

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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UNITED STATES PAVILION
XXVII BIENNALE, VENICE

PRESS PREVIEW: FRIDAY
June 18, 1954

FOR RELEASE: SATURDAY
June 19, 1954

No. 59

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NEW YORK, ORGANIZES U.S. REPRESENTATION AT BIENNALE

AS PART OF EXTENSIVE INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITIONS PROGRAM

The recent purchase by the Museum of Modern Art, New York, of the United States pavilion at the Venice Biennale was made to implement an extensive International Exhibitions Program. As part of this Program the Museum also organized the current American representation at the 27th Biennale, which includes the works of the painters Willem de Kooning and Ben Shahn and works by 3 sculptors, Gaston Lachaise, Ibram Lassaw and David Smith.

The International Exhibitions Program was made possible by a generous grant in 1953 for a five-year period from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, a private foundation for the promotion of science and the arts. The Program, which is under the direction of Porter A. McCray, will enable the Museum to carry on more vigorously than ever before its policy of promoting cultural interchange in the arts. Since the United States, unlike most governments, has no Ministry of Fine Arts, it has not been adequately nor consistently represented in the international exchange of exhibitions. As a result, people in other countries have generally not had an opportunity to become familiar with America's contribution in the arts. The Museum of Modern Art is one of the private institutions now undertaking to remedy this situation through an active program of circulating exhibitions of American art abroad. Under the International Program it also organizes and brings to the United States displays of art from other countries.

The International Program was inaugurated last year with an exhibition of "Twelve Modern American Painters and Sculptors." In addition to works by Ben Shahn and David Smith, who are included in the current Biennale, it contained paintings by such well-known artists as Stuart Davis, Arshile Gorky, John Marin and Jackson Pollock, and sculpture by Alexander Calder and Theodore Roszak. After opening at the Musée de l'Art Moderne in Paris in April, 1953 the exhibition was seen in Zurich, Düsseldorf, Stockholm, Helsinki and Oslo. Another major exhibition of painting and sculpture, comprising 45 works by Calder and paintings, drawings and prints by 16 artists of many tendencies current in America today, was assembled by the Museum of Modern Art under the International Program and sent as the U. S. representation to the II Bienal of the Museu de Arte Moderna at São Paulo, Brazil last winter.

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A group of six shows illustrating the dramatic revival of printmaking in America was purchased outright for the Museum for showing in various centers in Europe, Latin America and the Far East. One of these, a survey of "The American Woodcut Today," presents 40 examples by 30 leading artists in this medium and shows the characteristics which distinguish American printmaking in general: use of color and textures, emphasis on large-scale prints, and experimentation followed by technical innovation. "Young American Printmakers" features the work of 35 graphic artists under the age of 35.

Architectural shows assembled under the International Program include "The Skyscraper, U.S.A." and "Built in U.S.A.: Post-War Architecture." The latter, which will be shown in Italy as well as elsewhere in Europe and Latin America, is a comprehensive survey of the most significant examples of architecture built in the United States since 1945 -- private houses, schools, office buildings and industrial plants, a stadium, a hospital, a music center, a retail store and a chapel.

"The Family of Man," an extensive photographic exhibition comprising examples selected from the work of over 5000 professional and amateur photographers from countries around the globe, on the theme of the oneness of human beings throughout the world, is now being assembled by Edward Steichen, noted photographer and Director of the Photography Department of the Museum of Modern Art.

At the request of the U. S. Information Agency the Museum of Modern Art under the International Program organized and sent abroad "American Design for Home and Decorative Use," which was circulated in Scandinavia and other European countries.

First of the exhibitions under this Program designed to widen the acquaintance of the American public with art from overseas is "The Modern Movement in Italy: Architecture and Design." It documents the important and influential contribution made by Italy to contemporary architecture and design, including the work of many new and young designers. This exhibition is currently circulating in cities from coast to coast in the United States, including Cambridge, Massachusetts; San Francisco, California; and Portland, Oregon; and its itinerary also includes the Canadian cities of Ottawa and Winnipeg.

To assist in carrying out this extensive program of cultural exchange an International Council was recently formed under the chairmanship of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller 3rd, trustee of the Museum of Modern Art. It will eventually comprise 100 community leaders from all parts of the United States, for the Museum believes that so comprehensive a program can best be carried out through the active

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participation of advisors and supporters beyond the scope of any single institution. Scholars and critics from America and other countries who are specially interested in the problems of cultural interchange will also be invited to become members. The International Council plans to supplement the International Program by arranging conferences, publications and other special activities as well as assisting in various ways in the projects for exhibitions. In addition to the chairman, Mrs. Rockefeller, five others of the Museum's Board of Trustees are members of the International Council: Mrs. Bliss Parkinson and Mr. Ralph F. Colin, who serve as Vice-Chairmen; Mr. Wallace K. Harrison, Mrs. Samuel A. Marx, and Mr. James Thrall Soby. A number of other prominent patrons of art in various American cities have already accepted the invitation to membership in the Council.
