

The Museum of Modern Art

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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART CLOSURES ON WEDNESDAYS

Beginning in November, The Museum of Modern Art will close its galleries on Wednesdays in order to reduce operating expenses. Simultaneously, hours on Sunday, the most popular day for Museum visitors, will be extended by opening an hour earlier, at 11 a.m. instead of noon.

The "Pay-what-you-wish" day, most recently on Wednesdays, will now shift to Tuesdays. On Thursdays the Museum will continue to remain open from 11 a.m. until 9 p.m. in the evening. Gallery hours on Mondays, Tuesdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays will be 11 a.m. until 6 p.m. The regular film programs have been rearranged and additional screenings added on Mondays and Tuesdays. There will be no change in the hours the study centers and library are open to scholars and students. Offices remain open Monday through Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Museum Bookstore 2 at 23 West 53 Street, with its own separate entrance, will continue to remain open seven days a week, with an Information and Membership Desk for the convenience of Museum members and the public on Wednesdays.

The choice of Wednesday was dictated not only by internal scheduling but also by the consideration that many other museums and art galleries are closed early in the week.

"We are adopting this new schedule only with regret," Richard E. Oldenburg, Director of the Museum, said in announcing the change in hours and citing the compelling reasons for this decision at this time.

"Even with strict cost controls, unavoidable increases in operating expenses have put severe strains on the Museum's limited financial resources. Over the past year, we have been faced with increases of over \$200,000 in utility and maintenance costs alone. (more)

"Despite high attendance and encouraging growth in individual and corporate support, the continuing rise in operating expenses forces new economies if our deficit -- already more than \$1 million -- is not to increase further.

"We have sought to make these economies in areas which would least seriously affect the quality and scope of our program. We hope that our members and general public will understand and agree that forgoing the convenience of a seven-day-a-week schedule, which few museums are able to maintain, is preferable to reducing standards or eliminating essential services."

The Museum of Modern Art receives no operating funds from the City of New York, unlike the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Brooklyn Museum and more than a dozen other cultural institutions in the city. While the Museum does receive funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, that grant was substantially reduced for this coming year for the Museum, as it was for many other cultural institutions, thus compounding its financial problems.

Additional press information available from Elizabeth Shaw, Director,
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