

The Museum of Modern Art

11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019 Tel. 956-6100 Cable: Modernart

No. 67

July 9, 1969
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The first recipient of the René d'Harnoncourt Fellowship at the Lillie P. Bliss International Study Center of The Museum of Modern Art is Dr. Reinhold Heller, Assistant Professor of Fine Arts at the University of Pittsburgh, the Fellowship Selection Committee announced today. Dr. Heller will study the work, ideas and significance of the Austrian-American architect, stage designer and sculptor Frederick Kiesler.

The Fellowship is made possible by a Chair established in June, 1968 when Mr. d'Harnoncourt retired after serving as Director of the Museum for nineteen years. Among the members of the International Council of The Museum of Modern Art who have contributed to the d'Harnoncourt Chair thus far are Mrs. Edsel B. Ford, Mrs. Bernard F. Gimbel, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Hochschild, Mrs. Wolcott Hooker, Mrs. J. Lee Johnson III, Mrs. G. Macculloch Miller, Mr. Roy R. Neuberger, Mrs. Bliss Parkinson, and Mrs. Madeleine H. Russell. The Van Ameringen Foundation Inc., the H. Van Ameringen Foundation and the Noble Foundation also contributed.

Three fellowships, established by a grant from the Noble Foundation, have been awarded to Christopher Green, Lecturer at the Courtauld Institute of Art; Harry Gaugh, Instructor in Art History at Skidmore College; and Richard Lanier, PhD. candidate at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University. A Noble Curatorial Research Grant was awarded to Carlo Huber, Assistant Curator for Modern Art of the Kunstmuseum, Basel.

According to Anne Coffin Hanson, Director of the Lillie P. Bliss International Study Center, the fellowships, familiar institutions in universities, but relatively new to museums, were created so that The Museum of Modern Art could extend its policy of making its resources and facilities available to scholars working in the field of visual arts. The recipients of the research grants will have access to unique material in the Study Center's library and in the Museum's collections during the approximately four months of their fellowships.

Dr. Heller, born in Fulda, Germany, received his M.A. and PhD. from Indiana University, where his studies centered on the art of Edward Munch. Presently Assistant Professor at the Henry Clay Frick Arts Department of the University of Pittsburgh, he will be with The
(more)

Museum of Modern Art from January to May of 1970.

Kiesler, who died in New York City in 1965, was a close friend of Mr. d'Harnoncourt. He devoted his life to projects that were often radical and experimental. Many of his designs, although unexecuted, fascinate because of their visionary quality. Born in Vienna in 1896, Kiesler was also active in Berlin, Paris and New York throughout the 20's, designing theatres and stage sets. During this period Kiesler completed the first version of his "Endless House" in which the surface of the building develops sculpturally as a twisting continually curved ribbon wrapped around itself. "City in Space" was exhibited at the World's Fair in Paris in 1925. In his design for the complex, Kiesler treated vertical and horizontal buildings as thin slabs suspended between groups of vertical piers which also carried connecting bridges.

In 1926 Kiesler came to America where he continued work on his space house and other architectural ventures, as well as projects dealing with the stage, furniture and interior design. He was Director of the Laboratory for Design Correlation of Columbia University's School of Architecture, and also served as director of scenic design at the Juilliard School of Music. While in New York City Kiesler designed stage sets for the Metropolitan Opera, and built Peggy Guggenheim's famous "Art of this Century Gallery."

In 1947 Kiesler produced his first sculpture, the "Totem of Religions." In 1965 he used a method of shell construction in the "Shrine of the Book" an underground museum designed by Kiesler and Armand Bartos which houses the Dead Sea Scrolls in Jerusalem. The same method was used in Kiesler's "Universal Theatre" (1961) and the New Harmony, Indiana "Grotto for the New Being" (1963).

Throughout Kiesler's career, The Museum of Modern Art exhibited and collected his work. In 1952 The Museum of Modern Art exhibited Two Houses: New Ways to Build, in which an early version of the "Endless House" was shown. In the same year Kiesler's "Galaxy," a huge carved wood construction 12 feet high, and a painting in 19 sections was shown in the 15 Americans exhibition. In 1960 an eight foot scale model of a second version of the "Endless House" and photographs of the "City in Space" were allotted a major area in The Museum of Modern Art's exhibition Visionary Architecture, which later traveled throughout the world. Kiesler's sculpture "Landscape Table -- Marriage of Heaven and Earth" was acquired by the

(more)

Museum in 1965. In addition, Architecture of Museums exhibited by The Museum of Modern Art in 1968, included four large photographs and a section drawing of "Shrine of the Book" designed by Kiesler and Armand Bartos.

Except for those articles still held in the Kiesler estate, The Museum of Modern Art possesses the largest collection of the architect's drawings, blueprints, sculpture and writings, all of which will be available to Dr. Heller. In addition, the artist's widow, who championed Heller's fellowship application, has granted him access to the documents in her possession. Dr. Heller's project is expected to greatly contribute to critical awareness and appreciation of Kiesler's oeuvre.

The Noble Foundation, under the auspices of Mrs. Frank Larkin, a member of the International Council of The Museum of Modern Art and of the Museum's Trustee Committee for the Lillie P. Bliss International Study Center, is sponsoring three fellowships and a curatorial research grant. In addition, the Noble Foundation will provide funds for library enrichment in connection with the grantees' research and equipment for a Fellow's Study Room.

The recipient's projects cover a range of subjects. Harry Gaugh intends to study the painting of Franz Kline. Christopher Green will investigate the relation of Purism to the stylistic development of Ferdinand Léger. Richard Lanier's project is entitled Willem de Kooning: The Formation of His Art. Carlo Huber, awarded the Noble Curatorial Research Grant, will study the works of Rothko, Still, and Newman. These artists are represented by major work in various media in The Museum of Modern Art collection, and the Museum possesses unique documents relating to the artists and their works which will be available to the recipients of the Noble Fellowship grants.

Among those serving on the Selection Committee in addition to Mrs. Hanson, Mrs. Larkin and Henry Allen Moe are Professor William A. Camfield of Rice University, Houston, Texas; Professor George Heard Hamilton, Director of the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, Massachusetts; and Professor Joshua C. Taylor of the University of Chicago. Emilio Ambasz, Peter Bunnell, and Meg Potter, Associate Curators in different departments of The Museum of Modern Art, also served on the Selection Committee.

Additional information available from Elizabeth Shaw, Director, and Maeve Kinkead, Assistant, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019. 956-7504

The Museum of Modern Art

To THE STAFF

From ANNE COFFIN HANSON

Date MAY 10, 1969

Re FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENTS 1969-70

The Fellowship Selection Committee of the International Study Center has chosen the recipient of the first René d'Harnoncourt Fellowship. He is Dr. Reinhold Heller, Assistant Professor of Fine Arts at the University of Pittsburgh. Dr. Heller will study the works of Frederick Kiesler, using the Museum's considerable collection of Kiesler drawings, blueprints and archival materials as the basis for his research.

The very high quality of the applications for the René d'Harnoncourt Fellowship and their wide range of fields made the choice of a single Fellow extremely difficult. Thus, it was with great pleasure that we learned that the Noble Foundation had generously offered to provide additional Fellowships in the International Study Center together with funds for library enrichment in connection with the grantees' research and furniture for a Fellows' Study Room.

Recipients of Noble awards were chosen by the Committee convened to select the winner of the René d'Harnoncourt Fellowship. They are: Christopher Green, Harry Gaugh and Richard Lanier. A Noble Foundation Curatorial Research Grant was awarded to Carlo Huber.

You will find attached brief descriptions of all Fellows for 1969-70 and their projects. We will circulate the Fellows' schedule for working at the Museum to you as soon as final plans have been completed.

ACH:ls

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Lillie P. Bliss
International Study Center

RENÉ D'HARNONCOURT FELLOWSHIP

1969 - 1970

Reinhold Heller - Assistant Professor, Henry Clay Frick Department of Fine Arts,
University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania,
M.A., Ph.D., University of Indiana - dissertation: "Edvard
Munch's 'Life Frieze' : Its Beginning and Origins".

An investigation of the work of the Austrian-American architect, stage-designer and sculptor, Frederick Kiesler. Although Kiesler has been consistently respected and admired by other artists, he has been largely neglected by art historians. No monograph on his work exists and the significance of his oeuvre is not generally understood. A full study of Kiesler's architectural and environmental projects, both completed and uncompleted, together with information from Kiesler documents, will be an extremely valuable contribution to the field.

Dr. Heller will work with the Museum's considerable collection of Kiesler drawings, blueprints, models, sculptures and writings. His project is expected to result in an informative summary of Kiesler's artistic achievements, and an equally important comment on the significance of his work and ideas.

238

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Lillie P. Bliss
International Study Center

NOBLE FOUNDATION AWARDS:

1969-70

Noble Fellows

Harry Gaugh - Instructor in Art History, Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs,
New York

The Painting of Franz Kline: A step-by-step consideration of Kline's evolution
as a painter, from the naturalism of the 1940's and before to the
abstract expressionist paintings of the 1950's.

Christopher Green - Lecturer, Courtauld Institute of Art,
University of London

Fernand Léger and Purism: An analysis of Purism in terms of its stylistic
sources, philosophy and aesthetic system with stress on the role
of the machine in the Purist's conceptual framework. The Purist
programme will be considered in relation to Fernand Léger's
stylistic development, especially in those paintings which reveal
Léger's concept of the relationship of the machine to man.

Richard Lanier - Ph.D. candidate, Institute of Fine Arts, New York University

Willem deKooning: The Formation of his Art - A chronological study of
deKooning's work through 1955 with emphasis on sources and
significant features of his style and its relationship to contempo-
rary American art.

Noble Curatorial Research Grant

Carlo Huber - Assistant Curator for Modern Art, Kunstmuseum, Basel

Rothko, Still, and Newman : An examination of the work and inter-relationships
of Mark Rothko, Clyfford Still and Barnett Newman and a general
survey of American museum collections of modern art.