

The Museum of Modern Art

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AMBROISE VOLLARD, EDITEUR: PRINTS-BOOKS-BRONZES by Una Johnson, with a Preface by Riva Castleman. 168 pp, 62 black and white illus., 16 color illus.; bibl.; chron. Published by The Museum of Modern Art. Cloth \$17.50, distributed by New York Graphic Society. Paper \$7.95, distributed by The Museum of Modern Art.

AMBROISE VOLLARD, EDITEUR: PRINTS-BOOKS-BRONZES by Una Johnson will be published by The Museum of Modern Art June 9, on the occasion of a major exhibition devoted to Vollard, directed by Riva Castleman, which opens at The Museum of Modern Art that day.

Ambroise Vollard (1867-1939) began his career as an art dealer in 1893, when he opened a small gallery on rue Laffitte, known as the "rue des tableaux," and quickly developed a unique and eminent position in the art world of his time. His gallery became the lively center for the young artists involved in the then controversial new movements in art that we now recognize as "modern": Bonnard, Cézanne, Chagall, Denis, Gauguin, Maillol, Picasso, Pissarro, Redon, Rouault, and Vuillard all maintained a strong professional relationship with this man whom Una Johnson calls "an impresario of the arts." Johnson states that "with seldom-challenged authority and a gruff dignity, Vollard assumed his exceptional position in the art world of Paris."

However, it was as a publisher and entrepreneur that Vollard achieved the eminence he desired. Inspired by the idea of publishing works done by painters who were not printmakers by profession--an original idea at that time--he began to commission work from his artist friends. Beginning in 1895, for nearly forty-five years, Vollard spent the income gained from dealing in modern paintings to publish fine prints and illustrated books. With consummate care he commissioned an artist to illustrate a particular book, selected the paper, worked with the master-printer, and worried over every detail in order to achieve a magnificent volume. Today he is acknowledged to have been the foremost publisher of prints and illustrated books during the last part of the

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19th century and the first four decades of the 20th century. The catalogue offers a thorough description of all work published by Vollard: single prints, illustrated books and bronzes, and includes the commissioned but uncompleted projects as well as the works published after his death.

Una Johnson's Introduction presents a fascinating portrait of Vollard and explores his often complex relationship with the major artists of the School of Paris.

Representing the latest research on the subject, this new volume is a revised and expanded edition of a 1944 catalogue raisonné, published in a limited edition and long out of print. This new edition also includes the original Preface to the 1944 edition, written by the influential art critic of his day, Henry McBride, a friend of Vollard's. A Foreword by Riva Castleman, Director of the Department of Prints and Illustrated Books at The Museum of Modern Art and director of the Museum's exhibition Impresario — Ambroise Vollard (June 9 - September 6, 1977) provides a delightful view of this extraordinary connoisseur and publisher. Illustrations include 62 black-and-white photographs and 16 color plates.

The author, Una Johnson, is Curator Emeritus of The Brooklyn Museum, where she served as Curator of Prints and Drawings from 1941 to 1969. She has written several books on prints and numerous monographs.

The exhibition is made possible by grants from Exxon Corporation and the National Endowment for the Arts. After the New York showing it will travel to the Art Gallery of Ontario in Toronto, Canada; The Toledo Museum of Art in Ohio; and the Krannert Art Museum, the University of Illinois, Champaign.

Additional information and photographs available from Michael Boodro, Assistant, or Elizabeth Shaw, Director, Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, New York 10019. Tel: (212) 956-7296; 7501.
