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## Key Works by Simon Vouet, Pier Francesco Mazzucchelli (Morazzone), and Chuck Close Acquired by the National Gallery of Art



Simon Vouet  
*Madonna and Child*, 1633  
 oil on canvas  
 109 x 89 cm (43 x 35 inches)  
 National Gallery of Art, Washington  
 Chester Dale Fund

Washington, DC—At the most recent meeting of the board of trustees, the National Gallery of Art acquired a newly rediscovered masterpiece by Simon Vouet (1590–1649), an oil painting by Pier Francesco Mazzucchelli (Morazzone) (1573–1626), and a print of great importance by Chuck Close (b. 1940). Additionally, the Gallery acquired photographs by John Moran (1831–1903), Edward Weston (1886–1958), and Mark Ruwedel (b. 1954), among others. At this meeting, the Gallery also accessioned 28 works of art from the Corcoran Gallery of Art, including paintings by Cecilia Beaux (1855–1942) and Anne Truitt (1921–2004).

"We are delighted with the acquisition of these rare and important works by Simon Vouet, Pier Francesco Mazzucchelli, and Chuck Close, as well as gifts and promised gifts of works by photographers such as John Moran and Edward Weston," said Earl A. Powell III, director, National Gallery of Art. "We are grateful as well to our donors, whose continuing generosity strengthens and enriches the Gallery's collection."

### Paintings

Previously known only from copies, Simon Vouet's *Madonna and Child* (1633) is the earliest and the only signed and dated version of his great series devoted to the Virgin and Child. Having just returned to the French court from Rome, Vouet created a monumental image of the Virgin with her son on her lap in a gesture of extreme tenderness and intimacy, as well as prescient gravitas. The sensual depiction of the figures against a dark background combined with clear, bright colors and exquisitely subtle light mark the beginning of the great tradition of the French school of painting. This painting is on view in the West Building, Main Floor, Gallery 37.

This painting was purchased with funds from the Chester Dale Fund.

Represented as a night scene, Morazzone's *Adoration of the Magi* (c. 1600) combines mannerist elegance and exaggeration with protobaroque expressiveness, creating an aesthetic he shares with the early 17th-century Lombard School. This work has the characteristics of a painted sketch—an intimate mood and bravura execution—but does not seem to have been made for any of Morazzone's large-scale altarpieces of this subject. The elaborately carved and gilded frame appears to date from later in the 17th century and was likely added by an early collector to enhance the painting.

This painting was purchased with funds from the Pepita Milmore Memorial Fund.

### Prints

Chuck Close's *Keith* (1972) is a massive-scale, labor-intensive mezzotint, a printmaking process popular in the 18th century that yields white highlights on a dark, velvety ground. Outmoded by the 20th century, the technique was reprised by Close, who endowed *Keith* with photographic precision and larger-than-life scale. It is the first work in which he left the process—in the form of an underlying grid—visible, an important decision that influenced Close's subsequent work in all media. *Keith* represents both a milestone in Close's career and in the history of printmaking. *Keith* was meant to be

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produced in an edition of 20 prints, but rapid deterioration of the copperplate limited the edition to 10, plus a handful of proofs, making the print remarkably rare. This print will be on view in the Gallery's exhibition **Three Centuries of American Prints from the National Gallery of Art** through July 24, 2016. Dorothy and Herbert Vogel have also promised to the Gallery the unique photographic maquette for *Keith*.

The print was purchased with funds from the Jon and Mary Shirley Foundation, Frank H. and Eva B. Buck Foundation, Nelson Blitz Jr. and Catherine Woodard, Avalon Fund, Pepita Milmore Memorial Fund, and Jordan D. Schnitzer.

*The Flagellation of Christ* (1619) by Claudio Ridolfi (1570–1644) is an outstanding example of his complex style that fuses Venetian color with an elegant stylization, influenced by Parmigianino, and intense feeling, a product of his long association with Federico Barocci. This is the only drawing by the artist that is connected to an extant painting, and therefore documents his working procedure. A *modello* probably submitted for a patron's approval, it corresponds to a monumental altarpiece in Verona's church of Sant'Anastasia (c. 1619), which was his most highly praised work through the 18th century.

This drawing was purchased with funds from the Pepita Milmore Memorial Fund.

*Ships and Harbors* (1652–1654), a set of 36 etchings (three complete sets of 12) by Reinier Nooms (Zeeman) (1624–1664), clearly distinguishes different kinds of ships, views of harbors, marine battles, and ship repairs. For his etchings, Zeeman created new techniques, including widely different hatchings, dot patterns, and drypoint, to capture the variable and sometimes strange effects of light on water. Zeeman's prints were extremely popular in his day and through the 19th century; collectors vied for the best impressions and Charles Meryon even copied his etched views. Early impressions of his prints have become very rare, and complete sets of early impressions are almost unobtainable, making these three complete sets of uniformly rich and early impressions, all from their first editions, a great addition to Zeeman's marine painting and 15 etchings of city views already in the Gallery's collection.

These prints were purchased with funds from The J. and H. Weldon Foundation Inc. and the Pepita Milmore Memorial Fund.

#### Photographs

The Gallery also acquired an albumen print by John Moran, given by John P. Coll, in memory of Margaret Canaga Coll and John Owen Reilly Coll. Moran's *Broadhead's Creek, Delaware Water Gap* (c. 1865) is a lush, large-scale print by the brother of painter Thomas Moran. Platt Babbitt's (d. 1879) *Niagara Falls* (c. 1855) was purchased with the Robinson Family Fund in memory of C. David Robinson and the Clinton and Jean Wright Fund. It is a whole-plate daguerreotype, the largest size made at the time, and is quite rare, as few photographs of this type by Babbitt are extant today. Babbitt was the first artist to establish himself as a resident photographer at Niagara Falls catering to the tourist market. Both of these photographs will be included in the Gallery's upcoming exhibition **East of the Mississippi: Nineteenth-Century American Landscape Photography**, March 12–July 16, 2017.

Among the 54 photographs by 23 artists promised to the Gallery by Robert B. Menschel is Edward Weston's stunning gelatin silver print *Neil—Asleep* (1925), along with Man Ray's (1890–1976) portfolio *Electricité* (1931) and 25 photographs by Aaron Siskind (1903–1991). In addition, 12 gelatin silver prints by Mark Ruwedel, from his series *Westward the Course of Empire* (1994–2007), were given by John Divola.

#### Acquisitions from the Corcoran Gallery of Art

One highlight among the 28 works recently accessioned from the Corcoran Gallery of Art is Cecilia Beaux's *Julie Bruhns Kahle (Mrs. Marcel Kahle)* (1925/1926). Beaux has depicted miniature painter Julie Kahle (1858–1931) at work with a magnifying glass in one hand and a paintbrush in the other. Kahle, who did not begin her artistic career until she was almost 60 years old, studied miniature painting in New York City and actively exhibited there and in Philadelphia. Her son, a student of Cecilia Beaux, commissioned this portrait. Kahle's great-grandson Robert and his family donated the portrait to the Corcoran in 1997 in part because his wife Gail had taught there for many years.

A strikingly beautiful painting on paper by Anne Truitt, *1 June 1976* (1976), features understated textures that parallel her painted minimalist sculptures. This work joins two other paintings on paper by Truitt, both from 1962, accessioned from the Corcoran in 2014.

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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 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](http://www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt), Twitter at [www.twitter.com/ngadc](http://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.

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