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Still Life by Dutch Master Pieter Claesz, Works by Cézanne, Monet, and Gauguin, Painting by American Icon Jim Dine, and History's First-Ever Book on the Lives of Famous Women are Among Major New Acquisitions at the National Gallery of Art



Pieter Claesz, Dutch, 1596/1597 – 1660

Still Life with Peacock Pie, 1627

oil on panel, 77.5 x 128.9 cm

National Gallery of Art, Washington, The Lee and Juliet Folger Fund

Washington, DC—Since September 2013, the National Gallery of Art acquired an important cross section of art from the 15th through 20th centuries, including the first illustrated publication of *De claris mulieribus* by Giovanni Boccaccio; 15th- and 16th-century tempera-and-gold drawings on vellum by Zanobi Strozzi and Simon Bening; a 17th-century banquet piece by Pieter Claesz; an 18th-century chalk-and-ink wash by Jean-Honoré Fragonard; 19th-century works on paper by French masters Cézanne, Monet, and Gauguin; and a charcoal-on-canvas painting by one of America's most celebrated contemporary artists, Jim Dine.

"These acquisitions are masterworks from the Middle Ages to the current moment that represent the highest levels of creativity in media ranging from printmaking and manuscript illumination to easel painting and photography," said Earl A. Powell III, director, National Gallery of Art. "We are delighted that they can be shared with the public as part of our permanent collection."

***Still Life with Peacock Pie* by Pieter Claesz**

In this large—more than four feet across—and magnificent banquet piece, Pieter Claesz (1596/97–1660) demonstrates why he was one of the most important still-life painters in Haarlem. A sumptuous feast is set with some of the most extravagant foods available in the Netherlands in the early 17th century. A large peacock pie is festooned with the fowl's own feathers and gullet—a true delicacy marking only the most special occasions—plus a pink rose placed in its beak. An array of foods surrounds the garnished game, including a cooked bird, olives, lemons, breads, peaches, nuts, and candies. Many of these foods, which Claesz rendered beautifully in pewter platters and Wan-li bowls, were delicacies imported from foreign lands. A small mound of salt, which was itself a precious spice, in a gilded saltcellar adds even more flavor to the meal. Perched at the ready is a *berkemeier* filled with glistening white wine poured from a pewter pitcher.

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Painted in 1627, the size of this spectacular banquet feast is critical to its impact. Using life-size pictorial elements, the table top becomes extension of the viewer's space. Claesz subtly enhances the effect with evidence of human presence—food partially eaten, a napkin crumpled—and precisely captured textures: the pebbly lemon peel cascading from the plate, the shining pewter pitcher, the tablecloth's crisp folds. He harmonized and animated the scene with subtle shadows and delicate touches of light, as in the light passing through the glass of wine and reflecting on the cloth. This banquet scene was purchased through the Lee and Juliet Folger Fund.

Still Life with Peacock Pie is on view on the Main Floor of the West Building in Gallery 50.

A related work in the collection is:

Banquet Piece with Mince Pie, Willem Claesz Heda, 1635. (Heda and Pieter Claesz were the most important still-life painters in Haarlem.)

New Works on Paper by European Masters Cézanne, Monet and Gauguin

The Gallery strengthened its collection of 19th-century European drawings with the addition of three works by among the greatest artists of the period. This includes a beautifully atmospheric watercolor by Paul Cézanne (1839–1906), *A Stand of Trees Along a River Bank*; a stunning large, early drawing by Paul Gauguin (1848–1903), the imposing *Seated Nude Seen from Above* in colored chalks on brilliant yellow paper; and a ravishing pastel of Waterloo Bridge by Claude Monet (1840–1926). This symphony of blues and silvers is arguably Monet's finest work on paper and a direct precedent to his later oil paintings of the subject.

All three were purchased through the Florian Carr Fund.

Related works in the collection include other drawings and watercolors by all three masters as well as two oil paintings of Waterloo Bridge by Claude Monet. The paintings are on view in the West Building and the drawings may be viewed in the National Gallery of Art Print Study Room, which is open weekdays from 10 a.m. to 12 noon and 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.; call (202) 842-6380 for an appointment.

Jim Dine's Name Painting (1935–1963) #1

When Jim Dine (b. 1935) first rose to fame in the early 1960s, his name became synonymous with the American Pop Art movement. Yet his personal connection to the images he created was in sharp contrast to Pop's cool demeanor. Dine has always favored the expressive and handmade over the impassive and mechanical, characteristics often ascribed to Pop. His 1968–1969 work *Name Painting (1935–63) No.1* is a fitting representation of this attitude.

Across a canvas stretching 15 feet wide are the names of every person Dine had a relationship with during the first 28 years of his life, including family members, teachers, colleagues, friends and lovers. The effect is a charcoal haze of graphic marks, suggesting a deeper, more profound sense of verbal memory.

The Gallery has extensive holdings of the artist's work in other media; this is his first painting to enter the Gallery's collection.

The painting was offered by Patsy Orlofsky in Memory of Myron Orlofsky.

Important Drawings by Jean-Honoré Fragonard, Zanobi Strozzi, and Simon Bening

The Gallery received three outstanding drawings as gifts from Dian Woodner, including one of the great French painter Jean-Honoré Fragonard's (1732–1806) finest versions of *Avenue of Cypresses at Villa d'Este (1760/1765)*, an ink and wash over counterproof; *Initial Q with a Procession of Children* (1430s), a tempera-and-gold-leaf illumination on parchment by the Florentine Renaissance artist Zanobi Strozzi (1412–1468); and another tempera-and-gold illumination on vellum (calfskin), *The Adoration of the Magi* (mid-1520s) by Simon Bening (1483–1561), the last major figure in the history of Netherlandish book illumination. These illuminations are brilliant examples of the highly sophisticated and accomplished paintings created for hand-

decorated books in Europe as late as the 15th and 16th centuries.

These drawings may be viewed in the National Gallery of Art Print Study Room, which is open weekdays from 10 a.m. to 12 noon and 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.; call (202) 842-6380 for an appointment.

Woodcut-Illustrated Book of Giovanni Boccaccio's Seminal History of Famous Women

Giovanni Boccaccio's *De claris mulieribus* (translated as *On Famous Women*), illustrated by an outstanding German artist known as "the Boccaccio Master" from the work in this series, becomes the Gallery's earliest German woodcut book. Published by Johann Zainer in Ulm (1473), this book is the first illustrated printing of the first published book devoted to biographies of women in Western literature, covering mythology and antiquity into the Middle Ages. The fascinating series of 81 woodcuts—many are the earliest images of these female subjects—established the distinctive Ulm style of elegantly graceful figures and varied use of the rich blacks possible through the woodcut technique.

It was offered as an anonymous gift and can be viewed in the National Gallery of Art Print Study Room, which is open weekdays from 10 a.m. to 12 noon and 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.; call (202) 842-6380 for an appointment.

Frederick Sommer's *Max Ernst*

Accomplished in a variety of media, including drawing, collage and design, Frederick Sommer (1905–1999) is best-known for his photography. He is also known for the friendships he cultivated among a wide circle of artists, including Alfred Stieglitz, Charles Sheeler, Edward Weston, Aaron Siskind and Man Ray. But he was especially close to the Surrealist Max Ernst.

Sommer made this photograph of Ernst in 1946. By chance while Sommer was tidying up his studio he found two negatives: a portrait of Ernst standing against the wall of his house in Sedona and another of a water-stained concrete wall. He printed the two negatives together and the result is fittingly surreal. Ernst's skin takes on the texture of the wall, a nod to the look of *frottage* (a drawing technique of rubbing graphite on paper laid over a textured surface that Ernst pioneered in the 1920s). Ernst considered this the most definitive portrait of himself and it is widely considered Sommer's finest work.

Portrait of Max Ernst can be seen by appointment in the National Gallery of Art Print Study Room, which is open weekdays from 10 a.m. to 12 noon and 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.; call (202) 842-6380.

Related works in the collection include *Valise d'Adam*, Frederick Sommer (1949); *Venus, Jupiter, and Mars*, Frederick Sommer (1949); and *Moon Culmination*, Frederick Sommer (1951).

Additional Acquisitions

The National Gallery of Art also acquired a brilliant William Blake (1757–1827) watercolor, *The Death of Saint Joseph* (1803), a gift from Louisa Duemling.

From the Herbert and Dorothy Vogel Collection, the Gallery received eight sculptures by artists such as Roy Lichtenstein, George Ohr, Pablo Picasso, and Andy Warhol; 31 graphics by 23 artists including Marc Chagall, Eva Hesse, Jasper Johns, Robert Motherwell, and Bruce Nauman; and three photographs by Chuck Close, Joseph Kosuth, and Richard Long.

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. With the exception of the atrium and library, the galleries in the East Building will remain closed for approximately three years for Master Facilities Plan and renovations. For specific updates on gallery closings, visit <http://www.nga.gov/content/ngaweb/Collection/modern-art-during-renovation.html>.

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