

Mr. Cairns

NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART
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A priceless collection of Italian paintings and sculpture, lent by the Republic of Italy, will open at the National Gallery of Art in Washington on November 21, John Walker, Director of the National Gallery of Art, announced today. The exhibition of "Masterpieces of the Italian Renaissance" will represent the greatest single collection of Italy's fifteenth and sixteenth century masters ever to be sent to the United States.

After a six-week exhibition at the National Gallery, closing December 31, "Masterpieces of the Italian Renaissance" will be shown at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in January and February. The collection will then be returned to Italy.

The agreement between the Republic of Italy and the two galleries for the exhibition will be signed Monday morning (today) at the Italian Embassy in Washington. Signing for Italy will be the Republic's Ambassador to the United States, His Excellency Manlio Brosio. The National Gallery will be represented by its Secretary, Huntington Cairns, and the Metropolitan by its Director, James Rorimer.

The exhibition will be brought from Italy to this country by the Military Sea Transport Service, through the courtesy of the United States Navy.

This collection of Italian Renaissance masterpieces represents a unique panorama of a high point of Western artistic tradition. A visitor to Europe, for example, would have to seek out galleries from the north of Italy to Sicily to see all of these important works. The collection comes from fifteen galleries in ten cities, including such famed museums as the Uffizi and Pitti Palace in Florence and the Borghese in Rome.

Many of the works are world famous. The two Raphaels included, The Madonna of the Chair and La Donna Velata (the Lady with a Veil), were done when the painter had reached full maturity of style. La Donna Velata is supposedly a painting of the baker's daughter of whom Vasari wrote, "a woman of his, whom Raphael loved till his death, and of whom he made a beautiful portrait, which seems to be really alive."

Michelangelo's powerful marble bust, Brutus, comes from the National Museum (Bargello) in Florence. On its pedestal is an inscription of dramatic import: "While he was hewing the effigy of Brutus out of the marble, he came upon the spirit of crime and the artist stopped."

Pallas and the Centaur, by Botticelli, is associated with his similar mythological allegories, Primavera and Birth of Venus. Some critics have seen in this picture an allegory of the audacious and successful mission of Lorenzo de' Medici to Naples where he succeeded with remarkable ability in separating the king from his close league with the Pope against Florence, thus reestablishing peace.

Cellini's bronze model for Perseus is a magnificent small version of his large statue. In his celebrated "Life" Benvenuto Cellini wrote of the reception the final work received, saying, "Now it pleased my glorious Lord and immortal God that at last I brought the whole work to completion: and on a certain Thursday morning I exposed it to the public gaze. Immediately, before the sun was fully in the heavens, there assembled such a multitude of people that no words could describe them. All with one voice contended which should praise it most."

Other well-known works include Fra Angelico's The Marriage of the Virgin, Botticelli's Madonna of the Roses, Titian's The Concert, and Correggio's The Rest on the Flight into Egypt. Among the other fifteenth and sixteenth century masters represented are: Masaccio, Piero Della Francesca, Fra Filippo Lippi, Pollaiuolo, Filippino Lippi, Piero di Cosimo, Mantegna, Giovanni Bellini, Antonello da Messina, Perugino, Lotto, Veronese, Giorgione, and Donatello.

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A list of the paintings and sculptures accompanies this release.

MASTERPIECES OF THE ITALIAN RENAISSANCE

Lent by the Republic of Italy

To be shown at the National Gallery of Art,
Washington, D. C.

November 21 through December 31, 1956

The paintings and sculptures in the exhibition:

- MASACCIO - St. Paul - Pisa, National Museum
FRA ANGELICO - The Marriage of the Virgin - Florence, Museum
of San Marco
PIERO DELLA FRANCESCA - St. Jerome with a Donor - Venice, Academy
FRA FILIPPO LIPPI - Madonna - Florence, Pitti Palace
POLLAIUOLO - Portrait of Galeazzo Maria Sforza - Florence, Uffizi
BOTTICELLI - Pallas and the Centaur - Florence, Uffizi
BOTTICELLI - Madonna of the Roses - Florence, Uffizi
FILIPPINO LIPPI - The Death of Lucretia - Florence, Pitti Palace
FRANCESCO DI GIORGIO - Annunciation - Siena, Gallery
SIGNORELLI - The Flagellation - Milan, Brera Gallery
PIERO DI COSIMO - Perseus Freeing Andromeda - Florence, Uffizi
BOCCATI - Madonna and Child with Angels - Perugia, Gallery
MANTEGNA - Madonna - Milan, Poldi Pezzoli Museum
FOPPA - Madonna - Milan, Poldi Pezzoli Museum
GIOVANNI BELLINI - Madonna - Bergamo, Carrara Academy
ANTONELLO DA MESSINA - Portrait of a Man - Cefalù, Municipal
Museum
PERUGINO - Portrait of Don Baldassarre, Florence, Uffizi
TURA - Pieta - Venice, Correr Museum
PINTORICCHIO - The Holy Family - Siena, Gallery
BRAMANTINO - The Holy Family - Milan, Brera Gallery
RAPHAEL - La Donna Velata (the Lady with a Veil) - Florence,
Pitti Palace
RAPHAEL - Madonna of the Chair - Florence, Pitti Palace
TITIAN - The Concert - Florence, Pitti Palace
LOTTO - Portrait of a Man - Rome, Borghese Gallery
TITIAN - Portrait of Vincenzo Mosti - Florence, Pitti Palace
CORREGGIO - The Rest on the Flight into Egypt, Florence, Uffizi
CORREGGIO - The Adoration of the Magi - Milan, Brera Gallery
VERONESE - Christ in the Garden - Milan, Brera Gallery
VERONESE - Venus and Mars - Turin, Sabauda Gallery
GIORGIONE - An Old Woman - Venice, Academy

SCULPTURE

- MICHELANGELO - Brutus - Florence, National Museum (Bargello)
DONATELLO - Crucifixion (Bronze relief) - Florence, National
Museum (Bargello)
CELLINI - Perseus (Bronze model) - Florence, National Museum
(Bargello)