

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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

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72

MUSEUM HOLDS PRIVATE SCREENING OF COMMERCIALS FOR TELEVISION AND ADVERTISING INDUSTRIES

The Museum of Modern Art is inviting members of the television and advertising industries to attend a private screening on March 14 of the 54 television commercials selected as part of the Museum's current television retrospective, TELEVISION U.S.A.: 13 SEASONS. The commercials are being screened individually for the public during dramatic, comedy, music, news and special events, and arts and science programs running twice daily through May 2nd in the Museum's Film Auditorium. This special screening will be the only time that all the commercials will be shown together.

The commercials were selected by Abe Liss, President and Creative Director of Elektra Film Studios and a former instructor in film design at Columbia University. Mr. Liss enlisted the help of agencies, production houses and film festivals for suggestions. From lists submitted by approximately 300 people, Mr. Liss selected 54 commercials produced between 1955 and 1961. He based his selections on originality in the use of the medium and respect for the audience. When asked why 1955 is the starting point, Mr. Liss said "very, very few good earlier commercials still exist because they were often lost when clients changed agencies and, with the rapid improvement in techniques, old commercials were discarded as 'not valuable' to advertiser or agency. Also many production houses, which usually act as the commercial library, no longer produce tv commercials." Mr. Liss' selections represent the work of 29 agencies (with Young and Rubicam credited for 9 commercials, including 4 for Johnson and Johnson) and 24 production houses.

TELEVISION U.S.A.: 13 SEASONS marks the first time that television has joined the other 20th century visual arts and the first time that television commercials have joined the other commercial design media at the Museum. The entire retrospective, programs and commercials alike, is planned to provide a second view of the work done and the progress achieved in the new media.

The project was under the direction of Jac Venza, with Doris Hibbard as his assistant. Lewis Freedman was responsible for the dramatic selections for the series; Burt Shevelove for the comedy and music programs; Isaac Kleinerman for the news and special events; Perry Wolff for the arts and sciences.

The television retrospective was made possible by generous contributions from, and cooperation of, the American Broadcasting Company, the Columbia Broadcasting System and the National Broadcasting Company, Inc.

The series began February 5th and will continue through May 2nd with screenings at 3:00 and 5:30 p.m. each day.

Stills and additional information available from Marcia Rubinoff, Publicity Department, Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York 19, N. Y. CI 5-8900.