

PRESS

FOR RELEASE

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1941

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT TO DEDICATE NATIONAL GALLERY  
OF ART MARCH 17, 1941

On March 17, in the presence of government dignitaries and officials of the Nation's leading academic and cultural institutions, the President of the United States will dedicate the new National Gallery of Art. On Tuesday, March 18, the Gallery will be open to the general public.

The dedication ceremony will be brief and will be in keeping with the dignity and importance of the structure. Arrangements are being made to broadcast the President's dedication address and other features of the twenty-five minute program through a nationwide hookup.

The ceremonies will take place at one end of the large central corridors looking toward the main rotunda, with its twenty-four dark green Italian marble columns, in a setting surrounded by works of art in the Mellon and Kress collections. In the center of the rotunda is a grey-rose colored marble fountain, surmounted by the famous bronze figure of Mercury by Giovanni Bologna. Nearby, in the garden courts decorated with flowers, orchestras from the Marine Band will play during the evening.

Under construction for almost four years, an enduring and significant repository for art treasures, the Gallery is complete in every detail. The building, which was made possible by the gift of funds provided by the late Andrew W. Mellon, has been carried to completion under the direction of Paul Mellon, Donald D. Shepard and David K. E. Bruce, Trustees of the A. W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust.

Official presentation of the gift will be made by Paul Mellon, son of the donor. In addition to the Gallery itself, the Mellon gift also includes 126 paintings and 26 pieces of sculpture gathered from some of the most notable world collections.

Samuel H. Kress, prominent business executive, will also participate in the ceremonies and will present to the Nation his collection of Italian art, consisting of 375 paintings and 18 pieces of sculpture. The Kress gift is one of the most noteworthy private collections of Italian art in existence.

Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes, who serves as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the National Gallery of Art, will introduce President Roosevelt. In acknowledging the gifts to the nation the President will deliver a brief acceptance address.

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