

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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

TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900
500119 - 7

FOR WEDNESDAY RELEASE

MUSEUM SHOWS 40 PRINTS BY PICASSO ON THEME: THE SCULPTOR'S STUDIO

A series of 40 recently acquired etchings by Picasso on the theme of the sculptor's studio, have been placed on view in a gallery adjacent to the exhibition of Gjon Mili's photographs of Picasso's space drawings done with a pencil of light. Like the photographs, the etchings demonstrate Picasso's extraordinary freedom and virtuosity as a draftsman.

The etchings, which are of exceptional rarity, were almost all executed in the spring of 1933 at a time when sculpture was a major concern of the artist. In 1932 he had bought the Chateau of Boisgeloup and had turned its stables into a big studio for sculpture. There he produced a score of pieces including several colossal heads in plaster, similar in style to some of the sculpture represented in the etchings.

The prints however are not so much concerned with sculpture as with the sculptor's studio. The figures and settings, like the style, are freely neo-classic. The themes are few: the sculptor working with his modeling tool, the model gazing at a sculptured figure, the sculptor and model resting, friends of the sculptor admiring his work. Each theme is repeated with variations remarkable for their apparently effortless inventiveness. For instance on a single day, March 30, Picasso made four etchings of the bearded sculptor and his model taking their ease while they contemplate a statue. The following day he made four more and, before the week was over, half a dozen other variations, all on the same theme.

Occasionally a distorted head or an angular semi-abstract figure disturbs the flowing linear conventions of the drawing; and in one print visitors in Renaissance costume invade the idyllic nakedness of the neo-classic bohemia; but these variants scarcely disrupt a style and an atmosphere at once whimsical, nostalgic and timeless.

These forty etchings are part of a set of 96 made by Picasso during the 1930s but still unpublished. Only a few proofs have ever appeared on the international print market, and the set has never been publicly exhibited. So far as is known the Museum of Modern Art is the only museum in the world to own the complete set of 96. It was purchased in Paris a few months ago for the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Print Room by William S. Liebermann, Associate Curator. The print exhibition has been arranged by Dorothy Lytle, Keeper of the Print Room, and will remain open until March 19.