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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

NEW YORK

11 WEST 53rd STREET
TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900
CABLES: MODERNART, NEW-YORK

SARAH NEWMAYER, PUBLICITY DIRECTOR

June 10, 1941.

TO Art Editors
City Editors
Feature Editors
Motion Picture Editors

Dear Sirs:

You are invited to come or send a representative to the

Press Preview of
Two Circulating Exhibitions:
A HISTORY OF THE MODERN POSTER
and
A HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN MOVIES

Wednesday, June 11, 2 to 6 P.M.
at The Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53 Street.

These exhibitions are being shown in New York for the first time after being seen in seventeen other cities. In this first showing of circulating exhibitions to the New York public the Museum celebrates the tenth anniversary of its Department of Circulating Exhibitions, whose travelling shows have been seen by approximately eight million persons throughout the country.

For any further information will you please telephone me at Circle 5-8900.

Sincerely yours,

Sarah Newmeyer

Sarah Newmeyer
Publicity Director

P.S. The two circulating exhibitions mentioned above will go on public exhibition Thursday, June 12.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW YORK TO SEE TWO EXHIBITIONS SHOWN IN SEVENTEEN OTHER CITIES

Thursday, June 12, New York will have its first opportunity to see two of a series of travelling exhibitions circulated throughout the country by the Museum of Modern Art to an audience of approximately eight million persons during the past ten years. These two exhibitions are A History of the Modern Poster which, during the past year, has been shown in ten cities and towns outside New York City, and A History of the American Movies which has been shown seven times outside New York. A History of the Modern Poster will be shown in a gallery on the second floor of the Museum, and A History of the American Movies will be shown in the Museum's auditorium gallery.

Since 1934 Elodie Courter has been head of the Museum's Department of Circulating Exhibitions which, in the ten years of its existence, has prepared a total of 119 exhibitions which have been shown 1,389 times in 257 cities outside New York City. These exhibitions have been shown in 41 states and the District of Columbia, in Honolulu and in Canada. The city which has shown the greatest number is Detroit with a score of 42. Pittsburgh is a close second with 41; St. Louis third, with 37; San Francisco fourth, with 36 showings. During the past year 1940-41, thirty-four cities have been added to the list of those showing the Museum's exhibitions; the 41st state, Arkansas, took its first exhibition during the past year. The only states where the Museum's exhibitions have not yet been shown are Arizona, Mississippi, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming.

A History of the Modern Poster traces the development of poster design from the 1890's to the present and includes striking examples from the work of famous poster designers such as Cheret, Toulouse-Lautrec, Cassandre, Steinlen, Carlu in France; Hohlwein, Schmidt-Rotluff and Bayer in Germany; Ernst, Matter, Carigiet and Tschichold in Switzerland; Lissitsky and Klutzhis in Russia; McKnight Kauffer in England; Gispen in Holland and Lester Beall, Ben Shahn

and Frank Greco in America. Posters for magazines, theatres, movies, exhibitions, steamship lines, gasoline, travel, subway systems and clothing stores are among those shown.

A History of the American Movies shows the rapid development in movie-making by means of explanatory text, photographs of early equipment, studios, sets and production shots as well as stills from important movies utilizing the new techniques which were instrumental in developing the American film. The exhibition is divided into four sections:

Early Experiments--showing the first films and the transition from box to screen.

Development 1903-18--with The Great Train Robbery, the first Animated Cartoon, The Birth of a Nation, Intolerance, early comedies including Chaplin, etc.

A World Industry--noting the star system, epic films, westerns, early documentaries, Douglas Fairbanks, etc.

The Sound Film--first sound pictures, Disney, new stars, musicals, later documentaries, newsreels, etc.

The Museum's first travelling exhibition in 1931 was the International Exhibition of Modern Architecture, shown as a major exhibition in New York and then sent around the country so successfully for three years that a smaller exhibition was made up from it to be circulated seven years. The Museum's most successful travelling exhibition in number of persons who saw it was a single picture: Portrait of the Artist's Mother by James A. MacNeill Whistler, popularly known as Whistler's Mother and seen by nearly two million persons on its triumphal tour of this country, 1932-34.

In addition to painting, sculpture and architecture shows, the Museum has circulating exhibitions of graphic art, industrial art, theatre art, folk art, murals, posters, book illustrations, bookbindings, photographs, and motion picture material. These exhibitions are divided into three classes:

1. Major loan exhibitions re-assembled from the larger exhibitions shown at the Museum.
2. Small exhibitions prepared from major exhibitions shown at the Museum.
3. Small exhibitions especially assembled for circulation at low cost to colleges, schools and small museums.

Fees, which in most cases are far below the cost to the Museum of assembling and circulating the exhibitions, generally

range from \$10. to \$500., although fees for several of the most important exhibitions have been more than \$1,000, the van Gogh an all-time high of nearly 1,800. No part of the fee covers the Museum's staff work in planning, assembling or distributing. Fees include the cost of packing, which represents the largest expense; insurance, a close second; and mounts and frames frequently a considerable expense. The only other cost to the exhibitor is the express charge one way from the location of the previous showing. Insurance and packing are handled by the Museum, which sends out instructions for procedure with each shipment.

Under the direction of Miss Courter, the Department of Circulating Exhibitions works with other departments of the Museum in originating and assembling exhibitions which travel thousands of miles about the country. For seven years Miss Courter has organized the complicated work of her department with ingenuity and brilliance. With the assistance of the Museum's carpenter shop she has developed a series of unorthodox packing cases for small sculpture, for Surrealist objects of fantastic shape, for delicate models and for paintings, which reduce damage almost to the zero point and have the additional virtue of being easily packed and unpacked. To reduce the possibility of damage, nails and hammering have been eliminated in favor of screws and ingenious arrangements of boards which slide into rubber-lined grooves to hold the paintings or objects firmly. Each case is carefully marked which end to open, which screws to remove. Unpacking instructions and list of the contents are tacked on each case. For each exhibition Miss Courter works out a system of numbering the objects not only for identification with the descriptive literature and installation instructions but for re-packing them exactly as they came.

During the tenth year of its existence, 1940-41 the Department of Circulating Exhibitions had an active list of 58 exhibitions. For the coming season 1941-42 it expects to circulate approximately 84 exhibitions. The two circulating exhibitions on posters and motion pictures which open at the Museum Thursday, June 12, will be succeeded by A Memorial Exhibition of Paintings by Paul Klee, Stockholm Builds, George Grosz, and The Wooden House in America. Each of these circulating exhibitions will be shown in New York approximately one month.