

# National Gallery of Art

## NEWS RELEASE

January 15, 1998

### "VAN GOGH'S VAN GOGHS"

### NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART PRESENTS 70 PAINTINGS BY DUTCH MASTER LARGEST SURVEY OF HIS CAREER OUTSIDE THE NETHERLANDS IN MORE THAN 25 YEARS

Washington, D.C. -- 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, will be on view at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, October 4, 1998 - January 3, 1999. Van Gogh's Van Goghs: Masterpieces from the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam will present the work of one of the world's most renowned and original artists. This unique group of paintings -- part of Van Gogh'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 Van Gogh's paintings, drawings, and letters.

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.

After its Washington showing at the National Gallery, the exhibition will travel to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, its only other venue, January 17 - April 4, 1999.

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The Van Gogh Museum has generously offered to loan the paintings to the two U.S. museums during the period when it will be closed to the public for renovation and construction of a new wing, from September 1, 1998, to the reopening in the spring of 1999.

The seventy Van Gogh paintings, the largest number ever loaned by the Van Gogh Museum since its opening in 1973, have been selected by curator Louis van Tilborgh and director John Leighton of the Van Gogh Museum in consultation with the National Gallery. 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.

"Only a visit to Amsterdam in the past twenty-five years could equal the experience visitors will have when they see these breathtaking works created during the intensely productive years of Van Gogh's brief life," said Earl A. Powell III, director, National Gallery of Art. "His uncompromisingly insightful self-portraits, his deeply sympathetic depictions of working Dutch folk, and his discovery of radiant light and the Mediterranean landscape are represented in works that span all periods of his career."

According to John Leighton, director of the Van Gogh Museum, "Since its foundation over twenty years ago, the Van Gogh Museum has become one of the most popular and successful museums in Europe. Millions of visitors from all over the world have come to pay homage to Van Gogh and to enjoy a collection that offers a comprehensive overview of his work. We are delighted that the temporary closure of our building will offer a unique opportunity for the American public to share this

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experience of coming face to face with one of the most important artists of the last century."

"Andersen Consulting is proud to be part of this most historic art event," said George Shaheen, managing partner and CEO of Andersen Consulting. "Vincent van Gogh is one of the most famous artists the world has ever known. His works are considered by many to be some of the most important in the history of art. We are extremely proud to partner with the National Gallery of Art in helping to make this art milestone possible."

Van Gogh's work went largely unrecognized during his lifetime. Today, more than a century after the artist's death, the vibrant colors, explosive brushwork, and emotional intensity of his paintings make them some of the best-known and loved images in all of art. The exhibition will encompass all phases of Van Gogh's *oeuvre*: his earliest works in the Netherlands; his reactions to French impressionism in 1886 when he went to Paris; the images he painted while in Arles and in hospitals in Saint-Rémy in southern France; and his last months in Auvers-sur-Oise. The exhibition will include such icons as Potato Eaters (1885), The Bedroom (1888), Self-Portrait as an Artist (1888), The Harvest (1888), and Wheatfield with Crows (1890). Works never before seen in the United States will also be on view, such as Scheveningen Beach in Stormy Weather (1882), one of the earliest works, as well as Head of a Peasant Woman (1885) and Flying Fox (1886).

A fully illustrated 250-page catalogue will accompany the exhibition, with essays

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by Richard Kendall, an independent scholar, and John Leighton, as well as a chronology. It will address Van Gogh's major themes and phases of his career.

Founded by Van Gogh's nephew, Dr. V.W. van Gogh, the Van Gogh Museum opened to the public in 1973. Its holdings, on loan from the Vincent van Gogh Foundation, include some 200 paintings and more than 500 drawings and 700 letters by the famous Dutch master, as well as an important collection of works by other nineteenth-century artists. An increasingly popular tourist site, the museum welcomed one million visitors last year, twenty to thirty percent of whom were from the U.S. during the summer season.

Entrance to the exhibition while it is on view at the National Gallery of Art will be free; however, passes will be required for entry. Details on obtaining passes will be announced at a future date.

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. For general information, call (202) 737-4215, the Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) at (202) 842-6176, or visit the Gallery's Web site at <http://www.nga.gov>.

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