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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
11 WEST 53RD STREET, NEW YORK

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NOTE

Indian guests of honor at the private opening Tuesday evening will be Mr. Ambrose Roan Horse, a Navaho silversmith from Cornfields, Arizona; Mr. Fred Kabotie, a painter from the Hopi Villages, Second Mesa, Arizona; Miss Nellie Buffalo Chief of Rosebud, South Dakota and Miss Elsie Bonser of Pine Ridge, South Dakota, both Sioux artists who do porcupine quill work and fine beadwork.

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART REBUILDS THREE ENTIRE FLOORS TO INSTALL
INDIAN EXHIBITION WITH UNDERGROUND CEREMONIAL CHAMBERS,
TOTEM POLES, SIXTY-FOOT MURAL AND OTHER UNUSUAL FEATURES

The staccato of hammers, the shrill buzz of electric saws, the slap-slap of a dozen paint brushes and the noise and movement of numerous workers, technical helpers, curators and experts create a surface confusion under which highly efficient last-minute preparations are going forward on the three gallery floors of the Museum of Modern Art in preparation for the opening of its huge exhibition of Indian Art of the United States Wednesday morning, January 22. The work must be finished Tuesday afternoon so that the Museum's members and guests can preview the exhibition Tuesday night, which they are expected to do several thousand strong.

All the interior walls of the Museum's gallery floors have been removed and entirely new arrangements of walls and floor spaces have been set up under the direction of Rene d'Harnoncourt, General Manager of the Indian Arts and Crafts Board of the United States Department of the Interior, who has organized and is installing the exhibition in collaboration with Frederic H. Douglas, Curator of Indian Art of the Denver Art Museum, and Henry Klumb, architect. Dramatic lighting effects, brilliantly colored backgrounds and ingenious methods of display are being used to present the thousand or more items of the exhibition, which will remain on view through

Sunday, April 27.

Two of the most difficult tasks were accomplished ~~yesterday~~
^{and Tuesday, Jan 21} afternoon (Sunday, January 19) when the 12x60 foot canvas mural was hung on the ~~second~~^{third} floor. So wide that no single wall in the Museum was large enough, it was hung in a curve from wall to wall. Near it another mural, 12x22 feet, was also hung. The sixty-foot mural is a full-size replica of animal and figure drawings or pictographs chiselled and painted thousands of years ago by the ancient Basketmakers on the side of a cliff in Barrier Canyon, Utah. But an even more difficult task was to set in place in front of the Museum the thirty-foot totem pole carved and painted in the likeness of a raven, a killer-whale, a devil fish, a sea lion and a shark. This pole, which can easily be seen from Fifth Avenue, will serve as a sign for the exhibition. Other totem poles rise like a surrealist forest inside the Museum in heights of six to thirteen and a half feet.

On the third floor of the Museum is a series of underground ceremonial chambers, or kivas, lighted only by a hole in the top of each chamber as were their prototypes hundreds of years ago in the Southwest. The original ceremonial chambers were discovered in the Awatovi ruins in northeastern Arizona, the murals on their walls painted several centuries ago on successive layers of plaster. The chambers were excavated in 1939 and layer after layer of the murals painstakingly peeled from the walls by an expedition from the Peabody Museum of Harvard University. Under the direction of Fred Kabotie, Hopi Indian artist, the murals have been reproduced for the exhibition by descendants of the prehistoric Hopis who painted the original walls of the kivas. The reproductions have been painted on layers of adobe backed by thin sheets of wood which form the walls of the series of ceremonial chambers, or kivas, in the Museum.

As a graphic background to the life and culture of the Indians--prehistoric, traditional and contemporary--whose art will be shown in the exhibition, the Indian Arts and Crafts Board commissioned the New York City WPA Art Project to execute two maps of America north of Mexico indicating the prehistoric Indian culture areas and the geographic units of the historic period.

These maps, of which the largest is 12x25 feet, will be placed at the entrance to the second and third floors of the Museum to serve as background material for visitors who wish to study the distribution of the various Indian cultures.

The map at the entrance to the second floor indicates the various western historic cultures--the "Living Traditions." These cultures have each been given names suggesting the circumstances which have conditioned them. Indications are given of the general sections of North America inhabited by the Woodsmen of the North, the Apache Mountain People, the Navaho Shepherds, Pueblo Farmers and Desert Dwellers of the Southwest, the Seed Gatherers of the Far West, the Woodsmen of the East, the Hunters of the Plains, the Fishermen of the Northwest Coast and the Eskimo Hunters of the Arctic.

At the third floor entrance is a map showing areas where lived the Engravers of the Arctic, the Stone Carvers of the Northwest Coast and Far West, the Painters of the Southwest and the Sculptors of the East, all artists of the prehistoric period. Research made it possible to assemble a cross section of the artistic achievement of the American Indian in prehistoric times. Stone carvers are shown to have inhabited the northwest coast of Canada and the southwest coast of California; engravers were found in Alaska. The sculptors of prehistoric times predominated in the Ohio and Mississippi river valleys as indicated by findings from Indian mounds and burial places. In the Southwest painting of many kinds was the most developed art.