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## JOSEPH WRIGHT OF DERBY EXHIBITION OPENS AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

WASHINGTON, D. C. November 15, 1969. A group of nineteen paintings and four drawings by Joseph Wright of Derby, a British artist only recently appreciated for the unique manner in which he captured the spirit of the early Industrial Revolution, will open at the National Gallery of Art on Sunday, November 23.

The exhibition is the third in a series devoted to individual artists drawn from the British paintings in the collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon. It follows the showings of the works of J. M. W. Turner and John Constable.

Wright was born into a period of change and new ideas. The Industrial Revolution, with its drab connotations today, was for Wright a thrilling venture into the unknown. He lived in Derby in the Midlands of England, one of the earliest centers of the new industrialism. His direct and unflattering style was suited to painting members of the industrial class, but not the aristocracy accustomed to the elegance of Reynolds and Gainsborough.

Ross Watson, in his introduction to the illustrated catalogue, says that while the public will be less familiar with Wright than with Turner and Constable, nevertheless his work shows striking

diversity and originality. Included in the body of his work are portraits, landscapes, scenes of industrial life, and night subjects. The last were particular favorites of Wright and seven of the paintings in the exhibition are of night scenes.

The novelty of scientific experience rarely has been expressed with such force as in The Blacksmith's Shop and The Orrery. The bright faces of those observing the orrery, a nineteenth-century apparatus for showing the motion of bodies in the solar system, are captured with refreshing individuality.

The Joseph Wright of Derby exhibition will remain on view at the Gallery through April 26, 1970.

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Catalogues, black-and-white photographs and color transparencies on loan for purposes of publication are available from William W. Morrison, Assistant to the Director, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C. 20565, Area Code 202, 737-4215, ext. 225.