

# NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

NEWS RELEASE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Ruth Kaplan  
Deborah Ziska  
(202) 842-6353

## PAUL STRAND CENTENNIAL RETROSPECTIVE TO PREMIERE

### AT NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ON DECEMBER 2

Washington, D.C., June 27, 1990 -- A retrospective of the photographs of Paul Strand, a major twentieth-century American artist, will premiere at the National Gallery of Art on December 2, 1990. Paul Strand will celebrate the centennial of the photographer's birth on October 16, 1890. A grant from Southwestern Bell Foundation has made possible the exhibition and its international tour.

The exhibition will include approximately 150 photographs, several of which have never before been exhibited. They range from Strand's earliest studies of New York City, made shortly before World War I, to his final images of his garden in Orgeval, France, from the early 1970s. Strand wrote that through his photographs he strove to reveal "the essential character of a place and its people."

"Paul Strand has produced some of the most compelling and significant photographs of this century," said J. Carter Brown, director, National Gallery of Art. "We look forward to expanding the public's knowledge of this exceptional American artist in the United States and abroad."

-more-

Paul Strand will be the first major retrospective of the artist's work since his death in 1976. The exhibition will include such celebrated photographs as Wall Street, The White Fence, Mr. Bennett, and The Tailor's Apprentice, as well as many abstractions and studies of New York that were discovered after his death. Nature, landscape, portrait, and architectural photographs taken by Strand in such diverse locales as Mexico, Nova Scotia, the Hebrides, Italy, Egypt, and many regions of the United States are also included.

"Unlike so many other American artists of this time, Strand did not simply adopt the look of modern European art, but was able to transform it into something that was both uniquely his own and also distinctly American," said Sarah Greenough, curator of photographs, National Gallery of Art. Greenough, who was a co-curator of the exhibition, On the Art of Fixing a Shadow: 150 Years of Photography, selected the works for the show and wrote the exhibition catalogue.

Richard Benson, a photographer who worked with Strand, has used Strand's original negatives and lantern slides, as well as his prints, to make the copy negatives for the catalogue. Using the full capability of a six-color press, Benson has developed and perfected a technique that, with a remarkable degree of fidelity, reproduces Strand's extremely subtle, rich, and varied prints. The catalogue will include 104 plates printed by this method, as well as 40 duotones.

strand . . . page three

A special grant from Southwestern Bell Foundation has supported the exhibition catalogue, which will be published by the National Gallery of Art in association with Aperture Foundation, Inc. The publication will be available in paperback at exhibition venues and in a hardcover edition at bookstores throughout the country.

Born in New York, Strand received his first one-man show in 1916 at the age of 26 at the 291 Gallery directed by Alfred Stieglitz, a photographer who is widely celebrated for introducing modern art to the American public. Strand worked in various settings as a still photographer, cinematographer, and as a film director and producer. Some of his most outstanding films, such as The Wave and Native Land, will be shown at the National Gallery of Art throughout the exhibition.

In 1987-1989 the Southwestern Bell Foundation supported the exhibition Georgia O'Keeffe, 1887-1986, which premiered at the National Gallery of Art and toured the U.S. "We are very pleased to return to the National Gallery as a supporter and to make it possible for Americans to see the exceptional photographs of Paul Strand. The exhibition will clearly demonstrate that he was one of the most accomplished artists of his time in any medium," said Gerald D. Blatherwick, vice chairman, Southwestern Bell Corporation.

-more-

strand . . . page four

After the exhibition closes at the National Gallery on February 3, 1991, it will travel to The Art Institute of Chicago, May 26 - July 21, 1991; The Saint Louis Art Museum, August 11 - October 6, 1991; The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, November 10, 1991 - January 12, 1992; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, March 12 - May 15, 1992; and The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, M. H. de Young Memorial Museum, June 14 - August 16, 1992.

Upon completion of the U.S. tour, the core of the exhibition, comprising the Southwestern Bell Corporation Paul Strand Collection and selected photographs from the Paul Strand Archive and public and private collections, will be presented at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, September 16 through November 22, 1992.