

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WASHINGTON, D. C.

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NEWS RELEASE

DATE FIXED FOR OPENING OF THE WIDENER COLLECTION

The National Gallery of Art announced today that the famous Widener Collection, recently given to the Nation by Mr. Joseph E. Widener, is now being installed at the Gallery and will be opened for public inspection on Sunday afternoon, December 20th, at three o'clock.

It was Mr. Widener's desire that the public be allowed to enjoy this great collection at the earliest possible date. A day and hour have accordingly been fixed which will make it possible for many servicemen, war-workers and others, who are able to visit the Gallery only during the weekend, to have their first view of the collection at that time and during the ensuing Christmas Season.

Among the Italian paintings is the celebrated Feast of the Gods by Giovanni Bellini; three great works of Titian; and the Small Cowper Madonna by Raphael. There are in the collection fourteen paintings by Rembrandt, including The Mill, considered by connoisseurs one of the greatest landscapes in the history of art; and the pair of portraits, formerly in the Youssoupoff Collection, which rank among Rembrandt's noblest interpretations of character.

There are also the famous Van Dyck portraits, among which are supreme examples of his Genoese period; and two superb paintings by Vermeer as well as fine examples of the work of English painters such as Gainsborough, Reynolds, Romney, Turner and Constable. The sculpture includes the marble statue of the David of the Casa Martelli, by Donatello, and works by Desiderio da Settignano, and others.

Mr. Widener, accompanied by members of his family, will come from his home, Lynnewood Hall at Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, for the occasion. Preceding the opening, he will be entertained at luncheon by the Director of the National Gallery and Mrs. David E. Finley, at their home in Georgetown. Their guests will also include the Chief Justice of the United States and Mrs. Harlan Fiske Stone, who will afterward accompany Mr. Widener to the Gallery. The Chief Justice is ex officio chairman of the Board of Trustees of the National Gallery.

A group of servicemen, some of whom have returned from service overseas, will be special guests that evening at supper at the Gallery, and will be given an opportunity to see the Widener Collection and to attend the concert by symphony orchestra players to be held in the East Garden Court at eight o'clock.

The Gallery will be open to the public, as usual on Sunday, from 2:00 to 10:00 p.m.