

Release Date: July 17, 2014

Rarely Seen Landscape Watercolors on View for Only Two Months in *The Color of Nature*, July 13–September 14, 2014



Jules-Ferdinand Jacquemart, *Sun-Drenched Hills near Menton*, 1880  
watercolor over graphite with scraping on wove paper  
National Gallery of Art, Washington, Diane Nixon Fund

Washington, DC—An intimate group of vibrant landscape watercolors, the majority acquired in the past four years for the National Gallery of Art's renowned collection of prints and drawings, is on view in the West Building from July 13 through September 14, 2014. ***The Color of Nature: Recent Acquisitions of Landscape Watercolors*** presents 15 sun-filled works by a variety of European artists, including Jules-Ferdinand Jacquemart (1837–1880) from France, William Turner of Oxford (1789–1862) from England, and Louis Ducros (1748–1810) from Switzerland. The majority of these landscapes were purchased with funds donated by private collectors, and for several of them this marks their first ever public exhibition.

"Thanks to a number of generous donors, more than 200 European and American watercolors and gouaches from the 19th century have been added to the Gallery's collection in recent years," said Earl A. Powell III, director, National Gallery of Art. "Because works on paper are sensitive to light, these ephemeral paintings can only be exhibited on a selective and limited basis. *The Color of Nature* offers visitors a rare opportunity to view these fine works on the Gallery's walls."

### About the Exhibition

Key works in this exhibition include large-scale panoramas, such as the commanding (29 1/2 x 42 3/4 inches) *Dawn in the Valleys of Devon* (c. 1832) by William Turner of Oxford—just acquired in May—and *The Grand Waterfalls at Terni* (1790s) by Franz Kaisermann (1765–1833), which measures 40 9/16 x 25 9/16 inches. On a smaller scale, Jacquemart's *Sun-Drenched Hills near Menton* (1880) richly captures the brilliant sunshine of southern France, while *Sunset from a Rocky Coastline* (c. 1842) by Jean Achille Benouville (1815–1891), *A Promenade in the Park at Sanssouci* (1885) by Franz Skarbina (1849–1910), and *A Seated Man Contemplating a Sunlit Mountain Valley* (c. 1825) by Jakob Alt (1789–1872) add a palette of striking green, delicate blues, and misty sunset hues to the exhibition.

Artists have used watercolors for centuries, but it was not until the late 18th century that this medium came into widespread use. Over the course of the 1800s, the number of watercolors produced by professionals and amateurs alike, from rough sketches to highly finished compositions, grew exponentially. This rapid rise can be largely attributed to innovations in the manufacture of watercolor paints and papers, resulting in materials that were high in quality, practical to use, and easy to transport. These improvements made the technique particularly attractive to landscapists who painted outdoors and sought to capture the elusive effects of light, atmosphere, weather, and color.

### Prints, Drawings, and Illustrated Books at the National Gallery of Art

The Gallery's collection of prints, drawings, and illustrated books consists of more than 111,000 European and American works on paper and vellum, dating from the 11th century to the present. Because works on paper are highly susceptible to overexposure from light, they can be exhibited only for short periods. For that reason, the Gallery maintains a schedule of changing exhibitions drawn from its own collection or on loan from other institutions and private individuals.

Prints and drawings not on view may be seen by appointment by calling (202) 842-6380.

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## Curator

The curator for the exhibition is Margaret Morgan Grasselli, curator of old master drawings.

## 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](http://www.nga.gov). Follow the Gallery on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt](https://www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt), Twitter at [www.twitter.com/ngadc](https://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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