

Gauguin

THE ART OF PAUL GAUGUIN

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GAUGUIN RETROSPECTIVE IN WASHINGTON, CHICAGO AND PARIS

EXHIBITION TITLE: The Art of Paul Gauguin

WASHINGTON, April 22, 1988 - The National Gallery of Art and The Art Institute of Chicago in the United States, and the Galeries nationales du Grand Palais in Paris, will present the most comprehensive exhibition ever, and the first major retrospective in nearly 30 years, devoted to the works of the French post-impressionist artist Paul Gauguin (1848-1903). More than 240 objects will be brought together from collections in Europe, Asia, Polynesia, Australia, and North and South America, including important loans from the Soviet Union. The Art of Paul Gauguin is jointly organized by the National Gallery, The Art Institute of Chicago and the Réunion des musées nationaux. The exhibition is made possible by AT&T.

The Art of Paul Gauguin will be on view in the National Gallery's East Building May 1 through July 31, 1988. It will travel to Chicago for presentation in the Art Institute's Regenstein Hall from Sept. 17 through Dec. 11. The exhibition will appear at the Galeries nationales du Grand Palais, Paris, Jan. 10 through April 20, 1989, where it will be presented in association with Olivetti. The exhibition is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART,
WASHINGTON
May 1-July 31, 1988

THE ART INSTITUTE
OF CHICAGO
September 17-December 11, 1988

GALERIES NATIONALES
DU GRAND PALAIS
January 10-April 20, 1989

The exhibition is made possible by AT&T

"This exhibition is a celebration of Paul Gauguin, the artist-traveler, taking us from his early years in France through sojourns in Brittany and Martinique, his work side by side with Van Gogh in Arles, and then finally, to Tahiti," said J. Carter Brown, director of the National Gallery of Art. "The Art of Paul Gauguin is the first exhibition since the memorial show in Paris in 1906 to cover the full range of Gauguin's work: painting, sculpture, ceramics and graphic arts."

James N. Wood, director of The Art Institute of Chicago, discussed the scholarly impact of the exhibition: "Gauguin was the greatest colorist of the late 19th century and the principal source for a tradition in 20th-century painting that continued with Matisse. During the five-year preparation of this exhibition a wealth of new technical and documentary material has come to light that will contribute significantly to our understanding of Gauguin's life and work."

Robert E. Allen, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of AT&T, said "Paul Gauguin possessed the courage and vision necessary to define new possibilities of life, and vividly to bring those possibilities to the world through his art. He believed in taking risks -- a tradition that AT&T not only appreciates and respects but embraces in its own core businesses. For we believe it is the risk takers, not only in science and technology but in the fertile world of ideas, who will create the new possibilities for our own time.

"We are particularly pleased," Allen continued, "as part of our continuing association with the arts, to make possible the largest and most comprehensive exhibition of Gauguin's work ever seen, and to bring the imagination of this visionary artist to a new international audience."

The curators of The Art of Paul Gauguin are among the most distinguished scholars in the field of late 19th-century French art: Françoise Cachin, director, Musée d'Orsay; Claire Fréchet-Thory, curator of painting, Musée d'Orsay; Richard Brettell, director, Dallas Museum of Art; Charles F. Stuckey, curator of 20th-century art, The Art Institute of Chicago and formerly of the National Gallery; and Peter Zegers, special consultant for the exhibition. The presentation at the National Gallery is being coordinated by Charles S. Moffett, senior curator of painting at the Gallery.

During the 55 years he lived, Paul Gauguin was a merchant seaman, a stockbroker, a ditchdigger, an artist, a writer, and a journalist. He was born in the midst of the 1848 revolutions, the only son of a left-wing journalist who was exiled from France in 1850. Gauguin spent his childhood first in Peru, where he lived with relatives, and then in the small city of Orléans, France. His remaining years were spent in Paris and thereafter in a series of self-imposed exiles in Denmark, Brittany, Panama, Martinique, Tahiti, and finally, the Marquesas Islands.

The image of Gauguin as a free-spirited libertine has been celebrated in films, novels, stories and biographies to such an extent that his art has sometimes been overshadowed by his life. The Art of Paul Gauguin, therefore, will be the first opportunity for many viewers to appreciate Gauguin's art simply on the basis of the works themselves.

Although the exhibition includes a carefully selected group of works from Gauguin's impressionist period (1877-1886), the show's primary emphasis is on the post-impressionist years (1887-1903). The majority of these works is selected from the paintings, sculpture, ceramics, prints and drawings that Gauguin chose or created for major exhibitions during his lifetime.

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The curatorial team has located works of art in public and private collections throughout the world. These works have been selected to enable the viewer to explore the artist's own thoughts as he translated his ideas from one work to another. For the first time, series of individual works by Gauguin that explore a single motif in several media will be united in each venue of the exhibition.

The fully illustrated catalogue contains more than 500 pages that comprise both a record of Gauguin's career and a detailed account of the works presented in the exhibition. Co-authored by the curators and exhibition staffs, it includes many reappraisals of familiar works as well as suggestions for new approaches to the study of Gauguin's art. The catalogue will also include an illustrated chronology of the artist's life as chronicled in letters and documents.

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: Please contact Randall Kremer, National Gallery of Art, (202) 842-6353, or Eileen Harakal, The Art Institute of Chicago, (312) 443-3624.