

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

11 WEST 53RD STREET, NEW YORK

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ALL ATTENDANCE RECORDS BROKEN AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Saturday, February 3, 1940, from 10 A.M. to 10 P.M., 7,206 persons visited the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, to see the Exhibitions of Italian Masters and Modern Masters on view there through March 24. This is the largest attendance in the entire ten years of the Museum's existence, breaking the previous record made the last day of the van Gogh Exhibition, January 5, 1936, which was 5,969. It even broke the attendance figure at the opening night of the new building of the Museum, May 10, 1939, when there were 6,804 visitors. The total attendance for the first week of the Italian and Modern Masters Exhibitions was 31,884. This figure includes the 4,823 who attended the members' private opening.

Until March 24 the Museum will be open until ten o'clock every night including Sundays. Free lecture tours by members of the staff have been arranged for 4:30 P.M. and 8 P.M. every day except Sundays. The Museum urges as many as possible to come in the evening rather than in the crowded daytime hours.

To give New Yorkers an opportunity to express their preferences, the Museum has been asking visitors to vote on the works of art in the Italian Masters Exhibition. The first week's balloting, which closed last Thursday night, had a surprising result. Titian's painting of Pope Paul III not only received the greatest number of votes for first choice but also was in the lead for second and third choice. This was contrary to expectation, which forecast either Botticelli's Birth of Venus or Raphael's Madonna of the Chair as first.

Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Director of the Museum of Modern Art, stated in regard to the contest: "The New York public is to be congratulated upon its good taste in casting its majority vote for Titian's Portrait of Paul III. The sweetness and obvious sentiment of Raphael's Madonna of the Chair has made it one of the most popular paintings in the world. Almost as famous is Botticelli's

charming Birth of Venus. Both paintings are known through tens of thousands of reproductions. The Titian by comparison is far less familiar. It is, moreover, a profound and subtle characterization of an austere old man, painted in sombre colors with the greatest technical and esthetic reserve. Several experts have expressed their opinion to me that the Paul III is the greatest painting in the exhibition. That the popular vote should concur with the expert opinion of these authorities by preferring the Titian to better known and more obviously attractive works seems to me really important evidence of the discriminating taste of the Museum's visitors."

Voting on the Modern Masters has just begun and will be announced later. At present almost a quarter of the visitors to the exhibitions mark their ballots for first, second and third choice. On entering the exhibitions each visitor receives a ballot, which is also a check list. Some visitors write comments, frequently: "They are all so beautiful it is hard to make a choice," or "It would be easier to select the three least liked rather than the three best liked." One visitor wrote "You are to be congratulated on the joy your Museum is giving us New Yorkers--so are we." Several people have written urgent requests to the Museum to continue showing old masters. Others make comments such as "None compares with the show downstairs," (where the modern exhibition is shown); or "I would not trade one square inch of van Gogh for all of these." Another damns with faint praise--"All right for their time." The most interesting comment received is as follows:

"Eighty-five years ago my mother saw Raphael's Madonna of the Chair in Italy. She was then a girl living in Germany. She brought home a photograph of it and as a child my whole ambition--which continued until my present age of 60--was one day to be able to see this, which to me represented so much. Last night I could hardly sleep, and here my ambition is realized! This Museum will never quite know what a wonderful thing it has done in one man's life. With sincere appreciation and many, many heartfelt thanks."

The full results of the balloting on the Italian Masters are as follows:

1. Titian: Portrait of Pope Paul III - 983
First, Second and Third Choice
2. Raphael: Madonna of the Chair - 817
3. Botticelli: The Birth of Venus - 733
4. Michelangelo: Madonna and Child - 551
5. Verrocchio: David - 454
6. Palma Vecchio: Holy Family with
St. Catherine and John the
Baptist - 239

7. Tintoretto: <u>St. Augustine Healing the Plague-Stricken</u>	-	215
8. Bellini: <u>Madonna with St. Catherine and John the Baptist</u>	-	201
9. Fra Angelico: <u>The Naming of John the Baptist</u>	-	195
10. Gentileschi: <u>Virgin and Child</u>	-	184
11. Donatello: <u>Bust of a Young Man</u>	-	148
12. Correggio: <u>Madonna and Child</u>	-	136
13. Laurana: <u>Portrait of a Lady</u>	-	97
14. Pollaiuolo: <u>Hercules and Antaeus</u>	-	93
15. Masaccio: <u>The Crucifixion</u>	-	52
16. Parmigianino: <u>Portrait of a Lady</u>	-	42
17. Andrea Della Robbia: <u>The Annunciation</u>	-	46
18. Caravaggio: <u>Boy Bitten by a Lizard</u>	-	41
19. Mantegna: <u>St. George</u>	-	39
20. Bernini: <u>Portrait of Costanza Buonarelli</u>	-	37
21. Sebastiano Del Piombo: <u>Portrait of a Lady</u>	-	33
22. Luini: <u>The Body of St. Catherine Borne by Angels to Sinai</u>	-	26
23. Bronzino: <u>Portrait of a Lady</u>	-	17
24. Tiepolo: <u>A Council of the Knights of Malta</u>	-	14
25. Guercino: <u>Bath of Diana</u>	-	13
26. Cavallino: <u>St. Cecilia</u>	-	13
27. Lotto: <u>Portrait of a Young Man</u>	-	9
28. Longhi: <u>Portrait of Giulio Contarini</u>	-	9