

The Museum of Modern Art

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INFORMATION ON EXHIBITION CEZANNE TO MIRO

CEZANNE TO MIRO, an exhibition reviewing developments in modern painting from the 1880s to the 1940s through outstanding works by major European painters from private collections and museums in the United States, will be on view at the Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas, Venezuela from August 4 to 25. The exhibition was organized by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, under the auspices of the International Council of the Museum, for three showings in South America through August.

The paintings were selected by Monroe Wheeler, for many years Director of Exhibitions and Publications at The Museum of Modern Art, and now a Counsellor to the Trustees. Mr. Wheeler, who has directed many notable exhibitions for the Museum says in the catalog introduction:

"In the present exhibition we glimpse the forty worlds of as many different artists. Their resplendent paintings testify to the generosity of the lenders, who with warm neighborly feeling have made it possible to send to three South American cities a wide range of works of highest quality....Containing as it does only 54 paintings, this exhibition does not pretend to be a comprehensive survey: it can only suggest the many different influences, alliances, inspirations, and opinions prevailing in the art of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries."

The exhibition begins with ten works by important painters of the late nineteenth century: Cézanne, Gauguin, Seurat, van Gogh, Ensor, Vuillard, Monet, and Redon. Mr. Wheeler points out that the first exhibition of The Museum of Modern Art, New York, in 1929, showed major works by Cézanne

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Gauguin, Seurat, and van Gogh, and that they were "the ones chiefly honored by the first generation of twentieth-century artists." He groups their work and influence into three overlapping categories. The first, "Art of the intellect," or a "rational analysis of form and structure, which seeks to penetrate beyond what the eye sees to what the mind comprehends" stems mainly from Cézanne and Seurat. This intellectual approach is manifested later in Cubist painting and geometric abstraction like that of Malevich and Mondrian.

Another category he calls "Art of color and emotion," which begins in modern art with "Monet's lifelong quest for perceptual reality, van Gogh's impassioned spirituality, and Gauguin's primitivism and rhythmically patterned forms." To these sources he traces such art as that of the Fauves, the spontaneous execution of the expressionists, Rouault and Soutine, the lyricism of Bonnard and Matisse, and the expressionist abstraction of Kandinsky.

The third legacy of the late nineteenth-century painters, Mr. Wheeler calls "Art of dreams and fantasy." The visions of Redon, as seen in the exhibition in The Green Death (c. 1905), and of Ensor, in Masks Confronting Death (1888), are precursors of de Chirico's metaphysical painting, and the Surrealists' painting of subconscious reality - variously seen in the exhibition in the art of Magritte, Miró, Max Ernst, Dali, and Tanguy.

"This has been called the Age of Picasso," Mr. Wheeler says. "Surely, in his eighty-sixth year, he looms larger than any of the other giants of art since Cézanne." Picasso has the largest representation in the exhibition, five works, which include one from the "Rose Period," two classical Cubist paintings, and two later works using Cubist pictorial devices quite differently.

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The works exhibited have been chosen for their excellence as paintings, and the exhibition makes apparent the artists' individual strength of vision. Many of their roles in the eventful history of twentieth-century art can also be traced. The brilliant colorism of the Fauves, who emerged in Paris in 1905, is seen in paintings by André Derain and Maurice de Vlaminck. The "naïve" mystical poetry of Henri Rousseau is seen in Jungle with a Lion (1904-1910).

Paintings of 1910 to 1920 include excellent examples of the work of two of the leading Italian Futurists, Umberto Boccioni and Gino Severini, who adapted Cubist analysis of form to an art extolling motion and machines. Matisse is represented by two outstanding paintings showing his sensitive, joyous art, The Blue Window (1911) and Goldfish (1915-16). The Russian Wassily Kandinsky, who in 1910 painted the first abstract painting, is represented by Painting with White Form, No. 166, of 1913, an ebullient work showing his development of free-form abstract composition. The Russian Kasimir Malevich, who in 1913 founded Suprematism, a movement devoted to the expression of pure feeling through non-objective images, is represented by Suprematist Composition: Airplane Flying (1914-16), which in simple, geometric terms suggests the sensation of flight. The equally important Dutch developer of a "pure" abstraction, Piet Mondrian, is represented by Large Composition A, of 1919, reflecting his desire to establish the principal of "dynamic equilibrium" in painting in generalized, abstract terms. Excellent examples of the bold, immediate style of German-expressionist painting are seen in Emil Nolde's Russian Peasants (1915) and Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's The Street (1913). Two of the strongest artists using dream or folk images during this period were Giorgio de Chirico and Marc Chagall, the former represented in the exhibition by The Delights of the Poet (1913)

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and the latter by Over Vitebsk (1915-20), both classic examples of their work. Outstanding paintings by the Cubists Juan Gris and Fernand Léger, the realists Amadeo Modigliani and Maurice Utrillo, and an early painting by Robert Delaunay are also shown from the period 1910-20.

Works of the 1920s to 1945 include collages by one of the most influential collagists, Kurt Schwitters, whose work was part of the Dada movement, and who created formal, sensitive works from found scraps. Surrealism, founded in 1924 in Paris by writers and painters, is represented by such major exponents as René Magritte, Joan Miró, Max Ernst, Yves Tanguy, and Salvador Dali. Works also from these decades are by such diverse artists as the Italian still-life painter Giorgio Morandi, the religious expressionist Georges Rouault, the famed Cubist Georges Braque, the expressionists Chaim Soutine and Max Beckmann, and outstanding individualistic painters such as Paul Klee, Pierre Bonnard, and Balthus.

The paintings are from 21 private collections and seven museums; 14 are from The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Others have been lent by The Art Institute of Chicago, City Art Museum of St. Louis, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and The Phillips Collection, Washington, D. C.

Among the 21 United States collectors who have made loans to CEZANNE TO MIRO are: Mr. and Mrs. Ralph F. Colin, Mr. and Mrs. Victor W. Ganz, The Honorable and Mrs. W. Averell Harriman, Mrs. Albert D. Lasker, William S. Paley, Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Resor, Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Rodgers, Florene May Schoenborn and Samuel A. Marx Collection, Mrs. Bertram Smith, Mr. and Mrs. John Hay Whitney, and Richard S. Zeisler.

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Further information can be found in the illustrated catalogue, with an introduction by Monroe Wheeler and informative entries on each work by Lucy Lippard, published in Spanish by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, to accompany the exhibition.

The exhibition was initially shown at the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires, May 15 - June 5, and the Museo de Arte Contemporaneo, Santiago, Chile, June 26 - July 17.

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