

The Museum of Modern Art

For Immediate Release
November 1985

CONTEMPORARY WORKS FROM THE COLLECTION

November 21, 1985 - April 1, 1986

The Museum of Modern Art will rotate the contemporary section of its Painting and Sculpture Galleries three times a year in a new series of installations, entitled CONTEMPORARY WORKS FROM THE COLLECTION. In announcing this plan, William Rubin, director of the Department of Painting and Sculpture, states: "The Museum's holdings in contemporary art are so vast in relation to the space available to show them that rotation is the only solution. And as each four-month reinstallation will be organized by a different curator, a wide range of taste in what is shown is sure to emerge."

The current installation, on view from November 21, 1985, to April 1, 1986, has been organized and installed by Alicia Legg, curator in the Department of Painting and Sculpture. Miss Legg states that the new plan to change the contemporary galleries allows the Museum the opportunity "to introduce recent acquisitions and to bring out 'old favorites' that have not been on view for a number of years." Her selection of forty-five works ranges in date from 1943 to 1985 and particularly emphasizes Pop Art.

The third-floor galleries begin with Abstract Expressionist, Color Field, and stained paintings of the late forties and fifties, exemplified by Mark Rothko, Barnett Newman, Kenneth Noland, and Helen Frankenthaler, among others. Key works include Jasper Johns's Flag (1954-55) and Robert Rauschenberg's First Landing Jump (1961), which prefigure the radical shift into the sixties and the Pop movement.

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A large gallery of Pop Art contains such masterpieces as Claes Oldenburg's giant and witty Floor Cone (1962), Roy Lichtenstein's Drowning Girl (1963), and Tom Wesselmann's provocative "smoking cigarette" of 1967. Marilyn Monroe is depicted by Andy Warhol as an icon on a gold background (1962) and by James Rosenquist as a billboard star (1962). At the end of the gallery, Marisol's life-size caricature of art dealer Sidney Janis surveys the Pop scene.

In the adjacent gallery, a selection of smaller, more intimate works reflects certain artists' updated expressions of Dada and Surrealism during the post-war years. A 1943 Calder and two Miró sculptures of 1947 and 1954 are placed alongside works by Robert Moskowitz (1961) and Lucas Samaras (1960-61), as well as a 1968 scale model of Christo's unrealized proposal to wrap The Museum of Modern Art.

Works from the seventies and eighties, occupying the large East Wing gallery, range from Minimalism to Neo-Expressionism. Robert Motherwell's large, all-over blue painting of 1968 presages the Minimalist movement. Ellsworth Kelly's major thirteen-foot Diagonal with Curve, IX (1979), a weathering steel sculpture that has not previously been shown at the Museum, introduces other important sculptures, including wood or metal pieces by Mark di Suvero, Anthony Caro, Joel Shapiro, and Martin Puryear. Sol LeWitt's room-wall drawing, combining lines and arcs in white crayon on a black wall, has not been seen at the Museum since it was acquired from the artist's retrospective in 1978.

Reliefs and multi-part works in various mediums were a significant invention of the seventies. Dorothy Rockburne's three-part construction of paper and graphite panels, on view for the first time since it was acquired in 1971, provides a striking contrast to Rosemarie Castoro's five undulating wall pieces, ranging from thirty-three inches to twelve feet in length. Paintings by Leon Polk Smith and Robert Mangold demonstrate different treatments of the shaped

canvas, while those of Agnes Martin and Robert Ryman reveal their distinctive Minimalist sensibilities.

Finally, the paintings by French artists Simon Hantai and Claude Viallat and the American artist Gregory Amenoff typify the new international move to expressionism. Placed nearby, George Sugarman's major sculpture of 1968-69, consisting of ten modular units of white laminated wood, completes the installation.

A complete list of artists is attached.

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For further information or photographic materials, contact Jeanne Collins or Jessica Schwartz, Department of Public Information, 212/708-9750.

ARTISTS IN THE INSTALLATION

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| Gregory Amenoff (American, b. 1948) | Robert Moskowitz (American, b. 1935) |
| Alexander Calder (American, 1898-1976) | Robert Motherwell (American, b. 1915) |
| Anthony Caro (British, b. 1924) | Barnett Newman (American, 1905-1970) |
| Rosemarie Castoro (American, b. 1939) | Kenneth Noland (American, b. 1924) |
| Christo (Christo Javacheff)
(American, b. Bulgaria 1935) | Claes Oldenburg (American, b. Sweden 1929) |
| Chryssa (American, b. Greece 1933) | Martin Puryear (American, b. 1941) |
| Jim Dine (American, b. 1935) | Robert Rauschenberg (American, b. 1925) |
| Mark di Suvero (American, b. China 1933) | Dorothea Rockburne (Canadian) |
| Helen Frankenthaler (American, b. 1928) | James Rosenquist (American, b. 1933) |
| Philip Guston (American, 1913-1980) | Mark Rothko (American, b. Latvia, 1903-1970) |
| Simon Hantai (French, b. Hungary 1922) | Robert Ryman (American, b. 1930) |
| Jasper Johns (American, b. 1930) | Lucas Samaras (American, b. Greece 1936) |
| Ellsworth Kelly (American, b. 1923) | Joel Shapiro (American, b. 1941) |
| Sol LeWitt (American, b. 1928) | Leon Polk Smith (American, b. 1906) |
| Roy Lichtenstein (American, b. 1923) | George Sugarman (American, b. 1912) |
| Morris Louis (American, 1912-1962) | Richard Tuttle (American, b. 1941) |
| Robert Mangold (American, b. 1937) | Cy Twombly (American, b. 1928) |
| Marisol (Marisol Escobar)
(Venezuelan, b. Paris 1930) | Claude Viallat (French, b. 1936) |
| Agnes Martin (American, b. Canada 1912) | Andy Warhol (American, b. 1930) |
| Joan Miró (Spanish, 1893-1983) | Tom Wesselmann (American, b. 1931) |

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ALICIA LEGG

Alicia Legg, who selected and installed CONTEMPORARY WORKS FROM THE COLLECTION, has served as curator in the Department of Painting and Sculpture at The Museum of Modern Art since 1979.

In 1978 Miss Legg organized a major SOL LEWITT retrospective and edited its accompanying catalog. Other major exhibitions which she has organized at the Museum include THE SCULPTURE OF MATISSE (1972) and CLAES OLDENBURG (1969), which was also shown in Europe. In addition, she has designed the installation of numerous other exhibitions, including WILLEM DE KOONING (1969), HENRI MATISSE: 64 PAINTINGS (1966), RENÉ MAGRITTE (1965), THE SCHOOL OF PARIS: PAINTINGS FROM THE FLORENE MAY SCHOENBORN AND SAMUEL A. MARX COLLECTION (1965), and THE LAST WORKS OF HENRI MATISSE: LARGE CUT GOUACHES (1960). In 1983-84 Miss Legg assisted in the reinstallation of sculpture in the new Museum's galleries, as well as The Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden.

Miss Legg has directed several exhibitions that have circulated throughout the United States, among them, AMERICAN ART SINCE 1945 (1975), CONTEMPORARY PORTRAITS (1968), FERNAND LÉGER (1966), MILTON AVERY (1964), and THE EIGHT (1963). FOUR CONTEMPORARY MASTERS: GIACOMETTI, DUBUFFET, DE KOONING, AND BACON traveled throughout Latin America, and another LÉGER exhibition was shown in three Australian cities in 1976 under the auspices of the Museum's International Council. She also edited the publication, Painting and Sculpture in The Museum of Modern Art: Catalog of the Collection 1977.

A member of the staff of the Museum since 1949, Alicia Legg entered the Department of Painting and Sculpture in 1951. Before joining the Museum she was a librarian at the Costume Institute of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Born in Hackensack, New Jersey, she attended the Ogontz School in Philadelphia and the Art Students League in New York.

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