

The Museum of Modern Art

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

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BIENNIAL REPORT

The Museum of Modern Art -- basically concerned with the total physical environment as it is or could be shaped and given form by the artist -- is beset by a fundamental problem of the 60's and 70's that affects all cultural institutions: rising costs coupled with increasing demands for extended services, according to the Biennial Report released today.

At the close of the 1969 fiscal year (June 30) The Museum of Modern Art, which receives no subsidy from the city, state or federal government, had a record deficit of almost one million dollars. While income from admissions, membership fees and contributions increased between 1964 and 1969 from \$3,410,700 to almost six million dollars, expenses during that period rose from \$3,357,800 to close to seven million dollars. Gross revenue from all services combined was 30 per cent greater in fiscal 1969 than in fiscal 1967, but operating costs grew by almost 50 per cent during that time. Some of the major expenses in mounting exhibitions -- insurance, packing, transportation and installation -- have increased by as much as 40 per cent during the past five years.

In introducing the illustrated report, which covers the full range of the Museum's activities here and abroad, William S. Paley, President of the Museum, says: "A basic unity of purpose binds these diverse activities. The purpose is to transmit an integrated vision of all the visual arts of the 20th Century, embracing a spectrum of man-made objects from painting and sculpture to industrial design."

"This concept of its mission has often led the Museum to go beyond its own walls, through such programs as the Children's Art Carnival in Harlem and the Junior Council's project to renovate the Kingsbridge Welfare Station in the

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Bronx. It also accounts for the Museum's role in jointly founding, with other institutions, the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies in order to bridge the gap between theoretical studies and the pressing practical problems of the Nation's cities. And it is the reason why the Museum has held conferences on matters of concern such as the proper design of highway signs and problems of ecology," he continues.

"The Museum has evolved into a social force that intimately touches peoples' lives on a constantly broadening scale and in constantly increasing numbers. In the decade ahead it inevitably faces the critical need to provide additional gallery space and other facilities and make its resources ever more widely available. The decade of the seventies," he concludes, "may very well be our most rewarding."

During each of the years covered by the report more activities took place outside the Museum's walls than in its galleries on 53rd Street: 50 exhibitions were circulated to other museums in this country, Canada and Puerto Rico; film programs were sent to more than 2000 colleges, educational institutions and film societies, and under the auspices of the International Council, sixteen exhibitions had eighty-four showings in thirty-three countries and five collections of art were sent to American Embassies abroad.

In its offices in New York preparation began on the first computerized art museum catalog in the country, scheduled for completion about a year from now. Simultaneously the Museum participated with twenty-two other institutions on an inter-museum pilot project to explore the potential of a computer network based on their combined records.

Many exhibitions offered possible solutions for current problems. At a time when the "cultural explosion" was taking such unprecedented forms as 300 million museum visits yearly in the United States and the establishment of two new museums every week, The Department of Architecture and Design organized an international survey entitled Architecture of Museums as well as a series of small and relatively

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impromptu including Paris: May 1968,
 consisting of the student revolt and
Painting and the transformation of the urban
 environment

Although a facility that the Museum
 has not been hours of film screenings
 were presented, ranging from film
 classics to avant and experimental film
 makers in audience.

Fifth Avenue's galleries in New York,
 including the gift of the Southern Christian
 Leadership Conference entirely from the Museum's own
 collection poster; Jean Dubuffet at
The Museum of Art and Sculpture: The First
Generations Picasso. Among the twelve
 shows developed by Cartier-Bresson and
 Brassai including Joel Meyerowitz
 and Willard Lyonel Feininger's Ruin
by the Streets of New York, a "black" comedy
 production

New York represented in the collec-
 tion for purchases. The Museum also con-
 tinued to purchase Memory of Oceania and
 Jackson Pollock's books acquired during the
 two year Jean Dubuffet which makes the
 Museum's best in the United States. The
 entire collection was acquired as well as
 dozens of the Museum's holdings of prints

from Universal Limited Art Editions.

In 1968 the Mies van der Rohe Archive was established to house the architect's drawings, papers and related documents, which were subsequently left to the Museum when he died in 1969. The Department of Architecture and Design also added sixty design objects including molded plastic furniture, a folding telephone and wooden platters to its collection.

The Department of Photography made two unsurpassed accessions: the definitive collection of the work of the great French master Eugène Atget; and a gift of 277 prints from the collection of David J. McAlpin. For the first time the department collaborated with a degree-giving institution - New York University's School of the Arts - to offer formal instruction in the history of photography.

The Film Department's collection of stills and films was increased and the problem of preservation, which for years had been an anxious battle against time, is now on the way toward solution. One interesting group that has been saved is a series of Biograph negatives that have not been seen for fifty years.

The Lillie P. Bliss International Study Center, dedicated in the spring of 1968, provided accessible exhibition-like storage area for the collections of painting and sculpture, architecture and design and film. Interns from various parts of the country were brought to the Museum and the first Rene d'Harnoncourt Fellowships for advanced research in the field of modern art were awarded.

Enlarged quarters for the Library enabled it to put in use new equipment for indexing and storing. Among the gifts to the Library were the clippings and documents assembled by Sidney Geist for his monograph on Brancusi and the extensive file of catalogs, photographs and correspondence accumulated by George Rickey for his book on Constructivism.

Thirty publications, ranging from scholarly studies to illustrated checklists and portfolios of film stills were issued during the two year period along with

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reprints by Arno Press of out-of-print titles, and six original posters. The History of Photography by Beaumont Newhall was published in French; Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture, in Japanese.

The Children's Art Carnival opened on March 17, 1969, after more than a year of consultation with community leaders. Space was generously donated by The Harlem School of the Arts and remodeled by the Museum so that it could serve about 780 young children a week. The Museum has undertaken to sponsor this project for three years. A Community Advisory Board and Community Consultants have been working with the Executive Director.

Plans for a mobile Carnival, supported by an outside grant, progressed at the Art Center at 4 West 54th Street. Almost 3000 children and more than 1700 adults attended classes at the Art Center and at the Kearsarge Art Center on Long Island. On Long Island workshops and a studio course were sponsored by the Southampton College of Long Island University and the Institute of Modern Art.

Approximately 100 exhibitions, teaching portfolios, work models, slide talks and films were circulated by the Department of Education to New York City Public Schools.

Other Museum activities included the Jazz in the Garden series, which diversified its program to include rock and soul groups, lectures on art history, films and the model cities program, poetry readings, and mixed media presentations.

The Junior Council reported on the series of special evening programs for college students which included experimental films, happenings and poetry readings, a block party given in cooperation with the United Nations Hospitality Committee, and a series of lectures. The Art Lending Service showed a record year for sales in 68-69. The Television Archive of the Arts, initiated by the Council in 1964, now includes 115 films.

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The number of college and student members of the Museum doubled and by June 1969 total membership in all categories was over 40,000. Attendance was 1,033,254 in 1967-68, the year of the enormously popular Sculpture of Picasso show and 910,852 in 1968-69.

The report opens with excerpts from tributes delivered during the graveside service for Rene d'Harnoncourt on August 15, 1968 and at the Memorial Service held in the Sculpture Garden, October 8, 1968. Among those who contributed to this section honoring Mr. d'Harnoncourt, Director of the Museum from 1949 to 1968, are Nelson A. Rockefeller, Elizabeth Bliss Parkinson, Robert Goldwater and Robert Motherwell.

Additional information available from Elizabeth Shaw, Director, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53rd Street, New York, New York, 10019. (212) 956 - 7501.