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Patrons Form Modernist Art Museum Here

Mrs. John D. Rockefeller Jr.
and A. Conger Goodyear
Are Among Sponsors

Establishment in New York City of what is expected to become an important and permanent museum of modern art was announced yesterday by a group of American collectors and patrons of art who will open an exhibition gallery next month in the Heckscher Building, Fifth Avenue and Fifty-seventh Street.

The sponsors of the enterprise, which bears the name of the Museum of Modern Art, include A. Conger Goodyear, chairman; Mrs. John D. Rockefeller jr., treasurer; Frank Crowninshield, secretary; Miss Lizzie Bliss; Mrs. W. Murray Crane; Mrs. Cornelius J. Sullivan and Professor Paul J. Sachs. Alfred H. Barr jr., formerly of the Fogg Museum, will be the director.

The immediate purpose of the founders is to present a series of some twenty exhibitions of modern art during the next two years. The ultimate object is to acquire, from time to time, either by gift or by purchase, a collection of the best modern works of art for a permanent museum. The exhibitions will include as complete a representation as may be possible of the great modern masters—American and European—from Cezanne to the present day.

The project, plans for which were made public at a luncheon given by the organizers at the Hotel Madison, is described in a statement prepared by the committee, which sets forth the purposes of the institution and the circumstances leading to the organization of the enterprise.

The committee points to the rising tide of interest in modern movements in art, as reflected in the formation of private collections and public galleries in all parts of the world, and calls attention to the fact that "New York alone, among all the great metropolises of the world, lacks a public gallery where the works of the founders and masters of the modern schools can today be seen."

The sponsors of the project harbor no criticism of the position taken by the Metropolitan Museum, declaring that "as a great museum it may justly take the stand that it wishes to acquire only those works of art which seem

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certainly and permanently valuable. Experience has shown," the statement continues, "that the best way of giving to modern art a fair presentation is to establish a gallery devoted frankly to the works of artists who most truly reflect the taste, feeling and tendencies of the day."

The new museum aims to establish a relationship to the Metropolitan Museum like that of the Luxembourg to the Louvre. Among its functions will be to attempt to establish a collection of the immediate ancestors, American and European, of the modern movement; artists whose paintings are still too controversial for universal acceptance. This collection would be formed by gifts, bequests, purchase and perhaps by semi-permanent loans.

France and U. S. Come First

The idea is to have other galleries display carefully chosen permanent collections of the most important living masters, especially those of France and the United States, though eventually there would be representative

groups from England, Germany, Italy, Mexico and other countries.

To make a gradual approach to their final objective the founders have adopted the plan whereby the Museum of Modern Art will function during the first two years as a gallery for temporary loan exhibitions.

The temporary home of the museum will be on the twelfth floor of the Heckscher Building, where a room eighty-five feet by sixty-five has been obtained. The first exhibition will open about October 1, possibly earlier, according to Mr. Barr, who has the plans for operating the gallery in charge. This will consist of a collection of a hundred or more paintings and drawings by Cezanne, Van Gogh, Gauguin, Renoir and Seurat.

At first it was intended to open with an exhibition of paintings by American masters, who are to be given full recognition both in the temporary exhibitions and in the plans for the future museum, Mr. Crowninshield said at the luncheon yesterday. Those present included art critics, editors of art departments of newspapers and magazines, the new director and several of the founders, including Miss Bliss, Mrs. Sullivan and Mr. Crowninshield.

Albert P. Ryder, Winslow Homer and Thomas Eakins were the masters considered for the initial exhibition, whose works, however, will be featured in a subsequent show in the new gallery. Other shows on the coming season's schedule will consist of paintings by distinguished contemporary American artists, paintings by outstanding French painters of today, a survey of modern Mexican art and group exhibitions of

the work of American, French and German sculptors.

For all the museum's exhibitions the co-operation of other museums, private collectors and dealers are invited. Nothing in the museum will be for sale, according to the plan, and in all respects the institution will function purely as an educational one.

Mr. Crowninshield announced that the greater part of the fund necessary to operate the museum during the first year had been subscribed. In outlining the plan of operation he said there would probably be small exhibitions, such as groups of prints, drawings or small sculpture, which would supplement the larger exhibitions on the schedule and provide added variety.

Organizers Widely Known

The seven organizers of the Museum of Modern Art are all widely known in art circles as collectors and patrons of modern art. The chairman of the committee, Mr. Goodyear, formerly was president of the Albright Art Gallery, at Buffalo. Professor Sachs is head of the Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, and Mr. Crowninshield, editor of "Vanity Fair," is known for his active interest in the modern art movement. Miss Bliss is one of the first to attain prominence in America for the collection of works by the modern masters, while Mrs. Sullivan and Mrs. Rockefeller both are enthusiastic collectors of contemporary art.

Mr. Barr, who assumes direction of the gallery immediately, is a graduate of Princeton and a former student of the fine arts at Harvard, the Fogg Museum and abroad.