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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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

TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900

47401-13

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EXHIBITION OF LARGE SCALE MODERN PAINTINGS

OPENS AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Twenty canvases, the smallest of which is over six feet long, comprise an exhibition of large scale painting in the twentieth century which opens at the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, on Wednesday, April 2. The exhibition will remain on view in the third floor galleries through May 4 and was directed by Margaret Miller of the Museum staff. Artists from Europe, Latin America and the United States are represented in the exhibition which includes paintings by Picasso, Bonnard, Stella, Leger, Matisse, Siqueiros, Chagall, Miro, Beckmann and Ben Shahn.

In spite of the shrinkage of modern living space, which would seem to make large paintings an anachronism, twentieth century artists have continued to paint uncommissioned canvases of mural scale as well as commissioned large scale oils or wall painting for specific private houses or public buildings. The exhibition will examine the function, purpose and possibilities of these large scale paintings in contemporary culture. It will emphasize the uncommissioned painting, undertaken without thought of its eventual destination. Extremes have been chosen in the selection of the paintings showing the artists at their freest and most daring, or most disciplined, austere and uncompromising.

Commenting on large scale modern painting, Miss Miller says:

"Big pictures at their best are assertions of the artist's self-confidence and esthetic conviction, affirmations of his belief in the importance of painting itself.

"The exhibition is intended to show some of the functions which large scale paintings may fill, some of the styles in which they have been painted, some of the kinds of experiences or subjects which they incorporate. The open vistas of the installations have therefore the double value of isolating over half the paintings in the exhibition, yet permitting a cross-wall play of assertions between similar and opposite paintings."