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American Prints of Urban Life Celebrated at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, February 26 through August 6, 2017



Howard Norton Cook, *Looking up Broadway*, 1937
lithograph
National Gallery of Art, Washington, Reba and Dave Williams Collection, Gift of Reba and Dave Williams

Washington, DC—American artists of the early 20th century sought to interpret the beauty, power, and anxiety of the modern age in diverse ways. Through depictions of bustling city crowds and breathtaking metropolitan vistas, 25 black-and-white prints on view in *The Urban Scene: 1920–1950* will explore the spectacle of urban modernity. Prints by recognized artists such as Louis Lozowick (1892–1973) and Reginald Marsh (1898–1954), as well as lesser-known artists including Mabel Dwight (1875–1955), Gerald Geerlings (1897–1998), Victoria Hutson Huntley (1900–1971), Martin Lewis (1881–1962), and Stow Wengenroth (1906–1978), are included in this exhibition. *The Urban Scene* will be on view in the West Building from February 26 through August 6, 2017.

"During the past decade the Gallery has acquired extraordinary groups of prints from the Reba and Dave Williams Collection, the Corcoran Collection, and the collection of Bob Stana and Tom Judy," said Earl A. Powell III, director, National Gallery of Art. "We are thankful for the generosity of these donors and for the opportunities that have allowed the Gallery's American print holdings to grow in both richness and depth."

Exhibition Organization and Support

The exhibition is organized by the National Gallery of Art, Washington.

Exhibition Highlights

The black-and-white prints that comprise *The Urban Scene*, most of which were acquired in the last ten years, often highlight the unprecedented scale of urban architecture and the impact of industry and technology on city life. From one perspective, skyscrapers, bridges, and other technological marvels projected wealth, opportunity, and invoked the sublime, but from another these structures could be interpreted as blocking light, deepening shadows, heightening a sense of enclosure and confinement, and amplifying feelings of diminution and anonymity.

The artists featured in this exhibition chose their subjects, arranged their compositions, and scrutinized details to convey particular aspects of urban life. They used line to capture the specifics of a face or the idiosyncrasies of a building and manipulated tone to mimic the play of light. Employing precise detail and descriptive clarity to characterize experience, suggest meaning, and convey a narrative, certain elements were emphasized while others were minimized, resulting in images distilled to their narrative or atmospheric essence.

Exhibition Curator

The exhibition is organized by Charles Ritchie, associate curator, department of American and modern prints and drawings, National Gallery of Art.

Press Contact:

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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. Follow the Gallery on Facebook at www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt, Twitter at 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**

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CURATOR BIOGRAPHY**[Charles Ritchie](#)**

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The public may call (202) 737-4215 or visit www.nga.gov for more information about the **National Gallery of Art**.

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