

National Gallery of Art

NEWS RELEASE

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FIRST RETROSPECTIVE OF LANDSCAPES BY THOMAS MORAN
AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, SEPTEMBER 28, 1997;
INCLUDES YELLOWSTONE IMAGES THAT INSPIRED U.S. CONGRESS
TO ESTABLISH FIRST NATIONAL PARK

Washington, D.C. -- The first retrospective of paintings by Thomas Moran (1837-1926), long recognized as one of America's foremost landscape artists, will be on view at the National Gallery of Art, East Building, September 28, 1997-January 11, 1998. The exhibition will feature approximately 100 of Moran's finest watercolors and oil paintings, which provided Americans with breathtaking views of the American West, including the first images of Yellowstone. Viewers will be able to see a selection of Moran's paintings of Yellowstone that inspired Congress to establish the first national park in the United States. The Thomas Moran exhibition coincides with the 125th anniversary celebration of the creation of Yellowstone National Park. Also included in the exhibition is the painting, The Three Tetons, which hangs in the Oval Office of the White House.

The exhibition is made possible by generous support from The Boeing Company. In 1988, The Boeing Company sponsored the exhibition Sweden: A Royal

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Treasury 1550-1700 at the National Gallery of Art. The Moran exhibition is being organized by the National Gallery of Art, in association with the Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, Oklahoma, which holds the largest collection of works by Moran. After its showing in Washington, the exhibition will be at the Gilcrease Museum, February 8 - May 10, 1998, and the Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, Washington, June 11 - August 30, 1998.

"The loans from the Gilcrease Museum, along with major works never lent before from other outstanding collections, will enable visitors to enjoy an unprecedented view of Moran's stunning achievement. We are grateful to Boeing for its role in helping us bring these magnificent works to the nation," said Earl A. Powell III, director of the National Gallery.

"The Boeing Company is excited to sponsor the first major exhibit of pioneer artist Thomas Moran at the National Gallery of Art. Thomas Moran is an inspiration," said Boeing chairman and chief executive officer Philip M. Condit. "Moran captured the beauty and natural wonders of the West in his landscape paintings and also helped influence the formation of the National Park Service to benefit future generations. He epitomized the pioneering spirit that remains critical to Boeing and to America's future," Condit added.

YELLOWSTONE

In the period of renewal following the Civil War, the government sponsored survey teams to explore and map the vast resources of the American West. Moran's

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In addition to loans from private collectors, public lenders to the exhibition include the Gilcrease Museum; The White House; the National Park Service; the Smithsonian Institution; the Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming; the Museum of Western Art, Denver; the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Art Institute of Chicago; the North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh; the Detroit Institute of Arts; Berea College, Berea, Kentucky; the Union Pacific Museum Collection, Omaha; the National Archives, Washington, D.C.; and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

Accompanying the exhibition will be a comprehensive, fully illustrated catalogue with contributions from Nancy Anderson, associate curator of American and British paintings, National Gallery of Art, along with other leading Moran scholars including Anne Morand, curator of art, Gilcrease Museum; Joni Kinsey, professor of art history, University of Iowa; and Thomas Bruhn, acting director, Benton Museum, University of Connecticut, Storrs. The catalogue, being published by the National Gallery of Art in association with Yale University Press, will be the first extensive, scholarly work on Moran. It will include an illustrated chronology, color plates of every painting in the exhibition, and appendices of rare Moran documents available in part for the first time. One of the appendices will include illustrations of the series of chromolithographs that Moran did for Louis Prang in 1876, widely recognized as the finest chromolithographs done in nineteenth-century America. For the first time these will be reproduced in

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original watercolors, completed on the first survey expedition to Yellowstone in 1871, are being lent by the National Park Service as part of its anniversary celebration. They will be installed with photographs by the noted photographer William Henry Jackson who traveled with Moran on the historic expedition.

Moran's watercolors of Yellowstone played a decisive role in the creation of the first national park in the United States just a few months after being seen by the public and the U.S. Congress. Moran subsequently rose to national prominence when his first great painting of the American West, The Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone (1872), with its vast, spectacular landscape, was purchased by Congress to hang in the U.S. Capitol.

TRIPTYCH TO BE UNITED

The exhibition will include Moran's three most famous oil paintings, hung together for the first time as the western triptych he intended: Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone (1872) and Chasm of the Colorado (1873 - 1874) from the Department of the Interior, and Mountain of the Holy Cross (1875) from the Autry Museum of Western Heritage, Los Angeles.

LOANS INCLUDE RARELY EXHIBITED WORKS

While Moran's great Western paintings form the heart of the exhibition, visitors will also have an opportunity to see his rarely exhibited Italian, English, and Mexican scenes, as well as his little known Pre-Raphaelite-style landscapes of the eastern United States.

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color together with original text.

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 visit the National Gallery of Art's Web site at <http://www.nga.gov>.

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