

Henri ROUSSEAU

February 21–June 4, 1985

The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, NY 10019 (212) 708-9400

No. 73

FACT SHEET

EXHIBITION: HENRI ROUSSEAU

DATES: February 21 - June 4, 1985

DIRECTOR Carolyn Lanchner, Curator, and William Rubin, Director, the Department of Painting and Sculpture, The Museum of Modern Art; and Michel Hoog, Curator, Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris.

SPONSOR: The exhibition and its accompanying publication were made possible by a generous grant from PaineWebber Group Inc.

Additional support has been provided by the National Endowment for the Arts. An indemnity for the exhibition has been provided by the Federal Council on the Arts and Humanities.

CONTENTS: The exhibition will present approximately 60 works by Rousseau, dating from the outset of his documented career in 1886 through his last finished work, The Dream of 1910. It is the first major retrospective of Rousseau's art ever held and the first exhibition to include almost all of the artist's masterpieces. The only other exhibition that attempted to present Rousseau's art in depth was organized in 1942 by The Museum of Modern Art and the Art Institute of Chicago, but it was necessarily limited to works then in America.

The nucleus of HENRI ROUSSEAU is formed by the unparalleled collections of the two sponsoring institutions, The Museum of Modern Art, holder of The Sleeping Gypsy (1894) and The Dream, and the Réunion des Musées Nationaux de France. The Réunion has long held such major Rousseau paintings as War (1894) and The Snake Charmer (1907).

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The Réunion's already impressive holdings were greatly enriched recently by the Rousseau paintings that came to it from the estate of Pablo Picasso and from the Walter-Guillaume bequest.

Among the paintings from these sources that will be on view are a large, magnificently austere portrait of a woman (c. 1895) that Picasso bought in 1908 and kept in his studio until the end of his life, and such works from the Walter-Guillaume collection as The Wedding (1904-05), Old Junier's Cart (1908), and Child with a Doll (c. 1906).

Most of the paintings in the collection of the Réunion have never before been seen in America. The same is true of many of the paintings on loan from important public and private collections in Switzerland, Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Japan. A key work to understanding Rousseau is Myself-Portrait-Landscape (1890), which is being lent by the National Gallery of Prague and has never before been on view outside Europe.

A problem in the assessment of Rousseau's art has been persistent confusion regarding the actual extent of his output. By intentionally restricting the exhibition to paintings of unquestioned authorship that span Rousseau's entire career and include both his most ambitious works and more modest endeavors, a clearer image of Rousseau should emerge. Apart from the quaint legends that have always surrounded the artist, the exhibition aims to present the real, demonstrable Rousseau--the accomplished master--whose art was always held in the greatest respect by such diverse critics as Picasso, Delaunay, Kandinsky, Léger, and Beckmann, among others.

PUBLICATION:

In conjunction with exhibition, Henri Rousseau has been published in separate English and French editions by The Museum of Modern Art and the Réunion des Musées Nationaux de France. The approximately 300-page book includes 66 color plates and essays by the directors of the exhibition and Roger Shattuck and Henri Béhar.

TOUR:

HENRI ROUSSEAU originated at The Grand Palais in Paris where it was exhibited from September 14, 1984 - January 7, 1985.

PRESS PREVIEW:

Tuesday, February 12, 11 am to 5 pm