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National Gallery of Art to Acquire Landmark Collection of Some 1,700 Prints Annotated by Jasper Johns

Current "States and Variations" Exhibition Highlights Acquisition Gallery Owns Extensive Collections of Works by 20th-Century Artists

Washington, DC —Jasper Johns' lithographs, etchings, and screenprints—about 1700 proofs in all—will be acquired by the National Gallery of Art by the end of 2008. Many unique impressions, variants, and annotated or hand-worked sheets assembled by the renowned American artist since he began printmaking in 1960 are included. The Gallery will have the largest institutional repository of works by Johns when the acquisition is complete.

The exhibition *States and Variations: Prints by Jasper Johns*, on view in the East Building March 11 through October 28, 2007, is the first National Gallery of Art exhibition to highlight this acquisition. It focuses on the portfolio *1st Etchings, 2nd State* of 1969 and Johns' reexamination of motifs through his variation of composition, material and technique, including 39 proofs from this acquisition. The exhibition is sponsored by The Exhibition Circle.

The exhibition *Jasper Johns: An Allegory of Painting, 1955-1965*, which opened on January 28, is on view nearby in the East Building through April 29, 2007. The exhibition is proudly sponsored by Target as part of its commitment to arts and education.

"Printmaking is uniquely suited to tracking the evolution of an image's development through successive proofs," said Earl A. Powell III, director, National Gallery of Art.

"Jasper's proofs take this process to new heights. While some are of primary interest in the context of the final image, others are beautiful as individual works of art. Johns' daring and innovative approach to printmaking has been highly influential for younger generations of artists, and his work is essential to our understanding of the post-1960 revival of interest in print media. This important body of work will permit the Gallery to organize exhibitions that offer an amazing representation of Jasper's distinctive printmaking oeuvre."

The collection includes Johns' working proofs, trial and experimental proofs, progressive and state proofs, as well as sketches the artist made as part of his printmaking process. Included are virtually all the images associated with Johns' early art that are now considered icons of the postwar era: flags, targets, maps; major multi-panel abstractions, some incorporating images of body parts, from the 1970s; and recent compositions in which references to works by earlier artists such as Hans Holbein, Pablo Picasso, and Barnett Newman are juxtaposed with autobiographical references, including an old family photograph and a diagram of the artist's ancestral home. Because Johns' art in all media forms a coherent and interconnected body of work, these proofs offer an opportunity to better understand the conceptual and technical development of not only Johns' prints, but also his entire oeuvre.

Johns' prints have been the subject of numerous exhibitions over the course of his career, including *Jasper Johns: Prints from Four Decades* organized by the National Gallery of Art in 2001. *Jasper Johns: Working Proofs*, a landmark 1979 exhibition at the Kunstmuseum Basel, Switzerland, highlighted the extraordinary beauty of the works included in the Gallery's acquisition.

The edition prints that constitute the final stages of the proofs in the Gallery's acquisition were issued by several premier print publishers in the United States: Universal Limited Art Editions, Gemini G.E.L. (whose archive collection is at the National Gallery), Petersburg Press, and Simca Print Artists. Most recently Johns has published several prints from his Low Road Studio workshop.

In addition to Johns, the Gallery has the most extensive institutional holdings of works by several 20th-century artists, including Richard Diebenkorn, Robert Frank, John Marin,

Mark Rothko, and Alfred Stieglitz. The Diebenkorn collection includes some 1,400 paintings, drawings, and prints, among which is a study collection primarily of figure drawings, numbering approximately 1,200, donated by Phyllis Diebenkorn, the artist's widow. The Marin collection includes more than 900 works—primarily prints and drawings as well as some paintings—most of which are the gift of John Marin Jr. and Norma B. Marin. The Rothko collection of some 1,050 works includes paintings on canvas and paper, as well as drawings and sketchbooks, a gift of the Mark Rothko Foundation. The Stieglitz collection is made up of some 1,600 photographs donated by the photographer's widow, artist Georgia O'Keeffe. The Frank collection, a gift of the photographer and several donors, consists of approximately 350 vintage prints as well as a large archival holding related to Frank's publication, "The Americans."

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General Information

The National Gallery of Art and its Sculpture Garden are at all times free to the public. They are located on the National Mall between 3rd and 9th Streets along Constitution Avenue NW and 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. With the exception of the atrium and library, the galleries in the East Building will be closing gradually beginning in July 2013 and will remain closed for approximately three years for Master Facilities Plan and renovations. For specific updates on gallery closings, visit www.nga.gov/renovation (<http://www.nga.gov/renovation>) .

For information call (202) 737-4215 or the Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) at (202) 842-6176, or visit the Gallery's website at www.nga.gov. Follow the Gallery on Facebook at www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt and on Twitter at twitter.com/ngadc.

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 4th Street entrances to the East or West Building to permit x-ray screening and must be deposited in the checkrooms at those entrances. For the safety of visitors and the works of art, 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 in the checkrooms. Items larger than 17 by 26 inches cannot be accepted by the Gallery or its checkrooms.

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