

# NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

NEWS RELEASE

SIXTH STREET AT CONSTITUTION AVENUE NW WASHINGTON DC 20565 • 737-4215 extension 224

## NATIONAL GALLERY BEGINS "CIVILISATION" DISTRIBUTION TO SMALL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

WASHINGTON, D.C. November 18, 1970. "Civilisation," the outstanding thirteen-part film series on the cultural life of Western man, written and narrated by Kenneth Clark, will be distributed through the Extension Services of the National Gallery of Art, without charge, to colleges and universities in the Nation with fewer than 2,000 undergraduates.

J. Carter Brown, Director of the National Gallery, made the announcement today at a press conference at the Gallery attended by Lord Clark.

The distribution program, which enables the Gallery to purchase 25 16mm prints of the series, was made possible through matching grants totaling \$181,056 from the National Endowment for the Humanities and Xerox Corporation. Normal rental fee for the series would be \$1,000 to \$3,000, depending on audience size, and purchase price would be \$7,000 a set.

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It is estimated that some 1,700 institutions will be eligible to participate in the program, with an estimated annual audience of over three million.

The "Civilisation" series, originally prepared for the British Broadcasting Corporation, has drawn a total of more than 275,000 viewers to the National Gallery since November, 1969, when the series had its American premiere there. The entire series has been shown at the Gallery 95 times to date.

Distribution of "Civilisation" to small colleges will begin this month on a first-come, first-served basis. Each college will be asked to show each film twice, once for the general student body and once for the local community. No admission charge is permitted.

The distribution program has been designed to bring "Civilisation" to audiences located at some distance from major cultural resources, and to offer institutions a means of strengthening relations with their local communities by sponsoring the second showing for the general public. College presidents, rather than art, history or humanities departments, have been asked to sponsor the program, in order to emphasize its availability to the entire student body.

The distribution is under the supervision of W. Howard Adams, Assistant Administrator (Extension Service). Participating institutions will receive one segment of the thirteen-part film series

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each week. They will also receive a comprehensive study guide, prepared by art historian Richard McLanathan in consultation with the staff of the National Gallery. The guide contains notes to each program, listings of art works, poetry, music, and geographical and historical references figuring in the programs, as well as complete reading lists to supplement the films.

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For further press information contact Katherine Warwick, Assistant to the Director, or Alison Luchs, Public Information Office, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. 20565, area code 202, 737-4215, ext. 225.

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## FACT SHEET

### National Gallery's Distribution Program of "Civilisation" to Colleges and Universities, 1970-71

#### Program:

The National Gallery of Art, through its Extension Services, will distribute prints of the 13-part color film series "Civilisation," without charge, to colleges and universities throughout the nation with enrollments of fewer than 2,000 undergraduates. An estimated 1,300 institutions fall into this category.

Presidents of universities, colleges and junior colleges will be requested to sponsor the series for the general student body, rather than a particular department or discipline. Each film will be limited to two showings at each institution. In addition to the showing for its student body, each college will be requested to sponsor a second showing for its neighboring community.

#### Funding:

Matching grants totaling \$181,056 from the National Endowment for the Humanities and Xerox Corporation have enabled the National Gallery to purchase 25 16mm prints of the complete series from Time-Life Films, Inc.

#### Distribution:

In distributing "Civilisation," the Gallery seeks to encourage students and citizens to gain insight into Western civilization through historical perspective. The program is aimed at the broadest possible audiences, especially those with limited access to major cultural resources in urban centers.

Letters with application forms were mailed to qualifying colleges in mid-November. Applications returned from the colleges are being handled on a first-come, first-served basis.

Each institution will receive the films in sequence, one episode a week; afterwards, the films will be returned to the National Gallery for cleaning and inspection. Two-way shipping and insurance costs will be paid by the borrower.

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(Distribution -  
continued)

Participating institutions will also receive a study guide, prepared by art historian Richard McLanathan in consultation with the National Gallery staff. The guide contains notes to each program, listings of art works, poetry, music and geographical and historical references figuring in the programs, as well as reading lists to supplement all of the films. The study guide may also be purchased by the general public from the Gallery's Publications Rooms.

"Civilisation"  
at the  
National Gallery:  
AMERICAN PREMIERE

"Civilisation" had its U.S. premiere at the National Gallery in November of 1969. Nearly 20,000 people came the first day for a showing in the 300-seat auditorium. Since then there have been almost a hundred complete showings of the series at the Gallery, drawing more than 275,000 viewers. Some viewers came to see the entire series two or three times. A set of the films has been purchased by public subscription for regular showings in the Gallery auditorium. The Gallery also has available Lord Clark's book, Civilisation. This 360-page volume with 286 illustrations, 48 of which are in full color, is based on the author's narration for the film series.

The National  
Gallery's  
Extension  
Services:

The Extension Services of the National Gallery of Art, under the direction of W. Howard Adams, Assistant Administrator, will handle distribution of the films. Each year the Extension Service creates and lends exhibitions, films and slide and film strip lectures throughout the nation, last year reaching over 4,000,000 people in some 3,000 communities.

"Civilisation:"

"Civilisation," written and narrated for the British Broadcasting Corporation by Kenneth Clark, documents the ideas, events and particularly the arts of Western civilization from the fall of Rome through the twentieth century. Lord Clark, two producers and a three-man camera crew spent two years traveling through 11 countries to create the series. In Lord Clark's words, they tried "to define civilisation in terms of creative power and the enlargement of human faculties." The films' many subjects include the Vikings, Charlemagne, the Gothic Cathedrals, St. Francis of Assisi, the Renaissance and the Reformation, the baroque and rococo, bourgeois democracy in Holland and the Dutch master painters, the Enlightenment in Europe and America, romanticism and revolution in the 19th century, industrialism, and modern technology and materialism.

(MORE)

("Civilisation"-  
continued)

Periods and historical figures are evoked through art, architecture, newsreels, political satire, music, poetry, and history. All is elucidated and bound together by Lord Clark's commentaries, an avowedly personal interpretation by an experienced scholar.

Kenneth Clark:

Lord Clark of Saltwood has a long record of achievement in the fields of art history, education, and television. He was educated at Oxford, where he later was Slade professor of Fine Arts. He worked for two years with art historian Bernard Berenson in Florence. He has been director of the National Gallery, London (1934-45) and keeper of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. From 1953-60 he was chairman of the Arts Council of Great Britain, and for three of those years also chairman of the Independent Television Authority. He is the author of a number of books on art history and appreciation: The Gothic Revival, Landscape into Art, Piero della Francesca, Leonardo da Vinci, Rembrandt and the Italian Renaissance, and The Nude: A Study in Ideal Form, derived from the A.W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts, delivered at the National Gallery in 1953.

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