

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

11 WEST 53RD STREET, NEW YORK 19, N. Y.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART TO OPEN EXHIBITION ARE CLOTHES MODERN?

On Wednesday, November 29, the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, will open to the public an exhibition formerly called Problems of Clothing but now retitled Are Clothes Modern? It will not be a style or fashion show; it will not display costumes; it will not offer specific dress reforms. The purpose of the exhibition is to bring about an entirely new and fresh approach to the subject of clothes, to focus attention on dress as though it were an utterly new phenomenon, and to take the blinders of tradition off modern eyes so they can see that certain conventions, accepted as inseparable from dress and therefore never questioned, are in fact useless, impractical, irrational, harmful and unbeautiful.

To bring about this new realization, Bernard Rudofsky, director of the exhibition, has assembled a wide range of objects including specially sculptured figures which show the body as it would look if it fitted the clothes it wears; ancient and modern footgear such as anklets, stilts and heels which impede rather than assist walking; simulated x-ray examination of the layers upon layers of useless buttons and pockets modern man considers necessary to preserve dignity; a sectional view called the seven veils of the male stomach, which shows the numerous layers modern man wraps around his midriff.

Mr. Rudofsky, architect and designer of international note, practiced in Austria, Germany, Italy and Brazil. For fourteen years he devoted much time to the study of clothing, its effect on architecture, living habits, and behavior. The conclusions he has drawn from this study and the original ideas he has evolved are indicated in questions posed by the exhibition, such as:

Must man (and particularly woman) evolve a symmetrical foot with the large toe in the middle to fit the symmetrical shoe worn today and for centuries past?

Why should city people be compelled to walk on a sidewalk as hard-surfaced as the roadway on which automobiles travel? The hard surface wears out shoes and the nervous system and is unnecessary in this day of tough and resilient plastics.

Why should all floors be flat? An irregularly molded floor will be shown in the exhibition, and its advantages indicated.

Why do we chop beautiful material to pieces to make a dress? The exhibition will show several historical and traditional garments as well as four modern examples made of one or two pieces of material ingeniously joined.

The exhibition will occupy most of the gallery space on the first floor of the Museum and after its closing on March 4 will be circulated throughout the country.