

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GALLERY'S CENTER FOR ADVANCED STUDY HOLDS

SEMINAR ON RAPHAEL'S TRANSFIGURATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. April 21, 1981. The Transfiguration, the final great painting by the Italian Renaissance master Raphael, is the subject of a seminar to be presented by the National Gallery of Art's Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts on April 29. In conjunction with the seminar, a photo display of the painting after its recent cleaning will be open to the public on April 30. Both the seminar and the display are entitled A Masterpiece Close-up: The Transfiguration by Raphael.

The seminar, open to invited scholars only, features six specialists in Renaissance painting, each of whom will offer a short paper to stimulate discussion. The specialists are Fabrizio Mancinelli, Curator of Byzantine, Medieval and Modern Art at the Vatican Museums and supervisor of the painting's restoration; John Shearman, Professor of Art and Archaeology at Princeton University; Konrad Oberhuber, Professor of Fine Arts and Curator of Drawings at the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University; Sydney J. Freedberg, Arthur Kingsley Porter Professor of Fine Arts at the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University; Kathleen Weil-Garris, Professor of Fine Arts at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University; and David A. Brown, Curator of Early Italian Painting at the National Gallery. They will discuss the style, meaning, technique and history of the painting, as well as its relationship to other works of the period.

Installed in the Study Center on the ground floor of the East Building, the display will remain on view through the latter part of May. It offers thirty-two

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color photographs made directly from the painting, without the intervening steps of negatives or enlargements. Two photographs reproduce the entire painting at approximately 35% of its size, and one photograph shows the work at approximately 15% of its size. Sixteen reproduce sections of the work at full size, ten are three-time direct magnifications of details, and three are five-time direct magnifications.

The photographs are the result of a project undertaken by the Vatican Museums and Polaroid Corporation shortly after the recent restoration of the painting. The technical staff, headed by John McCann and Victoria Ruzdic from the United States, used an experimental large-format camera requiring 24 x 20 inch color film. The details and magnifications were made following recommendations by Dr. Mancinelli. Praised for their faithful reproduction of colors and sharpness of detail, the photographs permit extraordinarily close examination of the painting.

Two illustrated publications accompany the display, which is part of a larger exhibition organized under the auspices of the Vatican Museums and Galleries. A text relating to the display published by the Fogg Art Museum and a study of the painting published by the Vatican Museums and Galleries are both available in the Gallery's sales areas.

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