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Thomas Moran's Early Landscape of Juniata Valley, Pa, is Acquired by National Gallery of Art



Thomas Moran, American, 1837–1926
The Juniata, Evening, 1864
Oil on canvas, 50.8 x 76.2 cm (20 x 30 in)
National Gallery of Art, Washington
Gift of Max and Heidi Berry and Ann and Mark Kington/The Kington Foundation

Washington, DC—The Board of Trustees of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC, voted last week to acquire *The Juniata, Evening*, an exceptional painting done in 1864 by American artist Thomas Moran (1837-1926). Purchased from a private collection with funds from Max and Heidi Berry and Ann and Mark Kington/The Kington Foundation, the Pennsylvania landscape has never been exhibited publicly. It is the second painting by Moran to enter the Gallery's collection; the first is *The Much Resounding Sea* (1884).

"Since 1997, when the Gallery hosted a Moran retrospective, we have actively searched for superior examples of Moran's work," said Earl A. Powell III, director, National Gallery of Art. "*The Juniata, Evening*, unknown to us at the time of the retrospective, is the most important and the most beautiful of Moran's early landscapes to surface in decades."

The Juniata, Evening is a rare example of the eastern landscapes that Moran produced before he traveled to the American West in 1871. Commissioned by a Philadelphia banker and railroad executive, the painting has remained in private hands since it was completed in 1864.

Born in Bolton, England and raised in Philadelphia, Thomas Moran returned to his homeland in 1862 to study works by the artist he revered above all others—J.M.W. Turner. For several months, he retraced Turner's path through England and France, sketching the landscapes that had inspired the English master. Steeped in the writings of John Ruskin, Turner's early champion, Moran returned to Philadelphia and began producing a series of stunningly beautiful landscapes of the Pennsylvania countryside. Taking to heart Turner's example and Ruskin's advice to "study nature carefully and reproduce her wonders accurately," Moran spent weeks sketching in the forests surrounding Philadelphia.

In the summer of 1864 Moran ventured farther, traveling by rail to the Juniata River valley in central Pennsylvania. The Juniata River, a major tributary of the Susquehanna, wound through lush meadows and steep sandstone cliffs. Moran's painting of the valley is filled with closely observed detail: grazing sheep, farm dwellings, distant smoke, a lone traveler, and, most remarkably, a foreground vignette of an artist, possibly a self-portrait, with a painting on his easel duplicating the scene before the viewer.

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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 along 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. With the exception of the atrium and library, the galleries in the East Building will be closing gradually beginning in July 2013 and will remain closed for approximately three years for Master Facilities Plan and renovations. For specific updates on gallery closings, visit www.nga.gov/renovation (<http://www.nga.gov/renovation>) .

For information call (202) 737-4215 or the Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) at (202) 842-6176, or visit the Gallery's website at www.nga.gov. Follow the Gallery on [Facebook](http://www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt) at www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt and on [Twitter](http://twitter.com/ngadc) at twitter.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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