

*Local General* 38

# THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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

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## VALUE OF ART ACTIVITY FOR CHILDREN IS THEME OF MUSEUM EXHIBITION

The importance of art activity in the growth of the individual child is the theme of a picture story for parents and teachers, told largely through photographs, in an exhibition to be on public view at the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, from March 24 through April 27. THE HUMAN QUALITY IN CREATIVE EXPERIENCE has been prepared by the Committee on Art Education and the Museum's Department of Education. The Committee, which is sponsored by the Museum, is composed of more than 1,200 art teachers and educators from all parts of the country who will meet at the Museum for the 10th Annual Conference from March 20 through 23. The exhibition will be on view to Committee members during the Conference, in advance of its opening to the public.

The exhibition will consist of 18 large panels of photographs of children at home, in school and at play. Explanatory captions will point out right and wrong ways to encourage children's creative development. Children's works in art, including painting, sculpture, mobiles and design, will supplement the photographs in order to indicate the kind of work children can do with good art guidance. Recommended art materials and toys are also to be shown.

The first panel, headed "Look at the Child as Well as His Work," warns that "without reference to the particular child, the work has little meaning." Paintings by children may be glimpsed through a large eye-shaped hole next to a photograph of a child concentrating on making a picture.

The enjoyment that even very young children gain from art activity will be demonstrated on the next panels. Particular kinds of art expression are illustrated in a panel headed "We Learn about the World through Our Fingertips" and showing a selection of collages. These are made by pasting different kinds of materials - cellophane, shells, felt scraps, tinsel, wool, etc. - on a background of paper.

Another panel titled "We Explore Materials and Create New Forms" points out that "we have only begun to find out the extent of the child's creative power in three-dimensional media such as constructions and mobiles." Through a hole in this panel may be seen a selection of this type of art work made from clay, colored straws, wire, feathers, etc. Overhead will hang brightly colored mobiles.

Other photographs are to show a child experimenting with clay, young people applying design principles to particular problems, children learning through art to work together and to develop as individuals, a child fascinated by a pattern of her shadow, a small boy selecting leaves for their shape and feel. The text on this panel reads, "They express their daily impressions and experience in the art room and likewise recognize art values in life outside."

A panel to hang on the gallery's glass wall shows a small boy peering through a hole in a wall. The text says, "Art helps us to see, to look not only at things but to perceive and enjoy the special quality of shape, surface, color or texture of an object or a material." Looking through the large hole in this panel the visitor will see the Museum's sculpture garden and, beyond, the streets and buildings of New York.

The need for guidance in teaching art is emphasized in another panel, and the importance of making the right materials available to children is stressed in two others. Parents are urged not to stifle their children's creative growth with copying books, but to encourage their explorations of the world of art.

Paints, brushes, paper, clay and clay tools, collage and construction materials recommended by the Committee will be shown as a guide to parents and teachers.

Photographs for the exhibition are being lent by well-known photographers including: Helen Levitt, Len Rosenberg, Hilda Reis, Marion Palfi, Hella Hammid, Murray Weiss, Hugh Stern, Soichi Sunami, and Leo Trachtenberg. Edith Mitchell, State Director of Art Education in Delaware, and the Board of Education of New York are also contributing photographs.

The exhibition will be circulated to other schools and museums throughout the country after the New York showing.