

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

NEWS RELEASE

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

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NATIONAL GALLERY CELEBRATES FRANCE

WITH A MÉLANGE OF FESTIVE ACTIVITIES IN FEBRUARY AND MARCH

Washington, D.C. -- Honoring the bicentennial of the Musée du Louvre, the National Gallery of Art will present a series of free talks, tours, films, music, and a family program with a French focus in February and March, 1994.

The centerpiece of the Celebrate France festival will be a discussion between I.M. Pei, architect of the acclaimed plan for the Grand Louvre and the National Gallery's East Building; Michel Laclotte, president-director of the Louvre; and Jean Lebrat, president of Etablissement Public du Grand Louvre (EPGL). Moderated by National Gallery director Earl A. Powell III, The Achievement of the Grand Louvre Project, A Conversation will take place on Sunday, March 13 at 2:30 p.m. in the East Building auditorium. Seating is on a first come, first served basis. A concert at 7:00 p.m. will feature the Washington premiere of a new work commissioned by the Louvre in honor of its bicentennial. Both programs on March 13 are jointly organized by the National Gallery, Musée du Louvre, and EPGL.

Throughout March, varied activities will illuminate the Gallery's extraordinary collections of French painting and decorative arts. Beginning February 5, the celebration will include a retrospective of films from Gaumont, a major French film company now commemorating its 100th anniversary.

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French architecture will be highlighted in a series of Sunday afternoon lectures in the East Building auditorium: The Architecture of the Louvre from François I to François Mitterrand, presented by Hilary Ballon, associate professor, Department of Art History and Archaeology, Columbia University, on March 6; and Ancients and Moderns: Architectural Theory in the French Academy, with Dora Wiebenson, professor emeritus, School of Architecture, University of Virginia, on March 27; both are at 4:00 p.m.

The Ysaye String Quartet will perform the Washington premiere of Quartet No. 3 composed in 1993 by Pascal Dusapin, and works composed in 1793 by Haydn and in 1893 by Debussy, on Sunday, March 13 at 7:00 p.m. The concert will take place in the West Building, East Garden Court. First-come, first-served seating begins at 6:00 p.m., 6th Street and Constitution Avenue entrance. For more information, call (202) 842-6941.

Gallery talks will examine the arts in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century France. Special tours of the permanent collection also will be given in French. (See attached schedule for complete listing). A new walking guide surveying twenty-four paintings in the Gallery's French collections will be available free of charge.

As part of the celebration, portions of the impressionist and post-impressionist collections will be reinstalled. During March and April, an innovative audio tour system will be offered of these galleries. Rather than presenting a conventional narrative in a fixed order, the new system will allow visitors to choose commentary in any sequence from approximately thirty paintings in the impressionist and post-impressionist collections. By pressing designated keys on a hand-held unit, visitors will hear

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information only about those works of art selected, and they will be able to cut off or expand the length of the commentary on any particular work.

Child's Play in Eighteenth-Century France will offer a time-capsule journey of eighteenth-century manners and family life through paintings, furniture, and sculpture, followed by activities for children. For families with children ages five through seven, the tour is March 6; for ages eight through eleven, March 20. Registration is required; call (202) 789-3030.

Gaumont Presents: A Century of French Cinema will be featured on weekends, February 5 through March 27 in the East Building auditorium. Rare and notable films from the company's archives will offer a broad survey of French culture and a concise review of twentieth-century history. Films span the century from early French animation by Emile Chol and the Judex serials by Louis Feuillade of 1917, through 1930s films by Jean Vigo, *actualités* or newsreels from 1900 through 1940, to important post-1950 works by Sacha Guitry, Eric Rohmer, and others. Programs will be shared with the Library of Congress and the Embassy of France. New films about the Louvre also will be shown. For a complete schedule, call (202) 842-6799.

Sculpture, posters, and books based on the Louvre collections will be featured in the East Building bookshop. A recently published miniature compendium with 300 color illustrations of the Gallery's beloved French collections is available, Treasures of Impressionism and Post-Impressionism (\$11.95). To order, call (301) 322-5900.

The National Gallery of Art is located between 3rd and 7th Streets N.W. Admission is free. Hours are Monday through Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sunday 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. For general information, call (202) 737-4215; for assistance for people with disabilities: (202) 842-6690, or Telecommunications Device

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for the Deaf (TDD): (202) 842-6176.

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Celebrate France Gallery Talks
Tours meet at the West Building Rotunda

Chardin and the Art of Passing Time

Aneta Georgievska-Shine, graduate lecturing fellow. March 5, 12, 26 at 2:00

"Napoleon in His Study" by Jacques-Louis David (Samuel H. Kress Collection)

Eric Denker, lecturer. March 8 at 2:00, 15 and 22 at 1:00

Nicolas Poussin and Claude Lorraine

Philip Conisbee, curator of French painting. March 8 and 24 at 1:00

"A Bashibazuk" by Jean-Louis Gerôme (Anonymous Loan)

Frances Feldman, lecturer. March 10 and 13 at 2:00

Of Dangerous Liaisons: Ladies' Writing Desks of Eighteenth-Century France

Rebecca Albani, graduate lecturing fellow. March 11, 19, 25 at 2:00

French Painting: Impressionism and Post-Impressionism

Frances Feldman, lecturer. March 12, 13, 16, 22, 25 at noon

French Furniture of the Eighteenth Century

William J. Williams, education editor. March 15, 18, 30 at noon

"The Finding of Moses" by Sebastien Bourdon (Samuel H. Kress Collection)

Philip L. Leonard, lecturer. March 17 and 20 at 2:00

French Painting from Its Origins to Impressionism

Philip L. Leonard, lecturer. March 19, 20, 23, 29, April 1 at noon

Special Tours in French

French Paintings in the National Gallery of Art

March 10, 17 at 1:00 and March 24 at 2:00

Highlights of the West Building Collection

March 5, 12, 19 at 12:00

Highlights of the East Building Collection

March 5, 12, 19 at 2:00

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