

# The Museum of Modern Art

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**BONNARD AND HIS ENVIRONMENT** with texts by James Thrall Soby, James Elliott and Monroe Wheeler; 116 pages, 107 illustrations (41 in color); hardbound \$7.50; paperbound \$2.95; published by The Museum of Modern Art, hardbound edition distributed by Doubleday & Co., Inc.

**BONNARD AND HIS ENVIRONMENT**, with texts by James Thrall Soby, James Elliott and Monroe Wheeler, (\$7.50 hardbound; \$2.95 paperbound), has just been published by The Museum of Modern Art on the occasion of a major exhibition of the works of the French master now breaking attendance records at the Museum in New York. The 116-page book, which contains 107 illustrations, is notable for its 41 color plates, more numerous and more faithful than those in any previous Bonnard publication. Many of the illustrations are of works from the artist's own estate, which was tied up in litigation in France from the time of his death in 1947 until last year, and have never been reproduced before.

Often called the last of the impressionists, Bonnard is now recognized as a principal forerunner of contemporary abstract painting through his audacious compositions and his brilliant use of color. In the introductory summing up, James Thrall Soby, the author of many definitive monographs on modern artists, states the esthetic principles of Bonnard's lifework: the mystery of his draftmanship, the magic of his palette, by which he "consistently transformed ordinary pleasure into ecstasy."

In the title essay, James Elliott, Chief Curator of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, a specialist in Bonnard studies, has traced the influences and successive stages of the artist's extraordinarily homogeneous production. Monroe Wheeler, The Museum of Modern Art's Director of Exhibitions and Publications and well known author, has provided an evocative portrait sketch of Bonnard, the fervant nature worshipper, the romantic husband, the indefatigable experimenter. Through illustrations and text, the volume reveals the full range of Bonnard's mastery.

The book also contains a continuation of the bibliography in the comprehensive book on Bonnard by John Rewald, published by The Museum of Modern Art in 1948, the

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year after the artist's death, which the present volume supplements; as well as a list of books illustrated by Bonnard and a brief chronology of his life.

The Bonnard exhibition, which promises to have one of the highest attendance records in the Museum history, will be on view in New York until November 29; it will later be shown at The Art Institute of Chicago (January 8 - February 28, 1965) and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (March 31 - May 30, 1965). The initial order of paperback editions of the book, which went on sale at the Museum's bookstore when the exhibition opened, were completely exhausted after the first week.

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Review copies, photographs, additional information available from Elizabeth Shaw, Director, or Lynn Traiger, Assistant Director, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019. CI 5-8900.