

# NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

NEWS RELEASE

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

FOR RELEASE:

FRIDAY A. M.  
March 30, 1979

RENOWNED OLD MASTERS COLLECTION

ANNOUNCED TO TOUR U. S.

WASHINGTON, D. C. March 29, 1979. One of the most important loan exhibitions of old master paintings ever presented in the United States will begin a nine-city tour at the National Gallery of Art this fall. The exhibition comes from the renowned collection of Baron Hans Heinrich Thyssen-Bornemisza of Lugano, Switzerland.

This is the first time the Thyssen-Bornemisza collection has been shown in this country. The splendid collection is one of the few of its kind still in private hands.

Entitled Old Master Paintings from the Collection of Baron Thyssen-Bornemisza, the exhibition will be comprised of a selection of fifty-seven paintings dating from the fourteenth to the nineteenth centuries. Ranging from Duccio to Goya, it will include paintings by such masters as Van Eyck, Petrus Christus, Carpaccio, Cranach, Titian, El Greco, Zurbarán, Rubens, Rembrandt, and Fragonard.

The exhibition has been organized by the International Exhibitions Foundation, Washington, D. C., and will travel to eight cities after it leaves the National Gallery's new East Building: Detroit, Minneapolis, Cleveland, Los Angeles, Denver, Fort Worth, Kansas City, and New York. It has been made possible in part by a grant from United Technologies Corporation, and

(more)

has been supported in part by a federal indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities, and with a special grant in support of the catalogue from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

His Excellency the Ambassador of Switzerland, Raymond Probst, is the honorary patron of the exhibition.

The selection of the show was made by John Walker, Director Emeritus, of the National Gallery of Art. Among the Italian paintings in the exhibition will be a rare panel, dated 1311, Christ and the Samaritan Woman at the Fountain by one of the earliest and most important Italian masters, the Sienese artist Duccio di Buoninsegna. Among the seventeen other Italian pictures will be Young Knight in a Landscape by Carpaccio, one of the great paintings in the collection and considered the greatest masterpiece in the fifteenth-century Venetian painter's oeuvre; and Saint Catherine Before Pope Gregory IX by the fifteenth-century Sienese master Giovanni di Paolo. The great age of Venetian eighteenth-century painting will be represented with two works each by Canaletto and Guardi.

Among the nine works by Flemish masters will be two outstanding grisaille panels of the Annunciation by Jan van Eyck, the rare fifteenth-century master who is renowned for his exquisite handling of light, space and texture; Portrait of a Young Man by Hans Memling, with a landscape background and a fine still life with vase of flowers painted on the reverse; and Our Lady of the Barren Tree by Petrus Christus, another important fifteenth-century Flemish master by whom very few pictures have survived. Also included will be The Toilette of Venus by the greatest Flemish artist of the seventeenth century, Peter Paul Rubens; this picture was probably painted by Rubens after Titian's work of the same title in the National Gallery's collection.

(more)

The Thyssen-Bornemisza collection is also rich in early German works, and eight sixteenth-century paintings will be on view. Included will be portraits by Albrecht Altdorfer and Hans Baldung Grien as well as the Madonna with the Bunch of Grapes by Lucas Cranach the Elder, a major and influential master; and the powerful Annunciation to Saint Anne and Saint Joachim by Bernhard Strigel, which the Baron acquired at the recent von Hirsch sale.

Among the eleven Dutch pictures of the seventeenth century will be Portrait of a Gentleman by Rembrandt; Interior of the Council Chamber of Burgomasters in the Town Hall in Amsterdam, with Visitors by Pieter de Hooch, who is best-known for his peaceful interiors of the well-to-do burghers of the time; Self Portrait by Jan Steen, the renowned genre painter; a Still Life by Willem Claesz Heda, the master who developed North Netherlandish still life painting; and Still Life with Nautilus Cup by Willem Kalf, one of the most important Dutch still life painters.

Six seventeenth- and eighteenth-century French paintings will be on view including La Toilette by François Boucher, one of the superb examples of the artist's genre scenes painted in his best period, and The Seesaw by Jean-Honoré Fragonard, one of the greatest masters of eighteenth-century France.

Unusually fine Spanish paintings will include two versions of the Annunciation by the sixteenth-century master El Greco, whose unique pictorial style represents one of the highest achievements of European art; El Tio Paquete and Ansensio Julia in His Studio by Goya, the great eighteenth-century Spanish artist; and Saint Agnes by Zurbarán, the major seventeenth-century artist, whose religious paintings are fused with realism.

A fully illustrated catalogue accompanying the exhibition will include an introduction by John Walker, and individual entries on the paintings by Allen Rosenbaum, Curator of Paintings at Princeton University.

The itinerary of the exhibition is as follows:

National Gallery of Art, Washington, November 17 - February 17, 1980;

The Detroit Institute of Arts, March 8 - May 11, 1980;

The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, May 29 - August 3, 1980;

The Cleveland Museum of Art, September 2 - October 26, 1980;

Los Angeles County Museum of Art, November 15 - January 18, 1981;

The Denver Art Museum, February 7 - April 5, 1981;

Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas, April 25 - June 28, 1981;

William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art, Kansas City, July 18 - September 20, 1981;

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, October 9 - December 6, 1981.

END