

THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL AT THE MUSEUM
MODERN ART

11 West 53 Street, New York 19, N.Y.
Telephone: Circle 5-8900

No. 4
FOR RELEASE:
Friday, April 25, 1958

U.S. SECTION OF 29TH VENICE BIENNALE UNDER AUSPICES OF INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL

Paintings by Mark Rothko and Mark Tobey and sculpture by David Smith and Seymour Lipton will represent the United States at the 29th Biennale art exhibition on view in Venice from June 14 to October 19. The American section, to be sent abroad under the auspices of the International Council at The Museum of Modern Art, has been organized by the Museum's International Program. Porter A. McCray, Director of the International Program, will serve as U.S. Commissioner.

Twenty-seven countries have announced their participation in this year's Biennale which is expected to be the largest since this famous exhibition was inaugurated in 1895. Numerous prizes offered by public and private organizations will be awarded by an international jury.

The 36 paintings by the West Coast artist Mark Tobey included in the American section were mostly executed within the past 15 years. Mark Rothko of New York will be represented by 10 recent canvases. The 13 sculptures by Seymour Lipton and 15 by David Smith were completed during the 1950's.

Sam Hunter, Associate Curator of Painting and Sculpture at The Museum of Modern Art, selected the works by Rothko and Smith. The paintings by Tobey and sculpture by Lipton were chosen by Frank O'Hara of the staff of the International Program.

The U.S. Pavilion is the only one at the Venice Biennale which is privately owned. Others belong to the various governments participating. Erected in 1930 by a New York art gallery, the U.S. Pavilion was purchased by The Museum of Modern Art in order to ensure continuous representation of art from this country at the oldest and most famous recurrent international exhibition in Europe.

At the 27th Biennale in 1954 The Museum of Modern Art presented one-man shows by Willem deKooning and Ben Shahn while three sculptors, Gaston Lachaise, Ibram Lassaw and David Smith were each represented by a major work. At the 28th Biennale in 1956, the Art Institute of Chicago at the invitation of The Museum of Modern Art organized the U.S. exhibition, "American Artists Paint the City."

The International Council at The Museum of Modern Art consists of art patrons and community leaders from various parts of the United States. Mr. August Heckscher is Chairman and Mrs. Bliss Parkinson, President. The Council was incorporated in 1956 to encourage international exchange of the arts and assumed sponsorship of the International Program in July last year. Among the more than 20 shows currently touring abroad under its auspices are two large exhibitions of paintings by American artists: The New American Painting, which inaugurated a year-long tour in Basel on April 19, and a one-man show by the late Jackson Pollock, recently seen in Rome and also now on view in Basel.

For further information contact Elizabeth Shaw, Publicity Director, Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, NY. CI 5-8900.