

# NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART TO PRESENT MAJOR  
RETROSPECTIVE EXHIBITION OF VAN DYCK MASTERPIECES

WASHINGTON, D.C., June 12, 1990 - The National Gallery of Art will commemorate the 350th anniversary of Anthony van Dyck's death with a major exhibition featuring more than 100 oil paintings and oil sketches from all periods of the Flemish master's career. For the first time, Van Dyck paintings in the Gallery's collection will be assembled with other of the artist's greatest creations from around the world. The National Gallery, which will present Anthony van Dyck from November 11, 1990 through February 24, 1991, is the sole venue for the exhibition.

"A Van Dyck exhibition of this magnitude has not been mounted since 1899 in Antwerp and London," said J. Carter Brown, director, National Gallery of Art. He continued, "This show will demonstrate Van Dyck's extraordinary artistic talent, not only his brilliance as a portraitist, but the evocative qualities of his religious and mythological paintings."

The exhibition was selected by Arthur Wheelock, curator of northern baroque painting at the National Gallery of Art, and Susan Barnes, senior curator of Western art at the Dallas Museum of Art, and former assistant dean of the Center for Advanced Studies in the Visual Arts at the National Gallery of Art.

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"We selected works of the highest quality and importance for our understanding of the broad range of Van Dyck's artistic achievement. Each painting was carefully considered for its specific contribution to a proper assessment of Van Dyck's career," said Wheelock.

Anthony van Dyck (1599-1641) was born into a middle class family in Antwerp. He was a child prodigy, who at the age of fourteen was already painting masterful portraits. By the age of 18 he had become an assistant to Rubens, the most famous artist in Europe. The collaboration greatly enriched Van Dyck's work. Van Dyck quickly pursued his own direction and rose to the highest echelons of his profession, where he was courted throughout Europe by the most distinguished and discerning patrons of the day.

Among the early works in the exhibition are religious paintings that reveal the influence of Rubens, such as Moses and the Brazen Serpent from the Museo del Prado in Madrid, and portraits, such as his Self-Portrait from The State Hermitage Museum in Leningrad.

The National Gallery of Art's permanent collection contains some of Van Dyck's most remarkable portraits painted in Italy between 1622 and 1627. Five of these will be included in the exhibition, alongside other portraits such as Genoese Senator from the Staatliche Museen in Berlin. Other works from this period include history paintings that reveal Van Dyck's awareness of Venetian art, particularly his Susannah and the Elders from the Alte Pinakothek in Munich and Vertumnus and Pomona from the Palazzo Bianco in Genoa.

Religious and mythological paintings created by Van Dyck during his second Antwerp period, 1622 - 1632, are among his greatest works. Among those selected for the exhibition are Saint Augustine in Ecstasy from the Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten in Antwerp and Rinaldo and Armida from the Baltimore Museum of Art. Van Dyck's achievements as a court artist for King Charles I during the last years of his life in London are represented by the magnificent Charles I in Three Positions from the British Royal Collection and the Three Eldest Children of Charles I from the Galleria Sabauda in Turin.

The fully illustrated exhibition catalogue will include essays and entries on the paintings written by exhibition curators Wheelock and Barnes. Professor Julius Held will write the catalogue entries on fourteen oil sketches, as well as a short essay on their significance in Van Dyck's work. Essays on other aspects of Van Dyck's work, such as the sources for his work and his innovations and contributions as an artist, will be written by a number of Van Dyck scholars, including Christopher Brown, Carol Christensen, Zirka Filipczak, Sir Oliver Millar, Jeffrey Muller, and Douglas Stewart.

Wheelock and Barnes were assisted in their selection of the works by a scientific committee, whose members include Van Dyck scholars Christopher Brown, Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann, Roger d'Hulst, Irina Linnik, Annelise Mayer-Meintschel, Sir Oliver Millar, and Hubert von Sonnenburg.