

# NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
July 22, 1992

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## NATIONAL GALLERY TO ORGANIZE EXHIBITION OF RARELY SEEN PAINTINGS FROM BARNES COLLECTION

WASHINGTON, DC -- The National Gallery of Art and the Barnes Foundation, Merion, Pennsylvania, will organize an exhibition of approximately eighty of the finest French impressionist, post-impressionist, and early modern paintings from the extraordinary collection established by the late Dr. Albert C. Barnes (1872-1951), it was announced today by J. Carter Brown, director of the National Gallery. The ruling of Judge Louis Stefan of the Orphans' Court of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, handed down on July 22, 1992, gives permission to the Barnes Foundation to stage an international exhibition which will help achieve its founder's vision to "promote the advancement of the fine arts," and pay for critically needed improvements at the seventy-year old gallery housing the Barnes collection.

"We are delighted to be in a position to accede to the Barnes Foundation's request to assist them as its trustees work to secure the future of this remarkable collection and

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institution," said Brown. "Many of the paintings in the exhibition are key works in each artist's development and in the history of art, and seeing this selection in a new context and easily accessible to the public should be an unforgettable experience."

The exhibition Great French Paintings from the Barnes Foundation: Impressionist, Post-Impressionist, and Early Modern, which will premiere in the National Gallery's East Building May 9 through September 6, 1993, will select highlights from the Barnes Foundation's strong holdings of Renoir, Cézanne, and Matisse, as well as paintings by other major artists such as Manet, Monet, van Gogh, Gauguin, Seurat, Toulouse-Lautrec, Henri Rousseau, Modigliani, Braque, and Picasso. The paintings have been seen by relatively few people and have never been reproduced in color because of the Foundation's visitation and publication restrictions.

In addition to co-organizing the exhibition, the National Gallery will also advise the Barnes Foundation on arrangements for a tour of the exhibition to Paris in the fall of 1993 and to Tokyo in early 1994, and on an exhibition-related book to be published by Alfred A. Knopf Incorporated. The Gallery will work in close cooperation with the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Great French Paintings from the Barnes Collection will take place during the period that the Foundation is scheduled to restore the building which houses the collection. This historic

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building was designed by the noted architect Paul Cret and opened in 1925. The Foundation plans to upgrade the environmental and security systems which are essential to the preservation of the more than one thousand works of art.

Among the paintings to be included in the exhibition are Renoir's After the Concert (c. 1876-1877), a life-size, high-impressionist image of urban leisure; Cézanne's The Card Players (1890-1892), the grandest and most complex of the five paintings that the artist painted on this theme, and Nudes in a Landscape (1900-1905), a climactic and monumental example of the artist's mysterious "Bather" series; van Gogh's Joseph-Etienne Roulin (1889), a dazzling example from the series of portraits that van Gogh devoted to his friend in Arles; Matisse's The Red Madras Headdress (summer 1907), one of the artist's boldest, brightest and most decorative portraits of the pre-war period, and Seated Riffian (1912-1913), the most imposing figurative painting to emerge from Matisse's second Moroccan sojourn of 1912-1913; and Picasso's Jester and Young Harlequin (1905), one of the largest and most striking works of the artist's Rose Period.

Born and raised in Philadelphia, Barnes financed his tuition for medical school by playing semi-professional baseball. He received an M.D. at the age of 21 and a few years later entered the pharmaceutical business. Financial success enabled him to amass one of the world's greatest private art collections. At first he focused his efforts on European and American

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impressionist, post-impressionist, and early modern works. Later he also collected African tribal sculpture, Greek and Egyptian antiquities, metalwork, American Indian art, and old master paintings and drawings.

In 1922, Barnes established the Foundation, which was chartered as an educational institution. He also oversaw the building of a house for the Foundation and for his vast art collection in Merion, Pennsylvania. He died in an auto accident in 1951.

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