

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART  
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PICTOGRAPHS ENLIVEN ANNUAL REPORT OF MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

New York, N. Y., February 00, 1941--An unusual annual report will be mailed this month to the more than seven thousand members of the Museum of Modern Art, whose two-year-old glass, steel and marble building at 11 West 53 Street is a center of activities which reach out not only to all parts of this country but to Canada, Honolulu, Central and South America and Europe.

Like most annual reports the Museum's is crowded with statistics--but these statistics are made brilliantly graphic by the use of pictographs. So far as is known this is the first Museum report ever to be enlivened by sprightly little line drawings of visitors, money, electric light bulbs, paint brushes, books, films, trucks, workmen, which show at a glance attendance figures, salaries, operating expense, publications, exhibitions, circulating exhibitions, employees, disbursements and receipts.

Five hundred and eighty-five thousand, three hundred and three members and visitors attended the Museum's 18 exhibitions of 1939-40, in which 278 American and 203 foreign artists were represented. The exhibitions displayed 192 items from the Museum's collections and 4,037 items borrowed from other museums and private collections in the United States, Belgium, Norway, Switzerland, England, France and Mexico.

Other statistics of interest are contained in the report of John E. Abbott, Executive Vice-President:

"One excellent gauge of the value of a public institution is the popular response to its program. In terms of this alone the first year of the Museum in its new building was a most successful one. There was a growth in membership from 4,076 in 1939 to 7,309 in 1940, and a rise in the number of visitors from 119,803 to 585,303. There was an increase of 178,475 in the audiences of film showings.

"These gains, which were made in spite of the fact that this was the first year there was an admission fee of twenty-five cents at all times, are perhaps the Museum's proudest achievement. Lacking any tax support, the considered policy of the Museum has been to present exhibitions and services worthy of the public's financial support. A paid admission of half a million people is more convincing evidence of the public's vital interest than a million

people admitted free.

"It has been a year of unprecedented activity. The move into the new building necessitated many adjustments and the enlarged program made many demands upon the staff and the budget. Each year the earned income from memberships, admissions, film rentals, circulating exhibition fees and publications takes care of a proportionately larger share of the Museum's expenditures. It is, nevertheless, becoming more difficult to meet the running expenses of the existing departments with their increased activity and of the new departments which must be created in order to keep pace with the public's growing need of the Museum's services....

"However, the unbalanced budget and the lack of space are paradoxically virtues of the Museum...they are the by-products of a program which has been expanding constantly to meet a very real public need.

The Museum's Director, Alfred H. Barr, Jr., reported in part as follows:

"The year saw a number of new undertakings. An independent Department of Industrial Design was formed which laid plans immediately for an important domestic furniture competition. A series of Mexican concerts supplementing the Mexican exhibition was the Museum's first serious venture in music. The Dance Archives added to the Museum's resources an important new body of material for exhibition and research....

"A large number of gifts and purchases have enriched the Museum's collections of sculpture, photographs, films, paintings and graphic arts. A great painting, Henri Rousseau's Sleeping Gypsy, the gift of Mrs. Simon Guggenheim, stands out among the year's acquisitions which included Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr.'s gift of four whole collections, principally of American art."

Stephen C. Clark, Chairman of the Board of the Museum, sums up in general terms the work of the Museum for the year. In the foreword to the report he writes in part:

"The year covered by this report has been a period of remarkable growth and achievement. Through the additional facilities provided by the new building the Museum has been able to extend the range of its influence and increase the value of its service to the public. It has become a national institution which occupies an important place in the cultural life of the country.

"Some of our supporters may wonder how the Museum is able to expand its activities at a time when it is increasingly difficult to balance the annual budget. The explanation lies in the fact that foundations and individuals have contributed for specific cultural and educational objectives large sums of money which are not available for general uses. Indeed, the Museum is constantly confronted with the anomaly of possessing funds for growth and expansion while lacking the means properly to take care of its ordinary running expenses.

"Our gratitude is due to all those friends and supporters who have given time or labor or money to further the objectives for which the Museum was founded. It is our hope that the record contained in these pages will justify their faith and inspire them to continue their help in the future."