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Array of Public Programs Celebrate *El Greco in the National Gallery of Art and Washington-Area Collections: A 400th Anniversary Celebration*



Film still from the Gallery-produced documentary *El Greco: An Artist's Odessey* depicting Toledo, Spain on the hill above the River Tagus.

Washington, DC—Several free public programs will be offered in honor of an exhibition marking the 400th anniversary of El Greco's death, on view in the West Building of the National Gallery of Art from November 2, 2014 through February 16, 2015. Offerings include lectures, a film series, concerts, gallery talks, a Gallery-produced film, a teen studio, and recently-released video and audio podcasts on the subject of El Greco.

All programs are presented free of charge in the West Building Lecture Hall, unless otherwise noted. Seating is available on a first-come, first-seated basis.

### Exhibition Film

*El Greco: An Artist's Odessey*, narrated by Academy Award® winning actor Adrien Brody

November 2, 2014–February 15, 2015

West Building, Lecture Hall Lobby

Monday–Sunday, 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. (running continuously)

Produced by the National Gallery of Art on the occasion of the 400th anniversary of his death with new footage shot in Italy and Spain, this documentary explores the work of one of the most unusual painters in the history of art, whose deeply spiritual and expressive work fuses elements of late Byzantine, Renaissance, and mannerist art. This film was made possible by the HRH foundation. *Approximately 30 mins.*

### Lectures

*El Greco in America: Critics, Collectors, and Connoisseurs*

November 2, 2:00 p.m.

Richard L. Kagan, Arthur O. Lovejoy Professor Emeritus of History and Academy Professor of History, Johns Hopkins University

*The Ages of El Greco: From Crete to Toledo*

November 8, 11:00 a.m.

Felix Monguiot Benzal, art historian; docent, education division, Borghese Gallery, Rome; and Kress Interpretive Fellow (2012–2013), National Gallery of Art

### Concerts

Francisco Bernier, guitarist

November 9, 6:30 p.m.

West Building, West Garden Court

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Spanish Renaissance music  
Sponsored by the Billy Rose Foundation

Baltimore Consort  
December 14, 6:30 p.m.  
West Building, West Garden Court  
Spanish Renaissance music  
Sponsored by the Billy Rose Foundation

### Gallery Talks

*El Greco in the National Gallery of Art and Washington Area Collections: A 400th Anniversary Celebration*

November 17, 19, 20, 21; January 12, 13, 21, 22, 2:00 p.m.

Diane Arkin

November 22; December 10 and 13, 2:00 p.m.

Eric Denker

West Building Rotunda

50 mins.

### Teen Studio

*Painting: El Greco*

January 17 and 24, 10:00 a.m.–3:30 pm

Through the combination of art history and studio perspectives, these immersive workshops for grades 10–12 aim to expand creating thinking.

Investigate El Greco's paintings through the eyes of an art conservator. Online registration begins at noon on Wednesday, January 7 at

<http://www.nga.gov/content/ngaweb/education/teens/studio.html>.

### Podcasts

[\*In the Conservation Lab: El Greco's Saint Martin and the Beggar\*](#)

Ann Hoenigswald, senior conservator of paintings, and Felix Monguilot Benzal, 2012-2013 Kress Interpretive Fellow, review the conservation treatment of El Greco's *Saint Martin and the Beggar* (1597/1599). In this video from January 22, 2013, Hoenigswald and Monguilot Benzal reveal how the original texture and color of the paint will return once a layer of discolored varnish is removed. The Kress Interpretive Fellowship is supported by a grant from the Samuel H. Kress Foundation to provide a new kind of mentored professional development opportunity within American art museums. Released: October 29, 2013

[\*El Greco: 400 Years After: Introduction: The Critical Fortune of El Greco: Causes and Effects, Part 1\*](#)

Felix Monguilot Benzal, docent, Borghese Gallery, Rome, and Kress Interpretive Fellow (2012 – 2013), National Gallery of Art. This symposium explores the art and legacy of El Greco. An international panel of El Greco scholars provides an in-depth study of the artist's career, focusing on his early years in Greece and Italy and his renowned work completed in Toledo. Released: April 29, 2014

[\*El Greco: 400 Years After: El Greco in Italy: Formation of an Ambitious Portraitist, Part 2\*](#)

Jeongho Park, Anne L. Poulet Curatorial Fellow, The Frick Collection. Released: May 06, 2014

[\*El Greco: 400 Years After: A Greek Painter in Toledo, 400 Years After, Part 3\*](#)

Fernando Marías, professor of art history, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid-RAH, and exhibition curator of *The Greek of Toledo*, Museo de Santa Cruz, Toledo. Released: May 20, 2014

[\*El Greco: 400 Years After: Sainthood and Creativity: El Greco's Portraits of Saint Ildefonso and Giulio Clovio, Part 4\*](#)

Livia Stoenescu, visiting assistant professor, University of Houston-Clear Lake. Released: May 27, 2014

[\*El Greco: 400 Years After: The Apostolate of the Museo del Greco in Toledo: One of El Greco's Greatest Series, Part 5\*](#)

Luis Alberto Pérez Velarde, curator, Museo del Greco. Released: June 10, 2014

These programs were recorded on March 22, 2014 and coordinated with and supported by SPAIN arts & culture.

[\*Patrons, Artists and Saints: El Greco in the Chapel of San José in Toledo\*](#)

Felix Monguilot Benzal, docent, Borghese Gallery, Rome, and Kress Interpretive Fellow (2012–2013), National Gallery of Art. In November of 1597, El Greco was commissioned to create a series of paintings for the recently built Capilla de San José (Chapel of Saint Joseph) in Toledo, Spain. Two of these paintings, *Saint Martin and the Beggar* (1597/1599) and *Madonna and Child with Saint Martina and Saint Agnes* (1597/1599), were later given to the newly created National Gallery of Art by Joseph E. Widener in 1942. In this lecture recorded on March 24, 2014, as part of the Gallery's Works in

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Progress lecture series, Felix Monguilot Benzal discusses the history of the Chapel of Saint Joseph and the full provenance of the Gallery's two El Greco paintings. Released: June 17, 2014

## Film Series

### Athens Today

A group of young filmmakers in Greece has been revitalizing the cinema, creating allegorical narratives out of the tough times and colorful conduct of people in economic crisis. These six films—produced with small budgets and exceptional technical finesse—represent some of the best new writing and directing coming from an artistic surge that also bonds with a deeper tradition of Hellenic humanism. Films are in Greek with subtitles. With special thanks to the Greek Film Center, Hellenic Foundation for Culture, the Embassy of Greece, and to The James and Theodore Pedas Family Foundation.

### September

December 5, 7:00 p.m.

Malsi Doyle and Michael Forman Theater, McKinley Building, American University

Ana lives alone with her dog in a small apartment. When the dog suddenly falls ill, Ana begins to form a bond with a neighboring family. A fragile tale of solitude and solidarity, “the delicate simplicity of the storytelling sets the film apart. Panayotopoulou foregoes complex plotting and heightened emotion, crafting an organic, earthbound drama”—Dimitri Eipides. (Penny Panayotopoulou, 2013, 105 minutes)

### Standing Aside, Watching

December 7, 4:30 p.m.

Malsi Doyle and Michael Forman Theater, McKinley Building, American University

Returning to her hometown after living in Athens, Antigone attempts to resume old relationships and rebuild a life, but intractable local problems still fester and her resolve disappears. “Using Sophocles’s heroine — an eternal emblem of female rebellion, director Servetas blends a gritty character study with elements of the traditional western.... Antigone is a force of nature coming home to wreak havoc on the dismal status quo”—Cameron Bailey. (Yorgos Servetas, 2013, 98 minutes)

### Wild Duck

December 12, 7:00 p.m.

Malsi Doyle and Michael Forman Theater, McKinley Building, American University

Prompted by a recent Athenian wiretapping scandal, Yannis Sakaridis constructs an intricate character study in *Wild Duck* revolving around a telecom contractor and his accidental involvement in a human tragedy in an Athenian apartment block. “A vision of Greece seemingly in dialogue with the sea breeze which, for all the country’s recent ills, drifts through the film like a restorative force”—Dimitri Eipides. (Yannis Sakaridis, 2013, 88 minutes)

### At Home

December 14, 4:30 p.m.

A visually resonant and restrained story of a Georgian-born au pair whose relationship with her affluent Greek employer is jeopardized when she develops a rare disorder, *At Home*’s subtext—the chasm between rich and poor—is handled with rare delicacy and perception. The film’s muted palette beautifully offsets its complex emotions, while once again the sea, eternal source of calm, remains along the periphery. (Athanasios Karanikolas, 2014, 103 minutes)

### The Eternal Return of Antonis Paraskevas

December 21, 4:30 p.m.

Antonis Paraskevas is a popular morning TV host. One day, after twenty successful years, he suddenly disappears. “It couldn’t have gone better if Antonis had planned it himself—which, of course, he did. Holed up in an empty luxury hotel, he bides his time, teaches himself molecular gastronomy, and even manages to orchestrate a series of fake interactions with his so-called abductors”—Cameron Bailey. (Elina Psykou, 2013, 88 minutes)

### The Daughter

December 28, 4:30 p.m.

Myrto, a bright and serious teenager on the verge of womanhood, tries to take charge of her own life when her father suddenly disappears. For no apparent reason she kidnaps Angelos, the young son of her father’s business partner. Gradually, a picture emerges of a family undone by the recent economic crisis, as tensions start to intensify. (Thanos Anastopoulos, 2012, 87 minutes)

## ***El Greco in the National Gallery of Art and Washington-Area Collections:***

### ***A 400th Anniversary Celebration***

November 2, 2014–February 16, 2015

Domenikos Theotokopoulos (1541–1614), now universally called El Greco, developed a style of painting that fused elements of Byzantine and Renaissance art with the heightened spirituality of the Counter Reformation. After his death his work fell into obscurity. Some 300 years later, early 20th-century American collectors became fascinated by him. For many, his expressive style seemed to anticipate the work of modern artists, which only added to his appeal. Now, on the 400th anniversary of El Greco’s death, the Gallery—home to seven paintings—presents a commemorative exhibition

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that includes 11 paintings from the Gallery, Dumbarton Oaks, and the Phillips Collection in Washington, DC, and Walters Art Museum, in Baltimore. The exhibition is organized by the National Gallery of Art, Washington.

## 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 at 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. For information call (202) 737-4215 or visit the Gallery's Web site at [www.nga.gov](http://www.nga.gov). Follow the Gallery on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt](https://www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt), Twitter at [www.twitter.com/ngadc](https://www.twitter.com/ngadc), and Instagram at <http://instagram.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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### PRESS KIT

Exhibition Press Release ([English](#) | [Spanish](#))

[Checklist](#) (PDF 144 kb)

### Related Activities

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### ONLINE RESOURCES

#### [Exhibition Page](#)

Exhibition Film: [El Greco, An Artist's Odyssey](#)

[El Greco at The Frick Collection](#)

[El Greco in New York](#)

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Questions from members of the media may be directed to the Department of Communications at (202) 842-6353 or [pressinfo@nga.gov](mailto:pressinfo@nga.gov)

The public may call (202) 737-4215 or visit [www.nga.gov](http://www.nga.gov) for more information about the [National Gallery of Art](#).

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