

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

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NEWS RELEASE

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

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OLD MASTER PAINTINGS COLLECTION FROM SWITZERLAND

MAKES U. S. PREMIERE AT NATIONAL GALLERY

WASHINGTON, D. C. October 12, 1979. A selection of paintings by El Greco, Rubens, Rembrandt and other old masters from a collection regarded as one of the greatest private collections in the world will begin a nine-city U. S. tour November 18 at the National Gallery of Art.

The exhibition, Old Master Paintings from the Collection of Baron Thyssen-Bornemisza, will remain on view at the Gallery through February 17, 1980. It will then be seen in Detroit, Minneapolis, Cleveland, Los Angeles, Denver, Fort Worth, Kansas City and New York over the next two years.

The traveling selection of fifty-seven paintings from Baron Thyssen's villa on Lake Lugano, Switzerland, includes examples by Duccio, Van Eyck, Petrus Christus, Carpaccio, Cranach, Titian, El Greco, Zurbarán, Rubens, Rembrandt, Boucher and Fragonard, among others, which range from the fourteenth to the nineteenth centuries.

The exhibition, organized by the International Exhibitions Foundation, Washington, D. C. and made possible in part by a grant

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from United Technologies Corporation, is supported by a Federal indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities, with a special grant in support of the exhibition 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. The catalogue will include an introduction by Mr. Walker, with entries on the paintings by Allen Rosenbaum, Acting Director of the Art Museum at Princeton University. Mr. Rosenbaum will deliver a lecture on the exhibition on Sunday, November 18 at 4 p.m. in the East Building Auditorium.

The present Baron's father began assembling a collection of early German pictures, today unrivaled in any private collection and in very few museums. Seven of these will be included.

The Baron's collection of early Flemish paintings is considered unique among private collections. The earliest example in the exhibition will be Jan van Eyck's two grisaille panels of the Annunciation, a beautiful and rare example of this master's limited oeuvre.

Art of the Italian schools provides the richest part of the Baron's collection, with over eighty panels and canvases acquired by the present Baron and his father. Among the Italian works in the exhibition will be a rare panel which was once on the high altar of the Cathedral of Siena, Christ and the Samaritan Woman

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at the Fountain, dated 1311, by one of the earliest and most important Italian masters, the Sieneese artist Duccio di Buoninsegna.

Among the eleven Dutch pictures of the seventeenth century will be Interior of the Council Chamber of Burgomasters in the Town Hall in Amsterdam by Pieter de Hooch, the only picture extant which shows the interior of this important example of seventeenth-century Dutch architecture as it originally appeared.

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

Unusually fine Spanish paintings will include two versions of the Annunciation by the sixteenth-century artist El Greco, one done early in his career, the other later, illustrating the change in his style from the monumental solidity of his Italian period to the flamelike designs which marked his work in Spain.

The itinerary of the exhibition is as follows:

National Gallery of Art, November 18 - 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, April 25 - June 28, 1981

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

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

END

There will be a press preview of the exhibition on Thursday,
November 15 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION or photographs contact Katherine Warwick,
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