

The header image shows the National Gallery of Art building in Washington, DC, with the U.S. Capitol dome visible in the background. The text "National Gallery of Art" is overlaid on the left side of the image.

National Gallery of Art

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News Release

**NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART PRESENTS FIRST
U.S. EXHIBITION OF ITALIAN RENAISSANCE
MASTER LORENZO LOTTO**

Washington, DC -- The first U.S. exhibition of paintings by Italian Renaissance master Lorenzo Lotto (c.1480 - 1556/1557) will be presented this fall at the National Gallery of Art. *Lorenzo Lotto: Rediscovered Master of the Renaissance*, on view November 2, 1997 - March 1, 1998, will include fifty works by this fascinating artist, whose work is not sufficiently well known in the United States. Lotto's portraits, allegories, and religious paintings, with their brilliant color and arresting details, have an idiosyncratic character not usually associated with the Renaissance. Many of the paintings in the show are being lent by churches and museums in the picturesque locations in Italy where Lotto originally worked.

The exhibition is organized by the National Gallery of Art, in association with the Accademia Carrara di Belle Arti, Bergamo, one of the premier repositories of Lotto's work. The National Gallery of Art will be the only venue in the United States. After its Washington showing, the exhibition will travel to the Accademia Carrara in Bergamo (April 2 - June 28, 1998), as part of the museum's 200th anniversary celebration, and to the Galeries nationales d'Exposition of the Grand Palais/Musée du Louvre, Paris (October 12, 1998 - January 11, 1999). United Airlines is the official carrier for this exhibition, which is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities.

"Lotto's pictures never fail to intrigue viewers. Since Bernard Berenson's pioneering monograph on Lorenzo Lotto first appeared in 1895, the artist and his work have had a special appeal for twentieth-century sensibilities," said Earl A. Powell III, director, National Gallery of Art. "These paintings will be new to many, who have yet to discover the beauties of Bergamo, Recanati, Jesi, and the

other Lotto sites, which are off the beaten track for tourists." Also unfamiliar to some viewers will be two works by the artist being lent from Krakow, Poland, and Bucharest, Romania.

Portraits

Today, Lotto is most appreciated for the probing, psychological character of his portraits. Outstanding examples shown in the exhibition include the likeness of the antiquities collector Andrea Odoni (1527), lent by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II; the strikingly bold *Portrait of a Lady as Lucretia* (c. 1533) from London's National Gallery; and the melancholic *Portrait of a Young Man* (c. 1530) from the Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice. These portraits of single individuals, surrounded by symbols in unusual settings, are complemented by a pair of extraordinary marriage portraits from the Prado Museum, Madrid, and from The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg.

Allegories and Religious Paintings

Among the other masterworks included in the exhibition are the National Gallery of Art's *Allegory of Virtue and Vice* (1505) and *Allegory of Chastity* (c. 1506). These small works will be reunited for the first time in almost five hundred years with Lotto's portraits from Naples and Dijon, for which they originally served as covers. Similarly poetic is the *Saint Jerome in the Wilderness* (1506?) with its idyllic landscape from the Musée du Louvre, Paris.

Larger-scale religious compositions include the richly colored *Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine* (1523) from the Accademia Carrara di Belle Arti, Bergamo; the sensitively painted *Virgin and Child with Saints Catherine of Alexandria and Thomas* (c. 1528-1530) from the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna; and the visionary altarpiece of the *Virgin and Child Enthroned with Saints* (1521) from the Church of Santo Spirito, Bergamo. The last two works, among many others, have recently been conserved for the exhibition.

The intensely dramatic *Christ Carrying the Cross* (1526) from the Louvre and the *Annunciation* (c. 1534-1535) from the Pinacoteca Civica in the town of Recanati both reveal the depth of Lotto's religious feelings. An itinerant artist who forsook worldly pleasures, Lotto particularly identified with Saint Jerome, the reputed founder of

Western monasticism, and no fewer than five of his depictions of this saint are included in the exhibition.

"Lotto Carpets"

Among the highlights of the exhibition are a so-called "Lotto carpet" and two other Oriental carpets with geometric designs of the type that the artist included in his paintings. Lotto's expert knowledge of carpets can be seen by comparing the exhibited carpets with similar examples, which appear in his paintings.

Exhibition Organization

The curator for the National Gallery exhibition is David Alan Brown, head of the department of Italian Renaissance painting, National Gallery of Art, who co-organized the exhibition *Titian, Prince of Painters*, held at the Gallery and in the Palazzo Ducale, Venice, in 1990-1991. Other members of the organizing committee for *Lotto* are renowned Renaissance scholars Peter Humfrey, professor, University of St. Andrews, Scotland, and Mauro Lucco, professor, University of Bologna, as well as Francesco Rossi, director, Accademia Carrara di Belle Arti, Bergamo; Giovanna Nepi Scirè, superintendent of Fine Arts, Venice; and Carlo Bertelli, advisor to the city of Bergamo for the two-hundredth anniversary of the Accademia Carrara.

Catalogue

Accompanying the exhibition will be a fully illustrated catalogue, *Lorenzo Lotto: Rediscovered Master of the Renaissance*, with color images of every painting in the show. The catalogue offers a comprehensive account of the artist's achievement with essays by a wide range of international experts, along with detailed entries on the works exhibited. A comprehensive bibliography and a chronology are also included. The English edition of the catalogue will be published by the National Gallery of Art and distributed by Yale University Press, New Haven and London. An Italian edition will be published by Skira, Milan.

General Information

The National Gallery of Art and its Sculpture Garden, located on the National Mall between 3rd and 9th Streets at Constitution Ave. NW, are open Monday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The Gallery is closed on December 25 and January 1. For information call (202) 737-4215 or the Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) at (202) 842-6176, or visit the Gallery's Web site at www.nga.gov.

Visitors will be asked to present all carried items for inspection upon entering. Checkrooms are free of charge and located at each entrance. Luggage and other oversized bags must be presented at the Fourth Street Entrance of the East or West Building to permit X-ray screening and must be deposited in the checkrooms at those entrances. Any items larger than 17 X 26 inches cannot be accepted by the Gallery or its checkrooms. For the safety of the art work and visitors, nothing may be carried into the Gallery on a visitor's back. Any bag or other items that cannot be carried reasonably and safely in some other manner must be left at the checkrooms.

For additional press information please call or send inquiries to:

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