

~~Mr. Cowens~~  
SRS

NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

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WASHINGTON, April 30: David E. Finley, Director of the National Gallery, announced today the recent acquisition of three important American paintings for the Gallery. A portrait by Whistler, entitled Head of a Girl, and a figure painting by Sargent, called Repose, are the generous gift of Mr. Curt Reisinger of New York. The third painting, Catherine, by Robert Henri, depicting a little Irish girl, was generously donated by Mr. Oscar Doyle Johnson of Wynnewood, Pennsylvania, in memory of his father and mother.

"The beautiful portrait by Whistler is an important addition to our collection of works of this great American artist," Mr. Finley said. "Also the brilliant paintings by Sargent and Henri are particularly welcome, as these distinguished American painters have not been represented until now in the collection."

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John Walker, Chief Curator of the National Gallery, in discussing these paintings, said that the Head of a Girl by Whistler belonged to the artist's late period, about 1895, when Whistler would often set a rather dimly lighted face against a red-brown background.

"Such pictures were not only works of art but also demonstrations of an aesthetic theory set forth in The Gentle Art of Making Enemies," Mr. Walker said. "In Whistler's words, 'Could the people be induced to turn their eyes but for a moment . . . upon their fellow creatures as they pass in the Gallery, they might be made dimly to perceive . . . how quiet in color they are, how gray, how low in tone.'"

The Sargent painting, Repose, Mr. Walker pointed out, is signed and dated 1911. It represents with Sargent's amazing sensitiveness to the atmosphere of the epoch, a lady in a white dress resting on a sofa. It is brilliantly, almost gaily painted, and full of bright, cool tones, whites, greens and yellows. The actual model was Madame Michel, Sargent's niece.

Commenting on the Henri portrait, Mr. Walker said that it was painted during the three summer months of 1913 when Henri lived at Croaghan, County Mayo, Ireland, and produced some of his finest work. "His studio," Mr. Walker said, "was in the famous Corrymore house built by the Captain Boycott whose name has become a dictionary word. There, in

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the Boycott house, the Irish people from the fishing settlement a mile away would pose for Henri and talk Gaelic.

Catherine herself was a fisherman's daughter."

The Whistler and the Sargent paintings were last exhibited to a large public at the New York World's Fair in 1940. The Henri portrait is being placed on exhibition at the National Gallery to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of Henri's death.

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