

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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American representation at the XXVIII Biennale Exhibition of International Art to be held in Venice in the summer of 1956 will be organized by the Art Institute of Chicago at the invitation of The Museum of Modern Art, which owns the U.S. pavilion, it was announced here today.

"Two years ago when we bought the pavilion," William A.M. Burden, President of The Museum of Modern Art, said, "we announced that we would ask other leading institutions in this country to cooperate in organizing future shows, in order to present as broad a representation of American art as possible at these renowned international exhibitions. Therefore, as we made the selection of painting and sculpture in 1954, we are now extending the first invitation to the Art Institute of Chicago, an outstanding museum from another part of the country."

Sponsored by the Italian government, the Venice Biennale is regarded as the most important exhibition of contemporary art in Europe, if not in the world. The famous international exhibitions have been held every two years since 1895 except for the war periods. Approximately 20 countries display their contemporary art at the Biennale in pavilions belonging to their respective governments. The United States pavilion is the only privately owned exhibition hall at the Biennale. Erected in 1930 by a New York art gallery, it was purchased by The Museum of Modern Art in 1954 in order to insure the continuous representation of art from this country. The purchase was made possible by the Museum's International Program, financed by a grant from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund. Under this program, the Museum has sent more than two dozen exhibitions of American art to Europe, Asia, Latin America and the Far East and circulated in the United States a number of major exhibition of art from abroad.

At the XXVII Biennale in 1954, the Museum presented an exhibition of work by 2 painters of widely contrasting tendencies, Willem de Kooning and Ben Shahn. Three sculptors, Gaston Lachaise, Ibram Lassaw and David Smith, were each represented by a major work. Ben Shahn won the highest purchase prize awarded by the international jury.