

# The Museum of Modern Art

NO. 14

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## THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART AND JAPAN

The Museum of Modern Art was founded in 1929 to help people use, enjoy and understand the arts of our time. Its approach to the arts is international and its concern is with all the visual arts -- painting, sculpture, drawings, prints, architecture, design, film and photography. Today The Museum of Modern Art's program of international cultural exchange leads the programs carried out by any official or private institution. During the past 36 years more than 160 exhibitions organized by the Museum have been circulated to 79 countries on every continent. This international exchange program is sponsored by the International Council of the Museum, a group of more than 170 community leaders and art patrons from the United States and abroad.

The Museum's concern with the art of Japan has been reflected in its exhibitions, publications and film showings for many years, and its own collections number well over 300 works in all media by Japanese artists.

New Japanese Photography, consisting of approximately 200 prints by 15 photographers, is the most recent exhibition of Japanese work to be shown at the Museum. On view in the spring of 1974, it presents the photographs of Domon, Tomatsu, Ikko (Narahara), Hosoe, Fukase, Moriyama, Akiyama, Ishimoto, Kawada, Tsuchida, Naitoh, Ichimura, Ohara, Tamura and Jumonji. The exhibition and its accompanying publication have been directed and edited by John Szarkowski, Director of the Museum's Department of Photography, and Shoji Yamagishi, one of the leading Japanese authorities on photography and Editor of Camera Mainichi.

The Museum presented its first exhibition devoted entirely to Japanese art, The Work of Sharaku, in 1940. In 1954 a Japanese house and garden

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designed by Junzo Yoshimuto and based on 16th- and 17th-century prototypes, were built in the Museum's outdoor exhibition area. This was so popular it was kept on view for a second summer and is now on permanent display in Philadelphia. Exhibitions of Japanese Calligraphy and Japanese Pottery were also shown in 1954. An exhibition of photographs of The Architecture of Japan was circulated by the Museum throughout the United States and Canada from 1953 to 1958. In the 60s Recent Japanese Prints toured 19 cities. In 1965 an exhibition of The Prints of Masuo Ikeda was shown at the Museum and in 1966, Art Work of Japanese Children. Both circulated in North America. The same year, The New Japanese Painting and Sculpture, one of the largest exhibitions of recent Japanese work ever shown in the United States, was on view at the Museum in New York and later traveled to seven other cities in the United States under the Museum's International Council sponsorship. In 1966 the Film Department presented Experimental Films from Japan and The Films of Kon Ichikawa, and the following year, Ten Recent Japanese Films. The Japanese Film: 1896-1969 was presented in a three-month series in 1970, accompanied by an exhibition of 100 photo blow-ups. A retrospective of The Films of Masahiro Shinoda was shown at the Museum in 1973, and the same year a birthday tribute was offered to filmmaker Kenji Mizoguchi.

The Museum has sent exhibitions to Japan since the early 50s. In 1954 it sent a memorial exhibition of the works of the late Yasuo Kuniyoshi, an American artist born in Japan. In 1957 Twentieth Century Design in America and Europe: Selections from The Collections of The Museum of Modern Art was exhibited in Tokyo, the first time the Museum's unique design collection was shown outside New York. In 1953 and 1957 the Museum organized the United States' representation at the second and fourth International Art Exhibi-

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tions sponsored by the Foreign Ministry of Japan. Studies for Picasso's Guernica were sent to The National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo, in 1962. In 1963, the exhibition Drawings by Arshile Gorky was shown in Tokyo, and Visionary Architecture, including works by Japanese architects, toured six Japanese cities after a successful tour of the U.S.A.

Two Decades of American Painting, accompanied by a program of short experimental films, was exhibited in Tokyo and Kyoto in 1966-67. Consisting of 111 paintings by 35 leading artists, it was the largest and most comprehensive exhibition of contemporary American painting ever to be shown in Japan. In May 1970 the film series The American Film: 1894-1929 inaugurated the Film Library Building of The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo. A large collection of American painting and sculpture, assembled by the Art in Embassies Committee of the International Council, was on view at the American Embassy residence in Tokyo from 1961 through 1963.

From Cézanne through Picasso: 100 Drawings from The Museum of Modern Art, New York, was presented in Tokyo in 1971 under the auspices of the International Council. The exhibition, arranged through the invitation of Dr. Chisaburoh F. Yamada, Director of The National Museum of Western Art in Tokyo and an honorary member of the Council, was the first survey of the unique and extensive drawing collection of The Museum of Modern Art, New York, to be sent abroad. Tokyo was also the scene of the Council's annual spring meeting in 1971.

The Museum's publication The Architecture of Japan by Arthur Drexler records the contribution made by Japan's architects to modern architecture in the West. Among the Museum's books which have been published in Japanese editions are What is Modern Painting? by Alfred H. Barr, Jr. and The History of Photography from 1839 to the Present Day by Beaumont Newhall.

February 1974

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