

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

NEWS RELEASE

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

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PRIVATE COLLECTION OF CYCLADIC ART

IN U. S. THIS SPRING

WASHINGTON, D. C. February 28, 1979. The first exhibition of ancient Greek art ever to be sent to the United States from Greece will go on view this spring at the National Gallery of Art from May 20 through September 3, 1979.

Entitled Cycladic Art: Ancient Sculpture and Ceramics of the Aegean (3500-1500 B. C.) from the N. P. Goulandris Collection, the exhibition will comprise 166 objects from the private collection of Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas Goulandris. The Goulandris collection is the largest and most important collection of Cycladic art in private hands.

It is expected other major exhibitions from Greece will be coming to the United States within the next year and a half.

The small, white marble figurines closely evoke certain aspects of contemporary sculpture and are the most famous aspect of Cycladic art. Several obvious masters--including the distinct hand of the "Goulandris Master"--left marked characteristics on the Cycladic form. The marble, of exceptional quality and numerous varieties, was quarried on the Cycladic islands. Many examples of these figurines will be in the exhibition as well as decorated pottery vases and other ceramic objects of the same period.

The Cyclades, a circular group of islands located in the middle of the

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Aegean Sea, were the cradle of a unique civilization. In the Early Bronze Age and spanning the entire third millennium B. C., the Cycladic peoples made important advancements in hunting, fishing, animal husbandry, agriculture, metallurgy, marble sculpting, pottery, quarrying, and seafaring, and produced a rich variety of art objects.

Their original and representative art forms, characterized by highly refined and diversified forms, emerged during the third millennium B. C. The idealized human and animal figures, and other shapes, reappear throughout successive phases of Greek art, forming the basis of archaic and later Hellenic art, the famed classical period of Greek art.

Christos Doumas, Ephor of Antiquities and Director of Antiquities at the Ministry of Culture and Science and a renowned scholar of Cycladic art, has written the essay and object entries for the catalogue that will accompany the exhibition.

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