

NATIONAL GALLERY } ART
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Washington, December 22: David E. Finley, Director of the National Gallery of Art, announced today that the great tondo of The Adoration of the Magi by Fra Angelico and Fra Filippo Lippi, which was shown for a short time at the Tenth Anniversary of the Gallery in 1951, will be placed on view Tuesday, December 21st for 3 weeks. The painting is being shown in honor of the publication of Signs and Symbols of Christian Art by The Reverend George Ferguson, a book on the meaning of Christian art which was inspired by Mr. Rush H. Kress, Vice President of the Samuel H. Kress Foundation. The Kress Foundation has recently given this painting and many other newly acquired masterpieces to the National Gallery. These works of art will be placed on permanent view on the 17th of March, 1956, to celebrate the Fifteenth Anniversary of the inauguration of the National Gallery.

Announcements of some of these gifts will be made periodically during 1955 and 1956. "This donation," Mr. Finley said, "is among the most important ever received by the National Gallery of Art. It represents the third addition to the Kress Collection at the Gallery. It comprises more than 150 great paintings and ~~between~~ ^{over} 20 ~~and~~ fine examples of sculpture, as well as the Dreyfus Collection of small bronzes, plaquettes, and medals, which is ranked among the greatest collections in this field in the world."

Speaking of the tondo of The Adoration of the Magi by Fra Angelico and Fra Filippo Lippi, John Walker, Chief Curator of the National Gallery said, "Few works of art indicate more clearly the past and future of painting than this supreme masterpiece, once among the principal glories of the Cook Collection in England. At first the painting may seem a conservative work with its rich patterns, its flowing lines, and its flower-like colors. In its spirit of devotion it is especially suggestive of the Middle Ages. But this noble panel also portends the future. The row of naked youths who watch the procession are an early indication of that preoccupation with human anatomy which was to obsess Florentine artists until it reached its climax in the nudes of Michelangelo. And the scene in the stable, this glimpse of everyday life, how it foretells the flowering of genre painting at a still later date! It is interesting to note the degree to which Florentine painting for the next 50 years fell under the spell of the two monks who collaborated on this Adoration of the Magi. It is almost as though the Kress Collection tondo were a blossom which seeded a whole garden of art."