

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

NEWS RELEASE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HISTORIC FLAG REPLICAS TO BE DISPLAYED

AT NATIONAL SCULPTURE GARDEN

WASHINGTON, D.C. May 24, 1976. Twenty-six historic American flags in replica, the first of two exhibitions organized under the title "New Glory," will go on view in the National Sculpture Garden on Sunday, May 30.

J. Carter Brown, Director of the National Gallery of Art, and Manus J. Fish, Jr., Director of National Capital Parks, will join Paul Chadbourne Mills, Director of the Santa Barbara (California) Museum of Art, in the dedication ceremony scheduled for 12 noon. Mr. Mills has organized the exhibition. The National Sculpture Garden, located on the Mall at Seventh Street, is under the joint administration of the National Gallery of Art and the National Park Service.

The historic flag exhibit will remain on view until the first part of October. It is anticipated that it will again go on display in early April 1977 and will remain on view through June 13. On June 14, the two-hundredth anniversary of the American flag, there will be a special commemoration. A second exhibition, on view from June 15 until early October of 1977, will present the twenty-five best contemporary flags

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resulting from a nationwide design competition held to encourage improvement of state, city and other local flag designs.

The twenty-six historic replicas, each measuring approximately six by ten feet, depict those ensigns which either flew over our first colonies, led American troops into battle, or identified American ships. Among the oldest is the Cross of St. George, flown by seventeenth-century ships such as the Mayflower, and the Scottish Cross of St. Andrew, used by such early settlements as Nova Scotia.

One of the most unusual flags is the Massachusetts Bay or Endicott Flag, which is red with a blank white corner. Ardent Puritans objected to a cross that had been part of earlier versions of the flag, calling the use of a cross "popery" and "superstition," whereupon Captain John Endicott ordered the cross removed.

A catalogue of the historic flag exhibition illustrated in full color, with a cover designed by Antonio Frasconi, will be available at the National Gallery, the National Sculpture Garden, and the Santa Barbara Museum of Art. An indoor version of the same exhibition will be circulated to museums and galleries throughout the country by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service.

Both exhibitions have been aided by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts. The aluminum poles and general installation of the displays have been made possible by a grant from McDonald's Restaurants.

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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.