

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

NEWS RELEASE

SIXTH STREET AT CONSTITUTION AVENUE NW WASHINGTON 25 DC • REpublic 7-4215 extension 248

FOR RELEASE Sunday Papers,
March 3, 1963

WASHINGTON, D. C., March 3, 1963. John Walker, Director of the National Gallery of Art, announced today that an exhibition of renderings from the Index of American Design will be held at the Gallery starting Sunday, March 3, in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Department of Labor.

The renderings will illustrate the tools, sometimes simple, often ingenious, used by Americans before the advent of mass production. They range from the functional simplicity of a plane designed by a pioneer in 1734 to the decorative ingenuity of a 19th-century "sewing bird" that held the work in its beak while providing a built-in pincushion. Hand instruments such as a cranberry harvesting scoop or an asparagus buncher will be shown, along with forerunners of the machine age such as a wooden printing press of about 1800 which, modeled after Ben Franklin's press, was the first printing machine on the west coast.

The Index of American Design is a collection of water color renderings of the crafts and folk arts in the United States from before 1700 until about 1900. The Index was a Federal art project under the WPA, started in the late 'thirties as a record of designs of artistic and historic significance.

The exhibition, which will take place in the east corridor of the Ground Floor, has been timed to coincide with the official celebration of the Department of Labor's anniversary on March 4.

- End -