

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

NEWS RELEASE

FOURTH STREET AT CONSTITUTION AVENUE NW WASHINGTON DC 20565 • 737-4215/842-6353

FOR RELEASE:

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10 p.m.

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART TO RECEIVE
285 WORKS BY MARK ROTHKO

WASHINGTON, D.C. May 3, 1984. Two hundred and eighty-five paintings and drawings by Mark Rothko have been presented to the National Gallery of Art by the Mark Rothko Foundation as part of the planned termination of the Foundation.

The announcement was made today by J. Carter Brown, Director of the National Gallery, and Donald M. Blinken, President of the Rothko Foundation, on the occasion of the opening of the exhibition Mark Rothko: Works on Paper in the East Building of the National Gallery.

In making the announcement, Mr. Blinken stated: "We are delighted to pass our torch to this great national resource, which has undertaken to conserve, exhibit, lend and share with the public-at-large, a great legacy from a great twentieth-century artist."

Works in the gift date from all phases of Rothko's career and include works on both canvas and paper. Extensive archival material and photographs will also be presented to the Gallery, establishing a central repository and study center for Rothko's work.

The gift will vest in the National Gallery in late 1986, following the completion of the national tour of Mark Rothko: Works on Paper, currently on view at the Gallery, and a major exhibition of Rothko's paintings opening at the Tate Gallery in London in February of 1986. Forty works on paper in the current

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exhibition at the Gallery are part of the gift and are so identified in the installation.

Of the two hundred and eighty-five works in the gift, one hundred and seventy-one (171) are oils on canvas, one hundred and eight (108) are acrylics or watercolors on paper, and six are oils on board. Eighty-eight (88) works date from post-1950.

Once title to the paintings in the gift has been transferred to the National Gallery, these works of art will become part of the National Lending Service, a program making them available on a long-term loan basis to museums throughout the United States.

Accepting the gift on behalf of the National Gallery at the opening tonight for the exhibition, Paul Mellon, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, expressed the Board's appreciation: "We are deeply honored by the Foundation's selection of the National Gallery as the principal repository of the work of Mark Rothko, and we pledge our energies and our expertise toward the preservation and study of the work of this major American artist."

He continued: "This superb gift greatly expands the Gallery's holdings in post-war American art. We anticipate that the eventual transfer of documentary material, in addition to the works themselves, will make the Gallery a leading center for the study of modern American art."

Eighteen other institutions in the United States and abroad will also receive gifts from the Foundation. These are:

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
The Museum of Modern Art, New York
The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York
Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles
Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art

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Walker Art Center, Minneapolis
The Art Institute of Chicago
The High Museum of Art, Atlanta
Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge
Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven
Tate Gallery, London
Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam
Louisiana Museum, Denmark
Israel Museum, Jerusalem
Tel Aviv Museum

Mark Rothko: Works on Paper is the first comprehensive exhibition of the artist's works on paper, containing eighty-six works dating from the late twenties through 1970, the year of Rothko's death. The exhibition is installed on the upper level and mezzanine galleries of the East Building, where it remains on view through August 5, 1984.

The exhibition has been co-organized by The American Federation of Arts and The Mark Rothko Foundation, under the curatorial direction of Bonnie Clearwater, Foundation Curator. It is made possible by a generous grant from Warner Communications, Inc. Coordinator for the National Gallery is E. A. Carmean, Jr., curator of twentieth-century art.

After its premiere at the National Gallery, Mark Rothko: Works on Paper will be seen at the Museum of Art, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh (November 3, 1984-January 6, 1985); The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (April 25-June 16, 1985); the Milwaukee Art Museum (November 17, 1985-January 12, 1986); the Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon (February 9-April 6, 1986); the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (May 4-June 29, 1986); and The Saint Louis Art Museum (July 18-September 1, 1986).

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