

Local General
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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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SERIES OF INDIVIDUAL SHOWS TO COMPOSE

"FIFTEEN AMERICANS" EXHIBITION OF PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

"Fifteen Americans," a group exhibition of approximately 100 works of art by 11 painters, 3 sculptors, and the master of "lumia," will be on view in the third floor galleries at the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, from April 10 through July 6. The exhibition has been selected and organized by Dorothy C. Miller, Curator of the Museum Collections, who has also edited an illustrated catalog containing statements by the artists.

"Fifteen Americans" is one of a series of large exhibitions designed to give a representative showing to each artist. These have been a part of the Museum's program since its founding. Earlier exhibitions have at times stressed newer talents as well as established reputations. However the great wealth of new talent presented in museums and galleries in recent years has led to a change of emphasis in the present American group show, which aims to give the Museum's public an opportunity to study the work of a number of distinguished modern artists not heretofore exhibited so comprehensively in the Museum.

Miss Miller says of the artists:

Working in many materials - paint and pencil, wood, welded metal and wire, or colored light projected on a screen - these Fifteen Americans show equal variety in the forms and symbols with which they express the quality and dimension of their experience. Each is an artist of marked individuality and achievement. In their brief statements in the catalog they not only express their differing purposes and points of view, but also give a clue to the thinking of the American artist in our period.

In the work of certain artists in Fifteen Americans - Dickinson, Rose, Katzman - experience and its expression are related to the world the artist sees about him. Others - Baziotes, Kiesler, Ferber, and Pollock in some of his latest pictures - even when dealing primarily with abstract forms, evoke vivid associations with the objective world. The work of Glasco and of Kriesberg seems to fall between these two groups. Rothko, Still, much of Pollock, Tomlin, Corbett, Lippold and Wilfred fall within the category usually called abstract, which, as many competent observers have remarked, is the dominant trend in mid-century American painting.

The artists are represented in most instances by a number of works. Thus the exhibition will actually comprise a series of small one-man shows to present a more effective view of individual achievement than can be given in the type of group show that includes only one work each by a large number of artists.

William Baziotes, aged 39, is represented in the exhibition by eight oils. He came from Reading, Pennsylvania, to New York nearly 20 years ago and has exhibited his paintings here and in various parts of the country during the past half dozen years. He currently teaches at the Brooklyn Museum Art School, New York University and the People's Art Center of the Museum of Modern Art. Of his paintings he writes:

I work on many canvases at once. In the morning I line them up against the wall of my studio. Some speak; some do not. They are my mirrors. They tell me what I am like at the moment.

The only statement Edward Corbett makes in the present catalog is, "I intend my work as poetry." Aged 32, he has been working during the past year in Taos, New Mexico. Son of an Army officer, he spent much of his childhood at Army posts in the Southwest, and during the war was himself in the Army and the Merchant Marine. He studied, and also taught art and exhibited in San Francisco. The exhibition contains 10 of his compositions in chalk and casein and one in oil.

Edward Dickinson was born 61 years ago in upstate New York, a region that sometimes figures as subject matter in his paintings. He studied painting in New York City, prior to joining the Navy during World War I, and later worked in France. He has had one-man shows in New York, Buffalo and elsewhere, and at present he teaches in New York. Nine of his oils, about which he prefers to make no statement, are included in the exhibition. One of these is a large canvas of an imaginary ruined building, begun in 1943 and not yet completed.

Herbert Ferber, aged 46, is a native New York sculptor. His most recent piece on which he worked for nearly a year is his sole representation in the show - a large sculpture (12'8" x 7'10") made of soldered copper, brass, lead and tin, entitled "...and the bush was

not consumed." This was commissioned by the Congregation B'nai Israel for the facade of the new Synagogue in Millburn, New Jersey, for which the architect was Percival Goodman. Mr. Ferber states:

The artist is concerned with fusing his personal and private vision with form, to make a metaphor for his experience, so exactly constructed that there can be no doubt about his idea, although there may be several layers of meaning.

Joseph Glasco, 27 years old, originally came from Oklahoma and Texas and has recently moved to New York where he has studied and has had three one-man shows. In the Air Corps during the war he painted murals for the Amarillo Air Field before being sent into combat in Germany. He is represented in the exhibition by eight works: paintings in oil and colored inks, and ink drawings. Of his work he writes:

Painting for me does not consist in something I have seen, but in something I am. There is no "subject matter." My heads are perhaps landscapes and my landscapes heads. They are interior thoughts that exist in my heart and mind and not in my eyes.

Herbert Katzman, aged 29, is a native of Chicago where he studied painting at the Art Institute and, after a two-year interval in the Navy, graduated with a traveling fellowship in 1946. He spent three and a half years in Europe and returned to live in New York State in 1950. Six of his oils are in the exhibition. He says:

I am moved by the world around me....I like the way the yellow-black sky looks over the Brooklyn Bridge, the way the sun hits a building, or the way my wife looks in an ochre-green dress. These are the important things to me and they are wonderful to paint.

Frederick Kiesler was born 56 years ago in Vienna, where he studied structural engineering and architecture. In 1923 he designed the famous "machine-age" setting for the Berlin production of Capek's R.U.R. which gave the word "robot" to the languages of Western Europe and America. In 1925, the year before he came to New York to live, he designed for the Austrian section the most radical exhibit of the International Exposition of Decorative Arts in Paris - his "city-in-space." In recent years he has devoted himself to sculpture and painting. "Galaxy," a large carved wood construction 12 feet high,

and a painting, "Galaxy," in 19 sections, represent him in the exhibition.

My sculpture is a practical sculpture. It is both to be lived with and within.

Sculpture should be touched not by the eye alone. It should be enjoyed not only esthetically but physically as well. This is a sculpture for relaxation.

Paintings by Irving Kriesberg were shown at the Museum last year in the New Talent exhibition. Mr. Kriesberg, who is 33 years old, was born in Chicago and studied art, first at the Art Institute there, where he also has exhibited, and later for three years in Mexico, D.F., where he executed murals for an exposition building. He moved to New York in 1945. The exhibition will include seven of his paintings in tempera. He has written of his painting:

I see that nature is motion and change and that is what I paint. True, it is illogical, but then art is illogical. How can patches of color transmit to one man the passions felt by another? It is impossible. It is utterly marvelous.

Richard Lippold, 37 years old, trained as an industrial designer at the Art Institute of Chicago. Ten years ago he gave up designing to begin sculpture, and in 1944 he came to New York to live and work. He has taught in several schools and colleges and is now head of the art department at Trenton Junior College. Several eastern museums own examples of his constructions, including a large one purchased last year by the Museum of Modern Art through the Mrs. Simon Guggenheim Fund. This is to be shown with eight others in the exhibition. Mr. Lippold says of his work:

My preference for social action is simply to have my being among all the other objects that exist in Space, "which loves us all," and in which modes of communication today can dissolve barriers of time and energy, of nations and races. Although the word sounds old-fashioned, I thus have my faith in Space.

Jackson Pollock, who is 40 years old, came from Wyoming and grew up in Arizona and California where he has since paid a number of visits. He came to New York in 1929 and studied for two years with Thomas Benton at the Art Students League. He has had numerous one-man shows in New York, as well as in Chicago, San Francisco, Italy and Paris, and his work has been acquired by several museums. Eight paintings will be included in the exhibition, one of them 18 feet long. Since

Mr. Pollock prefers to make no comment about his work, the catalog will publish a statement by Alfonso Ossorio, painter and collector of modern art, in which he says:

New visions demand new techniques: Pollock's use of unexpected materials and scales is the direct result of his concepts and of the organic intensity with which he works, an intensity that involves, in its complete identification of the artist with his work, a denial of the accident.

Herman Rose, aged 42, was born in Brooklyn where he now lives, though he has lived and painted alternately in Manhattan and Brooklyn. He paints his city scenes on the spot, often from the roof tops to which, "like so many other tenement-raised children," he "early learned to escape." At 17 he went to the National Academy of Design to study for two or three years, and he learned much from his visits to New York museums and print rooms. He first exhibited in 1944, but only now is he able to give up his job as commercial draftsman to devote a few months to painting. The exhibition will contain 10 of his oils. On the subject of art he says:

The student of art takes root in tradition....Tradition takes the place of nature and first-hand experience for the young artist. Once secure and growing, he gains insight into how life influences art forms and expression, learns to cast his own experiences onto canvas, learns how in turn the valid and inspiring art of others influences his very life.

My sincerest desire is to paint the era I live in, twentieth-century reality.

Mark Rothko came to this country from Russia in 1913 at the age of 10 and spent his boyhood in Portland, Oregon. He attended Yale University and later studied at the Art Students League with Max Weber. He has had several one-man shows here and on the West Coast. He taught in the 1940s at the California School of Fine Arts, and at present teaches at Brooklyn College. He will be represented in the exhibition by eight large oils. Of his work he states:

The progression of a painter's work, as it travels in time from point to point, will be toward clarity: toward the elimination of all obstacles between the painter and the idea, and between the idea and the observer.

Clyfford Still, aged 47, was born in North Dakota and spent his youth alternating between farm work and schooling in Canada and in Spokane, Washington, where he took a degree at the University in 1933. He got his M.A. at Washington State College, where he taught for the next

eight years. During the war he worked in San Francisco shipyards and airplane factories. After a trip to the East, he returned to San Francisco to teach at the California School of Fine Arts from 1946 to 1950. He then came to New York to live, and at present teaches at Brooklyn College. Seven of his oils will be exhibited. He has written:

Demands for communication are both presumptuous and irrelevant. The observer usually will see what his fears and hopes and learning teach him to see. But if he can escape these demands that hold up a mirror to himself, then perhaps some of the implications of the work may be felt.

Bradley Walker Tomlin, 52 years old, comes from Syracuse, New York, where he graduated from the University in 1921. He spent the following several years traveling and studying in Europe. From 1932 to 1941 he taught at Sarah Lawrence College. His work has been seen in one-man shows in New York galleries, and is owned by several museums. He now lives in New York. Seven paintings are to be exhibited. Mr. Tomlin has made no statement regarding his work, but the collector and connoisseur of modern art, Edward W. Root, of Clinton, New York, writes:

Bradley Tomlin's admirable paintings...will appeal to those who enjoy sensitively manipulated pigment and linear suggestions of movement. Such people will respond to the luminous quality of his painted surfaces and will see...a sort of pictorial equivalent of ballet....

Thomas Wilfred, the master of "lunia" - an art of light in which moving forms and colors are projected on a screen by a special light-generating instrument - was born in Denmark 63 years ago. His first experiments with light were made with a cigar box and colored glass fragments as early as 1905. While continuing these experiments, he studied both art and music in Europe and became a professional singer and player of the 12-stringed archlute. After two years in the Danish army, he came to the U.S. in 1916, continued his concert work, and devoted himself to building the "clavilux" on which he gave the first lunia performance in 1922 in New York. For the next 21 years he toured the U.S., Canada and Europe with the clavilux. In 1929 he composed the first projected mobile mural, 21 x 210 feet, still in constant use, at the Hotel Sherman in Chicago. From 1930 to 1943 the

Art Institute of Light, founded by Mr. Wilfred, maintained a research center and recital hall in Grand Central Palace. During the war, he worked for the O.W.I.'s Danish department. Last year he designed the lighting equipment for the University of Washington Playhouse in Seattle, the first theatre in the country planned for projected scenery and keyboard control of lighting. Four lumia compositions will be included in this exhibition, and a lumia recital will be given daily from 1:30 to 2:30 in the Museum Auditorium during the exhibition. Mr. Wilfred has written of lumia:

Harmony and balance are here a kinetic concept; the composition may not contain a single moment of static symmetry, no matter where stopped....

Lumia has been used in various fields; when played from the keyboard, as visual accompaniment to music, the drama and the dance; and in recorded form, as projected mobile mural decoration, as exhibits in museums and private collections, and as an aid in psychiatric diagnosis and psychotherapy.