

The Museum of Modern Art

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MUSEUM OF MODERN ART SENDS BICENTENNIAL SHOW ON THE ROAD

AMERICAN ART SINCE 1945, an exhibition of more than 60 paintings and sculpture selected from the Collection of The Museum of Modern Art will be shown at eight museums around the country during the next year and a half as part of the Bicentennial celebration.

The exhibition, surveying the period when this country assumed the role of international leadership and innovation in art, was made possible by grants from Mobil Foundation, Inc., and the National Endowment for the Arts. It was selected by Alicia Legg, Associate Curator, Department of Painting and Sculpture, who also wrote the accompanying catalog.*

In connection with the exhibition, The Museum of Modern Art has arranged lectures by the well-known scholars and critics, Barbara Rose and Robert Rosenblum, as well as special film showings, for each of the eight participating museums. Sets of slides of works in the show, as well as of important works from the period which could not travel, along with posters and catalogs, are also being made available to each museum.

The itinerary of the exhibition is:

October 22 - November 30, 1975	Worcester Art Museum Worcester, Mass.
January 11 - February 22, 1976	Toledo Museum of Art Toledo, Ohio
March 22 - May 2, 1976	Denver Art Museum Denver, Colo.
May 31 - July 11, 1976	Fine Arts Gallery of San Diego San Diego, Calif.
August 19 - October 3, 1976	Dallas Museum of Fine Arts Dallas, Texas

*AMERICAN ART SINCE 1945 by Alicia Legg. 80 pages; 60 black-and-white illustrations; 4 color illustrations. Staplebound. Published by The Museum of Modern Art, New York. \$3.95.

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October 25 - December 5, 1976

Joslyn Art Museum
Omaha, Neb.

January 10 - February 20, 1977

Greenville County Museum
Greenville, S.C.

March 14 - April 17, 1977

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts
Richmond, Va.

"For the first time, painting and sculpture have received widespread recognition in this country, and because of the bold spirit and innovative approach of the artists, American art has proved influential throughout the world," Ms. Legg writes.

Actions and counteractions have always been the nucleus of art movements, she states further in explaining her selection. "Through this thirty-year period in the United States, there have been two main periods of change. The first is marked by the Abstract Expressionists' rejection of patriotic, regional polemics and socially conscious propaganda. Rejecting rigid geometric abstraction as well, they took up an abstraction that expressed content through the actual painting process. The other main shift has been effected by the artists of the sixties and seventies who are not interested in physical or emotional motivation but are concerned with the primary reality of their materials, such as the stained canvas, the surface, either sprayed or encrusted, and the fabricated metal object." Obviously, she concludes, there are currents operating at this moment that may either revert to past doctrines or establish new ones.

The largest group of works in the exhibition represents the pioneers of the late 1940s and '50s including Rothko (Yellow and Gold, 1956), Gorky (Good Hope Road II, 1945), Pollock (Number 1, 1948), Newman (Abraham, 1949), and de Kooning (Woman II, 1952).

Jasper Johns, whose 1961 map of the United States is on the exhibition

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poster and catalog cover, and Rauschenberg, who is represented by a large lithograph that incorporates as its central image an X-ray photograph of the artist, were important transitional figures between Abstract Expressionism and a new realism. Examples of "Pop art" include Jim Dine's canvas, on which a plastic glass with real toothbrushes is attached; Claes Oldenburg's soft sculpture, a nine-foot piece of layer cake; and Andy Warhol's Self Portrait (1966), silkscreened on six canvases.

Key innovative works by Rothko, Albers and Helen Frankenthaler and by artists influenced by but not proponents of Abstract Expressionism, such as Frank Stella and Ellsworth Kelly, constitute an important part of the exhibition. Other recent trends are seen in works by Cy Twombly, Jo Baer and Alan Shields.

Three-dimensional works in the show reflect the broad scope of American sculpture since 1945, including a mobile by Calder, forged and welded metal works by David Smith and John Chamberlain, a wooden hanging construction by Louise Nevelson, a fluorescent light work by Dan Flavin, and George Segal's plaster life-size portrait of the collector and dealer Sydney Janis, shown standing by an easel that holds Mondrian's Composition, 1933.

November 1975

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