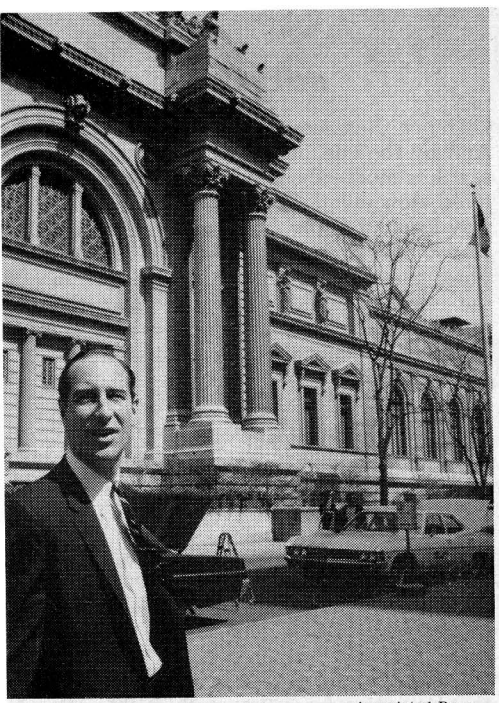
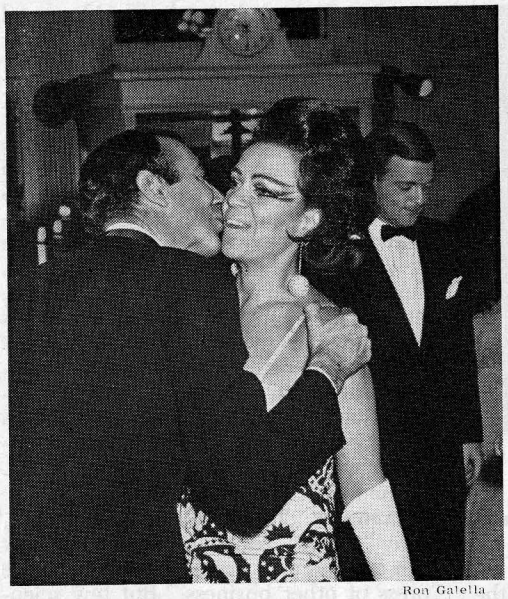
4-1-1968

National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities (1965-1967): Article 04



Associated Press



Ron Galella

Newsweek—Bernard Gotfryd

A man for all seasons: Hoving before 'treasure house of the West,' hosting gala at Metropolitan, with

HOVING OF THE METROPOLITAN

"Action is a way of life," says Thomas Pearsall Field Hoving. In his first year as director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the tall, lanky, 37-year-old Hoving has brought plenty of action to a field not previously noted for dynamism. Recently Hoving has been as ubiquitous as a Presidential candidate, flying to the Buffalo Arts Festival to speak on the community responsibilities of a museum director, then back in New York at the Princeton Club delivering a searing attack on the conservatism in American museums, hosting with Mayor Lindsay the annual reception for United Nations delegates, opening the Metropolitan's Peruvian silver show, acting as co-chairman of the New York State Draft Rockefeller Committee, finally flying off to Zurich for an advisory conference with European medieval scholars—and some skiing on the Swiss slopes.

Tom Hoving is a man for all seasons—the man who, as parks commissioner, turned New York into "Fun City" with his "Hoving Happenings" and brightened its dull and dangerous parks into swinging sanctuaries of excitement and public pride. As director of the largest museum in the Western Hemisphere, he has continued to work for the public by using his showmanship and panache, social cachet and political savoir-faire, scholarship and discipline to change that "great treasure house of the West" into a more meaningful and enjoyable playfield of the arts.

"The fact that the Met picked Hoving as director is highly symptomatic of what's going on today," says Tracy Atkinson, 39, director of the Milwaukee Art Center. "Modern museums are going toward involvement of the public." It has been estimated that more than twice as many people now go to art museums as baseball games. In 1967, the total operating budget of the 620 U.S. art museums came to $400 million, and twenty new museums sprang up. Currently there are 49 museums in various stages of construction, at an estimated cost of $230 million, in such cities as Atlanta, Norfolk, Oakland, Columbus (Ohio), Cincinnati, Tulsa and Memphis.

Liberal: The first museums on record were the temples in Egypt and Greece which held the treasures of the community, many of them votive objects placed there to propitiate the gods. The modern European museum came into being after the French Revolution, when much privately held art was nationalized and palaces were converted into public repositories of art. The American museum, in the words of former Metropolitan director Francis Henry Taylor, "is the child of nineteenth-century liberal thought . . . developed by the people, for the people and of the people."

The Met's first director, Luigi Palma di Cesnola, fought beside Garibaldi for Italian unity, came to America for adventure and served on the side of the Union in the Civil War. Succeeding directors were Sir Caspar Purdon Clarke, an Englishman; Boston archeologist Edward Robinson; Egyptologist H.E. Winlock; and Taylor and James Rorimer—both medievalists. It was Taylor who wrote that a museum's "only hope for survival in the modern world" was "by honestly contemplating and interpreting our resources in the light of their potential usefulness to society."

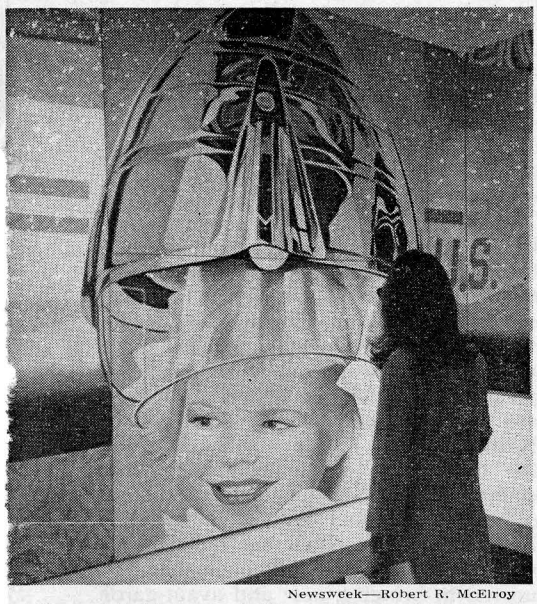
Hoving has been more conscious of "usefulness to society" than any other Met director. In his first year he has smashed by more than a million the previous annual attendance record of 4,697,157 and packed more than 62,000 visitors into the Met on one Sunday alone.

He opened the museum for the first time on Tuesday evenings and pulls in an average of about 3,000 people a night. He staged, for the first time, a contemporary play in front of modern paintings. He is engineering sweeping organizational changes, including the establishment of the Met's first department of contemporary art. He has started to catalogue the more than 1 million works of art in the Met by computer, is making more-informative gallery labels, has turned the staid old Met Bulletin into a jazzy and scholarly periodical, has candidly confronted the question of forgeries by using the Met's own dubious works in public seminars on this delicate question.

Exalted: "Art can't be detached from the people," says Hoving. "I want people to look at art without embarrassment, without awe, without peering over their shoulder and wondering if there's a professor lurking around to tell them what it's really like. It's a place for the people to battle against the blows of technology and the misery of life, a place where you can have your mind expanded, not by drugs, but by seeing things in a way you had never seen before."

Hoving, with his flair for snooping out art, has made brilliant, offbeat (and controversial) acquisitions, from Canova's marble "Perseus" to Monet's "Terrace at Ste. Adresse," for which the Met paid $1,411,200, the record auction price for a modern picture. This involved another of Hoving's talents, fund raising—the Met's trustees stipulated he would have to raise the money almost entirely through private sources.

Hoving's newest prize is a wonderfully



Newsweek—Robert R. McElroy

Canova's 'Perseus'; Rosenquist's 'F-111'

detailed fifteenth-century church lectern, topped by a fiercely evangelical eagle, which John Pope-Hennessy, director of London's Victoria and Albert Museum, pleaded with the British Government to keep in Britain. Describing this lectern, Hoving conveys the impact art objects have for him: "It's unbelievable. Some people have seen it and say it looks junky. Junky! That eagle is going to get off its perch and come down, pow! and pin you to the ground if you're not a Christian. That brass is screaming, spitting at you. You're hearing the gospel and you'd better believe it!"

Hoving is the first Met director to allow modern painting to stand in full glory beside time-honored masterpieces. He recently displayed James Rosenquist's pop painting "F-111" alongside Poussin's "Rape of the Sabine Women" and David's "Death of Socrates." Made up of bright fragmented images of such elements as parts of the F-111 fighter-bomber, an angel-food cake, a giant Firestone tire, a cherubic blond tot, a squirming mass of spaghetti, and a runner's hurdle, the 86-foot canvas brought modern art to the Met with a vengeance. "I was going to quit the place," says curator of contemporary art Henry Geldzahler, a major avant-garde spokesman of American art. "But Hoving promised me he is for modern art and we'd be getting and displaying more of it."

Hoving has far-reaching plans for the Met's future. He has selected architects Kevin Roche and John G. Dinkaloo to revamp the museum's neoclassic architecture, which will include the building of a new American wing and a $2 million glass enclosure to house the 2,000-year-old Temple of Dendur, which will be shipped in its entirety from Egypt. He has working agreements with institutions as close as the Brooklyn Museum and as far away as Mexico City and London. "I'm searching for the time," says Hoving, "when two great institutions, either here or abroad, will buy a great work of art together and exhibit it alternately. I tried that with the Monet, but it didn't work. Someday it may even be possible for museums to return works to their country of origin."

Community: As the Met Centennial (1970) approaches, Hoving is projecting shows that will involve all levels of art from pure scholarship to community participation. Next year he will stage a revealing Rembrandt show. "We've learned that many of our Rembrandts aren't Rembrandts," he says. "We're going to reattribute them and bring in pictures from around the world to back up our attributions."

Most fascinating, controversial and closest to Hoving's heart is an exhibition planned for next year called "Harlem on My Mind," organized by Alan Schoener, which, says Hoving, will be a "history of Harlem culture." He got the incentive for this show when he chaired a committee called New Directions. "Eddy Taylor of the Harlem Cultural Council was on the panel," says Hoving. "He began to batter the Establishment about the creative achievement of the city's non-Establishment areas. He took off in the most beautiful, eloquent way about being a black man and a black artist, and about the tribulations of the people of Harlem. When he finished I turned to him and said, 'Eddy, will you let us in?' and he said, 'You try us'."

In all this ferment Hoving has laid himself open to criticism from every side, and it has not been wanting. Some of his shows have been failures—such as a recent survey of fashion. Some critics have blasted him for bringing modern art into the Met's sacred halls and others have scorned his traditional acquisitions. The "Perseus" has been called a "great marble fag" and a "waxy sweetie." A leading Egyptologist has called the Temple of Dendur "fifth-rate." The New York Times, after praising Hoving's first show has since found little good to say of him. Times editorials have scolded the Met for paying too much money for the Monet, for bringing in the "stunning vulgarity" of "F-111" and for somehow turning its forgeries (such as the recently revealed "Greek" horse) into public-relations plums for the museum.

Chill: But behind the polemics that are triggered by the flamboyant Hoving burns a very real and important issue concerning the role of museums in a changing society. At the beginning of the century, artists all over the world issued manifestoes against the museums, calling for the destruction of these "cemeteries" which touched all art with the chill hand of death. But in our time museums have reasserted their vitality—displaying the large modern paintings and sculptures that have become too big for private collections, taking on expanded educational roles, becoming arenas for the new mixtures of media that are so important in contemporary art.

But for some the breakthrough is into vulgarization rather than vitality. Critics have challenged "Hovingism" as threatening to turn the traditional museum into a psychedelic emporium which, in critic Max Kozloff's words, "brutalizes even as it socializes" the viewer. Critic Barbara Rose has sardonically predicted the drive-in museum. And The New York Times's Hilton Kramer writes that museums "have been turned, if not exactly into discothèques, then surely into something far closer to a discothèque in feeling than to the esthetic refuge of old." "We are," says Kramer, on the brink "of a major crisis affecting the whole concept of what museums are, and thus a major crisis in our basic relation to art."

As in similar "crises" in modern education and communications, there are strong voices heard all through the spectrum from left to right. Sherman Lee, 54, director of the important and enterprising Cleveland Museum, does not see things Hoving's way. For Lee, museums are not institutions for mass education, but institutions for educated people. A museum, he says, "is not a community center." Shows such as Hoving's projected Harlem exhibition are, he thinks, "properly in the domain of institutions with sociological purposes—universities, welfare groups, municipal governments." Lee says that a museum's primary responsibility is "the proper preservation of an artistic heritage for posterity."

'Bing-Bang': The crowds that Hoving is pulling into the Met don't impress director Richard Randall, 42, of Baltimore's Walters Art Gallery. "No longer is it worthwhile to think of going to the Met on a Sunday afternoon to spend a few quiet hours looking at the impressionists," he says. "You can't do it anymore. At the Phillips, the Frick and the National Gallery, you can still see pictures because these galleries aren't in a popularity contest. The Met's a great big bing-bang show, a buzz bomb."

For Hoving, what he is doing is hardly

Fred McDarrah

Hoving, Lindsay at a happening

revolutionary. "We went back to 1870 to read our charter," he says. "You read Cesnola, you read what the original board said, and you have the damnedest flamboyant bunch of liberal thinkers that you've ever seen in your life. They thought that great works of art could profoundly change social conditions, and they were right." After nearly a hundred years, Hoving thinks that it is only beginning to happen. "If those founding fathers could come out of their sarcophagus and see what has happened, how we have not fulfilled our obligations to the community . . ."

Museums all over the country are growing more and more conscious of this obligation—the museum is the fastest-growing cultural institution in our society, flourishing from New York to Los Angeles, from Houston to Minneapolis.

Washington is becoming a museum enclave to rival even New York. "We are trying to become a great cultural capital," says 34-year-old James Harithas of the Corcoran Gallery. "I believe that we will take the lead in the next few years." S. Dillon Ripley, 49, director of the Smithsonian Institution, has added five new museums to the city: the National Collection of Fine Arts, the National Portrait Gallery, the Renwick Museum of Arts and Crafts, the Hirshhorn Collection and the Anacostia Museum, a renovated old theater located in one of Washington's most culturally deprived areas. Ripley wants the Anacostia Museum to reach those people who don't and won't go to museums, but who most need "color and visual orientation" in their lives.

As director of the new museum, the Smithsonian chose 31-year-old John R. Kinard, a Negro and a former Peace Corps worker who was raised in Anacostia. Kinard wants to make the museum a creative training center, including a recording studio where the many local jazz and rock groups could learn studio techniques. "Our main purpose," he says, "is to make people concerned with themselves. If our program doesn't meet the people's needs then let the people work out their own projects."

■ On more strictly esthetic ground, the century-old Corcoran's recent "Scale as Content" show was perhaps the first to prove conclusively that modern art has outgrown the museums. It also marked the first time that a U.S. museum has commissioned major artists to create special works to fit its space: Ron Bladen's colossal "X" and Tony Smith's gigantic "Smoke" eventually consumed the entire gallery space. Says Corcoran curator Eleanor Green: "A museum's first obligation should be to the living artist, to finance him and give him space to work in and exhibit. It should not be an entertainment center, self-consciously reaching out into the community."

■ Walter Hopps, 35, who put on shows in Los Angeles supermarkets and parking lots when he was director of the Pasadena Art Museum ('64-'67) is now director of the Washington Gallery of Modern Art. Recently he presented a 152-hour-long mixed-media "composition" by Negro artist and musician Lloyd McNeill. "We must build new institutions to fit new occasions," Hopps says. "Hoving, who comes from a scholarly museum tradition, should be like the special kind of parent who keeps in touch with the youngest generation. What Hoving does in the next few years will be watched by every museum board across the country."

■ The National Gallery's John Walker, 61, calls Hoving "very sympathetic and very attractive," but adds, "I'm against hoopla in art. Museums are for the eyes what concert halls are for the ears. We want to bring people into the museums and we want to stop the viewer before the art for X seconds of contemplation. We use many devices to stop the viewer, but our techniques don't involve Harlem and costume studies. This mansion is not for that purpose."

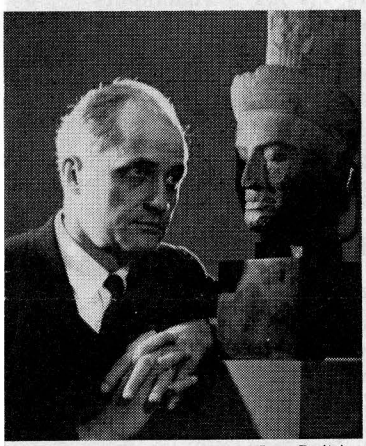
■ The nearby Virginia Museum, under jovial director Leslie Cheek, 59, has a different credo. "The social aspect of art is very important," says Cheek. "If you're too serious you lose customers." Cheek's customers get custom treatment. He shows his collection under superdramatic lighting (no natural light) accompanied by piped-in music from the period of the art, he has a restaurant with a Swiss chef and a good wine list, a 500-seat theater with permanent professional actors. The Virginia Museum was the first state-owned art museum, the first to pioneer the traveling artmobile and to establish branch museums throughout the state. Cheek sees the question of the "exploding museum" in a cool, humane light. "Sometimes I worry about the cultural explosion and wonder who is going to preserve the level of taste. As the head of the Metropolitan, Hoving could be instrumental in preserving taste in art."

■ Proud possessor of one of the most impressive collections of ancient and modern art in the country, the 125-year-old Hartford (Conn.) Wadsworth Atheneum, the oldest free public museum in the country, is embarking, under 44-year-old director James Elliott, on a $4 million building program that will redouble its space. For years the Atheneum has pioneered in bringing new and avant-garde work into a museum environment, and the museum helped establish the authenticity of pop artists such as James Rosenquist and Claes Oldenburg.

■ Culturati from all over the world are attracted to the Buffalo Albright-Knox Gallery for its Festival of the Arts Today. Director Gordon Smith, 61, has placed special emphasis on acquiring outstanding contemporary works of art, from the pioneer abstract expressionists to such mad modernism as the giant "Nana" of French artist Niki de Saint-Phalle.

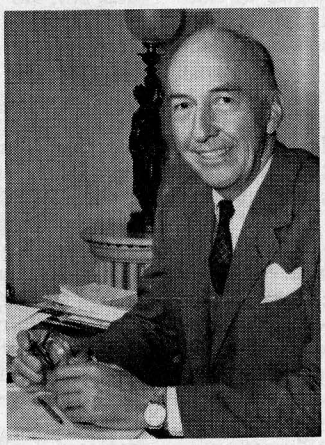
■ When the contemporary painter Theodore Stamos recently went to the Midwest he said that its art was twenty years behind the times. That doesn't seem to be the case with the museums. Director Jan van der Marck, 39, considers his brand-new Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago to be a "laboratory," not a "repository." Many of his shows are specially made out of materials he commissions artists to use. After the show the work is dismantled or destroyed. "Art should live no longer than people live," says van der Marck. "Therefore we do not collect. We only exhibit."

■ The Milwaukee Art Center, located in a beautiful Eero Saarinen building on

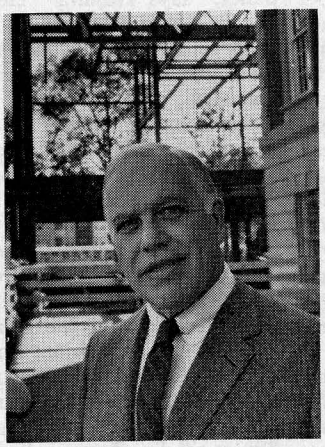


Ivan Dmitri

Lee: For posterity



Ripley: Many museums

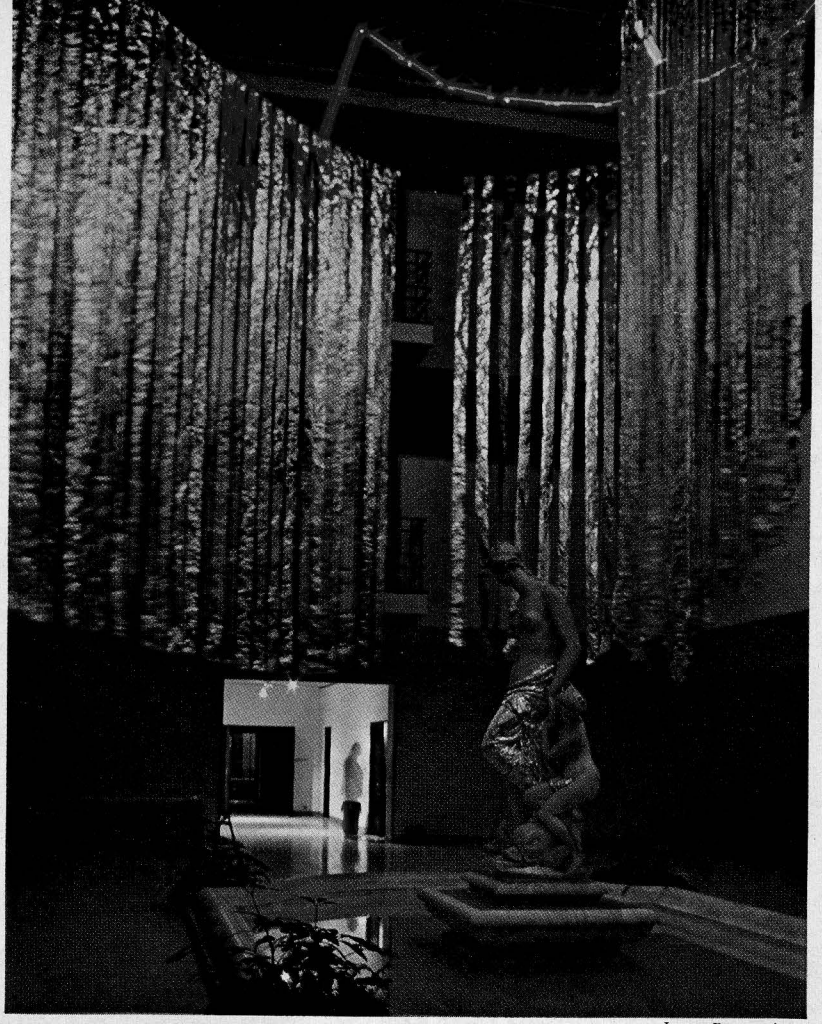


Cheek: Custom treatment

Richard Ellis

Atkinson: Way-outers

U. S. MUSEUMS GO MOD

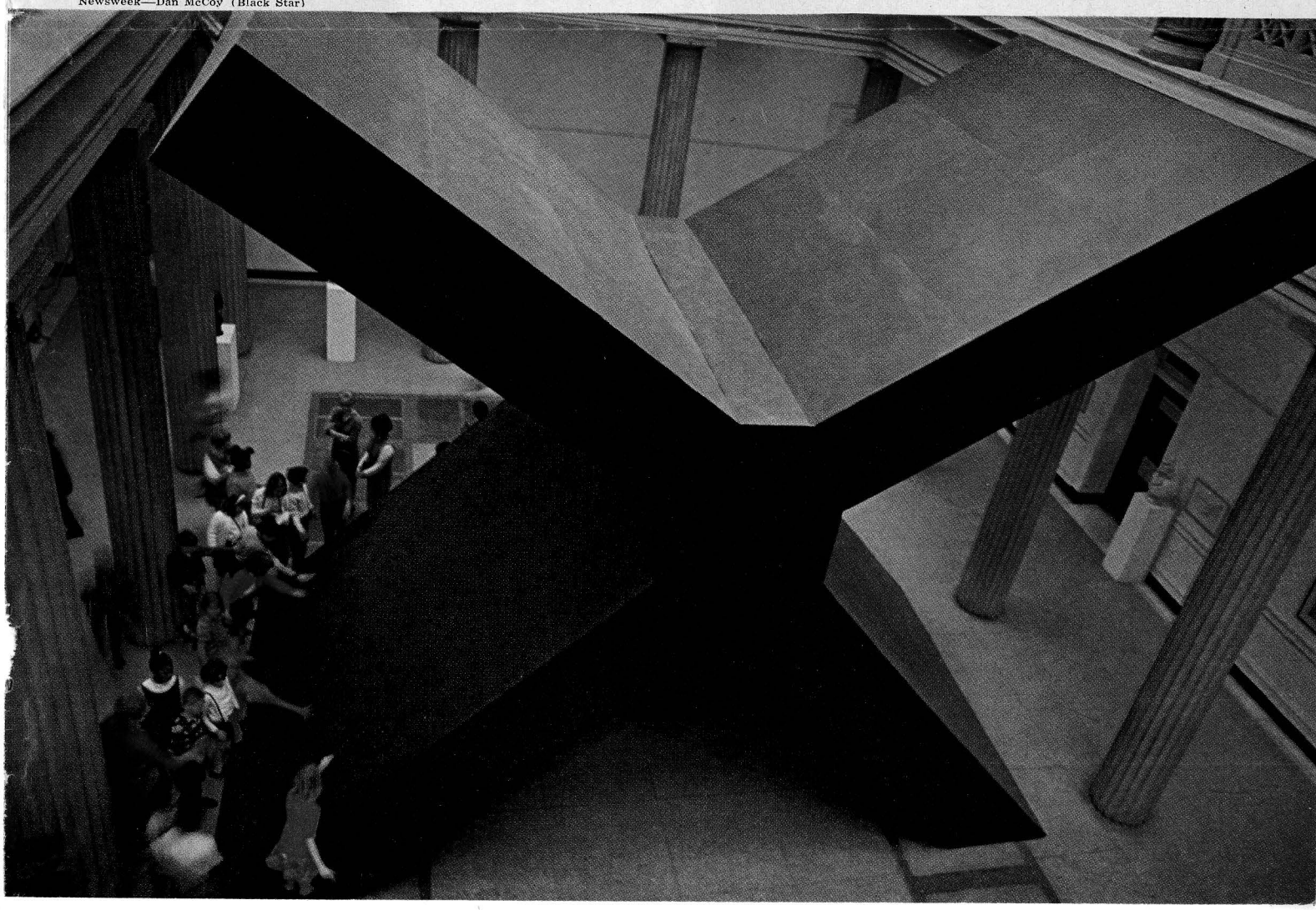


Newsweek—Dan McCoy (Black Star)

James Rosenquist

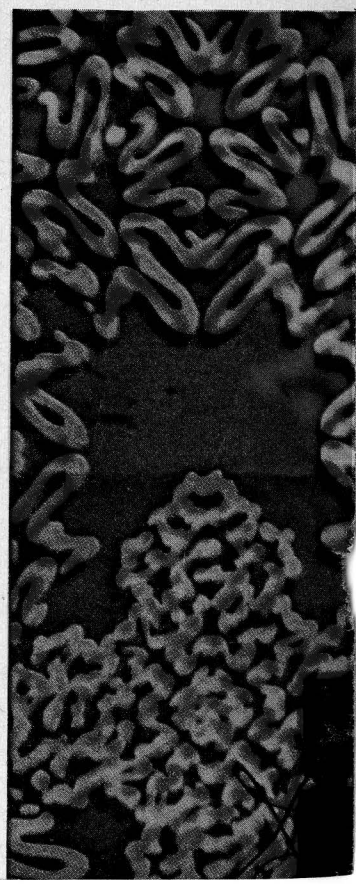
Pop artist James Rosenquist constructed a neon-and-tinsel ceiling 'Aurora Borealis' in the three-story main hall of the 125-year-old Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, Conn.

Ron Bladen's giant 'X' snuggles into Washington's Corcoran Gallery as if it were made for the space, which it was—for the first major 'made to order' exhibit in a U.S. museum.



Robert Israel knotted his 100-foot-long experiment in inflated vinyl into shape for display at New York's Whitney Museum (left) as he had previously fashioned similar works for his home base, Minneapolis's Walker Art Center.

The Washington Gallery of Modern Art presented Lloyd McNeill's 152-hour, light-sound composition spotlighting dancers from the Washington Modern Dance Society (right) silhouetted against Victor and Susie Lukas's flashing light show.



The Pasadena Art Museum presented a nose concert by composer La Monte Young (above and right). His amplified breathing triggered changing light patterns created by his wife, Marian Zarzeela.

Newsweek Photos by Dan McCoy (Black Star)

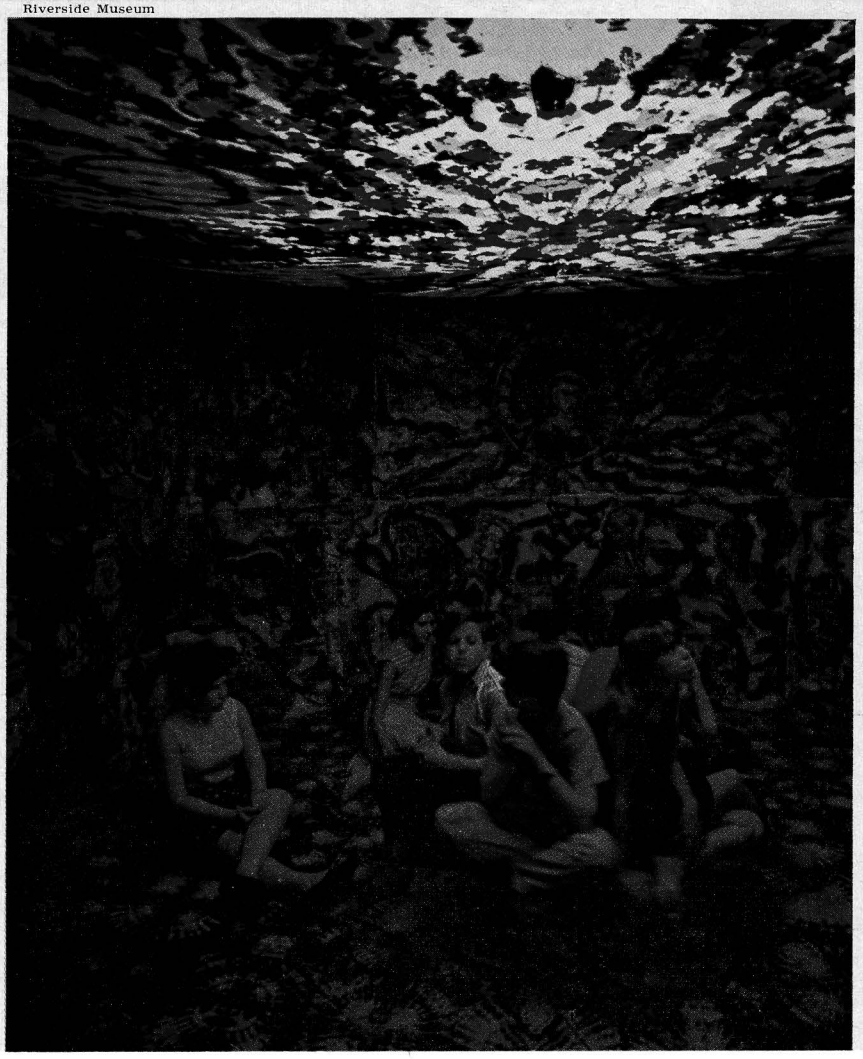
The 152-hour marathon also featured Buffalo's New Percussion Quartet, which coaxed amplified sound from 'cry-baby' dolls, clocks, egg beaters—any noise-maker.

Newsweek—Don Dornan

Albright-Knox Art Gallery

Buffalo's Albright-Knox Art Gallery exhibited sculptress Niki de Saint Phalle's colossal 'Nana' (above) seen hand-standing in the Sculpture Garden. The show, 'Paradis Fantastique,' also presented the mad machines of Jean Tinguely.

Riverside Museum



New York City's Riverside Museum invited the 35-member USCO, the artistic hippie commune, to create the first 'be-in.' Spectators (left) are deep in meditation in the light-bathed, hand-painted cloth and paper 'Cave.'

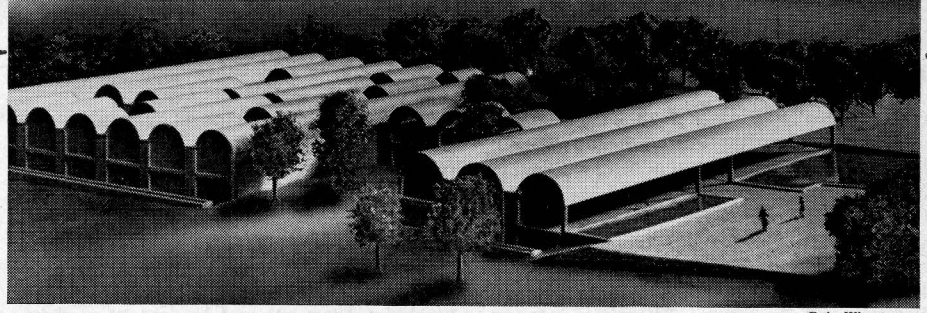
Lake Michigan, put on, under director Tracy Atkinson the country's first "Light/Space/Motion" art show and continues to exhibit way-outers. "A lot of museums are simply not doing the job they should be," says Atkinson, "although those that simply hang paintings on the walls are pretty few today. The museum that does not concern itself with contemporary imagery is missing a great opportunity. The fact that the good, gray Metropolitan decides that this is the direction in which museums should go is very, very important."

■ Minneapolis's Walker Art Center specializes in international avant-garde shows and co-sponsored, with Milwaukee, the "Light/Space/Motion" show. The Walker also has shown new art from Brazil and Argentina, England and Italy. One of Walker's recent shockers was Robert Israel's 100-foot-long experiment in inflated clear vinyl. Director Martin Friedman, 42, sees Hoving as an antidote against the "danger of certain museums looking inward. He's helping to loosen up the structures of museums."

■ The largest museum west of the Mississippi, the Los Angeles County Museum put itself on the art-world map last year with the "Sculpture of the Sixties" show, and now contemporary-art curator Maurice Tuchman, 31, plans a major art and technology show for 1970. The museum, says director Kenneth Donahue, 53, will also have a gallery for the blind. About Hoving, Tuchman says: "That such an established, authoritarian institution could appoint a young man is good for all young men—like Kennedy being President at 43."

■ Now in a concrete pagoda, the Pasadena Art Museum will move next year into a $3.6 million complex. Although it has had financial difficulties, the museum has managed to get a reputation as an enterprising avant-garde museum. It frequently holds intermedia shows, such as last month's concert in which La Monte Young made created music with a battery of electric gadgets while his wife formed geometric patterns with flashing lights. Local financial support, says 36-year-old director James Demetrion, "is not good. We are living in pioneer land out here—we are better known in London and Paris than in Pasadena." Because of this, Demetrion heartily welcomes the Hoving phenomenon. "Having a man like that running a venerable power like the Met creates a healthy situation for all museums, especially those like ours. Hoving gives something to point at. People are aware of him—it's an osmosis thing."

Nowhere are people more aware of Hoving than in his own enclave of New York, where the Met, the Museum of Modern Art, the Brooklyn, the Guggenheim, the Whitney, the Riverside, the Jewish, the Museum of Primitive Art and still more form the country's most brilliant and competitive museological community. In their various ways, these museums are following Hoving's line. Even the staid old Whitney, under its new di-



Bob Wharton

Architect's model for Kimbell Art Center: 'Friendly scale'

FORT WORTH BUILDS A MUSEUM

How do you build a major museum from scratch—no building, no pictures, no staff—just money?

In 1964 Texas industrialist Kay Kimbell willed approximately $100 million to the Kimbell Art Foundation. Purpose: to create a first-class museum for Fort Worth, Texas. After a long search Kimbell's executors chose 51-year-old Richard F. Brown as the Kimbell Art Center director. Rick Brown is now putting together what will be one of the finest small museums in the country.

First, there was the building. "I reexamined almost every museum in the world—the Capodimonte in Naples, the Kröller-Müller Museum in Otterlo, the Louisiana Museum in Copenhagen," recalls Brown. Brown then got busy on an architectural plan. After consulting architects Mies van der Rohe, Paul Rudolph, Gordon Bunshaft, I.M. Pei and Louis Kahn, he hired the brilliant 67-year-old Kahn to design the museum.

Placed on a 9-acre quadrangle, Kahn's building, constructed of reinforced molten stone, will cost about $6.5 million. To prevent cutting the view of the neighboring Amon Carter Museum, the new structure will be only 40 feet tall—in "friendly scale," as the architect puts it. "In a museum you want not to show people too much, but rather make them happy. And the museum must have natural light—a visitor should sense that night is falling or the sun is climbing toward noon. A museum must be sensitive to the fact that art works were torn out of the places where they were born—a paint-spattered, intimate studio. And," adds Kahn, "people will be able to wander into the courts to sit. This is very important—I get tired immediately upon entering a museum."

Unforeseen: As for the collection, Brown has been buying art with the almost unlimited funds made available by the fantastically rich bequest. "Numberless people get in touch wanting to sell us their Raphael which ain't a Raphael. We have to look at every work—one of them might prove out. But mostly we depend on the bona fide art market, private dealers, the old established firms like Agnew's, and the auctions. You have to keep moving. Unforeseen things bring something up for sale—a death, a business failure. I've flown off to Europe on five minutes' notice for a work. Getting there at the right time is a broken-field proposition and if you can run like Red Grange it helps."

Brown has already acquired a couple of dozen treasures, but he won't identify them because "we want the people in Fort Worth to be the first to know, when we open in 1971. However, I will say we have objects we believe to be definitive in these areas: Greek and Roman sculpture, ancient Far Eastern painting and sculpture, the medieval period, the Renaissance and French impressionism."

But the hardest part for Brown is finding a staff. "The museum explosion is gobbling up trained, experienced people. We will need a staff of 30 all told, including ten professionals for research, curatorial and library work. I keep in touch with my friends at all the major graduate schools and I go to all the museology meetings, keeping my ears open to hear outstanding prospects." Even before the museum is built Brown is thinking of the future. "I hope we'll have people on our staff who can make films about art and artists and use all the advances of mixed media. I think a program on Rembrandt that employs 3-D effects and scene cuts and close-ups and all the newer filmmaking techniques can help us understand Rembrandt better. Why use nineteenth-century methods?"

Dream: Brown, who left the directorship of the Los Angeles County Museum after protesting interference by the trustees, is delighted with the setup at the Kimbell. "There is no board of directors per se, but rather the ten executors of the Kimbell estate serve in that capacity, including Mr. Kimbell's widow who signed over her 50 per cent of the estate to the museum. She's smart, liberal and willing to do things—and do them right. That board is a director's dream—we haven't made a move yet which hasn't been unanimous."

How does he like Fort Worth? "People are people—you find them intelligent here just as in London, New York or Rome. But the percentage of active, interested people is probably greater here in Forth Worth than in New York. This is an intelligent, affluent, well-read, well-traveled community. Texas people, just like all the legends, really are expansive, charming and hospitable." These people have something to look forward to. As Kahn says: "Art is part of everyone if he can be engaged. A museum can be a matchmaker."

rector John I.H. Bauer, has moved out along Hovingesque lines and has established a museum and teaching center in New York's Lower East Side ghetto. Oriole Farb, however, the pretty 36-year-old director of the imaginative Riverside Museum, gives credit to Dillon Ripley and the Museum of Modern Art as the ground breakers. "Tom's a star—a glamour performer," she says. "I'm more interested in letting artists flower." Recently, a community of artists—USCO—flowered in their environment-as-art at the Riverside.

Bounced: The son of Walter Hoving, chairman of Tiffany's, Hoving was born in 1931 in New York City and spent most of his youth changing prestigious prep schools. He was bounced, for example, from Exeter for having slugged a 6-foot-5 Latin teacher. "Tom was a joker, not a leader," recalls his sister, Petrea Hoving.

As an undergraduate at Princeton, Hoving was still a joker and in his sophomore year was told that if he didn't produce, he was out. He did well in a medieval art course, taught by the eminent medievalist Kurt Weitzmann, and decided to stick with art. On weekends Hoving returned to New York where he attended drawing and painting classes at the Art Students League. "I was an eclectic with little ability," he says. "At that time I wore no socks, I was uncouth and I had surly things to say about most everything. I loathed spending time with Princetonians, but I really liked painting from a model, painting from still life."

Jugular: After being graduated with highest honors, Hoving went into the Marine Corps as a lieutenant and married his college sweetheart, Nancy Bell. He had a captain, "Captain Section Eight," who didn't appreciate his art background. "I've looked at your jacket and I find that you are an art lover," yelled Section Eight. "I don't like art lovers. They're a bunch of fairies." Yet Hoving for a while thought of staying in service as a regular officer because of "the morale and discipline." Finally he chose to return to Princeton as a graduate student in art history. "I dreaded giving a seminar paper with Tom in class," recalls Eugene Becker who got his Ph.D. from Princeton and is now an Assistant Secretary of the Army. "He immediately understood the historical problem and went for the jugular." "Had he stayed with medieval art he could have become a major scholar," says Weitzmann, for whom Hoving wrote his doctoral thesis.

During his last year at Princeton, Hoving gave a paper at the Frick Collection symposium, known as the "meat rack" because of the art experts who attend it in search of new talent. Metropolitan director James Rorimer asked him to work at The Cloisters, the Met's medieval museum. In 1960, he joined The Cloisters as a curatorial assistant and was made its curator in 1965. During his stay, he made a reputation as a serious scholar, tracking down several important acquisitions, including the twelfth-century Bury St. Edmunds Cross, which had been suspected as a fake. Hoving was able to prove its authenticity and buy it for the Met. Today, it is among the Met's four top possessions.

In 1965 Hoving was named parks commissioner by Mayor John Lindsay, for whom he had campaigned. Hoving remains Lindsay's favorite. "If I were President, which I'm *not* running for, Tom would be my first appointment," says the mayor. "We work so well together and our minds mesh so. His big plan—as mine is in my job—is to get the institutions out to the people."

Newsweek—Robert R. McElroy

With daughter Petrea and wife Nancy at home

Fire: Rorimer died in May 1966, and in December 1966, Hoving was named director of the Metropolitan over 120 other candidates. Hoving's wife recalls that he thought the selection committee wouldn't want him because of his "flamboyance and brashness" as parks commissioner. But Met president Arthur Houghton, noting that Francis Henry Taylor had been a "fire of genius" at the Met and that Rorimer had been a "sound housekeeper," conceded that the Met needed another "fire of genius." "The night Tom was named director," recalls his sister Petrea, "he came in and said 'I want a very cold, dry Martini like my new boss Arthur Houghton makes'."

Much of Hoving's time is taken up with public commitments. He is chairman of the newly organized National Citizens Committee for Public Television and a member of the Summer Citizens Committee, an organization which tries to prevent riots by finding jobs for the unemployed. "I think the director of a museum today has to involve himself with issues of importance in his city," says Hoving. "Museums are basically involved in communications."

An important part of Hoving's communications is with his own board of trustees, whose general attitude toward their brilliant but mercurial director may be described as proud but wary. In line with his interest in New York's minority and ethnic groups, Hoving hopes to get Puerto Ricans and Negroes on the Met's board. "We keep in close touch on such matters," says Houghton.

Hoving is resolutely dissatisfied with certain conditions in this country. "I think that American education is over-all absolutely lousy," he fumes. "There is no discipline. I think they ought to throw a lot of people out of the universities. This equal education for all has come to mean equal getting by for all, and that stinks, and it's gonna kill us in the long run. If you say 'elite' today in America it's enough to brand you as the most unbelievable conservative. There should be an elite and I say use it."

'Hang-Loose': Nancy Hoving, a bright, attractive, tough-minded girl, is the proverbial severest critic—with great insight—of her husband. "I sometimes wonder if Tommy would have gone over to the Establishment for real—aloof, arrogant—if he hadn't married me. I'm very hang-loose and irreverent, whereas the other influences in his life, his father for instance, have all been the other way. Fortunately Tommy could always see the humor in it. He's a product of this particular moment in history. I often think of him as a Robin Hood type. I think if there were ever a real revolution in this country he might be in it—on the side of the good guys of course."

Hoving does intend to go back into public service, but how and when? "I feel strongly that there should be a Secretary of Cultural Affairs in the Federal government," he says. "People in the arts who are knowledgeable about public service should be called upon." Lindsay thinks Hoving would be "a superb mayor of this city. He'd be so good at it, and so many people are going to know it that he might find it hard to avoid."

Hoving, however, won't leave the Met soon. "I'm sure as hell gonna be around, by God, until the plan for the new museum is finished," he promises. "I'll be there to see the Grand Old Lady sweep gloriously, spiritually, democratically, and slightly face-lifted into her second century. Jim Rorimer said that if more decent toilets made it easier to see Titians, then the Met should have more toilets. We'll have a lot more toilets for the Titians. We'll have them for Titian, Dendur, Rosenquist and Harlem."