

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

11 WEST 53 STREET, NEW YORK 19, N. Y.

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NEW ACQUISITIONS EXHIBITION, November 29, 1955 - February 19, 1956

Checklist with notes by Alfred H. Barr, Jr.

Note: Unless enclosed in parentheses, dates appear on the works themselves.

32.55 APPEL, Karel. Dutch, born 1921.

Child with Birds. 1950. Oil on canvas, 39 1/2 x 39 3/4".
Purchase Fund.

Painted in Holland by the young Dutch painter who has since moved to Paris.

189.55 BAZIOTES, William. American, born 1912.

Pompeii. 1955. Oil on canvas, 60 x 48".
Mrs. Louise Smith Fund.

About Pompeii Baziotes writes: "In the last year or two I found myself being drawn to the Roman civilization. This civilization with its decadence, satiety, subtlety and languor interested me. And I kept looking and returning to Roman wall paintings with their veiled melancholy and their elegant plasticity.

"I admired the way the Romans used their geology in their art -- the sense of mineral, clay, rock, marble and stone. The entire background and the upper part of the picture symbolize all this to me.

"The large gray spiked form rising from the bottom of the picture is to me the symbol of death and ruin.

"And finally the black cloud form is the symbol of fire, lava, and destruction."

328.55 BECKMANN, Max. German, 1884-1950. Worked in Amsterdam 1936-47; in U. S. A. 1947-50.

The Descent from the Cross. 1917. Oil on canvas, 59 1/2 x 50 3/4".
Curt Valentin Bequest.

During his early career Beckmann had a brilliant success as the bright young star of the Berlin Secession. In 1914 he enlisted in the German army hospital corps, but fell seriously ill in 1915. Perhaps as the result of his war experiences, perhaps because he saw so much medieval art in Frankfurt where he had been hospitalized, his style changed from the rather heavy-handed naturalism of his prewar painting to an angular expressionism. The Descent from the Cross of 1917 is one of the two most important early paintings in his new style which is obviously influenced by Gothic woodcuts and sculpture.

2.55.1-3 BONNARD, Pierre. French, 1867-1947.

Three panels from a screen. (1895-1896.) Oil on brown twill lined with canvas, each panel about 65 3/4 x 20".
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Allan D. Emil.

Bonnard painted a number of screens during the mid-nineties. This one probably had a fourth panel, now lost.

55 BORDUAS, Paul-Émile. Canadian, born 1905.

La Guignolée. 1954. Watercolor, 22 x 30 1/2".
Purchase Fund.

The Guignolée is a French Canadian custom for Christmas and New Year's Eves when costumed representatives of charitable organizations make a gay house-to-house canvass in sleighs, collecting refreshments for themselves and gifts for the poor. Borduas is generally considered the leading Canadian abstract painter. Until recently he was working in Montreal.

3.51 BURLE MARX, Roberto. Brazilian, born 1909.

Detail Number 5 of Plan for IVth Centennial Gardens, Ibirapuera Park, Sao Paulo. 1953. Gouache on paper, 43 x 52 1/8".
Inter-American Fund. Architecture Collection.

This abstract painting is actually a very elaborately studied design for a section of the gardens planned by Burle Marx for the São Paulo Quadricentennial, celebrated in 1953. The colors represent the vari-colored surfaces of paths, pools with mosaic patterns, grass areas and flower beds with twenty-seven kinds of flowers. Photographs of Burle Marx gardens are to be seen in the adjacent exhibition of Latin American Architecture Since 1945.

474.53 CORNELL, Joseph. American, born 1903.

Taglioni's Jewel Casket. 1940. Wooden box containing glass ice cubes, etc., 11 7/8 x 8 1/4 x 4 3/4" high.
Gift of James Thrall Soby.

Legend inserted by the artist inside the lid of the box:
"On a moonlight night in the winter of 1835 the carriage of Marie TAGLIONI was halted by a Russian highwayman, and that enchanting creature commanded to dance for the audience of one upon a panther's skin spread over the snow beneath the stars. From this actuality arose the legend that to keep alive the memory of this adventure so precious to her, Taglioni formed the habit of placing a piece of artificial ice in her jewel casket or dressing table where, melting among the sparkling stones, there was evoked a hint of the atmosphere of the starlit heavens over the ice-covered landscape."

5.55 CREMONINI, Leonardo. Italian, born 1925.

Enamored Tomcat (Il gatto innamorato). 1952. Oil on canvas, 23 1/8 x 17 3/4".
Purchase Fund.

Cremonini was born in Bologna and studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Milan.

191.55 DELAUNAY-TERK, Sonia. French, born Russia 1885.

Portuguese Market. 1915. Oil and wax on canvas, 35 5/8 x 35 5/8".
Gift of Theodore R. Racoosin.

Though influenced by her husband, Robert Delaunay, Sonia Terk won an independent reputation as designer and painter. In 1914 Guillaume Apollinaire coupled her name with that of her husband as "the champions of Orphism", the name he had given to their brilliant, rainbow-colored abstractions. Much of the color and form of these abstractions remains in the Portuguese Market, painted two or three years later.

7.55 DIX, Otto. German, born 1891.

Café. 1922. Watercolor, 19 1/4 x 14 3/8".
Gift of Samuel A. Berger.

13.55 van DONGEN, Kees. Dutch, born 1877. Lives in Paris.

Café Singer. (1906.) Oil on canvas, 39 3/8 x 32".
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Peter A. Rübél.

Van Dongen came to Paris in 1898. In 1906, the year of the Café Singer, he was living along with Picasso at 14 rue Ravignan, the famous "bateau-lavoir." Van Dongen, however, followed Matisse, combining a mastery of fauve color with his own sense of burlesque, vigorous and rowdy at this time, but later diluted to worldly elegance. The subject of the Café Singer is said to have been a female impersonator.

DOVE, Arthur G. American, 1880-1946.

13.55 Portrait of Alfred Stieglitz. (1925.) Collage of camera lens, photographic plate, clock and watch springs and steel wool; on cardboard, 15 3/4 x 12".
Edward M. M. Warburg Fund.

In 1925-26 Dove did a series of collages, some of them metaphorical portraits. In this one Alfred Stieglitz' appearance, character and concern with photography are symbolized.

DUFY, Raoul. French, 1877-1953.

544.54 Portrait of the Poet François Berthault. (1925.) Oil on canvas, 32 x 25 5/8".
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Peter A. Rübél.

FISCHER, Ida. American, born Austria 1883. Died Jan. 22, 1956

9.55 Florida Bark. (1951.) Mosaic, plaster and cement with shells, corks, bark, etc., on masonite, 16 x 12".
Gift of the American Abstract Artists.

Ida Fischer came to the United States in 1892 and taught music and art in New York high schools for 32 years. She exhibited with the American Abstract Artists group and since the war has had several one-man shows in New York.

FRANCIS, Sam. American, born 1923. Works in Paris.

194.55 Painting. (1954.) Oil on canvas, 77 x 51 1/4".
Purchase Fund.

Francis was born in San Mateo, California. To Paris in 1950. One-man shows in Paris, Berne and Rome. Perhaps the best-known young American painter now working in Europe.

FREUD, Lucian. British, born 1922.

546.54 Portrait of a Woman. (1949.) Oil on canvas, 16 1/8 x 12".
Gift of Lincoln Kirstein.

Of the sitter for the Portrait of a Woman, Lincoln Kirstein, the donor, writes: "She lived in the house next to Freud, had been bombed out during the war, and had much personal tragedy. When I met her, she struck me as having affinities with Dylan Thomas's eclogues on the fire-raids in London."

547.54 Dead Monkey. (1950.) Pastel, 8 3/8 x 14 1/4".
Gift of Lincoln Kirstein.

On a visit to Paris, Freud was touched by the sight of a small dead monkey which he brought back to London where he made the pastel drawing exhibited.

Lucian Freud is the grandson of Sigmund Freud.

HAMBLETT, Theora. American, born 1895.

10.55

The Vision. (1954.) Oil on masonite, 17 7/8 x 48".
Purchase Fund.

The artist writes: "I dreamed about seeing the Golden Gate in the clouds during a spell of sickness years ago. I had the picture design and color scheme planned, too busy to stop and paint it, in the spring of 1954. I broke my hip. I promised my maker on the operation table, if he wanted me to paint them to spare my life, and I would."

Theora Hamblett was born in Paris, Mississippi. She studied art briefly in summer school at the University of Mississippi and later took five correspondence course lessons from the Famous Artists Painting School. She won a certificate of merit from the National Amateur Painters Competition.

LE FAUCONNIER, Henri Victor Gabriel. French, 1881-1946.

505.53

The Huntsman. (1912.) Oil on canvas, 62 1/4 x 46 3/8".
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Leo Lionni.

As early as 1910 Le Fauconnier won an international reputation as a cubist though subsequently his role in that movement was generally overlooked.

LÉGER, Fernand. French, 1881-1955. Worked in New York 1940-46.

333.55

The Divers II (Les Plongeurs). (1941-42.) Oil on canvas, 71 6" x 68".
Mrs. Simon Guggenheim Fund.

The series of compositions called Divers (Plongeurs) occupied Léger during the earlier part of his wartime sojourn in New York. The Museum's picture is perhaps the culminating work of the first series in which the divers' bodies are modelled in light and dark. (An earlier, wider composition, Divers on a Yellow Background, is in the Art Institute of Chicago.)

334.55

The Three Musicians. 1944. Oil on canvas, 68 x 57".
Mrs. Simon Guggenheim Fund.

"The Three Musicians is perhaps something apart. It was based on a drawing of 1925 which I had always hoped to expand into an oil, but only found the opportunity after my arrival here in America. But even in this canvas, for all its static character, there is strength which is new. It would have been less tense and colder had it been done in France." (The artist, quoted in Katharine Kuh: Léger, Chicago, 1953.)

Léger intended to make this motif part of a much larger composition of circus characters.

17.55 MARINI, Marino. Italian, born 1901.

Curt Valentin. (1954.) Bronze, 9 1/8" high.
Gift of the artist.

This portrait was executed at Forte dei Marmi, Italy, only a few days before the death of the sitter who had been the sculptor's friend and dealer.

MATHIEU, Georges. French, born 1921.

198.55

Montjoie Saint Denis! 1954. Oil on canvas, 12' 3 5/8" x 35 1/2".
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Harold Kaye.

The title is a medieval French battle cry. The painter is interested in the military triumphs of the French Capetian monarchs. Also in 1954, he completed a very large composition of the Battle of Bouvines.

MATISSE, Henri. French, 1869-1954.

Seated Figure, Right Hand on Ground. (1908?) Bronze, 7 1/2" high.
Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Purchase Fund.

Tiari. (1930.) Bronze, 8" high.
A. Conger Goodyear Fund.

Tiari (Tiaré) is the name of a large flower which impressed Matisse on his visit to Tahiti in 1930. When he returned to Paris he modelled this sculpture of a flower, which is also a head, possibly under the influence of the Surrealists who at that time were preoccupied with the double image.

MONET, Claude. French, 1840-1926.

Water Lilies (Les Nymphéas). (c.1916-1923.) Oil on canvas, 78 1/2 x 18' 4 3/4"
Mrs. Simon Guggenheim Fund.

Monet was so much the butt of the reaction against Impressionism which began in the 1880s (and still continues) that critics overlooked the fact that he too reacted, though in a direction different from that of Cézanne, Renoir, Gauguin, van Gogh or Seurat. The series of Haystacks and then of Rouen Cathedral produced in the nineties are, it is true, studies of light painted at different hours of the day. Yet their color seems so unnatural, their forms so generalized and the paint so heavily loaded on the surface that their effect is more than superficially abstract. Indeed, Kandinsky, the founder of the abstract expressionist tradition, recalls that it was when he saw one of the Haystack series exhibited in Moscow in 1895 that he first asked himself the question: "Doesn't the painter have the right to go still further and abandon nature and the objective world?"

However, Monet, like Cézanne, Renoir and Seurat never abandoned nature entirely. Monet in fact usually painted with nature actually before his eyes. Nevertheless his late work might well be described as "abstract impressionist."

Monet's first water lily paintings date from the mid-nineties. In 1909 in Paris he held a show of 48 water lily canvases, which were much criticized by the new anti-Impressionist generation for their lack of structure. Monet was sensitive to the criticism but little influenced by it. By 1914 he was well along in his plans to paint a big series of decorations inspired by the lily pond in his garden at Giverny. Work on an immense new studio was scheduled to start on August 1, 1914, and fifty canvases 7 x 18 feet in size were ordered. By 1916, in the midst of the war, the studio was finished and within four or five years the series was largely completed in spite of Monet's 80 years and increasing blindness.

In 1918, on the day of the Armistice, Monet had written his close friend, Georges Clemenceau, the great war Premier of France, offering a pair of the huge panels to France in honor of the victory. In 1920, on the first day he could free himself from his official duties, Clemenceau came out to Giverny. So overwhelmed was he by the Nymphéas series that he persuaded Monet to give a large number of the panels to the French nation. Monet was reluctant, feeling that such a gesture would seem immodest. Furthermore, he had lost confidence in his own late work and even threatened to burn it. But Clemenceau was insistent and the deed was signed.

A few years after Monet's death in 1926 the Nymphéas murals were installed under Clemenceau's supervision in two great oval rooms at the rear of the Orangerie Museum. There, curiously, for over a quarter of a century they have remained hidden from all but the most determined visitors.

In the Museum's panel the pool is seen without an horizon though the sky and clouds are reflected and so is the shrubbery at left and right. This ambiguous, abruptly rising perspective together with the scale and spontaneity of the brush stroke combine to focus attention on the exciting surface of the canvas.

This sense of spontaneity and vitality of surface together with a remoteness from the Cézanne-cubist aesthetic of calculated structure have gone far to revive Monet's reputation and to win him the increasing admiration of the younger abstract painters who are generally called "abstract expressionists."

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Of the water lily murals, the Museum's canvas is one of the very few which are independent compositions. The others are combined in two or three or four panels. Other panels from the series are in the collections of Walter P. Chrysler, Jr., New York, and the Zürich Museum.

MOORE, Henry. British, born 1898.

18.54 Study for Sculpture on Time-Life Building, London. (1952-53.) Bronze, 15" high x 38 7/8" long x 2 7/8" deep.
Gift of Time, Inc.

The full-size screen (10 feet high x 26 1/2 feet wide) was carved in Portland stone and set as the crowning motif of a wing of the Time-Life Building just off Bond Street in London. The pierced screen faces the street on one side and on the other a terrace of the building.

MÜLLER, Otto. German, 1874-1930.

19.55 Bathers. (Before 1920.) Oil on burlap, 27 5/8 x 35 3/4".
Gift of Samuel A. Berger.

Otto Müller joined the Dresden Brücke group in 1910. Quiet, idyllic compositions of bathers are characteristic of his early work which was less violently expressionist than that of Kirchner or Schmidt-Rottluff.

NEGRET, Edgar. Colombian, born 1920. Works in France.

551.54 Sign for an Aquarium (model). Painted iron, 13 1/2" long.
Inter-American Fund.

NOGUCHI, Isamu. American, born 1904.

1.55.a-k Even the Centipede. (1952.) Kasama ware in eleven pieces, each about 15 to 18" wide, attached to a wooden pole 12 to 14" high.
A. Conger Goodyear Fund.

Noguchi spent much time studying the ceramic arts of Japan. Kasama is a very hard, durable ware ordinarily used for kitchen utensils.

22.55 Big Boy. 1952. Karatsu ware, 7 3/8" high.
A. Conger Goodyear Fund.

NOLAN, Sidney. Australian, born 1917.

340.55 After Glenrowan Siege (Ned Kelly Series). 1955. Oil on masonite, 48 x 36".
Purchase Fund.

Badman or "Robin Hood," Ned Kelly, the bushranger, was perhaps his country's only folk hero. On the night of June 28, 1880, Kelly, who might have escaped to safety, attempted to fight his way through the police lines to rejoin his band of three outlaws besieged in the small country hotel at Glenrowan. At first the police bullets ricocheted off the heavy iron helmet and body armor which he had had forged from ploughshares. Finally he was brought down by four shots in the legs and a few months later, at the age of 26, was hanged in Melbourne Jail after a dramatic trial. One of his men was killed early in the siege, the other two committed suicide when the police set fire to the hotel. Nolan's picture is a composite of the charred beams and cheap wallpaper of the hotel and, rising like an apparition, Kelly in his square helmet, flames reflected in his eyes.

Nolan was born in Melbourne and heard stories of the Kelly Gang from his grandfather who had taken a reluctant part as a police officer in the Siege of Glenrowan. Nolan now lives in London.

NOLDE, Emil. German, born 1867.

34.55 Christ among the Children. (1910.) Oil on canvas, 34 1/8 x 41 7/8".
Gift of Dr. W. R. Valentiner.

Nolde's great early series of paintings on the life of Christ was begun in 1909 and completed in 1910, the date of Christ among the Children.

21.55 Islander. (Early 1920s.) Watercolor, 18 1/2 x 13 3/4".
Mrs. Gertrud A. Mellon Fund.

In 1914 Nolde made a trip to the South Seas which inspired many of his paintings in the succeeding years.

OBREGÓN, Alejandro. Colombian, born Spain 1921.

22.55 Souvenir of Venice. (1954.) Oil on canvas, 51 1/4 x 38 1/8".
Inter-American Fund.

Obregón studied in Spain and later in Boston under Karl Zerbe. During the forties he was Director of the School of Fine Arts in Bogota. After a few years in France, he has returned to Colombia.

PAALLEN, Wolfgang. Born in Austria 1905. Lives in Mexico.

23.55 Fumage. (1944-45?) Oil and candle soot on paper, 18 3/4 x 10 1/4" (irregular)
Gift of Samuel A. Berger.

Paalen, a member of the Paris Surrealist group during the 1930s, invented the technique of "fumage" which consisted in developing the suggestive image formed by holding a piece of paper over a smoking candle. (Leonardo's injunction to his students to stimulate their imaginations by looking at an old weather-stained wall, or the ink blots used in the psychological test developed by Rorschach are comparable.)

PICASSO, Pablo. Spanish, born 1881. Lives in France.

342.55 Bather (La cabine de bain). 1928. Oil on canvas, 8 1/2 x 6 1/8".
Purchase Fund.

In 1928 Picasso painted a series of bathers on the beach at Dinard. In the Museum's picture the bather holds a towel over her arm while she unlocks the door to her cabin with a key.

552.54 PUTNAM, Wallace. American, born 1899.

Sheep on a Cliff. (1952.) Oil on masonite, 16 1/8 x 30 3/8".
Given anonymously.

de RIVERA, José. American, born 1904.

24.55 Number 8. (1954.) Stainless steel forged rod, 9 3/8" high.
Gift of Mrs. Heinz Schultz in memory of her husband.

Aside from its aesthetic value, de Rivera's sculpture is a feat of virtuosity.

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RIVERS, Larry. American, born 1923.

25.55 George Washington Crossing the Delaware. (1953.) Oil and pencil on canvas, 83 5/8 x 91 3 5/8".
Given anonymously.

26.55.4,.8 Two Studies for George Washington Crossing the Delaware. Pencil, 11 x 13 5/8".
Given anonymously. .4 2 .8

In an interview with James Thrall Soby published in the Saturday Review of Literature, September 3, 1955, Rivers said about his George Washington Crossing the Delaware: "To begin with, it took me a long time to make up my mind to do it. For a while I used to mention the project half-jokingly, and friends warned me it was a disastrous idea. But I kept wanting to make a picture out of a national myth, to accept the 'impossible' and the 'corny' as a challenge instead of running away. I had read Tolstoi's War and Peace and this became a great inspiration, just as Proust's books had been in a different way some time before. I guess I wanted to paint something in the tradition of the Salon picture, which modern artists hold in contempt. Besides, there was plenty in Washington Crossing the Delaware to dazzle me -- horses, water, soldiers, and so on."

In describing the technique of the picture he wrote: "Paint brush, clean rag and sharp pencil. I seem to rub away most of the painting -- what you see are the stubborn remains."

In preparing to paint, Rivers studied in the library at Southampton.

RYAN, Anne. American, 1889-1954.

159.55 Collage No. 269. (1949.) 4 1/2 x 4" (irregular).
Given anonymously.

157.55 Collage. (c. 1952.) 6 1/2 x 5".
Given anonymously.

158.55 Collage. (c. 1953.) 7 x 5".
Given anonymously.

SCHMIDT-ROTTLUFF, Karl. German, born 1884.

160.55 Pharisees. 1912. Oil on canvas, 29 7/8 x 40 1/2".
Mrs. Gertrud A. Mellon Fund.

Schmidt-Rottluff, as is true of the other members of the Brücke, Kirchner and Heckel, in the years around 1912 produced works of exceptional quality. The Pharisees owes something to Nolde in subject matter but is far more brilliant in color and compact in composition.

SICKERT, Walter Richard. British, 1860-1942.

344.55 Sir Thomas Beecham Conducting. (c.1935.) Oil on canvas, 38 3/4 x 41".
A. Conger Goodyear Fund.

Though little known in this country, Sickert is generally considered the leading British painter of his generation. At first an admirer of Whistler, he was later influenced by Degas. Paintings such as the Sir Thomas Beecham Conducting done during the last decades of his life show an original and personal expressionist style.

SOUTINE, Chaim. French, born Lithuania, 1894; died 1943.

557.54 The Old Mill. (c.1922.) Oil on canvas, 26 1/8 x 32 3/8".
Vladimir Horowitz and Bernard Davis Funds.

The Old Mill was painted near Cannes on the French Riviera.

SUTHERLAND, Graham. British, born 1903.

Thorn Heads. 1946. Oil on canvas, 48 x 36".
Acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest.

"About my thorn pictures; I can only give a clue, since the process of becoming involved with one's subject is always mysterious and not easy to explain..."

"I had been thinking of the Crucifixion (as you know I hope to attempt this subject for St. Matthew, Northampton) my mind became pre-occupied with the idea of thorns (the crown of thorns) and wounds made by thorns.

"Then on going into the country I began to notice thorn trees and bushes. Especially against the sky...all kinds of ideas for pictures started to come into my mind...I had several ideas for 'Thorn Heads.' A sort of 'pricking' and demarcation of a hollow headshaped space enclosed by the points..." (Letter from the painter to Curt Valentin, 1/24/46.)

TAMAYO, Rufino. Mexican, born 1899.

Girl Attacked by a Strange Bird. 1947. Oil on canvas, 70 x 50 1/8".
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Zadok.

This important canvas by Tamayo is the seventh painting presented to the Museum Collection from the exhibition "Paintings from Private Collections" held at the Museum during the past summer.

THORNTON, Leslie T. British, born 1925.

Men Fishing from a Pier. (1955.) Iron wire, 21 1/2" long x 14" wide x 23 1/4" high.
Mrs. Louise Smith Fund.

Thornton is perhaps the best-known sculptor of his youthful generation in England.

VANTONGERLOO, Georges. Belgian, born 1886. Lives in Paris.

Construction of Volume Relations. (1921.) Mahogany, 16 1/8" high.
Gift of Mrs. Silvia Neumann.

Vantongerloo was the sculptor of the Dutch "Stijl" group organized in Leyden in 1916. His sculpture is related to the paintings of Mondrian and van Doesburg and the architecture of Rietveld with whom he worked in originating the principles of Stijl design.

WEINBERG, Elbert. American, born 1928.

Ritual Figure. (1953.) Beechwood, 60 1/4" high.
A. Conger Goodyear Fund.

The sculptor was born into an orthodox family in Hartford and spent much of his childhood in the synagogue. He studied sculpture in Hartford, Providence, Rome and at Yale University. Of the Ritual Figure, the sculptor writes: "The subject matter refers to two episodes: in my own experience, that of the blowing of the ram's horn or shofar on the Jewish high holidays. It is reminiscent of the horns blown at the Battle of Jericho. However as in other pieces I am involved with, I prefer to think of it in its general symbolic role, a call to dedication."

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