

The Museum of Modern Art

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May, 1969

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

The International Council of The Museum of Modern Art (New York), founded in 1953, is a non-profit membership organization of 150 art patrons and community leaders from various parts of the United States, and other countries abroad. It sponsors the Museum's international exhibitions exchange program, the largest in the United States. In addition it has furnished United States embassies throughout the world with loan collections of 20th-century art and recently has initiated a program of sending art books and study materials to selected libraries and universities abroad. The Council is supported by the dues and contributions of its members, many of whom are trustees of other museums, and by an endowment from The Museum of Modern Art. Mrs. Donald B. Straus is President of the Council and Walter C. Dowling, Chairman.

The Museum of Modern Art, international in scope since its inception in 1929, began to circulate exhibitions overseas in 1938. With the establishment of the International Council the international program was assured continuity and long-range planning became feasible. In the past 16 years the Council has sponsored more than 100 exhibitions in 74 countries and has circulated in the United States 11 exhibitions from other countries. Devoted to all the visual arts, the exhibition exchange program has included such shows as Two Decades of American Painting, sent to Japan, India, and Australia; Contemporary Painters and Sculptors as Printmakers which toured 13 countries in Latin America; Architecture Without Architects shown in Australia, New Zealand, and Europe; 25 Contemporary American Artists as Printmakers sent to seven African countries; and The Family of Man, the famous photography exhibition shown throughout the world. The Art of the Real which opened at the Tate Gallery on April 21 and the Helen Frankenthaler exhibition which opens May 6 at the Whitechapel Gallery are both traveling under the Council's auspices.

Among the major one-man shows previously shown in London under the sponsorship of the International Council of The Museum of Modern Art are Jackson Pollock, David Smith, Robert Motherwell, Mark Rothko, Franz Kline, and most recently Willem de Kooning, shown

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at the Tate this winter. Several shows sponsored by the International Council have been presented under the auspices of the British Art Council, including Rauschenberg's Illustrations for Dante's "Inferno" and an exhibition of work by American printmakers. In 1963 the London County Council invited The Museum of Modern Art and the International Council to prepare the United States representation for the Sculpture in the Open Air show in Battersea Park. Exhibitions shown in England under the auspices of the Council devoted to architecture have included Built in USA: Postwar Architecture and Visionary Architecture; photographic exhibitions include The Family of Man show, circulated by the USIA; and Steichen the Photographer and The Artist in His Studio, photographs by Alexander Liberman, both circulated under the auspices of the Council.

One of the most notable exhibitions was The New American Painting, which concluded a European tour with a showing at the Tate Gallery in London in 1959. For many of the artists it was their first full representation outside the United States. Included was work by Baziotes, Brooks, Francis, Gorky, Gottlieb, Guston, Hartigan, Kline, de Kooning, Motherwell, Newman, Pollock, Rothko, Stamos, Still, Tomlin and Tworckov.

Exhibitions of work by Gorky, Feininger and Boccioni have also toured in England under the Council's auspices, as have several group shows.

The creation of the International Council's Inter-American Cultural Program in 1962, now under the chairmanship of William S. Paley, has given special emphasis to Latin America. This program, drawing upon the support of art patrons both in North and South America, has presented 12 touring exhibitions in Latin America, including Cézanne to Miró, a major exhibition of master paintings shown in Argentina, Chile, and Venezuela last year.

The Council holds two meetings each year; a fall meeting in New York and a spring meeting elsewhere in the United States or abroad. The Council has visited various parts of the United States, including Washington, D.C., where members were received by President Kennedy at the White House, Canada and three Latin American countries - Peru, Chile and Argentina.

Since 1960, through its Art in Embassies program, the Council has sent 37 collections of contemporary art to 33 United States embassy residences in Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Nine collections are presently installed in embassies in Abidjan, Lagos, (more)

Bucharest, Prague, Brussels, Mexico City, Budapest, Paris and Santiago. A collection for the United States Embassy in Russia is now being prepared.

The Council's Library Overseas Program was started in 1966 to establish and strengthen art sections of libraries abroad. Directed by Bernard Karpel, the Museum's Librarian, the first stage of this program is a five-year pilot project concentrated in Asia, where 34 libraries are receiving extensive, individual selections of study materials and art books. The next stage, now being organized, is to send similar material to selected libraries in Latin America.

For many years the Council sponsored the United States representation at the Venice Biennale after The Museum of Modern Art purchased the privately owned Pavilion. The Council has also sponsored the United States representation at international shows in São Paulo, Germany, Paris, Japan and India.

Further information available from Elizabeth Shaw, Director, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York through April 30, and at the Ritz Hotel in London from May 1 through May 9.