

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

11 WEST 53RD STREET, NEW YORK

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHILDREN THROUGHOUT COUNTRY COMMISSION PAINTINGS IN
COMPETITION SPONSORED BY MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Thousands of children between the ages of 5 and 12 years, in public, private, and parochial schools throughout the country, have replied specifically and enthusiastically to the question asked by the Museum of Modern Art: "If an artist promised to paint you a picture, what would you like him to paint?" Their replies constitute the basis of a Competition for Pictures for Children which the Museum will conduct among artists for paintings suitable for reproduction by the silk screen process.

Answers were definite and specific, often to the point of detailed description, but the overwhelming general demand was for paintings with the human and animal theme predominant, for large pictures in bright colors. Children asked for pictures of youngsters their own age playing games, children with their dogs and kittens, all sorts of animals. Boys asked for pictures of boats, airplanes, motor cars, trains, and fire engines. There was a demand for landscapes, but almost always with action, such as: "a man on horseback herding sheep with a river behind;" "a lot of monkeys on a mountain with a fence all around the mountain." On the whole, both city and country children seemed deeply interested in country scenes and animals, but country children showed no interest in city life.

This survey of children's preferences in art was begun last March by the Museum's Educational Project, under the direction of Victor D'Amico, as a result of many requests from teachers and parents for pictures containing subject matter and visual elements which would appeal to children. As there is a scarcity of such paintings the Museum decided to find out from the children themselves exactly what they wanted in art and then to hold a competition to get it for them.

Hundreds of letters have been sent to elementary school and art teachers throughout the country, asking them to discuss the matter with their pupils and then to relay to the Museum the children's preferences expressed in their own words. From enthusiastic replies received from all over the country, the terms of the competition have been drawn.

The Museum of Modern Art opens the Competition for Pictures for Children today, with this announcement, and closes it at midnight,

November 20, 1941; entries postmarked later will be rejected. The competition is open to all artists, except employees of the Museum, with the numbers of entries by each unlimited. All entries must be reproduced in color by the silk screen process either by the competing artist himself or by the artist in collaboration with a silk screen technician. Prints submitted must be designated to sell for \$10 or less.

The ten best works will receive a purchase award of \$25 each; ten others will receive honorable mention. A competing artist may win one prize and one honorable mention. At the close of the competition, the twenty best prints and a number of other selected entries will be exhibited in the Young People's Gallery of the Museum of Modern Art and will then be sent on a nationwide tour. Copies of the prints will be sold by the Museum to schools throughout the country, the entire proceeds going to the artists.

As entries must be strictly anonymous, artists desiring to compete should write to the Museum for entry blanks and competition program. All inquiries should be addressed to

Victor D'Amico, Director
Educational Project
Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53d Street
New York City

To guide, although not to restrict the competing artist, the Museum has tabulated the preferences expressed by thousands of children as follows:

Age 6 and 7:

Daily Life: houses, trees, flowers, gardens, farms, birthday cakes, children sleeping, going to school, walking in the woods, playing with animals, dolls, kites, balloons, ball, running races.

Animals: farm, domestic, and zoo animals, especially young animals and animals with their young.

People: cowboys, postmen, firemen.

The Mechanical World: cars, boats, trains, carts, a big ocean liner, freight trains.

Age 8 and 9:

Daily Life: (In addition to above): children at an ice carnival, playing baseball, jumping rope, on a beach, swimming, sliding, skating, playing the piano.

Animals: see above.

People: Indians, soldiers in U.S. Army camp. People in fairy stories: Snow White, Cinderella, fairy princesses, Robin Hood.

Landscapes: field of wild flowers, birch trees, mountain with snow, jungle scenes, "Sunset with cows and pigs," "farm with a horse."

Action Scenes: cop chasing a car, Indians attacking a stage-coach, boats sinking, skiing scene.

Age 10 and 11:

Daily Life: children at a party, at school, at a soda fountain, at the movies, people in a ferry boat, a street scene, a river scene.

Sports: fishing, skating, hunting, "bow and arrow shooting," boat riding, bicycling, etc.

Animals: (in addition to above):

particularly collies, cockers, police dogs.

People: (Historic) Paul Revere, Washington, Columbus, Daniel Boone walking through the forest.

Flowerpieces

Religious Scenes: Bible scenes

Action Scenes: A horse race, building dams and bridges, a sea battle, boat races, cowboys on a range, mountains and wild horses.

SPECIAL REQUESTS:

Washington and his wife talking (age 7)

Baby and father, with baby losing his shoe (8)

Great big picture of a freight train with engineer (be sure it is in the country and it has wheels) (9)

I should like to have a picture of penguins looking at the Northern Lights. (8)

I know exactly what I want. It is a second-hand car and it's green and it's a Ford. It is standing in the road and there is a mountain behind. (8)

A lamb looking at flowers with other lambs. (6)

"A ship wreck in light brown." (8)

A picture of my father (in the Air Force) drilling. (7)

A farm scene with sheep and chickens, a horse and wagon with hay, and a lady hoeing potatoes. (7)

I want a painting of an elephant with its trunk down in the green hay, and a lion that just woke up, yellow and big. (6)

If an artist told me that he would paint me a picture, I would ask him to paint a picture of me. (9)

My grandma's old house and crick when it was in the flood. (6)

Picture of a road going places. People on it. Road light black, red houses, field wheat color and brown. A large picture.

School children all over the country are eagerly awaiting the outcome of the competition. Before schools closed in June, teachers reported that some of the children were asking every morning: "Have the pictures come yet?"