

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART APPOINTS JAMES T. SOBY
DIRECTOR OF ITS ARMED SERVICES PROGRAM**

John E. Abbott, Executive Vice-President of the Museum of Modern Art, announces the appointment of James T. Soby as Director of its Armed Services Program. For more than a month Mr. Soby has been making a survey and consulting with Army and Navy morale officers as to ways in which the Museum could most helpfully put its facilities at the service of the men in our armed forces. Mr. Soby, well known as a collector and a writer on modern art, will be associated with the Museum for the duration of the war. He will work with and through the various departments of the Museum.

It was a soldier from one of the camps near New York who supplied the most direct and surprising information as to what the camps would like in the way of cultural entertainment. This soldier dropped in at the Museum one day last week to ask if there was any way that his camp could get art books in its library. He reported that the men were tiring of Western and crime stories. He said that there was only one art book in the library of his camp and that this book had been looked at with great interest by the men, some of whom had been to exhibitions at the Museum.

Upon investigation Mr. Soby found the report not in the least exaggerated. There seemed to be not only a desire but a need for art books as having more lasting interest and being a greater stimulant to conversation than fiction or picture magazines. The Museum has therefore decided to offer the libraries and recreation rooms of Second Corps Area camps many of its own art publications; it will also supply the camps with color reproductions to dissipate some of the drabness of the walls in recreation or barrack "day" rooms.

In addition the Museum is starting a campaign to persuade civilians to give art books for use in Army camp libraries in the Area. It will act as a depot for the books contributed and will see that they are turned over to the camp libraries which want and need them most. The Museum is also circularizing its entire membership for

contributions of art books for this purpose. It should be definitely understood, however, that it is only art books that are wanted. No magazines or periodicals of any kind will be accepted.

Another project begun by Mr. Soby a week ago is the assembling of an exhibition of photographs by 59 leading American professional photographers to send to Army camps in the Second Corps Area. Distribution of the exhibition will be handled by the Photograph Exhibit Committee of the Citizens Committee for the Army and Navy, and may later be extended to camps outside the Second Corps Area.

Beaumont Newhall, Curator of the Museum's Department of Photography, supplied Mr. Soby with the list of photographers from whom he requested a contribution of one print each. The response has already been exceedingly generous. About one-third of the photographers have already replied, in most cases offering to give not only one print but several.

Another activity which has just been initiated is a survey the Museum is making under the direction of Colonel Edward Steichen, Consultant to the Office of Emergency Management. The Museum's Department of Photography is mailing questionnaires to the 8,000 Camera Clubs in the United States, requesting information as to the number of photographers, mainly amateur, available for part-time volunteer service to State or Federal agencies. The survey will cover roughly 80,000 photographers. Detailed files on individual ability and experience will be set up by the Camera Clubs and a summary of this data will be kept in the Museum.

Mr. Monroe Wheeler, Director of Exhibitions and Publications, announces that on Wednesday, February 4, the Museum will open to the public an exhibition of U. S. Army Illustrators. The exhibition will consist of watercolors, drawings and photographs made by the soldiers themselves at **Fort Custer**, Michigan. It is hoped that the exhibition will be only the first of a series showing the work of artist-soldiers.