A New Cultural Center in Paris:

LE CENTRE NATIONAL D'ART
ET DE CULTURE
GEORGES POMPIDOU

Plateau Beaubourg
75004 Paris
THE GEORGES POMPIDOU NATIONAL CENTER OF ART AND CULTURE

The creation of the Georges Pompidou Center is a unique enterprise in Europe. For the first time, cultural activities hitherto presented separately will be reunited under one roof and will offer the visitor a coherent panorama of contemporary creative activity. New developments in the arts, literature, music, cinema, industrial design, architecture and urbanism will be seen in an international perspective.

The realisation of this project was possible only because a single vision animated its instigators. In 1969, Georges Pompidou, then President of France, decided to create a cultural center on the Plateau Beaubourg in Paris, east of the Boulevard Sebastopol (the old central market-place, "les Halles", being on the West). Its objectives were outlined in the law concerning its creation: "The Georges Pompidou Center of Art and Culture encourages the creation of works of art and of the spirit; it contributes to the enrichment of the cultural heritage of the Nation, to the information and the education of the public, to the spread of artistic creation and to social communication. It offers advice on request, particularly in the architectural realm, to local communities, as well as to any interested public or private organizations associated with it, of a cultural ensemble devoted to all forms of artistic endeavor, especially in the plastic arts, acoustical and musical research, industrial design, the art of the cinema as well as to public reading".

An international architectural competition was set up for the design of this center and in July, 1971, an international jury studied 681 projects submitted by architects from forty-nine different countries. The prize-winning design was conceived by two architects: Renzo Piano, an Italian, and Richard Rogers, an Englishman, with help from Ove Arup and Partners.
The building covers only one half of the two-hectare Beaubourg Plateau. Its exposed steel structure, glass walls, terraces and outside elevators and escalators give an impression of airy strength and vitality. A large open space with a gentle slope stretches in front of the building and will be used for open air events. Several nearby streets are reserved for pedestrians who may enjoy the greenery of neighboring squares, as well as the large open space in front of the center.

The Public Information Library or P.P.I. will be reserved for on-the-spot reference work and reading. It will offer books, magazines, newspapers and audio-visual material concerning every area of knowledge and will be carefully kept up to date. For easier research, date processing equipment incorporating new techniques, unique in France, will be made available to readers. In a News Room off the library the visitor will be able to consult a wide range of books, periodicals, newspapers and illustrated materials from all over the world. He will be able to hear the latest recordings and use the audio-visual facilities. A part of this room will be set aside for the use of young children.

The Industrial Design Center of C.C.I. will cover every aspect of design and the evolution of our life-style: urbanism, architecture, industrial design and visual communications. Different facilities and reference material will be made available to the general public as well as to specialists. There will be exhibitions, a gallery of industrial design, reference materials for creators and consumers, publications, and a consulting bureau for institutions and communities.
The Acoustic/Music Research and Coordination Institute or I.R.C.A.M. will bring together musicians and scientists in a new interdisciplinary area. Data processing, electro-acoustics, instrumental and vocal research will be brought together for the first time. The researcher, composer, instrumentalist, acoustician and scientist will cooperate in theoretical and practical research. This research should lead to a better understanding of musical phenomena and a greater freedom in musical composition.

The National Museum of Modern Art, transferred from the Avenue President Wilson, will assemble and present works... paintings, sculptures, prints and drawings, photographs and art films... from the beginning of the twentieth century to now. The exhibition areas will be complemented by rooms storing additional art works which may be made directly accessible to the public, as well as by lecture rooms, slide displays, rest areas and information posts. The museum's reference library will contain all types of information and documents related to the history of twentieth century art and to the development of international contemporary art. It will act as an information center and, at the request of the reader, will provide him with information on artists, artistic events, bibliographic information and particulars related to a special topic. The reference section can also serve to put the artist or designer in touch with the people or organizations likely to be interested in his work: architects, exhibition organizers, etc.

These four departments and the film library will work together to produce exhibitions and programs which will offer their French and foreign visitors as comprehensive a survey of contemporary international creative activity as is possible.
SOME FACTS AND FIGURES

The Center; a few dates:

1969 - Président Georges Pompidou decides to create a polyvalent cultural center and public reading room. The State buys the Plateau Beaubourg from the City of Paris.

1970 - Announcement of an international competition for the conception of the building.

1971 - Among 681 propositions, the project of Piano and Rogers is chosen by an international jury.

1972 - The excavation is begun.

1973 - The substructure is begun.

1977 - Opening of the Center.

A few figures:

Total surface: 100,000 square meters
Usable surface: 70,000 square meters
Cost of construction: 900 million francs
Annual running expenses: 130 million francs
Number of employees: 215

The building will be open from ten in the morning until ten at night, seven days a week. The entrance to the permanent public collections will be free.
The museum, its space:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Square Meters</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Permanent collection</td>
<td>12,190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental gallery</td>
<td>1,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphic arts</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documentation</td>
<td>1,720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offices</td>
<td>640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>16,550</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, the museum may dispose of certain other spaces in the building for special exhibits and events:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Square Meters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Temporary exhibition space</td>
<td>3,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terraces</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
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</table>
THE MUSEUM AS A COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

by Pontus Hultén
During the past fifteen years we have seen a radical transformation of the function and structures of the museum that we inherited from the nineteenth century: a conservatory, a place of quiet contemplation where one might see and admire works of the past... paintings, sculptures or objects having lost their primitive function; individual, social or ritual... catalysters of collective memory which have become beautiful fossils of a bygone time. Basically, nothing had changed. The museum prolonged the life of objects and works, not always of the highest quality, which had been sanctified by bourgeois taste.

In the Sixties, one discovered that one could open the traditional museum to radically different works, which convey the aggressive values of that which is authentic, original and new; order group creations of great originality with implications which might be at the opposite extreme of classically admired and admitted art; play other music, investigate other methods of acting, show other films than those on the commercial circuit; in short, emphasize life and the event rather than worn-out habits. The museum became a different place.

This situation of creative liberty was quite brief. It became impossible after May, 1968. Generally accepted notions were suddenly out of date. Alive art broke away from the setting of luxury commerce for a whole generation whose hope was to resolve the problems of current living in a concrete and political manner. Other forms of communication began to create new relationships between art and life, life and artistic creation and distribution. One had to facilitate social communication. Information and art criticism had to situate the work of art and its implications in a new perspective. An anonymous public, curious, much larger, more varied, and in a way disoriented had replaced or bypassed the literate and curious traveller of the last century.

A different kind of museum had to adapt itself to this new public, with its different needs; a place which is totally open and where the collection
of art works is maintained and enriched but where it represents only a part of other activities which draw their inspiration from it. An art collection connects us to the past, is an historical witness, a collective memory where the experiences of the artist are preserved and where we can decipher a whole system of references, historical and social, as well as artistic.

Today, the museum finds itself on the border of several domains. It regroups numerous activities whose identities it must respect. The work of art is admired in itself, whether shown in the permanent collection or in a temporary thematic or historic exhibition, but it is situated by the information and analysis for which it is the point of departure or the support. We know that the partitioning of art, literature, science and music is a notion which life itself, as well as the practitioners of these disciplines, has gone far beyond. The museum has become a place where the encounter of artists and the public is natural, in contact with the most recent manifestations of contemporary creativity, where one is the closest to current creative sensibility and invention, and where the participation of each person is made possible.

Information, dialogues and debates must reactivate the work of art, make it enter the context of current life, no longer a passive cult-object. We would like to create what the Surrealists called "la critique de la vie". Of course, such a method is only valid if the system functions constantly and is founded upon a well-considered methodology. A true science of information is now beginning to develop in correlation with the new orientation of science and the social sciences: art history, communications, cybernetics, linguistics and semiology have restated the concepts of theory, history, space and time, and of the symbol in new terms. We are moving toward a society where art will play a great role. The museum must be opened to disciplines once excluded, and to the largest possible public, and this right away.
THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

New Activities and Possibilities
The National Museum of Modern Art will now dispose of much more space than in its old building and will possess the most modern equipment for showing, storing and protecting works of art.

The Collections Department groups and presents paintings, sculptures, drawings and prints, photographs and artist's films created from the beginning of the twentieth century on. This department is responsible for the care of the collection and, in addition, acquires works by purchase or donation. It oversees their conservation and their presentation within the museum and through loans to other French and foreign museums.

The members of this department also prepare exhibitions based on the collection, be they linear or thematic, as well as all publications concerning the collection or any part thereof.

Since 1975, the efforts of the Collections Department have been directed toward a development of the museum's resources: Those sectors of the collection which were already developed have been enriched by the addition of complementary works, i.e., Matisse, Pink and White Head, 1914; Violinist at the Window, 1916-17; Marcoussis, Souvenir, 1912; Magnelli, La Charrête, 1914.

At the same time, an effort has been made to round out the collection by filling lacunae. Through purchase, the museum has thus acquired works by Mondrian, de Chirico, Dali, Kiro, Sophie Tauber, Marcel Duchamp, Herbin, Fautrier, Magritte, Larionov, Dubuffet, Morandi, Arp, and other artists.
The collections have been still further enriched by assuming the role once filled by the Musée de Jeu de Paume of acquiring works of foreign origin. This activity will be pursued energetically and is currently well under way with the purchase of works by Cornell, André, Jacobsen, Mortensen, Beuys, Stenberg, d'Haese, etc.

The existing collection of prints, drawings, and photographs has been catalogued and will have its own exhibition space in order to meet its special requirements in matters of viewing and handling. Since 1975, the museum has bought works by Léger, Kandinsky, Pierre Roy, Sagnelli, Exter, Gontcharova, Camoin, Hélion, Bellmer, Tobey, Etienne Martin, Fautrier, Malévitch, Gleizes, Giacometti, Tanguy, Cromaire, Segottex, Soutine and Miro.

The Donations

Through donation, the museum has been fortunate to acquire some very important works: fifteen paintings and fifteen watercolors and gouaches by Kandinsky given by Mme Nina Kankinsky; thirty-five sculptures of Jacques Lipchitz, gift of Mme Yulla Lipchitz; forty works of Henri Michaux, an important Dubuffet from the D.C.C. Collection, Paris; fifteen paintings by Vasarely given by the artist; one hundred and sixty-three maquettes of Chauvin, fifteen works by Charchoune; some very important paintings by Jim Dine, Jasper Johns, Pauschenberg, Kelly, Pollock, Oldenburg, Fontana, etc...

The museum has also received as gifts works by Hosiasson, Tal Coat, Kankinsky, Zao Wou-Ki, Camoin, Sonia Delaunay, Luce Ferry, Hajdu, Morandi, Desnoyer, Fautrier, Vieira da Silva, Szenes, Ipopoudeguy, Hiro, and Adami.

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The Documentation

The Documentation Department collects, stores and makes available to the public various types of information relative to the history of art in our century as well as to contemporary developments in creative activity. As an organ of coordination and exchange it can provide information as to the nature and contents of other documentary systems public or private, French or foreign.

As an instrument of research, its collection consists of: a library containing books, periodicals, and exhibition catalogues; archives, personal papers, manuscripts and artist's files (questionnaires filled out by the artist himself, press clippings, various documents submitted by the artist or collected by our documentalists), as well as thematic files; collections of photographs in black and white; collections on microfilm; slides and ektachromes; interviews of artists; a film library with videotapes as well as conventional films. In addition, there are a certain number of specialized collections concerning Eastern European art since the beginning of the century, the collaboration of artists and architects, films made by artists, etc.

As an instrument of diffusion, the department organizes and transmits information about artists and events in the art world, as well as bibliographies and thematic studies.

Aside from the contribution made by the department in preparing exhibits and catalogues for the center, it prepares other publications and documentary presentations: a catalog-dictionary of its resources, an analytical classification of articles which appear in periodicals, historical studies, presentations of important material hitherto unpublished, reprints, audiovisual programs, etc.
As a means of stimulating artistic creation, through its files, this department can put artists in contact with those persons or organizations likely to be interested in their work.

**Exhibitions and Manifestations**

The Manifestations and Exhibitions Department is responsible for the organization of the various events presented by the National Museum of Modern Art. It also invites artists and specialists to conceive and carry out exhibitions. It coordinates these initiatives and tries to obtain a maximum of diversity in the types of presentation created by the museum. For example:

1) Retrospective monographies, thematic exhibitions or reflections based on an idea.

2) Evaluation of a period, a movement, or a tendency; consideration of the relationship between art movements and other types of expression; conferences and debates.

3) Exhibitions planned as a means of informing the public as to the relationship of artistic creation and other aspects of modern civilization: sciences and technology; literature and linguistics (in collaboration with the B.R.I.), or architecture and urbanism (in collaboration with the C.R.I.).

4) Permanent or temporary presentations of graphic art, films, photographs, and video tapes by artists, of which many will be partially produced by the center.

5) Periodical presentations of new acquisitions.

6) Traveling exhibits for the general or more specialized publics. A program of guided visits, lectures, and commented audiovisual presentations within the center and outside of it will complement the program of travelling exhibits and widen the museum's public.
THE FOUNDING MEMBERS
OF THE MUSEUM

Their functions and privileges
The Founding Members of the Georges Pompidou National Center for Art and Culture are part of an international organization destined to provide as broad a base as possible for the future activities of the center.

One becomes a Founding Member of the National Museum of Modern Art by making a contribution of a minimum of one million francs (about 200,000 dollars). This contribution is destined to purchase works of art necessary to round out the collection and may also take the form of a donation of a work of art of equal value, subject to the approval of the acquisitions committee and preferably chosen in collaboration with this committee.

The names of the Founding Members will be inscribed at the entrance of the center and they will be lifetime honorary members of the museum. As such they will have constant free access to the center and all of its activities as well as to the customary special advantages of museum membership: private openings, catalogs, special information, studio visits, trips and lectures.

The list of Founding Members should reflect the ambition to maintain a truly international orientation.
Among the first Founding Members are the following:

Madame Nina KANDINSKY
Madame Dominique De MESNIL et ses enfants
Monsieur et Madame Pierre SCHLUMBERGER
Collection D. B. C. PARIS
Madame Yulla LIPCHITZ
Madame Marcel DUCHAMP
Madame Dorothea TANNING
Monsieur Victor VASARELY