

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

NEWS RELEASE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NATIONAL GALLERY PRINT EXHIBITION SURVEYS

AESTHETIC ROLE OF PAPER FOR PRINT CONNOISSEURS

WASHINGTON, D. C. April 27, 1977. The National Gallery of Art is mounting a special exhibition on the aesthetic role of paper in fine prints. The exhibition opens in conjunction with the Print Council of America's annual meeting in Washington on April 29 and will be on view from May 1 through July 4.

Primarily from the Gallery's collection, the selection of 148 prints, drawings and illustrated books was made by Andrew Robison, the Gallery's Curator of Graphic Arts. The exhibition also includes several outstanding loans from public and private collections in the United States. Mr. Robison is the current president of the Print Council.

The selection ranges from one of the earliest European prints on paper, an early fifteenth-century woodcut of the Adoration of the Magi by an anonymous South German artist, through prints on brilliantly dyed papers by Paul Gauguin, Edvard Munch and Ernst Ludwig Kirchner. Also included are an example of embossing by Josef Albers and a contemporary exploitation of the full page, deleting margins, by Robert Motherwell.

The exhibition explores three important features of paper which determine to a great extent the final appearance of the work of art: the

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various textures of paper and their receptivity to ink; the striking effects of colored papers, including the wide range of tones among whites and the use of dyed papers, which has fascinated printmakers since the fifteenth century; and the size and treatment of margins and edges.

Some of the finest and rarest of the Gallery's works on view are an anonymous fourteenth-century Death of the Virgin drawn on blue prepared paper, the white-line Madonna and Child by the Master E S, an extraordinary trial proof for Gauguin's two-tone woodcut Te Atua, and fourteen fine Rembrandts on a variety of papers.

Among the outstanding loans on view are one of the earliest drawings on dyed blue Venetian paper, Albrecht Dürer's Kneeling Donor (1506) from the Pierpont Morgan Library, and, from the Cleveland Museum of Art, Hans Burgkmair's Emperor Maximilian (1508), possibly the first woodcut where the white ink is printed for highlights along with the black for design, producing an effect similar to a chiaroscuro drawing.

Other important loans on view include a print of Three Patron Saints of Regensburg, one of the earliest prints in which an artist used only embossing to form the image, and Plateau in Rocky Mountains, a rare etching by Hercules Seghers, the early seventeenth-century Dutch artist, whose extraordinary color prints made him the most famous and successful printer of images on prepared paper. These two fine examples have been lent by the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

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A second exhibition entitled Prints of Paris: The 1890s, a selection of eighty-six prints recalling the ambience of that famous city during "La Belle Epoque," has been mounted with Paper in Prints. Famous names from the world of entertainment and art, as well as scenes of everyday life in the streets, parks and cafés, appear in prints by Pierre Bonnard, Mary Cassatt, Edgar Degas, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, Jacques Villon and James McNeill Whistler, among others.

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