

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PALLADIO DRAWINGS ON VIEW AT NATIONAL GALLERY MAY 17

WASHINGTON, D. C. May 4, 1981. The first major exhibition in the United States of the drawings of Andrea Palladio (1508-1580), the great sixteenth-century Italian architect, begins a five-city tour at the National Gallery of Art May 17 through July 5.

Entitled The Drawings of Andrea Palladio, the exhibition includes 110 of Palladio's finest drawings lent from public and private collections in Europe and North America, including the Royal Institute of British Architects, the Museo Civico in Vicenza, the Devonshire Collections at Chatsworth, and the Library of Congress. Twenty drawings by Palladio's contemporaries and followers are also being shown, to exemplify prototypes and parallels for his designs.

The exhibition has been organized by the International Exhibitions Foundation, Washington, D. C., in commemoration of the 400th anniversary of the artist's death.

The selection of drawings was made by Douglas Lewis, curator of sculpture at the National Gallery and an authority on Venetian art and architecture. Dr. Lewis has also written the introduction and scholarly notes on each drawing for the fully illustrated catalogue which accompanies the exhibition.

The drawings in the exhibition illustrate the range and beauty of Palladio's graphic art. His work is carefully proportioned and classical in style, generally with a dominant central focus and harmonious exterior and interior design.

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On view in the exhibition are Palladio's designs for major civic and domestic buildings in Vicenza and Venice, elegant country houses designed for noble families throughout the Veneto, and drawings for some of Venice's most spectacular churches.

In addition, studies of ancient architecture dating throughout his career are included, to illustrate the classical sources of his own designs.

In 1570, Palladio published the Quattro Libri, or Four Books of Architecture, illustrating his theory and work. These have had an enormous influence on buildings all over the world and have made Palladio the most imitated architect in history. Several first editions of the book are on view in the exhibition.

The exhibition is supported by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts (a Federal agency), Fiat S.p.A., Turin, Italy, and with an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and Humanities. The catalogue is partially supported by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

After closing at the National Gallery, the exhibition will travel to The Art Institute of Chicago; the Ackland Memorial Art Center, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; the San Antonio Museum of Art; the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University; and the Brooks Memorial Art Gallery, Memphis.

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