

NEWS RELEASE

National Gallery of Art
Washington, D. C.

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WASHINGTON, September 8: David E. Finley, Director of the National Gallery of Art, announced the opening of an exhibition on Sunday, September ninth, of the new acquisitions in the Rosenwald Collection. The original gift of the Rosenwald Collection to the National Gallery of Art was made in March 1943. Since that time, through the great generosity of Lessing J. Rosenwald, 1984 prints and drawings have been added. The present exhibition represents a cross section of the new acquisitions.

The exhibition is arranged chronologically from the fifteenth century to the present in order to display some of the significant new gifts in each period. The most outstanding addition to the fifteenth century material, which was superlatively represented in the original gift, is a set of 39 Italian woodcut playing cards. The set, apparently unique and undescribed, was recently discovered inside a binding of a volume of Eusebius, Chronicon which was printed in Venice in 1483. This important series, made in Venice about 1470, is antedated only by the cards preserved in the Vatican Library. Other representations of the early period of print making include examples by the Master E. S., Schongauer, Dürer, Montagna and Giovanni da Brescia. In this group there is also a very fine engraving by the Dutch artist, Lucas van Leyden, the Poet Virgil Suspended in a Basket. Sixty-five years ago, at the Carl Schlösser sale in Frankfurt, this particular impression was noted for its unusual quality. One section of the exhibition is devoted to examples of landscape etchings which were made in the sixteenth century by Hirschvogel and Lautensack. These landscape prints, which represent the countryside along the Danube, are seldom to be found in such brilliant, crisp impressions.

The group of seventeenth century prints shows a wide diversity in subject and style. There are, for example, two very rare etchings in early states by Van Dyck, The Christ Crowned with Thorns and Titian and his Mistress.

Less well known are two picturesque etchings by the Neapolitan, Salvator Rosa, ornament prints by della Bella and two handsome woodcuts, drawn in a free baroque style by Jacques Stella, a pupil of Poussin. The purchase of a small collection of the popular genre prints by Van Ostade made it possible to include six of these charming etchings in the early states before the plates were reworked.

Rowlandson and Hogarth, masters of political and social caricature, were represented in the original gift by only one or two plates. Last year, with the fortunate purchase of two nearly complete collections of their work, plus the acquisition of the famous set of Cries of London, by Wheatley, from the Stotesbury sale, the entire panorama of the English eighteenth century prints can be seen. Five Blake drawings, large bold pencil sketches intended as illustrations for the Book of Enoch, which formerly belonged to Allan Brown, present the imaginative world in contrast to the decorative realism of the satirists.

The exhibition continues through the nineteenth century to the present. Prints by Picasso, Rouault, Bracque, Miro, represent the French School. There is a small selection of prints by contemporary Mexican artists, Orozco, Castellanos and Siqueiros. A powerful lithograph of the Three Kings by Nolde and a strong portrait by Beckmann of Dr. Piper are examples of the German Expressionist movement. Tarantella by William Hayter and Sol y Luna by the Argentinian Lasansky conclude the exhibition.

The exhibition will remain on view at the Gallery through October twenty-first.