

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

NEWS RELEASE

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**PRESS PREVIEW

Wednesday, October 12, 1983
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

JUAN GRIS RETROSPECTIVE AT
NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

WASHINGTON, D.C. July 29, 1983. The first American retrospective in twenty-five years of the work of Juan Gris opens in the National Gallery of Art's East Building on October 16, 1983. Over ninety paintings, drawings and collages by the Spanish-born painter, covering every phase of his career, will remain on view through December 31, 1983.

Gris was born José Victoriano Gonzalez in Madrid on March 23, 1887. He adopted the pseudonym of Juan Gris in 1906, shortly before he moved to Paris, perhaps as a gesture of independence from his background. Soon after arriving in Paris, Gris met Pablo Picasso and moved into the building in which Picasso lived, the Bateau Lavoir. He became part of the artistic and literary group that included Georges Braque, Guillaume Apollinaire, André Salmon, Max Jacob, and Gertrude Stein, among others.

Gris' early career is poorly documented. In Spain and then in Paris he supported himself by producing satirical

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drawings in an Art Nouveau style for a variety of publications. Only one oil painting survives from the period prior to 1911, however--Siphon and Bottles (1910), included in the exhibition.

In 1911, Gris adopted the modern style of cubism, developed by Picasso and Braque. From his first efforts in the new style, Gris differed from the older artists in his use of color and strong patterns of light and shadow. Cubism, and particularly cubist still-life, became for him the ultimate in artistic expression. Gertrude Stein observed that for Gris, "still-life was not a seduction, it was a religion."

Gris worked in a cubist style until his premature death, at 40, in 1927. More than a style, it was, by his own description, a state of mind for him. In it was contained "every manifestation of contemporary thought." A principal goal for Gris was the reconciliation of this modern form of expression with the great painting traditions of history, especially the still-life painting of Chardin.

Juan Gris has been organized by the University Art Museum, University of California, Berkeley, where it will be on view from February 1--April 8, 1984, following the National Gallery premiere. After the Berkeley venue, the exhibition will travel to the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York (May 18--July 15, 1984).

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Among the lenders to this comprehensive survey of Gris' career are the Centre National d'Art et de Culture Georges Pompidou, Paris; Kunstmuseum, Basel; The Art Institute of Chicago; The Prado, Madrid; The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; The Philadelphia Museum of Art; M. Georges Gonzales-Gris, son of the artist; and Mme. Louise Leiris, heir to the estate of dealer D. H. Kahnweiler.

Guest curator for the exhibition is Mark Rosenthal, formerly curator of collections at the University Art Museum, Berkeley and now curator of twentieth-century art at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. E. A. Carmean, Jr., curator of twentieth-century art at the National Gallery, consulted on the exhibition. A fully-illustrated catalogue by Mr. Rosenthal, co-published by the University Art Museum and Abbeville Press, accompanies the exhibition.

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION and photographs please contact Katherine Warwick, Assistant to the Director (Information Officer), or Marla Price, Information Office, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. 20565, (202) 842-6353.