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NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART
WASHINGTON, D. C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WASHINGTON, January 11: David E. Finley, Director of the National Gallery of Art, announced today that the famous statue representing David by Michelangelo from the Bargello Museum, Florence, which has been loaned to the National Gallery of Art by the Italian Government, will be placed on public exhibition Sunday afternoon, January 16th, in the presence of the Italian Ambassador, Signor Tarchiani, and the Acting Secretary of State, Mr. Lovett. The statue has been installed alone in the large room opening from the West Sculpture Hall into the Garden Court. Its installation, completed in time for President Truman's Inaugural Reception to be held in the Gallery on January 20th, reaffirms the friendship and the cultural ties that exist between the peoples of Italy and the United States.

The journey of this great masterpiece to this country has been attended by unusual honors. It was sent from Florence to Naples and there placed on board the United States cruiser, Grand Canyon, in the presence of representatives of the Italian Government and of the American Embassy in Rome. On arriving in Norfolk, Virginia, it was brought to Washington by a United States Naval convoy and received at the National Gallery by a guard of honor of United States Marines, by representatives of the Italian Embassy in Washington, and officers of the National Gallery.

Mr. Finley said: "This friendly and generous gesture which Italy has made will be deeply appreciated by the American people, who will now have an opportunity to see in this country a full-length statue in the round by Italy's greatest sculptor."

Mr. Finley added: "It is altogether fitting that the love of freedom, which Michelangelo felt so intensely as a man and the anti-materialistic beliefs which he declared so forcefully as an artist, should be reasserted at this time. Americans who might otherwise never see an original work from Michelangelo's hand will sense an ideal which they share with their contemporaries in Italy and with lovers of freedom everywhere--an ideal that has lost nothing of its force or its appeal during all the intervening centuries since Michelangelo left this statement in stone for us to read."