

# NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

NEWS RELEASE

SIXTH STREET AT CONSTITUTION AVENUE NW WASHINGTON 25 DC • RPublic 7-4215 extension 248

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WASHINGTON, D.C., October 22, 1963. John Walker, Director of the National Gallery of Art, announced today the opening of an exhibition of 18th-century Venetian drawings from the Correr Museum in Venice on Sunday, October 27th. The show will remain on view four weeks, through November 24, in the Central Gallery on the Ground Floor. The exhibition, the first of its kind in this country, will comprise 120 drawings by 42 artists representing the golden age of Venetian draughtsmanship.

The most famous names of Venetian 18th-century art are represented - Tiepolo, Guardi, Longhi, Piazzetta, and Canaletto. In addition, dozens of lesser-known artists will afford a unique opportunity to savor the romance and elegance of Venice, captured by eyewitness observers, in the city's last century as an independent state.

The exhibition has been organized by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service, and will subsequently be circulated by it. Dr. Teresio Pignatti, Vice-Director of the Correr Museum and Keeper of Prints and Drawings, has selected the drawings in the exhibition and prepared the comprehensive catalogue, which illustrates 100 drawings. Dr. Pignatti, who has published extensively in the field of Venetian art, has accompanied the exhibition to the United States.

Dr. Pignatti has written in the catalogue:

"Perhaps (Venice's) image has been preserved because so much of the city's past still remains close to us; gondolas and canals, crowded fondamente with lazy boys in the sun, and the Piazza San Marco...with processions of foreigners, and the boats bobbing on the water along the Riva degli Schiavoni.

"But perhaps these familiar sights evoke memories of the past because they correspond to an inner image created by many artists' portraits of the Venetian eighteenth century, a time beloved and dreamed about like a youthful fancy..."

(more)

Many of the drawings have come to the Correr collection directly from the artists' studios. A group of Guardi drawings, for example, were sold by Francesco's son, Giacomo; a receipt exists from 1829 documenting the sale of 18 drawings by Francesco Guardi for the minute sum of 14.5 lire. The Correr Museum, named after the 19th-century connoisseur and collector Teodoro Correr, contains one of the great collections of Venetian 18th-century drawings in the world.

Comedy is represented in the exhibition by the caricatures of Gian Battista Tiepolo and his son Domenico. The delight of Venetians in the stage and in carnival is suggested by Diziani's costume study for two oarsmen, evidently prepared for a special carnival boat.

The charm of the Venetian scene is captured by the city views, or vedute, by Canaletto and others, and by the impulsive draughtsmanship of Guardi.

Twenty-six of the drawings were executed by members of the Guardi family - Francesco, the more assured master; Gian Antonio, his elder brother and skillful collaborator; and Giacomo, Francesco's son and imitator. The series documenting the Polignac wedding and several other sketches have Francesco's unmistakable vitality and ease of execution.

After its opening in Washington, the exhibition will be shown on the following limited tour:

Houston, Texas	Museum of Fine Arts Dec. 7, 1963 - January 5, 1964
Los Angeles, Calif.	Los Angeles County Museum of Art Jan. 18 - Feb. 16, 1964
San Francisco, Calif.	California Palace of the Legion of Honor March 2 - 31, 1964

An exhibition of 18th-century Venetian etchings from the National Gallery's own collection is simultaneously being shown on the Ground Floor, east wing.

(end)

---

Photographs and further information available through J. Carter Brown, National Gallery of Art, Washington 25, D.C. REpublic 7-4215, ext.248.