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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART  
11 WEST 53RD STREET, NEW YORK

TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 7-7470

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Whistler's "Mother," the painting which is the subject of the present stamp controversy, will arrive in New York next Tuesday for a four-day showing before being returned to France on Saturday, May 19. An expression of opinion regarding the reproduction of Whistler's painting on the recent issue of Government postage stamps came from the Museum of Modern Art yesterday, with the Museum's suggestion for a design for the stamp.

The original design for the stamp was mailed to Postmaster Farley with the following letter from Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Director of the Museum:

May 9, 1934.

Postmaster General James A. Farley  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

The Museum of Modern Art is directing in this country the tour of Whistler's "Mother." The painting was originally loaned by the Louvre to our Museum for its Exhibition of American Painting and Sculpture in October 1932. The painting will be returned to France on May 19th of this year after a four-day showing at our Museum here in New York.

We are therefore especially interested in the Whistler's Mother stamp and the controversy about its artistic merit.

Whistler himself was so much concerned with the design of this painting that he gave it the title "Arrangement in Grey and Black." We are afraid that if he were alive today he would be enraged by the adulteration of his design on the stamp. We regret that Whistler's painting has been mutilated in a stamp which might have done honor to the most famous of American artists and might also have called attention to the fact that 1934 is the 100th anniversary of his birth. In its Goya memorial stamp several years ago, Spain honored one of its famous artists in a similar fashion.

We believe you may wish to have from an impartial art institution like the Museum of Modern Art a suggestion for a stamp which preserves the integrity of Whistler's design. The lettering on the stamp is reduced to a minimum and is so placed that it does not encroach on Whistler's composition.

We enclose with this letter the original design we have prepared.

Yours very truly,

(signed) Alfred H. Barr, Jr.  
Director.

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The New York exhibition of the painting will be the wind-up of a triumphant tour of the country, where the famous portrait has been seen by more than two million persons. . . Thirty-one cities requested the privilege of showing it, but time limited its loan to only twelve before its scheduled return to France. No painting, and very few living personalities, have ever received such a nation-wide ovation. Everywhere the "Mother" has gone it has been received with honors. It has broken museum-attendance records throughout the country. In San Francisco in one day 25,000 persons came to see it. Last week it attracted 11,000 Bostonians in a single day to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. Kansas City established a record of more than 7,000 persons in four hours.

On Tuesday, May 15, the Summer Exhibition and Whistler's "Mother" will have a preview for members before the public opening on Wednesday. Mrs. James Roosevelt, the President's mother, and M. Charles de Fontenouvelle, French Consul General, will attend as guests of honor and will participate in a special program to be broadcast nationally over NBC WJZ and network, from 4:30 to 4:45. Mrs. John S. Sheppard, a Trustee of the Museum, and Mr. A. Conger Goodyear, its President, will also speak.

On the same evening, the Alliance Francaise will hold a conference in the large gallery of the Museum, where the painting will hang. The meeting will be under the official patronage of the French Ambassador, M. Andre de Laboulaye, and will be addressed by M. Henri Focillon, Professor of Aesthetics at the Sorbonne and of History of art at Yale University, on the subject of Whistler.

Wednesday the Whistler painting and the Summer Exhibition, which will include the entire Bliss Collection as well as models and photographs of modern housing, will be open to the public. During the three days - Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, May 16, 17, 18--that the Whistler painting is on view, a charge of one dollar will be made for the benefit of the Museum's Endowment Fund. Last March the Museum raised \$600,000 without appeal to the public. The sum of \$750,000 has been set by the Trustees of the Museum as the total for an adequate Endowment Fund.

On Saturday, when the Whistler "Mother" sails for France the Museum will resume its regular summer schedule.