

The Museum of Modern Art

For Immediate Release

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART RECEIVES MAJOR BEQUEST

The Nina and Gordon Bunshaft Fund for the Acquisition of Painting and Sculpture to be Established

June 29, 1994.....Richard E. Oldenburg, Director, The Museum of Modern Art, announced today that the Museum is to receive one of the most generous bequests in its history from the estate of Nina Bunshaft, friend of the Museum and widow of architect and Museum Trustee Gordon Bunshaft (1909-1990). The bequest, which follows the death of Nina Bunshaft on May 17, 1994, fulfills a pledge made by Gordon and Nina Bunshaft to the Museum in 1984.

Under the terms of the bequest, the Museum is to receive the Bunshafts' entire modern art collection -- which is especially rich in works by Jean Dubuffet, Alberto Giacometti, Henry Moore, and Joan Miró, among others -- as well as the proceeds from the sale of the Bunshaft house in East Hampton, Long Island, and remaining monies in the residual estate. These proceeds will establish The Nina and Gordon Bunshaft Fund, an endowment which will provide substantial annual income for the acquisition of paintings and sculptures for the collection of The Museum of Modern Art.

Agnes Gund, Chairman, The Museum of Modern Art, stated, "We are extraordinarily moved by the exceptional generosity of Gordon and Nina Bunshaft's bequest to this Museum. These works of art are superb and will enhance our collection. The significant endowment established for the acquisition of new works in the future dramatizes the Bunshafts' sincere respect for and understanding of the importance of the collections at The Museum of Modern Art. On a personal level, I had enormous admiration for both of them."

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Ronald S. Lauder, Chairman, Trustee Committee on Painting and Sculpture, stated, "The Museum of Modern Art has been favored by many instances of great private patronage. But now, when art prices have risen beyond the reach of most museum acquisitions budgets, we have special reason to celebrate the exemplary generosity of this unprecedented bequest from Nina and Gordon Bunshaft. Gordon was a valued member of our Committee on Painting and Sculpture for more than fifteen years. The bequest that he and Nina have left the Museum provides the Committee with the largest unrestricted endowment for acquisitions that we have ever had."

Mr. Oldenburg added, "Gordon and Nina Bunshaft were discriminating collectors of modern art, assembling a large number of major works. Over the years, they had given the Museum several important pieces. Now, with their bequest, they are adding immeasurably to the Museum's holdings in the present and in the years to come. As a member of our Committee on Painting and Sculpture, Gordon was very firm in his judgements about proposed acquisitions. His and Nina's gift is particularly generous in being so open-ended, fully respecting the Museum's future judgements on works to be acquired through their fund."

According to Kirk Varnedoe, Chief Curator, Department of Painting and Sculpture, "Gordon and Nina Bunshaft's generosity of spirit in stipulating that this money be available without any designated limitations makes the fund all the more valuable to us. In this fashion, the already formidable contributions these patrons have made to the Museum collection will be continually enhanced. The great collection they amassed over the years adds tremendous strength to the Museum's holdings of several major modern artists. In the cases of Jean Dubuffet and Henry Moore, the Bunshafts' collection is

especially extensive and varied, while other artists such as Joan Miró, Alberto Giacometti, and Helen Frankenthaler are represented by singular works of exceptional distinction."

The Bunshaft collection includes major paintings by Dubuffet, such as the outstanding *Building Facades* (1946); an untitled gouache (1934) and an untitled painting (1950) by Miró; sculptures by Giacometti, such as *Walking Quickly Under the Rain* (1948) and *Large Standing Woman III* (1960); sculptures by Moore, such as *Seated Woman, thin neck* (1961) and *Oval with Points* (1968-1969); and the painting *Chairman of the Board* (1971) by Helen Frankenthaler.

The Bunshaft home in East Hampton is a single story modernist house with sweeping views of Georgica Pond. It is the only house designed by Mr. Bunshaft. Also on the property is a free-standing studio in which the architect worked. Numerous sculptures are interspersed in landscaped gardens surrounding the home.

One of the leading architects of our era, Gordon Bunshaft's association with The Museum of Modern Art spanned many years. He was a member of The International Council from 1962 to 1985, serving as its Vice Chairman between 1970 and 1980. In 1974 he became a Trustee of the Museum and joined the Committee on Painting and Sculpture, where he played a major role in the development of the Museum's collection. A partner at the architecture firm Skidmore, Owings & Merrill in New York, Mr. Bunshaft received a bachelor's and a master's degree in architecture from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

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