ONE MAN SHOW OF STAGE DESIGNS BY EUGENE BERMAN
OPENS AT MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Eugene Berman is an outstanding twentieth-century artist whose work as an easel painter is matched by the brilliance of his scene and costume designs for ballet and theatre. In a retrospective exhibition: THE THEATRE OF EUGENE BERMAN, opening at the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, Wednesday, January 22, more than 100 gouaches of Berman's designs for ballet sets and costumes and four stage models will be shown. The exhibition, directed by George Amberg, Curator of the Museum's Department of Theatre Arts, will be shown in the Auditorium and Theatre Arts Galleries.

The exhibition will be the first representative survey of Berman's complete theatrical work, including several drawings or gouaches from every production Berman has designed. It will be genuinely comprehensive, even in its presentation, for a special installation has been designed in cooperation with the artist.

Simultaneously with the opening of the exhibition the Museum will publish a monograph, written by Mr. Amberg: THE THEATRE OF EUGENE BERMAN. In his introduction Mr. Amberg says, in part:

"Ten years ago, at the Hartford Festival, Eugene Berman was presented to a limited audience for the first time as stage designer. Today his theatrical work is known to countless spectators in this country and abroad, and one cannot imagine the American ballet stage without his brilliant contributions. Meanwhile, with eight staged productions and several major unexecuted productions to his credit, he has established himself as one of the few modern painters who has an authentic professional standing on the stage.

"For Eugene Berman, though he is primarily an easel painter, stage design is not a minor or incidental occupation, to be taken up as opportunity offers, but a major creative field having its own validity. Keenly aware of the specific scenic requirements, he approaches each task with a deliberation and a clarity of purpose which convey to his drawings the incisive neatness of technical tracings. His sure, easy transition, from one medium to the other, is significant. Many of his easel paintings suggest, in structure and composition, in light effects and atmosphere, idealized images of illusionistic scenery. This characteristic is not casually or candidly borrowed from the theatrical stock of the historical past; it is carefully studied, deliberately evoked and masterfully applied. There is an essential and congenial relation between Berman and the theatrical magicians and technicians of the High Renaissance and Baroque.

"The supreme quality of Berman's theatrical work is its
balance of intellectual discipline and creative imagination. Once in possession of the primal conception, he leaves nothing to chance. The innumerable sketches which he creates in the course of a long germinating process are not indications of a lack of decision or precision; indeed there is nothing haphazard, equivocal or hesitant in these brilliant studies. The finished work reveals the ultimate, comprehensive integration of all component factors into one unified whole: "a perfect synthesis of function and effect, reason and vision."

Eugene Berman was born November 4, 1899 in St. Petersburg (Leningrad), living there and Tsarskoie Selo until 1908. He lived in Germany, Switzerland, and France from 1908 until 1913. He showed an early aptitude for drawing and painting and in 1914, upon his return to Russia, began the study of art and of architecture.

In 1918 Berman left Russia. After short stays in Finland and England, he settled in Paris, which he regarded as his home until 1937. In that city he studied under Vuillard and Denis and did some work under the architect Emilio Terry. He made his first trip to Italy in 1922 and thereafter visited that country almost yearly until 1938. Berman made his first trip to the United States in 1938. In 1937 he applied for citizenship and now makes his home in California.

Eugene Berman's first exhibition was held in Paris in 1924 where his work was shown with that of Berard, Tchelitchew, Leonide, Tonny, and others. He exhibited in Paris in 1927, 1928, and 1929 and held his first New York exhibition in 1932 at the Julien Levy Gallery. His work has been included in numerous exhibitions in Paris, London, New York, Chicago, etc., and he has had many one-man shows.

He is represented in many private collections and his work is owned by leading museums including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, the Phillips Memorial Gallery, Washington, D.C., the Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, and the Museum of Modern Art, etc.
THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
11 WEST 53RD STREET, NEW YORK 19, N. Y.

THE THEATRE OF EUGENE HERMAN
January 24 - March 9, 1946

CHECKLIST

ARIA DA, 1945.
Sketch for Setting
Sketch for Costume
Costume: Intermezzo
lent by Victor Hugo Gallery

Bourgeois Gentilhomme, 1944.
Sketch for Frame Curtain
Costume: Negro
Design for Backdrop
Costumes: Scene III
lent by Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo

Concerto Barocco, 1941
Detail of Setting, 1941
Shadow-box, 1941
Costumes: Venice Comedians
lent by Victor Hugo Gallery

Danse Coquettantes, 1944
Sketch for Costume
Sketch for Setting
Design for Backdrop
Sketch for Costume
Design for Front Curtain
lent by Julien Levy Gallery

Devil's Holiday, 1939
Design for Setting
Sketch: Venetian Setting
Sketch: Tavern Scene
Design: Ballroom
Design: Act II
Sketch for Setting
Costume: Prologue
Sketches: Hardware
Costume: Hat Vendor
Costumes: Scene III
Sketch for Setting
lent by Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo
Theatre Arts Collection, Museum of Modern Art
lent by John Yeon
lent by Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo
lent by S. J. Denham
lent by Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo
Theatre Arts Collection, Museum of Modern Art
lent by Wadsworth Atheneum
lent by Edward F. W. James
Theatre Arts Collection, Museum of Modern Art

Divertissement, 1946
Project
Project
lent by Katharine Sergava
lent by Julien Levy Gallery

EssPare
Sketch: Act II, 1940
Sketch for Curtain, 1940
Sketch: Act II, 1940
Sketch: Act I Setting, 1940
Sketch: Act I, 1940
Sketch: Act II, 1946
Sketch: Act II, 1946
Sketch: Act I, 1946
Sketch: Act II Backdrop, 1946
Sketch: Act I, 1946
lent by Julien Levy Gallery
lent by Julian Levy Gallery
lent by Julien Levy Gallery
lent by Victor Hugo Gallery
lent by Victor Hugo Gallery
lent by Julien Levy Gallery
lent by Julien Levy Gallery
lent by Julien Levy Gallery
lent by Julien Levy Gallery
lent by Julien Levy Gallery
GISELLE
Sketch for Curtain, 1946
Sketch for Curtain, 1945
Sketches: Giselle's House, 1943
20 Designs for Costumes, 1946
Model: Act I, 1946
Model: Act II, 1946

EASTFORD FESTIVAL, 1936
Design for Setting

IOA22
Sketch for Setting, 1938
Sketch for Setting, 1938
Sketch: Serge Lifar as Icare, 1938
Sketch for Costume, 1939

THE ISLAND GOD, 1942
Model: Setting

ITALIAN SYMPHONY, 1940
2 Projector: Scene II
Sketch: Scene IV Setting

L'OPera DB 4 SCUS, 1937
Sketch for Curtain
Sketch for Backdrop
Sketch for Curtain

Sketch: Panghua's Shop
Sketch: 5 Human Miseries 
Poster

MIRAGE, 1940
Project

JO VADIS
Costume: Nero, 1942
Sketch for costumes, 1943
Costumier: Soldier, 1943
Costumes: Soldiers, 1943

ROMANTIC BALLET, 1939
Sketch for Costume
Sketch for Costumes
Sketch for Setting
Sketch for Setting

RO final AND JULIET
Design: Main Scene, 1942
Costume: Romeo, 1942
Costumes: Botticelli Studies, 1942
Costumes: Botticelli Studies, 1942
Design: Prologue, 1943
Shadow Box: Prologue, 1943
Shadow Box: Finale, 1943
Costume: Girl at Curtains, 1943
Costume: Beggar, 1943
Costume: Ball Scene, 1943
Costume: Capulet Boy, 1943
Costumes: Courtesan, 1943
Costumes: Beggar and Friar, 1943
Costume: Juliet, Ballroom Scene, 1943
Costume: Juliet, wedding dress, and
Nurse, 1943
Costume, 1943
Model: Main Setting, 1943

SCIENCE DJ BALLET, 1946
Project
Project
Project
Sketch: Finale

SIN LAKE, 1946. Project
Project

TWELFTH NIGHT, Port in illyria

All images, projects, and costumes are lent by various institutions and individuals. For example, the designs for Giselle's House, 1943, are lent by Julien Levy Gallery, and the set for The Island God, 1942, is lent by Victor Hugo Gallery.