of visitors in recent years?

RO: Putting aside the special effects of something like the Picasso show, in a year when the shows were fairly strong in the old museum we would have as many as 1,250,000 or 1,300,000 people. It doesn't seem unreasonable to think that the new museum may attract at least a million and a half people a year, and even more for special shows.

One of the things that has a great effect on that is the tourism in New York. The museum is certainly one of *the* places you visit when you come to New York, which is not the least of the reasons we had to expand. There were days even in an ordinary weekend when we would have to say, "Sorry, we just can't let any more people into the museum." This happened often enough that it was a serious problem. And it probably would have happened even more if we had been more adamant about not allowing the galleries to get too crowded.

ME: As for your role in the new museum, do you see certain difficulties as being inherent in the position of museum director?

RO: It's not an easy profession because the expectations are very high and often unreasonable. That's even more true in some institutions that are smaller than the Modern where the director is asked to be absolutely everything—chief curator, fundraiser, trustee coordinator, staff administrator. This is simply not possible, no matter how gifted the individual. I think that's what gets directors in trouble: they can't perform all of those roles.

ME: Some people think the greatest danger in museums is trustees who look over the shoulders of curators. Do you agree?

RO: No, although it is *a* danger. By tradition it seems that the Modern has been remarkably free of that kind of interaction because of the great authority of figures like [former directors] Alfred Barr and René d'Harnoncourt. When trustees don't have that much confidence in the museum directors or curators, I think they tend to be more difficult. But it's certainly true that some trustees are extremely knowledgeable about collecting and are qualified to look over the curators' shoulders.

I think a greater danger is the changing perspective of trustees as the philanthropic pattern gradually erodes and disappears. There are now more and more people with a business background who feel that although they are not competent in the art field, what they have to contribute to museums is the expertise that brought them to the top in their world. Unfortunately those talents are not necessarily the ones needed to make a great museum. The more you emphasize the bottom line, the financial matters, the more you put at risk the purposes of the museum.

You obviously expect responsible and efficient management, with as little wastefulness and stupidity as possible. But faced with the choice between a director who runs a marvelous program and gets great acquisitions for the museum but still winds up with a deficit that has to be covered by the trustees, and a director who runs a tight ship with a balanced budget but has programs of no distinction and an unremarkable collection, I don't think anyone would choose the latter.

ME: What do you see as the greatest threat from within the profession? We hear, for example, about a shortage of people to run museums and to head curatorial departments.

RO: There is a continuing contrast between the purely curatorial museum person and the purely administrative. The insulting thing to a lot of very talented people is the implication that they can't be both. It seems to me that most top directors in the country are excellent art historians as well as good administrators. It's difficult for a curator who

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loves art, who has become an expert, who gets exhilaration out of dealing with art, to become the director of a museum or even to assume the chairmanship of a department without sacrificing some curatorial time to administrative work, which is certainly less exciting.

In the old days many people made that sacrifice simply because directors tended to be much better paid than the curatorial people. But as curators are becoming better paid, I think you'll find quite a few of them making the choice to become chief curator and take care of the collections and the exhibitions rather than run the place as director and worry about finances.

ME: With the opening of the museum imminent, what kind of response to the expansion have you gotten from people around the world?

RO: We seem to have gotten the most interest in the apartment tower and the enormous scope of the expansion. But it has been mostly an expression of great curiosity about and admiration for the innovative aspect of it all—although a number of European observers have had a great deal of difficulty understanding the concept of air rights.

SH: What would the museum have done if the tower had not been approved?

RO: That's a good question. We were taking quite a risk with that plan. In fact, we actually started digging the hole for the construction while we were still meeting with various boards, before we had the final contract. We used to comfort ourselves by saying that we would fill the hole up with all the lawyers if the project didn't go through. Had the tower not been approved, I think it highly unlikely that we would have been able to build anywhere near the amount of additional space that we now have. It probably would have been another patch job to see us through a few more years. Also it would have been extremely hard to raise as much money as we did the other way.

ME: How much time do you have just to look at art, without having to worry about how much it's going to cost to insure, how many walls will have to be torn down, how many curators will have to be consulted and so on?

RO: Not as much as I would like. I try to keep in contact by going to galleries and above all to openings at other museums, although we all know that openings are probably the worst time to actually look at art. The works I spend the most time on are those in this museum. One of the real luxuries of working in a museum is being able to wander around your own galleries or special shows when they aren't crowded.

One of the biggest frustrations of this whole expansion period has been that we've had so little on view; some of my favorite works I haven't seen for quite a while. What all of us are looking forward to is just seeing the pictures back in the galleries. We have such a marvelous collection, and it's going to look even better in the larger space. It's going to be quite something. ■

Director PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

William Rubin

'We are a museum of modern art, not a museum of contemporary art. Our role is to be true to a hundred years of modernism'

Sylvia Hochfield: What is the role of the Museum of Modern Art in an age when contemporary art is on view in dozens of galleries and alternative spaces?

William Rubin: It's true that the number of places that show contemporary art is growing very rapidly. It's impossible for anyone now to cover the scene. I think we all remember when on a Saturday and maybe one other day in the week you could get a good sense of what was going on by visiting ten or 12 galleries. Today that's just a drop in the bucket of the activity. I think that the role not simply of this museum but of all museums is to confront this tremendous and eclectic mass and try to make some judgments, to filter out certain kinds of things.

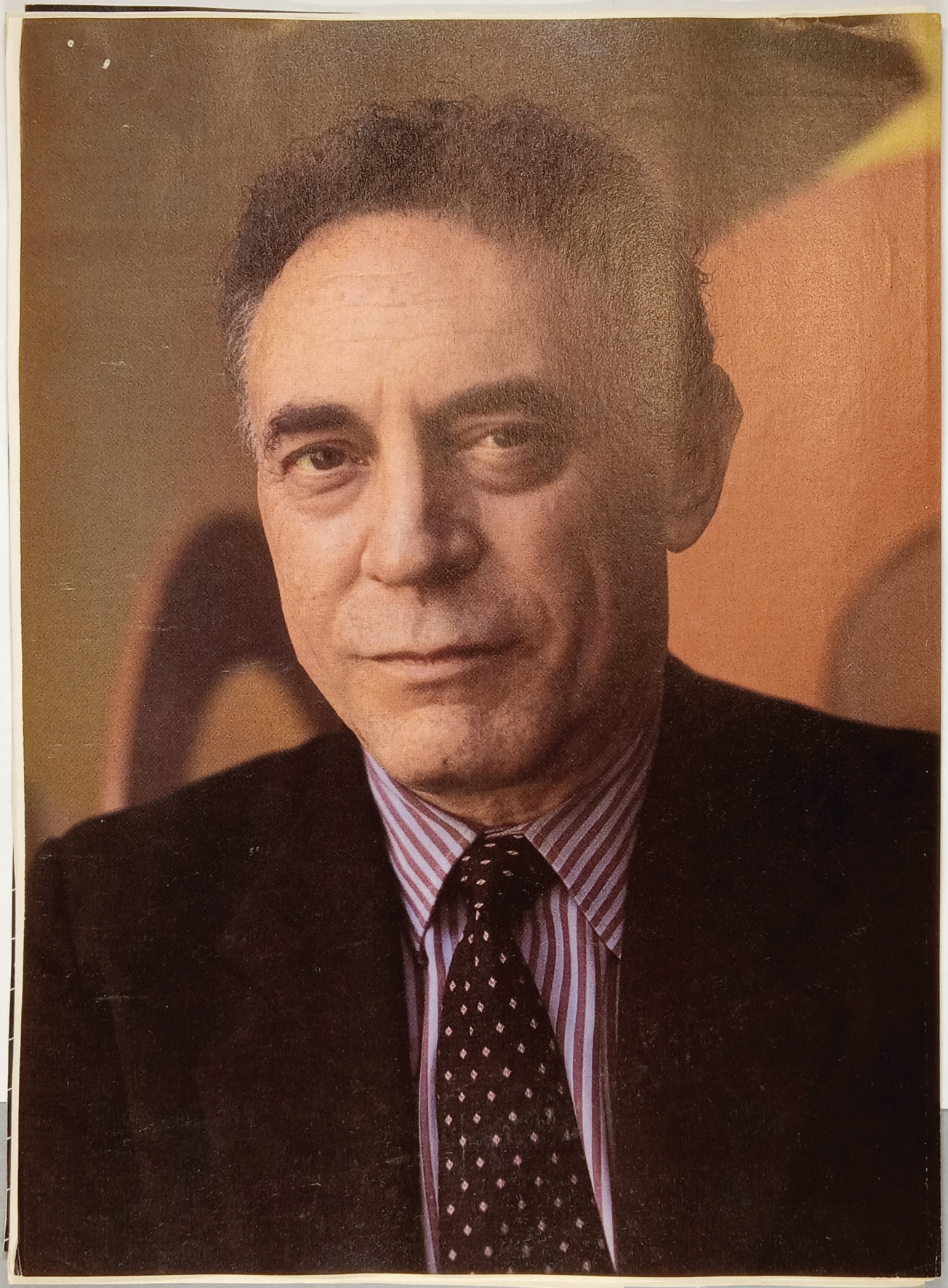
We know that part of our public is going to be seeing a lot of art in the galleries, but it's possible to see a lot and still miss a lot more. Therefore, if from time to time we select out certain things, it's possible that even our more art-conscious visitors will have missed them, not to say a great many other visitors who are not habitués of the galleries. The idea of getting a perspective on all the activity is certainly one task, but it's not exclusively our thing. The scene is now so immense that no one museum could deal with this filtering problem.

The other point is that we are not a museum of *contem-*

INTERVIEWED BY MILTON ESTEROW AND SYLVIA HOCHFIELD

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porary art. We are a museum of *modern* art. Whether you put the beginnings of modern art, as Alfred Barr did, in the 1880s, which is where our collection begins, or a little earlier, with Manet, we're dealing essentially with about a hundred years of art in our collection and in our exhibition program. And in a world in which contemporary art is being widely shown, and in which it's much more difficult for anyone but us to organize a show of, let us say, Picasso or Rousseau, or even a show of Surrealism or Abstract Expressionism, the exhibition program of this museum is responsible to the entire history of modern art, not merely—or even primarily—to what is happening today.

The contemporary show has to share our space and our time with this responsibility for the whole of modernism, which we are better prepared than most museums to exhibit, in part because of our collection, which gives us the possibility of getting loans through reciprocity, and in part because of our experience. If our role is to be true to this whole hundred years, a show of very young, new artists cannot happen all that often because there's a tremendous mass of historical material that we haven't shown or that was shown so long ago that a whole generation, or even two generations, has never seen it. I think it's very important to distinguish between a modern museum and a contemporary museum. And the fact is that if you look back at the museum's history, there was always a distance, even when there was only a handful of galleries, between what the museum did and what the gallery world did.

I think it was James Thrall Soby who said that we should always stay one step behind the artists. And that meant the dealers who show contemporary art as well. That one step is, let's say, the minimal distance for a perspective. I don't think we should feel in competition with the dealers or even with other museums. I'd like to think we're in a kind of collective situation where all the New York museums are trying to do some filtering, to make certain points, and obviously those points will differ as the taste and feelings and ideas of the various curators differ.

The role of the Museum of Modern Art necessarily changes as time goes on because we cover an increasingly long period of history. Our responsibility today is larger than it was when I came to the museum 17 years ago because there is that much more modern-art history that has to be covered. Some of the people who were virtual unknowns 17 years ago are now "old masters" of contemporary art. It makes a tremendous difference in the way things are structured. So, in a certain sense, time imposes this changing role on us.

And then people have other options today. When I was young, the Guggenheim—it was the Museum of Non-Objective Art then—didn't have shows. The Whitney was a two-bit operation with a very different take on the contemporary scene than it has now. In the '40s, the Metropolitan went little beyond Jack Levine—that was what passed there for modern art at the time. Our role has changed in relation to other museum activity in town as well as in relation to the gallery scene.

We also have to see our role in terms of what we can do that no one else can do. No other museum could have done the Picasso show; you can't imagine the markers we had to call in to get what we got for that show, quite apart from our personal relationship with the Picasso family. It's a fair question: why shouldn't the museum do certain kinds of important historical shows that only it can do as opposed to a kind of show that everybody can do?

Now, in the contemporary scene, it seems to me that what any museum—not just ours—should do that the galleries don't do is to put things together in a way that is revelatory. Sure, you can go downtown and see group shows of certain established movements like pattern painting and so forth, but mostly you see one-man or one-woman shows, and it's a sort of morass. Where the museum seems to play a role is to go beyond this, selecting not simply single artists for retrospectives but groups of people, in order to say that in this big morass there's some stream which is important, which is coherent and to which we want to draw attention. If we show contemporary art, it should be in some other way than it's shown in the galleries—so that it reveals something, so that you see things in a new way. And that seems to me to be our role.

Milton Esterow: Can you elaborate further on the distinction between modern and contemporary art?

WR: You probably won't find two people who will give you the same definition of "contemporary." Some people would confine the term to art done in the last five or ten years, or by artists under 50. The minimum requirement is that the artist be alive—but is Chagall contemporary? He's a living artist and he still paints. Is Willem de Kooning contemporary? Why shouldn't he be? The machinery tends to read people out very quickly; Frank Stella could conceivably be read out soon, and he's only 47, and, for me, more inventive today than "newer" artists. It's getting so that you have to either have done nothing before or be under 45 to be thought of as contemporary. But whatever definition you give, the "contemporary" is only a fraction of our responsibility.

SH: There are people who would say that Frank Stella was contemporary until he had a retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art, at which point he became modern.

WR: That isn't really the case. Frank's painted metal reliefs were something utterly fresh and new and very much of the moment, and all of that took place after Frank had his museum show. I know that certain artists—Willem de Kooning felt this way many years ago—were almost afraid to have a show at the museum because in a way that would sort of spell the end. But it doesn't. I think Frank is the perfect example, but not the only example. Ellsworth Kelly has gone on to do very interesting and different things since he had his show here.

SH: Do you think the museum's collection will change a great deal in the future?

WR: No, not taken as a whole. It has changed a good deal in the 17 years I've been here, and it will continue to grow forward in time, but the rate of growth is constantly slowing as regards the historical part of the collection. High-quality works of the early 20th century become rarer and rarer; they pass into other museums, or the prices are so prohibitive that we have no money to acquire them. In fact, there are very few people in the world who can afford the four or five million dollars or even the two million dollars now required for a modern masterpiece.

We're almost in a position where only pictures can afford pictures. That's the way we have acquired some important things over the years. One of the gaps in our collection was an important, first-rate Egon Schiele oil. We had watercolors but no oil. We acquired an absolutely extraordinary one, but we could never have done it with money alone. It came in part from selling a painting and partly from a cash gift

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from one of our trustees.

I have been very concerned with trying to fill gaps in the collection. Alfred Barr desperately wanted a construction sculpture by Picasso because not to have a Cubist construction was a terrible hole in the collection, not just for Picasso but for everything that developed after that. He tried very hard, and so did René d'Harnoncourt and everybody else. And it was really a lucky stroke that I was able to get to Picasso and to obtain the metal *Guitar* of 1912.

With respect to the Matisse *découpages*, on the other hand, Alfred didn't like them as much as the earlier work. We had a very handsome one, but I felt that that area was underweighted and for that reason bought the *Memory of Oceania* and later *The Swimming Pool*.

Most museums have so few modern works that they're interested in getting *a* this or *a* that. We're so rich that we're only interested in getting a Picasso, Max Ernst, Miró, Pollock *of a particular year or type*. In other words, for us the question is not that an artist be represented—Schiele was one of only two historical figures who were unrepresented by an important work—it's that in our holdings of a given artist, there may be a particular period that isn't well represented.

Considering how rare first-rate early 20th-century pictures are in general, you can imagine that the one that fits the slot you're trying to fill is even rarer. And you have to sometimes nose around very, very hard. We had a Gustav Klimt landscape that is very beautiful. But it was my judgment that Klimt's real contribution was the so-called Art Nouveau or Jugendstil type of image. There were only three such Klimts left in private hands, all of them in Austria. So we had not only to buy two of them, which helped us to get one out, but to convince the Austrian government that it was in their interest to let it out. This took years of searching and negotiation. That's the kind of thing we do on the art-historical side; it's not just buying nice pictures. It's a question of balancing and filling out the collection, making sure that certain kinds of connections between things become clear.

SH: A frivolous question. Do you have a wish list?

WR: Picasso asked me, "If you could walk out of here with anything you wanted, what would it be?" And I wrote up a little list, because I'd given a lot of thought to it, that had only eight works of art on it: four paintings and four sculptures. When he saw the list, he was very pleased because I hadn't simply asked for the four most important paintings. In fact, I doubt if anyone in the world would have asked for the four paintings I picked. I asked for those that made the most sense in terms of what we already had. It included the *Still Life with Chair Caning*, which was the first collage and had a crucial historical importance. It included *The Crucifixion*—an offbeat, strange picture that most people don't even like—because it had a special meaning. It included *The Kitchen*, of which there are two versions, one more abstract and marginally better, which we finally were able to buy from one of the heirs.

On the sculpture side, it started with the *Guitar* and went on from there. And we managed to get two of the four before Picasso died. He was planning to give us the rest, I believe, one a year. He joked, "See, it's my birthday and I give you the gift." The last time I saw Picasso, we were looking through the older work and we came upon the *Still Life with Chair Caning*. Jacqueline [Picasso] leaned over and said, "That's the next one you're getting." And of course it's now in the Picasso Museum in Paris.

There's no point in a wish list because there aren't any places you can wish things out from. Most of the major private collections belong to people who have made it clear where they are going to leave their collections. There are certain objects, and I'd rather not even mention them, that are still in private hands which I think ought to be here and, indirectly or directly, I have been trying to get them. I worry about how we'll pay for them afterward. But it's much harder to find a thing you want than it is to get the money, which is hard enough.

ME: Are there any pictures in other museums that you would particularly like to have in your collection?

WR: There are many pictures in other museums I'd love to have here. What you're really asking for is my ideal museum of modern art. There are objects in the Centre Pompidou and the Tate. Even some modern masterpieces in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, for example, the portrait of Gertrude Stein, which is the real beginning of Picasso's "primitivism." Gertrude Stein probably would have left it to MoMA had she lived longer because she knew and liked Alfred. But she thought this museum might turn out to be a fly-by-night affair. She told Alfred that this thing he was developing was all wrong because you could either be modern or be a museum but you couldn't be both. And she didn't think he was going to succeed. To her the Metropolitan was stability, big blocks of stone. And in her own interest she wanted the portrait someplace where she was sure it was going to stay. I think that today Gertrude Stein might leave it to the Museum of Modern Art. It's a picture that in terms of the other Picassos we have makes a great deal of sense, and I would say it would be necessary for the ideal museum of modern art you are asking about.

All we can do is try to come as close to that ideal as possible. This was the position Alfred took and I take; I grew up in Alfred's light, so to say. While I have different views on specific artists or specific periods, basically we share a vision, as everybody here does, of a synoptic historical collection in which all schools and all nations and all artists are equilibrated according to our judgments of their quality. Not because they're Americans or because they're not Americans, and not because the pictures are offered to us. Mark Rothko offered René d'Harnoncourt 50 pictures if he would hang them, but what would a collection like ours do with 50 Rothkos? It would totally unbalance the entire collection. Later, happily, Rothko gave me my choice of anything I wanted from what he had, and I chose seven pictures, of which four or five will hang regularly and I think play an important role in our representation of Abstract Expressionism, which will be much increased in the new galleries.

There are collectors who have specialized in the work of one artist and want to see it all kept together. Now, it's quite wonderful to go into a certain type of museum and see a hundred pictures by X. But that's not the nature of this museum. You probably know that Alfred refused the Arensberg collection, which was then offered to and accepted by the Philadelphia Museum of Art. That was a pretty rough thing to have to do, but he refused it on the basis that we had to mix our pictures together and not keep any one person's collection separate. And he wouldn't guarantee that we would show all the paintings in the collection.

What we can do here, and it's very rare among museums, is show a whole historical period in balance. Perhaps the

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first wing of the Uffizi does that for 14th- and 15th-century paintings on this kind of quality level. But it's extremely rare. Most museums in other countries are primarily if not entirely national; even the Uffizi is mostly Italian painting. But that's where the action was at that time.

Alfred bought Italian Futurism or De Stijl painting as readily as he bought anything American or anything Parisian, with the result that we have a great Futurist collection that you can't find the likes of even in Italy. And whereas the Beaubourg just bought its second Mondrian, we're not even going to show all our Mondrians, and I think we're going to have 14 of them on view. But you won't feel that that's too many Mondrians—or too many Brancusis or Picassos. The notion of a synoptic historical collection is fundamental to our conception, and if it has on one hand prevented us from getting certain kinds of gifts, it has on the other hand made the collection absolutely unique.

ME: Are there artists whose work you'd like to see better represented?

WR: That's a rough one because what I usually want is a certain moment of an artist's work rather than just more of it. Not every object you will see in the galleries when we reopen belongs to the Museum of Modern Art. In order to move toward my ideal of historical representation, I have negotiated a few long-term exchange loans with other museums where we sacrifice an object from an area in which we're terribly rich and the other museum is poor and we get an object that we very much need.

For example, we have a marvelous collection of works by Paul Klee, many more than we could exhibit. But of the very late, "pictographic" Klees, which had, I believe, quite apart from their own quality, a great importance for people like Gottlieb and other Americans working at a certain moment, we have one small work on paper that came to us from Nelson Rockefeller. It's very fine, but it isn't a major work of that period. On the other hand, we have so many more Magrittes, de Chiricos, Max Ernsts and so forth than we can show that it was possible for me to negotiate long-term exchange loans with the Klee Foundation and the museum in Berne through which we got one of the really great masterpieces, in fact I think *the* picture that most makes the point I wanted to make. The picture is called *Vorhaben* (Premonition). The point I'm trying to make with it, first of all, is to show Klee's own development better. And the other point is that these late Klees lead into painting after World War II in a way that earlier Klees don't, not quite in this way.

We are making a long-term exchange with the Picasso Museum. With all the Picassos we have, we have none of the metal construction sculptures of the early 1930s. Since they have the *Woman in the Garden*, which is the largest of these, they are lending us a piece called *Head*, which is absolutely fabulous. It was, I might add, one of the four sculptures on my list. We are lending them a Cubist picture from Horta, of the summer of 1909, which was when Picasso's Cubism came together fully for the first time. They don't have any Horta pictures because Picasso kept virtually nothing of that period himself. For them it's a terrible lacuna. We have three great pictures from that period, and it seemed to me more important to sacrifice one of them to get this sculpture—which is the point of departure, I might add, for the sculpture of González, whose work will adjoin that of Picasso in the gallery.

ME: Now that you're completing this tremendous reinstallation, what gives you the most satisfaction?

WR: The greatest collection of modern art in the world will be better exposed. At the same time, we're maintaining the kind of intimate scale the museum has always had. You were talking earlier about the "new" Museum of Modern Art, and I felt like saying it should be the new/old Museum of Modern Art, because we very much want to retain the character of the museum even as we expand and enlarge.

When you go into the Beaubourg or the Tate or the Metropolitan, it's a very different kind of experience even before you look at the pictures. The Museum of Modern Art has had a distinct ambience, a certain intimate character, and we hope it will retain that in the larger quarters.

Arthur Drexler said to me about ten years ago—and I was quite shocked—that one could take the then Museum of Modern Art and put it within the central rotunda of the Metropolitan. The whole museum could be plunked into that space. It reminded me of how small a bandbox we really were. And that has something to do with the nature of the institution, but it goes even further. It has something to do with modern art. The Metropolitan is a kind of palace building, which is quite proper for its "world art." Most traditional museums have the character of the kind of palace for which Renaissance and Baroque art was actually made. Modern art is a different kettle of fish, as I see it. Whether by chance or by accident, the scale of the galleries at the Museum of Modern Art, which is much more intimate than in these other museums—the ceilings are lower, the spaces are less wide—seems to be just right for modern pictures. It's the kind of space in which a picture like Matisse's *Red Studio* seems like a big painting. I have seen that picture in a variety of other museums, most recently at the Beaubourg, where it looked like a postage stamp.

The assumption that larger spaces are good for pictures strikes me as utterly wrongheaded. I'm convinced that modern pictures, at least up to Pollock, Rothko et al., were made for private spaces. Older pictures were made for palaces, for churches, for government buildings, for public spaces. And not simply their size but their character related to this. A lot of modern pictures were painted for private destinations, and they really belong in apartments, ideally, and in studios. That's the context. A museum can't be an apartment or a studio, but it can have intimate proportions that suggest private spaces. To that end we're going to have commercial carpeting in the first three-quarters of the installation, up through the big space reserved for Pollock and the other Abstract Expressionists. That's for a variety of reasons. Partly, and mostly, I should say, for comfort, and to keep the galleries quiet for contemplation. But it's also there because there is an association to carpeting which is private—it suggests intimacy.

But the last quarter of the installation has a wood floor, and this is for several reasons. First, because the art is less intimate and more public—the scale of the works makes a break with the tradition that prevailed right up through Pollock and Rothko, the size of their pictures notwithstanding. The wood floor is also dictated by the need to put a lot of floor pieces down. Our early Serra would look silly on a rug; it's a piece that spreads out and wants a loft type of floor. And finally the wood floor is dictated by the fact that the last quarter of the collection is going to be rotated regularly, and carpeting freezes the configuration of the installation. I won't say that all things after Abstract Expressionism are equal. Obviously certain Johnses, Kellys,

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Stellas are going to be there more than other things. But as you get closer to the end of the collection, there's going to be more revolving of works.

We've been buying lots and lots of contemporary works, but the number of those you feel compelled to have on view, compared to the Cézannes or Mirós or Picassos, is much smaller, while their total number is much larger. In other words, the collection expands in number, but the consensus about the importance and quality of individual works— and therefore our obligation to exhibit any particular one of them—shrinks. To me, our Chuck Close is a must—but not to everybody. They all agree on Picasso's *Girl Before a Mirror*, but they wouldn't all agree on the Chuck Close. We buy all the time, but we would need a building five times the size to show all that material.

I like the scale of the new galleries very much. The problem in the old building was that because of the piers the galleries all had to be more or less the same size, and there wasn't the kind of variety and range I would have liked. Now we will have a number of galleries that will be more or less the same size as the old, but also some that are considerably bigger.

The new Matisse room is three or four times the size of the old one, but there won't be many more pictures. The room with the Pollocks and the Rothkos is going to be much bigger. On the other hand, there's a little room built especially for Matisse's *Swimming Pool*, whose size was determined by the size of that work itself. There will be more variety in the galleries than there was before, but the average will still be intimate. And even what we're calling a very big gallery, like the Matisse gallery, is small by the standards of the Metropolitan Museum. When Rothko said, "I paint big to be intimate," he was thinking of a living room where the picture displaces the wall and you feel surrounded by it. You can't put a picture like that in a huge room and have that kind of meaning, as is shown in the Beaubourg, where their Rothko makes no impression at all.

A lot of museums get built by architects who are more interested in their own creation of an interesting architectural space than in a space right for paintings. *The ne plus ultra* of this is Mies van der Rohe's museum in Berlin, where the entire main floor is useless. They've had to turn it into a lobby and to carve out a museum below grade, which is where you see the collection. But you come into this immense, meaningless space. There's nothing that could survive in that space. They've put in a few giant sculptures, but it's a totally useless space, as was the upper terrace of our old garden.

Museum people have to watch out for architects. The better they are, the worse they are, in the sense that the more powerful their vision, the less they are liable to consider the needs of paintings. The classic example of that will always be the Guggenheim Museum, which is one of the greatest pieces of architecture in the world but not one of the greatest museums. I admire tremendously the degree of museological quality they've been able to squeeze out of that building, but it's been, so to say, a downhill battle.

ME: We've heard the cliché, particularly with new museums, that the architect wins and the museum loses.

WR: I've heard that the architect wins and the art loses. We've all seen museums where the architectural effects are impressive but there aren't enough galleries or they're the wrong shape or they're in the wrong place. We have tried to keep first things first here, and in that sense the new/old museum continues as it was. The most important thing is the art. Within the shell of the building, each department head articulates the space as he or she wishes.

I, for example, though I'm constrained by certain limitations, have tried to tailor at least certain parts of this space to the works of art. I can have a wall put up because there's a very important picture that needs to be singled out. One example would be Picasso's *Demoiselles d'Avignon*, which has its own wall because it needed to be separated out from other things. In the Abstract Expressionist galleries, the placement of the walls is determined by the works. First we designed a rough layout, and the walls were mocked up—we call them jerry-built walls in part because the fellow in charge of this was named Jerry Neuner, and he's very, very good at what he does—and then we moved the art in. Obviously the best-laid plans can go awry. Certain things look good, and other things look wrong; certain juxtapositions don't work. So we chopped off a wall here and added a wall there.

ME: Were there any works that gave you particular problems?

WR: There's a wall that has a very big Pollock on it. That wall was probably moved left or right or chopped a little shorter or made a little wider five or six times until I got the Pollock in the right relation to the Rothko, which you see behind it to the right, and to the exit from the gallery, which you see on the left. If the gallery had been six feet wider, I wouldn't have had to do all this chopping. The problem was that there were things that had to be gotten together exactly right. One was the Rothko. The other was the exit, which had to be big enough so that you knew that's where you were supposed to go out but not so big that it cramped the Pollock and the Rothko. And the Rothko had to look as if it was on a different plane from the Pollock. But since it was behind and there was an angle where the Pollock wall ended, you didn't want to cut off the Rothko from too much of the gallery. So we had to jockey the walls around time and time again to get this relationship right.

So these are the problems. Also, you want to emphasize historical cross-relationships between objects. Now there, for example, it was not possible to do certain things I had hoped to do. I had hoped that when you looked at David Smith's *Australia* of 1951, you could look back at Picasso's *Kitchen* of 1948 and see the relationship between Smith and Picasso. Well, that was one I couldn't get.

Other things worked out better. For example, contrary to popular belief, the *Demoiselles* doesn't really lead directly into the Cubism of 1909-11 that Picasso shared with Braque. The forms of that Cubism are much more architectural. The *Demoiselles* is almost an expressionist picture, with scalloped shapes, wild, powerful forms. And one of the things I had always had in the back of my mind was that there was another kind of Cubism to which the *Demoiselles* did, in fact, lead. Picabia was obviously influenced by the *Demoiselles*, and used its scalloped forms in the *Dancers at the Spring*, pictures like that. So I had in some way to get the Picabia later than the *Demoiselles*, where you could see it out of the corner of your eye so that you would see some relationship between the *Demoiselles* and the *Dancers* without needing to see the Cubism that took place in between, which formed only with the intervention of Braque.

There are lots of these cross-relationships that people don't even notice, or notice only subliminally. There's a limit to how many you can develop because one almost

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cancels out another sometimes.

We have one Léger in with our Brancusis, and happily it is a Léger with the kind of forms Brancusi used in making some of his bases. So I put this earlier Léger a little later than some others. I was forced to make a choice here in favor of character as against chronology. Our collection is basically chronological, but so many developments occurred almost simultaneously between 1909 and 1914 that you can't conceivably stick to a strict chronology. We bend and weave within the chronological framework.

Finally, of course, no matter what the chronology, you want to hang every picture so that it looks its best. And if its historical neighbor takes something away from it, you don't hang it there even if in the art-history books you would reproduce it next. The most important thing is the independent, autonomous quality of each work.

Obviously this takes a lot of trying out, and this is what we've been doing for a year. I sit in a wheelchair, not so much because my feet are bothering me but because you couldn't stand for that length of time, and hour after hour we just study the way these things relate together. For example, if you are going to have three Soutines, they may not be your three best Soutines. You may take number four and put it in instead of number three because the link between that picture and the Modiglianis across the room is better. There are an incredible number of considerations to take into account.

Now, the result of this may not please people. You can only do what you think is right in your own terms, and people like it or they don't. But let's say that this is what we are, for better or for worse, trying to do—and I think there are very few museums, perhaps none, that have been able to do this, partly because there's no museum that has such an elaborate synoptic historical collection and partly because most of them have ready-made buildings where you just take the walls and do the best you can within that wall structure.

SH: Will the installation be didactic?

WR: We never have texts in the collection galleries. It seems to me that ideally pictures should tell their own story. Obviously there are certain kinds of things that only words can tell, but there's an awful lot that pictures can tell just by themselves.

I've never done a show where I've had texts in with the works of art. I'm going to do my first one next fall, which is "Primitivism in Twentieth-Century Art." There's a certain minimal amount of information you've got to give people for them to fully understand. That is the first and probably the last show I'll ever do that has words in it.

My feeling is that if visitors need to be told anything, they should be told it elsewhere than in the galleries. There are a million books; there are art-history courses. We have a big education department that is going to make available printed material to help people understand. But you shouldn't be reading in the galleries; you should be looking. You can read at home or anywhere else.

I think that most people unfortunately put ideas before the direct experience of the picture. It seems to me that just by looking and looking and looking you get the real essence. No amount of words is ever going to make up for the absence of a spark between you and the picture. If that spark exists, the words can embroider, they can elaborate. But why have them when you have the picture? There are a million ways you can be educated by words. MoMA is where you ought to be educated by pictures. And that's all you're going to see in the galleries.

SH: How will your space be distributed?

WR: The lion's share of the new space is going to the period from World War II to the present. That period was scanted in the old galleries, in part because there were so many masterpieces we just couldn't take down that there wasn't a lot of space left for post-World War II art. Also, we have acquired in the last 15 years a tremendous number of Abstract Expressionist pictures and major things after that. We have two galleries of the early works of the Abstract Expressionists.

ME: What have you learned from the reinstallation?

WR: I'll have to stop and think about that. Basically, how infinitely changeable and unfathomable pictures are. For example, the juxtaposition of a certain kind of Calder with a certain kind of Tanguy—of course I knew they were both biomorphic artists. But we were able to juxtapose them in a way that is newly revelatory about that connection. I'd always felt that the notion of Henri Rousseau as a naive painter, a precursor of Bombois and people like that, was completely cockeyed, and that he was in his own way a Post-Impressionist very much in the spirit of Gauguin. The new juxtaposition makes it perfectly clear: the Gauguin *belongs* next to the Rousseau.

Your judgments of the quality of pictures change as you change their context. Certain pictures just got blown off the wall in the new installation. There's an Ozenfant, for example, that used to hang next to the Le Corbusier oil—he used his real name, Jeanneret, as a painter—and I intended to hang them together again, with Léger and some new acquisitions. The Corbusier looked fine, but the Ozenfant suddenly looked terribly empty. I gave it a lot of thought but finally I decided it couldn't hold its own and it would be a picture that scholars could look at in the reserve. There are lots of interesting art-historical objects that are not going to be in the gallery because in the end you have to opt for quality. If the choice is between quality and representing a minor artist like Ozenfant, if his picture isn't good enough, I don't put it in.

On the other hand, we have a wonderful picture by someone you probably haven't heard of named O'Connor, who was a *fin de siècle* Symbolist painter somewhere between Klimt, Munch and Fauvism. It's always been one of my favorite pictures in the collection—I think it's terrific, and in its new place it holds forth even better than it did in its old spot. You put these things out, and they start "talking about" each other in a different way. Each picture says something about its neighbors, about the pictures across the way and about itself, of course. Sometimes the message is positive, and sometimes it isn't. But that's what all this installation procedure is really about.

I think Mondrian is going to come out wonderfully in the new installation. Mondrian has always been for me a kind of test case because the elements are so simple and so spartan that it looks as if anyone could do it. The power of what Mondrian did as opposed to what his followers did has never been clearer to me than now. The greatness of Mondrian—that such tremendous expressive power can inhere in pictures of such simple means—has never been brought home to me, even in a Mondrian retrospective, with such clarity. So my own estimation of certain painters was either confirmed or not confirmed during the reinstallation.

You also see human and psychological relationships. For

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example, we were given a gift by Jacqueline Picasso of the largest of the big heads of Marie-Thérèse Walter that Picasso made in plaster in the early '30s. In the Picasso show we had only the bronzes, because plasters can't travel. For years my knowledge of these came from photographs of Picasso's Boisgeloup studio, and I always thought of them as white and dreamlike, whereas the bronzes seemed lugubrious and heavy and dark. That part of the Picasso show was a big disappointment to me. Well, we got this plaster, which is just so gorgeous and so incredible, and we put it in the middle of a very big room that has the Picassos of the '30s. Suddenly the other images of Marie-Thérèse reading, drawing, playing with a beach ball, looking at herself in the mirror and so forth all pulled together. It's a kind of Marie-Thérèse ambience. And you get much more of the sense of the way Picasso actually saw, how he felt about his image-making, which was not making pictures but expressing emotions about people, things and situations. This comes home much more clearly, I think, in the new installation. For many years nobody even knew who Marie-Thérèse was. Picasso kept that chapter very quiet. Now it has taken on a whole new dimension.

Of all the things a curator does, installing pictures is the greatest fun. Writing is painful to me, just terrible. But installing pictures is really it. First of all, you're looking at pictures all the time instead of sitting in your office or at the typewriter, and you're discovering things about them, about their relationships. I would love to pass my whole life installing the greatest modern pictures in the world—to pluck out two or three hundred of the great pictures from other museums and then to arrange them in any way I wanted, in an infinitely flexible space. It would probably take me ten years to get to the ideal solution. And those ten years would be paradise.

ME: Do you think Alfred Barr would have liked what you've done?

WR: Probably. He would have enjoyed doing the installation immensely, and I wish he had been here to do it with me as he did the last one. He liked that one and I think he would also consider this one worthy of what he began. I had the good fortune to know him over a long period of time, and what I've done is entirely in the spirit of what Alfred did. The conception of the whole thing is Alfred's conception, and I have no problem with that because it's not a matter of submitting to it; I believe in it. And I think a lot of other people do, too.

There was only one Alfred Barr, and there's only one Museum of Modern Art collection, so there can be only one success story. I mean, let's face it, this museum's history is unique. ■

Curator 'INTERNATIONAL SURVEY OF RECENT PAINTING AND SCULPTURE'

Kynaston McShine

'The show tries to be as inclusive as possible and to show various trends because it's a moment of great diversity. I've tried to be a bit open, not be too doctrinaire'

Milton Esterow: You've been working for years on the museum's opening show, the "International Survey of Recent Painting and Sculpture." How did it all begin?

Kynaston McShine: It began because the museum felt it should reopen with an exhibition of younger artists. We haven't done a large group show of contemporary art for a long time, and we felt that this was the right moment. There haven't really been any large group exhibitions of contemporary art in this country for some time; there have been smaller shows, like the Italians at the Guggenheim and the German Neo-Expressionists in St. Louis, but there hasn't been an overall survey. The show is essentially a report on some of the activity going on at the moment. And since we are an international institution—unlike the Whitney, for example—the show defined itself from that point of view.

Sylvia Hochfield: We understand that you don't want to talk about specific artists, but can you say something about your principles of selection?

KMcS: I didn't want to include artists who have had really large exhibitions in New York, artists who were already very well known—people like Claes Oldenburg or Jasper Johns or Cy Twombly.

I have included nothing from the museum's collection. I didn't want any confusion between the show and the col-

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lection. This is entirely a loan exhibition, although it is not said that the museum will not acquire some works from the exhibition. Those were the basic ground rules.

I've tried to give a sense of the atmosphere of the moment. I think our public is different from the public that sees things on West Broadway or that travels a lot—not everybody gets to Documenta, for example.

Basically, there is one work per artist, but that doesn't hold for everyone. Some artists work on a very small scale, so there's reason to have more than one work.

The exhibition tries to be as inclusive as possible and to show various trends. There's a certain amount of abstraction, for example. The show is not totally devoted to any one school because I think it's a moment of great diversity. And while I've tried to bring a critical perspective to bear on it, I've also tried to be a bit open, not be too doctrinaire.

I think one of the problems is that it's a show that covers almost two artistic generations, which has to do with the fact that there hasn't been a show like this for quite some time. There is a range from relatively unknown artists to some who are much better known.

SH: Will you be introducing any artists to New York?

KMcS: I hope so.

SH: Are they artists who have exhibited previously?

KMcS: Oh, yes, I think so.

SH: So there's no work that's straight from the studio?

KMcS: Not totally. And I don't think that's necessarily something the Museum of Modern Art should be doing in a show of 165 artists—that would be another kind of show for another time. I think I have included some people whose work I saw in alternative spaces. And, as you well know, there's very little hidden in studios at this point.

SH: Did you find it difficult to make a selection?

KMcS: Absolutely. I have to stand by what I've done, but I think there's an awful lot of other good work and many other young people who are really interesting and exciting who are working at the moment. And then there were things I couldn't include because of space limitations—for example, large environments.

ME: You have said that you wanted to give a sense of the atmosphere of the moment. How would you describe that atmosphere?

KMcS: Extremely lively. I think that there's a good deal of a certain kind of introspection. I think that a lot of work is involved with metaphor and the autobiography of the artist. There's a certain preoccupation with the problems of the artist, the artist's life—or maybe it's just the problems of existence.

And I think that on one hand there is a lot of work that is extremely straightforward and direct, object oriented—the straightforward stretched canvas or the straightforward sculpture—while on the other hand there's a certain amount of work that is a bit more allegorical, more metaphorical. But there's a continuing attempt to move on with creating new work, new art.

ME: You have been organizing exhibitions for quite a while now, going back to your days at the Jewish Museum over 20 years ago, and even before that. How would you compare the atmosphere today with the atmosphere 25 years ago or a decade ago?

KMcS: I think it's probably a more even situation today. A decade ago, or a little bit more than that, American art was dominant. Today there's a lot more European work that is worth looking at than there was ten or 15 years ago.

ME: Any other differences?

KMcS: I hesitate to say this because I haven't thought it through, but I think there is less sculptural activity at the moment. I think there was much more of a sense of sculpture in the '70s, many more artists working with sculpture.

And I think there's much more emphasis on the figure than there was 15 years ago.

ME: I wonder why.

KMcS: I don't know. I have to leave some questions for others to think through. I would like the exhibition to pose some questions.

ME: What are the questions?

KMcS: For example, questions about how much intellectual rigor is going into the work of the moment. And where does it place itself in relation to everything else that has happened in the 20th century? I hope the work itself will pose some of these questions.

SH: Do you have any provisional answers?

KMcS: Well, I'm looking forward to seeing the exhibition myself. An exhibition is like an essay. After it's up on the walls, it poses some of the questions you've probably been asking yourself.

SH: Why did you choose 1975 as your starting point?

KMcS: It began as an arbitrary way of working with a decade, but then I began to realize that 1975 was about the time when a certain kind of work other than Minimalism or Conceptualism started being seen. I was looking for a reasonable period to work with, and then it seemed to coincide with the moment when attention began to be paid to a very different group of artists. It was about the time when people began to think about things like the late paintings of Philip Guston, for example, and when people began to look at artists like A. R. Penck and Georg Baselitz.

ME: Some people think that the state of contemporary art is rather low. Would you care to comment on that?

KMcS: Well, you know, I didn't live in 1913 so I'm not sure how I would have felt about everything that was going on at that time. Looking back, we realize what an awful lot was happening then—Matisse, Duchamp, Picasso. Seventy years from now, I can look back and say I was in favor of my own time. I think it's important for us to be in favor of our own time. One can always judge the past, but it's very difficult to see the present.

SH: Doing a show like this, you will inevitably be criticized.

KMcS: I know. Everyone has their own favorites. An artist may criticize you for including a work from 1979 rather than his most recent work, but I've tried to select one work of an artist that I hope has two or three levels of meaning.

Anything one does is open to criticism, and there's no way of avoiding it. But there are several levels of criticism. I hope the criticism is intelligent and I hope it is about the work, what's up on the walls, and that it provides something to think about, raises issues.

I think the exhibition should be considered a beginning, not an end.

ME: Do you have any other shows in the works?

KMcS: I don't want to do another group exhibition right away. I might do something historical. I would like to spend some time thinking about the museum's collection, about what we've collected in the last ten years and what we should be trying to acquire.

ME: Do you have any advice for curators who might be undertaking a similar project in the future?

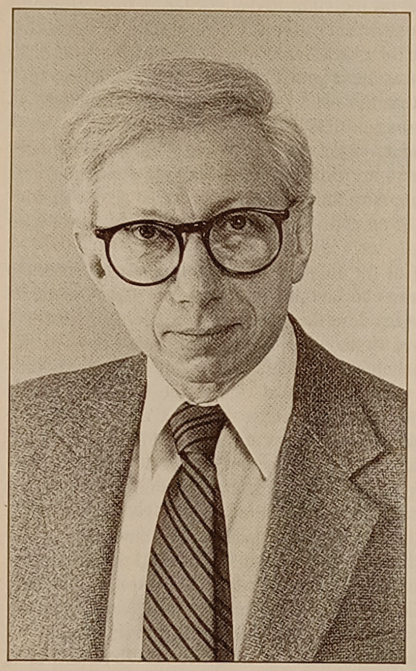
KMcS: Be open-minded and take risks. ■

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Director ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN

Arthur Drexler



'If I put thumbtacks on the wall, people will assume there must be a profound message, and they will go home and contemplate thumbtacks'

Michael Kimmelman: Your department has much more space now.

Arthur Drexler: We used to have an out-of-the-way gallery that was only one half of the old east wing on the second floor. It was 2,700 square feet, of which 1,700 was used for the collection and 1,000 for rotating material. From that dependable 1,700 for the collection,we have gone to a total of 6,500. All loan shows will now revert to the ground floor.

MK: Is this enough space?

AD: No. As far as I'm concerned,we were ill treated. We have not gotten anything like the space that we should have. On the other hand, we have three times what we used to have, so I don't want to be an ingrate.

MK: How will the space be used?

AD: Of the 6,500, about 3,000 square feet will be used for the first gallery, a room assigned to architectural models and drawings. There isn't anything like that anywhere in New York. We should be able to show an average of eight to ten models at a time. As with the drawings, some of these will rotate.

The room has a continuous bench around it so people can sit down when they reach the limit of their strength and so that we can have impromptu seminars and student groups. In fact, in one respect we're very lucky because we're the only department that has its offices and its study center contiguous with its gallery. Everything is easily available. For students and specialists who come to use our study center, we don't have to show slides of the major items in the collection. They'll be right next door in the gallery. It will be a much more manageable and, I hope, productive operation. There will also be some interesting new additions to the galleries. For instance, the gallery will be wired for recorded music. Once a week, say, there may be a two-hour concert of 20th-century music that has some relationship to the architecture and design material on view. I think architects should be reminded of what was being composed, for example, in the second half of the '20s when Le Corbusier was doing the Villa Savoie. It's up to individuals to

Michael Kimmelman writes on a variety of cultural subjects.

INTERVIEWED BY MICHAEL KIMMELMAN

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make of it what they will. You don't have to make anything of it. You can just sit there and listen. No harm done.

There will also be a helicopter displayed—the 1947 Bell 47 D-1, the type people know from *M*A*S*H*. The scope of this collection is, in principle, anything from a teaspoon to an ocean liner. The helicopter is particularly important because of all the research going into them today. This one is the least dated and the least styled, like the jeep. It's hard to remember that its design dates to the years before World War II. Some designs have much greater longevity, principally because they were not developed by people who are primarily interested in design, who tend to style things according to what they think is of the moment—and whose works are the ones that die by tomorrow. I prefer objects that are not insistent on their novelty, which doesn't mean I'm immune to the appeal of novelty.

MK: Will the galleries cover the entire history of modern architecture?

AD: No. Some periods in the 20th century are a lot more productive and interesting than others. The collection necessarily reflects this and is very rich in periods of important work. There is a very rich phase in the '20s, for example.

MK: Did the reorganization of the collection change your notion of which phases were strongest?

AD: In a way. Alfred Barr used to say that if one in ten pictures seems worth looking at after a hundred years it would be sensational. I tend to think one out of a hundred. I have become more rather than less rigorous as I've gotten older, and there now seems to be a lot of stuff that looks less interesting. Let's take American furniture in the late '40s and the '50s. At the time there seemed to be a lot of interesting work, and we got it all. But what survives is work by Charles Eames, and not much of that. Out of the 50 pieces by him we have in the collection, three will make it to the furniture platform. Out of Eames' total production, there are about five pieces of furniture that will survive.

MK: Why will they survive?

AD: Their ideas were thought out. They resolved a condition by stripping the design to its essentials. No one has improved on those ideas. You may reject them, but it's not likely that you're going to come up with a variation that adds anything. They are just fine examples of good design.

MK: How do you decide what is good design?

AD: This is an art museum. It's not a museum of science and industry. It's not a government testing bureau. We deal with art—the esthetic experience. Rietveld's red and blue chair contributes absolutely nothing to the notion of chair as useful object. You can sit in it but at risk of life and limb. But it is in the collection because it contains ideas vital to an understanding of key notions about art and design in the 20th century.

MK: But from the way you speak of the helicopter and the Eames furniture, the relationship between form and function seems to be crucial. You seem to favor works that provide simple, clear answers to their design problems.

AD: The notion that form follows function—that the useful object should bear some apparent connection between appearance and the purpose it was meant to serve—is an idea that even ten-year-olds can grasp without inordinate difficulty. Yet many people today tend to be thrown by it. The taste for simplicity in design is a moral one. It is something stated by Plato and reiterated through the ages by St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Bernard, the Cistercian Order, the Quakers and the Shakers and every other group that feels that the purpose of life is the contemplation of something beyond life, and that the things you surround yourself with in your transient earthly existence, rather than distracting you, should propel you into the other world. There is nothing radically new about this idea. It is as old as human history, so there's nothing to get upset about. The taste for simplicity is both good for you and useful.

MK: Very modernist.

AD: I think someone who says that the museum is committed to the fuddy-duddy idea of useful objects being beautiful is at least on the right track. As far as modernism in architecture is concerned, there's a great deal of agonizing about whether the clock has stopped ticking. Is modernism over? Is the movement ended? Is there anything left to say? The point is that the modern chair has been designed. As with the scissors and the umbrella, there is a limit to how many refinements you can squeeze out of basically a very few ideas. There are certainly potential developments, and of course there are things that will come next. History doesn't come to an end. Something will happen, but not on command.

I think that at the moment it takes little imagination to see that the ideas that come as a relief to most architects and as yet a very few designers have to do with history. Architects have discovered that it's all right now to acknowledge that there were historic styles before modernism—which, incidentally, was due to the initiative of this department and our exhibition on the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. That show was not important in the way I had hoped, but it proved to be very important in ways that I was less concerned about. I had hoped that the exhibition would encourage a restructuring of the system of architectural education. It had some effect in that area but nothing like what it should have had. Instead it produced the marketing of drawings that were not as good as a lot of people thought they were. But it did more than that. It gave people the moral fortitude to attempt to deal with historical motifs, to incorporate them into modern architecture. The exhibition raised questions about the deficiencies of modern architecture, such as the lack of a range of scale, and about ornamentation—whether ornament was forever inadmissible or whether one could find ways of reconciling the superfluous, which is what an ornament is, with the essential, which is what modernism was supposed to be dealing with. In principle, all these questions should have answers that don't bring in the issue of eclecticism or historicism. But what happened was that everybody said, "Oh, you mean we can now go back into history and do whatever it is that we wished we could do all of our lives but never thought we could get away with." Well, sure, it means that, if you insist. But in my view, people missed the point—and that's where I think our educational system has failed. Teachers in the architectural schools should insist that some of these problems be solved in nonhistoricizing terms.

MK: Yet you think there was a reason to question modernism?

AD: Puritanism or any Old Testament morality is very difficult to sustain, and it seldom reigns for more than 30, 40 years, if that long. Then comes a backlash that sometimes gets violent. The reaction is always slightly crazy. It's always a case of throwing out the baby with the bath water.

MK: So you don't see postmodernism as a very productive step?

AD: I think that postmodernism—if one means by that not

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simply a late phase of modernism but a historicizing movement—has produced some extremely interesting work. Philip Johnson's AT&T Building in New York, for instance. Not necessarily a great building but certainly a hell of an interesting one. Plenty to talk about, to think about. Louis Kahn was, as far as I am concerned, the first postmodern architect. I think he was a lot better at it than most, if not all, of the people who came after him. He certainly produced buildings that will endure, in my opinion, a very long time.

Nonetheless, the modern movement is by no means over. There are still very beautiful minimalist, high-tech buildings going up all over the world. They're not getting much attention in professional journals, but they're being built and they're part of the history of the day. I saw a building in Houston recently called Four Allen Center. Nothing had been written about it in any magazine, and I wasn't even familiar with the work of the architects—Lloyd, Jones and Brewer. It is the most beautiful mirrored-glass building I have ever seen—absolutely staggering. I called up the architects, and they were also sort of puzzled and hurt that nobody else had noticed it. There they are alone in Houston bravely doing modern buildings.

MK: Certainly this department has had a reputation for promoting modernist architecture, as it did with design in the "Good Design" exhibitions of the '50s. Some people think it no longer plays as forceful a role as it did in those days.

AD: Look, the "Good Design" program was to encourage the public to look for, and to accept and ultimately buy, well-designed household objects—to convince people that modern design was good design. Those shows were held twice a year at the Merchandise Mart in Chicago and once a year in New York. That meant that the museum had inadvertently committed itself to an annual exhibition of very high quality, but there wasn't that much good design available on an annual basis. Ironically, while it called a great deal of attention year after year to work of highly uncertain quality, the museum's collection, which was supposed to be the important work, was nowhere to be seen because there were no collection galleries for design until 1964. I put a stop to the "Good Design" shows because they had served their purpose. You really don't have to sell the same idea over and over. People are not that dumb. It's like trying to convert the pope. After a while you have succeeded. You cannot escape modern design. There is nowhere I know of that you can go except perhaps darkest Tennessee where you might actually be able to avoid modern design, and I don't think even there.

As far as saying the museum is not what it used to be—every morning I get up and I criticize myself for not being 25 years old anymore. It's not as good as it was when I was 25. The fact remains that for all of us the year is 1984, not 1929 or 1934 or 1945. There is nothing that you can do if you have been born in the wrong moment in history. It doesn't help to bite your fingernails and make yourself very, very unhappy. It was better to go to Paris in the '20s than in the years immediately after World War II. It was better to go to Paris immediately after World War II than in 1960. And there's no point at all in going to Paris now. The museum simply reflects the great moments of the period that it was formed to deal with. The museum doesn't make the art, and when there are great periods there will be great aspects and phases of the collection.

MK: Yet some people still expect the museum to lead the way to good design, to suggest what will be worthwhile.

AD: Yes. I don't think it's possible for us not to play that kind of role. I don't know how I can avoid it. If I put thumbtacks on the wall people would think that there must be some profound message, and they would go home and contemplate thumbtacks. I wish it weren't the case. I find it all a little preposterous. I go to the Metropolitan Museum or the Frick or the Cloisters because I like to look at beautiful things; I don't assume every time they give a special exhibition on some theme, whatever it may be, that someone—an individual or a committee—has met to plot the future of my sensibility. I really assume that there isn't anybody that mad. But people don't have the same generosity of spirit regarding this department or the Museum of Modern Art as a whole.

MK: If you accept that role, then where do you think good design today is coming from? Among contemporary architects and designers, whose works will you emphasize in the new galleries?

AD: I'm not going to answer the second question. And I am very leery about making predictions, but there's no question that the Italians have dominated design starting in the '60s, and I mean *dominated*. Everybody else is running after them trying to catch up. The Italians are very talented and approach design with gusto and a sense of humor and none of that plodding seriousness of the Germans. And every once in a while they produce something of staggering beauty and richness of imagination. Design in other countries is so influenced by marketing, by advertising, that it's a miracle anything of quality is made. That holds for this country more, perhaps, than any other. Every once in a while something slips through the cracks, partly because someone assumes that there's a market for educated or, you might say, elitist taste that is large enough to support the manufacture of a reasonably good product.

Architecture is a different proposition. There are other factors involved in the making of a building. America is the most influential country in this field. Postmodernist historicizing is an American phenomenon. Not exclusively but decisively. Now it's one thing to design a historicizing house or library or school or even a historicizing office building. It's another thing to design a historicizing airport or power station. It has yet to be demonstrated that our culture as a whole is willing to accept this kind of historicizing exercise across the board. So far as designed objects are concerned, this style has only been used for *objets de luxe*. There has been no indication whatsoever that anyone wants a Chippendale telephone or an Adam refrigerator or a Sheraton TV. Some people have fiddled around with silver teapots in funny shapes, but we are again dealing with *objets de luxe*. It is not apparent to me that this method adds anything to the history of design that I want to see added to it. So one stifles a yawn and turns the page.

As a result, there's a dichotomy today between architecture and design. There are two styles, one for mass-produced useful objects and ubiquitous things like telephones and refrigerators, and another for higher-class objects. If we were to institutionalize and teach what would normally be recognized as a somewhat psychotic condition, then we would go back to the kind of fragmented experience seen in the early 19th century, which modernism finally overcame by cleaning up the act and focusing on the essentials. I hope we don't do that, but who knows what will happen in the future? ■

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Director PHOTOGRAPHY

John Szarkowski



'We don't need pictures of every president, although they're very good things to have. They should be somewhere, but they don't have to be here—unless the president was photographed in a way that gives you a different sense of what it's like to be a president'

Michael Kimmelman: What do you think are the most significant directions photographers are taking today?

John Szarkowski: Certainly one of the more obvious—which has been quite clear for a number of years—is that photographers have gotten much more interested again in the nature of the photographic process. I think this has a great deal to do with the failure of the magazine as a persuasive creative medium for serious photographers. When I was a young photographer, many ambitious young photographers took the magazines very seriously indeed. They felt that there really was a major challenge and opportunity there to communicate intensely within the context of the mass media. But many photographers do not have that hope anymore. And so they have turned back to what it is that they make. Consequently, they've become very much more interested in the process, in the potentials of the process that they themselves control.

There's a corollary to that. They have become very much more interested in books—that is, their books or books that they maintain authority over. They define the content of the book, they do the sequencing. To some degree the same thing would be true of certain kinds of exhibitions in which sequences or groups of photographs are organized by the photographer.

A few years ago it seemed to me that those photographers who did the work that seemed most vital, surprising and challenging to their colleagues had become very private or, if not private, at least very personal. I don't know whether it's wishful thinking, but it seems to me that now there are photographers who are trying to find ways of speaking to issues that are not only personal. Robert Adams is an interesting case in point. He's trying to deal with subjects, values and issues that are not personal, except in the sense that they inevitably inform his own response, understanding and vision. Although he was born in New Jersey, he has lived most of his life on the eastern slopes of the Rockies, near Denver, and when he began taking photographs that area had deteriorated. Yet his landscapes are absolutely free of rhetoric—he treats his subject matter in so punctilious a way that he doesn't extend the sins that most offend him. Adams' work may not instantaneously attract a very large, enthusiastic audience, but it does point to one direction good photography is taking.

MK: Do you think your department has played or should play an important role in determining what is supposed to constitute good photography today?

JS: I would be depressed, and it would take an enormous amount of the pleasure out of my work, if I thought that nobody else would have shown the work we have shown. There really would be no fun in this job if one thought one was making it up. It is not made up. People like Lee Friedlander and Garry Winogrand and Diane Arbus are not important because we showed them. They might have been seen a little sooner, a little better—I'm willing to admit that.

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But the notion that their work wouldn't have surfaced and wouldn't have been made available to other photographers, or that other photographers wouldn't have been alert enough to understand the work, I find that idea nutty and insulting to photography. Photographers in this country are, compared to the rest of the world, enormously well educated in terms of their own tradition. And certainly that isn't anything that started when I came to this museum. The general level of understanding of what has been done so far, and therefore an intuitive sense of where the end of the diving board may be now, is remarkably sophisticated in this country. That's not surprising if you consider the history of photographic education in this country, the books that have been published and the number of museum collections.

MK: Especially this museum's?

JS: Yes and no. Obviously it is politically impossible to go through the history of this museum and single out names to demonstrate the fact that the imprimatur of this museum *doesn't* necessarily work. I think one could find in the museum's chronology of photography exhibitions the names of photographers who were shown substantially and yet became like stones dropped into bottomless wells. So you could demonstrate historically that this museum did not invent a tradition—any more than any other museum invented one.

MK: You seem to want to play down the importance of your department.

JS: Alfred Barr wanted this place to be responsive to what happened that was of value. I believe that Alfred would have thought, as I think, that anything else would be really quite an immoral position for a museum to take.

However, I don't mean to suggest that what one does in the museum doesn't have some kind of effect. One hopes that one's programs will bring to a broader audience, including, very importantly, other artists, work that will be meaningful to them. We should be a liaison—an intelligent one, hopefully. The principals are the artist and the audience, which includes other artists.

MK: How many photographs does your collection contain?

JS: About 15,000. It is certainly minuscule in comparison to that of the Library of Congress or the Smithsonian or maybe even the New York Public Library. That depends on what one thinks the function of the collection is.

MK: What is it for this museum?

JS: Unlike one of those great encompassing archives, which collects photography for the sake of showing as fully as possible what has happened in the world, we hope that ours documents the way *photography* has dealt with the same subject. We don't need pictures of every president, although they're good things to have. They should be somewhere, but they don't have to be here—unless the president was photographed in a way that gives you a different sense of what it's like to be a president.

MK: And how does this museum differ from other places that show contemporary photography?

JS: I think of a place like the International Center of Photography, for example, as an informal school. In some ways one might say that it serves a function—I wouldn't want to make the comparison too close—comparable to that of the old Photo League, where photographers and would-be photographers could meet and talk.

MK: You don't see this museum as serving that kind of function?

JS: We can to some degree. But obviously, when one gets to be a museum, other obligations become burdensome. The people who look back to the early days of this museum with some kind of wonder—it was wonderful, there's no doubt about it—don't realize that a good deal of the freedom and looseness and economy of effort was possible because it really wasn't a museum. It had no collection of significance. It did not have the weight of a thousand tons of archives.

Concerning this museum as a kind of school, let me say that I've always been profoundly dedicated to the idea of this place as an educational institution. This aspect will be enhanced with the expanded facilities. We will have a larger study center, for example, which will make it even easier to do things like conduct graduate seminars.

MK: And with the expanded gallery space, how many photographs will you now be able to show?

JS: In the neighborhood of 250 pictures, compared to probably about 120 in the old museum. The photographs have been getting bigger, so we don't quite get a realistic ratio from that.

Our new exhibition space is the entire second floor of the old building, which gives us at least two and a half times the space we had after the 1954 expansion. Our first gallery, the introductory gallery, will be used most often for special exhibitions from the collection or various kinds of smaller team shows or, on occasion, temporary loan shows. But since the collection space proper is larger than the space we had before, we can be much more ambitious with what we show. Previously we could only suggest the historical shape of the classic modern period of photography—from about 1910 to World War II. It was a reasonably adequate Cook's tour. Beyond that, however, we really could provide only samples. The whole 19th century was represented by perhaps a dozen pictures. Everything from the 1940s through the '70s amounted to nothing more than a few pictures that hinted at what had gone on.

I don't mean to suggest that even with the new space we're going to be able to do an encyclopedic history. But certainly I think the new installation is going to give us a sense of what photography has been about since the beginning. It will tell the story in a way that's more subtle and complex, and I think that's good. The audience by now is ready for a story that's a little less simple. And the installation should be very beautiful. I mean, if it's not beautiful we must be pretty dumb, since we've been collecting pictures for a very long time. So we should have enough good material to make an impressive condensation of what the art of photography has been about.

MK: Which is?

JS: I think it is continually redefined. I believe that it is one of the principal techniques by which we have continued to redefine not only what the world looks like—obviously it has redefined that—but also what is important or significant or worth looking at. Well, that's quite a bit.

MK: I expected you to say it has redefined the way we look at things rather than the things we look at.

JS: Both. I am becoming incapable of making distinctions anymore between form and content. But certainly, no matter what you call it, it has to do with the stuff of life, with the meaning of the world and the meaning of life.

It's true that I'm very much interested, I'm profoundly interested, in the process by which meaning enters a photograph. It's also unfortunately true that I find it extremely difficult to separate the meaning from the process. And I don't know how to deal with one at a time because, to the

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degree that the picture is formed—and I don't mean straight lines and shallow space and angular planes, I don't mean that at all—its meanings must be contained in that process for the picture to attain some kind of rigor. If they're not contained in that process, how do you get them from the picture? How do you know they're there? And, of course, sometimes the process itself becomes a large part of the meaning. That is one direction photographers can take.

MK: Will you be emphasizing many more photographers?

JS: We will have more people and a wider variety of people, and we'll be able, I think, to deal better with some of the interesting, even if not absolutely central, figures.

MK: For instance?

JS: The whole nature of the character and influence of the vernacular tradition, in the 19th century and even substantially into this century, has always been of very great interest to me. But it has been difficult to take down a Stieglitz or a Callahan and put up work by a lesser-known or younger photographer. Now we can show both types and at least make an attempt to explain why—I don't mean in words but by the context—why they're both there and what it means. If you include more work, does that mean you have lowered your standards? In some way it might. And at least in some areas, maybe it allows you to be a little more forgiving.

MK: Are there particular contemporary artists you are going to emphasize?

JS: This is the kind of thing no intelligent curator would admit. But it's very difficult for me to believe that Friedlander, for example, is going to become a boring photographer, that he is going to stop changing. Zeke Berman, who creates oddly constructed still lifes that fool the eye, is wonderful. And Harry Callahan.

As for lesser-known artists, I must say that we really try, we really make an effort, but we still don't get to see everything that's shown in this town, to say nothing of what's happening in the rest of the country and the rest of the world. As it is, I would say on the average we see 20 to 25 portfolios every Thursday morning. In the course of a year, it adds up. It is a major expenditure of time. I know that the photographers find it difficult when they come back and I say "Thank you very much" and shake hands and say "Good-bye."

MK: How often do you select anything from these portfolios?

JS: Well, I would guess that we buy work by about ten to 20 new artists each year.

MK: Will you show more contemporary work?

JS: Our temporary gallery—which will give us something like five times the temporary space we had before—will be used a good deal of the time for contemporary work.

MK: Do you think you have enough space in the new museum?

JS: I think the museum has been very generous. It's a question of what you have, what the museum has, where its riches lie, what the nature of its obligation is and how well we can explain what we have to explain in our department. If we say that we're only showing one-tenth of one percent, or whatever, of our collection, it's meaningless. We acquire pictures that we know we're not going to put up on the wall. We don't acquire them for that purpose. We can't begin to show everything. But, you know, 15,000 photographs, in terms of the whole tradition, isn't that much. It's invisible. ■

Michael Kimmelman: What will your new galleries be like?

Riva Castleman: For the first time, the museum will try to cover the history of modern art since 1885 in prints. We can now do this because we finally have a gallery devoted entirely to prints. I think visitors will really like the galleries. When you enter them, you move out of the wonderful light illuminating the escalator system into a sort of dark and mysterious area, a space with low ceilings and little light, which is the print gallery. Actually, the first few galleries are dark, linen-walled spaces; they include works dating up to about 1962. For the contemporary period we have a separate gallery, a sort of loft space. We hope to change the works often in that space so that recent acquisitions will go up as soon as possible. Obviously, we have to change many of the pieces so that they don't stay up too long—which wouldn't be good for the prints.

MK: What is the first major print show you will have in the new museum?

RC: A Toulouse-Lautrec exhibition next year. And there are a few small exhibitions I've been planning for a long time, including a show of Hungarian avant-garde prints and drawings from the National Gallery in Budapest. That is an area in which I've been particularly interested. The material hasn't been very widely seen in this country, though it has been exhibited quite a bit in Europe. We're more familiar with the Russian version of Constructivism, and this is lesser, to be sure, but it takes up some of the threads that the Russians neglected or abandoned. Also, we forget that there were provincial places other than America in the teens. It is interesting to see where the Hungarians were taking their influences from, how much they looked to France and how much they looked to other places. It's a very minor exhibition, but the material is fascinating and the kind of thing that I think has a place in a big museum like this.

MK: Are you satisfied with the space?

RC: Never! No, it isn't enough, and I hope someday we'll be able to rectify that. The worst thing is that by the time we finally got the gallery built, it was no longer big enough for the kind of art people are making in printed form today. It was unforeseen that artists would get increasingly interested in prints and occasionally make extremely large major works in print instead of in another medium. Indeed, the print medium has become more and more vital over the last 20 or 25 years.

MK: Why?

RC: There was an impetus toward it. Pop artists found it a convenient way of getting their message across, employing techniques that were considered commercial at the time. There was a very interesting symbiosis going on among the commercial media, the medium of silkscreen and the kinds of images that Pop artists were making.

Another thing that fostered the recent growth of printmaking in the United States is that ateliers became available to American artists in the '60s. Before then, it was unusual for somebody to work in a studio with an artist. Once artists started having that kind of system, however, going into a print shop and working in collaboration with the printer and a few other people didn't seem so strange.

MK: Is there also an interest in prints because they can be reproduced and sold widely?

RC: Yes, they're a very good deal economically. I would

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Director PRINTS AND ILLUSTRATED BOOKS

Riva Castleman



'We acquire works by artists who are completely unknown. We don't care whether they manage to do more than one good work in their life. After all, if you choose friends only on the basis of pedigree, you know what you get'

say at least half of the prints done are just commercial ventures. It often happens that the artist still is trying to make art, but the motivation is money. It's a fascinating story, which all of us interested in prints have already discussed, but I think it's the least of several fascinating things about prints.

Not only economically but also conceptually, prints are very good for artists. Making them is much different from taking a brush and some paint and putting something on canvas. The fact that it takes so long to make a print, that so much time has to elapse between decision and realization, is in many cases very good discipline for artists, particularly those who developed when they were quite young.

You see what happens with an artist like Frank Stella, who is doing so much of his work in prints. I think he likes the print materials that he works with. He discovers things which are imposed by other people who are part of the team that produces the print, or by the manufacture, or whatever, that I think are inspirational. It's the old junkyard mentality, which previously he didn't seem to share. What has happened is that because prints are a two-dimensional medium, printmaking has answered questions raised by his increasingly three-dimensional art. I think it addresses issues that must be central to his work: what do you do with the plane if you can't break the object into pieces and work forward and backward with it, how do you keep it flat but still work front and back? There is no doubt that prints contribute a lot to his unique work.

MK: You bring up teamwork in making prints. Why would that be inspirational for artists?

RC: I think it has a certain appeal for certain artists. Some really have to transcend their desire to be alone. How that is done is always very interesting because you can almost recognize it in the art. The artists who are successful printmakers, by and large, are the ones who establish a very good working relationship in the print workshop and who are very congenial. And it's interesting that when the personalities don't jibe, the art doesn't either. When the art is good, you can often guess that the teamwork was an attractive part of the process for the artist.

MK: What are the other attractions for artists?

RC: There are many things best communicated in prints—a certain physicality, for example. Munch, say, realized that there were things that wouldn't work in a watercolor because the medium wasn't fierce enough, harsh enough. And so he chose printing. If you look closely at certain prints by Toulouse-Lautrec, for example, and at his paintings, you see clearly that he knew all about printing and was actually able to represent a lot of things better in printing than he could in painting. It wasn't really his technique; it was that when he chose his inspiration from, let's say, Japanese prints, he realized that his ideas would not be best represented by the soft fluidity of paint or pastel. The brighter artists really do know when they should and when they should not do something in print, when the actual material just won't convey what they're trying to do. Lesser artists pick images or ideas that could be done in any medium.

MK: Many artists mix mediums.

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RC: Yes. My feeling generally is that you use more mediums when you know less what you're trying to convey.
MK: Then what do you look for in a good print—a certain faithfulness to the technique?
RC: I don't know. How can I tell you? This is a question that every curator wants to have the answer to and to which there is no one answer. As far as collecting for the museum is concerned, I am interested in representing in prints artists who are important in other materials, because this is the way we have built our collection in the past. The balance here is that there are many prints by painters, sculptors and others who work in unique forms and not as many by printmakers. If the museum is collecting a painting by some artist who has been making prints and if his or her print has some of the appeal of the painting, if it's suited to the chosen medium, it is likely that we would acquire it.

But we still look at prints by everybody. And from time to time we will acquire works by artists who are completely unknown to us because they bring something fresh to the image. We don't care whether they manage to do more than one good work in their life. After all, if you choose friends only on the basis of pedigree, you know what you get.
MK: Are there any artists you are particularly eager to collect?
RC: That is prediction, and I just won't give you an answer. There are many, both in Europe and here in America. I will say that collecting has become difficult in some curious ways. For example, I've come to a crisis recently because Julian Schnabel has made a print on velvet that is about the size of an entire wall. We never anticipated needing facilities for that. As a result, we must really consider whether or not we can buy it.
MK: That is a new dilemma.
RC: Yes. In that sense, it was easier in the past. Of course, we are always collecting works from the past, trying to fill gaps in the collection. But only if those gaps seem historically significant. For instance, we have had very little of the kind of art that James Tissot represented; yet it is quite likely that we won't be adding that type of work to the collection, because at the moment I don't see the carryover, the influence it has had on anybody. Yes, it was a beginning for people like Jacques Villon, but they rid themselves of that influence. So it may be that we were correct in the first place not to collect it.

On the other hand, this process also means that we look for work that perhaps did not appeal or look significant, say, 20 years ago. Right now, for example, there's a lot of scholarship on artists of the postwar period, the 1940s and '50s. Sure enough, there are prints coming out of the cracks. Some of them are awful, but some all of a sudden look interesting. And those are the gaps we will fill in.

In the end, I see myself—as do most curators, at least here—as an educator of some kind. Just like anyone else fervently interested in something, curators want to pass on their interests to other people, but not to pontificate, I hope. I want to show pictures and let viewers get out of them what they will, without telling them what they should see. It is true that biases naturally come through. But whatever I see in our exhibitions, you, the visitor, will see in them what you see. Your decisions about the exhibition will be informed by your particular background, your education and so forth. What we want is for people to come to our wonderful new print galleries and make those decisions for themselves. ■

Michael Kimmelman: What is a drawing?
John Elderfield: Institutionally, a drawing is defined as a unique work on paper. That is a reasonably workable definition. But one could posit a different definition without regard to medium. I think that we tend to fluctuate between wanting to show a very catholic understanding of drawing—which therefore is inclusive in terms of medium—and wanting to veer in an opposite strict direction. This fluctuation is, in fact, reflected very much in the kinds of acquisitions we make. We have purchased certain things that perhaps another institution would call paintings. Recently, for example, we got an Yves Klein that is on a board and is made with powdered pigment that is burned and smoked. In certain respects it looks like a painting. But in a broad sense it falls within the limits of this department, and it was acquired in part because of this ambiguity. That, for me, is one of the attractions of working in this area: that drawing, historically, has really refused definition—something that we hope will be evident to anyone walking through the new drawing galleries.
MK: You have more gallery space in the new museum.
JE: Oh, yes. Previously, we shared a gallery of about 2,500 or 3,000 square feet with the print department. It meant that out of the four annual installations in that gallery, we did two installations of roughly 100 drawings each. We showed, therefore, 200 drawings a year, plus a selection of other works on paper in the painting and sculpture galleries.

With the new system, we will still show some works on paper in the painting and sculpture galleries, those that fit in the history of those mediums, such as a few of the Cubist collages, certain of the pastels. Apart from that, we'll be working within the new drawing galleries. They are somewhat larger than the combined galleries were, so we'll be showing at least twice as many works a year. We're still not sure how many drawings we'll get into those galleries in one session, but it may be roughly 150. If we change four times a year, that's potentially 600 drawings on view each year.
MK: Will the drawings cover the history of modern drawings, or will they be arranged in other ways?
JE: Initially, we will do a historical survey to the present. At times, we will take the whole thing down and put up a thematic selection of works. At other times, we will use part of the galleries for a historical survey and then use one of the galleries for a separate grouping from the collection.

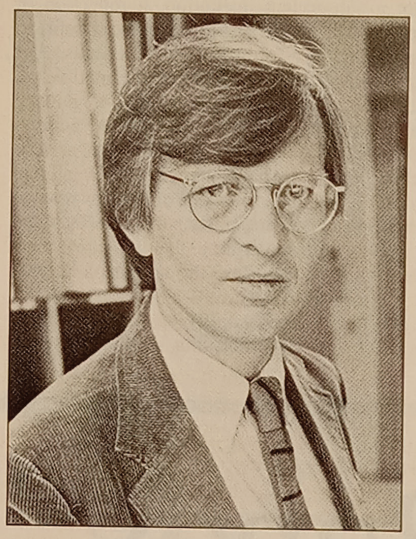
Altogether there are about 6,000 drawings or works on paper in the collection. We own many works that are not major masterpieces and that would not normally fit within a historical survey of masterpieces. But with the new gallery setup, it will be possible to show that material as well. For example, we have an enormous amount of material by the Czech artist Frantisek Kupka. We also have many studies for the theater—Bauhaus productions and Russian work, right through to Hockney. In terms of quite contemporary work, we have a number of very large pieces, or pieces composed of many units, that, again, could not have been shown in the past. Indeed, it is particularly important that we have this added space because there is so much contemporary work to show now. I think there is a great deal of interest in drawing today, more so during the past five or six years than before. After Minimalism and certain kinds of Conceptual art, drawing as an autonomous medium is

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Director DRAWINGS

John Elderfield



'Our concern is with art as an independent social institution. It is not a subservient institution, a reflection of politics. There isn't a social institution called political thought that art illustrates'

undergoing a great revival—almost challenging painting and sculpture. In fact, this revival is often being led by artists for whom drawing is at times the principal medium of expression, or at least equal in importance to painting or sculpture or whatever.

MK: Why this revival?

JE: Well, it has coincided with the revival of images in art, which has given drawing a more crucial role. This new art is more firmly based in drawing than, say, was the painting of the 1960s, which seemed in a way an escape from drawing. One cannot imagine wanting to acquire, for example, a drawing by Kenneth Noland, because everything is in the painting. That is no longer true of many artists.

MK: Which artists doing drawings today interest you most?

JE: I wouldn't want to say, there are just so many. Which isn't to say that I think that better drawings are being made now than in the past, simply that more of them are being made and that more issues are being worked out through drawing.

MK: What kinds of issues?

JE: One thing that has always interested me about drawing is that it forms a sort of link throughout the Western tradition as a means of image making. Image making is perhaps the principal root of drawing. I mean by it the purely inscriptive making of a thing. And certainly one of the interests of recent drawing, as of recent painting, is to somehow come back to image making. That had not been the case somewhat earlier. Painting in the modern period, at its most advanced, had tended to dissolve the image. I'm thinking first of all of Impressionism, as well as of Pollock, or Sol LeWitt—that is, certain kinds of allover process drawings, art that articulates an allover surface. I'm not saying I don't find that of interest, but such art seems to be less concerned with the fact that images themselves have potency.

MK: By "image making," are you referring to representational images?

JE: Both that and certain kinds of abstract images. I also mean image making as drawing in its most primal form, like the drawings on cave walls. Hannah Arendt talks about certain kinds of work and works of art, and she says that of all the arts, poetry most clearly exists without a tangible form and is closest to pure thought. And really drawing, within the visual arts, seems to me to hold that position. A painting is more something that exists as an object; it needs to be more fully constructed.

Now, what we're witnessing today is a period of tumult and reconsideration after abstraction had reached a certain impasse. What is happening now is not dissimilar to what had happened by the end of the 1920s, when geometric abstract art had seemed to go as far as it could. The 1930s saw a return to image making. One could also find parallels with the 1890s. Looking back on those periods, one realizes that the great art didn't come until this tumult had somehow led to something else, which would suggest that art today

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is not very strong. But, of course, it is dangerous to make presumptions in terms of the past. Let's wait and see if it's great art or not.

MK: How do you decide what is great art?

JE: I believe that, however impossible it is to prove, there is something called quality. One makes a discrimination when one looks at a work of art, not actually by choice, but value judgments come along with one's experience. I really feel that in looking at works of art one responds in terms of value.

MK: Value measured in formal terms?

JE: It is true, my interests have been largely with formal art-historical problems. The kinds of discriminations I'm talking about in no way, however, imply formal as opposed to, say, iconographic issues. It seems to me that if one is going to talk about form, the only useful definition is that which is actually seen. And that includes the illustrated subject as well as the means by which that subject is manifested. One knows that the fact that Matisse painted odalisques in the 1920s crucially affected what the pictures looked like, and one can't and shouldn't try to think away the subject. And even within the classic modern movements, one knows that if all choices were esthetic, certain movements wouldn't get much attention. So I know that in making acquisitions and doing exhibitions it is important to lay out, with the greatest openness and catholicity, the tradition of drawing, even to include in some cases those works that are in an esthetic sense perhaps less great but that are somehow distinct and personal.

MK: Would this catholicity extend to including, for instance, a social realist work that is of historical interest but that you would say is not a very good drawing?

JE: Again, it would depend on the particular case. Probably, the answer would be no in the circumstance you describe. Our concerns are with art as an independent social institution. It is not a subservient institution, a reflection of politics. There isn't a social institution called political thought that art illustrates. But as I said, it depends. The evaluation of goodness would come about in several ways. Although esthetically the work may not stand up against a Matisse, it may have redeeming qualities. It may address itself to, or respond to, a particular social outlook or situation with such urgency that no matter how conventional the means used to deal with it, the work of art may engage you. That is what I mean by distinct and personal. But again this is finally an esthetic evaluation.

MK: So all decisions are based on the notion of esthetic quality?

JE: It is true that it is a responsibility of this museum to collect in terms not only of quality but also of historical

Director FILM

Mary Lea Bandy



'American films have suffered because of their very popularity. When they have worked, they have been so marvelous that people assume they have no artistic value. Someday American classics like Notorious and Duel in the Sun will take their place among the important artworks of the 20th century'

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importance, which isn't necessarily the same. Yet one ends up making esthetic value judgments anyway, even if you have as much money as the Getty Museum. And I feel that if that is what happens, we should face up to it.

MK: Some have said that this museum used to play a much more assertive role in declaring the good art of the time. Do you think that this is true, and do you want this department, given the greater opportunities afforded by the expansion, to play that kind of aggressive role?

JE: When I came to the Modern it was certainly my perception that the museum had always been in the vanguard. It turns out, of course, that it had not. It was late in lots of areas, such as Abstract Expressionism, about which one is inclined to think of the Modern as pioneering. Even the bulk of the Matisse collection was not made until the 1950s.

It was Alfred Barr's notion that the museum should stand back a little and allow the dust to settle just a bit before making discriminations. Basically, it is a position that I also believe in. I think that one can never, in fact, be absolutely in the foreground. And the more institutionalized the Modern becomes, the less pioneering we can be, simply because it takes a while for an institution to move and to decide on things. That holds true particularly for acquisitions. Corporate collections, for example, can respond far more quickly to new art than we can. Nonetheless, because of our reputation, people still assume that what our gallery shows is meant to be a statement about the direction of drawing in the future.

MK: You can't help playing that role.

JE: No, in a sense we can't. Barr was aware of it. He said that he was a reluctant tastemaker. So despite ourselves, it happens that we are influential, which is something one cannot help thinking about.

MK: How do you think you are most influential?

JE: In a curious way, I think our historical exhibitions are more influential than our contemporary shows. Artists often talk to me about the historical shows as being most influential on their work. As far as the "New Work on Paper" shows are concerned, we don't intend them to be a definitive selection. We have never wanted to declare flatly that such exhibitions represent the greatest art being made.

MK: Will this series continue?

JE: It certainly will. There will be many more exhibitions. Early next year, there will be a Matisse drawing show, which we are collaborating on with the Arts Council of Great Britain and which will be shown in London first. At the same time, there will be another in the "New Work on Paper" series. And a Constructivist show. In fact, we will have four exhibitions in '85. It should be great for all our visitors. I just hope we can survive. ■

Michael Kimmelman: Why does the museum collect film?

Mary Lea Bandy: In 1929, when Alfred Barr said that the museum should collect the best of all the visual arts, he felt that film took its place among them. I agree with that completely. Film in this country has been linked with the performing arts because many times it is presented in a performing-arts facility. Yet film is a visual art like all the others, with the general exception that it moves. Film shares all the concerns of painting and sculpture, and there are many interesting similarities to architecture. Like architecture, it is an art form produced by committee, by many hands. There is a writer, or architect, who designs it, somebody else who builds it, somebody else who acts it out.

MK: If you see film as belonging to the same traditions as sculpture, painting and the other visual arts, does that determine your criteria for judging what is significant about the medium?

MLB: Oh, yes, very definitely. My background was in art history, and I approach film from the point of view of the history of painting. So the formal elements of film, the visual styles, are very important to me. I believe, however, that all art has content, no matter how abstractly it is presented. It has emotional content; it has intellectual content. It moves you. Art must do that somehow. Film tends to do that through narrative. Now, there are certain people on this museum's staff who approach film from the point of view of narrative content, who believe that the writer and director are equal. But there are many different approaches to film history. It hasn't settled into patterns quite as firmly defined as those that apply to art and architectural history. This will happen only when we learn to take film more seriously, which is an attitude this museum is trying hard to foster.

MK: Will you have more film exhibitions than in the past?

MLB: We will, starting with the museum's opening show, the "International Survey of Recent Painting and Sculpture." Throughout the summer, we will be presenting selections from videos and films done over the last several years that complement the ideas and themes in the painting and sculpture survey. I think this is very appropriate. There are many filmmakers today who have consciously decided to be film artists rather than painters or printmakers or whatever and who are conceptually very close to artists in those mediums. Artists have found that they can, for instance, work out many visual problems through film. Someone trying to study motion or the serial form, who in the past might have executed a series of prints, let's say, can carry out his or her investigations with film or tape instead. Artists who want to create performance art in which they themselves interact with the audience can do this through video marvelously well. Formal issues can also be addressed through film. Using film, it is possible to be very experimental with color, for example. Narrative isn't the only important aspect of film, although it has been one of its primary concerns.

MK: Particularly for American filmmakers?

MLB: Absolutely. American film has developed a very strong narrative tradition from D. W. Griffith, whose body of work we have assiduously collected and preserved. He was the great American filmmaker, the one who really created the narrative form. But American film has also developed a strong visual style. It has produced the technology to make films in the most sophisticated way. And so it has been able to accomplish absolutely wonderful ways to tell a story in visual terms, to create a mood—through what you see, not only through what you hear. American Hollywood studio films at their best are a wonderful fusion of script-writing, visual style and art direction as well as acting, pacing and drama.

Curiously, these films have suffered because of their very popularity. When they have worked, they have been so delightful, so marvelous, that people assume they have no artistic value whatsoever. I feel that 50 years from now people will understand the David O. Selznick collection in

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the Museum of Modern Art far better than they understand it today. *Notorious*, *Duel in the Sun* and other American classics will take their place among the important artworks of the 20th century.

MK: Do you feel that American films differ from European films?

MLB: Yes, although it is obviously difficult to generalize. European films approach character and story development in different ways. The Germans, for example, to put it very superficially, have developed a magnificent technique for creating dramatic atmosphere through light and shadow as well as through wonderful pacing. That ability to create a particular emotional atmosphere was translated into the American cinema through the émigrés who came here before and during the war. Filmmakers like Fritz Lang have left wonderful legacies.

The British film also differs from the American but in other ways. The British are very interested in telling how things are done—how a group of men functioned on a boat in World War II or how the mail train goes from London to Edinburgh and what happens on that train. Their films are also wonderfully literate and funny. Language is very important in them, often more so than in American films. The British also have a different studio system from ours. It is not as lavish. This has tended to produce intimate films that often focus on certain aspects of British society, on the way people in the various classes of British society live—particularly on how people don't move out of those classes very easily, which is very different from the theme of the American dream, in which anybody can go out and do anything they wish.

MK: You will be doing a British film series, won't you?

MLB: Yes. It will run for a year and a half, starting in October. We are surveying the entire history of British film, including the silent period. We will present different aspects of the British cinema—films that deal with these issues of class, films from the genres of the musical, the melodrama, the horror film and, of course, the great tradition of comedy. There will also be a section on the literary cinema, which will highlight this distinct aspect of British film style—the fact that it is often much closer to theater and literature than its American counterpart. The people who made movies in London also performed in plays at the same time. In the United States, beginning in the '30s, actors on the stage who wanted to be in movies had to get on a train to Hollywood. They had to choose. That pattern of making your career in one medium or the other has continued in this country, although today many young actors and actresses want very much to be accepted as performers both on the stage and in films. They are very conscious of the fact that people may take them less seriously if they are seen only as film stars.

MK: Do you think that is still the case?

MLB: Generally it is still true in this country. Again, it is not true of other places, such as France. French film differs from American film in that from the beginning it was accepted as an art form and taken seriously. The French did not debate, as Americans always have, whether or not film was a major art form. The consequence in America was that, unfortunately, painters, writers, architects and others generally didn't get involved in filmmaking. American film was always considered more of a commercial venture than the other arts, and that tended to give it a tainted reputation.

MK: Yet, as you said before, you also think great artists, like Griffith, worked in American film.

MLB: Absolutely. I don't know whether it was John Ford who said he wanted to become a millionaire and so decided to make films. No matter, because he was an artist. In fact, he learned to use the system and work through it.

MK: What do you mean, he used the system?

MLB: I think he exploited the fact that film was a widespread and commercial medium. He recognized that it is quite a fascinating and extraordinarily difficult problem to create art that can be understood by anyone. Matisse was another who thought about that. Remember his remark that he wanted to make art for the tired businessman sitting in his armchair. Well, Ford is not far from that notion. Matisse wanted to appeal to everyone, not just learned, educated, isolated people. Filmmakers can be like novelists who try to make art and also sell many copies of their work. I often think that Griffith was superficially like Dickens, who was popular and often therefore dismissed, yet who, years later, is recognized as a great artist. The same thing is going to happen with Ford, with Hitchcock and with Orson Welles.

MK: This department does not shy from collecting and showing the most commercially popular films, does it?

MLB: I don't think so. We want a representative collection of the entire history of the medium. Many of the films that have won Oscars are in the collection—and should be—and many others we wouldn't touch with a ten-foot pole, no matter what. The first films of Steven Spielberg were shown in the museum. *Sugarland Express* was shown in the "New Directors" series. Of course, we would like to have copies of all his films; he is a very important young filmmaker. We certainly wish to have films by the major people working today. I think that Martin Scorsese is a great filmmaker, and I would like to have every one of his films in the collection. We have a few of Francis Ford Coppola's films and would like to have more. But we are generally selective in what we collect because our collection is supposed to include only what is best in the medium.

MK: Your department has had a reputation for presenting a very broad range of international filmmakers.

MLB: I hope so. From the '60s until now, I think one of our major priorities has been to expose work from all over the world that could not find a commercial outlet.

In terms of the rest of New York, however, we are not unique in this way. There are many film programs today in the city, organizations and institutions presenting films.

MK: So you don't see the importance of this museum as being usurped by these other places?

MLB: Oh, no. I think we all complement each other. The more outlets there are and the more options, the more people will become interested in going to the movies.

MK: What do you think distinguishes your department?

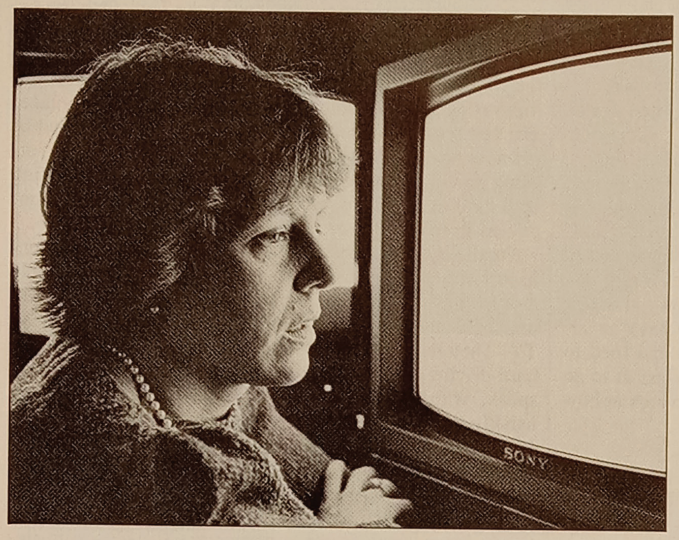
MLB: I think one of the wonderful characteristics of this place is that our approach is so varied. We don't feel that we have one major or narrow function. We very much wish to be a place where filmmakers can study the work of other filmmakers and present their own work. But we go further than that. I think that if we had to declare a purpose at MoMA, we would say that we wish to present the many varied genres and styles of films that are being made throughout the world today. Like the film medium itself, our range of interests—and the expression of them—is great. This is what makes film such a remarkably exciting medium—and this department such an especially wonderful part of the museum. ■

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Assistant Curator VIDEO

Barbara London



'Video is more the art of our times than is the art of any other department here.... It is a field full of promise'

Michael Kimmelman: How many works do you have in the video collection?

Barbara London: Three hundred. The number of works by independent video artists will number 150 after the opening show, ''Narrative,'' which will include 40 works from all over the world made from 1981 to 1984. The total of 300 includes the commercial work we've been given over the years. We've got some of the best TV commercials.

MK: Do you want the collection to expand in a commercial direction?

BL: I don't think we should stick just to art videos. People like Godard, Rossellini and Fassbinder all did good work for television. The BBC has done incredible programming, and we've shown some of it in film format because a lot of their spots were shot in that medium.

Let me make clear that video is within the film department, which, I think, is quite appropriate. As video cameras and the screens and projection systems improve, you won't know the difference. The result will be a lot more programming that overlaps. Now, of course, video tends to be shown on a box, whereas film is projected onto a screen. The resolution with video isn't yet as good as with film. Video, admittedly, often looks very washed out in comparison.

MK: So what is the appeal of video?

BL: Several things. I think one of the big draws from the beginning was that it was a part of the media. We were all familiar with video from the TV. We knew that it could be used as a communicator of news and such. And you can shoot and then immediately see what you've recorded. Also you can overshoot, a thing you can't do with film as the development costs are so prohibitive. Most filmmakers have to be so careful. But somebody who is out shooting with video can just go at it. That is appealing. And then many video artists are interested in exploiting the medium's sense of immediacy.

MK: Why is that important?

BL: It is appropriate to our generation and lifestyle. We're so used to immediacy—to getting immediate gratification. Film seems more contemplative. Not that video is not often contemplative too, and very poetic. I'm thinking, for example, of Bill Viola's wonderful *Chott el-Djerid (A Portrait in Light and Heat)* or of Mary Lucier's *Ohio at Giverny*. Some works have the same look or feel as a Turner, his quality of light or constructing images, or of, say, a Delacroix watercolor of a desert.

MK: Do you see connections between painting and video?

BL: Well, some of the early videomakers began as painters. Many of them came to video because, like many other artists in the '60s, they were very interested in time and the fact that, during the act of painting, images would unfold that the viewer would never see. Moreover, in a gallery a painting will just sit on a wall while people waltz by. Video makes people stop. So for some of those artists it was a form of control. They could get the viewer to sit down and

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really *watch* what they'd done. They had control over time and attention, which is also an important issue for television people, particularly makers of commercials.

MK: Let's get back to television for a moment. Do you expect in the new museum to do exhibitions of, for example, television commercials or programs?

BL: Oh, I imagine somewhere down the road. We did a show of British commercials, which was fascinating, a little over a year ago. And I have shown some rock video, although I haven't really made up my mind about it completely. I know it's important because it's lucrative. But I've been waiting for a lot of that material to get better. And, frankly, I just don't know if once videomakers have walked down that commercial road they can turn back.

MK: Will you compete with such places as the Museum of Broadcasting?

BL: Not really. They—in the past, anyway—have concentrated on collecting representative programming from the major networks. We, on the other hand, will go after specific people's work, or the work of an amazing director, let's say a film person like Fassbinder or Herzog who got started in television and went on to feature films. We're also different from, say, the Kitchen because we don't show or collect only contemporary material. We also have an archive, and so we have gone after early work and tried to fill in gaps. Moreover, I have tried to get storyboards to go with the works, so that students will be able to look at how an entire project was composed.

MK: How do you decide what to select?

BL: I go on what everybody in this place goes on—quality, choosing the best work. And to me that doesn't mean that it has to be incredibly well done technically. But it must have an idea, integrity, and somehow be unified.

I don't particularly like the term, but I favor work that's more perceptual, that deals with seeing—the work of people like Robert Cahen from Paris, or Viola. We're going to do a show of Viola's work in 1985. It will be the biggest video exhibition we've ever had. Viola is an incredible visionary. He was and still is a pioneer and, in my opinion, is one of the most important videomakers. He knows the capabilities—and limits—of the medium and is able to use the equipment for what it can do well. He pushes it but won't do anything that doesn't fit in with the images. He deals with light and the fact that video is light; he creates images that very seriously consider what video as a medium is.

When I say "deal with seeing," I mean the work is concerned with the formal properties of video. But I'm also interested in video that deals with the soul. A good video work must have spirit in it. The work must hold up to formal analysis but must also say something quite poetic. That counts out a lot of video, let me tell you.

MK: What kinds of video appeal to you less?

BL: I'm waiting to see the whole computer area get more rigorous. The technology is amazing, but a lot of the visuals look like something out of the '60s. Our collection includes a little bit of it, however.

MK: Has the new museum changed your approach to the collection?

BL: Yes, in a way. For one thing our gallery, which will have about 13 seats, is no longer down in the basement. It's going to be right off the lobby, quite front and center. I think a lot of strong video work is being done, so we warrant that attention. But I suppose it also makes me feel more cautious.

MK: How so?

BL: I've always seriously thought about what we exhibit, but I guess now I feel I must go a little deeper. The opening show is being done in conjunction with the "International Survey of Recent Painting and Sculpture." That has made me think seriously about the crossovers, the influences, the extent to which artists—painters, sculptors, videomakers—are all responding to the same stimuli.

MK: For example?

BL: Well, the new expressionism also characterizes the work of certain people doing video. Take Tony Oursler, for instance, who came out of California and studied with John Baldessari and Jonathan Borofsky. If you look at his tapes, the way he constructs the sets and the quality of the acting, the way he does the sound effects and his use of language, you can see the connections. Oursler's work has a kind of rawness to it. He's playing a bit on vulgarity, on the sets being done in a crude way. He's really interested in setting up a kind of energetic, emotive environment that's not unrelated in feeling to *art brut*.

Paralleling this is the work of an artist like Marcel Odenbach, who lives in Cologne. He and a couple of people around him—Klaus vom Bruch and others—have for some time been making videos using found footage from film and TV. They integrate this material with live performance and hard-driving music, confronting their own images, so to speak, within a mass-media environment. The whole is harshly edited, and the sound is harsh.

MK: How would you describe what's happening in video right now?

BL: There are two real directions. One is being followed by people using the medium to explore the media, much as Cindy Sherman does in her photographs. Included in this group are such artists as Dara Birnbaum in the United States and Gusztáv Hámos in Germany. Then there are the people like Viola and Cahen who work to compose a personal poetry, who are intent on creating a world of their own.

MK: Which artists do you want to concentrate on?

BL: There are a number of new works by people from virtually everywhere that I'm very interested in. Some people have come out of the blue—from Europe, Latin America, Canada, the United States. Cecilia Condit, for example, a woman from Ohio, makes videos that play with the structure of narrative. Then there are people whose work I've followed and want to keep up with: Woody Vasulka just did a piece called *The Commission*; and Viola did a piece last year called *Anthem*. The Japanese are particularly adept at exploiting the two-dimensionality of the video screen. I am much taken with Yasuno Shinohara's *Cubist Fantasy II*, which in its superimposition of images takes advantage of video's narrow depth of field. There's a young English fellow named John Adams whose work is worth looking at. Cahen in Paris. And the Germans. There are so many—it's really very exciting.

MK: Do you think video is an important and lively part of the museum?

BL: Video is more the art of our times than is the art of any other department here. And, yes, I think it *is* thrilling to see the level of the work get better, deeper, more rigorous—to see the artists get more sophisticated with their equipment. Now we have fewer works that are just the by-products of experimentation and more by artists starting with an idea and finding whatever means necessary in video to realize their vision. It is a field full of promise. ■

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COURTESY ANNINA NOSEI GALLERY



Mimmo Paladino, **Viadante**, 1983, oil on canvas with wood and reliefs, diameter 84 inches.

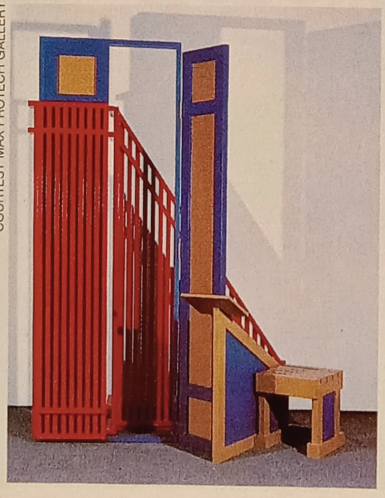
An International Survey of Recent Painting and Sculpture

COURTESY DAVID McKEE GALLERY



Sean Scully, **Tiger**, 1983, oil on canvas, 82 by 75 inches.

COURTESY MAX PROTECH GALLERY

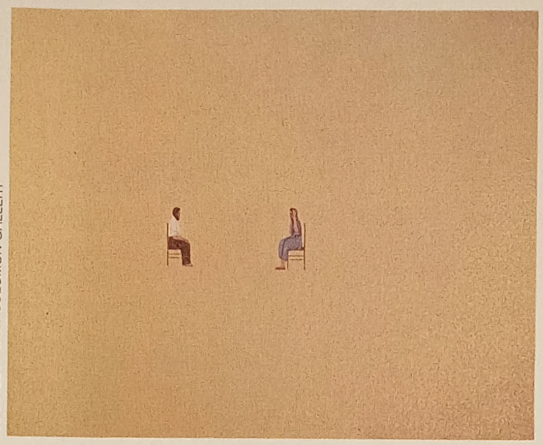


Siah Armajani, **Garden Gate**, 1982-83, painted wood, 95 by 75 by 37 inches.

The following artists were invited to participate in the exhibition. The list was compiled from a number of sources, including artists, dealers, collectors and others in various countries. As this issue went to press, the Museum of Modern Art had declined to verify the list.

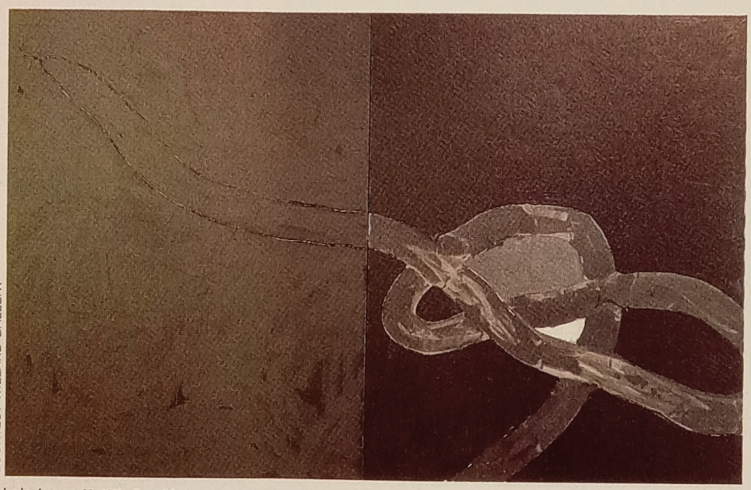
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COURTESY HOLLY SOLOMON GALLERY

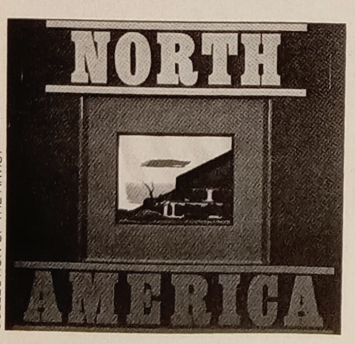
Nicholas Africano, **The Cruel Discussion**, 1977, acrylic, wax and oil on canvas, 73 by 90 inches.



COURTESY WILLARD GALLERY

Lois Lane, **Untitled**, 1981, oil and graphite on canvas, 75 by 120 inches.

Steve Gianakos, **Dead Girl at Party**, 1980, acrylic on canvas, 18 by 24 inches.



COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

Neil Jenney, **Bruce Hardie Memorial**, 1978-82, oil on wood, 74 by 80 inches.



COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

Magdalena Abakanowicz
Alice Adams
Mac Adams
Robert Adrian
Nicholas Africano
Jean-Michel Alberola
Peter Alexander
Davilen
Gregory Amenoff
Anselmo
Siegfried Anzinger
Siah Armajani
Armando
Attersee
Frank Auerbach
Georg Baselitz
Jake Berthot
Jean-Charles Blais
Erwin Bohatsch
Peter Bömmels
Peter Booth
Jonathan Borofsky
Richard Bosman
Paul Boston
Gary Bower
Troy Brauntuch
Roger Brown
Chris Burden
Scott Burton
Michael Byron
Miriam Cahn
Luciano Castelli
Marc Camille Chaimowicz
Louisa Chase
Sandro Chia
Francesco Clemente
Tony Coleing
Jan Commandeur

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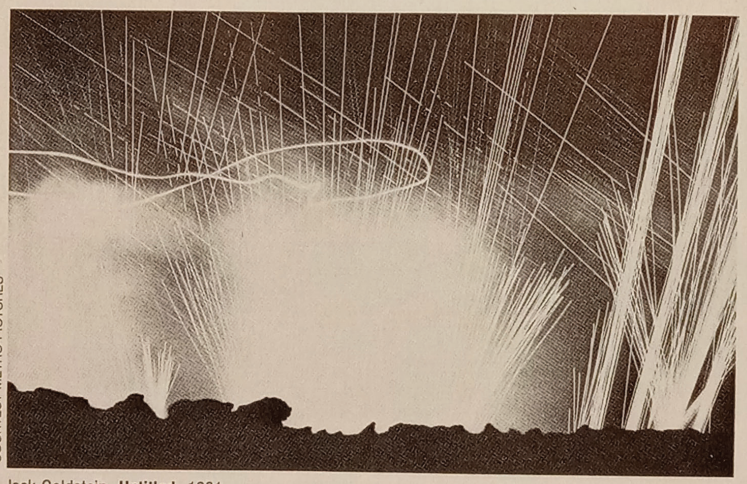
COURTESY WASHBURN GALLERY

Bill Jensen, **The Tempest**, 1981, oil on linen, 30¼ by 22⅛ inches.



COURTESY WILLARD GALLERY

Barry Ledoux, **No. 1 with Spleen**, 1980-81, lead, copper, chair, locusts, spider, needles and pigment, 54½ by 44 by 41 inches.



COURTESY METRO PICTURES

Jack Goldstein, **Untitled**, 1981, acrylic on canvas, 84 by 132 inches.



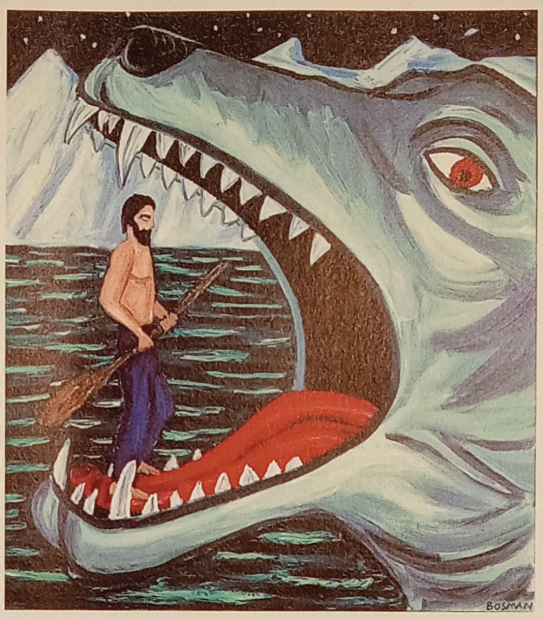
COURTESY WILLARD GALLERY

Susan Rothenberg, **Pontiac**, 1979, acrylic and flashe on canvas, 88 by 61 inches.

Stephen Cox
Tony Cragg
Enzo Cucchi
Walter Dahn
Nicolo DeMaria
Gianni Dessi
David Deutsch
Antonio Diaz
Martin Disler
J.G. Dokoupil
Donald Evans
Luciano Fabro
Rafael Ferrer
Rainer Fetting
R.M. Fischer
Eric Fischl
Peter Fischli and David Weiss
Joel Fisher
Barry Flanagan
Alphons Freijmuth
William Garbe
Jedd Garet
Dana Garrett
Steve Gianakos
Jack Goldstein
Antony Gormley
Toni Grand
Jene Highstein
Howard Hodgkin
Horst Hödicke
Bryan Hunt
Jörg Immendorf
Mark Innerst
Oliver Jackson
Yvonne Jacquette
Neil Jenney
Bill Jensen

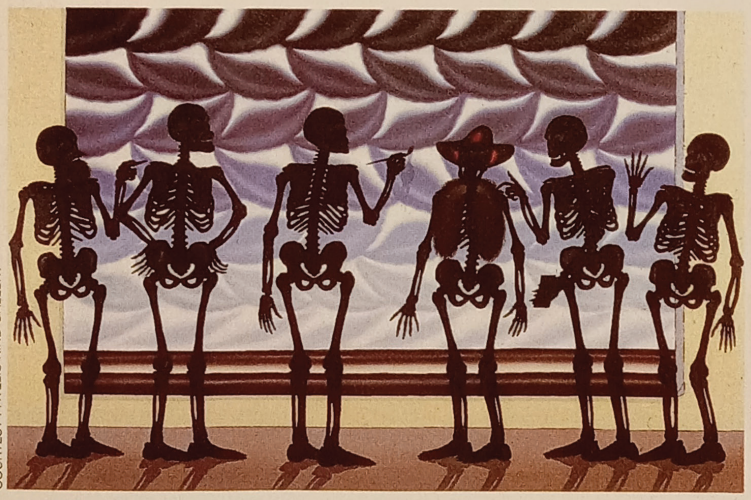
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COURTESY BROOKE ALEXANDER GALLERY

Richard Bosman, **The Norseman**, 1980, oil on canvas, 84 by 75 inches.



COURTESY PHYLLIS KIND GALLERY

Roger Brown, **Art's Folly: The Artist Working with His Critics, Dealer, Patron, and Student Admirer Looking On**, 1983, oil on canvas, 48 by 72 inches.



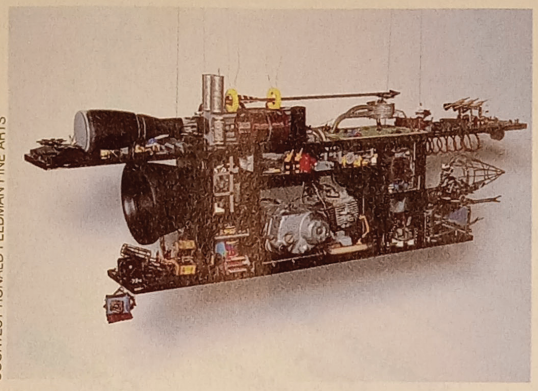
COURTESY ROBERT MILLER GALLERY

Louisa Chase, **Saint Sebastian**, 1979, oil on canvas, 72 by 78 inches.

Roberto Juarez
Anish Kapoor
Mel Kendrick
Jon Kessler
Anselm Kiefer
Per Kirkeby
Bernd Koberling
Komar & Melamid
Robert Kushner
Cheryl Laemmle
Lois Lane
Bertrand Lavier
Christopher Lebrun
Barry Ledoux
Jean Le Gac
Robert Longo
Nino Longobardi
Markus Lüpertz
Kim MacConnel
David Mach
Carlo Maria Mariani
Bruce McLean
Helmut Middendorf
Malcolm Morley
Robert Moskowitz
Elizabeth Murray
David Nash
George Negroponte
Tom Otterness
Mimmo Paladino
N. Palerma
Giulio Paolini
Ed Paschke
A.R. Penck
Giuseppe Penone
Emmanuel Pereire
Sigmar Polke
Katherine Porter

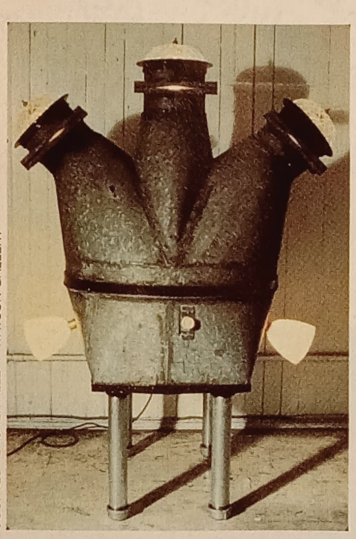
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COURTESY RONALD FELDMAN FINE ARTS

Chris Burden, **The Santa Maria**, 1982, wood, toys and paint, 75½ by 15¼ by 30 inches.



COURTESY BASKERVILLE + WATSON GALLERY

R. M. Fischer, **Bertha**, 1982, galvanized steel, steel, wood, glass, plastic and electric lights, height 60 inches.

Gregory Amenoff, **In the Fifth Season**, 1983, oil on canvas, 100 by 88 inches.



COURTESY ROBERT MILLER GALLERY



COURTESY NANCY HOFFMAN GALLERY

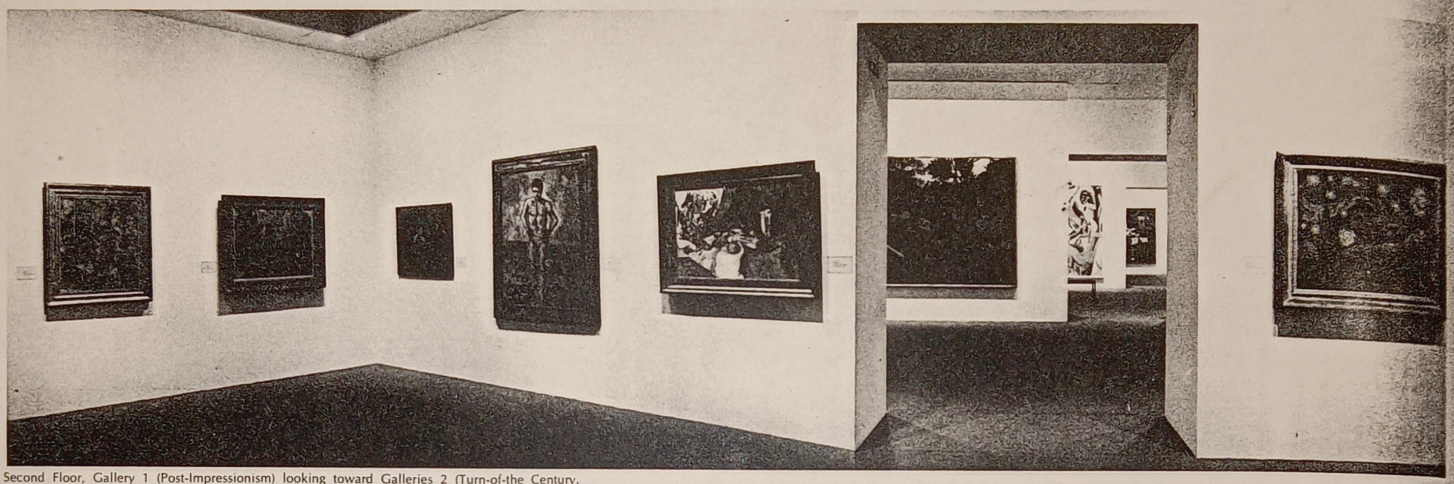
Raphael Ferrer, **Finale (El Show)**, 1982, oil on canvas, 63 by 120 inches.

Ken Price
Markus Raetz
Carl Fredrik Reutersward
Gerhard Richter
Bruce Robbins
Susan Rothenberg
Reiner Ruthenbeck
David Salle
Salomé
Patrick Saytour
Hubert Schmalix
Julian Schnabel
Andreas Schulze
Sean Scully
Joel Shapiro
Alexis Smith
Ned Smyth
Robert Stackhouse
Pat Steir
Gary Stephan
Thomas Stimm
Donald Sultan
Riduan Tomkins
Ger Van Elk
Hans van Hoek
Toon Verhoef
Emo Verkerk
Didier Vermeiren
Claude Viallat
John Walker
Thornton Willis
Christopher Wilmarth
Robert Wilson
Terry Winters
Bill Woodrow
Robert Zakanitch
Kes Zapkus
Bernd Zimmer
Gilberto Zorio
Michael Zwack

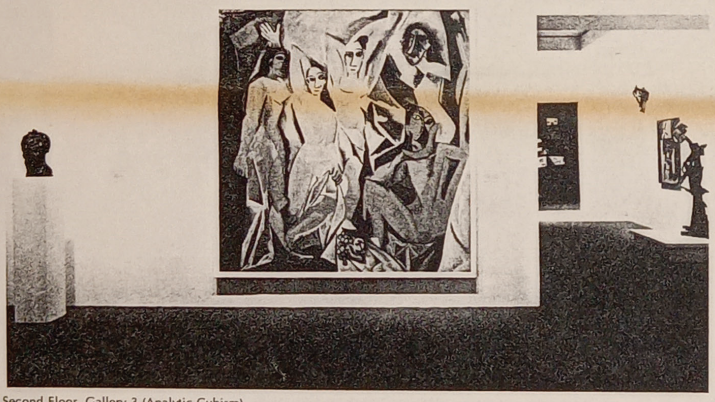
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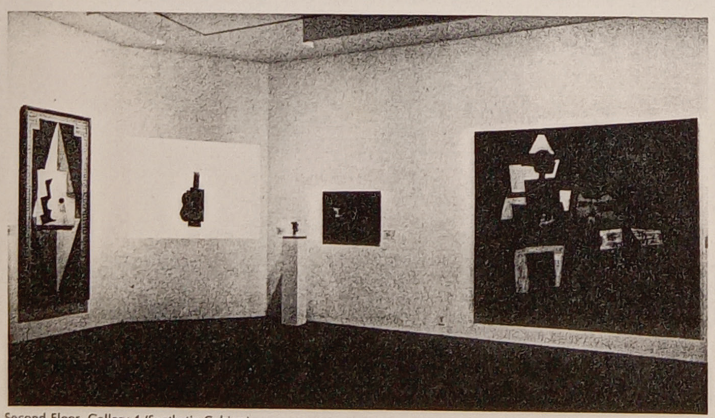
TALKING WITH WILLIAM RUBIN: "LIKE FOLDING OUT A HAND OF CARDS"



Second Floor, Gallery 1 (Post-Impressionism) looking toward Galleries 2 (Turn-of-the Century, Fantasy and Early Expressionism) 3 (Analytic Cubism) and 4 (Synthetic Cubism).



Second Floor, Gallery 3 (Analytic Cubism).



Second Floor, Gallery 4 (Synthetic Cubism).

On April 29, 1974, two editors — Lawrence Alloway and John Coplans — interviewed William Rubin, Director of Painting and Sculpture at The Museum of Modern Art. Questions posed by the editors are in italics, and the answers are in roman type. Mr. Rubin wishes it pointed out that his opinions do not necessarily constitute official policies of the Museum. As an agreed condition of the interview, this abbreviated version has been approved by Mr. Rubin. An interview with Mr. Rubin on the Museum's exhibition and collection policies appeared in *Artforum*, October, 1974.

Let's talk now about the collection of the Museum. We'd like your views on the Expressionist collection, for example, beginning with Munch and Ensor, and stretching its way . . .

Well, in some areas I think it's very good — in fact, it's certainly one of the best in the world despite a few obvious lacunae, the most notable of which is the absence of a painting by Munch. We've been very much aware of this, and have tried all along to do something about it. Since I've been at MOMA, we have been offered — on the basis of our solicitations and out of the blue — something like five or six paintings by Munch. None of them were really what one would want. They were late versions of 1890s images in which the drawing was flaccid, the silhouetting unsure, and the Munchian mystery lacking. The only '90s picture we were offered was a view of people at a gambling table in Monte Carlo. You might imagine that Munch would have painted this subject in something of the spirit of Van Gogh's *Night Cafe* — a threatening Strindbergian ambience, the sort of place, as Van Gogh wrote, where a man could run amok. But it wasn't like that at all, curiously. It was almost the real Monte Carlo, and it didn't have at all the quality that we wanted.

Three-and-a-half years ago, we bought an immense collection of Munch prints, which gives us, outside of Norway, the most complete collection of his imagery in the world. Munch was a great printmaker, and the prints, in fact, have his best qualities more consistently than do his paintings. That purchase was the thing to do, rather than put the money into a second-rate Munch painting. That hasn't stopped us from looking for the right painting, of course.

After Munch, the other Expressionist artist we are trying most hard to acquire is Franz Marc. In some ways, it's almost harder to get a really first-rate Marc. We have the requests out all over the world — especially in Switzerland and Germany. When Marcs come up, we usually know about it. The best we've been able to turn up was a picture of a cat — a nice, run-of-the-mill Marc at a fantastically high price. Somehow, I don't mind paying a very high price for a masterpiece — Pollock's

ARTFORUM XIII, No 3 November 1974

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One, Picasso's *Charnel House*, or Miró's *Birth of the World*, for example. But there's something that rubs me the wrong way about paying that kind of price for a "representative example." (I must add that we have no funds for such purchases; these major works are acquired, in effect, by exchange of a group of minor ones from our reserves.) So we didn't buy that Marc, and we're still looking for one.

In the case of Munch, we have also tried to solve the problem in another way. I have been negotiating with Päl Hougen of the Munch Museum to see whether we can arrange an exchange. They would lend us a significant work by Munch, which could be changed, say, every two years. In return we would send Norway a group of pictures on extended loan or perhaps every so often a small exhibition. But as yet the Norwegians haven't agreed to lend.

With the exception of Munch and Marc, the Expressionist collection is an excellent one. And in some areas — Kirchner and Kokoschka, for example — an exceptional one. We also have good pictures by minor Expressionists, such as Heinrich Campendonk. The pressure to fill the few gaps that we have follows from the synoptic nature of the entire collection — a conception which makes the whole greater than the sum of its parts.

As it is currently displayed, the collection starts with Post-Impressionism and except for the James Ensor paintings and Munch graphics, then postpones the appearance of the North Europeans who really continued its expressive side. Haven't you weakened the impact of Expressionism by breaking it up?

It is no more broken up than history — the actual events — in fact less so. There is Expressionism and there is Expressionism: 19th and 20th century; German and non-German; Symbolist-oriented and Cubist-oriented, etc. Let's look at the particulars. Alfred Barr had always put the Ensors with the *fin de siècle* things, and I felt that was more appropriate than putting them with the 20th-century German Expressionists. Our Munch prints are also in that area of the galleries; they are roughly contemporaneous with the Gauguins in the first room, and with the Klimt and the early Ensors in the second. The main 20th-century Expressionist room, which holds the Lehmbruck sculptures, Kokoschkas, Kirchners, Noldes, and so forth, is mostly Austro-German. However, I didn't want to make it a strictly national thing, so I divided Rouault so that while you see a Fauve Rouault among the Fauve pictures, you also see Rouaults in the same room as the 20th-century Expressionists. Those Rouaults are hung on the "back" walls, which you tend to see as you leave that room. Thus they mediate, as it were, between the *mittel-Europa* Expressionist pictures and the School of Paris works in the next room. Now, as far as the other content of that Expressionist room, there were a lot of difficult choices. For example, we had to omit a very impressive Kirchner of soldiers taking a shower, *The Artillerymen*, which is a very big picture; it would have forced a number of other things out of the room. We had to omit a fine late Kokoschka landscape and some of our good Noldes, Beckmanns, etc.

What obtains in that room is true throughout the collection — that we have good pictures that we presently don't have room for. On the other hand, we put these pictures to work: we sent around a show of German Expressionism that went to smaller museums throughout the country (it even made a stop at the New York Cultural Center). This was put together from our reserves. We also lend many of these pictures individually — both from our galleries and our reserves — to other institutions. Two Noldes were out on loan last year; there isn't a year that goes by that we don't have a couple of Kirchners or Beckmanns out on loan, and so forth. In the case of the Noldes, the show was an important one, at the Nolde Museum in Seebull, Germany, so we lent our best pictures and our reserve Noldes went in the galleries. We have to weigh each request: how many people will be seeing the picture, the nature of the show, etc. If it's an important retrospective, you do the artist's reputation a disservice by not lending some of your major work. On the other hand, to lend a key picture to a college show in a small city — unless it's a damned unusual show— — is to deprive your New York audiences and out-of-town visitors, even scholars from other countries. Many of these people count on being able to see certain works when they visit New York.

To return to the installation, you will notice that the Expressionist room is, architecturally speaking, not in a direct line with the School of Paris rooms. This is partly because our now rather old building has piers in certain places, and the ways of dividing the space are therefore limited. But I rather liked the idea of having the Expressionist things open onto the French works, but not be something you had to pass through in order to go from Picasso to Léger. That, if you want to argue, is an art-historical judgment.

I don't know if it's a judgment, Bill. My feeling is that it's a bias. One goes from early Post-Impressionist things, and, instead of continuing logically and systematically at that point to the German Expressionists, there's a kind of detour which takes in Cubism. One tradition is suddenly dropped, and Cubism is brought in — partly, I think, because you wanted to bring in Cubism good and early to show a nice, secure basis for a constructive Cubist line, which is sympathetic to you. Then you go back to the German Expressionists, which chronologically has its problems. But also it means a stylistic jump.

I think that you're simply wrong there. The fact is that *all* German Expressionism is later than early Cubism, and most of it is later than high Analytic Cubism.

The artists of Die Brücke *are not later than the Cubists that you have got hanging.*

Look again. The *Brücke* paintings, the characteristic *Brücke* paintings — let's say the *earliest* full-blown Kirchners — begin 1908–09. The earliest. And the pictures we have hanging straddle the turn of that decade and go well into the next one. To show those works as if they came *before* the *Demoiselles d'Avignon* would be wrong. Now, you can't very well show the *Demoiselles* plus 1908–09 Cubism, and then show some Kirchners, and then double back to continue the development of Analytic Cubism. You have to make the basic decision as to whether the span from *Demoiselles* through at least Analytic Cubism — that has to be a unit — should come before or after the German Expressionists. I made the decision that it should come before. This is right not only chronologically but intrinsically. Indeed, *Demoiselles* contains some of that "primitive" material before any German Expressionist thought to include it.

Demoiselles has two possible ways of being interpreted here. You can say that it's the beginning of Cubism and leads off into that. But it also, as you say, has a primitive component. You've hung Demoiselles *according to what you know about its future rather than in relation to a primitivistic impulse which it shows.*

In fact, it shows a new formal as much as a primitivistic impulse. But let's see what one's options are. I put the *Demoiselles d'Avignon* in a center area because it is a crucial, a key picture. Your options in terms of the MOMA collection would be to surround it with either the Cubist pictures which grew out of it or, as you say, Expressionist pictures — Kirchners like *The Street* (we have no Expressionist pictures with "primitive" iconography). It seems to me that while the *Demoiselles* is at least two things, so to say, you cannot coherently relate it to both at the same time (at least in our spaces), and that the better choice is to relate it to the thing which emerged as its more central influence, which was the early — but also "Primitive" — Cubism of Picasso in 1908, such works as *Repose* and those which follow it.

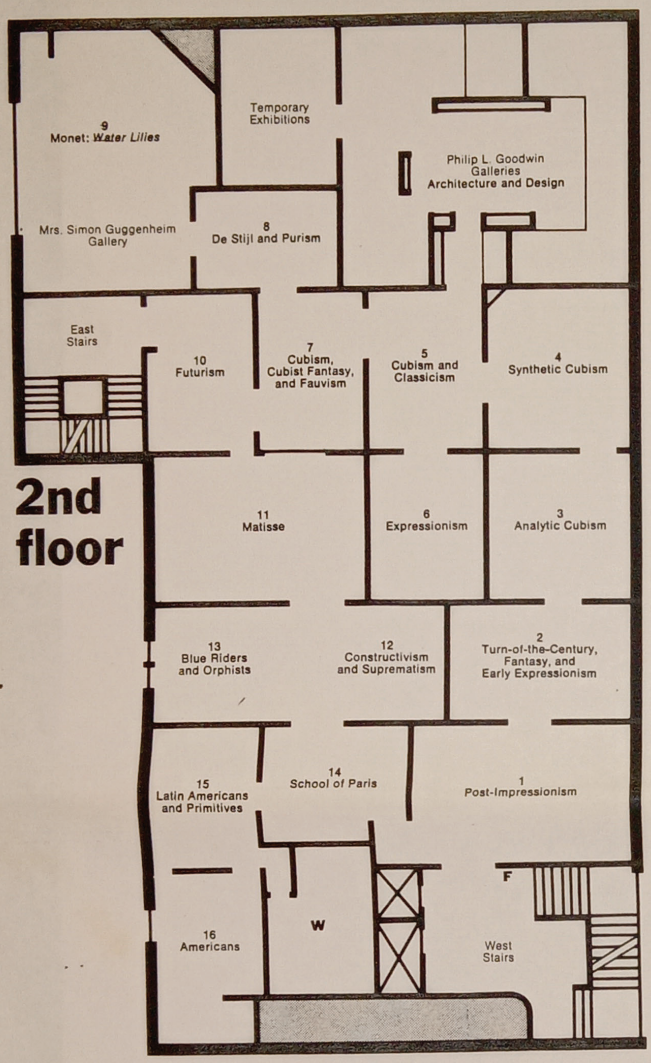
If you do a chronological installation, as yours is fundamentally, it is subject to the character of the collection and therefore represents a kind of fiction — or a compromise — in which the successive facts of history and the works in the collection come together in ways that are not really congruent.

Inevitably, the image of art history that emerges from this collection is far from perfect, although it is the most complete synoptic view of 20th-century art anywhere. I do not see how it is possible to avoid your "compromise" without being able to choose *precisely* the pictures you want from the whole of what the century has produced, and to place them in an architectural installation which you are entirely free to design yourself. And even then it probably wouldn't work since looking from picture to picture, going from gallery to gallery involves linear time, and many different kinds of works were in fact executed simultaneously, or almost so. What I faced, in any case, was a series of columnar supports every so many feet throughout the building, so the number of rooms, their size, and their relationship to one another, were fixed within certain limits. I was locked in a situation where I could not have more than once in a while a room that was not on a continuous path, so that you get a monolinear effect which is not true of history.

I would have preferred, let us say, central "core" rooms, with others radiating from

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them, and so forth. None of that was possible. However, it is not only the limitations of the collection but also, paradoxically, its strengths that militate against art-historical balance and accuracy. There are visitors just concerned with seeing as many as possible of our great pictures. They're not interested in history. They certainly wouldn't want to see a first-rate Kirchner displaced by our second-rate Jawlensky for the sake of inclusiveness. And they probably don't even like the fact that a few of our fine Matisses have to go unhung in order to make room for paintings by such artists as Kirchner. But that's what you sometimes have to do; in that sense, all installations in museums with rich collections involve some compromises.

Supposing one assumes that the collection had certain biases before you took it over, and that we are merely asking you about those biases which you are not responsible for.

The strengths were, perhaps, biases, somewhat more than the weaknesses. One of Alfred's biases was, in fact, *in favor* of Expressionism. That we are tremendously strong in Picasso had to do with Alfred's bias in favor of Picasso. That we are weak in Fauvism may be more the result of chance than Alfred's fault. Alfred tried to get certain Fauve works; perhaps he didn't try quite as hard as he did for some Picassos and so forth but he really tried quite hard — I know the correspondence. However, one of the things that I felt when I came to judge the collection myself was that Fauvism was a weak area. In the last few years, we have done, I think, some very successful things in this area, though they're invisible since the pictures in question were purchased at our suggestion by a trustee and are in his bequest to us. They were too expensive for us.

What we are saying is that there seems to be a little too much emphasis in one direction, and that what we would call, in the broader sense, Expressionism and its roots are less well represented than they could be. There have been, for example, dozens of first-rate Jawlenskys for sale at very low prices over the last ten years.

Not low prices, at least not in the six years I have been at MOMA. In Jawlensky, however, you do touch upon an artist whom Alfred didn't seem to care much about. Four-and-a-half years ago I got a trustee to buy an extraordinary Jawlensky I found in the hope that it will come to the collection, and I think it will. But it was no cheap picture. I cannot speak about Alfred's attitude toward Jawlensky; I know that Alfred had very strong feelings about Kokoschka, Kirchner, Beckmann, Nolde and Lehmbruck — and, of course, most of the *Blaue Reiter*.

Alfred's conception was the first "ecumenical" conception of modern art museology. If you look at other modern collections in museums anywhere in the world, they will naturally have strengths and weaknesses. But these disparities are much greater than at MOMA. For example, the Museum of Modern Art in Paris doesn't have a single Mondrian, no Kokoschka, and no Boccioni. It's mostly French painting. The Tate has a broader collection, but even then . . . .

Few Expressionist works, very few.

So there you are. I mean, what would you compare the MOMA collection to?

That's not the point. The American art scene and modern art history in America is in a very different situation to what it is in most other countries, particularly France, Italy, and places like that. The paucity of major Fauve paintings as combined with some weak areas in Expressionism seems to cut the Museum off —

What are the weak areas of Expressionism? You mentioned Jawlensky, and admittedly we now have only one weak picture which I chose not to hang.

I'm not speaking of German Expressionism, I'm thinking of Expressionism as a whole and in relation to Fauvism, which had that primitive thing that one misses.

Fauvism is a different matter. Relative to the importance of the movements, we have much more Expressionism, even with our lacunae, than we have Fauvism. For whatever reason, Fauvism was scanted. But Alfred, in any case, saw Fauvism much more in the line of French painting than in relationship to the "primitive" aspects of Expressionism. Consequently, if he scanted it, it would not be for the reason that you're suggesting. I don't think he really intended to scant it, but if he did — let's say it didn't excite him as much as Cubism — it was not because of its Expressionist content, as you can tell by the way he writes about it. At the same time, you are absolutely right that when you walk through the collection, it is literally embarrassing that you walk past all those great Cubist pictures — and things that come out of Cubism — and then you compare it to our one Fauve wall which doesn't even have a Matisse or a Braque Fauve on it (though these are the two slots we have filled — for future generations). Until we receive the bequests I've negotiated, the main Fauve lacuna is Matisse. But another generation will have it. You have to take the long-range view. On the other hand, it obviously would be wonderful if we had these pictures now so that Fauvism would not seem to be overwhelmed by the Cubist paintings around it.

How does a curator arrive at his notion of history in relation to his sense of taste?

Well, it varies. In my generation, from my own experience, it comes first from looking at pictures and second, from studying art history, writing about it, participating in it in

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some way.

But it's not an idea-less situation. I mean, you have certain ideas which must be in any curator's mind. You say for your generation — what would those ideas be?

Among museum men Alfred was unusual in his generation, one might almost say in "advance" of it, in being less the pure connoisseur and more the art historian. My generation tends to be more art historical than most of the people of Alfred's generation. Alfred apart, the people who built modern collections in museums here and elsewhere tended to think of the fineness of the single work rather than the comprehensiveness of the collection. If they could get another great Cézanne even though it meant that they wouldn't have a Braque of a Chagall or whatever, that didn't matter. Alfred, as you probably know, sold a number of Cézannes, Degas and other late 19th-century works that came to the museum in the original gift of Miss Lillie Bliss. But you have to see what he got: *Les Demoiselles,* Matisse's *Piano Lesson,* Brancusi, etc. This is how he built the collection. Instead of a collection that was heavy in Post-Impressionism and lacking in other areas, he decided that he was going to spread out and try to represent those things.

But Bill, Alfred was not only different from the people of his generation in other museums, he was different from most of the other people who helped found this *museum.*

Indeed. It was a kind of combination of their predominantly connoisseurship approach with his more art-historical bias. Remember that the curators *propose;* the Painting and Sculpture Committee *disposes.* In other words, neither Alfred nor I have had the final say. It's a series of checks and balances. I think you have to judge it by the results. As it functions now — and it wasn't always like this with Alfred — it's very rare that the committee does not take the recommendation of the staff.

On what grounds have they not taken it? Too expensive, or . . .

It can never be simply that it's too expensive, because the way the acquisitions committee works technically is that if they think the thing is worth having for the collection, it is accepted subject to funding (although obviously, one is not going to propose things for which there is no hope of raising money).

What I'm getting at is this, you see. Do you think that it is wise for an institution to continue having trustees determine what finally enters the collection rather than, say, a committee of your colleagues as experts – someone like George Heard Hamilton?

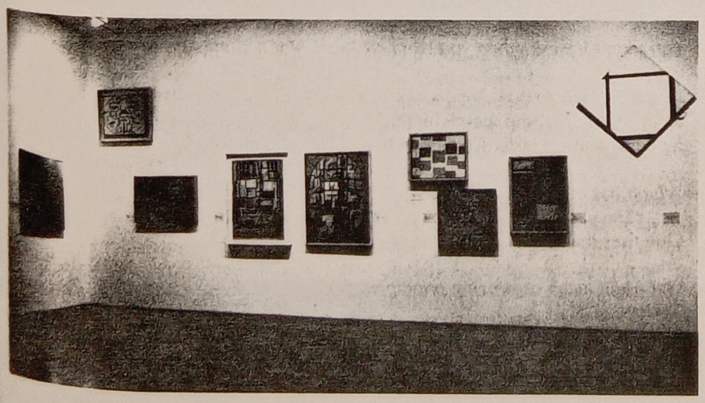
But George *is* a trustee, and is the chairman of the acquisitions committee. As I've said, the committee is partly made up of art historians and museum men. There are also artists — though not painters or sculptors — like Philip Johnson. Johnson has been a remarkably valuable member of that committee for many years. This is above and beyond, of course, his role as founder of MOMA's Department of Architecture and Design. In the days when the committee tended to reject certain things that Alfred proposed — our first Barnett Newman, for example — Philip often bought them with his own funds and later made a gift of them. There are a number of collectors on our committee who have very good eyes for painting and who contribute a lot. My feeling is that this is a good committee, and I don't mind at all having to present the material to them. I have never found that if I had real conviction about an acquisition and could make a good argument for it, they would countermand it.

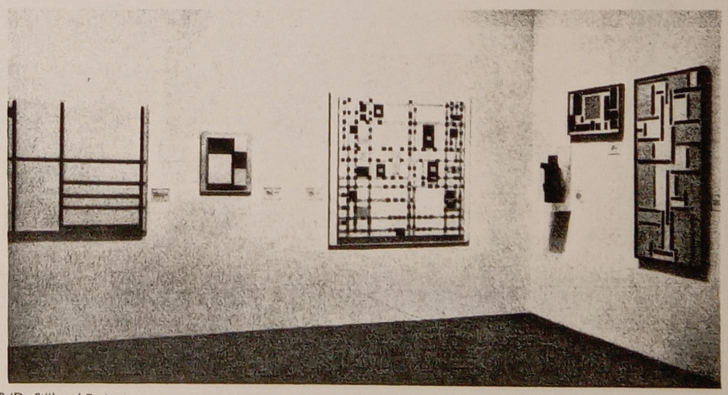
Let me go back for a moment. We've agreed that Barr was unlike others of his generation. What formed the ideas of your generation of curators, and how does it differ from Alfred's? Now, you've indicated one of the ways in which you share a methodology with Alfred. What is different?

I find that my own views about the collection and about the exhibiting of it are very much like Alfred's. That's partly because I was brought up on Alfred's museum and on the collection as he built it. And if there's anything wrong, it's probably that I'm too much a creature of the education I've had. Modern art education during and just after World War II was, in the first instance, very much a question of this museum and its publications. I was Meyer Schapiro's student for many years. But even *his* sense of modern art was conditioned by what was to be seen in this museum. It was only when I began to travel widely as a graduate student in the early '50s that I sufficiently realized that there were aspects of art history that were not represented or out of focus, so to say, in this collection. Of course 20 years ago this collection was a lot less full, so that the misimpressions you got were much greater than now. But there are still things which don't ring true, and these are the things which one tries to do something about.

So your part would really be, as you see it, one of balancing and completing a kind of outline which Barr began.

Partly that, and partly extending it as history unfolds. That it to say, Barr and his colleagues built a great collection. That collection, nevertheless, had lacunae. There are not only movements but individual artists and, perhaps most of all, particular works which Alfred didn't go for — or didn't know, as was the case with Miró's *Birth of the World* — which I felt I wanted for MOMA. For example, Alfred did not have much feeling for Pop art. As you know, he bought only a small, unimpressive Lichtenstein. I worked very hard to make it possible for us to obtain the *Drowning Girl.* But when you consider the incredible job Alfred did, it sounds rather niggling to





Second Floor, Gallery 8 (De Stijl and Purism).

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say that there were areas in which one way or another he didn't do the necessary. Successive generations of curators and critics must deal with that. Every individual will have holes in his perception, or biases or whatever, and they should be pointed out. We have several Painting and Sculpture curators rather than one partly for this reason.

To turn to another area of the collection, would you say that Symbolism is adequately represented?

Well, this is a problem that really has to do with a definition of the 19th-century *limits* of the Museum collection — and I think that this may indeed be a question of an art-historical view or bias on Alfred's part as to the role of Symbolism as it feeds into 20th-century art. As we saw earlier, the collection begins essentially with the late 1880s — as a background for the art of our century. Now, one might argue that Symbolism is of this period. Alfred would have said that the great Symbolists are Gauguin, Rousseau, Redon, Klimt, the late Monet. He would not have said Khnopff. All right, there's a perfect example. Why not Khnopff?

Don't you think that is because the study of Symbolism has advanced past the point it was at in Alfred's time?

I don't think *any* area of study was very far in Alfred's time. We tend to think, because we are aware of what Futurism and Cubism . . .

The study of Cubism was ahead of the study of Symbolism.

Perhaps, but I doubt that the study of Fauvism, Futurism, Orphism or De Stijl was any more advanced. Quite to the contrary. There was probably more literature available and much more Symbolist art to be seen in the early 1930's — Moreau, Kubin, Böcklin, Klinger, the Belgians, to say nothing of Redon — than there were works visible or literature on, say, Futurism, or even Cubism. A man going to Europe and touring the major museums would have seen much more Symbolism, and I'm sure Alfred did. I think rather that Alfred defined the modern period in such a way that he saw certain types of Symbolism as not feeding in that directly. Now, I think it would be fair to argue that, after all, why does Fernand Khnopff not feed in? Isn't there something in Surrealism that has to do with him? There's a grain of truth in this, though in fact, Moreau had much more to do with it than Khnopff. And yet, though Alfred was a great amateur of Surrealism, he never really made much of an attempt to acquire a Moreau (though MOMA had a Moreau exhibition). I rather think that in the area of Symbolism, Alfred probably did not feel that Moreau or Khnopff were modern painters. There's no question in my mind that Alfred thought of this collection as a 20th-century collection with certain late 19th-century roots, and that the late 19th-century introduction was to be made up of the things that fed in. Cézanne, Gauguin, Van Gogh, and so forth — but also the Nabis, Redon, Ensor, Munch, Rousseau, Klimt, *art nouveau*. I don't think he thought that the Belgian Symbolists, for example, really fed in.



Second Floor, Gallery 6 (Expressionism).

What's your view?

I think that in an ideal modern museum, I would like to have a Khnopff and a Moreau. Even more, I would like the right kind of Ferdinand Hodler landscape, which we've been looking for, thus far without success.

Just in the study collection? Or would you hang them?

In an ideal situation — which would mean much more exhibition space for the collection than we have now — I would like more turn-of-the-century material. On the other hand, I would have to be frank and say that given our present space limitations I probably wouldn't be able to hang a large Moreau, for example, if we got it as a gift. That would force me to take down one of the Rousseaus, Ensors or Vuillards — in any case, something in that second gallery. Those are the choices one has to face here . . .

I've tried to point up one little relationship at that point in the installation — between de Chirico and Rousseau — that is never thought about. You'll notice that I've juxtaposed our big de Chiricos in the second room with the Rousseaus and I think you see immediately what I'm getting at — the white, atmosphereless "dream" light, the silence, the flat silhouetting, etc. Now, as it happens, one of our Rousseaus was painted within a few years of our de Chiricos. Most MOMA installations had the Rousseaus at the very beginning; Alfred's installation began with Rousseau. He was placed before Cézanne — the first thing you saw. I've changed it; I've put Cézanne first. Though we think of Rousseau as a 19th-century painter, he lived, after all, into the Apollinaire world, and that's the context de Chirico painted out of. We don't usually think of de Chirico as a contemporary of Rousseau, but as a proto-Surrealist painter and, of course, I bring him back in that context on the third floor. The Rousseau–de Chirico thing is only one of a thousand little "threads" that you try to make link pictures, link rooms, and so forth — that you hope the visitor will see. It doesn't matter if he doesn't see them; but you try to point these things up anyway. By the same token, since you're not entirely free to hang things in any way you want, and since you don't have all the pictures you want, you inevitably find yourself making some sort of sacrifice here in order to do something else there. If we hadn't been rich in de Chiricos, I would have had to choose between putting de Chirico near the Rousseaus or near the Magrittes and the Dalis.

When you're making your choices, you seem to have a great confidence in distinguishing between major works and other works. Now, what would be the source of your ranking, the source of the idea by which you rank them?

By which I think a thing is a major work? Certainly, my first instinct is just my own reaction — a purely subjective reaction.

You didn't have it when you were six years old. It came as you trained.

I think that's quite true. Anyone who looks at paintings every day of his life, is trained as an art historian and spends his time looking, reading and studying, develops strong feelings, forms a taste. Certain pictures begin to emerge.

Which has to do with the notion of "major?"

One uses that word as a matter of convenience.

You use it as an organizing principle.

The hierarchy is inherent in the works themselves. Qualitative differences *do* exist. And beyond the intrinsic question there are art-historical differences. There is also the question of the size of the picture — which has a somewhat different meaning than in deep-space, Old Master painting. A great Rousseau that is 7 x 9 feet is a "major" work in a way that a 1 x 2 foot Rousseau of the same quality is not.

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When you're installing you have to think about the axes of the viewer's passage, of the grouping of pictures, and so forth and so on. I very consciously, where feasible, put large pictures on axis so that as you move into the room, the other pictures tended to be grouped around it. That wasn't an art-historical point; it was purely a visual and esthetic point. For example, you walk in — the Cézanne *Bather* is the thing that's right in front of you. You walk into the next room, and the big Rousseau receives you. If you stand toward the center of the first room, you see the Cézanne *Bather*, you see part of the Rousseau *Dream*, part of *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon*, and part of the *Three Musicians*. It's almost like folding out a hand of cards, if you know what I mean. And for anyone who plays these cards, so to say, you don't have to see the whole picture to recognize and understand the relationship. Okay. I found this very exciting myself. Other people may not.

Because of their nature, or because of some other connection between them?

Well, obviously, there's a principle of development there. . . . I wanted this impact of large key pictures on the axes. As Mark Rothko said, eight feet of red is redder than two feet of red. And though that's not exactly true, we understand what he meant. I think that a wonderful big modern picture, be it by Picasso, Rousseau, or whomever, has a different effect — it simply does — than a smaller one.

What about the scale now — "major" seems to be speaking of the size.

That's one dimension. The other dimension depends, let us say, upon a subjective view of quality. Kirchner's *Artillerymen* is iconographically, I think, one of the more interesting pictures we have. It's a fine picture — one of the biggest of our Kirchners. But it is not as good as most of the others.

Leaving size apart, what makes a picture less than "major," not as good as others?

I'm afraid nobody has ever figured out a way to measure, to quantify quality. You can't attach a wire to a picture and have it ring up "masterpiece." We're all making assumptions — you do too. We're human beings and art is not mathematical.

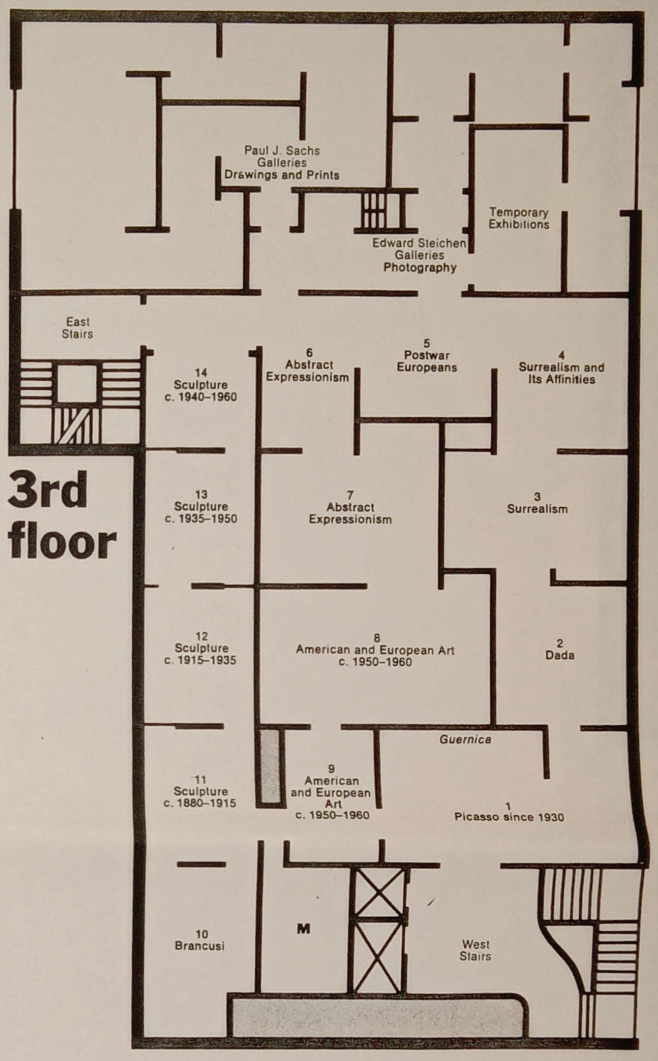
That is not the only alternative to the je ne sais quoi.

In a scientific discipline there are verities, there are demonstrable truths, subject to proof. Quality in art is not subject to proof. We make our judgments as individuals. We also tend to form collective views, and obviously as individuals we like to know what the collective view is. There are times when my view differs from the collective view and times when it doesn't. For example, I'm sure that all three of us here would feel that Barney Newman's *Vir Heroicus Sublimus* is really one of his great pictures. And since I can't show all our examples of Barney's work . . .

That satisfies a requirement: size, consensus and je ne sais quoi. *Is that right?*

Before all that it satisfies my gut reaction — that I'm deeply moved. But I would also imagine that in this case it has something to do with its being a big picture — that the relationship of size to the experience is not utterly accidental. The fact that when only a handful of people knew Barney's work all of them thought highly of *Vir Heroicus* may have confirmed my own feelings — I don't know. Not everything we have purchased represents the very best, for reasons we can't control. We have a first-rate Cubi sculpture of David Smith's, for example. But it is not one of David's greatest Cubi — and I regret that very deeply. It was the best one available by the time I came to this museum. Had I had my druthers, there are half a dozen others that I would have preferred. But they had already been sold — almost all to museums.

I think you're right that it isn't the best Cubi. I don't know either quite why it isn't the best Cubi, but still and all I haven't committed myself on it one way or the other. But you have. It's here in the museum. What is the thing about it which led you to get it, despite the fact that you knew that it wasn't, perhaps, one of the best in the world?



It's also very far from the worst Cubi. It was the best one left in the Smith estate — at least in my estimation. I loved David's Cubi. I saw them being made, and I thought they were wonderful sculptures. Even a middling Cubi has expressive qualities that aren't found elsewhere in David's work. I'm not saying they're better or worse; they're different. If we didn't have great Cézannes, I would go for a good Cézanne rather than settle for no Cézanne at all. But I don't feel that way about all artists, obviously.

When does a painter deserve a room of his own?

A room of his own?

Like Léger, who has virtually a room of his own.

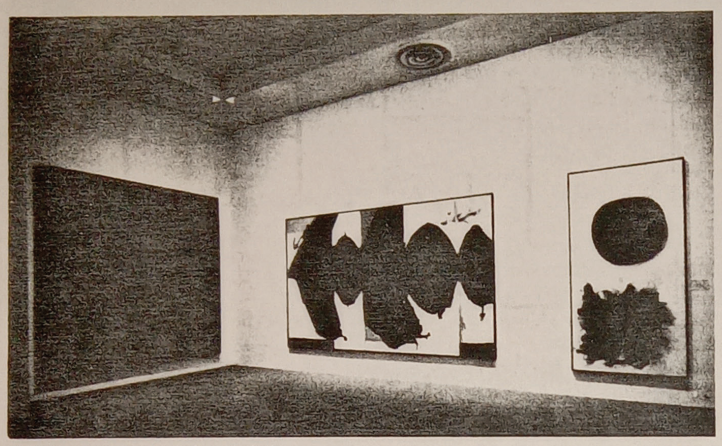
But he doesn't. Anyway, I've never thought in those terms.

There's only one other picture in the Léger room.

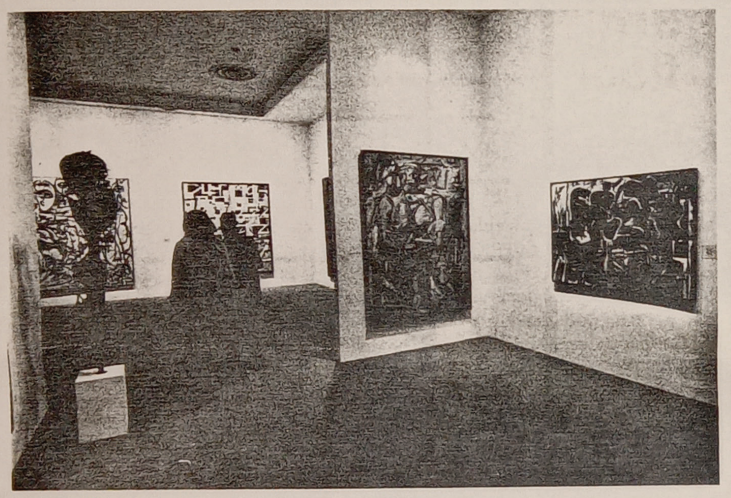
But, you see, that picture — the monumental Picasso, *Three Women at the*

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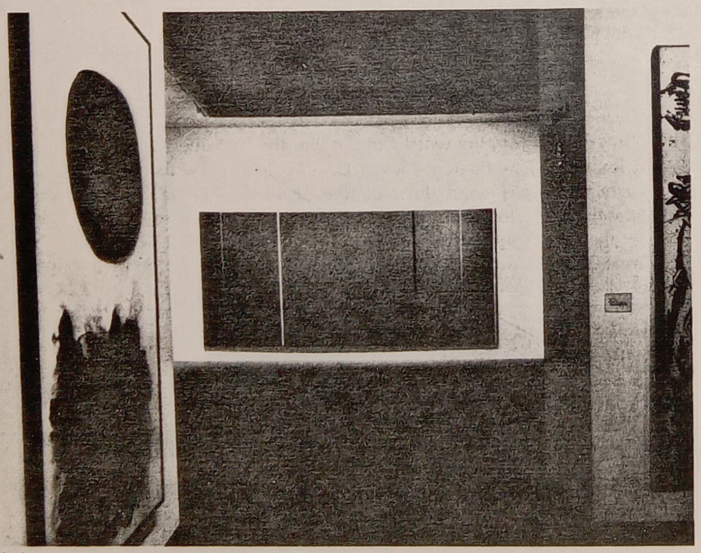
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Third Floor, Gallery 7 (Abstract Expressionism).



Third Floor, Gallery 6 (Abstract Expressionism).



Third Floor, Gallery 8 (American and European Art c. 1950-60).

Spring — is very important in the ensemble.

What I'm trying to say is under what circumstances does a painter deserve a massive presentation such as Léger's?

Offhand, I can think of only two painters in the collection who have rooms of their own: Picasso and Matisse. I guess that happens when, to give a fair sense of the artist's work, based on what we have in the collection, it takes a room or nearly a room to do it. I don't know what I would remove from that Léger room. It is perfectly true that I could have made it entirely a Léger room if I'd been thinking in those terms, but I wasn't. Picasso's *Three Women* is hung in there for very important reasons. First, I wanted it in proximity to — but not adjacent to — Picasso's *Three Musicians*, which was painted in the same summer; the Neo-Classicism of *Three Women* is the more explicit form of the Classicism implicit in the Cubist work. But also, as a picture representing three women in very volumetric, consciously classical and monumental manner, it has affinities to the *Grand Déjeuner* of Léger, which is on an opposite wall; it is also at right angles to Léger's *Three Musicians*, which is on the east wall of that gallery just as Picasso's *Three Musicians* is on the east wall of the previous gallery.

All those little relationships, you see, refer to what's going on in the early '20s. . . . Thus I have tried where I could to point up certain things, and to set certain things in interesting juxtapositions, and so forth. For example, in the German Expressionist room, the way the hands work in the Kokoschka double portrait of the Tietzes. You see immediately the relationship to the hands in Wilhelm Lehmbruck sculptures and that the very gesture of the Lehmbruck hands is picked up again in the Kokoschka *Self Portrait,* on the side wall. Now, unlike certain other interrelations, that's not a formal thing; it belongs to the expression of the human body. Formally the Lehmbrucks and Kokoschkas have certain affinities, but what one is dealing with here is essentially the notion of psychological expression through the posture of the body. I juggled the things around in that room a number of times to try to multiply certain kinds of affinities and cross-references. We don't normally think of Lehmbruck with Kokoschka; in fact, Alfred had isolated the Lehmbrucks up in the sculpture gallery on the third floor.

I would say we don't normally think of Lehmbruck.

That may be but he's a great artist just the same. I've always loved these sculptures, but I disliked seeing them in the third floor sculpture galleries in the context of Brancusi and so forth. I don't think Lehmbruck was essentially about that. I wanted to bring him into the world of Kokoschka and Expressionism, where the emphasis was on the human body as an expressive thing. So I brought him down to the second floor.

Even if we agree that a standard of quality is sort of unverifiable, that experts might agree with one another but it can't really be formulated.

Since it can't be formulated, and never will be formulated, what more . . .

Perhaps it's not there. Perhaps it's just attributed to the work as a result of a particular phase of taste.

Nobody will convince me it isn't there. To imagine that things aren't there just because we can't prove they are is a rather mechanical view of experience. I'm just as sure that it's there as I am when I'm in love with somebody. How can you prove that? You can only feel it. There's no wire you can put on some guy that rings up "love," or "he only thinks he's in love," or "he's faking it" . . . As far as taste goes, the best work survives its vagaries — and has for centuries.

But in the act of purchasing, you resort to greatness – a quality judgment.

It's pure cant to pretend that you can escape quality judgments. But the act of purchasing is subject to many considerations. For example, given our limited funds, is this what the collection needs most? Is this the artist the collection needs? Is this the work the collection needs? Is this the best work of that type we can find? Now the judgment as to whether it's the best work is, in the first instance — but only in the first instance — my judgment. Then it is in the judgment of the other curators, just as

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when they propose something, their judgment is the first. Then it goes to the committee. I think you will find that in actual fact there tends to be considerable agreement about these things.

I would expect that because you guys are all the same.

But are we all the same? Is Kynaston McShine's taste, for example, that similar to mine? I doubt it. He asserts his differences in our acquisitions meetings, let me assure you — and in his choice of exhibitions.

But still, you all share a certain notion of culture.

We are, admittedly, products of modern Western culture.

You wouldn't be more specific?

Well urban America — New York — culture to an extent, though Kynaston is originally from Trinidad, and Jenny Licht, to pick another example, is from England. In fact, I sometimes find myself being odd man out in this group of curators, though I don't think this is because I am the only native New Yorker among them.

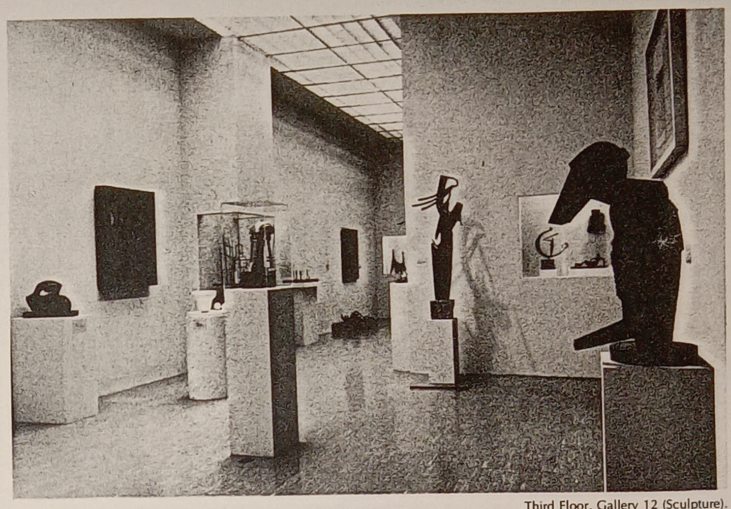
But it isn't that you and they appreciate totally different sets of cultural artifacts. It's that you have some differences within an area you are agreed to call "art."

I think there is perhaps even disagreement there. There are common areas of agreement, and areas of disagreement. Now, on the committee there is also a variety of views. George Hamilton, for example, has had a different take on things than Bob Goldwater did. Bob Rosenblum too.

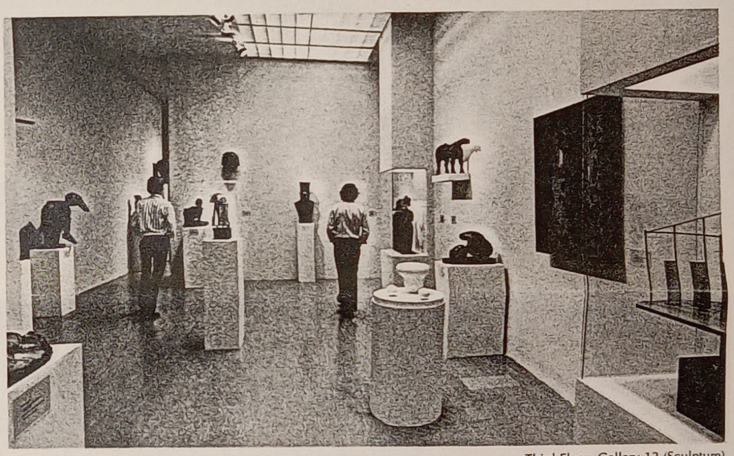
To return to the question of installation, don't you think that the distinction drawn in the galleries between painting and sculpture is to a large extent rather artificial? The Brancusis are separated, Arp cannot be sufficiently seen in the round. The sculpture itself kind of drifts, creeps off in a kind of aimless way in the collection — to some extent.

I agree that ideally the sculpture should not be as separate from the painting as it is now. If you recall the old installations, you will see that I have tried in some small way to correct this. The Lehmbrucks are a case in point. The fact is that we are saddled with a building that has a lot of problems. The module size of the galleries that we are committed to as a result of the frequent piers is such that if we were to intermix all the sculpture and paintings, we would end up being able to hang much less painting. The space that would be required for protection of the sculptures, and the desire to avoid placing them so that they were seen against a painting would result in that. Therefore, I accepted the continued use of what I think is an inflexible gallery — that narrow, dreary third floor space — for much of the sculpture, while bringing more of it into the painting galleries. But there is also, of course, a great deal of sculpture in the garden and some in the lobby.

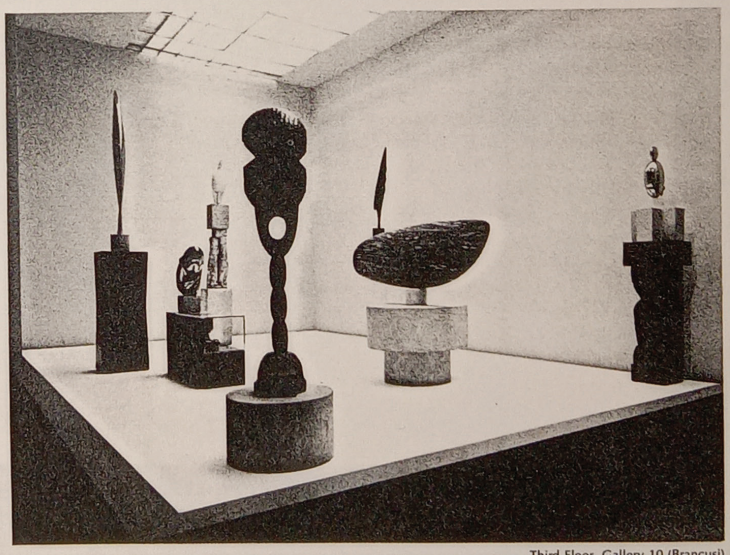
In regard to its largely separate installation, an argument can be made, up to a certain point, that sculpture has its own history. It has a history of symbiosis with painting, to be sure, but there is also a history of sculpture as it relates to sculpture. It's interesting, for example, to see *The Serf* by Matisse near the Rodin *Nude Balzac;* there's a clear relationship there. I have hopes that we will one day get the 1901 Matisse painting of Bevilacqua, the actual model for *The Serf.* I would then want to hang that in the same context. What I'm saying is that if one had the space and setup to permit an ideal installation, one would be constantly switching back and forth. I think that Alicia Legg, who installed the third floor sculpture gallery, did marvelously within the limitations of what could be done. She made a tremendous number of studies in an attempt to break out of a very constricting framework. But if you want to say that those sculptures would look better if we could bring them out of there, I'm in agreement. And in the best of all possible worlds, David Smith's *Australia* wouldn't be in the lobby but in amongst the Abstract Expressionist paintings upstairs. But to add it to the Smith already there would mean representing one less Abstract Expressionist painter in all likelihood. When I installed the collection last year, I thought of so many things that I would have liked to have done, but they were just impossible. I hope I'll live long enough — live *here* long enough — to install this collection in a really flexible way. ■



Third Floor, Gallery 12 (Sculpture).



Third Floor, Gallery 12 (Sculpture).



Third Floor, Gallery 10 (Brancusi).

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The Museum of Modern Art

THE DEPARTMENT OF PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

The Museum of Modern Art's Collection of Painting and Sculpture, the most important of 20th century art anywhere in the world, will be a major beneficiary of the present expansion program. Upon completion, the new Museum will provide twice as much gallery space for the Department's installations. This is especially exciting because until now, due to space constraints, only 15% of the Department's collection has ever been on display at one time.

"There are a considerable number of pictures that have come to the Museum in the last three or four years and have never been exhibited in the galleries," says William Rubin, Director of the Department. "These include the Masterpieces of the Nelson Rockefeller Collection, the James Thrall Soby Bequest, and other gifts from trustees, as well as major acquisitions made during the last few years.

"In the opening installation," Rubin continues, "we will also include a limited number of very important pictures that are life interest gifts to the Museum, and thus are still with their donors. These pictures will be lent for the first six months or year of the initial installation, deepening its range and variety, and enhancing its sense of the new."

The general layout of the collection will be more or less the same as it has always been--that is to say, roughly chronological. "The rooms will on average be somewhat larger, but not much larger," comments Rubin, "since we are anxious to retain the scale and intimacy that we consider proper for modern art, which is basically an art of easel painting. Through and including the

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work of Pollock and Rothko, the work should be seen in apartment-sized spaces rather than in palazzo- or church-like spaces. Rothko once remarked 'I paint big to be intimate.' He envisioned his pictures in a sense displacing walls, not, as would be the case in a very large space, looking like objects hanging on a wall. With the exception of the work of the last few years, some of which is really of immense scale, the history of modern art up through Abstract Expressionism needs spaces which are essentially like those we have always had," Rubin says.

The greater amount of space makes it possible to make visible certain areas of the collection which have been either under-represented, or not represented at all, he points out. A major area, for example, is the earlier work of the Abstract Expressionist painters from the early and middle 1940s. Included in the new installation will be works by Gorky and Matta, Pollock's Gothic and Rothko's Slow Swirl by the Edge of the Sea from this period.

Up to this point in the chronological installation, the galleries will be carpeted. That has a dual purpose: firstly, to make it quieter and more comfortable, and secondly, to enhance the private character of the space. "A museum is a museum, and you can't pretend it's an apartment," states Rubin, "but the carpet does tend to minimize the viewer's sense of being in a big public area."

The last quarter of the space, beginning with Johns, Stella, and up through minimal sculpture and onwards, will have a wooden floor. It will also have a more flexible wall system because the collection of that period will be rotated to show many different kinds of work for shorter periods of time. There will be substitutions and changes from time to time in all the galleries, but they will be fewer in the historical period. The major share of the new space will be

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devoted to the art made since the beginning of World War II: American Abstract Expressionism, the European Expressionism of Francis Bacon and Dubuffet, and onward.

Double the space will not double the number of paintings or pieces of sculpture. "I intend to install the pictures somewhat less tightly than in the previous installation," explains Rubin. "There was room for 600 works, and now there's room for upwards of 800. There will be more sculpture than before, but it will be mixed in with the paintings and will take its place in the unfolding of the main story. Naturally, since sculpture takes up a tremendous amount of space, there will still have to be a considerable amount in the Garden and on the terraces in the Garden Hall. But there will certainly be more in the galleries, and we won't have a sculpture gallery, per se."

The Painting and Sculpture installation will begin at the top of the escalator on the second floor of the Garden Hall in the original Museum building. Moving east through Post-Impressionism, Fauvism, Cubism (particularly works by Picasso), Futurism, Constructivism and through the stairway lobby into the West Wing, the visitor will enter a major Matisse gallery, followed by special galleries for the School of Paris, including more Picasso, Dada and Surrealism, de Chirico and Miró. In the second floor stairwell will hang works from the Russian School by Malevich, Lissitzky, etc. On the third floor the visitor will move west through the American art of the 1920s -- Hopper, Wyeth, O'Keeffe, Stuart Davis -- to early American Surrealsim, then Dubuffet, Pollock, and into the late 1940s and early 1950s.

The Matisse cutouts and a special gallery for The Swimming Pool (acquired several years ago by the Museum, and shown only twice) will serve as an introduction to a gallery for major works of the New York School, including Pollock and the Abstract Expressionists -- Motherwell, Rothko, Gottlieb, de Kooning and, farther on, works from the later School of Paris.

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The area beyond will be uncarpeted. This flexible area will contain works from the 1960s to the 1980s, beginning with Rauschenberg, Johns, Pop, and the color field artists, Ellsworth Kelly to Kenneth Noland, and on to the Minimalists and the Conceptualists.

"I hope that one aspect of the collection will continue to be perceived in the same way in our new space," says Rubin, "and that is that the collection is anchored by an unrivaled series of masterpieces, and that it is the only synoptic collection of modern art in the world: the only one which has the works of all the national schools and has them in some kind of equilibrium. We have tried to keep a kind of ecumenical, art-historical view of the entire modern movement. That was Alfred Barr's idea from the beginning, and we've maintained it throughout. If there are more American paintings from the period after World War II, it is because there was a judgment that that was where the best painting was being done. We are not a national museum in that sense. We are an international museum."

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DEPARTMENT OF PAINTING AND SCULPTURE FACT SHEET

DIRECTOR: William Rubin (appointed, 1972)

DEPARTMENT CHRONOLOGY: The majority of the Museum's early exhibitions were primarily devoted to painting and sculpture and, thus, the first curatorial division was established in these mediums. From the founding of the Museum in 1929 to 1943, Alfred Barr, the first Director, oversaw the acquisition and exhibition of painting and sculpture. In the late 1940s, these responsibilities were divided between a Committee on Museum Collections (Barr had by then been appointed Director of Museum Collections, a position he would hold until 1967) and a Department of Painting and Sculpture Exhibitions. Acquisitions and exhibitions were reunited under the aegis of the department director in the late 1960s. In 1972, William Rubin, who had organized the Museum's 1968 exhibition DADA, SURREALISM, AND THEIR HERITAGE, and subsequently became Curator of Painting and Sculpture, was named Department Director.

COLLECTION: The first painting donated to the Museum was Edward Hopper's 1925 House by the Railroad, which was given in 1930; the first sculpture, Aristide Maillol's 1910 Ile de France (now in The Metropolitan Museum of Art), had been donated a year earlier. In 1934, the first major collection of works, The Lillie P. Bliss Bequest, was received by the Museum, and this gift, which included masterworks by Cezanne, Gauguin, Matisse, and Picasso, among others, became the cornerstone of the Department's (and the Museum's) collection. Today, the Department's collection includes more than 3,500 works, representing the quality and scope of painting and sculpture in the 20th century in synoptic fashion.

MAJOR HOLDINGS: The collection includes 16 works by de Chirico, seven by Malevich, 35 Matisses, 21 paintings and sculptures by Miro, 16 works by Mondrian, 63 Picassos, and 18 Pollocks, as well as representative masterworks by almost every major artist of the last 100 years. A sample includes: Matisse's Dance, Mondrian's Broadway Boogie Woogie, Picasso's Les Demoiselles d'Avignon, Pollock's One (Number 31, 1950), and van Gogh's The Starry Night, to name but a few.

BEQUESTS, DONATIONS AND GIFTS: A selected list of bequests, donations, and gifts held by the Department includes: Lillie P. Bliss Bequest (1934); Mrs. Simon Guggenheim Fund (first gift of funds, 1938); Katherine S. Dreier Bequest (1953); Florene M. Schoenborn

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BEQUESTS, DONATIONS AND GIFTS (CONTINUED):

and Samuel A. Marx Gift (1955); Mrs. Bertram Smith Gift (1956); Mrs. David M. Levy Bequest (1957); Philip L. Goodwin Bequest(1958); Larry Aldrich Fund (1959); Kay Sage Tanguy Bequest (1963); Alexander Calder Gift (1966); Sidney and Harriet Janis Collection (1972); Nelson A. Rockefeller Bequest (1979); James Thrall Soby Bequest (1979); The Estate of John Hay Whitney (1983); and the following who have previously donated works or contributed funds for the acquisition of specific works: The Louis and Bessie Adler Foundation, Inc., Seymour M. Klein, President; Philip Johnson; Ronald S. Lauder; The Family of Eugene and Agnes E. Meyer; Joan Miro; Jacqueline Picasso; Blanchette Rockefeller; Mark and Mell Rothko; Agnes Gund Saalfield.

EXHIBITION PROGRAM:

The Museum held its first exhibition, a show of European Post-Impressionist work entitled CEZANNE, GAUGIN, SEURAT, VAN GOGH, in November, 1929. Since that show, some 500 exhibitions of painting and sculpture have been presented, including such highlights as: CUBISM AND ABSTRACT ART (1936); FANTASTIC ART, DADA, SURREALISM (1936); ART IN OUR TIME (1939); FIFTEEN AMERICANS (1949); MATISSE (1951); SCULPTURE OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY (1953), and later, THE NEW AMERICAN PAINTING AND SCULPTURE: THE FIRST GENERATION (1969); INFORMATION (1970); CEZANNE: THE LATE WORK (1977); MATISSE IN THE COLLECTION OF THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART (1979); and PABLO PICASSO: A RETROSPECTIVE (1980).

GALLERY SPACE:

49,200 sq. ft. Before expansion, 18,900 sq. ft.

SPECIAL GALLERIES:

Alfred H. Barr Gallery (dedicated, 1975), in honor of the Museum's first Director.

Rene d'Harnoncourt Gallery (dedicated, 1975), in honor of the Museum's second Director from 1949-68.

Mrs. Simon Guggenheim Gallery (dedicated, 1959), containing Monet's 1920 Water Lilies.

SINGLE ARTIST GALLERIES:

The Matisse Gallery on the Museum's second floor contains some 20 works by the artist, including the bronze Serf, 1900-1903 and the 1916 painting The Piano Lesson. On the third floor, Matisse's nine-panel mural The Swimming Pool (1952) is shown in a special installation.

The Brancusi Room on the second floor contains 10 works from 1908 to 1933 by the Rumanian-born sculptor.

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PICASSO: Beginning in Gallery 6 and continuing through Galleries 7 and 8 (with some Braque and Gris) and Gallery 16, Picasso's pre-Cubist, Cubist, and work from the 1930s to the 1950s is presented in depth.

SCULPTURE GARDEN: The Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden, designed by Philip Johnson, was dedicated in 1953. Named in honor of one of the Museum's founders, the Garden contains such major works as Rodin's Monument to Balzac; Matisse's four bronze reliefs, The Back; Barnett Newman's 25-foot Broken Obelisk; and Picasso's She-goat.

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FROM N.Y.T. ARTS & LEISURE
DEC 9, 1984

MAILBAG

To the Editor:

Your article on Julian Schnabel ["What One Artist's Career Tells Us of Today's Art World," Dec. 2] stated:

"Two New York museums, the Whitney and the Metropolitan, own Schnabel works; the Modern has not yet acquired one."

This might seem to imply a future intention and/or that we are remiss. I think the phrase should have read:

"The Modern has not acquired one."

WILLIAM RUBIN
Director of Painting and Sculpture
Museum of Modern Art

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The Museum of Modern Art

EXPANSION AND RENOVATION PROJECT FACT SHEET

LOCATION: North side of 53 Street between Fifth Avenue and The Avenue of the Americas

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The combined-use project involves the construction of a new West Wing, the renovation and refurbishment of all of the Museum's existing facilities, and the construction of a 44-story residential tower above the new wing. The tower has been developed entirely separately by a private developer, Museum Tower Associates, under the direction of Charles H. Shaw.

MAJOR FEATURES: The 168,000 sf West Wing is the largest single element of the expansion project, providing some 46,500 sf of new gallery space as well as a new auditorium and service and support areas. The wing occupies the first six floors of the combined-use structure that also includes the residential tower. The building is located on a 17,600 sf parcel adjacent to the Museum's existing facilities.

A new, four-story, steel and glass Garden Hall (18,000 sf) on the north side of the Museum overlooking the Sculpture Garden and housing a new system of escalators and circulation areas connecting the Museum's public facilities.

An expanded, two-story Garden Wing at the east end of the Sculpture Garden, providing a public Garden Cafe on the ground floor and a Members Dining Room on the floor above.

Renovation of galleries and service and support areas in the original 1939 No. 11 Building and the 1964 East Wing and refurbishment of the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden.

Renovation of the existing North Wing to provide a new education center, galleries, and conservation and storage facilities.

PROJECT SCHEDULE: Start: January, 1980
Completion: Spring, 1984

TOTAL COSTS: Museum Expansion and Renovation: approx. $55 million

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ARCHITECTURE:

Museum: Cesar Pelli, founding principal, Cesar Pelli & Associates, New Haven, Connecticut, was Project Designer, working in collaboration with Gruen Associates, New York, the Architect of Record for the Museum portion of the project.

Tower: Design conceived by Cesar Pelli and Gruen Associates in collaboration with Jacquelin Robertson. The Architect of Record for the residential tower was Edward Durrell Stone Associates, New York.

MUSEUM DESIGN:

The design responded to the Museum's primary goals of doubling gallery space and providing substantially more visitor reception and circulation space without sacrificing well known special qualities such as the human scale of the galleries and the serenity of the Sculpture Garden.

The earlier Museum's main circulation axis was vertical, as in a house, with a central stair and a pair of elevators. In the greatly expanded Museum, circulation is organized horizontally via a tier of escalators rising from the main No. 11 building into the new West Wing. This system is housed in the new, four-story, glass-enclosed Garden Hall. A light and airy space that opens views to the Sculpture Garden, 54 Street, and midtown Manhattan, the Garden Hall adds some 18,000 square feet to the Museum's circulation areas.

The facade of the West Wing was designed to balance the overall composition of the Museum exterior along 53 Street. The original white No. 11 building containing the expanded lobby entrance is now flanked by the dark gray West Wing and the similarly dark East Wing.

(For a detailed discussion of the project's design, please see the enclosed interview with architect Cesar Pelli.)

PROJECT SCOPE:

Approximately 170,000 sf (15,800 m^2) of new space (West Wing) and 200,000 sf (18,580 m^2) of completely renovated space, providing a total of 370,000 (34,380 m^2) for the expanded Museum.

SELECTED BREAKDOWN:

Galleries	approx. 87,000 sf
Public Areas	
Main Lobby and Education Center	12,200
Garden Hall	18,000
Department Study Centers	15,000
Library	9,000

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SELECTED BREAKDOWN (CONTINUED):

Auditoriums Theater I (seating cap. 460) Theater II (seating cap. 217)	13,400
Conservation Labs	8,000
Restaurants Garden Cafe (seating cap. 220) Members Dining Room (seating cap. 240)	20,700
Museum Store	8,000
Storage	17,000
Shops	8,000
Offices	65,000
Mechanical	37,000

GALLERY SPACE BREAKDOWN:

Gallery space has been increased from approximately 40,500 to 87,000 sf (8,080 m^2) and is divided as follows:

Permanent Gallery Space (new):	67,000 sf
(Before Expansion):	30,000
Temporary Gallery Space (new):	20,000
(Before Expansion):	10,500

Comparison of new gallery space with other museums:

Tate Gallery, London:	52,000 sf
National Museum of Modern Art (Beaubourg) Paris:	180,000
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York:	33,000
Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco:	25,000
National Gallery East Wing, Washington, DC:	67,000
Walker Art Center, Minneapolis:	44,000
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York:	26,700

EXTERIOR STRUCTURE AND MATERIALS:

West Wing and Tower Facade: concrete frame; aluminum and glass curtain wall patterned with 11 shades of opaque ceramic glass and tinted vision glass.

Garden Hall: steel frame with aluminum and glass curtain wall. Glass type: PPG insulated clear glass with an ultra-violet screening interlayer.

Additional Tower Details:

Height:	580 ft
Number of Units:	263
Residential Space:	500,000 sf

(For further information about the Museum Tower, please contact Sedgwick Mead, Jr., Executive Vice President, Charles H. Shaw Company.)

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CONSULTANTS:

General Contractor: Turner Construction Company
Mechanical Engineer: Cosentini Associates
Structural Engineer: Rosenwasser Associates
Lighting: Donald Bliss
Landscaping: Zion and Breen Associates
(Sculpture Garden)

PROJECT SPONSORS:

The Museum's participation in the project is under the auspices of The Trust for Cultural Resources of the City of New York, a public benefit corporation established by enabling legislation passed by New York State in 1976. This legislation provides for the creation of specific Trusts in individual cities throughout the State. These Trusts are empowered to act on behalf of cultural institutions owning property rights to participate with private developers in the construction of combined-use facilities, providing separately for commercial development and for expansion and improvement of a cultural institution's facilities.

FINANCING:

To finance the approximately $55 million in total project costs for the Museum expansion and renovation, the Trust issued $40 million in tax-exempt collateralized bonds in January, 1980, and an additional $20 million in such bonds in March, 1984. The Museum provided $49 million in collateral funds to support the bonds.

The Museum's primary source of funding for expansion operations is its $75 million 50th Anniversary Capital Campaign. This effort, through February, 1984, has contributed approximately $70 million to the Museum's endowment.

PRINCIPAL PROJECT BENEFITS:

Twice as much gallery space for Museum collections and temporary exhibitions

Expanded collection study and storage facilities for curatorial departments and improved library facilities

A larger lobby and dramatically improved public circulation

A second theater for film programming and for educational activities such as lectures and symposia

New education and orientation facility for school and other visiting groups

Expanded and improved restaurants and bookstore

A modernized mechanical plant

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The Museum of Modern Art

THE DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN

When the new galleries of The Museum of Modern Art open, one of the most striking changes will be the dramatically expanded installation of the Collections of the Department of Architecture and Design. The entire fourth floor of the Museum's new wing will be devoted to them, and this increased space will make it possible for the first time in the Museum's history to display the collection of masterpieces of modern design chronologically, so that visitors will be able to appreciate fully the historical development of style and technology in this century.

A generous selection from the Architectural Collections, which includes drawings and building models, will be on display in a large gallery, which Arthur Drexler, the Department's Director, believes is the first museum space in the world permanently allotted to drawings and models of modern architecture. Its walls will be hung with drawings by 20th century masters such as Frank Lloyd Wright, Louis Kahn, and Mies van der Rohe and contemporary designers such as James Sterling and Michael Graves. The tiled center will contain architectural models of seminal modern works, including Wright's house Falling Water, Gerrit Rietveld's Schroder House, and Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye, among others. The two spaces will be separated by low banquettes on which visitors may rest and which can be used for seating during seminars or lectures before small groups of students. Drexler also plans to present programs of recorded music perhaps one day a week. As he says, "the gallery can be used for teaching and has been laid out to facilitate certain kinds of impromptu events."

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The permanent Design Collection will be displayed in a series of galleries, and will begin with such 19th century precursors of modern design and technology as Viennese bentwood furniture. The installation will then move forward through the Arts and Crafts and Art Nouveau movements, de Stijl and Bauhaus design, through Scandinavian and Italian design, and up to the computer technologies of today. Along the way there will be sections featuring the furniture masterpieces of such diverse architects/designers as Hector Guimard, Antonio Gaudi, Frank Lloyd Wright, Gerrit Rietveld, Marcel Breuer, Mies van der Rohe, Le Corbusier, Alvar Aalto, and Charles Eames. The last room in this sequence will accommodate changing groups of material drawn from the collections of special exhibitions.

In addition to these galleries there will be a large two-story entrance area with a view of the new Garden Hall, in which there will be additional seating. Its largest wall will be hung with a selection of posters from the department's rich collection of graphic design. This space will also contain work that was shown in the Museum's landmark 1934 MACHINE ART exhibition together with outstanding later examples of industrial art, such as the Cisitalia sports car. As Drexler points out, "there will be other things there as well, but the first impression will be that it's filled with posters." Because of the great height of this space, it is hoped that one of the "other things" will be a small helicopter hanging from the ceiling.

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DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN FACT SHEET

DIRECTOR: Arthur Drexler (appointed, 1956)

DEPARTMENT CHRONOLOGY: A Department of Architecture was formed at the Museum in 1932 with Philip Johnson as Chairman. Johnson had co-organized with Henry Russell-Hitchcock and Lewis Mumford the Museum's first architectural exhibition that same year. Following the success of the MACHINE ART show in 1934, the Department was reorganized in 1935 and its name changed to the Department of Architecture and Industrial Art. In 1937, John McAndrew was named Curator. Throughout this period, Philip L. Goodwin, a founding Trustee, served as Chairman of a departmental Advisory Committee. A separate Department of Industrial Design was formed in 1940 under the direction of Eliot Noyes. The two departments were reunified under the present name in 1949 with Philip Johnson returning to assume the Directorship. In 1951, Arthur Drexler, the current Director, joined the Department as Curator. He assumed administrative responsibilities for the Department upon Johnson's resignation in 1954 and was appointed Director in 1956.

COLLECTION: The only curatorial division at any museum worldwide devoted entirely to architecture and design, the Department's collection today totals some 2,200 design objects representing all the arts of manufacture, from household appliances and furniture to tools and textiles; some 3,500 objects of graphic design including posters, typography, and other printed combinations of word and image; more than 60 architectural models and more than 150 architectural drawings; and the Ludwig Mies van der Rohe Archive.

MAJOR HOLDINGS: The collection includes an extensive selection of useful objects designed by major 20th century architects and designers such as Alvar Aalto, Marcel Breuer, Charles Eames, and Gerrit Rietveld, to name but a few. Between 1960 and 1968, the Department received as a gift more than 20,000 drawings as well as documents and correspondence of Mies van der Rohe. Now organized as the Mies van der Rohe Archive, the collection is one of the most important holdings of material on a 20th century master architect. The Department's graphic design collection is one of the richest and most varied of its kind.

BEQUESTS, DONATIONS AND GIFTS: Joseph H. Heil Collection of Tiffany glass (1960); Joseph H. Heil Bequest of Art Nouveau objects (1974); Phyllis B. Lambert Fund, Mies van der Rohe Archive (1968); Estee and Joseph Lauder Fund for purchase of design objects (1969); Best Products Co. Architectural Model Fund (1979); Marshall Cogan Purchase Fund for architecture and design (1981).

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EXHIBITION PROGRAM:

The Museum's first exhibition devoted to architecture, MODERN ARCHITECTURE: INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION, was held in 1932, and introduced the work of European modern masters such as Gropius, Le Corbusier, and Mies van der Rohe to American audiences. It also became the Museum's first traveling show and led directly to an ambitious circulating exhibitions program in the 1930s. In 1934, the Museum held its first industrial design show, the influential and controversial MACHINE ART. Important exhibition series organized by the Department include the USEFUL OBJECTS series in the 1930s and 40s, and the GOOD DESIGN series in the 1950s. Additional informal series include exhibitions devoted to domestic architecture--such as THE HOUSE IN THE MUSEUM GARDEN (1949), designed by Marcel Breuer, and JAPANESE HOUSE (1954), based on 16th and 17th century prototypes--which involved the full-scale construction of houses in the Museum's Sculpture Garden; and a series featuring automobile design, beginning with EIGHT AUTOMOBILES (1951) and, most recently, THE TAXI PROJECT: REALISTIC SOLUTIONS FOR TODAY (1976). Other milestones in the Department's exhibition program include: BUILDINGS FOR BUSINESS AND GOVERNMENT (1957); ART NOUVEAU (1960); VISIONARY ARCHITECTURE (1960); FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT DRAWINGS (1962); WORD AND IMAGE (1968); ITALY: THE NEW DOMESTIC LANDSCAPE (1972); THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE ECOLE DES BEAUX-ARTS (1975); TRANSFORMATIONS IN MODERN ARCHITECTURE (1979).

GALLERY SPACE:

6,500 sq, ft. Before expansion, 1,700 sq. ft.

SPECIAL GALLERIES:

Philip L. Goodwin Gallery (dedicated, 1964) for the Design Collection, in honor of a founding Museum Trustee, co-architect with Edward Durrell Stone of the Museum's 1939 building, and donor of works to the Museum's collections.

Philip Johnson Gallery (dedicated, 1984) for architectural models and drawings, in honor of the Department's first Director, Museum Trustee, and donor of works to the Museum's collections.

ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN STUDY CENTER:

Located adjacent to the Department's galleries on the fourth floor of the Museum, the Study Center contains an extensive collection of design objects (except furniture, textiles, oversize posters, and architectural models); the graphic design collection; the Mies van der Rohe Archive; and photographic and biographic archives on designers, architects, and graphic designers. Open by appointment to architects, designers, and scholars, the Study Center also includes a viewing and seminar room.

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The Museum of Modern Art

THE DEPARTMENT OF PHOTOGRAPHY

"The marvelous thing about the new space," says John Szarkowski, Director of the Museum's Department of Photography since 1962, "is that we have three times as much of it for our collection. The other side of the coin is that it makes it imperative that the area not remain static. Curiosity and interest in photography are very great. It's important that serious interest of that kind be satisfied in our galleries. The larger part of our program is the new Museum, and the larger part of our energies will be devoted to making more pictures, a greater variety of pictures, available to Museum visitors."

The Department of Photography's new galleries on the second floor of the renovated North Wing, totaling some 4,800 square feet, are arranged in such a way that certain galleries can be closed off for reinstallation, allowing the larger part of the collection to remain open to visitors. There are essentially six small galleries that will be arranged chronologically, plus an introductory gallery that will show a wide variety of temporary exhibitions.

The Photography Collection spans the whole history of photography, which started about 1840, whereas other Museum collections begin around 1880. "To jump immediately into the 1840s in a museum where everything else begins a generation later requires a difficult switch on the part of the visitor," observes Szarkowski, "so we'll not start chronologically, but begin with a gallery that will show recent work, or shows that have a broad historical range.

"With the new space," says Szarkowski, "I think that it's going to be possible for us to deal with the history and with the collection in a much more

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flexible way, so that a sense of the richness and complexity of the story can be suggested. The difference in magnitude allows one to create a difference in kind."

The historical survey in the galleries will be continually revised at what Szarkowski refers to as something between "glacial" and "supersonic" speeds. "I don't mean we're going to change the whole hanging, of course, but we'll be able to maintain a degree of fluidity which will enable our regular audience to walk through once a month and recognize a significant number of changes in the galleries."

The Photography Collection numbers more than 15,000 prints. Its aim is to provide a record of the ways in which photography has responded to the modern world, rather than a record of that world.

Fluidity in exhibition is the key to the new photography galleries. "I can't think of one photograph in our collection that must be on the wall at all times," comments Szarkowski. "There are photographers who must be represented, obviously, but is there one Kertesz, one Weston, one Stieglitz? There are congeries of photographs which represent the Edwardian period, or the late Victorian, or the Photo-Secession. There will be anonymous pictures as well, where we not only cannot trace the specific influence on photographic thought, but don't even know who made them.

"In our line of work," observes Szarkowski, "we talk and think a great deal about the collection and the degree to which it reflects the history of the medium. In photography there were no guilds, no academy. There was virtually no discipline--there still isn't. Often a photographer of the modern period will leapfrog backwards over the preceding generation to a model that he likes better earlier on. For a long time the study of photography's history

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was not pursued in a coherent, systematic way, nor could it have been. With new acquisitions, the discovery of important works, and original scholarship, it is now possible to have a collection that more accurately reflects what happened."

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DEPARTMENT OF PHOTOGRAPHY FACT SHEET

DIRECTOR: John Szarkowski (appointed, 1962)

DEPARTMENT CHRONOLOGY: Although there were a number of exhibitions of photographs during the Museum's early years, the Department was not formally established until 1940 under the direction of Beaumont Newhall. After having developed the foundation for the Department's collection by acquiring some 2,000 prints, Newhall joined the U.S. Air Force in 1943. In his absence, Willard Morgan served as Director of the Department and Nancy Newhall as its Acting Curator. In 1947, photographer Edward Steichen was named Director, continuing in this capacity until retirement in 1962. That same year, John Szarkowski, the Department's current Director, was appointed.

COLLECTION: The first photograph to enter the Museum's collections was Walker Evans's Lehmbruck: Head of Man, which was donated by Lincoln Kirstein in 1930. By 1935, the Museum had acquired more than 100 photographs by Evans, 13 by Edward Weston, four by Man Ray, and one by Clara Sipprell. Today, the Department's collection totals some 15,000 photographs, one of the largest photography collections of any art museum in the world, with particular strengths in 20th century work.

MAJOR HOLDINGS: The Department's collection includes numerous works by historically important photographers such as Diane Arbus, Eugene Atget, Walker Evans, Dorothea Lange, Moholy-Nagy, Man Ray, Alexander Rodchenko, Edward Steichen, and Edward Weston; and an extensive body of work by contemporary photographers such as Ansel Adams, Bill Brandt, Brassai, Harry Callahan, William Eggleston, Lee Friedlander, Joel Meyerowitz, and Aaron Siskind.

BEQUESTS, DONATIONS AND GIFTS: A selected list of persons who have contributed to the Department in the form of bequests, donations, or gifts, includes: Ansel Adams, Celeste Bartos, Albert Bender, Shirley Burden, the Vera Frazer Estate, Lincoln Kirstein, David McAlpin, Robert Menschel, Georgia O'Keeffe, James Thrall Soby, Edward Steichen, Paul Strand, Willard Van Dyke, and Mr. and Mrs. Clarence H. White, Jr.

Gifts of exceptional generosity from Springs Industries, Inc., have supported a wide variety of exhibitions and

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BEQUESTS, DONATIONS AND GIFTS (CONTINUED):

publications during the past five years, including the four-part exhibition series on the work of Eugene Atget and the four-volume book that accompanies it.

The Department's Beaumont and Nancy Newhall Curatorial Fellowship is funded by the 1977 gift of Ansel and Virginia Adams.

EXHIBITION PROGRAM:

In 1932, photography was first exhibited at the Museum in a show entitled MURALS BY AMERICAN PAINTERS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS. The following year, the first one-man show WALKER EVANS: PHOTOGRAPHS OF 19th CENTURY HOUSES was directed by Lincoln Kirstein. The Museum's and this country's first critical survey of the history of the art of photography entitled PHOTOGRAPHY: 1839-1937 was directed by Beaumont Newhall in 1937. Since then, the Department has presented some 200 exhibitions, including landmark shows such as: SEVEN AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHERS (1939); ROAD TO VICTORY (1942); PAUL STRAND: PHOTOGRAPHS 1915-1945 (1945); POST-WAR EUROPEAN PHOTOGRAPHY (1953); THE FAMILY OF MAN (1955); THE PHOTOGRAPHER AND THE AMERICAN LANDSCAPE (1963); THE PHOTOGRAPHER'S EYE (1964); WALKER EVANS (1971); MIRRORS AND WINDOWS: AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHY SINCE 1960 (1978); BEFORE PHOTOGRAPHY (1981); THE WORK OF ATGET (1981-1985).

GALLERY SPACE:

4,800 sq. ft. Before expansion, approximately 1,700 sq. ft.

PHOTOGRAPHY STUDY CENTER:

The Edward Steichen Photography Center was dedicated in 1964, honoring the well known photographer, Director of the Department, and donor of works to its collection. The new, expanded Photography Study Room, located on the Museum's fifth floor, houses the photography collection, library, and supporting archives. It is open by appointment to students, scholars, and photographers.

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The Museum of Modern Art

THE DEPARTMENT OF PRINTS AND ILLUSTRATED BOOKS

For the first time in the history of The Museum of Modern Art, the Department of Prints and Illustrated Books will occupy its own exhibition space. In the past the Department has shared a gallery with the Department of Drawings. "There hasn't really been a way of showing our collection, which consists of almost 40,000 works," says Riva Castleman, the Department's Director. "We've had a limited amount of space, and the works couldn't stay long in the old gallery because of overexposure to light. We have safeguards in the new exhibition space," she explains. "The galleries are designed so that low levels of light can be maintained. And we'll be able to rotate works much more freely."

The new third floor galleries, which have a total space of 2,700 square feet, open directly off an area of three stories of open glass and very bright north light. "We want people to come in and get used to the relative dimness," says Castleman, "so there is an introductory gallery at the beginning, which is in fact a small sitting area and reading room containing catalogues and books about prints."

The first portion of the main gallery is classical in style, with carpeting and linen walls, and will contain major works from the 1880s to the 1950s, such as The Spider, an 1887 lithograph by Odilon Redon, and Picasso's Minotauromachy etching (1935). "I think it's very important that certain key prints be on the walls for a good period, and our new gallery will make that possible," says Castleman.

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Prints from the Department's great collections of Munch, Matisse, Picasso, Klee, Dubuffet, and Johns will always be on view, thereby broadening the representation of these artists seen in the Painting and Sculpture installation and giving the public a richer view of their overall achievements. In all these cases the Department has more than 75 works to choose from. In the cases of Picasso and Matisse, Klee and Johns, it has more than 100. "Although we don't have to have one specific Munch on view all the time, we must have some Munch up," remarks Castleman, "because a painting doesn't clarify entirely what Munch is about. You can't understand his work without knowing his prints. They extend our perception of the artist beyond the drawings and paintings that are shown."

Beyond the classical gallery is a large, white, wood-floored space which will be used to exhibit a more extensive selection of contemporary work in the collection, and also for the presentation of some of its latest acquisitions. In an attempt to facilitate more frequent rotating of these acquisitions, many may be shown without frames, behind plexiglass.

Meeting the many demands of displaying the Museum's important historical and contemporary collection of prints has been the great challenge of planning these galleries. The results will give the Museum visitor a much greater sense of the scope of the Prints and Illustrated Books Collection, and of the history of modern print-making, than has ever before been possible.

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DEPARTMENT OF PRINTS AND ILLUSTRATED BOOKS FACT SHEET

DIRECTOR: Riva Castleman (appointed, 1976)

DEPARTMENT CHRONOLOGY: The Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Print Room was opened in 1949, honoring Mrs. Rockefeller's continued support for such an endeavor and her donation in 1940 of her outstanding collection of some 1,600 prints. In 1960, the Department of Drawings and Prints was established under the direction of William Lieberman. In 1969, the Department of Prints and Illustrated Books was formed in recognition of an expanding and richer body of work. Riva Castleman was named Curator in 1972 and Director of the Department in 1976.

COLLECTION: Founding Trustee Paul J. Sachs was responsible for the Museum's first acquisition of prints when he donated eight works, including prints by Beckmann, Grosz, Feininger, Kokoschka, and Pechstein, in 1929. In the 1930s, the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest brought a significant group of 50 prints, including works by Cezanne and Redon, into the collection; a large number of illustrated books from Paul Eluard's library was acquired and given to the Museum by Walter P. Chrysler, Jr. Today, the Department's collection totals some 40,000 works, encompassing prints by artists from 64 countries and offering an historical panorama of the art since Degas and Gauguin.

MAJOR HOLDINGS: Outstanding collection of works by Beckmann, Dubuffet, Feininger, Klee, Matisse, Munch, Picasso (including his masterwork Minotauromachy), Villon, and contemporary American artists. Holdings include the entire production of Tamarind Lithography Workshop (nearly 3,000 prints made between 1960 and 1970); the first copies of every edition published by Universal Limited Art Editions (publishers of lithographs by Johns, Rauschenberg, and others); an important collection of books illustrated by French painters and sculptors; and a unique collection of the proofs and plates of Pollock's only engravings.

BEQUESTS, DONATIONS AND GIFTS: A selected list of bequests, donations, and gifts held by the Department includes: Curt Valentin Bequest of prints by School of Paris artists (1956); Mr. and Mrs. Ralph E. Colin Donation of the complete graphics of Dubuffet (1960); Celeste and Armand P. Bartos Gift of Universal Limited Art Editions (1962-);

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BEQUESTS, DONATIONS AND GIFTS (CONTINUED):

Louis E. Stern Collection of Illustrated Books (1964); John B. Turner Fund for the purchase of contemporary American Prints (1964); Kleiner, Bell and Co. Gift of Tamarind Lithography Workshop (1967-70); William B. Jaffe and Evelyn A.J. Hall Collection of prints by Munch (1970).

EXHIBITION PROGRAM:

In 1933, TOULOUSE-LAUTREC PRINTS AND POSTERS was the first Museum exhibition to consist solely of prints. An influential exhibition of modern illustrated books, PAINTERS AND SCULPTORS AS ILLUSTRATORS, was presented in 1936. The first show of prints based entirely on works from the Museum's collections was held in 1946. Other important exhibitions of works in the print mediums include: HAYTER AND STUDIO 17: NEW DIRECTIONS IN GRAVURE (1944); JACQUES VILLON: HIS GRAPHIC ART (1953); GEORGES BRAQUE: PAINTER AND PRINTMAKER (1956); THE GRAPHIC WORK OF EDVARD MUNCH (1957); AMERICAN PAINTERS AS NEW LITHOGRAPHERS (1964); CONTEMPORARY PAINTERS AND SCULPTORS AS PRINTMAKERS (1964); PABLO PICASSO: MASTER PRINTMAKER (1970); AMERICAN PRINTS: 1913-1963 (1974); IMPRESARIO: AMBROISE VOLLARD (1977); PRINTED ART: A VIEW OF TWO DECADES (1980); PRINTS FROM BLOCKS: GAUGUIN TO NOW (1983).

Since the 1940s, traveling exhibitions of prints from the Museum's collections have toured throughout the United States, as well as in Europe, Australia, Japan, India, and Latin America.

GALLERY SPACE:

2,700 sq. ft. Before expansion the Department shared some 2,500 sq. ft. of gallery space with the Department of Drawings.

SPECIAL GALLERIES:

Paul J. Sachs Gallery (originally dedicated in 1964 as the Paul J. Sachs Galleries for drawings and prints)

Another gallery devoted to contemporary works will be dedicated to Tatyana Grosman, late founder and Director of Universal Limited Art Editions.

PRINTS AND ILLUSTRATED BOOKS STUDY CENTER:

The Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Print Room, which since 1949 has been the foremost center for the study of modern prints, is open to students, scholars, and collectors, by appointment only. The expanded facility, located on the Museum's fourth floor, houses the Department's entire collection of work in the print mediums.

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The Museum of Modern Art

THE DEPARTMENT OF DRAWINGS

For the first time in the history of The Museum of Modern Art, the Department of Drawings has its own exhibition space; formerly, galleries were shared with the Department of Prints and Illustrated Books. The Drawings Collection is rich in quality and, with more than 6,000 works, is probably the largest single collection of modern drawings. The Department's Director, John Elderfield, has extensive plans for the new galleries.

The new galleries will open with a survey of the strengths of the collection, showing its historical breadth, its qualitative importance, and its diversity in mediums. The installation will begin with works by the great Post-Impressionists and continues into work of our own time. Like the collection itself, it will include not only drawings in the traditional mediums of pencil, ink, and charcoal but also watercolors, gouaches and collages, and works in mixed mediums.

"The exhibition space comprises about 3,000 square feet," says Elderfield, "which is larger than the area we previously shared on a half-time basis with Prints. So we more than double the availability of drawings to the Museum's public. Moreover, the space has been planned so that it can accommodate a variety of installations. It can take one continuous exhibition; two that are quite separate; even five distinct groups of work, which will be useful for showing a diverse range of particularly contemporary art." The gallery floors are carpeted for a more intimate atmosphere, and the walls are covered with linen. "This is important," notes Elderfield, "not only for intimacy but also to

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prevent smaller, classic works from being overwhelmed by white walls." However, the space is designed so that white panels can cover the linen walls when appropriate for more contemporary installations. There are also windows opening onto the third floor Garden Hall, which serve to make the galleries "less hermetic," in Elderfield's words.

Although the Drawings Collection is vast, part of it is study material. "As well as having galleries for the first time," says Elderfield, "we will also have our first fully equipped study center. This will allow students and scholars to come in and look at those drawings which only rarely will be exhibited, if at all." Even excepting this study material, however, only a fraction of the collection will be on view at any one time.

"Three months is the standard period for a drawing to be on view," explains Elderfield. "Even with low light levels, which we will have, drawings have to be rotated. We will therefore change our hangings four times a year. Often, the whole installation will be changed, but we want to leave ourselves the option of keeping a particular kind of installation up for longer than three months, gradually changing individual works with new examples by the same artist. This kind of rotation will also apply to those drawings that we will show outside our own galleries, as a complement to works in the Painting and Sculpture installation."

The groupings shown in the Drawings Galleries will not always be conceived as historical surveys. They will include thematic slices through the collection, concentrating on particular mediums (such as collage or watercolor), subjects (like landscape, the figure or theater designs), and more general themes (including sculptors' drawings, geometric abstraction, etc.), as well as installations of individual artists, groups of artists and art-historical movements. And often, two or even more of such groupings will be shown at the same time in

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different parts of the galleries. "So much of the collection has been virtually invisible for so long," says Elderfield. "Indeed, more of it has been seen elsewhere, in traveling exhibitions, over the past two years, than in the Museum itself. Now we have a chance to show, in our own galleries, just how superb our holdings are."

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DEPARTMENT OF DRAWINGS FACT SHEET

DIRECTOR: John Elderfield (appointed, 1979)

DEPARTMENT CHRONOLOGY: A Department of Drawings and Prints was established at the Museum in 1960 under the direction of William Lieberman. An independent Department of Drawings was established in 1971 with Lieberman as Director. Upon his retirement from the Museum in 1979, he was succeeded by John Elderfield, Curator in the Department of Painting and Sculpture.

COLLECTION: In November, 1929, the same month the Museum opened its doors to the public for the first time, the institution acquired its first drawing as part of a donation by Paul J. Sachs, a founding Museum Trustee. In 1934, as part of the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest, the Museum acquired 36 important works on paper, including several Cezanne watercolors and Seurat conte-crayon drawings. In recent years, the most important single gift to the Department was the Joan and Lester Avnet Collection (1978) of some 200 drawings, including works by Braque, Matisse, Mondrian, and Picasso. The Department's collection now numbers more than 6,000 works and is widely acknowledged to be the richest and the most comprehensive collection of 20th century drawings.

MAJOR HOLDINGS: Outstanding in its representation of Dada, Surrealism, School of Paris, early Russian avant-garde, Italian Futurism, and historical and contemporary American drawings. Significant holdings of works on paper by Dubuffet, Ernst, Klee, Kupka, Matisse, Schwitters, and many more. Early masterworks in the collection include Cezanne's Foliage (1895-1900); Redon's Masque of the Red Death (1883); Seurat's At the Concert Europeen (1887-88). Important recent drawings include groups of works by Johns, Pollock, and Rauschenberg. The Department also holds an extensive collection of designs for the theater by major artists.

BEQUESTS, DONATIONS AND GIFTS: A selected list of bequests, donations, and gifts held by the Department includes: Lillie P. Bliss Bequest (1934); Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Gift (1935) and Bequest (1948); Mrs. Simon Guggenheim Fund (1942);

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BEQUESTS, DONATIONS AND GIFTS (CONTINUED): Katherine S. Drier Bequest (1953); John S. Newberry Collection (1960); Sidney and Harriet Janis Collection (1967); Joan and Lester Avnet Collection (1978); Nelson A. Rockefeller Bequest (1979); and recent gifts from The Lauder Foundation.

EXHIBITION PROGRAM: Most of the Museum's early exhibitions included drawings. Early exhibitions of works on paper by Americans included a 1930 show of Charles Burchfield watercolors and three shows in 1936 devoted to the work of Marin, Feininger, and Demuth. The Museum's first survey of modern draftsmanship, MODERN DRAWINGS, was held in 1944; and the Museum presented its first exhibition of drawings based solely on its collection in 1947. Other landmarks in the exhibition of drawings at the Museum include: 100 DRAWINGS FROM THE MUSEUM COLLECTION (1960); DRAWINGS FROM THE KROLLER-MULLER NATIONAL MUSEUM, OTTERLO (1973); SEURAT TO MATISSE: DRAWING IN FRANCE (1974); DRAWING NOW: 1955-1975 (1976); BETWEEN WORLD WARS: DRAWING IN EUROPE AND AMERICA (1976); CUBISM AND ITS AFFINITIES (1976); A CENTURY OF MODERN DRAWING (1982); and THE MODERN DRAWING (1983).

Since the 1940s, the Museum has maintained a highly active traveling exhibition program for works on paper.

In 1981, the Department initiated the NEW WORK ON PAPER series, devoted to the presentation of work by younger artists not previously seen at the Museum.

GALLERY SPACE: 3,100 sq. ft. Before expansion, the Department shared some 2,500 sq. ft. of gallery space with the Department of Prints and Illustrated Books.

SPECIAL GALLERIES: Within the set of Drawings galleries there will be a Paul J. Sachs Gallery in honor of a founding Trustee and first important supporter of drawings at the Museum (originally dedicated in 1964 as the Paul J. Sachs Galleries for drawings and prints).

DRAWINGS STUDY CENTER: The expanded Drawings Study Center, which contains the Museum's collection of works on paper and documentation on the collection, is located on the Museum's fourth floor. It is open by appointment to students, scholars, and collectors.

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The Museum of Modern Art

THE DEPARTMENT OF FILM

Today, The Museum of Modern Art's Department of Film boasts the strongest international collection of film in the United States. Founded in 1935, the department undertook a pioneering effort "to trace, catalogue, assemble, exhibit, and circulate a library of film programs so that the motion picture might be studied and enjoyed as any other one of the arts." Since then, the department has assembled an archive of more than 8,000 films.

Upon completion of The Museum of Modern Art's Expansion Program, the Department of Film will have the use of two theaters instead of one. The original, 460-seat auditorium was built in 1939 and renovated in 1976-78 through a gift to the Museum from Roy and Niuta Titus. The new Roy and Niuta Titus Theater 2 has now been added on the lower level of the West Wing. This 217-seat theater is equipped with two 35mm projectors, two 16mm projectors, a Super-8 projector, two slide projectors, Dolby sound, and facilities for lectures. The screen is 27 feet wide and 12½ feet high.

The additional theater will in effect double the department's exhibition program, from a former maximum of 18 screenings a week to more than 30. "The goal," says Department Director Mary Lea Bandy, "is to be able to show a broader spectrum of programs, covering the avant-garde, independently produced films, works from the archives, and major narrative films from all over the world." The Roy and Niuta Titus Theater 2 will establish an intimate atmosphere for those films that attract a smaller, but increasingly important, audience.

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The other, no less important, change that will result from the new space will occur largely behind the scenes: The department will be able to advance toward its long-term goal of transferring 8 million feet of unstable nitrate film to modern acetate stock. The new Preservation Screening Room, located near the department's Film Study Center on the fifth floor, is outfitted with over $350,000 worth of the finest equipment for the projection of films from every period, from 1895 to the present. All formats--silent, sound, varying widths and speeds--can be accommodated. "This facility will enable the staff to look at each stage of preservation printing, at the original film side by side with an advanced state of preservation, at films from two different labs, at two different reels of the same film," states Bandy. "Comparative viewing is very important to make the best preservation materials possible." This room will be the first such screening facility in an American museum and will serve as a seminar room for film conservators from all over the world, as well as an aid to filmmakers seeking to preserve their own work.

A new Video Gallery is also planned for the finished Museum, and the department has upgraded its equipment with two new Sony 32-inch monitors. The Video Collection, numbering some 300 tapes, was begun in 1970 and includes material ranging from educational works to broadcast documentaries to Nam June Paik's Lake Placid '80. The Projects: Video program--which in 1981 exhibited 72 tapes by 43 artists--will be continued and expanded.

More than any institution outside Hollywood itself, the Museum has taught several generations of American filmmakers the cinema of today and yesterday. Now, with extra space, a more modern Study Center, and top-of-the-line equipment, the department hopes to complete its catalog of the collection, establish

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a strong publishing program, and expand its Circulating Film Program. It will also continue and enlarge ongoing programs such as Video Viewpoints and Cineprobe, in which videomakers and filmmakers introduce their works and talk about them; What's Happening?, the series of recent films of social or political interest; Films for Young People, and Films From the Archive.

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DEPARTMENT OF FILM FACT SHEET

DIRECTOR: Mary Lea Bandy (appointed, 1980)

DEPARTMENT CHRONOLOGY: The Department was founded in 1935 as the Film Library, with John Abbott as Director and Iris Barry as Curator. Among its first acquisitions were Fernand Léger's Ballet Mécanique (1924) and Edwin S. Porter's The Great Train Robbery (1903). The Film Library presented its first series--A SHORT SURVEY OF THE FILM IN AMERICA, 1895-1932 and SOME MEMORABLE AMERICAN FILMS, 1896-1934--as circulating exhibitions in 1936. In 1938, the Film Library became one of the founding members of the Fédération Internationale des Archives du Film, and in 1939 it acted as host for FIAF's first annual congress. Film Notes, a compilation of program notes for the circulating programs, was issued as the Library's first original publication in 1940. In 1966, an expanded and more flexible programming policy went into effect, and the Film Library was renamed the Department of Film to clarify to the public the broadened scope of its activities. In 1979, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences gave the Department of Film an Honorary Academy Award in recognition of its "on-going program of film preservation and its continuing support of the motion picture as an art form." In 1985, the Department will host the FIAF annual congress on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Museum's film programs.

FILM ARCHIVE: Contains over 8,000 films; principal holdings include representative works of international cinema, European avant-garde films, works of American independent filmmakers and studios, documentaries of the 1930s and 40s. Special collections include the D.W. Griffith Collection, Biograph Collection, Edison Collection, Douglas Fairbanks Collection, Twentieth Century-Fox Collection, David O. Selznick Collection, Thomas Brandon Collection. Ongoing projects include computerization of information on these holdings and publication of a catalog.

CIRCULATING FILM PROGRAM: Provides about 4,000 films each year to approximately 500 institutions; maintains a collection of over 1,000 titles.

EXHIBITION PROGRAM: Presented its first in-house exhibition, A CYCLE OF 70 FILMS 1895-1935, in 1939, and has mounted approximately 450 exhibitions since. Recent series include FILM INDIA (June-October 1981), REDISCOVERING FRENCH FILM PART ONE (November 1981-January 1982), PARAMOUNT PICTURES: 70TH ANNIVERSARY (November 1982), REDISCOVERING FRENCH FILM PART TWO (January-October 1983). Ongoing series include FILMS FROM THE ARCHIVE, A HISTORY OF FILM, CINEPROBE (independent and avant-garde films), WHAT'S HAPPENING? (documentaries on social and political issues). Annual series include NEW DIRECTORS/NEW FILMS, RECENT FILMS FROM WEST GERMANY, PERSPECTIVES ON FRENCH CINEMA.

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THEATERS:	The Roy and Niuta Titus Theater 1 460 seats--inaugurated 1939; renovated and renamed 1977; renovated 1984 The Roy and Niuta Titus Theater 2 217 seats, with wheelchair space for 4--inaugurated 1982 as part of the Museum's new West Wing
FILM STILLS ARCHIVE:	Contains some 3 million photographs of films from all periods.
FILM STUDY CENTER:	Permits serious film students, researchers, scholars, and filmmakers to view films from the Department's study collection; maintains a large collection of screenplays and dialogue continuities, files of film reviews and articles, publicity material, reference books, posters, FIAF Periodical Index.
PRESERVATION PROGRAM:	Maintains an ongoing effort to preserve the films in the Archive both from nitrate deterioration (for films made before 1950) and from fading of color films. To date, more than 12 million feet of nitrate film have been transferred to safety stock. A Film Preservation Fund has been established to insure the preservation of the remaining films in the Archive, as well as the new acquisitions that continually enter the collection.
VIDEO PROGRAM:	Established 1974. Presents approximately 10 exhibitions a year in the Museum's Video Gallery, as well as the VIDEO VIEWPOINTS lecture series in the Roy and Niuta Titus Theater 2. Acquires works of video artists for permanent collection. Recent exhibitions include THE SECOND LINK: VIEWPOINTS ON VIDEO IN THE EIGHTIES (August-September 1983) and VIDEO ART: A HISTORY (October-December 1983). New Video Study Center (inaugurated 1984) will allow scholars and artists access to materials in the collection, including videotapes, catalogs, periodicals, posters, transcripts of interviews, and ephemera. A Circulating Video Library was added to the Circulating Film Library in December 1983 and currently makes available a total of 45 titles by 42 videomakers.
BEQUESTS, DONATIONS AND GIFTS:	A selected list of bequests, donations, and gifts held by the Department includes donations of films or funds to preserve films, given over extended periods from: The Rockefeller Foundation, John Hay Whitney, David Wark Griffith, Douglas Fairbanks, Sr., Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., Lillian Gish, ABC Pictures, Inc., Twentieth Century-Fox, the National Endowment for the Arts, Celeste Bartos, the Pinewood Foundation, the Jerome Foundation, the New York State Council on the Arts, Stanley Kubrick, Len Lye, the Hans Richter Estate, Warner Communications, Mrs. John Hay Whitney, and the Greentree Foundation.

[illegible] mixed bag of a show, the last "documenta" at Kassel as well as the "Zeitgeist"-exhibition

5000 Köln 1, Lindenstr. 18, Telefon: 0221/245818

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art aktuell

Confidential information about the International Art Scene

Publisher and responsible for its contents: Dr. W. Bongard

Cologne, end of May 1984
14 th Year, No. 9-1o

Dear Friend,

back from my recent info-trip to the States -to be exact to New York, Chicago, Ft.Worth, Dallas, Houston Philadelphia and Washington, I'd like first to take the opportunity of thanking each of those, who helped me with advice, information and deeds, in particular Gina T.,Katheleen C., Leonard D.,Laura C.,Hilde H., Brooke A. Holly & Horace S., Jim S., Jeanne-Claude & Christo, Pamela S., Jeffrey D., Bob F. and the unknown student, who, at the end of my journey, lugged my suitcase full of books, catalogues, prospectuses etc When push comes to shove, it's the human element that makes the oft frustrating occupation with contemporary art appear worthwhile.

Secondly: please forgive me for my last "art aktuell"-telegram, hastily mailed to you from New York with nothing but names, names

1. of those artists who are to be represented at the coming Biennia of Venice (vernissage on the 6th,7th and 8th of June for members of the press -·for a friendly smile and a small tip- for any other interested person, too, and
2. of those "lucky" artists-please note the quotation marks- who are in Kinanston McShines "Survey"-exhibition at New York's Museum of Modern Art (the show runs til Aug.7th, the catalog is not ready yet and will-hopefully- appear in a couple of weeks

Since I was in such a hurry, I desisted from signing and numbering this extra-service.

As far as the "Survey"-show of the MoMa (The "Louvre of Modern Art"-as the German critic Werner Spies called it) is concerned, I am far from being enthusiastic about the whole affair. Considering that McShine, the senior curator who is in charge of contemporary art at the Modern, has had four(!) years to prepare this show, considering the -unmatched- resources that the MoMa has at its disposal, I must confess that the result fills me with anger or sadness, or even both. In comparison with this mixed bag of a show, the last "documenta" at Kassel as well as the "Zeitgeist"-exhibition

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at Berlin-with all their one-sidedness and imperfections- turn out smelling like a rose: the MoMa-"Survey" being a mis-mash without any point of view, a pseudo-information about what happene within the last ten years.

Very sorry, Mr.McShine, but your rambling miscellany of 195 works by 165 artists from 17 countries has reduced your art-curatorial credit-rating from whatever it was to 3EE. Visitors of "your" museum surely deserve more help and guidance than you are either willing or able to provide!

Not that I underrate the difficulties involved in mounting such a "survey", nor do I fail to understand the personal inclinations, wishes and judgements, but -along with most of my friends in the art world (who prefer speaking "off the record" or "for background only"), I cannot but blame McShine for having missed a chance, for having provided the public with a dis-service:

Too many artists

-appr. 6 weeks prior to the opening, the number of artists was increased from 12o to 165-the same mistake made at the last "documenta"-and certainly the main reason in the catalog's not being ready -

too few works,

as a rule only one per artists, and that, more often than not, not representative,

terrible hanging,

thereby increasing the confusion; "juxtapositions" which in many cases only turn about to bad jokes,

unforgivable omissions of important artists,

highly questionable consideration of second rate artists,

under-representation of women-artists (only 14, as if- particularly since 1975- not many more women had given major impulses to the art world, and-last not least-

complete omission of Graffiti-artists

(not even Keith Haring being shown), although these artists, yes, artists, count among the liveliest and most original of New York creations, even though the Museum Boymans-van Beuningen in Rotterdam dedicated a show to this art recently, even though many European and American galleries are showing them, even though some of them will be shown in Venice within the scope of "Aperto '84":

all of this, because of the "Graffiti-ing" of Picasso's Guernica -remember?- by Tony Shafrazi, who has Keith Haring and some other (post-)graffiti-artists in his stable!!

Those are only the most bovine mistakes of this undertaking, the undertaking of art in the funeral sense, concocted by McShine, the man from MoMa, who in an interview with the New York Times uttered the incredible line: "I think that some people can benefit from not being in the show. They will have to think about their work."

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Unbelievable, that a museum-curator could say-or even think- such junk-no wonder that that line raised the brows of the entire New York art world. On the other hand, McShine claims NOT to have said it in this way-in all fairness to him.

However, if it is not a quote, he certainly said and meant something like that. (The New York Times is-after all- the New York Times).

It is quite astounding that JohnRussel, this "Pope" among New York art critics, has been so lenient on McShine. Only the cleverest "between-the-lines"-readers were able to share Russel-s dissatisfaction (especially since this "critic" has never considered it his job to be critical). Well, I was warned by some well-intentioned friends to be gentle on McShine, since he is considered one of the-few- "progressive forces" in New York's museum scene. (I do realize, that almost everybody in New York would like to do business with this curator: manus manum lavat!)

There is perhaps some consolation in the -new-permanent installation done by Bill Rubin, who is-as director of painting and Sculpture- known not to like much of the contemporary scene. This installation (which omits all 165 artists in McShines "survey"-show) is intended to complement that exhibition by "emphazising the work of the 196o's and early '7o's". (Whereas McShine's show consists of loans only, Rubin picked his works from MoMa's own collection. Here the artists he considered worthwhile showing at the occasion of the re-opening of the MoMa -somewhat in the order of hanging:

J.Johns, R.Rauschenberg, Christo, C.Oldenburg,J.Chamberlain, Cy Twombly, Al Held,F.Stella,E.Kelly, A.Liberman,R.Morris,D.Judd, A.Warhol, K.Noland, M.Louis, H.Frankenthaler, Y.Klein, Arman, R.Lichtenstein,C.Andre,J.Rosenquist, A.Martin, R.Ryman, E.Hesse, Mario Merz, R.Serra,B.Nauman,J.Winsor,D.Flavin,J.Olitski, Sol LeWitt, A.Caro, Ch.Close, Ch.Simonds-and Joseph Beuys(as the only German-with the museum's new acquisition "Ostende"!)

It is planned that this part of the permanent collection-the floors of which are parquet, in contrast to the carpeted "holy of holies" for modern classics from Cezanne to Pollock- should be re-hung every four months. It will be quite interesting to observe the changes and the reconsiderations undertaken by Bill Rubin on such occasions. (at present you will gain the impression that such movements ac Conceptual Art, Land Art, Story Art, Action Art never existed, not to mention Photo-Realism, Video- or Performance Art. Perhaps you can now realize how the re-opening expo of the MoMa has been received in New York artists and gallery circles...

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It is all the more amazing that there haven't been any demonstrations or similar signs of discontent!
" It's 1984 "
is what I frequently was told-by way of explanation...

To come back to the "Survey"-show just one more time: this "survey"-which is not one at all- had to suffer from its very beginning: because of its restriction to traditional mediums, namely paintings and sculptures. Important developments in the last ten years thus could not be included, or even considered. Which does not say, that the MoMa has turned its back on new media and inter-disciplinary forms of art, although the exhibition program til the beginning of 1985 isn't exactly a proof of that: with retrospectives of Irving Penn (the photographer), Lee Krasner-Pollock and Richard Serra, besides that a furniture show of Alvar Aaalto and
"Primitivism in 2oth century Art: Affinity of the Tribal and the Modern" on the agenda. The latter show raises the fear, that many young artists will be giving their newest work a"primitive" look (one can do that without great effort), in order to catch MoMa's roving eye. Because: whether the MoMa does or doesn't want to believe it, it still plays the major role-at least a major role in the modern art world -since there is a general lack of direction in the art world today.

Just for history's sake, I would recommend to all those PH.D.-aspirants in the fiels of art-politics, art sociology, art-relations ect. that they get hold of MoMa's computerized list of 4o ooo names for the 2o-odd pre-reopening events guest list! A thorough analysis could provide better information about the "Vatikan of Modern Art" resp. the hierarchy of today's art world than all the guessing and monday-morning quarterbacking ever did. Some of the names of the "Happy Few" who were-in geopolitical terms "extraterritorial" are: Jacqueline and Paloma Picasso, Werner Spies, Thomas Messer & Wife, Sidney Janis and Leo Castelli..

In case there was ever any doubt as to who "rules" the roost-besides the ever present "almighty Dollar"- McShines "Survey"-Show demonstrated clearly that it is the New York dealers who are the kings! McShine's show serves the pudding ex negativo, in that he borrowed only two/three works from New York galleries, from which he could have had a choice, and had it much cheaper. Almost all of the loans are coming from private collectors, museums or from artists'"collections". For me, this is one more proof of the power of the New York dealers, especially of Leo Castelli (in coope-

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ration with Ileana Sonnabend, Mary Boone/Michael Werner, Metro Pictures, Sperone-Westwater-Fischer, Blum/Helman etc.). Leo himself furnished proof of this by his statement in the May-issue of "Vanity Fair" magazine (p.16), where he says:

"I feel, perhaps arrogantly, that any artist would come to me if I asked him. It is very important to feel that you can have something, to know that you have a choice, even if you don't exercise that choice. As long as you feel the whole world(!)is at your disposal (!), you're satisfied."

To fully appreciate the meaning of this statement, it might be necessary to reed it twice. Considering his reputation (as uncrowned "King"of the New York art world) it must have come as a big blow to him that "his" (and Mary Boone's,-they shared) youngest artist, Julian Schnabel, has decided to join the Pace-Gallery stable. It probably hit Leo like an earthquake- since he learned from Schnabel's choice by phone (after everybody else knew it!).

However old the news of Schnabel's decision is by now, its shockwaves are still reverberating through the New York art world and ought to continue to do so for some while. Castelli has- reportedly- sworn never to speak with Schnabel for the rest of his life (he is 77). When I asked him about Schnable's step he called it-twice- "contemptuous, particularly with respect to Mary Boone, who "made Schnabel big" (that might be a double-entendr and has now the dirt-end of the stick. Castelli told Schnabel:

"You are a fool!"

which is probably the most direct language he has ever used with an artist. Castelli has probably never been treated with more disrespect than from Schnabel. Without Castelli, whom Mary Boone was able to win for Schnabel-and herself- this self-appointed "genius" of a painter would hardly be the highest-paid and most-discussed artist of his generation.

Why Schnabel did it, is a question open to speculation. Of course there are rumours that he did it in order to take revenge on Mary Boone, who opened her new-enlarged gallery- with a one-man-show of Michael Werner's (her boyfriend) Georg Baselitz -so that Schnabel was no more the number One artist in Mary's stable. Some people think that Schnabel was very "smart" in leaving Castelli/ Boone and joining a -financially extremely well equipped- gallery that has a different clientele, particularly in the States. Schnabel himself reportedly told "The Washington Post":

"It's spring.

That's why I made the change."According to the "Village Voice" Schnabel's intermediary termed "absurd" reports that the Pace Gallery had offered the artist a 1 million dollar annual guarantee. Maybe he did it to be even more (or rather again) talked about. Anyway, the Pace Gallery is -amongst young New York artists- considered a "graveyard" rather than anything else.(Who has heard of Brice Marden since he joined that bluest blue-chip-gallery?)

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Castelli meanwhile has little else to do but make a simple gesture, like a shrug of his shoulders-to get undecided collectors off of Schnable... A final word on the "Schnabel-Case":
In the past, most artist-dealer-relationsships have been founded on basis of faith and trust-only in the rarest cases were there written contracts. From now on, that is a thing of the past. Schnabel has set an unmistakable signal. His rise-and, as I see it- inevitable fall- put the cap on an entire era, an era of mutual trust between artists and dealers-for whom Castelli was the prime representative. The Schnabel-case also defines the start of another era, the "dollar-Era", in which outright business(makers) will gain the position of predominance versus all other considerations and feelings.

From "New Wave Art" to "New Wave Business"

that was the characterization of an experienced art-world-observer to the new situation (which isn't really that new at all).
Contemporary art is now seen as merely another way to "make" money, but art can only suffer when the criteria are the same as those of the stock exchange. Friendships are dumped, egos are catered to and satisfied. It is hardly astounding, that the new key words are "Fun", sarcasm, satire, parody and, above all, "cynism". These are the"concepts" which open the treasure house of contemporary art. It was therefore some consolation that I was able to meet some of my very oldest friends and also real friends of contemporary art.

Somewhat dejected, but not despairing, I remain-in the hope, that we will meet in Venice or Basel-

yours sincerely,

Max Wagner

107/55o

P.S. Among the stands at the coming Basle "ART" (14th til 18th of June, vernissage on June 13th,5-8 p.m.) I would like to recommend the shows of Graffiti-art (only) being put up by Sidney Janis and the gallery Gallozi-La Placa (both at the entrance of the fair ground). And don't forget to have a look at the "Skulptur im 2o.Jahrhundert"-Show ("Sculpture in the 2oth century") in the Merian Park of Basel/St.Jacob (from June 3rd til Sept. 3oth).

PPS.: More on my American impressions and experiences in the next edition at the end of June!

Der Inhalt dieses Informationsdienstes ist nur zur persönlichen Unterrichtung des Empfängers bestimmt. Weitergabe und Vervielfältigung nicht gestattet. Alle Nachrichten werden nach bestem Wissen, jedoch ohne Gewähr gegeben. "art aktuell" erscheint normalerweise monatlich und ist nur im Abonnement erhältlich. Bezugspreis: Jahresabonnement 282,50 DM einschließlich Porto und Mehrwertsteuer. Künstler erhalten einen Nachlaß von 50 Prozent. Für den Inhalt verantwortlich: Dr. Willi Bongard. Auflagenlimit: 550 Exemplare.
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The Museum of Modern Art

Public Information

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December, 1984

LANDMARK SURVEY OF THE PAINTINGS OF HENRI ROUSSEAU TO BE EXHIBITED AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

The first comprehensive retrospective ever organized of the paintings of Henri Rousseau will open at The Museum of Modern Art in New York on Thursday, February 21, 1985. Sponsored jointly by the Museum and the Reunion des Musees Nationaux de France, HENRI ROUSSEAU features approximately 60 works by the artist, dating from the beginning of his documented career in 1886 through his last completed painting, The Dream of 1910. Included will be almost all of Rousseau's acknowledged masterpieces as well as several key works from foreign collections that have never before been on view in the United States. The exhibition will run through June 4.

Carolyn Lanchner, Curator in The Museum of Modern Art's Department of Painting and Sculpture, and William Rubin, Director of the Department, have organized HENRI ROUSSEAU together with Michel Hoog, Curator of the Musee de l'Orangerie in Paris. The exhibition was shown this fall at the Grand Palais in Paris.

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The core of the retrospective is formed by the unrivaled Rousseau collections of the two sponsoring institutions. The Museum of Modern Arts holds what many consider to be the two most important paintings of the artist's career, The Sleeping Gypsy (1897) and The Dream (1910).

The Reunion has long held such major works as War (1894) and The Snake Charmer (1907). Its impressive collections were further enhanced by the paintings that came to it from the estate of Pablo Picasso and from the Walter-Guillaume bequest. Among the works from these sources that will be on view in the exhibition are a large, austere portrait of a woman (c. 1895) that Picasso acquired in 1908 and kept in his studio until the end of his life. Works from the Walter-Guillaume holdings include The Wedding (1904-05), Old Junier's Cart (1908), and Child with a Doll (c. 1906). Most of these paintings have never been seen in this country.

HENRI ROUSSEAU and its accompanying publication has been made possible by a generous grant from PaineWebber Group Inc. The exhibition has received additional funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, and an indemnity has been provided by the Federal Council on the Arts.

The events of Henri Rousseau's life have come down to contemporary critics and art historians in a tangle of myth and suspect anecdote. Even his famous sobriquet, "douanier," is a misnomer. Rousseau was not a customs inspector, but an employee of Paris' municipal toll service, a "gabelou."

Among the facts known about Rousseau are that he was born in 1844 in Laval in northwest France, spent several years in the army stationed in France (not in "tropical" Mexico as the writer Apollinaire would claim),

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and began his artistic career in the 1870s in Paris as a "Sunday painter."

Despite an often negative critical reaction to Rousseau's work during the early years of the Salon des Independants, it was not at this juncture ridiculed as relentlessly as many romanticized versions of his life have claimed. Indeed, it was noticed and admired by a number of artists, such as Pissarro, Renoir, Degas, Puvis de Chavannes, Redon, Gauguin, Toulouse-Lautrec, and Signac.

In 1893, the "douanier" retired from the municipal service to devote himself full-time to his art. Over the next two decades until his death in Paris in 1910, the critical reception of his work tended to become increasingly sharp, even as his paintings attracted more and more attention from the new generation of artists, notably Picasso, Delaunay, and Leger.

If separating fact from fiction in Rousseau's life can be troublesome, a similar problem exists in the assessment of his work. The actual extent of his output has been difficult to ascertain, and a large number of works often attributed to him have come under question.

The contents of the Museum's HENRI ROUSSEAU retrospective have been intentionally restricted to works of unquestioned authorship. By establishing this qualification and by including with the artist's most ambitious endeavors his more modest ones, a clearer image of the real, demonstrable Rousseau--the accomplished master--should emerge. Many of of the paintings in the exhibition are on loan from lesser known public and private collections in Switzerland, Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Japan. A key work to understanding Rousseau is Myself-Portrait-Landscape (1890),

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which is being lent by the National Gallery of Prague and has never before been on view outside Europe.

In conjunction with the exhibition, Henri Rousseau has been published in separate English and French editions by The Museum of Modern Art and the Reunion des Musees Nationaux de France. The approximately 300-page book includes 66 color plates with detailed commentaries, 167 black and white illustrations, and essays by the directors of the exhibition and Roger Shattuck and Henri Behar.

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***The press preview for HENRI ROUSSEAU has been rescheduled for Tuesday, February 12, from 11 am to 5 pm.

For further information, please contact Pamela Sweeney, Assistant Director, or Patrick Milliman, Press Officer, Department of Public Information, Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, NY 10019 (212) 708-9750.