

# NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

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## PRIME MINISTER OF TURKEY ANNOUNCES EXHIBITION AT NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

WASHINGTON, D.C. April 5, 1985. In conjunction with his visit to the National Gallery of Art today, the Prime Minister of Turkey, His Excellency Turgut Özal, announced a forthcoming exhibition which will be seen in 1987-1988 in Washington, D.C., Chicago, and New York.

The Age of Süleyman the Magnificent will open at the National Gallery of Art in February 1987 and will travel to The Art Institute of Chicago and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York in succeeding months. Of the more than 200 works in the exhibition, over 150 will be on loan from Turkish national museums in Istanbul; the remaining objects will be borrowed from major collections in Europe and the United States.

In discussing the exhibition with J. Carter Brown, the Director of the National Gallery, Prime Minister Özal said: "I am delighted to announce this magnificent cultural exchange between Turkey and the United States, hosted by the National Gallery of Art. We are proud to display our national cultural heritage, which has contributed to the development of Western civilization. This exhibition will not only represent the highest aesthetic and technical achievements of Turkish artists, but will also highlight a remarkable ruler whose laws and judicial codes became the basis for the constitutions of many countries."

The Prime Minister was joined at the National Gallery by His Excellency Vahit Halefođlu, Minister of Foreign Affairs; His Excellency Şükrü Elekdađ,

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the Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey; The Honorable Robert Strausz-Hupé, the United States Ambassador to Turkey; William B. Macomber, President, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and former United States Ambassador to Turkey; James N. Wood, Director, The Art Institute of Chicago; and other Turkish dignitaries.

The Age of Süleyman the Magnificent will document the splendid artistic production of the reign of Sultan Süleyman I (1520-1566). In Turkish, Süleyman is known as Kanuni, or Lawgiver, in reference to his administrative and legal reforms. In the West, he is known as "the Magnificent" because of his remarkable military and diplomatic achievements. During Süleyman's forty-six year reign, the Ottoman Empire more than doubled its territories and acquired its most strategic provinces.

Süleyman (1494-1566) -- a contemporary of Charles V, the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire; Francis I, King of France; Henry VIII and Elizabeth I of England; and Martin Luther, the Protestant leader -- was also a celebrated poet and above all an enthusiastic patron and avid collector of the arts. Under his demanding and generous patronage, the arts flourished. Süleyman personally oversaw the activities of the imperial painting studio and supervised the design for his spectacular royal mosque, the Süleymaniye. His wife and daughter, his Grand Vezirs, and other high ranking officials also commissioned buildings. The court studios employed artists from all parts of the empire.

The exhibition will include examples from the imperial painting studios (bookbindings, calligraphy, illumination, illustrated literary and historical texts, album paintings, and drawings); the sultan's treasury (jade, rock crystal, silver and gold objects embellished with gems, ceremonial arms and armor, and inlaid woodwork); the imperial wardrobe (ceremonial kaftans and

accessories, brocaded and velvet furnishings, textiles, and rugs); and the royal pottery kilns (vessels and tiles).

A fully illustrated catalogue will accompany the exhibition. In addition, a facsimile edition of the Süleymanname -- a biography of Süleyman written and illustrated by contemporary artists -- will be published. There will also be a model of the renowned Süleymaniye Mosque, built by Sinan for the sultan, together with a photographic display of the entire complex. Esin Atil (Center of Asian Art, Smithsonian Institution) is guest curator for the National Gallery of Art.

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