

# NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

NEWS RELEASE

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

## ADVANCE EXHIBITION SCHEDULE

July 1 through October 14, 1979

The Art of the Pacific Islands. Pacific Islands art, which was not discovered by Europeans until the sixteenth century and was untouched by European influence until contact with Captain James Cook and the China traders of the eighteenth century, is the subject of this comprehensive major exhibition. The more than 400 objects in the show are being lent from over eighty public and private collections in the United States, Europe, Australia and New Zealand. Each object has been selected for its pristine aesthetic relationship to the original island cultures. Included are intricately carved wooden figures; masks; decorated canoe prows and weapons; highly finished bowls and other ceremonial implements; necklaces and other ornaments made of shell; and large, brightly colored feather capes from Hawaii. The installation takes the visitor on a voyage of the island groups from east to west, beginning in Hawaii. The route then goes through the small island clusters of Polynesia and related areas of Micronesia, traverses the large islands of Melanesia, and culminates in New Guinea. This plan is designed to illuminate the interrelationships of the style areas and to illustrate the recurrent themes in Pacific Islands art.

July 15 through September 16, 1979

Mondrian: The Diamond Compositions. Mondrian's diamond-shaped paintings are probably the most famous of the artist's oeuvre, and they have become one of the classic images of modern art. This is the first exhibition to concentrate on the diamonds. Eight paintings and eight drawings have been lent from American and European collections for this exhibition, the second in a series of scholarly shows devoted to various aspects of the Gallery's collection; the first was Berenson and the Connoisseurship of Italian Painting. Mondrian (1872-1944) created the diamonds in his maturity. There are only sixteen known pictures in this form. Less than half have the color planes intersected by black bands generally identified as the artist's style. The others are entirely black and white or introduce color bands. An accompanying catalogue will offer new information on these pictures.

September 23 through December 2, 1979

Honoré Daumier (1808-1879). One hundred prints, drawings and portrait busts make up this exhibition marking the centenary of the death of the renowned nineteenth-century French political and social satirist. The drawings are being lent by public collections in America. The prints and portrait busts are from the Gallery's Rosenwald Collection, distinguished for its early proofs of the artist's lithographic work, with notations by the artist or caption writer for publication in contemporary newspapers and journals.

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October 14 through December 2, 1979

Mies van der Rohe and the Barcelona Pavilion. The Barcelona Pavilion by Mies van der Rohe is considered one of the most influential buildings of the twentieth century. It was constructed as part of the German display at the 1929 International Exhibition held in Barcelona. Disassembled after the exhibition, the parts were later almost entirely lost. Over forty drawings, photographs and other documents, complemented by a model, examples of furniture Mies designed for the pavilion, and a surviving cruciform column will be included in this, the Gallery's first architectural exhibition. Mies' extreme clarity and simplicity in architectural design and furnishings became a touchstone for others' work. The pavilion, with its vertical and horizontal slabs, is one of the monuments of the International Style he led. Mies emigrated to the United States in 1938, and his work greatly affected American architecture after World War II.

October 28, 1979 through January 27, 1980

European Terracottas, Fifteenth to Twentieth Centuries. A selection of terracotta sculptures, spanning the history of the medium through the last six centuries, will be on view from the collection of Arthur M. Sackler. These delicate works served a variety of functions. Some are preliminary models for works in more permanent materials, while others are replicated objects. A few were apparently modeled individually as finished sculptures, which might have been left plain or colored with patinas of various types. The popularity among discriminating collectors of "cabinet pieces" in terracotta reached its zenith in Italy and France in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and the majority of the Sackler terracottas come from this period. The high regard in which they were held by these Baroque connoisseurs has been increasingly shared by collectors in our own century, and this exhibition presents one of the first attempts to re-evaluate the history of this medium since the Renaissance.

November 17, 1979 through February 17, 1980

Old Master Paintings from the Collection of Baron Thyssen-Bornemisza. Fifty-seven old master paintings, dating from the fourteenth to the nineteenth centuries, will be lent for this exhibition from the renowned collection of Baron Hans Heinrich Thyssen-Bornemisza of Lugano, Switzerland. The collection is one of the finest of old masters still in private hands. Among eighteen Italian pictures will be works by Duccio, Carpaccio, Giovanni di Paolo, Canaletto and Guardi. Among nine works by Flemish masters will be examples by Jan van Eyck, Memling, Petrus Christus and Rubens. Eight sixteenth-century German paintings will include works by such artists as Altdorfer, Hans Baldung Grien, and Lucas Cranach the Elder. Eleven Dutch seventeenth-century paintings will include works by Rembrandt, de Hooch, Jan Steen, Heda and Kalf. Six seventeenth- and eighteenth-century French artists include Boucher and Fragonard. Among the Spanish paintings will be two each by El Greco and Goya, and one by Zurbarán. Organized by the International Exhibitions Foundation, Washington, D. C., the exhibition will travel to eight other cities in the U. S. after its premiere at the National Gallery.

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December 16, 1979 through March 2, 1980

Wonders of the Age: Masterpieces of Early Safavid Painting.

This exhibition will present masterpieces of sixteenth century Persian book painting. Together for the first time will be a large portion of the most brilliant miniatures painted for Shah Tahmasp of the Safavid dynasty (reign 1524-1576), one of the Muslim world's most inspired art patrons. Many of the miniatures have been temporarily removed from their original manuscripts and albums for this exhibition. Among the finest are those from Shah Tahmasp's two noblest manuscripts. One consists of thirty-five miniatures from the Shahnama of Firdowsi ("The Book of Kings"), including Sultan-Muhammad's Court of Gayumars, considered the supreme example of Persian painting. The other is the Khamsa of Nizami, illustrated between 1539 and 1543, which includes fourteen pictures. Earlier fine examples of art from the reign of Shah Isma'il (1501-1524), the father of Shah Tahmasp and founder of the dynasty, will also be shown.

December 16, 1979 through March 2, 1980

Italian Drawings from The Art Institute of Chicago. One hundred fifty-one drawings representing most of the major schools of Italian art from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries will be on loan from The Art Institute of Chicago, whose drawings collection is considered one of the best among U. S. museums. The exhibition coincides with their publication of the first of four projected volumes devoted to their collection. Included will be landscapes, religious scenes, portraits, and other subjects. Among the artists represented will be Carpaccio, Parmigianino, Vasari, Veronese, Tintoretto, the Zuccari brothers, Guardi, Guercino, Castiglione, Tiepolo, Piazzetta, Canaletto and Piranesi.

February 10 through June 15, 1980

American Light. This is the first major, comprehensive exhibition devoted to the American luminist movement--the culminating phase of Hudson River School painting in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. Over 200 paintings, complemented by approximately forty drawings and watercolors and twenty-four photographs, will be lent from public and private American collections. The paintings reflect American attitudes towards nature and the national identity--manifestations of Jacksonian optimism and expansiveness combined with belief in the transcendent beauty of nature. The pictures glow with atmospheric sunlight, threatening storms, and incandescent twilight vistas. Over a dozen paintings by each of the major figures in the movement--Fitz Hugh Lane, Martin Johnson Heade, Sanford Gifford, John F. Kensett, and Frederic Edwin Church--will be on view. Works by contemporary and related artists and by those who followed, showing the transformation of luminist light into American impressionism, will complement the work of the movement. Drawings, watercolors and photographs, rarely treated in this context before, will help illuminate the artistic principles and processes of the luminist style.

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February 17 through July 6, 1980

In Praise of America, 1650-1825. To present the finest furniture and decorative arts of American designers and craftsmen during this country's first two hundred years and to bring new scholarship of the period to the public, seventy-seven examples from the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries will be lent from public and private American collections for this exhibition. Included will be chairs, chests, tables, sofas, sideboards and examples of decorative arts such as silver, candlestands, tumblers and pole screens. The exhibition will present the work of craftsmen working both in the urban areas of Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Charleston and New Orleans and in various rural regions.

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION 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.