

# National Gallery of Art

## NEWS RELEASE

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### NATIONAL GALLERY ANNOUNCES PAMELA HARRIMAN'S GIFT OF VAN GOGH'S "WHITE ROSES"

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Earl A. Powell III, director, National Gallery of Art, announced today that "Pamela Harriman has bequeathed a Van Gogh masterpiece, White Roses, to the American people through the National Gallery of Art." There is no date set as to when the painting will go on public view.

"We are elated and deeply grateful for Ambassador Harriman's magnificent and generous gift of White Roses, one of Van Gogh's finest and most beautiful paintings, to the nation," said Powell. "It will be installed prominently in the West Building for all to enjoy."

In 1989 the Gallery announced Mrs. Harriman's gift of a partial interest in White Roses with a pledge of the balance at or before her death. It was the lead gift in the Gallery's campaign to attract gifts of works of art in honor of its first half century. The painting was shown at the Gallery in the 1991 exhibition Art for the Nation: Gifts in Honor of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art and appeared on the cover of the exhibition catalogue. It was most recently on view

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**white roses/2**

in Ambassador Harriman's residence in Paris.

The painting, 28 x 35 1/2 inches, depicts a profusion of white roses against a boldly articulated green background painted with particularly expressive brushwork. It is one of four still lifes, including two paintings of roses and two of irises, executed by Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890) shortly before he left Saint-Rémy, France, in May 1890.

The painting will be the first still life by Van Gogh to come into the Gallery's collection. The Gallery owns no major painting by Van Gogh from this important period, though its collection of impressionist and postimpressionist artists is one of the most comprehensive in the world.

White Roses was given to Mrs. Harriman by her husband, the late W. Averell Harriman, who purchased the painting in 1930. In 1972 the W. Averell Harriman Foundation donated twenty-two paintings by such important artists as Cézanne, Degas, Gauguin, Matisse, Picasso, and Seurat to the National Gallery.

Mrs. Harriman was a Benefactor of the National Gallery of Art. She also served on its Trustees' Council, a leadership group that advises the Gallery's Board of Trustees, from 1982 until 1993, when she withdrew prior to assuming her duties in Paris as United States Ambassador to France.

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