

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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

FOR WEDNESDAY RELEASE

TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900
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NOTE: Press Preview, Tuesday
December 6, 2 - 5 p.m.

HOLIDAY CARNIVAL FOR CHILDREN AGED 4 TO 8 TO OPEN AT MUSEUM

The Children's Holiday Carnival of Modern Art, composed of works of art and moving toys and providing an opportunity to create in a variety of media, will be open to children from 4 to 8 years of age at the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, from December 7 through January 11 except on December 24-26 and 31, and on January 1-2. The Carnival, designed by Victor D'Amico, Director of the Museum's Educational Program, introduces children to the fundamentals of modern art through play and creative techniques. It is a laboratory where the child's reactions to art are studied and new media explored in an informal atmosphere. It is for children only, but after January 13 adults will be admitted to see the Carnival and the work produced by the children.

The children will enter the Carnival through a gate shaped from the contour of an eight-year-old. Once through the gate the child will be surrounded by works of art and creative opportunities. As he looks up he will see a vortex of color and pattern produced from the hanging mobiles made by the artist Toni Hughes. To the right will be a side show where children can manipulate puppet-like figures such as a tight rope walker, a juggler or a bareback rider. The child can make designs by overlapping wires and colored transparent shapes in a shadow box lit from behind. He can also operate the abstract film strip movie. These devices were designed by Leonard Nelson. Color slides of works of modern masters will be continuously projected in another part of the first room.

Perhaps the most unusual device in the Carnival will be the Color Player designed by Mr. D'Amico. This is a machine which is operated somewhat like a piano. A child can create an endless number of designs in different colors by pressing the four keys of the keyboard which control different lights and the two pedals which produce motion. The resulting patterns and colors are projected on a screen in endless variety, different for each child depending on the pedal tempo and the color key combinations he chooses.

The child will then enter a sculpture gallery like a circus ring surrounded by white rope zig-zagging from floor to ceiling. The sculptures to be shown here were selected for the children principally

for their touch and form appeal. The children will be urged to pat, stroke and fondle the sculptures. Especially designed to be shown here will be a lucite giraffe by Toni Hughes and a metal alligator by Ruth Vollmer.

The child will emerge into a brilliantly lighted area where individual easels of various heights will offer him the opportunity to paint. In the center of this room will be a gleaming white table on which are mounted lazy susans heaped with colored pieces of plastic, beads, string, colored paper and fabrics. There also will be the tools for making collages and constructions from these materials. Other objects for the child's creative interest will include puzzles made from reproductions of works of modern art and magnetic pictures. These are framed, magnetized plates on which a child can arrange organic and geometric shapes. They were originated and loaned to the Carnival by Leonard Nelson. On the walls above the easels will hang works by modern artists.

Victor D'Amico has made the following comments about the Carnival:

"The Carnival is a successor to the Circus and Fair held at the Museum during the Christmas seasons of the past 8 years. It is based on the educational principle that appreciation in young children is best developed through actual contact with works of art chosen for their particular interest in texture, color and subject matter, integrated with creative opportunities. It uses play appeal because, for the young child, play is an important element in learning, since the child's creative impulses are more acute and his sensitivity more alert in a play experience.

"As far as we know the Museum of Modern Art is the only institution which has gone to the effort and expense of studying the creative interests of children under controlled conditions of presentation and esthetic standards. These annual activities have had far-reaching results, for they have stimulated parents to find creative opportunities for their children, and they have encouraged schools to enrich their art programs. Through these Carnivals we have also attempted to raise the standards of toy manufacturers as well as to introduce new ideas for art equipment. The child's free-standing easel, designed for an earlier Fair, is now produced and can be purchased through the Museum. Many children have joined the classes at the People's Art Center through the stimulation of the various Carnival events."

The Carnival will be open mornings, except Sundays, from 10 to 12 o'clock and every afternoon from 2 to 5. Work sessions will begin on the hour and will close ten minutes before the next hour. All places must be reserved in advance by telephone only: CIRCLE 5-8900, Educational Program.

A check list of the paintings and sculptures to be exhibited in the Carnival will be available at the Press Preview.