

The Museum of Modern Art

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ALCOA FOUNDATION TO SPONSOR MUSEUM OF MODERN ART EXHIBITION OF WORKS ONCE OWNED BY THE STEIN FAMILY

Alcoa Foundation will sponsor the major winter exhibition at The Museum of Modern Art, John Hightower, Director of the Museum announced today. **FOUR AMERICANS IN PARIS: THE COLLECTIONS OF GERTRUDE STEIN AND HER FAMILY** will be shown at the Museum from December 19 through March 1, 1971. The grant from Alcoa Foundation will cover the costs of assembling and mounting the exhibition which consists of about 175 works, acquired by the Steins when they were early patrons of Matisse, Picasso, Gris and other artists who were to become internationally known as pioneers of 20th century art. Earlier masters whose work they bought included Cézanne, Gauguin and Manet.

Since these paintings eventually found their way into major public and private collections throughout the world, this will be the first time the public can see almost the entire range of art bought over the years by this extraordinary family. Many of the paintings, particularly those from the Gertrude Stein Estate, have never been shown in this country. One gallery will be devoted to photographs and other documents about the family and their friends who included writers such as Hemingway and Fitzgerald, composers Virgil Thomson and Aaron Copeland, the poet Guillaume Apollinaire, artists Matisse, Braque and Picasso.

Arthur M. Doty, President of Alcoa Foundation said, "Alcoa Foundation is proud to take part in bringing one of the world's outstanding family collections to one of the world's premier museums. In its support of the arts, Alcoa Foundation seeks opportunities both to be innovative and to facilitate significant exposure of art to the public." An earlier grant was made by Alcoa Foundation to the Associated Council of the Arts for research, writing and publication of a book on the development of community cultural centers around the country.

(more)

By 1905 Gertrude Stein and her brothers Leo and Michael and his wife Sarah had all settled in Paris. At the Autumn Salon of that year they bought Matisse's Woman with a Hat, now considered one of the earliest masterworks in the history of modern painting. A few months later Leo Stein bought the family's first Picasso, Acrobat's Family with Monkey. In the decade that followed, masterpiece after masterpiece was added to these initial purchases. Oil paintings, gouaches, watercolors, drawings, prints, and sculpture by Picasso and Matisse predominated; but works by Cézanne, Daumier, Delacroix, Gauguin, Manet, and Renoir were also included.

In the two apartments -- Michael and Sarah's, and Leo and Gertrude's -- open house was held on Saturday evenings. Visitors were welcome; Leo and Sarah loved to converse and exchange ideas. In many respects these two houses, walls filled with the most advanced paintings of the time, might be described as the "first museum of modern art."

The exhibition, which the Museum had hoped to present last year, could not have been organized without the grant from Alcoa Foundation, John Hightower said. "Like practically every other cultural institution in America today The Museum of Modern Art is caught in a severe financial bind. The particular generosity of Alcoa Foundation in making a grant for a project at the Museum has repercussions not only for our program but for the support of other arts organizations by the business community. The grant points the way to what may very well be the financial salvation of the arts in this country by the corporate sector of the economy."

The exhibition will be directed by Margaret Potter, Associate Curator in the Department of Painting and Sculpture. In slightly different versions it will later be shown at The Museum of Art in San Francisco, where the Steins were raised, and at the Baltimore Museum of Art as well as The National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa, Ontario.

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