Exhibiting Art at the American National Exhibition in Moscow, 1959

Domestic Politics and Cultural Diplomacy

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In 1959 the United States Information Agency (USIA) coordinated the American National Exhibition that was sent to Moscow. Officially, the exhibition’s purpose was to implement the U.S.-USSR cultural exchange agreement signed by the United States and the Soviet Union in 1958. According to Harold C. McClellan, the general manager of the American National Exhibition, the exchange was meant to be a “major step toward building better relationships and improved understanding between the United States and the Soviet Union.” This statement, however, told only part of the story. The exhibition was also a tool of cultural diplomacy against the Soviet Communist regime. A few months after the exhibition, William Benton, a former assistant secretary of state, remarked that the U.S. State Department was in the propaganda business and not in the art business. The State Department will always be in the propaganda business and will never be in the art business. “Art” judged from the standpoint of the U.S. Government and its Congressional appropriations, applied to overseas activities, must always be judged from its impact as propaganda—and never from its impact as art.  

1. During the six weeks that the American National Exhibition was featured at Sokolniki Park in Moscow (25 July–4 September 1959), a similar exhibition was mounted by the Soviet Union at the Coliseum in New York City.
3. William Benton to Lloyd Goodrich, 10 November 1959, Lloyd Goodrich Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C. (hereinafter referred to as AAA/SL). Hans Tuch, a USIA foreign service officer in Moscow and embassy officer assigned as a liaison to the exhibition, recently concurred with McClellan, arguing that programs such as these were intended to “create mutual understanding” between the two countries. Communication from Hans Tuch to author, 12 March 1993.
According to Benton, the United States was selling its lifestyle and its philosophy of government to a people who lived under a totalitarian regime, intending to project an image of a free and peace-loving America in which citizens lived in comfort with all modern conveniences. Different components of the exhibition in Moscow included a model home (the kitchen of which was the site of the famous “kitchen debate” between Richard Nixon and Nikita Khrushchev), an American fashion show, a collection of American automobiles, and a state-of-the-art television studio built exclusively for the exhibition. But in the art section of the exhibition, the image of America was more ambiguous. Several works depicted the United States as a land with deprivation or as a place in which abstract art flourished. When this became known and when it was “discovered” that some of the artists represented in the show had “Communist affiliations,” a few right-wing publicists and legislators claimed that Communist sympathizers were undermining the reputation of the United States. They wanted the entire show recalled to the United States. Eventually the controversy, which attracted enormous media attention, threatened to undermine the propagandistic purpose of the exhibition (see Figures 1 and 2). In the end, however, USIA refused to succumb to congressional pressure (pressure that had been used successfully on previous occasions), thus marking the start of an era in which the U.S. government, including Congress, would support exhibitions in the visual arts.4

In early 1959 USIA chose a jury (approved by President Dwight Eisenhower) to select a group of art works that would be sent to Moscow as part of the American National Exhibition. The four jurors were Lloyd Goodrich, the director of the Whitney Museum of American Art; Henry R. Hope, the chair of the Fine Arts Department of Indiana University; Theodore Roszak, a sculptor; and Franklin C. Watkins, a painting teacher at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. According to Watkins, who headed the group, the art

4. On numerous occasions in the late 1940s and 1950s, the government backed away from art exhibitions in the face of congressional objections. In 1947 the State Department had sent a collection of American paintings for display in Czechoslovakia, but after congressional attacks on the artists and works in the collection, the State Department withdrew the paintings and sold them in 1948. In 1956 an exhibition, “Sport in Art,” selected by Sports Illustrated and organized by the American Federation of Arts, was to be sent abroad by USIA. The exhibition was seen in several venues in the United States, but was never sent to Australia (where it was to coincide with the Olympic Games in Melbourne) because of pressure from right-wing groups in Texas. Also in 1956, the American Federation of Arts organized an exhibition of twentieth-century American painting, “100 American Artists of the Twentieth Century,” which was supposed to go on tour in Europe. Although the paintings had already been created and were in New York waiting to be shipped overseas, the exhibition was canceled by USIA because of the alleged political affiliations of twelve of the seventy-five artists represented in the show. For information on previous government involvement in the arts during this period, see Francis Frascina, ed., Pollock and After, The Critical Debate (New York: Harper & Row, 1985); William Hauptman, “The Suppression of Art in the McCarthy Decade,” Artforum, Vol. 12, No. 4 (October 1973), pp. 48–52; and Jane de Hart Mathews, “Art and Politics in Cold War America,” American Historical Review, Vol. 81, No. 3 (October 1976), pp. 762–787.
was to be a “cross cut selection . . . that will state strongly and frankly what has been going on in America since about 1920. We believe it will be charged with vitality and the sense of freedom that marks our character.” After a series of USIA-sponsored exhibitions in the 1950s that were recalled because of Congressional pressure, assurances from USIA itself that it would not interfere with the new project created optimism that at last there would be a government-sponsored exhibition that was truly representative of American art. The choice of Lloyd Goodrich, a consistent proponent of artistic freedom, signaled that USIA was ready to begin a new chapter with a more liberal sponsorship of exhibitions overseas. As early as February 1959 Aline Saarinen wrote in *The New York Times* that “happily, there is no veto over your [the

Figure 2. “Won't That Make Us Look Sort of Foolish?,” New York Herald Tribune, 3 July 1959
jury's] choice.” She emphasized that the most important consideration was to send the best art that America had to offer: “As Thomas Paine said, 'But such is the irresistible nature of truth, that all it asks and all it wants is the liberty of appearing.' Let it appear.”

Not long after Saarinen published her article, however, problems surfaced. Wheeler Williams, the president of the American Artists Professional League, a conservative organization, wrote a letter to President Eisenhower expressing concern about the choice of the jury:

> The conservative artists of the world have had their fill of museum directors, critics, and so-called art experts. Many people doubt the advantages of any cultural exchange with Russia. But at least we must be sure that any work sent over there will be of a high quality, and cannot be used as a proof of the decadence existing under a capitalist system.

Although Eisenhower did not heed these strictures, Williams found a sympathetic ear in Representative Francis E. Walter, a Democrat from Pennsylvania, who was the chair of the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC). For Williams, Francis Walter was a suitable benefactor in two respects: Williams was a sculptor who was closely associated with politically conservative organizations, and his livelihood was dependent on the government commissions that he regularly received for traditional monumental pieces.

By 3 June 1959, two days after the official USIA press release announcing the exhibition, Walter had conducted sufficient research on the artists in the exhibition to announce in Congress that “of the 67 artists whose works have been chosen for the exhibition in Moscow, 34—a fraction more than 50 percent—have records of affiliation with Communist fronts and causes.”

9. Francis E. Walter was also the coauthor of the McCarran-Walter Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, which preserved the 1920s immigration quotas to stem the flow of immigrants following World War I.
10. See Charlotte Devree, “Is This Statuary Worth More Than a Million?” *Artnews*, Vol. 54, No. 2 (April 1955), p. 34. Throughout the 1950s Williams was associated with Congressman George Dondero of Michigan, who led an assault on the arts during the McCarthy era. (McCarthy himself seldom dealt directly with the arts.) For further information on Dondero, see Hauptman, “The Suppression of Art in the McCarthy Decade,” pp. 48–52; and Mathews, “Art and Politics in Cold War America,” pp. 772–777.
ter declared that twelve of these thirty-four artists had inconsequential records of Communist associations, but that

this leaves 22, or one-third of the 67 artists, with significant records of affiliation with the Communist movement in this country. . . . The routine check. . . . indicates that these 22 artists have a minimum of 465 connections with Communist fronts and causes.  

Walter proceeded to chronicle the involvement of the twenty-two artists with supposed Communist organizations and declared that they did not represent American culture. Walter wanted the art works to be recalled from Moscow, where they had been shipped on 1 June.

Jack Levine's 1946 painting, *Welcome Home* (Figure 3), was singled out by Walter for special criticism and became a symbol of everything that the right-wing groups believed was wrong with the exhibition. The painting depicts a general and his wife at a banquet where the guests are well fed, well dressed, and steeped in the protocols of social expectations. The painting is far removed from the pain and grotesque suffering that had recently occurred during World War II. Levine, a young man who had just returned from military service, intended the painting to convey his disgust with the army hierarchy—he was opposed to officers across the board.  

Walter asserted that Levine used

This art as a weapon to arouse hatred of our free society and people considered representative of it. . . . His picture of the gum-chewing 'stuffed-shirt' American general will help the Kremlin convince its enslaved people that its vicious propaganda about American military leaders is true, and is supported even by the American people.  

Defending Levine, respected ABC commentator Edward P. Morgan sarcastically remarked that *Welcome Home* could lead to the

nasty inference that the artist was hitting back psychologically at the regimentation of military life or maybe even, heaven forbid, was expressing a revulsion toward war. This and kindred sorts of subversive reaction can be dealt with, however, when in the aftermath of this artistic furor we make the logical move to establish our own ministry of culture and install a patriot


13. Jack Levine, telephone conversation with author, 8 December 1992. Levine said that previously he had instructed his dealer that he would not participate in any State Department exhibitions, because of controversies that had occurred in the 1950s. However, *Welcome Home* was owned by the Brooklyn Museum, and Levine had no control over the painting.

like Representative Walter as czar to tell us what is art, whether we like it or not.\textsuperscript{15}

The controversy had erupted with demarcation lines clearly drawn between those who wanted to censor the art show to include only work depicting America as a prosperous place, done by artists whose loyalty to America was without question, and those who wanted the exhibition to encompass work representative of the American scene, done by artists regardless of their political affiliations and beliefs.\textsuperscript{16} On 4 June 1959, the day after Walter’s declaration, Senator Philip Hart protested Walter’s outburst:

I believe that it is the Soviet Union which has lost face by attempting political censorship of its artists. We do not want to get ourselves into that situation.

\textsuperscript{15} Transcript from “Edward P. Morgan and the News,” American Broadcasting Network, 3 July 1959, Downtown Gallery Papers, AAA/SI.

\textsuperscript{16} Ironically, William Gropper accused Franklin Watkins of “anti-pink prejudices [sic]” for not including his works in the exhibition. (Franklin Watkins to Lloyd Goodrich, 6 June 1959, Lloyd Goodrich Papers, AAA/SI.) Goodrich responded: “Too bad that he [Gropper] misinterprets the reasons for his non-inclusion in the show. It is hard to tell a man that his work just isn’t good enough” (Lloyd Goodrich to Franklin Watkins, 9 June 1959, Lloyd Goodrich Papers, AAA/SI). At the same time that Walter was accusing the jury members of Communist support, Gropper was accusing them of anti-Communist sympathies!
There are a great many people in the world who think one can judge a civilization and the soul of a people more clearly by looking at its works of art and sculpture than by counting its plumbing and automobiles.\textsuperscript{17}

Among the other politicians who supported the jury’s choices were Senators Jacob Javits and Hubert Humphrey and Representative Frank Thompson Jr. This sentiment was also expressed by Emily Genauer in \textit{The New Herald Tribune} on 4 June when she wrote that the exhibition ought . . . to provoke no controversy in America at all. The show will include every significant aspect of American art from the realism of Grant Wood, Thomas Benton and Andrew Wyeth, to abstractions by the best known exponents of the avant-garde like Jackson Pollock and William [sic] de Kooning.\textsuperscript{18}

She added that American artists wanted to show that they had the freedom to work in any style.

Most telling was the initial Soviet reaction to the controversy. “Walter is horrified,” one Soviet newspaper reported, “that the dangerous Communist idea of peace will be disseminated from the American pavilion in Sokolniki Park and attract an increasing number of Soviet people.”\textsuperscript{19} Even in the early stages of the dispute, Soviet commentators, rather than picking up on Walter’s claims of Communist artists in the exhibition, began to turn the argument against the congressman by depicting his comments as anti-peace and anti-freedom. TASS reported that the “statements of the arch-reactionary congressman show once again the true worth of the fable about ‘freedom’ of artistic endeavor in the U.S.”\textsuperscript{20}

Francis Walter was so intent on registering his objections to the art exhibition that he quickly scheduled hearings on the subject. The artists who were accused of being dedicated Communists—Jack Levine, Ben Shahn, and Philip Evergood—were subpoenaed to appear before the committee, but Levine was out of the country and did not return in time to give his testi-

\textsuperscript{17} Philip Hart cited in U.S. Congress, \textit{Congressional Record}, 86th Cong., 1st sess., 4 June 1959, p. 9814. The Soviet Union had recently been widely condemned for banning Boris Pasternak’s novel, \textit{Doctor Zhivago}.

\textsuperscript{18} Emily Genauer, “U.S. Ships Art Works for Moscow Show,” \textit{The New York Herald Tribune}, 4 June 1959, p. 7. Notably, the artists to whom Genauer referred were not mentioned in Walter’s speech in the House of Representatives on 3 June.

\textsuperscript{19} Article from \textit{Literaturnaya gazeta} cited in “Russians Chide Walter,” \textit{The New York Times}, 7 June 1959, p. 34.

\textsuperscript{20} Franklin Watkins to Larry Fleischman, n.d., Lloyd Goodrich Papers, AAA/SI. The quotation is from a dispatch from TASS that was sent by Allen Dulles’s office to Franklin Watkins. Most probably, that dispatch was monitored by the U.S. Foreign Broadcast Information Service, an overt arm of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency that monitors foreign radio and wire services (Hans Tuch to author, 12 March 1993).
mony. The congressional hearings on the art exhibition occurred on 1 July 1959. Both Shahn and Evergood repeatedly declined to answer questions, citing their Fifth Amendment rights against self-incrimination. According to Lloyd Goodrich, they took this step because “if they had conceded membership or association with radical organizations, even in the 1930s [sic], they would then have been forced to become informers on their fellow artists and friends.” Richard Arens, the HUAC staff director, launched an all-out effort to link the two artists with Communist organizations. Although Shahn and Evergood each attempted to deliver a prepared statement to the committee, neither of them was allowed to do so.

In addition to calling Levine, Shahn, and Evergood to testify, Walter also heard from Wheeler Williams, who spoke extensively about the artistic scene in the United States. Williams had made a great deal of money from government commissions for the sculpture of monuments, and he therefore had a stake in ensuring that the government would continue to turn to him and a few other well-connected artists to carry out these projects. As early as 1956 Lloyd Goodrich recognized this when he commented to Theodore Streibert, then director of USIA, that there was a small group of extreme reactionaries who have attempted to smear all art outside their own narrow viewpoint as communistic. These artists, who have a vested interest in maintaining the status quo because they have been beneficiaries of practically all of the commissions awarded by the Government in recent years, have consistently opposed legislation in the field of the arts, or any broadening of governmental art activities, and have attacked other artists and art organizations on purely political grounds. They have the ears of a few members of Congress on the extreme right, and have for years been feeding them information and mis-information.

Goodrich specifically identified Williams as one of these “reactionaries.”

21. Ironically, in 1958 the editors of Amerika had approached Ben Shahn about publishing an article he had written, because “we feel that your ideas will be extremely interesting and thought provoking to our readers in the Soviet Union” (Franklin Watkins to Larry Fleischman, n.d., Lloyd Goodrich Papers, AAA/SI). Amerika was a Russian-language magazine published by USIA and distributed in the Soviet Union, in accordance with a Soviet-American exchange agreement signed at the end of World War II. The Soviet Union, for its part, was entitled to distribute the English-language USSR (later retitled Soviet Life) in the United States. The agreement was suspended in 1952, but it was revived in 1956.


23. Lloyd Goodrich to Mrs. Miller, 17 September 1959, Lloyd Goodrich Papers, AAA/SI.

24. Lloyd Goodrich to Emily Genauer, 29 July 1959, Lloyd Goodrich Papers, AAA/SI. Both of the prepared statements can be found here as well.

25. Lloyd Goodrich to Theodore C. Streibert, 9 July 1956, Lloyd Goodrich Papers, AAA/SI.

26. Lloyd Goodrich to Hubert M. Humphrey, 10 July 1956, Lloyd Goodrich Papers, AAA/SI.
During the hearings, Williams characterized Pablo Picasso as a “trivial artist” and dismissed Jackson Pollock’s painting in the Moscow exhibition, *Cathedral* (Figure 4), as “just a meaninglessly scribble. It is the worst doodle that you could imagine on a telephone pad.”27 Williams insisted that the Communists wanted
to destroy all phases of our culture; and if they can destroy our faith in God and our faith in the beauty and wonders of our cultural heritage, including the arts and literature and music and so forth, they can take us over without a hydrogen bomb. They can take us over with popguns.28

Williams also claimed that Communists had infiltrated the American cultural scene by becoming museum directors, artists, and art school teachers, and he felt that they were promoting social realist art and abstract art in order to mock and undermine the foundations of American democratic society.

Eisenhower himself was drawn into the controversy on the day of the hearings, when he was asked to comment on Jack Levine’s painting. He responded that it “looks more like a lampoon than art, as far as I am concerned. . . . But I assure you I am not going . . . to censor . . . art that has already gone there [to Moscow].”29 He added that in the future he might like to have a say about the choice of paintings if USIA were to sponsor another exhibition of this type. Edith Halpert, the on-site curator of the art section at the American National Exhibition, responded publicly to Eisenhower: “Some people think the President’s [own] paintings aren’t so good either.”30 Although this exchange attracted media attention (including the curiosity of many Soviet citizens who wanted to see the woman who dared to chide her president), Eisenhower carefully refrained from taking any step that would smack of censorship.31 He was closely involved in the Moscow exhibition and was com-

28. *Ibid.*, p. 910. This statement is suspiciously similar to an earlier comment by Congressman George Dondero to Frank Getlein. Dondero remarked that the “ultimate effect of nontrepresentational and abstract art will be to muddle the brains of decent, innocent Americans.” Then “the Soviets, either by internal subversion or by simply landing an army in New York, will be able to take over the country without a shot being fired.” Quoted in Frank Getlein, “Politicians as Art Critics: Thoughts on the US Exhibition in Moscow,” *The New Republic*, 27 July 1959, p. 13.
30. Edith Halpert quoted in “President Favors Art Liked by U.S.,” *The New York Times*, 2 July 1959, p. 3. When asked about this exchange of comments, Jack Levine confirmed that Halpert was referring to Eisenhower’s paintings, which were actually “paint by number” compositions. (Jack Levine, telephone conversation with author, 8 December 1992.)
31. The comment about Soviet citizens who wanted to see the woman who stood up to the president was made to the author in a telephone conversation with Claire and Sam Driver, guides in the art section of the American National Exhibition, 19 November 1992. It also was reported in Emily Genauer, “Moscow’s Verdict on U.S. Art,” *New York Herald Tribune* (European Edition), 14 August 1959, p. 6.
Figure 4. Jackson Pollock, Cathedral, 1947, Enamel and aluminum paint on canvas, 71 1/2 x 35 1/16, Dallas Museum of Art, gift of Mr. and Mrs. Bernard J. Reis
mitted to ensuring that the show would proceed as planned. Had it not been
for Eisenhower's personal intervention, Congress undoubtedly would have
forced USIA to cancel or make drastic changes in the exhibition.

As a compromise, however, Eisenhower sent twenty-seven supplementary
paintings to Moscow, all of which dated from the mid-eighteenth through
the early twentieth centuries. According to the USIA press release, these addi-
tional works were “assembled to give greater depth and perspective to the art
exhibit, in keeping with President Eisenhower’s desire that more attention
be given to paintings by American artists of the pre–World War I period.”

Because the artists were all from the pre-Bolshevik period, they were
“safe” from attack by Walter and other right-wing advocates. The selection
was made by David E. Finley, the former director of the National Gallery of
Art.

Reaction to the supplementary exhibition was muted in the press, but the
four jurors who had chosen the main paintings were disappointed by Eisen-
hower’s concession. Franklin Watkins wrote to Goodrich that the additions
were a statement of weakness: “It’s sort of a slap at us that they didn’t ask the
original committee to carry them [the additions] out . . . [M]y worst
forebodings did not anticipate the ramifications of evil that have been forth-
coming.” Even while expressing these concerns, however, Watkins was re-
lieved that “there is a rallying of sanity.”

Part of this “rallying” was Eisenhower’s reaction to the controversy.
Goodrich saw the president’s intervention as “the first time [the administra-
tion and USIA] resisted these attacks” and refused to recall an exhibition.

The journalist Mary McGrory wrote in the weekly publication America that
“in light of past history, the conduct of this incident showed a disposition to
let artists take care of their own business. This sent a thrill of hope throughout
the Washington community.” The incident must be seen as a turning point
in the amount of power that McCarthyites were able to exert on the art field

The comments about Eisenhower were made to the author in a telephone conversation with Abbott
Washburn, deputy director of the USIA during the American National Exhibition, 3 September 1992.

32. “27 Older Paintings Chosen for Exhibition in Moscow,” Press Release from the Office of the
American National Exhibition in Moscow, 22 July 1959, USIA Archives, Washington, DC. This selec-
tion included such “safe” paintings as Gilbert Stuart’s George Washington, John Caleb Bingham’s
jolly Flatboatmen, and James McNeil Whistler’s Battersea Ranch (see Appendix).


34. Lloyd Goodrich statement sent to interested persons in the art field, 13 July 1959, Lloyd Goodrich
Papers, AAA/SI. The list of over fifty names to whom the letter was sent can be found in this same
archive. The letter was also transmitted to politicians who were involved in arts legislation and had ex-
pressed an interest in the controversy.

35. Mary McGrory, “Washington Front,” America, 25 July 1959, p. 545. A copy of the article can be
found in the Lloyd Goodrich Papers, AAA/SI.
as well as the willingness of government agencies to stick by their policies despite threats of the loss of appropriated funds.

The reaction of the Soviet public to the art section in the Moscow exhibition must also have given confidence to the Americans who were confronting right-wing critics. The art was one of the most popular aspects of the entire show—some 20,000 to 30,000 people waited in line each day to view it. Although many were unaware that the exhibition had sparked controversy and political infighting in the United States, they were eager to learn more about America itself. The Soviet visitors to the show wanted to know what the “official” American art was, and they expressed surprise when they found out that there was none. Much of the time the conversation went from there to discussion about political freedom. The fears of Francis Walters never materialized, because most visitors saw the heterogeneity of styles as an indication that there were alternatives in American life. In fact, Charles Vetter, an official at the exhibition, commented that the impact of the diverse styles was seen not as a confirmation of Communism, but as a stimulus to immigrate to America. The Soviet press failed to convey the significance of Walter’s controversy. In a typical case, V. Kamenev, a member of the Art Academy of the USSR, wrote:

It is apparent that this [addition of paintings] is the result of the extremely negative reaction of the public to abstract art [italics mine]. The organizers of the exhibition had to “straighten matters out” in a hurry and, in one way or another, present the realistic art of their century. But how? Once again, not with the works of contemporary artists of the realistic and democratic school, but with the painting of former times and not the best examples of that, either.

Only older Soviet citizens had been exposed to any art besides the officially mandated Socialist Realism, but younger people had a sense that they were deprived and wanted to see what was forbidden until then, especially since this was the first exchange of art exhibitions between the Soviet Union and the United States. Soviet visitors often seemed confused that American legislators referred to the abstract art as Communist art (the contro-

versity in the United States was covered in Soviet press reports) while the official Soviet press condemned the same works as the degradation of capitalism. Generally, abstract art was not well appreciated, and Khrushchev was not alone when he described it as “terrible.” He added: “I thank God for not being grown-up enough to understand such forms of art. Do not be offended, I say what I think. It seems to me America is much more interesting than she is in these paintings.”

Singled out for derision in the Soviet press were Pollock’s Cathedral and Gaston Lachaise’s Standing Woman (Figure 5), which many saw as grotesque and mocking. Jack Levine’s Welcome Home was recognized as being anti-war, and therefore the Soviet press felt more comfortable with it. The painting was construed by some visitors as anticapitalist because the Soviet press regularly depicted American businesses as warmongers. Hence, antiwar was equated with anticapitalism. (“It is fine if the Soviets saw this as anti-war,” remarked Jack Levine.) Andrew Wyeth’s Children’s Doctor (Figure 6) was a favorite at the exhibition. Soviets citizens were familiar with female doctors, especially females who were pediatricians—this was an image that they knew, and furthermore it was painted in a recognizable style. Although Peter Blume’s The Eternal City (Figure 7) was surreal and difficult to grasp, the Soviet commentators favored it because it was clearly anti-Mussolini.

The repercussions that Walter had feared—that the Soviet masses would see in American art an indication that the United States was a breeding ground for Communism—never emerged. Instead, the art was seen as a manifestation of a free society, much as was originally intended by USIA. Years later, Wallace Littell, the director of policy and research for the exhibition, said that he was once told by a prominent Russian writer, Vasily Aksyonov, that the show in Moscow was one of the most important events in the opening up of the Soviet Union, which began in the fifties and culminated in the change to the current Commonwealth of Independent States. Certainly the American Art Exhibit was a key element among

41. Edith Halpert, “Address to the Advisory Committee on the Arts, Department of State,” at the Whitney Museum of American Art, 26 October 1959, Downtown Gallery Papers, AAA/SI.
43. The comments about Welcome Home were made by Claire and Sam Driver in a conversation with author, 19 November 1992.
Figure 5. Gaston Lachaise, Standing Woman, 1932, Bronze (cast 1932), 7'4" x 41 1/8" x 19 1/8", The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Mrs. Simon Guggenheim Fund
the new impressions and ideas introduced by the American National Exhibition.45

The damage done by Walter’s campaign against the art occurred not in the Soviet Union but in the United States itself, where the controversy threatened to obscure the value of using cultural diplomacy vis-à-vis the Soviet regime. In the end, however, the benefits outweighed the damage. The attention of the U.S. public in the summer of 1959 was focused on government support of the arts. Although USIA did not put its full weight behind the arts (in the fall

of 1959 it canceled its support of a sculpture show organized by Yale University), this incident must be seen as a further move away from McCarthy-era standards. Ultimately, the exhibition gave a strong fillip to the idea of government involvement in the arts at home and the use of art as a cultural tool abroad, regardless of the domestic political ramifications.46

Appendix

Following is the original checklist for the art section at the American National Exhibition in Moscow, 1959. The source for this checklist is U.S. State De-

46. The reasons for the cancellation of the Yale exhibition were never clarified. Although USIA cited “budgetary considerations,” few believed that to be the real story. (Andrew Carnduff Ritchie, director of Yale University Art Gallery, to George Allen, director of USIA, 28 September 1959, Lloyd Goodrich Papers, AAA/SI.) After the American National Exhibition, Lloyd Goodrich organized a group of representatives from the American Association of Museums, the American Federation of Arts, the Association of American Museum Directors, and the College Art Association to lobby for tolerance in cultural activities as well as increased government support of the arts.
Outdoor Sculpture

Alexander Calder, *Seven-Footed Beastie*, 1958
Jose de Creeft, *Youth*, 1956
Jose de Rivera, *Copper Construction*, 1949
Herbert Ferber, *Once Again*, 1954–58
Minna Harkavy, *American Miner’s Family*, 1931
Gaston Lachaise, *Standing Woman*, 1932
Jacques Lipschitz, *Mother and Child*, 1941–1945
Oronzio Maldarelli, *Bianca II*, 1950
Bernard Reder, *Adam and Eve*, 1957
Hugo Robus, *Walking Figure*, 1957
William Zorach, *Victory*, 1945

Indoor Sculpture

Alexander Calder, *Black Mobile*, 1957
Jo Davidson, *Dr. Albert Einstein*, 1934
Jose de Rivera, *Construction No. 47*, 1957
John Flannagan, *Pelican*, 1941
Chaim Gross, *Balancing*, 1935
Ibram Lassaw, *Galactic Cluster #1*, 1953
Robert Laurent, *La Toilette*, 1944–1945
Seymour Lipton, *Sorcerer*, 1957
Elie Nadelman, *Head of a Woman*, 1922
Isamu Noguchi, *The Ring*, 1957

Paintings

Ivan Le Lorraine Albright, *The Hole in the Wall Gang*, 1952
Thomas Hart Benton, *Boom Town*, 1928
Hyman Bloom, *Younger Jew with Torah*, 1942–1944
Peter Blume, *The Eternal City*, 1937
Alexander Brook, *My Son Sandy*, 1932
Charles Burchfield, *Promenade*, 1928
Stuart Davis, *Combination Concrete, Number 2*, 1958
William (sic) de Kooning, *Asheville II*, 1949
Charles Demuth, *After All . . .*, 1953 [sic—actually 1933]
Philip Evergood, *Street Corner*, 1936
Lyonel Feininger, *Manhattan, The Tower*, 1944
William Glackens, *Soda Fountain*, 1935
Arshile Gorky, *Water of the Flowery Mill*, 1944
Morris Graves, *Flight of the Plover*, 1955
George Gross [sic], *Peace II*, 1946
Philip Guston, *Passage*, 1957
Marsden Hartley, *Mt. Katahdin, Autumn, No. 1*, 1942
Edward Hopper, *Lighthouse at Two Lights*, 1929
Karl Knaths, *Winter Wharf*, 1955
Walt Kuhn, *Seated White Clown*, 1929
Yasuo Kuniyoshi, *The Amazing Juggler*, 1952
Jacob Lawrence, *Fulton & Nostrand*, 1958
Reginald Marsh, *Steeplechase Park*, 1936
Robert Motherwell, *Wall Painting #4*, 1953
Georgia O’Keeffe, *Ram’s Head, White, Hollyhock and Little Hills*, 1936
Jackson Pollock, *Cathedral*, 1947
Abraham Rattner, *Two Figures and Masks, Composition #3*, 1949
Mark Rothko, *Old Gold over White*, 1956
Ben Shahn, *Parable*, 1958
Charles Sheeler, *Upper Deck*, 1929
John Sloan, *Sixth Ave. Elevated at 3rd Street*, 1928
Eugene Speicher, *Red Moore, Blacksmith*, 1935
Niles Spencer, *In Fairmont*, 1951
Joseph Stella, *American Landscape*, 1929
Mark Tobey, *Delta*, 1952
Franklin Watkins, *Portrait of Thomas Raeburn White*, 1940
Grant Wood, *Pastor Weems' Fable*, 1939
Andrew Wyeth, *Children's Doctor*, 1949

**Photograph**

Edward Steichen, *Family of Man*, 1955

Following is the checklist of the pre–World War I paintings that were added to the exhibition. The source for this checklist is a press release issued by the Office of the American Exhibition in Moscow, 22 July 1959, Washington, DC, copy in author's possession.

George Caleb Bingham, *The Jolly Flatboatmen*, 1877–1878
Gutzon Borglum, *Lincoln*, 1911
Mary Cassatt, *Caresse Enfantie*, 1902
George Catlin, *Buffalo Bull (Grand Pawnee)*, 1832
William M. Chase, *Hide and Seek*, 1888
George W. Cope, *Wild Duck, Hanging on a Green Wall*, 1905
John Singleton Copley, *Portrait of Jacob Fowle*, 1763
Louis Eilshemius, *Bridge for Fishing*, 1905
Childe Hassam, *Washington Arch, Spring*, 1890
George P. A. Healy, *Abraham Lincoln*, 1860
Robert Henri, *Indian Girl in White Ceremonial Blanket*, 1921
Edward Hicks, *Peaceable Kingdom*, n.d.
George Inness, *Georgia Pines*, 1890
Ernest Lawson, *Spring Night, Harlem River*, 1913
Emanuel Leutze, *Westward the Course of Empire Takes Its Way*, 1861
George Luks, *New Year's Shooter*, c. 1916–1923
Thomas Moran, *Cliffs of the Upper Colorado River, Wyoming Territory*, 1882
Maurice Prendergast, *Autumn Festival*, 1917–1918
Frederic Remington, *Fired On*, c. 1907
Albert Pinkham Ryder, *Moonlight*, 1880–1885
John Singer Sargent, *Portrait of Mr. and Mrs. John W. Field*, 1882
Gilbert Stuart, *John Adams*, 1826
John Henry Twachtman, *Emerald Pool*, 1895
James McNeill Whistler, *Battersea Reach*, c. 1865
The following paintings were also mentioned in the USIA press release as “already in Moscow, sent with the original shipment last month.” However, they were not included on the original checklist.

George Bellows, *Blue Snow, The Battery*, 1910
Thomas Eakins, *Salutat*, 1898
Winslow Homer, *High Cliff, Coast of Maine*, 1894