

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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THE ART OF ASSEMBLAGE by William C. Seitz. 176 pages, 146 plates (11 in color).
Published by the Museum of Modern Art, New York. Distributed by Doubleday & Co.,
Inc. \$6.50.

The controversial exhibition The Art of Assemblage now on view at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and scheduled for showings in other parts of the country, is thoroughly illustrated, documented and illuminated in a 176-page book of the same title by William C. Seitz published this week by the Museum and distributed by Doubleday & Co., Inc.

An "assemblage" (a more inclusive term than the familiar "collage") is a work of art made by fastening together natural or manufactured objects not originally intended as art materials. Cut or torn pieces of paper, clippings from newspapers, photographs, bits of cloth, fragments of wood, metal or other such materials, shells or stones or even objects such as knives and forks, chairs and tables, parts of dolls and mannequins and automobile fenders are among the materials used in the works illustrated and discussed in the book. The symbolic meanings of these materials can be as important as their realistic aspects.

"The Art of Assemblage" is the first historical survey of this movement which is unique to this century and has been increasingly practiced by young artists here and abroad since World War II. Mr. Seitz traces the beginnings of the movement from the first collage made by Picasso in 1912. He relates the "liberation of words" by Mallarme, Apollinaire, Marinetti and Gide to the "liberation of objects" by the great cubist masters, Picasso, Braque and Gris, by the Futurists, the Dadaists and the Surrealists.

He describes the "collage" environment of today's urban centers--"its random patchwork of slickness and deterioration, cold planning and liberating confusion, resplendent beauty and noxious squalor." He concludes with an essay on some of the philosophical implications of the recent wave of assemblage: "a dissatisfaction, ranging from impatience to nihilism, with the limitations traditionally imposed by the idea of art, the sequestered atmosphere and geometric enframement of the museum... the whirl of dealers, collectors and soaring prices."

The Art of Assemblage contains 146 plates, 11 in color, a complete catalog listing of works in the exhibition and a working bibliography prepared by Bernard Karpel, Librarian of the Museum of Modern Art.

Mr. Seitz, Associate Curator, Painting and Sculpture Exhibitions, is the author of "Monet: Seasons and Moments" and has written widely on 19th and 20th century art. To gather material for "The Art of Assemblage" exhibition and book he spent several months in Europe and traveled throughout this country. The exhibition, on view at the Museum of Modern Art through November 12, will also be shown in Dallas and San Francisco.

Review copies, photographs and additional information available from Elizabeth Shaw,
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