

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

WASHINGTON, D. C.

FOR RELEASE

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David E. Finley, Director of the National Gallery of Art, announced today that, in response to a widespread demand, the National Gallery has again placed on exhibition the important collection of French 19th and 20th century drawings and water colors lent by the Louvre and other French museums and by private collectors.

These drawings and water colors, which aroused such interest when first shown at the National Gallery last winter, are part of a larger collection of French 19th century oil paintings which has been on exhibition at the Gallery during the past year. Like the oil paintings, these **water** colors and drawings were selected by René Huyghe, Curator of Paintings at the Musée du Louvre. They have been arranged chronologically by René Batigne, Special Custodian of the Collection, with the purpose of showing the artistic movements in France during the last 150 years, from David to Matisse.

The extraordinary vitality and versatility of French art during this period can be seen and felt in these drawings. The classical period, with its reaction to the graceful art of the 18th century, is represented by magnificent drawings by David and Ingres. The revolution in art, accomplished by Gericault and Delacroix, is made evident by fine examples of their work,



followed by characteristic sketches by Courbet, Rousseau and Corot. An entire wall is devoted to Daumier, while a series of drawings by Degas lead on to the work of the Impressionist group. A special alcove is devoted to quick summary sketches by sculptors such as Rodin, Bourdelle and Maillol. A diversified selection of works of 20th century artists concludes the exhibition. Remarkable in this group is a drawing by Picasso from his classical period, which rounds out the cycle and underscores again how contained and individual is the French tradition in art.

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In an adjoining gallery a group of political caricatures, assembled from the Lessing J. Rosenwald Collection, have been placed on exhibition. A few striking examples of political satire in graphic art have been selected for exhibition. Among the most interesting is an anonymous woodcut, one of the earliest political satires known, which was made about 1470 and represents the Emperor Frederick III and Pope Paul II struggling for power. Among the 19th century prints are the powerful commentaries of the great French artist, Daumier. Three of his early lithographs, made in 1834 attacking the corrupt reign of Louis Philippe, are included: The Liberty of the Press, the Legislative Body and the Death of Lafayette. A few fine water colors, made by Forain in 1919, reflect French opinion during that critical year. The exhibition concludes with a number of witty and perceptive drawings by the contemporary British cartoonist, David Low.