

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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FOR RELEASE Saturday P.M. or
Sunday A.M., November 9 or 10, 1946

In reply to the letter sent by Stuart Davis and Paul Burlin, and signed by a number of other prominent artists, to Nelson A. Rockefeller, President of the Museum of Modern Art, regarding the resignation of James Johnson Sweeney as Director of the Museum's Department of Painting and Sculpture, Mr. Rockefeller sent the following letter:

"October 31, 1946

"Dear Mr. Davis:

"This is to acknowledge the letter which I received yesterday afternoon from you and Mr. Burlin, written on behalf of a group of distinguished artists, concerning Mr. James Johnson Sweeney's resignation as Director of the Department of Painting and Sculpture of the Museum of Modern Art.

"When his letter of resignation was first received, I had two long conversations with Mr. Sweeney in which I endeavored to persuade him to withdraw his resignation. Unfortunately, however, I was unsuccessful as he was reluctant to function as Director of the Department of Painting and Sculpture within the revised administrative structure of the Museum as recently determined and approved by the Board of Trustees. At the meeting of the Board the following week, Mr. Sweeney's letter of resignation was brought before the Trustees and it was unanimously voted to defer action. Since that meeting I regret to say it has not been possible to work out an agreement and some weeks ago Mr. Sweeney in fact carried his resignation into effect by withdrawing from his duties within the Museum with the exception of his work on the catalog for the Henry Moore exhibition.

"Yesterday, when your letter arrived, I raised the question with the Executive Committee at its scheduled meeting, and the members regretfully came to the conclusion that no further purpose could be served by keeping the matter in abeyance. Therefore, I was instructed to write Mr. Sweeney expressing the Museum's sincere regret at his resignation, and deep appreciation for his distinguished service to the cause which the Museum represents. It is our earnest hope that Mr. Sweeney will continue to participate actively in the councils of the Museum and that we will continue to have the benefit of his advice as well as the pleasure of association with him.

"Your interest and thoughtful communication are greatly appreciated and I can assure you that all of us deeply regret the termination of Mr. Sweeney's association as Director of the Department of Painting and Sculpture.

"Sincerely,

(signed) Nelson A. Rockefeller

President
of the Museum of Modern Art"