January 12, 1944.

TO Art Editors
City Editors

Dear Sirs:

You are invited to come or send a representative to

PRESS PREVIEW of
Twelve New Acquisitions of American Painting

Tuesday, January 18
2 to 6 P. M.

at the Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53 Street

The exhibition will open to the public Wednesday, January 19th.

For further information please telephone me at Circle 5-8900.

Sincerely yours,

Sarah Newmeyer
Publicity Director
Twelve paintings recently acquired by the Museum of Modern Art will be put on exhibition in the Museum's New Acquisitions Gallery beginning Wednesday, January 19. The twelve artists whose work will be shown are all now or about to become American citizens; four of them were born abroad: two in Italy, one in Scotland and one in Russia.

The eldest artist represented in the exhibition is Lyonel Feininger. He was born in New York in 1871 but lived for many years in Germany, where he was a professor at the Bauhaus from 1919 until 1933. He now lives in New York. The youngest is Junius Redwood, Negro artist of twenty-seven now in the United States Navy. Born in Columbus, Ohio, he went to school at Hampton, Virginia. He lived in New York from 1936 until 1940, where he attended the WPA Art Center and, for a few weeks, the National Academy of Design. His greatest progress in art was made after his return to Hampton where he worked under Dr. Viktor Lowenfeld, head of the Art Department at Hampton Institute.

Born in Scotland in 1880, Matthew Barnes came to the United States in 1904. Since 1906 he has lived in San Francisco. He is represented in the exhibition by High Peak. The paintings by the two artists born in Italy are Festival by Francesco Cristofanetti and Factories by Joseph Stella. The Cristofanetti painting is the gift of the Advisory Committee; the other four paintings have been acquired through the Museum's Purchase Fund.

The complete list of new acquisitions is as follows:

BARNES, Matthew. High Peak, oil, 1936. Purchase Fund
BERMAN, Eugene. The Tower in the Quarry, oil on cardboard, 1934. Gift of Briggs W. Buchanan
BURLIN, Paul. Fallen Angel, oil, 1943. Purchase Fund
CRISTOFANETTI, Francesco. Festival, oil. Gift of the Advisory Committee
FEININGER, Lyonel. Steamer Odin, oil, 1927. Purchase Fund
GROSSER, Maurice. The Puchcart, oil, 1942. Gift of Briggs W. Buchanan
JULES, Morvin. The Little Presser, oil, 1943. Purchase Fund
In an article which will be published in the February issue of the Museum Bulletin, James Thrall Soby, Director of the Department of Painting and Sculpture, comments on these twelve new acquisitions as follows:

"In approach they are variously realist, romantic, expressionist and abstract, and some of them belong in more than one of these elusive categories. Among them are works by two older American artists whom we have long wanted to represent adequately in the Collection: Lyonel Feininger and Joseph Stella. Feininger's Steamer Odin carries the mark of his seemingly contradictory, but nonetheless rewarding, devotion to Cubism on the one hand and to the Baltic seascapes of the 19th century German Romantic Caspar David Friedrich, on the other. Yet the picture is extremely personal in stylistic and emotional content, and is one of the key works by an American whose fame in his homeland lags shamefully behind his reputation abroad. Joseph Stella's Factories is equally important to the Collection. Stella was one of the pioneers in the anti-academic revolt which sprang from the Armory Show. He was one of the first American artists to convert the industrial scene to an abstract order, as exemplified with considerable power in Factories.

"Paul Burlin is often described as a painter's painter, yet the rich chromatics and festive abandon of Fallen Angel are readily enjoyable by the layman. The picture is a small one but it is also an exceptionally pure distillate of Burlin's Expressionism. Cristofanelli's Festival is no less a fantasy, considering that its subject is Coney Island, but here the thick structural impasto and black contours of Burlin's canvas are replaced by warm, Italian ribbons of color, weaving upward from the foreground and forming a screen to the clustered glare of the midway. Maud Morgan's Musical Squash is a handsome arrangement in the Post-Cubist decorative tradition.

"Three of the acquisitions are patently romantic and among themselves provide interesting contrasts. In Matthew Barnes' High Peak, reality is arbitrarily transformed into a Ryderesque chimera of stylized landscape, ghostly architecture and moonlight. Walter Stuempfig, on the other hand, in Cape May has attempted the perhaps more difficult task of giving the actual American landscape a lyric form, and has reacted against the blunt reportage of the American Scene movement which was often so crude in pictorial grammar. His work is related in spirit to that of the former Parisian Neo-Romantic, Eugene Berman, who in 1927-28 began to interpret romantically the open-air palace which is the countryside of Italy, and in 1933-34 completed a fine series of landscapes at Les Baux, near Avignon. Of the latter series, Tower in the Quarry is an outstanding example.

"Both Maurice Grosser's The Pushcart and Mervin Jules' The Little Presser are realistic documents of American life by comparison with the works of Barnes and Stuempfig mentioned above. But in Night Scene by the young Negro painter, Junius Redwood, and in The Blue Doll by Alton Pickens, reality is merely a point of departure for 'studio' invention. As is Redwood's usual practice, his painting was worked up from sketches. The subtle opposition of round figures and sack to the stern horizontals of the cart, the deft balance of broad highlights, the freshness of color - these are qualities which artists of far longer training might envy. But what
gives the picture its final distinction is its dignity of conception and its proud simplicity and conviction. Alton Pickens' The Blue Doll is said by the artist to have been inspired by the sight of children burning their dolls on the streets of New York. But the picture hints of darker matters than this, of witchcraft and the ancient magic of the effigy pierced and burned. It is an extraordinarily forceful image, executed in a technique and spirit which recall German masters of the Grünewald tradition."

The new acquisitions will be on exhibition from Wednesday, January 19, through Sunday, March 19.