

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

NEWS RELEASE

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Washington, D. C. September 1: John Walker, Director of the National Gallery of Art, today announced an exhibition of recent accessions to be opened at 2 p.m., September 6th in the Founder's Room, where it will remain on view for one month.

The exhibition consists of three important paintings bequeathed by Mrs. Edith Stuyvesant Gerry: THE TRAGEDIAN by Manet (for which a separate release has been issued) and two paintings by Whistler, a SELF-PORTRAIT and a portrait of GEORGE W. VANDERBILT.

The Manet is the famous full-length, life-size portrait of the actor Rouvière as Hamlet, which seemed at the time it was painted so revolutionary in style that it was refused at the Salon of 1866. Even when it was bought by George W. Vanderbilt, in 1902, it was considered a very unconventional acquisition.

Mr. Vanderbilt's foresight as a collector was matched by his judgment as a patron of artists of his own generation. In 1897 he commissioned Whistler, then fully as controversial as Manet had been in 1866, to paint his portrait. Like the Manet, it is full-length and life-size. Whistler was more interested in it, we are

(more)

told, than in any of his other portraits of men. He moved it about with him, from studio to studio for years, working at it whenever he and Mr. Vanderbilt happened to be together.

The SELF-PORTRAIT, a half-length, shows Whistler in an animated pose, as if engaged in one of his famous witty and acrimonious conversations.

All three paintings hung for many years in Mr. Vanderbilt's mansion "Biltmore", near Asheville, North Carolina, before being bequeathed to the Nation by his widow, Mrs. Gerry.

It is planned, according to Mr. Walker, to hold similar exhibitions from time to time in order to call special attention to the first showing of the Gallery's accessions.

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