

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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No. 40 a

Background Notes on Walter Bareiss

Walter Bareiss was born in Tuebingen, Germany, in 1919. After receiving his early schooling in Europe, he came to the United States in 1937 to enter Yale University where he majored in applied economic science and from which he was graduated in 1940. He studied one year at Columbia Law School and then served in the U.S. Army. Since 1947 he has been active in various phases of the textile business - manufacturing and selling, here and abroad.

In June 1944 Mr. Bareiss married Miss Molly Stimson, a Bennington graduate, whose Great Uncle was the former Secretary of War. They have five children, a 12 year old daughter and four younger sons. They live in Greenwich, Connecticut, in a rambling house, to which they recently added a modern wing, designed by Elliot Noyes.

Although Mr. Bareiss' interest in collecting was encouraged by his American-born father whose own collection of old masters was shown in Europe several times, Yale University provided an important stimulus. While majoring in economics, Mr. Bareiss also took many fine arts courses and, primarily through George Heard Hamilton, developed a strong interest in the arts. His first purchases were Japanese prints and early Chinese ceramics which he acquired while an undergraduate. In 1940, however, he bought the Courbet oil, the earliest work in the Guest House exhibition, and in 1941 some drawings by Picasso. The first American painting he purchased was the famous The Lost Felice by Marsden Hartley.

During the past 10 years Mr. Bareiss has traveled abroad extensively on business and has acquired about half his collection in Europe, about half in the United States. His entire collection now includes about 500 objects. The children are allowed to choose works for their rooms (so long as the safety of the work of art is not endangered). The Bareisses report that the changing ages of the children is reflected in changing requests for pictures, ranging from primitives to Pollock.

Mr. Bareiss' graphic collection parallels the paintings he owns, and Mr. Lieberman, who selected the show, says it would have been possible to select a fine exhibition in any one of three media - paintings, prints or illustrated books. However, in an effort to provide variety, Mr. Lieberman has chosen 27 paintings, 7 drawings, 5 sculptures and 11 illustrated books and prints. A catalog of recognition photographs of all the works in the show has been published by the Junior Council.

Mr. Bareiss is a trustee of the Associates in Fine Arts of Yale University, a member of the Junior Council of the Museum of Modern Art and a member of the Museum's Collection Committee.