

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

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GIFT OF PAINTING BY DAUMIER

The National Gallery of Art announced today that the Board of Trustees had accepted the gift of an important painting by Honoré Daumier, entitled "Advice to a Young Artist", presented by Mr. Duncan Phillips, a Trustee of the National Gallery and Director of the Phillips Memorial Gallery in Washington.

Mr. Phillips, a distinguished collector of modern art and its sources, has made his collection available to the public in the Phillips Memorial Gallery which he has established in Washington. He is also a well known writer on art, his most recently published work being a book on "The Leadership of Giorgione".

The painting by Daumier (1808-1879), which Mr. Phillips has given to the National Gallery, is the first painting by a 19th century French artist to enter the Gallery's Permanent Collection.

"Advice to a Young Artist" has the distinction of having been included in the first large, comprehensive exhibition of Daumier's work at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris, in 1901. It is also particularly interesting as having been first owned by Corot, the great landscape and figure painter, and friend of Daumier.

Painted in deep rich color, it depicts a young draftsman showing his portfolio of drawings to an older man. The scene takes place in an artist's studio. The two figures are powerfully and sympathetically drawn in Daumier's most characteristic style. Their grouping, at once simple and monumental, brings out a kindly yet intense psychological relationship between the two. One of the well known group of paintings by Daumier showing incidents in the realm of studios, art shops, and cabinets of connoisseurs, the picture is an intimate record of the artist's deepest interests. It is virtually an autobiographical study, done as most of Daumier's paintings were, in time stolen from his major activity as cartoonist and caricaturist for the Parisian press.

The significance of the painting is enhanced by Corot's ownership, for it was probably given to him by Daumier; and the subject matter, a young artist receiving the advice and encouragement of an older colleague, is especially fitting and appropriate. From Daumier's early period, Corot had befriended him; and toward the close of Daumier's life, when the greatest draughtsman of the day was penniless and almost blind, it was Corot's intervention which led to a governmental pension, and Corot's tactful generosity which provided a home in his last years. It is recorded that it was not until Daumier was firmly established in a comfortable little cottage at Valmondois

near Paris that Corot revealed his own identity as benefactor. The picture is thus a memento of one of the most unselfish and inspiring of friendships among painters.

After Corot's death in 1875, "Advice to a Young Artist" passed through the Guillotin, Tavernier, and Cronier Collections (Paris), and the Goerg Collection (Reims) before coming to the National Gallery through Mr. Phillips' generosity.