

National Gallery of Art

NEWS RELEASE

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, WASHINGTON,

LAUNCHES WORLD WIDE WEB SITE

- 100,000 Works of Art from the Collection Featured
- More than 3,200 Full-View Images and 3,800 Details of Art in Magnificent Color

Washington, D.C. -- The National Gallery of Art has launched its World Wide Web site, a dynamic and invaluable resource for art enthusiasts around the globe.

Home to one of the finest collections of art in the world, the National Gallery brings its comprehensive collection of 100,000 works to its first Web site, accompanied by an array of tours, historical audio segments, a features section, and information on special exhibitions and programs.

Presented are more than 3,200 full-view digital images and 3,800 details of art in magnificent color, illustrating Western achievements in painting, sculpture, and graphic arts, from the Middle Ages to the present. The National Gallery of Art's Web site can be reached at <http://www.nga.gov>.

"We are pleased that the National Gallery's new Web site is capable of reaching an international audience, bringing many of our nation's preeminent works of art to millions of users throughout the world," said Earl A. Powell III, director, National Gallery

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of Art. "Exciting technological developments such as the Internet enable us to foster a greater understanding and renewed enjoyment of works of art as we move into the new century."

Home Page

On the home page, representative works from the National Gallery's permanent collection rotate in ten-minute intervals. The home page also displays a National Gallery of Art (NGA) seal. Anytime viewers click on the NGA seal in any section of the Web site, they automatically return to the home page. As visitors begin to explore the Web site, they will also find burgundy-colored hot links to different sections where they can explore a work of art, take a tour, or obtain specific information. Several categories can be found on the home page:

- Help. Learn how to best use the Web site.
- Feedback. Get a chance to offer feedback and respond to the Web site.
- Search. Using words or phrases, search the site to find information about subjects or documents, and search the collection using the artist's name, title of work, or a combination of criteria. Information on all of the objects in the National Gallery's permanent collection can be found using the search capabilities.

Highlights

The home page also contains a link to a special section called "highlights," featuring:

- History of the National Gallery of Art. Included in this section are special audio segments that offer dedication speeches by President Franklin D. Roosevelt for the 1941 opening of the West Building and by President Jimmy

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Carter for the 1978 opening of the East Building.

- Features section. This area will be devoted to a variety of independent interactive presentations that highlight works in the National Gallery's permanent collection using developing technologies. The first feature is a study of John Singleton Copley's Watson and the Shark (1778), a tension-filled work that takes on vivid dimensions in this animated exploration of the painting. In this section, viewers may also download a file of a Gallery guide focusing on Copley's works in the collection. The guide is offered in five languages: English, Italian, French, German, and Spanish.
- Links to tours of the collection. Special tours of the collection are highlighted in this section, including French paintings of the nineteenth century with audio descriptions narrated by Philip Conisbee, curator of French paintings, and selections from the National Gallery's collection of approximately 17,000 watercolor renderings of American decorative arts.

General Information

A special segment called "Today in Gallery History" will be featured, as well as facts about museum hours, restaurants, special programs, and the museum shops. Visitors may also find out how to become involved with the museum, including information about charitable giving and volunteer programs.

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The Collection

A cornerstone of the Web site, the collection section offers detailed information on the 100,000 objects in the National Gallery's permanent collection. Each object page -- many of which are illustrated -- carries links to information such as provenance, exhibition history, and bibliographic references, as well as links to other resources in the site where the object is featured. Viewers may select their own paths and learn about the collection at their own pace using search criteria such as the artist's last name, school, style, year created, medium, subject, or a key word in the title of a work.

A variety of tours of the permanent collection, many featuring audio segments, focus on art ranging from fifteenth-century Northern European, to seventeenth-century French and Italian, to twentieth-century American. Collection tours are organized first by medium -- painting, sculpture, decorative arts, and works on paper -- and then by school.

Exhibitions

Visitors to the site will discover information about current special exhibitions, including opening and closing dates, tour schedules, objects currently on view, and related information. Members of the news media and the public can have direct access to the latest information about current and upcoming exhibitions.

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Programs and Events

Detailed information about programs and events is updated on a monthly basis, including Gallery talks, audio and guided tours, music and film programs, family activities, distance learning, and the museum's Micro Gallery.

Resources

In addition to serving the general public, the National Gallery also reaches a broad community of scholars, educators, and students. Information about the Art Research Library, the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, the Department of Curatorial Records, and other educational resources can be found in this section.

The Shops of the National Gallery

A listing of a variety of items from the shops of the National Gallery relating to art, special exhibitions, and the permanent collection will be available soon. Items that can be purchased include printed reproductions, stationery, distinctive gifts and jewelry, and books on art history and architecture, as well as children's books and creative games and kits for all ages. Once the shop section is open, orders can be printed out and mailed or faxed to the National Gallery, or submitted online.

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

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