

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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OF MODERN ART

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MUSEUM'S 19TH YEAR OF CIRCULATING EXHIBITIONS

The Department of Circulating Exhibitions of the Museum of Modern Art announces that its program for supplying exhibitions, especially to sections of the country where original works of art are not widely available, will continue during the coming year with 60 traveling shows and 3 Teaching Portfolios of reproductions. Aiming to reach the largest possible number of people, these exhibitions will be rented or sold at fees well under the actual cost.

The coming year will be the 19th in which the Museum has gone outside the city of New York to spread a knowledge of various art forms to many parts of the world. In this period 936 exhibitions have had 5,437 showings in U. S. cities and towns. Exhibitions have also been shown in 33 foreign countries.

Public reaction to shows of modern art has never failed to be interesting, and frequently surprising. Places generally considered conservative have often gone to great expense and trouble to obtain a very controversial exhibition. More often than not such controversy has produced an understanding, an appreciation of something new, an acknowledgment of its right to exist.

Most important of the new exhibitions is Modern American Painting: Movements and Countermovements, which includes 50 of the best American original works from the Museum Collection, tracing the sequence of modern movements in this country from the 1913 Armory Show to the present together with countermovements which opposed or modified modernism. Sculpture by Painters presents bronzes and drawings by outstanding modern painters including Masson, Miro, Renoir, Braque, Beckmann, Picasso and Matisse.

Among the new exhibitions presenting original work in the graphic arts is a selection of Twenty Fantastic and Surrealist Prints from the Museum's own collection, a group of Picasso's most recent lithographs and Matisse's colorful portfolio Jazz.

Exhibitions of architecture, displayed in large photographic panels, are Painting and Sculpture in Architecture and Post-War Building. In the field of design are included exhibitions of Lobmeyr Glass 1856-1949; Postage Stamp Design; The Styling of Motor Cars, from

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the Model T to most recent designs in Europe and America; Posters from many countries, and Advertising Art.

The Department of Photography has prepared for circulation a smaller version of The Exact Instant, Events and Faces in 100 Years of News Photography, so successful in its original showing at the Museum of Modern Art this spring. The work of Bill Brandt and Henri Cartier-Bresson has been newly added to the series of 12 one-man exhibitions of Leading Photographers.

An innovation in the program is the series of Teaching Portfolios, especially designed for use in the classroom. Each portfolio includes an introductory text and 40 plates in fine black and white reproduction in an 11 x 14" cardboard slipcase. The Department of Circulating Exhibitions also offers for sale multiple exhibitions of reproductions dealing with such subjects as What Is Modern Painting? and Elements of Design, which can be used repeatedly each school term.

Behind the scenes much planning technique goes into the making of these exhibitions. All insurance and packing are arranged by the Museum where special cases are constructed for purposes of safety and ease in handling. With each exhibition the Museum sends instructions for unpacking and repacking; blue prints of display methods, often accompanied by photographs, explaining groupings and sequences; panels, collapsible tables or other settings suitable for shows difficult to instal; publicity releases and photographs for local newspapers. One museum curator remarked: "Even a blind man could have handled the situation."

Costs are generally highest on exhibitions of original material assembled for the most part with the generous co-operation of museums and private collectors in this and other countries. Such loans are necessarily for limited periods and can rarely be circulated for more than one season. Hence the fee, based on a proportionate division of the cost among the exhibitors, is increased. On the other hand, a show consisting of photographs or reproductions can be circulated for several years, and the rental fee is much lower when divided among many institutions. Fees actually cover only packing, which represents the largest expense; insurance, a close second, and mounts and frames. No part of the fees goes towards the work of the staff in planning, assembling or distributing. Large exhibitions of original works of

art run to approximately \$300 for a 3-week showing. Smaller exhibitions rent for as little as \$12, and the portfolios sell for only \$7.50.

Comments on the value of these exhibitions have been rewarding. Typical are: "It is probably difficult for you who live in the metropolitan center to know what an event an original is in this part of the world," and, "There is no possibility of any satisfactory education along artistic lines except by such exhibitions as you have sent out."

The Museum's Department of Circulating Exhibitions continues its efforts, put into words by the late President Franklin D. Roosevelt in his broadcast 10 years ago at the dedication of the Museum's new building:

"The standards of American taste will inevitably be raised by bringing into far-flung communities results of the latest and finest achievements in all the arts.

"These traveling exhibits will extend the perspective of the general public...will make all of our people increasingly aware of the enormous importance of contemporary industrial design, architecture,...photography, the printed book, the illustration, the advertisement, the poster, the theatre and the moving picture. Thus, a nation-wide public will receive a demonstration of the force and scope of all these branches of the visual arts."