

National Gallery of Art

NEWS RELEASE

ADVANCE EXHIBITION SCHEDULE

NOTE TO EDITORS: The following exhibition information is current as of **JANUARY 1998**. Please disregard previous schedules. Information is subject to change; please confirm dates, titles, and other pertinent information with the National Gallery of Art Press Office at (202) 842-6353.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, WASHINGTON, D.C.

The National Gallery of Art, one of the world's preeminent museums, was created for the people of the United States of America by a joint resolution of Congress accepting the gift of financier, public servant, and art collector Andrew W. Mellon in 1937, the year of his death. The Gallery's outstanding permanent collection of nearly 100,000 paintings, drawings, prints, photographs, sculpture, and decorative arts traces the development of Western art from the Middle Ages to the present. Its world-renowned conservation department restores and analyzes paintings, sculpture, and works on paper.

Funds for the construction of the original (West) building, which opened to the public in 1941, were provided by the A. W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust. The collection on view in the West Building, designed by John Russell Pope, includes primarily European works from the thirteenth century through the early twentieth century. A comprehensive survey of Italian painting and sculpture, including the only painting by Leonardo da Vinci in the Western Hemisphere is presented here. Rich in Dutch masters and French impressionists, the collection offers superb surveys of American, British, Flemish, Spanish, and fifteenth- and sixteenth-century German art. A recent addition is the Micro Gallery, the most comprehensive, interactive, multimedia computer system in an American art museum.

Funds for construction of the East Building were given by Paul Mellon and the late Ailsa Mellon Bruce, the son and daughter of the founder, and by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Designed by I. M. Pei, the East Building opened to the public in 1978. Its galleries and exhibition spaces are especially suited for displaying contemporary art. Major twentieth-century artists such as Alexander Calder, Henri Matisse, Joan Miró, Pablo Picasso, Jackson Pollock, and Mark Rothko are represented in the collection. The East Building also houses the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, a research library, an extensive photographic archive, and administrative offices.

Some fifteen to twenty special exhibitions are held annually. The Gallery also offers a concert series, in addition to numerous lectures, tours, film showings, and a wide range of educational programs and materials. Works on paper by important artists ranging from Albrecht Dürer to Helen Frankenthaler may be seen in special exhibitions or by calling 202/842-6392 to make an appointment to view them in the public study rooms.

The National Gallery represents a partnership of federal and private resources. The Gallery's operations and maintenance are supported through federal appropriations. All of the Gallery's acquisitions of works of art as well as numerous special programs are made possible through private donations or funds. Admission to all exhibitions and events is free of charge. The Gallery is located on Constitution Avenue, N.W., between Third and Seventh Streets, and is open 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) at (202) 842-6176. The National Gallery of Art's Web site can be reached at <http://www.nga.gov>

To receive the Gallery's monthly Calendar of Events free of charge, call 202/842-6360. To receive the quarterly Film Calendar free of charge, call 202/842-6799.

ALEXANDER CALDER 1898-1976

National Gallery of Art, East Building
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art

March 29 - July 12, 1998
September 4 - December 1, 1998

OVERVIEW: This is the first major retrospective of Alexander Calder's work in the United States since his death in 1976. With approximately 250 works, the exhibition presents the breadth of his prolific and diverse career and illuminates his role as one of the great formal innovators of twentieth-century art. The show concentrates on the best examples of Calder's sculpture -- including mobiles and stabiles ranging from small-scale to monumental works -- along with a select group of paintings, drawings, and jewelry.

Since the 1977 installation of the large mobile Untitled (1976), commissioned for the East Building, Calder's work has been closely associated with the National Gallery. Other important works have since been added to the collection, including forty early sculptures and drawings recently given by Mr. and Mrs. Klaus G. Perls, Calder's dealers in the United States for over twenty years, as well as a large stabile, Obus, 1972, and a collection of standing mobiles given by Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon.

This exhibition also celebrates the twentieth anniversary of the East Building, for which the great mobile that graces the atrium was commissioned. The exhibition will be installed in the interior galleries of the East Building as well as in the public spaces on each floor. The exhibition will also feature a major outdoor component of large-scale sculpture.

ORGANIZATION: The exhibition is organized by the National Gallery of Art.

CURATOR: Marla Prather, curator and head of the department of twentieth-century art, National Gallery of Art

PUBLICATION: A fully illustrated exhibition catalogue will be published by the National Gallery of Art.

SPONSOR: The exhibition is made possible by GTE Corporation.

United Airlines is the official carrier for the exhibition.

DEGAS AT THE RACES

National Gallery of Art, West Building

April 12 - July 12, 1998

OVERVIEW: This will be the first museum exhibition of Edgar Degas' lifelong fascination with the theme of the horse and racing subjects -- central motifs in his art that inspired many of his most striking and innovative works. Other impressionists, such as his friend Edouard Manet, saw the racetrack as a distinctly modern form of entertainment, but for Degas, it was much more: he was captivated by the controlled nervous tension of the thoroughbred horse and the excitement of the race, in the same way he was fascinated by the lithe agility and discipline of ballet dancers. Of all the impressionists who were seeking new ways to represent and express the modern world, only Edgar Degas was consistently attracted to painting the world of horses and the race course.

The exhibition will include some 127 works, including 41 paintings and pastels, 67 drawings and prints, and 19 sculptures. Loans will come from museums and private collections worldwide, including Paris and Japan.

A highlight will be the unique group of 16 wax sculptures of horses from the collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon and the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond. Believed to have been destroyed shortly after the artist's death, these works were rediscovered in 1955, but have rarely been seen together by the public.

Another highlight of the exhibition will be Degas' early masterpiece, The Steeplechase: The Fallen Jockey, exhibited at the Paris Salon in 1866 but in the artist's possession until his death in 1917. It has been exhibited only rarely since then.

ORGANIZATION: The exhibition is organized by the National Gallery of Art.

CURATORS: Guest curator and noted Degas scholar, Jean Sutherland Boggs; Philip Conisbee, curator of French paintings, National Gallery of Art; and Kimberly Jones, assistant curator of French paintings, National Gallery of Art.

PUBLICATION: A catalogue by Jean Sutherland Boggs will focus on Degas and his depiction of the horse in painting and sculpture. The catalogue will include an essay by Shelley Sturman and Daphne Barbour, object conservators at the National Gallery, on Degas' technique and the making of his wax sculptures, and an essay by Kimberly Jones on the history of horse racing in nineteenth-century France.

SPONSOR: On behalf of its employees, First Union National Bank is proud to make this exhibition possible.

It is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities. United Airlines is the official carrier for the exhibition.

MARK ROTHKO

National Gallery of Art, East Building
Whitney Museum of American Art
Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris

May 3 - August 16, 1998
September 10 - November 29, 1998
Winter 1998/99

OVERVIEW: This is the first comprehensive American retrospective of Mark Rothko's work in twenty years. Drawing on loans from public and private collections in the United States, Europe, and Japan, it is also the first exhibition of its kind to take full advantage of the National Gallery's unique Rothko holdings, which include a large number of works that were donated by the Mark Rothko Foundation in 1986.

The exhibition reveals Rothko's achievement in a body of work that represents the height of American abstraction. Approximately one hundred twenty works on canvas and paper will encompass all phases of Rothko's career, from the late 1920s to 1970, with an emphasis on the so-called surrealist and classic periods. Rothko's mature art is distinguished by an emphasis on pure pictorial elements such as color, surface, proportion, and scale. Through restricted formal means the artist created variations on certain formats and motifs. However, his ambition for these commanding works was an expressive one, and their impact is often described in emotional and spiritual terms.

ORGANIZATION: The exhibition is organized by the National Gallery of Art.

CURATOR: Jeffrey Weiss, associate curator, twentieth-century art, National Gallery of Art. Mark Rosenthal, curator of twentieth-century art at the Guggenheim Museum, and David Anfam, author of the forthcoming Rothko catalogue raisonné, are consultants for the exhibition.

PUBLICATION: A fully illustrated catalogue will be published by the National Gallery of Art and distributed in hard cover by Yale University Press. It will include contributions by John Gage, Carol Mancusi-Ungaro, Barbara Novak, Brian O'Doherty, Mark Rosenthal, Jessica Stewart, and Jeffrey Weiss, as well as interviews with contemporary artists.

SPONSOR: Sponsored by Mobil.

A COLLECTOR'S CABINET

National Gallery of Art, West Building,
Dutch Cabinet Galleries

May 17 - August 9, 1998

OVERVIEW: Dutch and Flemish artists excelled in creating exquisite, small paintings that were eagerly collected in the Netherlands in the seventeenth century. Patrons of the arts at that time were not primarily princes or church leaders, but private citizens who had prospered from business and international trade. They quickly developed an insatiable appetite for paintings, graphic arts, sculpture, and decorative arts that fueled a flourishing art market. Because their residences were modest in comparison to the palaces and churches elsewhere in Europe, these middle-class collectors offered artists few opportunities for grand, decorative commissions. These collectors preferred, instead, works of art that were appropriately sized for a "collector's cabinet." This term originally designated a kind of furniture for housing small and precious objects, but eventually referred to an intimately scaled room for displaying a private collection.

This exhibition will create the character of a seventeenth-century collector's cabinet, or *kunstkamer*, with an assembly of artistic and natural objects chosen for pleasure and wonder to represent the full range of human and divine creation. Galleries will be densely hung with Dutch, Flemish, Italian, and German paintings. Four display cases will be devoted to other types of objects found in *kunstkamers*, such as small bronze, ivory, and wood sculptures; Dutch and Flemish commemorative medals; antique coins and medallions; rare Chinese and European decorative arts; jewelry; glass; musical and scientific instruments; and prints, drawings, and rare books. There will also be exotic shells and coral of the type brought back by Dutch traders from the South Pacific and the West Indies.

Most of the paintings and sculpture are from the collection of the National Gallery of Art. Lenders include The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Smithsonian Institution, the Library of Congress, The Walters Art Gallery, and the Philadelphia Museum of Art, as well as other museums and private collectors.

ORGANIZATION: The exhibition is organized by the National Gallery of Art.

CURATOR: Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr., curator of Dutch and Flemish painting

PUBLICATION: An illustrated catalogue written by Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr. will accompany the exhibition. It will examine the history of collectors' cabinets and include entries on many objects in the exhibition.

SPONSOR: Shell Oil Company Foundation, on behalf of the employees of Shell Oil Company, is proud to make possible this presentation to the American people.

ARTISTS AND THE AVANT-GARDE THEATER IN PARIS

National Gallery of Art, East Building
National Academy of Design, New York

June 7 - September 7, 1998
October 1, 1998 - January 3, 1999

OVERVIEW: This exhibition explores the unique relationship between the visual and performing arts in Paris in the late 1880s and 1890s. Striking new plays by French writers and major foreign authors such as Henrik Ibsen and Oscar Wilde were produced by theaters and a natural affinity developed with Parisian avant-garde artists interested in the theater, including Toulouse-Lautrec, Bonnard, Vuillard, Signac, and foreign artists living in Paris such as Munch and Toorop. Patrons and producers of theatrical performances were also friends of the visual artists. These relationships culminated in the commissioning of original prints to decorate the covers and pages of the theater programs.

Artists and the Avant Garde Theater in Paris features sixty-five prints selected from one of the finest collections of theater programs in the world. This collection was formed over three decades by the late Martin Atlas and his wife, Liane W. Atlas. The exhibition includes examples of images in different states and color variations and an outstanding watercolor by Bonnard for an unpublished program cover.

The exhibition also includes the scrapbooks that the Atlases acquired about the Théâtre Libre.

ORGANIZATION: The exhibition is organized by the National Gallery of Art.

CURATOR: Guest curator Patricia Eckert Boyer, consultant and well-known scholar of late-nineteenth-century French art, in collaboration with Ruth E. Fine, curator of modern prints and drawings, National Gallery of Art.

PUBLICATION: The exhibition catalogue has been written by Patricia Eckert Boyer and deals with the history of the theaters themselves and the relationship between the artists and the theaters.

MANET, MONET, AND THE GARE SAINT-LAZARE

Musée d'Orsay
National Gallery of Art, East Building

February 12 - May 17, 1998
June 14 - September 20, 1998

OVERVIEW: The works in this exhibition were all painted in the Europe District of Paris surrounding the Gare Saint-Lazare during the late nineteenth century. The newly developed neighborhood attracted young artists such as Edouard Manet, Claude Monet, and Gustave Caillebotte. Here they sketched and painted on the streets, in their studios, and in Monet's case inside the Gare Saint-Lazare itself. The great train station with its heroic iron bridges and roaring steam engines symbolized the new modern energy and positiveness of the age.

Among the fifty works in the exhibition are some thirty paintings, including Monet's Gare Saint Lazare, Arrival of a Train (1878) from the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University Art Museums, one of nine paintings by Monet in the exhibition depicting the famous train station; Caillebotte's On the Pont de l'Europe, Gare Saint-Lazare (1877) from the Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth; and one of the National Gallery of Art's most admired yet enigmatic paintings, Manet's The Railway (Gare Saint-Lazare) (1873), a gift of Horace Havemeyer in memory of his mother, Louise W. Havemeyer, 1956. Exhibited with the title The Railway at the Paris Salon in 1874, Manet's masterpiece has never ceased to intrigue critics, art historians, and lovers of great painting. The exhibition will also include related drawings, prints, photographs, and a period map of the neighborhood.

ORGANIZATION: The exhibition is organized by the National Gallery of Art, Washington, and the Réunion des Musées Nationaux/Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

CURATORS: Guest curator and noted Manet scholar, Juliet Wilson-Bareau; Philip Conisbee, curator of French paintings, National Gallery of Art; and Florence E. Coman, assistant curator of French paintings, National Gallery of Art.

PUBLICATION: A fully illustrated catalogue is being written by Juliet Wilson-Bareau.

SPONSOR: This exhibition is made possible by a grant from The Florence Gould Foundation.

The exhibition is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities.

**AUGUSTUS SAINT-GAUDENS' MEMORIAL TO ROBERT GOULD SHAW
AND THE MASSACHUSETTS FIFTY-FOURTH REGIMENT**

National Gallery of Art, Washington

September 21, 1997 - January 4, 1998

Will go back on view late autumn 1998

OVERVIEW: One of the greatest works of nineteenth-century American sculpture is on view at the National Gallery of Art on a long-term loan from the National Park Service, Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site, Cornish, New Hampshire. Sculpted by the preeminent sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens (1848-1907), the relief masterfully depicts Colonel Shaw and the first African American infantry unit from the North to fight for the Union during the Civil War. The memorial, which has been on display since 1959 in an outdoor pavilion at the Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site, has recently undergone restoration in Boston.

The monumental plaster sculpture, which measures nearly fifteen feet high, eighteen feet wide, and three feet deep, is shown with six portrait heads of African-American soldiers and rare and early plaster sketches of the memorial. Except for a show in Cornish last summer, most of these objects have not been on public view since a retrospective in 1908.

The dramatic high relief of the memorial reveals Colonel Shaw astride his horse, upright and serious, a figure for the ages. The troops push forward with intense determination, as an angel floats protectively overhead, bearing poppies symbolizing death, sleep, and remembrance, and olive branches symbolizing peace. The sculpture combines the real and allegorical, and presents a balance of restraint and vitality.

ORGANIZATION: The exhibition is organized by the National Gallery of Art, Washington.

CURATOR: Nicolai Cikovsky Jr., the Gallery's curator of American and British paintings, National Gallery of Art

PUBLICATION: An illustrated brochure, written by Deborah Chotner, assistant curator of American and British paintings, National Gallery of Art, is available in the exhibition free of charge. A comprehensive, illustrated book on the history of the memorial is available in the Gallery Shops.

SPONSOR: The Shaw Memorial Project is made possible by the generous support of The Circle of the National Gallery of Art. Additional support is provided by Shell Oil Company Foundation.

VAN GOGH'S VAN GOGHS:
MASTERPIECES FROM THE VAN GOGH MUSEUM, AMSTERDAM

National Gallery of Art, West Building
Los Angeles County Museum of Art

October 4, 1998 - January 3, 1999
January 17 - April 4, 1999

OVERVIEW: Van Gogh's Van Goghs: Masterpieces from the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam presents seventy paintings by Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890), the largest survey of his career outside The Netherlands in more than a quarter of a century. This unique group of paintings -- part of the artist's treasured *oeuvre* kept together by his brother Theo and his family -- will form an unprecedented loan from the Van Gogh Museum, home to the single greatest collection of the artist's paintings, drawings, and letters.

All periods of Vincent van Gogh's brief but intensely productive ten-year career are represented: his earliest works in The Netherlands; his reaction to French impressionism in 1886 when he went to Paris; the images he painted while in the hospitals in Arles and Saint-Rémy in southern France; and his last, feverishly creative months in Auvers-sur-Oise. The exhibition will include such icons as Potato Eaters (1885), The Bedroom (1888), Self-Portrait as an Artist (1888), Harvest (1888), and Wheatfield with Crows (1890). The vibrant colors, explosive brushwork, and emotional intensity of these and other paintings make them some of the best known and loved images in all art.

The Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam was founded by Vincent's nephew, Dr. V. W. van Gogh, known as the "Engineer," and opened its doors to the public in 1973. Its extraordinary collection is based on works acquired directly from the artist by his beloved brother Theo, which then passed by descent to the "Engineer." Today it is well known that Vincent van Gogh was one of the most powerful and original artists of the 19th century, yet his genius was little understood during his tragically short lifetime. However, Theo, an art dealer by trade, was a lifetime collector of his art as well as his best friend, confidant, constant correspondent, and financial and emotional support.

ORGANIZATION: The exhibition is organized by the National Gallery of Art, Washington, and the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam, in collaboration with the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

CURATOR: Philip Conisbee, curator of French paintings, National Gallery of Art

PUBLICATION: A fully illustrated catalogue with essays by Richard Kendall, independent scholar, and John Leighton, director of the Van Gogh Museum, will accompany the exhibition.

SPONSOR: The exhibition in Washington is made possible by generous support from Andersen Consulting.

The exhibition is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities.

LOVE AND WAR: A MANUAL FOR LIFE IN THE LATE MIDDLE AGES

Städelisches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt
Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam
Haus der Kunst, Munich
National Gallery of Art, East Building
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

September 17 - November 1, 1997
November 21, 1997 - January 19, 1998
July 24 - October 11, 1998
November 8, 1998 - January 31, 1999
May 11 - July 26, 1999

OVERVIEW: From the late medieval period, one of the most delightful artists -- but also one of the rarest -- is known as the Master of the Housebook (active c. 1465 - c. 1500). He is especially surprising in his range: from elegant courtly grace, to psychologically sensitive humanism, to charmingly observant humor.

The artist is known primarily from two sources: the drawings in a manuscript of secular recipes and instructions, the Housebook, from which he takes his name, and 89 drypoints, the great majority of which exist in a single collection, that of the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

Legendary among scholars of the period, the Housebook still belongs to a private noble family in Germany, that of the Prince of Waldburg Wolfegg, and has rarely been seen in public in this century. The National Gallery of Art now has a unique opportunity to borrow and display separately all the drawings and pages of the manuscript, subsequent to its being disbound for a facsimile reproduction.

The exhibition at the National Gallery is organized around various secular themes of late medieval life, such as guilds and craftsmen, agriculture and peasant life, war and chivalry, hunting and archery, love and dancing, vagrants and strangers. In addition to the best drawings in the Housebook, the exhibition at the National Gallery includes twenty-one of the master's greatest prints from the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, rare gothic prints in the National Gallery's collection, and loans from other American collections.

ORGANIZATION: In Washington, the exhibition is organized by the National Gallery of Art.

CURATOR: Andrew Robison, Mellon Senior Curator, National Gallery of Art, and Virginia Clayton, associate curator of Old Master Prints, National Gallery of Art.

PUBLICATION: A fully illustrated catalogue of the Housebook will be published by Prestel, Munich.

JAPAN: ART AND LIFE IN THE EDO PERIOD, 1615-1868

National Gallery of Art, East Building

November 15, 1998 - February 15, 1999

OVERVIEW: This exhibition will be the first comprehensive survey in the United States of Japanese art of the Edo period (1615-1868). It will feature more than 250 works of art, including painted scrolls and screens, costumes and accessories, armor, sculpture, ceramics, lacquer, and woodblock prints from more than seventy Japanese collections, both private and public. Many of these works have been designated as National Treasures or Important Cultural Properties because of their rarity, historical significance, and artistic quality.

The Edo period was one of unprecedented peace and prosperity in Japan. For the first time in centuries the country was unified under the Tokugawa shoguns, who governed from their new capital at Edo (modern Tokyo), the largest city in the world in the eighteenth century. The capital's influence on the country at large was so profound that its name came to denote the culture of all Japan during this time.

ORGANIZATION: Organized by the National Gallery of Art in collaboration with the Agency for Cultural Affairs (Bunkacho) of the Japanese Ministry of Education, and the Japan Foundation.

CURATOR: Robert T. Singer, curator of Japanese Art, Los Angeles County Museum of Art

PUBLICATION: The fully illustrated catalogue will contain thematic essays written by a team of leading scholars in the field led by Robert T. Singer.

SPONSOR: The exhibition is made possible by NTT Corporation.

JOHN SINGER SARGENT

Tate Gallery, London
National Gallery of Art, Washington
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

October 15, 1998 - January 17, 1999
February 21 - May 31, 1999
June 23 - September 26, 1999

OVERVIEW: This exhibition of John Singer Sargent (1856-1925) will include more than 100 paintings and watercolors representing the most significant and beautiful of this artist's more than one thousand works. This will be the first time, since the retrospective mounted after his death, that so many of his works will be exhibited.

The exhibition will reflect the main phases of Sargent's art: his portrait, landscape, and figure sketches, 1874-84; exhibited portraits and subject pictures, 1878-84; impressionism, 1883-1889; commissioned portraits, 1890-1917; landscapes and figure subjects, 1900-14; watercolors, 1880-1925; and Gassed, Sargent's great war picture, which stands in eloquent contrast to his portraits and landscapes. Some of his most well-known and beloved works, such as Madame Gautreau, The Boit Children, and The Wyndham Sisters, along with some not so well known paintings, will also be shown.

An astute portraitist, Sargent painted many of the leading personalities of the age in works of great elegance and panache. His energy and fluency enabled him to combine complex composition with the appearance of life itself. Sargent assimilated lessons from the old masters, the realists, impressionists, and symbolists to create his own highly individual style of intensity of expression, brilliant light effects, and highly keyed color.

Although portraiture dominated Sargent's public career, he was even more prolific as a landscape and figure painter. The impact of impressionism led to the Monet-inspired landscapes of Broadway and the figure subjects of Calcot and Fladbury, which show the experimental side of his art.

ORGANIZATION: Organized by the Tate Gallery, London, in collaboration with the National Gallery of Art, Washington, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

CURATOR: Nicolai Cikovsky, curator of American and British Paintings, National Gallery of Art

PUBLICATION: An illustrated catalogue, published by the Tate Gallery, will accompany the exhibition, with entries written by Richard Ormond, director of the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, former curator of the National Portrait Gallery, and great-nephew and leading biographer of John Singer Sargent; and Elaine Kilmurray, co-author of the catalogue raisonné of the artist. There will also be an entry on the Boston murals by Mary Crawford Volk, guest curator of the 1992 exhibition at the National Gallery of John Singer Sargent's "El Jaleo."

SPONSOR: Made Possible by Ford Motor Company

CURRENT EXHIBITIONS

M.C. ESCHER: A CENTENNIAL TRIBUTE

National Gallery of Art, East Building
San Diego Museum of Art

October 26, 1997 - April 27, 1998
October 3, 1998 - January 3, 1999

OVERVIEW: The National Gallery of Art is celebrating the centennial of the birth of twentieth-century Dutch artist M. C. Escher (1898-1972) with an exhibition drawn entirely from the Gallery's holdings, the most comprehensive collection outside The Netherlands. A gifted draftsman, Escher is best known for his compositions of complex interlocking shapes that resemble jigsaw puzzles and architectural designs that are physically impossible to construct. The selection of some eighty-five works includes drawings, woodcuts, lithographs, and mezzotints, as well as illustrated books and related technical materials.

The exhibition, which spans the artist's career, is divided into four sections: "Self Portraits," "The World Observed," "Inner Visions," and "Metamorphosis." Among the works on view are Escher's first known print, Escher's Father, G.A. Escher (1916), a linoleum-cut portrait printed in vivid purple; his last work, Snakes (1969), a three-color woodcut; his only portrait of his wife Jetta (1925); a selection of Italian scenes; a group of his early religious woodcuts, including Saint Francis (1922); and the visual experiments that brought Escher international acclaim in the 1950s and 1960s, such as the lithograph Print Gallery (1956) and the color woodcut Tetrahedral Planetoid (1954).

The exhibition concludes with the last of Escher's metamorphosis prints, a twenty-three foot-long woodcut from 1967/1968. The print begins and ends with a checkerboard pattern, and depicts squares metamorphosing to cubes, fish to horses, hexagons to birds, and birds to sailboats.

ORGANIZATION: The exhibition is organized by the National Gallery of Art.

CURATOR: Ruth E. Fine, curator of modern prints and drawings, National Gallery of Art

LORENZO LOTTO: REDISCOVERED MASTER OF THE RENAISSANCE

National Gallery of Art, West Building	November 2, 1997 - March 1, 1998
Accademia Carrara di Belle Arti, Bergamo	April 2 - June 29, 1998
Galeries nationales du Grand Palais, Paris	October 16, 1998 - January 11, 1999

OVERVIEW: Since Bernard Berenson's pioneering book on the Venetian Renaissance master Lorenzo Lotto (c.1480-1556/1557) first appeared in 1895, the delightfully idiosyncratic quality of the artist's work has had special appeal for twentieth-century sensibilities. But the only comprehensive Lotto exhibition took place in Venice in 1953, and there has never been an exhibition devoted to him in the United States.

Though Lotto has frequently been compared with Titian, the two artists could hardly be more different. Titian's art expressed perfectly the Renaissance spirit, while Lotto was an eccentric whose formal and iconographic experiments set him apart from the mainstream culture of his time. In particular, Lotto's portraits probe the psychology of his sitters in a thoroughly modern way. The exhibition presents some forty-six paintings in most of the genres in which Lotto worked, such as devotional works, altarpieces, and portraits, in chronological order from his beginnings through the brilliant work of his maturity to the end of his career in a religious community on the Adriatic coast. This fascinating artist is shown at his best and most creative in such masterpieces as the Saint Jerome in the Wilderness (1506) from the Musée du Louvre and Portrait of Andrea Odoni (1527) from the collection of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

ORGANIZATION: The exhibition is organized by the National Gallery of Art, Washington, in association with the Accademia Carrara di Belle Arti, Bergamo.

CURATOR: David Alan Brown, curator of Italian Renaissance painting, National Gallery of Art

PUBLICATION: Published in English and Italian editions, the 248-page fully illustrated catalogue focuses on Lotto's autograph paintings. A hardcover English edition of the catalogue is distributed by Yale University Press, New Haven and London. The Italian edition is published by Skira, Milan.

The catalogue is supported by a grant from the Samuel H. Kress Foundation.

The exhibition is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities.

United Airlines is the official carrier for the exhibition in Washington.

BUILDING A COLLECTION

National Gallery of Art, East Building

November 16, 1997 - April 19, 1998

OVERVIEW: In the past three years the National Gallery of Art has been fortunate in acquiring many outstanding and intriguing works of art. This exhibition of approximately one hundred forty works highlights many of the finest acquisitions from the Renaissance to the present, including watercolors, drawings, prints, rare illustrated books, and photographs.

Unlike previous exhibitions of acquisitions, Building a Collection explores the many reasons why acquisitions are made, especially the variety of ways the new works relate to those already in the collection. The exhibition begins with one-on-one comparisons to illustrate these themes and then expands to wider issues concerning particular artists and general schools of art.

The exhibition includes Rembrandt's original copperplate used to produce one of the artist's outstanding late etchings, Abraham Entertaining the Angels (1656), and major drawings by George Bellows, Edgar Degas, Claude Monet, Giovanni Battista Piazzetta, and Giovanni Battista Piranesi. Also in the exhibition are rare artists' proofs of prints by Félix-Hilaire Buhot, Pablo Picasso, and Giovanni Tiepolo; an outstanding series of German drawings and watercolors from the mannerist, baroque, and romantic periods; vintage photographs by André Kertész and William Henry Fox Talbot; and stunning watercolors by Charles Demuth, Edward Hopper, Georgia O'Keeffe, and Charles Sheeler.

ORGANIZATION: The exhibition is organized by the National Gallery of Art.

CURATOR: Andrew Robison, Andrew W. Mellon Senior Curator, National Gallery of Art

PUBLICATION: An illustrated catalogue by Andrew Robison accompanies the exhibition.