

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

NEWS RELEASE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SPECIAL LECTURE SERIES TO MARK
GALLERY'S BICENTENNIAL JEFFERSON EXHIBITION

WASHINGTON, D.C. May 20, 1976. A special series of lectures on Thomas Jefferson's interests in painting, architecture, garden design and city planning, and the works of art that he particularly admired will be given at the National Gallery of Art on the four Sundays in June. Offered in conjunction with The Eye of Thomas Jefferson, the National Gallery's major Bicentennial exhibition, the lectures will be held in the Gallery auditorium at 4 p.m.

On June 6, the lecture will be "Paintings in Jefferson's Paris, 1784-1789." Robert Rosenblum, Professor of Fine Arts at New York University's Institute of Fine Arts, will discuss a selection of the paintings that appeared in the Paris Salons of 1785, 1787, and 1789, which, as an avid connoisseur of the arts, Jefferson visited during his time in Paris as Minister to France. The Salons were biennial exhibitions of paintings, sculpture, drawings, and engravings by members of the French Académie Royale de peinture et sculpture. Professor Rosenblum will concentrate on works by David and his contemporaries, who were responding

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to newly discovered ideas of classical artists and theoreticians. A number of works to be featured in the lecture will be in a special section of the exhibition recreating a Paris Salon of the period.

The lecture on June 13, "Thomas Jefferson's Architecture," will be given by Frederick D. Nichols, Chairman of the Division of Architectural History at the University of Virginia. Professor Nichols, author of Thomas Jefferson's Architectural Drawings and Monticello, will outline Jefferson's contributions to, and influence on, American architecture, particularly the great impact he had on designs for state capitols throughout the nation and public buildings in Washington, D.C. After describing the characteristics of public buildings and private dwellings that Jefferson designed, Professor Nichols will go into more detail about the University of Virginia, the Virginia State Capitol, Poplar Forest, and Barboursville, as well as Monticello. The exhibition, which will have on view the largest group of Jefferson's architectural drawings ever assembled, will also have three large-scale models of buildings, including his own Poplar Forest and Monticello, and a full-scale reconstruction of the Central Hall of Barboursville.

"Jefferson's Paris: Garden Design to City Planning" is the topic of the June 20 lecture, to be given by Dora Wiebenson, Professor of Architectural History at the University of Maryland. During the latter half of the eighteenth century, Paris experienced a burst of new public construction and extensive private building projects. According to Professor Wiebenson, planning concepts associated with formal and

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landscape gardening were first introduced into French urban planning at that time, greatly affecting the appearance of the city when Jefferson was there. The Eye of Thomas Jefferson will present many designs executed by visionary French architects of the time and a Jeffersonian botanical garden, which will be installed in the Gallery's West Garden Court.

For June 27, the lecture will be "Thomas Jefferson's Art Gallery for Monticello," given by Seymour Howard, Professor of the History of Art and Archaeology at the University of California, Davis. Professor Howard will discuss those works that Jefferson had, or wished to have, for Monticello, relating Jefferson's choices to the foundations of his taste and temperament and showing how those choices influenced his tastes in later years and, through him, the aesthetic development in the United States. Among the works Jefferson would have liked to own is the Venus de' Medici (first century B.C.-first century A.D.), the renowned sculpture that represented in the late eighteenth century the most ideal, beautiful woman. The Venus, lent by the Uffizi Gallery, and several other works that Jefferson thought ideal will be on view in the exhibition.

As with other programs offered at the Gallery, there is no admission charge for the lectures.

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION contact Katherine Warwick, Assistant to the Director, or Mary Dyer, Information Office, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. 20565, area code 202, 737-4215, ext. 224.