

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
NEW YORK 19

11 WEST 53rd STREET
TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900
CABLES: MODERNART, NEW-YORK

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 27, 1955

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART SUMMER VACATION PAINTING CLASSES TO EXHIBIT WORK

An exhibition of work by students attending the Museum of Modern Art's SUMMER VACATION PAINTING CLASSES on Long Island will be on view for one day only at Ashawagh Hall in The Springs, Long Island, this Saturday, July 30, from 10 a.m. until 9 p.m. The four weeks outdoor painting course, which began in early July under the instructorship of Victor D'Amico, Director of the Museum's Department of Education and People's Art Center, is the first of its kind to be offered by the Museum.

The exhibition consists of approximately 45 compositions inspired by studies made at the Montauk Light House, the dunes around Amagansett, the fish fertilizer factory at Promised Land, the docks and yacht basin at Sag Harbor and a variety of other localities. The exhibition, which ranges from realistic impressions to abstract interpretations, is distinguished by variety of expression and is entirely the work of amateurs who are studying art for their own satisfaction and enjoyment. The group of 44 students exhibiting their work includes doctors, lawyers, business men and housewives.

A highlight of the course was a visit to studios of outstanding artists such as Alexander Brook, Julian Levi, Tino Nivola and Ray Prohaska. The classes are also indebted to the generous cooperation of the town of Easthampton and others who have permitted the students to use their facilities in studying.

In connection with the exhibition a reception will be held at Ashawagh Hall from 7 to 9 p.m. and the public is cordially invited to attend.

#65

NY Press
22 Press

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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

TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900

23/
FOR RELEASE: WEDNESDAY

August 3, 1955

No. 65

six paintings of major importance now on view at the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, in the widely praised exhibition Paintings from Private Collections have been acquired by the Museum, it was announced here today. Ranging in date from the 1890s to 1954, the paintings are by two French masters, Cézanne and Matisse, the Swiss Paul Klee, the Spaniard Joan Miro and the American Jack Levine.

Cézanne's Boy in a Red Waistcoat, given by Mr. and Mrs. David Rockefeller, is being shown for the first time in this country. It is also the first major 19th century painting to be given to the Museum since it abandoned its early policy of relinquishing older paintings to other institutions and decided to keep permanently on view masterpieces of the modern movement beginning with the latter half of the 19th century. The two newly acquired paintings by Matisse are among his most famous compositions: The Moroccans, given by Mr. and Mrs. Samuel A. Marx of Chicago, and Goldfish and Sculpture, acquired through a gift from Mr. and Mrs. John Hay Whitney. Glove and Newspaper, an early still life by Miro, is the gift of Armand G. Erpf. Klee's Vocal Fabric of the Singer Rosa Silber, given by Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Resor, was formerly in the collection of the National Gallery, Berlin, until removed by order of Hitler and sold. The most recent painting in the group, Election Night, by the American artist Jack Levine, has been given to the Museum by Joseph H. Hirshhorn.

All the paintings will remain on view through September 5 in the exhibition, Paintings from Private Collections. The exhibition, which is being presented by the Museum as the culmination of its 25th Anniversary celebration, was selected by Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Director of Museum Collections.

Mr. Barr comments on each of the new acquisitions as follows:

Cézanne: BOY IN A RED WAISTCOAT - Gift of Mr. and Mrs. David Rockefeller.

Sometime in the early 1890s, Cézanne painted four canvases of an Italian boy dressed in knee breeches and a red waistcoat. He is shown posing frontally, or standing with a straw hat or seated leaning with his elbow on a table. In the picture just presented to the Museum of Modern Art he is seated in profile.

The figure in the Museum's picture is seen in a simple and relaxed pose against a dramatically angular background formed by a great wedge of dark green curtain.

more

In spite of the vigorous red of the waistcoat, the color is in general subdued and subtle, the brushing sensitive. The face is delicately modelled with the pale rose tones and greenish shadows which Cézanne borrowed from the early work of the Impressionists and made structural. The general effect is both tender and strong.

The Boy in a Red Waistcoat was originally in the collection of the painter and Cézanne's friend, Claude Monet from whom it passed to Mrs. Chester Beatty whose collection of the French Post-Impressionists was, in London, second only to that of the late Samuel Courtauld. When Mrs. Beatty died recently, some of her best paintings came on the New York market. The Boy in a Red Waistcoat was bought by Mr. Rockefeller in April of this year. While the donor has given the Museum title to the picture, he has retained a life interest in it which will permit him to keep the painting in his home or lend it to the Museum as he may prefer.

Matisse: THE MOROCCANS - Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel A. Marx

One of Matisse's greatest compositions, The Moroccans, is divided into three clearly separate sections. At the upper left one sees a balcony with a large pot of blue and white flowers and a dome in the distance. In the lefthand corner yellow melons with great green leaves are spread on the pavement. To the right are half a dozen Moroccans, one seated in the foreground, his back turned, the others, highly abstract in drawing, recline or crouch, some of them with burnouses drawn over their heads.

These three groups are like the three movements in a symphony with well marked intermissions. The composition is enriched and unified by ingenious analogies and ambiguities. The four great striped circular flowers in the architecture "movement" echo the four melons in the still life section, yet these melons are so like the turban of the seated Moroccan in the figure section that the whole pile of melons with their leaves has been mistaken for Moroccans bowing their foreheads to the ground in prayer.

The Moroccans was painted at the time when Matisse first began to use black as a "color of light," not darkness. The black in The Moroccans indeed seems as vivid as the lavender or the green.

The Moroccans was painted near Paris in 1916 from memories of winters spent in Tangiers in 1912 and 1913. For many years the painting remained in the comparative obscurity of Matisse's studio. It was first exhibited in New York in 1927 and several times thereafter, though apparently never in Paris until after the second World War, possibly because of its large size and uncompromising power.

It was purchased for the Museum by Mr. and Mrs. Marx out of the Museum's Matisse exhibition in 1951.

more

Matisse: GOLDFISH AND SCULPTURE - Acquired through a gift from Mr. and Mrs. John Hay Whitney

This is the second of a famous series of six canvases in which goldfish were the principal theme. Painted in Matisse's studio at Issy-les-Moulineaux, a Paris suburb, in 1913, it was sold to Matisse's faithful German disciple, Hans Purrmann in 1916, and passed into Mr. and Mrs. Whitney's collection in 1947.

The sea green bowl with scarlet fish, the green vase with nasturtiums, and the terra cotta figure sing against a translucent sky blue field. Above them in the background rise a lemon yellow door and a doorway through which one sees a garden cut by a diagonal green shadow. To keep these colors pure and without reflexive vibrations the painter has left a narrow white margin of unpainted canvas around the objects, insulating them from their background.

Judged by realistic standards the painting is paradoxical. The forms are drawn in normal foreshortening, but there is no modeling in light and shade; the fish, flowers and sculpture are painted in their own colors, but the background is an abstract light blue. These conflicts with ordinary visual experience give vitality and tension to what otherwise might be simply a supremely fresh and joyful decoration.

Miro: GLOVE AND NEWSPAPER - Gift of Armand G. Erpf

In Glove and Newspaper, One of Miro's two large early still lifes, the painter gives no intimation of the extreme surrealist subject matter and spontaneity of form which by the mid-1920s possessed his art. Instead, the composition is as formal as a Catalan romanesque fresco, symmetrically disposed, each object presented with the utmost lucidity, the whole painted in a severe Spanish harmony of yellow, orange, gray and brown, with small accents of red.

Klee: THE VOCAL FABRIC OF THE SINGER ROSA SILBER - Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Resor

In The Vocal Fabric of the Singer Rosa Silber, Klee achieves one of his most subtle and complex works both in texture and color. The plaster or gesso ground while still wet was covered by a square of cheesecloth which adds to the variety of texture. The irregular surface is tinted in rectangles of pale color so that the effect is that of a crumbling wall which reveals several layers of ancient plaster. The singer is symbolized by her initials, her voice by the vowels, "A, E, I, O, U." Klee was an excellent musician and used musical subject matter in many of his paintings and drawings. The Vocal Fabric of the Singer Rosa Silber suggested one of the themes in the ballet scenes (1951) of the young German physician, Hans Werner Henze.

more

Because it was the principal painting by Klee in the collection of the National Gallery, Berlin, The Vocal Fabric of the Singer Rosa Silber was for years one of the master's best known works. In 1933 it was removed from the walls by order of Hitler. Some years later it was sold by the Nazis, eventually passing into the collection of Mr. and Mrs. Resor in 1940.

Levine: ELECTION NIGHT - Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn

Levine satirizes the less palatable aspects of American political and social life with its racketeers, crooked contractors, compromised police, shabby celebrities, and corrupt politicians.

"It is my privilege as an artist," he wrote in 1938, "to put these gentlemen on trial, to give them every ingratiating characteristic they might normally have and then present them, smiles, benevolence and all, in my own terms."

Levine's style is now more flexible, more brilliant, but he remains faithful to his satirical spirit.

Photographs available on request from Elizabeth Shaw,
Publicity Director, Museum of Modern Art, New York.