

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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

TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900

490202 - 12

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MUSEUM TO SEND OUT CIRCULATING EXHIBITION OF POSTAGE STAMPS

The Museum of Modern Art announces a new exhibition on Postage Stamp Design, to be circulated to museums and galleries throughout the country. Consisting of a selection of about 300 stamps, beginning with Great Britain's classic Penny Black of 1840, the exhibition illustrates the varied subject matter that has appeared on stamps up to the present. The largely ignored element of design is emphasized in captions and in the preponderance of well-designed examples.

The exhibition will be rented to out-of-town organizations for \$50 for a 3-week showing.

THE STAMPS MAY BE SEEN BY THE PRESS IN THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4, BY APPOINTMENT. PHONE MR. PORTER McCRAY, CI 5-8900.

Mr. McCray, Director of the Department of Circulating Exhibitions, comments on the stamp collection as follows:

"This is perhaps the first attempt to present the subject of Postage Stamp Design in the light of the stamp's functions and special design problems. The exhibition is particularly timely, in view of the widespread criticism of the design of the 29 new stamps issued last year by the United States Post Office.

"Postage stamps have been widely collected and studied almost from the moment of their first issue little more than a century ago. But they have been collected and valued largely for their rarity and for freaks of printing rather than for excellence of design. In fact, despite the enormous circulation of postage stamps (about twenty billion annually in the United States alone), the whole subject of stamp design has received little consideration from the point of view of esthetic quality.

"Many examples in this exhibition illustrate the fact that the size of the stamp is far the most important consideration in stamp design and one that is frequently ignored. Well-designed stamps have a simple, almost emblematic character. They are immediately clear, dignified, effective symbols that reach through the postal system to the far corners of the world."