

National Gallery of Art News Release



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MAJOR GIFTS TO CELEBRATE ANNIVERSARY ANNOUNCED

WORKS BY BELLINI, LAUTREC, CEZANNE, HOMER, AND EAKINS*

Washington, D.C., February 2, 1991 - A number of gifts and pledges to the National Gallery in honor of its 50th anniversary were announced today by director J. Carter Brown in the first of two announcements of 50th-anniversary gift highlights. All the gifts will be on view at the Gallery for the first time in the exhibition Art for the Nation: Gifts in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art, which will run from March 17 through June 16, 1991. The exhibition, which includes more than 320 works of art from 150 donors, is supported by a grant from GTE Corporation.

The paintings include Jacopo Bellini's Saint Anthony Abbot and Saint Bernardino, c. 1460, from an anonymous donor; Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec's Marcelle Lender Dancing the Bolero in "Chilpéric", 1895-1896, from Betsey Cushing Whitney; Paul Cézanne's Boy in a Red Waistcoat, 1888-1890, from Paul Mellon; Thomas Eakins' Portrait of Rear Admiral George W. Melville, 1905, from Mr. and Mrs. H. John Heinz III; Jan Brueghel the Elder's A Basket of Mixed Flowers with a Vase of Flowers, 1615, from Paul Mellon; Hendrick ter Brugghen's The Mocking of Christ,

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* A checklist of the selected objects with dimensions and full credit lines is attached.

1621, from David E. Rust; Roelandt Savery's Landscape with Animals and Figures, 1624, from Robert H. and Clarice Smith; Frans Snyders' Still Life with Fruit and Game, c. 1625, from Herman and Lila Shickman; and Luca Giordano's Diana and Endymion, c. 1675-1680, from Joseph F. McCrindle.

In the next few weeks the National Gallery will make a further announcement of some of the most significant fiftieth-anniversary gifts of nineteenth- and twentieth-century art.

The gift of Jusepe de Ribera's The Martyrdom of Saint Bartholomew, 1634, from the Gallery's 50th Anniversary Gift Committee -- a work considered by scholars to be one of the finest of the master's career -- was announced in December 1990.

Drawings and watercolors include works by Titian, Federico Barocci, Canaletto, Hubert Robert, Jacques-Louis David, and Winslow Homer. The Gallery is also the recipient of Giambologna's bronze sculpture Christ Crucified, 1585-1588. Among important old master prints and books, the Gallery will receive rare Italian Renaissance woodcuts, as well as major works by Hendrik Goltzius and one of the most important illustrated German incunabula.

"These works will be major additions to the National Gallery's holdings in all media. Each one will help with a specific need," said Brown. "Our entire collection has come from the largess of private donors. The level of giving reflected in these objects happily demonstrates that the spirit of generosity is alive and well a half-century since our founding."

PAINTINGS

The recent rediscovery of an important work by Jacopo Bellini (c. 1400-c. 1470), Saint Anthony Abbot and Saint Bernardino, 1459 or 1460, is critical to scholarship in demonstrating for the first time that Jacopo introduced Renaissance values into Venetian painting, a role that has previously been identified primarily with his son Giovanni. Part of an altarpiece in the private funeral chapel of the Gattamelata family in the basilica of Sant'Antonio in Padua, the work shows the tall, upright figures of the two saints in front of a landscape. Their rendering and that of the stratified rocks nearby resembles similar figures and rocks from Jacopo's sketchbooks where he used the new invention of linear perspective. This panel is much more advanced than Jacopo's few other surviving paintings, which are all in the late Gothic style. It will provide the earliest example in the Gallery's superlative coverage of Venetian painting of four centuries.

Toulouse-Lautrec was so captivated by the actress Marcelle Lender that he saw her in Hervé's comic operetta Chilpéric at least 20 times and included her in a variety of works of art. Marcelle Lender Dancing the Bolero in "Chilpéric," 1895-1896, almost five feet square, is both Lautrec's most important depiction of the actress and one of his greatest paintings. A masterpiece of caricature, portraiture, popular entertainment, and theatrical exaggeration, the work underscores the changing course of late nineteenth-century art and is the first Lautrec on canvas at the National Gallery.

Cézanne's Boy in a Red Waistcoat, 1888-1890, a three-quarter-length portrait of a young Italian model, is considered to be one of the artist's finest paintings. More than the mood and personality of its subject, the work subtly and beautifully explores the harmony and counterpoint of surface, color, and the balance of complex compositional elements.

Intensely observed and utterly candid, Thomas Eakins' late portraits are among the most profoundly moving examinations of human character ever painted. Among the finest of Eakins' late works, Rear Admiral George W. Melville, 1905, is the second of Eakins' two portraits of this subject. It successfully expresses the power of Melville's person and personality -- his imposing size, great physical strength, and dauntless and indomitable spirit.

Jan Brueghel the Elder's A Basket of Flowers and a Vase of Flowers, 1615, will be the earliest Flemish still life in the National Gallery's collection and the first painting by this extremely important master. A fascinating example of Brueghel's treatment of one of his favorite subjects, it juxtaposes a random display of cut flowers in a basket with a more formal arrangement of tulips, buttercups, and other delicate flowers in a Venetian glass. Brueghel's adroit handling of paint conveys the delicacy of the thin forms with remarkable naturalness.

The Mocking of Christ, 1621, will be the first painting to enter the National Gallery's collection by Ter Brugghen (1588-1629) or any of the so-called Dutch Caravaggisti -- early seventeenth-century artists from Utrecht who were profoundly

influenced by Caravaggio on their travels to Italy. In this striking composition, Ter Brugghen has intensified Christ's humiliation by bringing the confrontation to the immediate foreground. This feature and the tonality of the colors relate Ter Brugghen's style to the work of Caravaggio. Thematically, however, the subject is close to graphic work by artists such as Albrecht Dürer. The fusion of these two traditions gives Ter Brugghen's work its extraordinary intensity.

Never before exhibited, and published for the first time in the catalogue for Art for the Nation, Roelandt Savery's Landscape with Animals and Figures, 1624, is the first work by this artist to enter the collection and the first painting by any of the artists in the important circle around Emperor Rudolf II. Typical of the mannerist style of Savery (1576-1639) and his Dutch and Flemish contemporaries, strong contrasts and striking patterns of sunlight and shadow enliven this scene of cattle, sheep, and goats brought to drink from a trough fed by a fountain. The robustness and vitality of the scene are testimony to the impressions made on Savery by his earlier travels in Bohemia and the Tyrol. It is only relatively recently that northern mannerism has been collected in the U.S., and this painting will be the first northern mannerist landscape at the Gallery.

Frans Snyders' Still Life with Fruit and Game, c. 1625, a masterpiece of composition, bold brushwork, and rich colors by the foremost Flemish painter of still lifes, comes as a complement to the Brueghel fiftieth anniversary gift. The first

painting by Snyders (1579-1657) at the Gallery, the work is a particularly rich example of the artist's large tabletop compositions. The pyramidal composition of fruits, vegetables, and dead game conveys the richness and bounty of the Flemish countryside and provides the artist an opportunity to display his ability to convey textures varying from fur to feathers to the delicate skin of grapes.

Diana and Endymion, c. 1675-1680, by Luca Giordano (1634-1705), is the first painting by the artist to enter the National Gallery collection; it and the Ribera are the Gallery's first two Neapolitan baroque paintings. The size and mythological theme of the signed work indicate that it was executed for a private patron. The subject of Diana and Endymion provided Giordano the opportunity to portray the human body at rest and in action, as Diana, the goddess of the moon, emerges from the dark of night to embrace the resting Endymion. More immediate than his two other autograph versions of the subject, this Diana and Endymion suggests the artist's Neapolitan origins in the school of Ribera, whose influence is evident through dramatic lighting and candidly direct forms.

DRAWINGS

Among the drawings coming to the National Gallery is Titian's Study of an Eagle, c. 1515, a work in pen and brown ink, from J. Carter Brown. A vibrant study of the bird's head and outspread wing, the work exhibits Titian's fluid handling of the pen, lending it an almost painterly texture. Rapid "staccato"

pen strokes, here suggesting feathers, are characteristic of the Venetian master's work. There are few generally accepted Titian drawings in any museum collection.

The first pastel head study of Federico Barocci (c. 1535-1612) to enter the collection, Head of a Woman, 1582-1586, is from Peter Josten. The drawing on blue paper is a virtuoso work in colored chalks, for which the artist is famous. A study for an attendant to the Virgin Mary in a painting for a chapel in Urbino, the work reveals how the artist tested the play of light on the woman's face with colored chalks and reevaluated her pose with black chalk outlines.

Canaletto's c. 1760 Courtyard of the Palazzo Pisani, from Robert H. and Clarice Smith, is only the second drawing by this master to enter the collection. The beautifully rendered intimate view of the inner courtyard of a palazzo is filled with Canaletto's Venetian light and enlivened by such details as adults and children conversing, laundry baskets, a small dog, and curtains blowing in the breeze.

The gift of Hubert Robert's Oval Fountain in the Garden of the Villa d'Este, Tivoli, 1760, from Mr. and Mrs. Neil Phillips and Mr. and Mrs. Ivan Phillips, is one of the greatest single examples of Robert's draftsmanship and one of the major masterpieces in the Gallery's collection of French drawings. Another major French graphic gift is Jacques-Louis David's Portrait of Thirus de Pautrizel, c. 1795, perhaps the artist's finest portrait drawing, from Walter H. and Leonore Annenberg. Presenting his fellow member of the French revolutionary

Convention in an austere profile reminiscent of ancient coins, David created an arresting image and an eloquent likeness of the sitter.

Winslow Homer's large watercolor Blackboard, 1877, from Jo Ann and Julian Ganz, Jr., is one of the artist's greatest works and best-known watercolors. It illustrates Homer at his wittiest as he incorporates vertical, horizontal, and oblique lines into the composition of a young teacher at a blackboard as if he were following the children's drawing lesson taught by the teacher/model. With further wit he signed the blackboard in the lower right-hand corner as if it were his creation.

SCULPTURE

The bronze Christ Crucified, probably before 1588, by Giambologna, is the Gallery's first major work by this pre-eminent mannerist artist, considered the most important Florentine sculptor of the sixteenth century after Michelangelo. It is a gift of Mr. and Mrs. John R. Gaines. Giambologna, who was born in Flanders but active most of his career in Florence, is recognized for his superlative command of anatomy and graceful twisting movement and unsurpassed technique in bronze and marble. He also created the celebrated Mercury that is represented by an eighteenth-century cast in the National Gallery's rotunda.

PRINTS AND BOOKS

In the category of prints are outstanding new gifts in two areas especially sought by the Gallery. Among Italian Renaissance chiaroscuro woodcuts, The Martyrdom of Two Saints, c. 1530, by Antonio da Trento is a gift of Andrew Robison, and the anonymous Presentation in the Temple, 1530-1540, is from Daryl R. Rubenstein and Lee G. Rubenstein. Among major northern mannerist prints are two works by Hendrik Goltzius (1558-1617): Hercules and Cacus, a 1588 chiaroscuro woodcut from a private collector, and Pietà, a 1596 engraving from Ruth and Jacob Kainen. In addition, one of the finest known copies of Hartmann Schedel's Liber Chronicarum (Nuremberg Chronicle), 1493, is a gift from Paul Mellon.

Hartmann Schedel's Nuremberg Chronicle is the first truly monumental printed illustrated book of the fifteenth century, and the first major illustrated book printed before 1500 to enter the Gallery's collection. Published in 1493 by Anton Koberger in Nuremberg, a major intellectual center of Europe, it contains 1,809 woodcuts illustrating the text whose ambitious scope is a history of the world beginning with Creation. The high quality of the woodcuts in the Chronicle paved the way for Albrecht Dürer's own handling of the medium in his famous series of The Life of the Virgin, The Large Passion, and The Apocalypse. This particular copy is one of the finest known -- originally hand-colored throughout and specially bound for a member of the famous Fugger family of Augsburg.

Da Trento's Martyrdom of Two Saints is an early and especially successful impression, evidenced by strong and clear lines in very rare tones of blue that give depth to the image. Both the Martyrdom and the nearly contemporary Presentation in the Temple by an anonymous Italian master derive from the work of Parmigianino and are particularly successful in creating the subtle qualities of a wash drawing, which can be achieved with a chiaroscuro woodcut.

Hercules and Cacus is the largest, most impressive, and perhaps the earliest of Goltzius' chiaroscuro woodcuts, which compose a small but accomplished portion of his oeuvre. The Pietà, on the other hand, is an extraordinary example of Goltzius' skill in engraving. It is a brilliant and rich work in an outstanding state of preservation, giving it a distinguished rank among all the other prints by the artist in the National Gallery collection.

Every donor represented in the exhibition will have made a significant present gift to the Gallery in honor of its anniversary. Some objects are given in part; all objects in the exhibition not given outright in their entirety are committed to the Gallery.

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Checklist of gifts announced attached.

National Gallery of Art



February 2, 1991

CHECKLIST OF MAJOR GIFTS TO CELEBRATE 50th ANNIVERSARY:

Jacopo Bellini

Saint Anthony Abbot and Saint Bernardino of Siena, 1459 or 1460
tempera on wood

43 1/4 x 22 1/2 inches

Anonymous Gift in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art

Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec

Marcelle Lender Dancing the Bolero in "Chilpéric", 1895-1896
oil on canvas

57 1/8 x 59 inches

Gift (Partial and Promised) of Betsey Cushing Whitney in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art

Paul Cézanne

Boy in a Red Waistcoat, 1888-1898

oil on canvas

35 1/4 x 28 1/2 inches

Promised Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art

Thomas Eakins

Rear Admiral George W. Melville, 1905

oil on canvas

40 x 27 inches

Gift (Partial and Promised) of Mr. and Mrs. H. John Heinz III in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art

Jan Brueghel the Elder

A Basket of Mixed Flowers with a Vase of Flowers, 1615

panel

22 x 35 inches

Promised Gift of Mrs. Paul Mellon in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art

Hendrick ter Brugghen

The Mocking of Christ, 1621

oil on canvas

37 1/2 x 49 1/2 inches

Promised Gift of David E. Rust in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art

Roelandt Savery

Landscape with Animals and Figures, 1624

oil on canvas

21 1/2 x 36 inches

Gift of Robert H. and Clarice Smith in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art

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Frans Snyder

Still Life with Fruit and Game, 1625

oil on canvas

36 x 54 inches

Gift (Partial and Promised) of Herman and Lila Shickman in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art

Luca Giordano

Diana and Endymion, 1675-1680

oil on canvas

73 1/2 x 79 1/2 (framed) inches

Gift of Joseph F. McCrindle in Memory of Mr. and Mrs. J. Fuller Feder and in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art

Jusepe de Ribera

The Martyrdom of Saint Bartholemew, 1634

oil on canvas

41 x 44 1/2 inches

Gift of the 50th Anniversary Gift Committee in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art

Giambologna

Christ Crucified, before 1588 (?)

bronze

42H x 14 1/2W x 4 3/8D inches

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. John R. Gaines in Memory of Clarence F. and Amelia R. Gaines, and Gloria Gaines and in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art

Titian

Study of an Eagle, c. 1515

pen and brown ink on paper

3 5/8 x 3 5/8 inches

Gift of J. Carter Brown in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art

Federico Barocci

Head of a Woman, 1582-1586

colored chalk with some stumping on blue paper

15 3/8 x 10 5/8 inches

Gift of Peter Josten in Memory of Stephen Spector and in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art

Canaletto

Courtyard of the Palazzo Pisani, 1760

pen, brown ink, gray wash on paper

18 1/16 x 13 3/8 inches

Gift of Robert H. and Clarice Smith in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art

Hubert Robert

The Oval Fountain in the Garden of the Villa d'Este, Tivoli, 1760
red chalk over graphite on paper

12 7/8 x 17 3/8 inches

Gift (Partial and Promised) of Mr. and Mrs. Neil Phillips and Mr. and Mrs. Ivan Phillips in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art

Jacques-Louis David

Portrait of Thirius de Pautrizel, 1795

pen and ink, brush and wash, with white gouache on paper

7 1/2 inches in diameter

Gift of Walter H. and Leonore Annenberg in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art

Winslow Homer

Blackboard, 1877

watercolor

19 7/16 x 12 3/16 inches

Gift (Partial and Promised) of Jo Ann and Julian Ganz Jr., in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art

Antonio da Trento

The Martyrdom of Two Saints, 1530

chiaroscuro woodcut printed from three block in three tones of blue

11 1/8 x 18 1/2 inches

Gift of Andrew Robison in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art

Anonymous Italian Master

Presentation in the Temple, 1530-1540

chiaroscuro woodcut on paper

16 x 11 5/8 inches

Gift (Partial and Promised) of Daryl R. Rubenstein and Lee G. Rubenstein in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art

Hendrik Goltzius

Hercules and Cacus, 1588

chiaroscuro woodcut on paper

16 3/16 x 13 1/8 inches

Gift of a Private Collector in Honor of Andrew Robison and in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art

Hendrik Goltzius

Pietà, 1596

engraving on paper

7 x 5 inches

Promised Gift of Ruth and Jacob Kainen in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art

Hartmann Schedel

Nuremberg Chronicle, 1493

book with illustrations by various artists on paper

18 9/16 x 2 7/8 inches (closed)

Gift of Paul Mellon in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the
National Gallery of Art