

# THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

11 WEST 53RD STREET, NEW YORK

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FOR RELEASE

## FACTS ON NEW TWO-MILLION-DOLLAR BUILDING AND SCULPTURE GARDEN OF THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Two-million-dollars is the cost of the new building and land at 11 West 53 Street, now the permanent home of the Museum of Modern Art. The plot has a 130-foot frontage on 53 Street, just west of Fifth Avenue. Centered on it at the rear is a 75-foot frontage on 54th Street. The 54th Street land will be used as a permanent sculpture garden for the Museum.

During the period of the World's Fair, however, the garden on 54th Street will have a frontage of 380 feet, the site of the former homes of John D. Rockefeller, Sr., and John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Both because the enlarged space will be used only temporarily by the Museum of Modern Art and because the time of preparation for the World's Fair visitors was so limited, the transformation of the entire plot into an oasis in the city has been worked out in only a few weeks with comparatively little expense yet with amazing variety.

It was designed by ~~the Museum staff in collaboration with the architects~~ John McAndrew, Curator of the Museum's Department of Architecture and Industrial Art in consultation with the architects.

The garden has a variety of fencing: wattle, saplings, plywood, wire, and a part of the original wrought iron fence that stood before the Rockefeller, Sr., home. Left in place are a few of the trees and hedge which were originally there. The garden is floored by grey and yellow pebbles to be rolled into the ground. The pebbles form mosaics of large abstract design.

To serve as a background for a great variety of sculpture ranging in style from realistic to purely abstract and in such mediums as metal, stone, etc., will be screens of plywood, saplings and asbestos, and a variety of trees--birches, pines, cyresses, apples, dogwood, etc. Trees and shrubs have been contributed by several Trustees of the Museum. Marshall Field has given forty arborvitae trees, and Philip L. Goodwin has contributed oleanders,

yews and cactus plants. There are two shelter pavilions in the garden each with a roof and a single wall of varnished plywood. Tea will be served in a shady corner of the garden and there will be plenty of seats: well-designed park benches and soda fountain wire chairs in navy blue and chocolate color.

Of modern reinforced concrete construction, the new building has many innovations in architecture, interior design and equipment. Its glass walls, if arranged as a one-story facade, would extend more than two city blocks in length. Other unusual features are the demountable interior gallery walls which can be taken down and put up in different positions to form new backgrounds. For even greater flexibility of arrangement there are no stationary ceiling lights. The lighting fixtures are in strips that are toggle-bolted or "buttoned" on and off the ceiling in different locations as desired. Ventilation and working lights are provided in the galleries by anemostat in the ceiling.

The penthouse of the building, entirely of glass on the south side, is shielded from glare by a cantilevered concrete slab pierced by fourteen circular holes five feet in diameter. These make an interesting pattern of light on the terrace and enlarge the view, giving the entire upper structure the effect of a modern pergola. Sliding door in penthouse is 24 feet long by 9 feet 2 inches.

Handrail of stairs of aluminum, alumilited to prevent oxidization; panels of unbreakable glass. Service stair handrails of ordinary piping bent by means of filling with shot to prevent breaking.

Interior marble, rouge antique. Exterior marble, Georgia white. Office furniture: file drawers topped by boards inlaid with linoleum. The small projection room seats 49; large auditorium 478.

Franklin D. Roosevelt, President of the United States, will open the new Museum of Modern Art with a special address to be broadcast from the White House on Wednesday, May 10. The President's fifteen-minute talk from 10:45 - 11:00 P.M. E.D.S.T. will come as the climax of the ceremonies celebrating the opening of the new glass-walled, two-million-dollar museum building at 11 West 53 Street, and will emphasize not only the cultural significance of the

Museum's work but also the national scope of its activities. The theme of the opening program will be cultural freedom.

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The Museum of Modern Art, New York, was founded in June 1929. Its first exhibition was held November of the same year. During the ten years of its existence it has held eighty-five exhibitions of painting, sculpture, graphic arts, architecture, industrial art, commercial design, theatre art, photography and motion pictures. These exhibitions - among them the noted van Gogh and American Painting and Sculpture exhibitions - have been attended by a total of more than one-million-and-a-half people.

In May 1938, at the invitation of the French Government, the Museum of Modern Art sent to Paris for a showing at the Musée du Jeu de Paume a large exhibition of American painting, sculpture, folk art, architecture, photography and motion pictures called Three Centuries of American Art.

In the spring of 1932 the Museum sent out its first travelling exhibition, an influential show of Modern Architecture. During the seven years since, the Museum has sent out 68 travelling exhibitions which have been shown 790 times in 186 cities. These exhibitions range from the largest shown by the Museum in New York to small ones assembled especially for circulation to small galleries and museums.

The Museum of Modern Art Film Library was established as an educational institution in 1935 by a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation. Its purpose is to collect and preserve representative motion pictures of all types, as well as related material, with the object of making them available for study. In the four years since it was founded the Film Library has uncovered and in some cases restored many rare old films and has accumulated extensive archives of the most noteworthy motion pictures made in this country or abroad during the past forty years. It has arranged programs of these films and circulated them non-commercially to museums, colleges and film study groups throughout the country. Approximately two hundred organizations are now regularly showing Museum of Modern Art Film Library programs.

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(The candleholder on the table for the Trustees dinner tonight (May 8) is a stabile by Alexander Calder. It is of wire with candle-cups welded on, the entire thing tinned over. It is designed in various abstract forms and is in sections so that it can be used in part or entire. As used at the Trustees dinner tonight it will hold 120 candles.)