

# National Gallery of Art

## NEWS RELEASE

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### NEW DUTCH CABINET GALLERIES

#### RETURN VISITORS TO SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY HOLLAND AND FLANDERS; OPEN SEPTEMBER 24 WITH WORKS BY BROUWER, VERMEER, AND OTHERS

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Beginning September 24, visitors to the National Gallery of Art can view small Dutch and Flemish works of art in three new cabinet galleries. These intimate spaces, similar in scale to cabinet galleries found in homes of seventeenth-century Dutch collectors, have been constructed adjacent to the expansive interiors of the Dutch and Flemish galleries on the main floor of the West Building.

The new galleries open with four installations: Adriaen Brouwer: Youth Making a Face, Paintings on Copper, Vermeer and His Contemporaries, and Dutch and Flemish Still-Life Paintings. The works will be on view through February 11, 1996, with some rotations.

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The creation of the Dutch Cabinet Galleries is made possible by Juliet and Lee Folger and The Folger Fund. Adriaen Brouwer: Youth Making a Face is made possible by gifts from Juliet and Lee Folger/The Folger Fund, The Wunsch Foundation, and the friends of Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr. The exhibition brochure is made possible by The Circle of the National Gallery of Art.

"The Dutch Cabinet Galleries are a logical extension of the Gallery's high standards of display," said Earl A. Powell III, director, National Gallery of Art. "It is our hope that the architectural layout of the new cabinet, along with its conceptual flexibility in terms of exhibitions, will arouse in our visitors the same sense of enthusiasm, discernment, and curiosity experienced by viewers in the seventeenth-century Dutch collector's cabinets."

The idea for the creation of the Dutch cabinet galleries was first proposed a decade ago when the department of northern baroque painting felt that the Gallery's small Dutch paintings should be displayed in an environment more compatible with their size. Architectural drawings revealed space between the existing Dutch galleries and the Information Room that could be utilized for such a purpose. During the reinstallation of the West Building in 1991-1992, the idea was revived by the design department, who designed and constructed the three new cabinet galleries. While small paintings can be displayed throughout the new spaces, built-in cases in one of the galleries also accommodate drawings, prints, books, and small sculpture.

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According to Wheelock, Gallery curator of northern baroque painting and organizer of the current installations, "The seventeenth-century cabinets would contain a variety of small works of art and various other kinds of objects that might strike a collector's fancy."

The four premiere installations, which include loans from public and private collections, as well as works from the permanent collection of the National Gallery, are as follows:

**Adriaen Brouwer: Youth Making a Face:** This focus exhibition highlights the Gallery's recent acquisition of a delightful, small painting (c. 1632-1635) by Adriaen Brouwer of a young peasant making a face directly at the viewer. Brouwer (1605/6-1638) was one of the most expressive Flemish painters of the seventeenth century. Included in the exhibition are three of Brouwer's "low-life" genre paintings from the Alte Pinakothek, Munich, and related works by his contemporaries Frans Hals, David Teniers the Younger, and Adriaen van Ostade. The iconographic tradition for the mocking gesture in Brouwer's painting is demonstrated by a late fifteenth-century polychromed wood sculpture of Christ Carrying the Cross from the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, and a manuscript, illuminated by Simon Bening, from the J. Paul Getty Museum.

**Paintings on Copper:** Dutch and Flemish artists often painted meticulous still lifes, landscapes, and church interiors on copper. A number of such works by Jan van Kessel I, Jacob Marrel, Jan van Huysum, Hendrick Avercamp, Jan Brueghel the Elder,

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Joachim Wtewael, Pieter Neefs I, and Dirck van Dalen are on view.

**Vermeer and His Contemporaries:** National Gallery masterpieces Girl with a Red Hat (c. 1665) and Woman Holding a Balance (c. 1664) by Johannes Vermeer and Young Girl with a Flute (c. 1665), attributed to Vermeer, are presented with paintings by Gabriel Metsu and Frans van Mieris the Elder, on loan from the Royal Cabinet of Paintings Mauritshuis, The Hague. This installation will be changed when the paintings by Vermeer are installed in the exhibition of the artist's work, which opens November 12, 1995.

**Dutch and Flemish Still-Life Paintings:** This installation focuses on the Gallery's recently acquired still-life painting by the Flemish painter Osias Beert the Elder (active 1596-1623), Banquet Piece with Oysters, Fruit and Wine (c. 1615). It will bring together paintings by seventeenth-century artists Abraham Mignon, Balthasar van der Ast, Isaac Soreau, Jan Brueghel the Elder, Jan Davidz. de Heem, and Gerard Dou, who also painted luxurious displays of fruit and flowers.

The National Gallery of Art, located between Third Street and Seventh Street on Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C., is open free of charge, Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. For information call (202) 737-4215 or the Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD), (202) 842-6176, weekdays, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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