

# THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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MUSEUM EXHIBITS WORK DONE BY CHILDREN ATTENDING THE HOLIDAY FAIR  
HELD AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART DURING THE CHRISTMAS SEASON.

A selection of about 50 paintings, a dozen collages and some 25 transparencies, the best examples of the imaginative, colorful work done by 2,097 children who attended this year's Holiday Fair will be on view from February 2nd through the 27th in the Young People's Gallery of the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street. The Children's Holiday Fair is the only opportunity offered by the Museum for very young children to find works of modern art chosen on the basis of their interest and shown at their eye-level where they are free to touch sculpture and to operate moving toys. Poster paints, colored papers, gelatin and cellophane are then within easy reach so that the children, four to eight years old, may react to these experiences by creating their own art.

There is always one set of subjects more popular with the children than others. This year again, for example, the children produced pictures inspired by the Christmas holiday, winter scenes, houses, people; and there are of course many abstractions done by the younger children. The exhibition will include examples of each.

Victor D'Amico, Director of the Museum's Education Program, who designed and directed the Fair and selected the examples for this exhibition, has made the following statements regarding the intent and achievements of the annual Fair:

"The Fair is based on the principle that children learn best by following up observation with activity. That is why there is always a workshop adjacent to the exhibition of artists' work. The question often arises as to whether viewing artists' work combined with activity does not induce copying on the part of the child. The answer is yes if the child has already learned to copy, otherwise it is no. Children work by insight, and if they have not already been hampered by the habit of imitating they catch the essence of the artists' work - the color, the fantasy and the inventiveness.

"The Fair every year opens to many children for the first time in their lives the opportunity for working creatively. Moreover it often helps parents to see the importance of the creative art experience for the child and in many cases induces them to seek a continuation of this activity. It also serves as a laboratory for introducing new media and materials. For example, in this recent Fair, picture

transparencies were used as a teaching medium for what is believed to have been the first time. These are designs or pictures made out of bits of cellophane or gelatin pasted together giving the effect of stained glass. The brilliance of the transparent sheets placed over illuminated glass and the discovery that secondary colors result from overlaying primaries has obviously served to heighten the children's natural interest in color. The spontaneity and originality of the examples shown in this exhibition illustrate the effectiveness of the freedom which the Fair provided for the children and of the stimulus of the materials and surrounding art specifically displayed for them."

Work from these annual Fairs is presented in exhibitions which are circulated throughout the country to schools, women's clubs and art associations. In this way the ideas used and the knowledge gained may benefit parents and teachers of young children throughout the country.