

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

11 WEST 53 STREET, NEW YORK 19, N. Y.

TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900

No. 57

City Desk - NY Daily
Beckley + Knox

FOR RELEASE: SATURDAY,
June 12, 1954

William A. M. Burden, President of the Museum of Modern Art, and Mrs. Burden will leave New York by plane (TWA, Flight 950, lv. 5 p.m. for Paris) on Saturday, June 12, to attend the opening ceremonies at the U. S. Pavilion in the famous international art exhibition in Venice, which opens to the public this month. The Museum of Modern Art purchased the U. S. Pavilion this spring and has organized an exhibition of American paintings and sculpture to represent this country in the Biennale, one of the oldest and most famous international art exhibitions in the world.

A reception for officials of the Venice Biennale will be given at the U. S. Pavilion at noon on June 16 by Mr. Burden and René d'Harnoncourt, Director of the Museum of Modern Art, who is already in Venice. Art critics and other representatives of the press will view the show on June 15 and 16. The international jury of the Biennale meets on June 17 and 18 to award prizes. The exhibition will open to the public on June 19 remain on view until October 17.

The exhibition representing this country includes paintings by Ben Shahn and Willem de Kooning and sculpture by Gaston Lachaise, Ibram Lassaw and David Smith. More than 20 European and Latin American governments participate in these famous art shows which have been held in Venice every two years, except for the war period, since 1892.

The United States Pavilion is the only exhibition hall at the Venice Biennale which is not owned by a participating government. It was built in 1929 by a commercial art gallery which since the war delegated the selection of exhibitions to different art organizations and individuals. When the Museum of Modern Art announced this spring that it had bought the exhibition hall, Mr. Burden said that the purpose of the Museum's purchase was to insure the continuing representation of American art at these international exhibitions. In future years the Museum plans to ask other leading institutions to participate in organizing the shows.

The Venice Biennale is sponsored by the Italian Government for the purpose of bringing together noteworthy and significant examples of contemporary Italian and foreign art.