

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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In a special and experimental exhibition called "A Bid for Space" the Museum of Modern Art has put on view in its second floor galleries a crowded sampling from its collections - paintings, drawings, prints, photographs, architecture and design - to indicate the range and interest of the works of art which will become accessible to the public in the "new" Museum.

At the same time twelve paintings and sculptures of exceptional interest, either recently acquired or promised as future gifts, have been installed more spaciouly in the first floor galleries to demonstrate continuous growth and therefore the present and future needs of the Museum Collections.

The special exhibition coincides with the announcement of the Museum's 30th Anniversary Campaign Drive for \$25,000,000 for a "new" Museum with additional buildings and adequate program funds, announced November 17. The new wing, planned for West 54 Street, will enable the Museum to present an unrivaled review of 75 years of the most multiform and challenging achievements in the history of art, according to Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Director of Museum Collections.

To dramatize the need for more space many walls in the special exhibition have been double or triple hung with several rows of pictures. A wall of German Expressionist paintings, for example, crowds three works by Nolde, one by Heckel, two by Schmidt-Rottluff and four by Kirchner into a space that should contain only three or four paintings. Another wall, literally covered with paintings, presents three Malevichs, six Mondrians and two van Doesburgs. Only a few of the famous large masterworks in the collection such as Rousseau's The Dream, Kandinsky's Picture With An Archer, Matisse's Piano Lesson, Picasso's Guernica and Night Fishing, and Pollock's No. 1, 1948 are given an entire wall to themselves.

Furniture, utensils, posters, architectural drawings and a model from the Architecture and Design Collection present, in capsule form, the scope of the collection which includes outstanding examples of work from the major historic movements, Art Nouveau, de Stijl and the Bauhaus down to recent work in this field. The Photography Collection, which now numbers 5,500 prints, is represented by a gallery of 55 photographs from Hill and Adamson to work by young photographers. Prints are shown in two galleries, and 29 distinguished drawings have been hung four deep in a corridor for lack of space.

Commenting on the temporary installation, Mr. Barr says: "We usually keep on view on this floor about 12 per cent of our collection of paintings in 17 small crowded galleries. Of these galleries, five have now been turned over to our curatorial

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departments of Architecture and Design, Photography, Prints and Drawings, so that they could each have show windows for their collections which are ordinarily hidden away in inconvenient storerooms. In most of the remaining 12 galleries we have hung not fewer but often twice as many paintings - paintings which we would like to show, which we ought to show. On many walls paintings are hung from floor to ceiling.

A few galleries remain as before with a fairly spacious arrangement, and even in the crowded galleries there are a few walls hung with a single important painting both for present relief and to suggest a happier future. You will see a number of excellent paintings you didn't know the Museum owned but you will also find some of your favorites missing. For even with this crowding we have had to omit important paintings, major masters, whole schools. For example, ten paintings by Picasso are missing and so are all but the smallest in the Museum's unrivaled collection of Italian Futurist pictures. Hopper and Modigliani, Shahn and Miró are represented by single paintings only, though the Museum has several first-rate works by each of these painters."

When the new wing is added to the Museum, there will be space to exhibit 400 paintings, more than twice as many as can be shown now, while the rest will be in easily accessible study-storage. In the existing building only about 12 per cent of painting collection can be shown and storage facilities are so limited that most of the other works are accessible only at the cost of considerable time and convenience.

While the Museum's collection of twentieth century etchings, lithographs and woodcuts is unsurpassed, according to William S. Lieberman, Curator of Prints and Drawings, only one-fourth of one per cent are usually on view and the rest can be seen only by appointment. In the "new" Museum about 150 of the 6,700 will always be on view in changing shows and the rest easily available to the interested public.

The token showing of the Print Collection, in the special 30th Anniversary Exhibition, includes a lithograph and an etching by Matisse, selected from the 249 prints by the great French master now in the Museum Collection, one print by Hopper, selected from his entire graphic work which is in the collection and one by Paul Klee, although the Museum's representation of his prints is the most extensive in the world. The Museum owns 431 drawings ranging in date from the 1880's through today. Even if the entire third floor of the Museum were devoted to the collection, the installation would be crowded.

Approximately a dozen drawings are generally on view. The rest are housed in a storeroom. In the "new" Museum at least five times as many will be continually on view, the rest readily available to the public.

The Architecture and Design Collection, normally not shown at all, now comprises more than 1,000 objects, 2,400 posters and other graphic material, and 15 models.

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Arthur Drexler, Director of the Department of Architecture and Design, has selected a capsule exhibition from this material which in the "new" Museum will occupy an entire floor. The sampling shown here includes a recently acquired 19th century Thonet reclining chaise, Art Nouveau vases and furniture, classic goblets, a de Stijl chair and lamp, objects from the Bauhaus School, and chairs by Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe, Breuer, Aalto, Eames, Saarinen, and Wegner. Industrial design and kitchenware, examples of Machine Art, posters from Europe and America, a silk vestment designed by Matisse, a model of the Villa Savoye by Le Corbusier and a decorative tile by Frank Lloyd Wright are also shown.

The Photography Collection, which includes 5,500 prints all of which are ordinarily in storage and none of which have permanent exhibition space in the existing building, will be represented by about 150 photographs always on exhibition in the "new" Museum. The current sampling, selected by Edward Steichen, Director of the Department of Photography, includes work by American, Swiss, English, French, Japanese, and Hungarian photographers.

The Museum Collections have been acquired by gifts from more than a thousand individuals and many corporations. Among the principal early donors were General A. Conger Goodyear, the Museum's first President, Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Miss Lillie P. Bliss and Mr. Stephen C. Clark. Although the collection has no endowment and receives no part of the annual budget, many patrons have contributed purchase funds, of which by far the largest is this fund replenished each year by Mrs. Simon Guggenheim.

Department heads recommend acquisitions to the Director of Collections, Alfred H. Barr, Jr. who in turn submits them to a committee composed largely of trustees, under the chairmanship of James Thrall Soby. Nothing can be acquired for any of the collections without the approval of the Collections Committee.

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