

National Gallery of Art
Washington, D. C.

FOR RELEASE
FEBRUARY 28, 1943

Exhibition of French 19th and 20th Century Drawings and Water Colors

An important collection of French Nineteenth and Twentieth Century drawings and water colors from the Louvre, from other French museums, and from individual owners, will be placed on exhibition at the National Gallery of Art on February 28th.

This collection is a part of a larger collection of French Nineteenth Century oil paintings which has been on exhibition at the Gallery during the past year. Like the oil paintings, these water colors, and drawings were selected by M. René Huyghe, Curator of Paintings at the Musée du Louvre, and have been presented in this country under the supervision of René Battigne. They represent French painting of the last one hundred and fifty years -- from David to Matisse. This includes the whole of the Nineteenth Century, which M. Huyghe believes is the greatest century of French art.

Individualism is the outstanding characteristic of this period, during which the French genius in art reveals itself fully. The varied qualities of earlier French masters like, Poussin, Claude, and Watteau, are carried on by Ingres, Corot, and Renoir, but enriched by contributions of a new era. Van Gogh's emotional intensity and Cézanne's simplification of form are continued by artists such as Rouault, and Picasso.

David, the founder of classicism is represented in the exhibition by a wash drawing for the famous painting of, "The Sabines"; his great pupil, Ingres, by one of his finest pencil

drawings, "The Stamaty Family" of 1818. Ingres, who ranks among the great draftsmen of European art, was also one of the first to use the newly developed lead pencil.

Géricault, the fountain head of Romanticism, and Delacroix, the acknowledged leader of the Romantic School, are represented by important drawings. Théodore Rousseau, Millet, Corot, and Daumier are also included; and there are characteristic examples by the Impressionists from Manet to Signac. Rodin's draftsmanship is illustrated by a pencil and water color drawing pulsating with life, and his well known pupil, Bourdelle, by a strong portrait in opaque water color.

The striking individuality of the Twentieth Century stands out clearly in drawings by Matisse and Picasso, and in larger water colors by Dufy and Aujame.

The contemporary trend toward unreality is suggested by one of Lurcat's landscapes in opaque water color entitled, "The Fishermen." With it, the development, which begins with classicism, is brought up-to-date with surrealism.