

The Museum of Modern Art

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\$1 Million Gift Announced by Museum of Modern Art

A \$1 million gift to The Museum of Modern Art from Mr. and Mrs. Roy V. Titus was announced today (Oct. 13) by Mrs. John D. Rockefeller 3rd, Museum President, at a reception in the Museum Sculpture Garden honoring the donors. Mayor Beame, who spoke to the 300 invited guests including city officials, civic leaders and friends of the Museum, said that in a time of government austerity the need for private contributions to cultural institutions was particularly crucial. Martin E. Segal, Chairman, New York City Commission for Cultural Affairs, also praised Mr. and Mrs. Titus as "shining examples for other private citizens who can help the City."

The gift is for the complete renovation of the Museum's auditorium and for the endowment of the auditorium program. The hall, used for film showings and, in addition, for lectures, symposia and performances concerned with all the arts, will be named The Roy and Niuta Titus Auditorium. The remodeling is scheduled to be completed next summer.

Speaking as President and also for William S. Paley, Chairman of the Board, Mrs. Rockefeller said: "The generous gift of Mr. and Mrs. Titus to renovate and endow the auditorium of The Museum of Modern Art has a special significance for the Museum. The auditorium has been, for almost 40 years, one of the liveliest cultural centers in New York. Its daily film programs have attracted millions of visitors from New York and from all over the nation and the world. It has served as a forum for outstanding artists, critics, philosophers and other figures of world-wide reputation to present and discuss some of the most original and provocative ideas relating to the arts in our time.

"The gift of Mr. and Mrs. Titus makes a memorable contribution to the life of the City of New York at the most challenging moment in its history.

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"Mr. Paley and I are also deeply grateful to Mayor Beame who has consistently demonstrated his support for the cultural institutions of New York, and to Martin E. Segal, Chairman of the New York Commission for Cultural Affairs, whose informed and resolute action has reinvigorated the cultural life of our City."

The renovation of the auditorium will be carried out in stages with much of the work scheduled to be done on Wednesdays when the Museum is closed to the public. It is expected that it will not be necessary to close the Auditorium completely for more than three weeks during the spring.

The 480-seat hall, which has not been renovated since it opened in 1939, will be provided with the newest projection, screen and sound equipment. A simultaneous translation system will be installed in order to expand the Museum's ability to screen foreign films. Seats, carpeting and other upholstery will be replaced. In addition, income from the endowment fund will help to ensure the maintenance of the hall as well as provide support for the continuing activities of the Department of Film.

Mayor Beame, stressing the difficulty of finding adequate public funds for cultural institutions said: "We live in a period when there is a severe shortage of government funds, and it is really hard to win general public sympathy for the expenditure of public funds for cultural activities at a time when police, fire, sanitation, health, education and social services are reduced.

"However, I continually acknowledge the extraordinary importance which our cultural institutions have in our great City.

"...there is a great public stake in the well-being of our private cultural institutions and it follows that in a time of government austerity, the need for private contributions to support our cultural showpieces becomes even more vital, in fact crucial."

Mr. Titus, in response, stressed that the gift was intended to help the City as well as the Museum. "As private citizens, my wife Niuta and I hope to be, and

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want to be, part of the solution to the City's problems. We believe that support for a great institution like The Museum of Modern Art is a practical solution. The Museum of Modern Art unites the best of our aspirations with what is most noble about New York. It is a privilege to help out in a time of need -- and through such help, to aid New York as well."

Additional information available from Elizabeth Shaw, Director, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53 St., NY. Tel. 956-7501