

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

NEWS RELEASE

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NATIONAL GALLERY SALUTES CENTENNIALS OF METROPOLITAN AND BOSTON MUSEUMS

WASHINGTON, D.C. November 25, 1970. An exhibition of some of the nation's finest American paintings, honoring the centennials of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, will open at the National Gallery of Art on November 30 before making a transcontinental trip to the mid- and far-western regions of the United States.

A selection of 50 pictures from the collections of each of the centennial celebrating museums has been made by Thomas Maytham, associate director of the Seattle Art Museum.

J. Carter Brown, Director of the National Gallery, saluted the exhibition as marking the extraordinary advance of all American museums during the past one hundred years and added: "This is a great event, and we are delighted with the opportunity to honor these two outstanding museums and their magnificent collections. We are also grateful that they have consented to lend so many of their finest American pictures."

"While the course of American painting can be followed, even

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in detail, in either the Boston or Metropolitan collection, if combined they tend to supplement rather than duplicate each other," Mr. Maytham has written in the illustrated catalog of the exhibition that he prepared.

The exhibition surveys American paintings from the seventeenth century to the present. The selections range chronologically from an anonymous seventeenth century portrait, Robert Gibbs (Boston) to a modern Kenneth Noland color painting (Boston) and Willem de Kooning's Easter Monday (Metropolitan).

Each museum has contributed portraits by Gilbert Stuart, the leading Colonial portrait painter, a pupil of Benjamin West. West himself is represented by Moses Viewing the Promised Land (Metropolitan). Highlights also include John Singleton Copley's Watson and the Shark (Boston).

The earliest major romantic painter, Washington Allston, is represented by two of his finest works, Moonlit Landscape and Elijah in the Desert, both from Boston.

The Hudson River School of landscape painters, important in the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century, figures in the exhibition through works of Thomas Cole, Asher B. Durand, Jasper Francis Cropsey and Frederic Church. This group established what is broadly considered to be the first American school of painting--romantic and naturalistic at the same time.

The master genre painters of the mid-nineteenth century, William Sidney Mount, George Caleb Bingham and Eastman Johnson, are also represented.

The famed Madame X by John Singer Sargent comes from the Metropolitan, and Boston has lent two other works by the artist. Boston has also lent The Lagoon, Venice by Sargent's fellow expatriate, James McNeill Whistler.

Four works by Winslow Homer and three by Thomas Eakins represent the high point of the American realist tradition. Trompe l'oeil, the popular form of realist art in the late nineteenth century, appears in the exhibition in Poor Man's Store (Boston) by Frederick Peto, Old Models (Boston) and The Artist's Card Rack (Metropolitan) by William Harnett.

Works by leading American impressionists, Childe Hassam, Mary Cassatt and John Twachtman are also included.

Major twentieth century paintings in the exhibition include Emma and Her Children (Boston) by George Bellows, Regler Church, Erfurt (Boston) by Lyonel Feininger, A Crow Flew By (Metropolitan) by Andrew Wyeth, Probst I (Boston) by Franz Kline, Elegy to the Spanish Republic, 70 (Metropolitan) by Robert Motherwell, and Clown with a Black Wig (Metropolitan) by Walt Kuhn.

The exhibition will remain on view at the National Gallery through January 3. It will be seen at the City Art Museum of St. Louis from January 28 through March 7 and finally at the Seattle Art Museum from March 25 through May 9.

In a joint preface to the exhibition catalog, directors Perry T. Rathbone of the Boston museum and Thomas P.F. Hoving

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of the Metropolitan, write: "We feel the Centennials of two of the greatest art museums in the western hemisphere are events not just of local but of national significance. Therefore, we are proud that tens of thousands of citizens throughout the country, as well as visitors from many nations, will have this opportunity to see major works from our collections and thus to find insights into the nature of American life and art."

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