

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

11 WEST 53RD STREET, NEW YORK

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TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART ANNOUNCES FOURTEEN PRIZE WINNERS IN COMPETITION
FOR NATIONAL DEFENSE POSTERS AND SHOWS THEM IN EXHIBITION

A surprise awaited the jurors when they had completed the anonymous judging of the 610 posters submitted in the Competition for Posters for National Defense held by the Museum of Modern Art from April 29, 1941 through June 28, 1941. When the names were matched with the numbers on the prize-winning posters it was found that two men had alternately won the first and second prizes in both sections of the Competition.

John C. Atherton, of Ridgefield, Connecticut, won the first prize of \$500 in Group A, Posters for United States Treasury Department; Mr. Atherton also won the second prize of \$250 in Group B, Posters for United States Army Air Corps. Joseph Binder of New York City won the first prize of \$500 in Group B, and the second prize of \$250 in Group A.

Clara Fargo Thomas, well known artist of New York, was the only one of ninety-five women who entered the Competition to win a prize. She was awarded one of the five \$50 honor prizes in the Treasury group of posters.

At the request of the Army and Treasury authorities the judging was done by the Directors and Curators of the Museum of Modern Art. Both Army and Treasury officials have expressed satisfaction with the remarkable results of the Competition and so acute is the need for fine posters that Harford Powel, Information Director of the Defense Savings Staff, has announced that in addition to using the winning posters the Treasury Department will probably purchase and use many other posters entered in the Competition which did not receive cash awards.

In announcing the prize winners of the Competition, John Hay Whitney, President of the Museum, said:

"We at the Museum of Modern Art have consistently maintained that the activities of the creative artist are a normal social function and that in time of national emergency the artist can perform a service as valuable in its way as that of any other worker in defense. As an example of this fact we now have an exhibition illustrating the role Britain has assigned to her artists in a war-time program.

"Several months ago, confident that American artists

needed only an opportunity to demonstrate their ability and their willingness to serve in our national emergency, the Museum of Modern Art opened a Competition for two groups of national defense posters: one for the Treasury; the other for the United States Army Air Corps.

"We were sure of the artists. But we felt it was our job to bring their work convincingly to the attention of government agencies who need and are commissioning these services. More than five hundred artists throughout the country entered posters in the Competition. Thirty of the best, including fourteen prize-winners, comprise the exhibition which will open to the public tomorrow.

"In our opinion, these posters represent as dynamic and effective a group of contemporary poster art of this or any other country as has been assembled. We don't ask you to take our word for it. Look at these posters and decide for yourselves whether or not you agree with us that the American artist has brilliantly demonstrated his value as a potential worker in the interests of defense.

"Although the Competition was conducted for only two government departments, we earnestly hope that other government agencies will feel free to consult us as an intermediary between the artist and those who can use his work, which is a primary purpose of the Museum."

The prizes total \$2,000 for both groups, with five \$50 honor prizes in each group. The honor prizes are as follows:

Group A - Hugh Donnell, West Redding, Conn.
Pat Rooney, New York City
Arnold Roston, New York City
Alex Steinweiss, Westport, Conn.
Clara Fargo Thomas, New York City

Group B - W. L. Frazer, Brooklyn, N. Y.
John A. Gibbs, New York City
Alfred S. Plane, New York City
Xanti Schawinsky, Edgewater, N. J.
Si Vanderlaan, Los Angeles, Calif.

Mr. Atherton, winner of the first prize in Group A and the second prize in Group B, is an American artist who has been unusually successful in dividing his career into two water-tight compartments. As an advertising artist he is much in demand. He also finds time for independent creative work; his latest exhibition was a one-man show at the Julien Levy Gallery last winter. Mr. Atherton was born in Brainerd, Minnesota, in 1900. He attended the California School of Fine Arts in San Francisco and for the past ten years has lived in Ridgefield, Conn. His work has been shown at the Whitney Museum of American Art, Carnegie Institute, the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, the Corcoran Art Gallery in Washington, D. C. and the Art Institute of Chicago.

Joseph Binder, winner of the first prize in Group B and the second prize in Group A, is an internationally known poster artist. He was born in Vienna in 1898 and was graduated from the School of Arts and Crafts in that city, where he won the State Prize of Austria.

Later the Austrian Government appointed him expert for graphic applied design. From 1933 to 1935 he was guest instructor and lecturer in the United States at the Art Institute of Chicago; Columbia University, New York; Pratt Institute, Brooklyn; Minneapolis School of Art, Minneapolis; and the Chouinard School of Art, Los Angeles. In 1936 Mr. Binder again entered the United States and made application for citizenship. Among his most recent awards in this country have been the prize for the official poster of the New York World's Fair, 1939; the Collier Medal Award in the 1939 Art Directors Show, New York; first prize in the McCandlish Poster Competition in 1938. Examples of his work are in leading museums in this country and abroad, among them the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City; Boston Museum of Art; Franklin Museum, Philadelphia; The Austrian Museum, Vienna.

So many excellent posters were received in the Competition that the Museum decided to show sixteen additional posters which did not receive prizes. The recipients of these merit awards are:

Group A - Treasury:

Jacques Lucas, Brooklyn, N. Y.
John Milne Boothroyd, New York City
Jaro Fabry, Fort Monmouth, N. J.
Lester H. Kohs, New York City
Carl A. Paulson, New York City

Group B - Army:

Harold J. Brennan, New Wilmington, Pa.
Vincent Cavallaro, New York City
George Giusti, New York City
James F. Hayes, Chicago
Don S. Johnson, New York City
Daniel W. Keefe, New York City
George Platt Lynes, New York City
Leo Rackow, New York City
Leo Sternberg, Brooklyn, N. Y.
Ferdinand Texidor, New York City
Hal Zamboni, New York City