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NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART,
WASHINGTON, D. C.

FOR RELEASE: IMMEDIATELY

WASHINGTON, March 31: More than a quarter of a million people have viewed the collection of captured German paintings on display at the National Gallery of Art since the exhibition opened on March 17, it was announced today at the Gallery. This is believed to be an all-time high, the greatest attendance ever recorded for any museum or gallery in a comparable period of time.

The 250,000th visitor, who entered the National Gallery this afternoon, was the Rev. Philip J. Jensen, Rector of St. Thomas's Church, Garrison Forest, Maryland, and Mrs. Jensen, his wife, who was the 250,001st. Both expressed keen appreciation of the current exhibition of 202 paintings, mainly from the Kaiser Friedrich Museum, which are being shown pending their return to Germany.

The attendance at this exhibition continues to climb at a rate exceeding 16,000 daily. The record for a single day was 35,593 on Sunday, March 21st. It is estimated that more than half the people are visitors to Washington from other parts of the country. Almost every State in the Union is represented daily among the visitors.

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Still visible to visitors, the remains of salt deposits on three of the paintings provided a reminder of the dramatic war-time history of this German art, which was discovered by the American Army in April 1945, in the salt mines at Merkers, Germany. These great paintings from the Berlin museums were brought to the United States for safekeeping, and have been stored in an air-conditioned vault in the National Gallery since December, 1945. This collection was placed on exhibition March 17, at the request of the Department of the Army, and the exhibit will continue through April 18th.

Nationwide interest in the exhibition has been shown by inquiries received from every section of the United States, and visitors from other countries add an international aspect to one of the greatest art displays of this generation. In conjunction with the National Gallery collection, the American public can see for the first time under one roof no less than 8 Raphaels, 38 Rembrandts, 12 Botticellis, 7 Vermeers, 17 Titians, 6 van Eycks, 14 Frans Hals, 8 van der Weydens and 5 Memlings.

The Army has assigned a detachment of military police to supplement the Gallery's regular guard force in the eight rooms where the paintings are exhibited. Daily lectures on some aspect of the exhibition are given by members of the Gallery staff.

Gallery visiting hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays, and 2 p.m. to 10 p.m. on Sundays. There is no charge for admission.

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