

The Museum of Modern Art

11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019 Circle 5-8900 Cable: Modernart

No. 8

Tuesday, January 10, 1967
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

23

On Thursday, January 19, The Museum of Modern Art will announce the formation of a Television Archive of the Arts, a collection of films featuring contemporary artists: painters, sculptors, filmmakers, architects and photographers. Originally created as television documentaries, they will now be available to students and scholars for research and reference.

In formation since 1964, the TV Archive already includes more than 65 films. The most recent group of major accessions will be announced on January 19th by René d'Harnoncourt, Director of the Museum, at a reception given by the Junior Council of The Museum of Modern Art for the contributors, participating artists, producers and directors.

The films have been given to the Museum by the American Broadcasting Company, Columbia Broadcasting System, National Broadcasting Company, National Educational Television, and WNDT, New York's Channel 13.

In the fall of 1967, the Archive will become part of the Museum's audio-visual research center, with projection, study and storage facilities located in the Museum's new International Study Center, now being constructed in the building vacated by the Whitney Museum on West 54th Street.

In the television documentary, a new source of original research material has been made available, documentation in which the television camera provides a chronicle of the expressions and reactions of the contemporary artist discussing his work or demonstrating his techniques.

The Junior Council of The Museum of Modern Art, which is responsible for the formation of the Television Archive of the Arts, is a group of approximately 50 young men and women volunteers who are concerned with extending the Museum's services to Museum members and to the community. The organization was founded in 1949.

Additional information and full background data on the TV Archives will be available at the reception in Founders' Room of The Museum of Modern Art on January 19, or by mail from Elizabeth Shaw, Director, and Lynn Traiger, Assistant Director, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 St., N.Y.C. 10019
Circle 5-8900

The Museum of Modern Art

11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019 Circle 5-8900 Cable: Modernart

No. 9

FOR RELEASE:

Thursday, January 19, 1967

René d'Harnoncourt, Director of The Museum of Modern Art, announced the formation of the Museum's Television Archive of the Arts on Thursday, January 19, at a reception at the Museum. The Archive films feature contemporary artists: painters, sculptors, filmmakers, architects and photographers. Originally created as television documentaries, they will now be available to students and scholars for research and reference at the Museum.

Mr. d'Harnoncourt also announced a number of films recently acquired by the Archive: two films from the Columbia Broadcasting System "Eye on New York" series, about filmmaking and happenings; two films from National Educational Television's "USA: Artists" series; and five color films from the National Broadcasting Company.

William McAndrew, President of NBC News, presented Mr. d'Harnoncourt with the color film for "New York: The New Left Bank," which was produced by Warren Wallace, and featured artists Helen Frankenthaler, Charles Hinman, Alex Katz, Roy Lichtenstein, James Rosenquist and George Segal; and with films of four other programs from the "Sunday" show with Aline Saarinen interviewing Alexander Calder, Alberto Giacometti, Edward Hopper and Georgia O'Keeffe.

NET presented the Archive with the last two films in the "USA: Artists" series, produced by Lane Slate, thereby completing the entire series of 11 programs for the Archive. John White, President of NET, represented the educational network at the reception.

CBS provided two new films from the "Eye on New York" series, produced by Gordon Hyatt; these are: "Shots from the Underground" (Part I), with filmmakers Carmen d'Avino, Bruce Conner and Ed Emshwiller and narrated by Peter Hyams, and "What I Did on My Vacation" which features happenings by Charles Frazier and Allan Kaprow. William Leonard, Vice-President, Director of News Programming at CBS represented the network at the announcement.

Since the project began in 1964, films have been given to the Museum by all the leading networks: the American Broadcasting Company, Columbia Broadcasting System,

(more)

National Broadcasting Company, National Educational Television and by WNDT, New York's Channel 13. In most cases the films were outright gifts; in the case of the Channel 13 material, the Museum's Junior Council paid for the transfer of the programs from tape to 16 mm film thus enabling the tapes to be re-used by the educational channel.

Mr. d'Harnoncourt pointed out that, "In saving these films and making them available for study purposes the Museum is preserving a valuable new source of original research material, documentation in which television's cameras provide a chronicle of the expressions and reactions -- visual and verbal -- of the contemporary artist discussing his work and/or demonstrating his technique. It is hoped that the Archive will continue to grow as the networks produce an increasing number of new documentary programs about the art and artists of our time."

In the fall of 1967, the Archive will become part of the Museum's audio-visual research center, with projection, study and storage facilities located in the Museum's new International Study Center, now being constructed in the building vacated by the Whitney Museum on West 54th Street.

The project was initiated in 1964 when James Thrall Soby, Chairman of the Committee on the Museum Collections, suggested that the Museum's Junior Council gather these invaluable films, many of which were in danger of being destroyed. Since then more than 65 films have been sought out, screened and catalogued by a committee of the Junior Council which is now headed by Robert G. Berry.

The value of this kind of material as a study resource was described by Alfred H. Barr, Jr., in his introduction to Roland Penrose's PORTRAIT OF PICASSO: "Suppose the camera had been invented 500 years before Picasso. Think what photographs we might have had! Ghiberti standing beside his prize-winning relief for the Baptistery doors ... Michelangelo perched on his scaffolding under the Sistine ceiling, his beard clotted with plaster, shouting his anger at Pope Julius down below; or finally and just to settle a long argument, Hubert van Eyck, himself, at work on the Ghent alterpiece."

(more)

The TV Archive now includes several ABC documentaries: interviews with Marc Chagall and with Jacques Lipchitz from ABC's "Directions '62" series and an interview with Mordecai Ardon from the "Directions '64" series; the "Directions" programs were produced by ABC for the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. Thomas Wolf is Vice-President, Director of Television Documentaries, and Robert T. Goldman, Vice-President of New Operations, at ABC.

The Archive has also catalogued a number of films from CBS, in addition to those which were announced at the reception. From the "Accent" series there are interviews with Thomas Hart Benton, produced by Don Kellerman, also with architects Louis I. Kahn and Philip Johnson, and with photographer Edward Steichen, produced by William Kobin and directed by Martin Carr. There is Charles Collingwood's two-part program, "Henry Moore: A Man of Form," and a number of earlier programs from the "Eye on New York" series.

The material from CBS also includes a number of Mike Wallace interviews with such artists as Richard Anuszkiewicz, Hannes Beckmann, Benjamin Cunningham, Marisol, Claes Oldenburg, Robert Rauschenberg and George Segal, which were filmed for several programs produced by Gordon Hyatt. The Museum has the complete unedited film as well as the CBS special programs in which short sections appear. William Leonard is Vice-President, Director of News Programming at CBS, and Edmund W. Cramer is Director of Programming at WCBS-TV.

The earliest film in the Archive is the 1956 interview of Marcel Duchamp by James Johnson Sweeney, museum director and art historian, which appeared in the NBC "Wisdom" series. Also among the NBC films is a series of interviews with Alexander Calder, Marc Chagall, Stuart Davis, Alberto Giacometti, Jean Miró and Henry Moore done by Aline Saarinen and produced by Craig Fisher on the occasion of the re-opening of The Museum of Modern Art in the spring of 1964. The interview with Stuart Davis was his last public appearance. These documentaries were produced under the supervision of Mr. McAndrew and Donald Meaney, Vice-President of NBC News.

Gifts from NET include programs from several series: "Art and Artists: Great Britain," "Art and Man" and "USA: Artists." The entire "USA: Artists" series (more)

includes programs about Jim Dine, Willem de Kooning, Jasper Johns, Richard Lippold, Barnett Newman, Kenneth Noland and Morris Louis, Frank Stella and Larry Poons, and Jack Twarkoff, among others. John White is President of NET and Paul K. Taff, Director of Program Operations.

WNDT/Channel 13 has provided tapes from "Art New York" with artists Reuben Nakian, Robert Motherwell, Larry Rivers and David Smith; from "Artists of New Jersey" with Robert Birmelin, Lee Gatch, Jacob Landau, Jason Seley and Ben Shahn; and from two special programs: "Oh Dada, Poor Dada" and the study of Alexander Calder from the "Portrait in Thought" series. John W. Keirmaier is President of WNDT/Channel 13.

Among those who attended the reception, which was given by the Junior Council, were representatives from the contributing networks, the participating artists, directors and producers, and members of the Museum staff. A selection of films from the Archive was continuously projected on three screens to enable the guests to see the material that has been compiled thus far.

Members of the Junior Council's TV Archive Committee, which selects the films for the Archive, are: S. Carter Burden, J. Frederic Byers III, Carroll L. Cartwright, Arthur D. Emil, Gordon Hyatt, Harold Eliot Leeds, Mrs. J. C. Timothy Sharpe, Mrs. Irving Straus and Mrs. Guri Lie Zeckendorf. The Junior Council is a group of approximately 50 young men and women volunteers who are concerned with extending the Museum's services to Museum members and to the community. Mrs. Douglas Auchincloss and Mrs. Alfred R. Stern are Co-Chairmen of the Council.

Founded in 1949, the Council has organized and now operates such activities as the Art Lending Service, special lecture series and film showings, the annual selection of Christmas cards and the publication of the Museum's yearly appointment calendar.

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