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The Department of the Interior has brought together the most comprehensive collection of twentieth century American Indian paintings, sculpture and handicrafts ever assembled to premier the reopening of the Department's gallery and museum May 11.

The exhibit will include paintings from the priceless collection of the late William and Leslie Van Ness Denman, patrons of Indian art for several decades; Tell-known contemporary American Indian artists; and a selection of student art contributed by schools operated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

The Departmental gallery, a feature of the Interior Department's main building at 18th and C Streets, NW., had for the past several years been used as storage and office space until Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall requested that it be reactivated as a museum for the American people.

The Secretary and Mrs. Udall have extended invitations to more than 500 prominent men and women throughout the country to attend the opening reception, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., Monday, May 11.

A briefing for the press will take place between 5:00 and 6:00 p.m. of the same evening.

The Indian art exhibit will be open to the public weekdays between May 12 and October 2.

FACT SHEET DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR GALLERY EXHIBIT "SCHOOLS OF AMERICAN AND ESKIMO INDIAN ART"

STUDENT ART COLLECTION

Within the 284 schools operated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Indian students from Florida to Alaska have contributed paintings, wood sculptures, and ceramics and craft items. Most notable in this grouping is the collection of wall hangings, paintings, pottery and carvings created by Indian students now attending the Institute of American Indian Art, a technical school at Santa Fe, New Mexico. These items were designed to decorate the Miccosukee tribal center in southwest Florida, a project currently under construction. Several of the student contributors have already attained prominence in national exhibits. Award-winners to be represented in the student show include Larry Bird (Laguna), Hank Gobin (Snohomish), and Harry Walters (Navajo), ceramic artists; Arden Hosetmsavit (Apache), Benedict Snowball (Eskimo) and Douglas Crowder (Choctaw), sculptors; Larry Bird (Laguna) and Harry Walters (Navajo), painters; and Elaine Rice (Seneca) and Eliza Vigil (Tesuque), weavers.

THE DENMAN COLLECTION

William Denman, cowboy, lawyer, judge and art lover, and his wife, Leslie Van Ness, acquired during their lifetimes a significant collection of paintings by American Indians, most of whom attained their prominence during the first half of the twentieth century. Fifty-nine paintings from the Denman collection will be on exhibit, most of them by Indians of the Southwest and representative of the early exponents of modern Indian art, largely religious in theme and stylized in motif. Artists in the Denman group include Fred Kabotie, Ma-pe-Wi, Awa Tsireh, Monroe Tsa-toke, Harrison Begay, Pableta Velarde,

and Allen Houser