

Mr. Cairns

NEWS RELEASE

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EXHIBITION OF DRAWINGS AND WATER COLORS
BY FLEMISH AND DUTCH MASTERS
OPENING AT NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, FEBRUARY 14

WASHINGTON, February 14: David E. Finley, Director of the National Gallery of Art, announces an exhibition of Drawings and Water Colors by Flemish and Dutch Masters from the De Grez Collection, lent by the Royal Museums of Belgium. The exhibition was arranged by the American Federation of Arts. Its inauguration will take place at the National Gallery on February 14th, and the exhibition will remain on view until March 14th when it will travel to other American Museums.

Writing in the illustrated catalogue of the exhibition, Paul Fierens, Conservateur-en-chef of the Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, says, "The Commission of Historic Painting of the Musées Royaux and the Belgian Ministry of Education have acceded to a loan request involving the finest examples of our Collection. It is our belief that, in this case, the responsibility to make more widely available material that is ordinarily confined to its home, outweighs the inevitable risks and perils which every journey brings about. We trust that scholars as well as a broad public in the United States will round out their conception of Flemish and Dutch art by studying these examples which, though small and unpretentious in format, nevertheless convey better than the chefs d'oeuvres of painting themselves, the handwriting of our masters."

Thomas M. Messer, Director of the Exhibition, has described the scope of the show as follows: "The exhibition is concerned with the Flemish and Dutch Masters of the 16th and 17th centuries. The medium ranges from drawing to water color, and includes such varied and subtle gradations as pen and ink drawings, washes, water-color washes, and other composite media combining drawing and water color in various degrees of complexity.

"The scope of historic chronology is defined by Peter Brueghel, the Elder, who was born about 1525, and by Meindert Hobbema, who died in 1709; between the two Masters unfolds the panorama of the Flemish and Dutch Schools."

John Walker, Chief Curator of the National Gallery of Art, speaking of the exhibition, said, "We particularly welcome this generous loan from the Belgian Government which has been arranged by the American Federation of Arts. There is everywhere a constantly increasing interest in drawings. As draughtsmen, the Flemish and Dutch Masters of the 17th century were unsurpassed in their recording of everyday scenes. The growing concern with realistic representation, which characterizes the work of many contemporary painters, will make the present exhibition of particular significance."