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Stellar Collection of Early American Furniture, Dutch and American Paintings, and Works on Paper Acquired by George M. and Linda H. Kaufman of Norfolk, Va, to be Given to the National Gallery of Art, Washington



Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Chippendale Desk and Bookcase

Circa 1765

Attributed to Thomas Affleck

George M.* and Linda H. Kaufman

Washington, DC—One of the largest and most refined collections of early American furniture in private hands, as well as major Dutch paintings, American paintings, and works on paper, including some 40 floral watercolors by Redouté, acquired with great connoisseurship together over four decades by George M. and Linda H. Kaufman, have been promised to the National Gallery of Art, Washington. A temporary exhibition highlighting the early American furniture will take place at the Gallery in two years.

"While building their exceptional collection of art and antiques, Linda and George Kaufman have been leaders, as well as generous lenders and donors, in the art world,

and especially at the National Gallery of Art," said Earl A. Powell III, director, National Gallery of Art. "One of America's earliest art forms was furniture influenced by European traditions, and this is an opportunity for the Gallery to complement not only our European decorative arts donated by the Widener family, but also our growing collection of American art. With this donation, the Gallery will house one of the finest assemblages of early American furniture, and there is no such comparable and easily accessible public collection in the nation's capital. This gift also includes the most significant donation of Dutch paintings to the Gallery since the donations of its founding benefactors."

"We always wanted to give the collection to the American people," noted Linda Kaufman. "The National Gallery of Art will be the ideal home. George would have been extremely pleased."

Although the Gallery does not actively collect decorative arts, its holdings of some 515 objects include European furniture; tapestries; enamels; ceramics from the 15th and 16th centuries; medieval treasury objects; a fine selection of 18th-century French furniture; and a large group of Chinese porcelains, primarily from the Qing Dynasty of the 17th to 19th centuries.

The Kaufman Collection of American Furniture

The Kaufman Collection of American furniture includes more than 200 objects, many of which were featured in the 1986–1987 Gallery exhibition and catalogue, *American Furniture from the Kaufman Collection*. Furniture and decorative arts from the collection have been on loan or appeared in exhibitions at numerous museums throughout the United States, such as The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY; the Philadelphia Museum of Art, PA; the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA; Winterthur Museum, Garden, and Library, Wilmington, DE; the Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, VA; and the Smithsonian Institution and the U.S. State Department, Washington, DC.

Furniture was an expression of personal and national identity in the emergent American Republic. Stylistic influences from Europe were tempered by a vigorous independence and sense of pragmatic functionalism. The Kaufman Collection is comprised of

masterpieces from the major centers of furniture making, including Boston, Salem, Newport, Providence, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Charleston. Among the many renowned cabinetmakers whose work is represented are Thomas Affleck, John Goddard, Benjamin Randolph, John and Thomas Seymour, and John Townsend. Furniture in the Kaufman Collection spans from 1690 to 1830 and includes objects in the William and Mary, Queen Anne, Chippendale, and Neoclassical styles.

Among the highlights are a Boston dressing table with exotic japanned designs (1700–1730), a chest-on-chest (1765–1790) with four sculptural carved shells and a history of ownership by Providence merchant John Brown, a monumental Philadelphia desk-and-bookcase (c. 1765) considered by many scholars to be one of the greatest examples of American case furniture, and an ornately inlaid Federal sideboard (1793–1795) made by Williams and Deming, New York, for Oliver Wolcott, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. Other notable pieces are a tea table (1755–1765) with claw and ball feet and pierced talons attributed to John Townsend, a singular inlaid Pembroke table (1780–1800) that descended in the Pringle family of Charleston, and numerous examples of seating furniture from distinguished sets, including two from the famous suite commissioned by Philadelphia merchant John Cadwalader and his wife Elizabeth Lloyd.

A smaller selection of other decorative arts includes looking glasses, mirrors, and clocks, all of which were in the 1986–1987 exhibition. A pair of painted and gilded porcelain "Old Paris" vases (c. 1820) with portraits of Presidents George Washington and John Adams; four rare pieces of Bonnin and Morris porcelain (1770–1772), America's first porcelain manufactory, made in Philadelphia; and an Amelung glass tumbler with the American eagle, made for the inauguration of President George Washington in 1789, are also part of the gift.

Paintings

Most of the 35 paintings in the gift are Dutch, and some are from the American and French traditions. In terms of quality and significance, the Dutch paintings will greatly enhance the Gallery's collection, particularly landscapes. They include the celebrated *River View* (1645) by Salomon van Ruysdael (1600/03–1670), which is one of the finest

and most atmospheric of this master's majestic river scenes. The Dutch works also include *A Pier in Dordrecht Harbor* (early 1640s), a light-filled river scene by Aelbert Cuyp (1620–1691), and an imposing landscape from the end of the 1640s by Jacob van Ruisdael (c. 1628/29–1682) that depicts a weathered brick bridge crossing an inland waterway near a large oak tree. In addition, there are two important cityscapes: a fanciful view of Amsterdam by Jan van der Heyden (1637–1712) and a representation of the marketplace in Haarlem by Gerrit Adriaensz Berckheyde (1638–1698). Both of these latter paintings were included in the Gallery's recent exhibition in 2009, *Dutch Cityscapes of the Golden Age*.

Dutch still life paintings in the gift include a *trompe l'oeil* depiction of a letter rack (1703) by Edward Collier (fl. 1640–after 1706). One of the finest paintings in the Kaufman collection is *Bearded Man with a Beret* (c. 1630), an expressive head study by Jan Lievens (1607–1674), which was featured in the Gallery's recent monographic exhibition on the artist.

Watercolors

The Kaufman gift includes one of Winslow Homer's most vibrant and luminous early watercolors, *Gloucester Sunset* (1880)—one the most dramatic of a series of watercolors done by the artist of sailboats on Gloucester Harbor—and two major watercolors by Childe Hassam, including *Portrait of the Artist's Wife (Leaning on a Garden Wall)* (1890). More than 40 stunning watercolors of flowers, vegetables, and plants painted on vellum by French artist Pierre-Joseph Redouté (1759–1840), a favorite of Empress Josephine, are also a major addition to the Gallery's collection of some 100,000 works on paper. Rounding out the extensive gift are important watercolors by Francis A. Silva, William Trost Richards, and others.

The Collectors

In 2001 George M. (1932–2001) and Linda H. Kaufman (b. 1938) became the tenth recipients of the Henry Francis du Pont Award for Decorative Arts and Architecture, which was established in 1984. This honor was an acknowledgement of their standards of excellence in a variety of endeavors, but particularly in terms of their philanthropy and

connoisseurship.

The Kaufmans, lifelong residents of Norfolk, VA, began collecting American furniture shortly before they were married in 1958. George earned an MBA from the University of Virginia, then worked as a banker, an investor, and a real estate developer before founding Guest Quarters Inc., in 1972. Linda grew up in a home filled with fine art and antiques that her parents, Elise and Henry Clay Hofheimer II, had acquired. She attended Old Dominion University in Norfolk. The Kaufmans have two children, Edward G. Kaufman and Claire Kaufman Benjack, and four grandsons.

In 1977, the Kaufmans established the Kaufman Americana Foundation to award grants for the encouragement, promotion, and enhancement of the study of American decorative arts or designs and related items, literature, and illustrations. Through this foundation, they supported a number of scholarly and seminal books, articles, exhibitions, and research projects. In addition, the Kaufmans funded two galleries at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, contributed to the Charles F. Montgomery Curatorial Chair at Yale University Art Gallery, and established special funds and awards at the Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, VA; the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, Winston-Salem, NC; and Winterthur Museum, Garden and Library, Wilmington, DE.

The Kaufmans, and particularly Linda H. Kaufman, have been active at the National Gallery of Art as members of the Trustees' Council, 1994–1998 and 2003–2008; the Collectors Committee, 1982–2009; and The Legacy Circle since 2003. They also supported various Dutch art projects and acquisitions, contributed acquisition funds, established staff awards, and underwrote the catalogue for the 2002 exhibition, *An American Vision: Henry Francis du Pont's Winterthur Museum*.

The Kaufmans are also known for their generosity in other areas, such as heart disease and education. They provided the philanthropic support for the establishment of the Kaufman Center for Heart Failure at the Cleveland Clinic in Ohio, which opened in 1998. According to the Center's Web site, the Kaufman Clinic is "synonymous with patient care, education, research, and a healing environment, consistent with the four cornerstones of the Cleveland Clinic." In 1985, the Kaufmans and their children funded the George M. Kaufman Presidential Professorship and also participated in creating a

Darden Graduate School of Business Administration professorship held by the school's dean at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville.

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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.

For additional press information please call or send inquiries to:

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