

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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Opening:
January 30,
1952 - 5

MASTERWORKS ACQUIRED THROUGH THE
MRS. SIMON GUGGENHEIM FUND, 1938-50

PAINTINGS

(Note: Two large paintings by Matisse - The Red Studio, 1911, and The Piano Lesson, 1916 - cannot be shown because they are included in the Matisse exhibition now on tour.)

Peter BLUME: The Eternal City. 1934-37. Oil on composition board,
34 x 47 7/8". Acquired 1942.

An allegory of modern dictatorship conceived in 1933 while the painter was studying in Italy on a Guggenheim Fellowship. Completed in 1937 after years of work which included such studies as the two drawings exhibited. It may be compared with the ebullient optimism of Boccioni's The City Rises inspired (in 1910) by another Italian city, Milan.

Georges BRAQUE: Woman with a Mandolin. 1937. Oil on canvas, 51 1/4 x 38 1/4"
Acquired 1948.

A subtle harmony of color and texture painted in the late 1930s by the artist who thirty years before had been one of the founders of cubism.

Marc CHAGALL: I and My Village. 1911. Oil on canvas, 75 5/8 x 59 5/8",
Acquired 1943.

The best known and one of the greatest works by a painter whose earthy and poetic fantasies based upon his memories of a Russian Jewish childhood anticipate the imaginative freedom of surrealism.

Edward HOPPER: Gas. 1940. Oil on canvas, 26 1/4 x 40 1/4". Acquired 1943.

A painting by a master of the American scene whose realism often involves a latent but haunting poetry of the commonplace.

Roger de LA FRESNAYE: Conquest of the Air. 1913. Oil on canvas,
91 1/2 x 77". Acquired 1947.

La Fresnaye was not one of the primary masters of cubism, but his Conquest of the Air with its handsome color and grandeur of composition may be counted among the noblest works of 20th-century French painting.

Fernand LÉGER: Three Women (Le grand déjeuner). 1921. Oil on canvas,
72 1/4 x 99". Acquired 1942.

The Three Women (called in French Le grand déjeuner) is the greatest work of Léger's "classic" period which developed in the early '20s as a reaction to a long series of highly abstract mechanical and industrial subjects. However, neither the traditional subject matter nor the comparative realism of this composition remove it essentially from Léger's concern with the esthetic assimilation of machine forms and colors. Painted in the same year, Léger's Three Women offers a serious, if not intentional, challenge to Picasso's Three Musicians, also in the exhibition

(Out on loan) Henri MATISSE: Piano Lesson. 1916. Oil on canvas,
96 1/2 x 83 3/4". Acquired 1946.

(Out on loan) Henri MATISSE: The Red Studio. 1911. Oil on canvas,
71 1/4 x 86 1/4". Acquired 1949.

Joan MIRO: Dutch Interior. 1928. Oil on canvas, 36 1/8 x 28 3/4".

Acquired 1945.

After a trip to Holland in 1928 Miro painted a number of interiors which recall something of the subject matter, the gusto and the pell-mell profusion of the 17th-century master, Jan Steen. In the Dutch Interior a man with a guitar, a dog, cat, bat, still life and view through a window are all transformed by Miro's fantastic humor and marked by more than his usual care for brilliant detail and color.

Amedeo MODIGLIANI: Reclining Nude. 1919? Oil on canvas, 28 1/2 x 45 7/8"

Acquired 1950.

This, perhaps the latest of Modigliani's figures, was distinguished, apparently by the artist himself, with the title Le grand nu. In no other painting of his are sensuality and serenity held in such classic balance.

Pablo PICASSO: Three Musicians. 1921. Oil on canvas, 79 x 87 3/4".

Acquired 1949.

One of the greatest of Picasso's climactic works and usually considered the culmination of the eight years' development of synthetic cubism. The subject matter - a pierrot, a harlequin and a domino - is related to the Commedia dell'Arte ballet Pulcinella for which Picasso designed costumes in 1920.

Pablo PICASSO: Girl before a Mirror. March 1932. Oil on canvas,

63 3/4 x 51 1/4". Acquired 1938.

Of all Picasso's paintings of the early 1930s this is one of the most elaborately designed and sumptuously painted. Its magnificent color, heavy dark lines, and diamond-patterned background call to mind Gothic stained glass. The intricate metamorphosis of the girl's figure - "simultaneously clothed, nude and x-rayed" - and her image in the mirror, the paradoxical tension between a contemplative subject and a composition of maximum activity in color and design, all suggest poetic and metaphysical implications rare in Picasso's art of this period.

Pablo PICASSO: Seated Bather. 1929. Oil on canvas, 64 1/2 x 51".

Acquired 1950.

The painter raises his architecture of bones against the ironic serenity of sky and sea. A capital work of Picasso's metamorphic or surrealist period of the late 1920s.

Henri ROUSSEAU: The Sleeping Gypsy. 1897. Oil on canvas, 51 x 79".

Acquired 1939.

In 1897 at the age of 52 Rousseau painted La Bohémienne endormie and sent it to the Paris Salon des Indépendants where it was conspicuously hung and generally treated as a colossal joke. The artist, however, thought so well of it that he offered it as a gift to his home town, Laval. It disappeared for some years but about 1919 was bought by the great New York collector John Quinn. The Sleeping Gypsy, often considered Rousseau's greatest painting, is unique in his work for its large, simple forms and its effect of trance-like hallucination.

Pavel TCHELITCHEW: Hide and Seek. 1940-42. Oil on canvas, 78 1/2 x 84 3/4".

Acquired 1942.

Hide and Seek originated in some drawings of an ancient oak which the artist studied in Sussex in 1934. Little by little the old tree, enriched by double images and the colors of a New England autumn, was

peopled by children, large and small, until it assumed the character of a complex, multiple allegory of life and death, the four elements, the cycle of the seasons, the mysteries and delights of childhood, of nature itself and man's absorption in it. Ten studies for Hide and Seek make clear the development of the composition and some of the details.

SCULPTURES AND A CONSTRUCTION

Charles DESPIAU: Assia. 1938. Bronze, 6' 3/4" high. Acquired 1939.

A major work by the French sculptor known for his modest spirit and subtle modeling of surface.

Gaston LACHAISE: Standing Woman. 1932. Bronze, 7'7" high.

Acquired 1948.

The Standing Woman is the culminating monument in a long series of figures expressing the obsessive theme of the artist's work: the pride and power of womanhood.

Richard LIPPOLD: Variation No. 7: Full Moon. 1949-50. Nickel-chromium wire, stainless steel wire and brass rods, 10' high.

Acquired 1950.

The artist's modern industrial materials, his mechanical technique, his mathematical symmetries taken together with his romantic title offer a curious paradox. Yet the work itself seems to exert a fascination for many observers far beyond that of a geometrical nocturne. It might indeed serve as the cult image for some shrine of Pythagorean mysticism.

Aristide MAILLOL: The River. c.1939-43. Lead, 7'6" long, 53 3/4" high.

Acquired 1949.

The River, originally commissioned as a monument to the French writer and pacifist, Henri Barbusse, was begun just before the war, and completed after many delays late in 1943, a few months before the artist's death at the age of 82. Its daring instability of pose combined with its dynamic torsion make The River unique in Maillol's sculpture. The River is probably his last completed work, a final and magnificent act of creative energy on the part of a man who was, in his generation, the world's greatest sculptor.