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NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WASHINGTON, November 16: The famous "Art Treasures from the Vienna Collections," lent by the Government of Austria, will go on public view at the National Gallery of Art at five o'clock, Sunday afternoon, November 20. The exhibition will continue through Sunday, January 22.

Included in the collection are 129 paintings, 32 sculptures, 2 miniatures, 6 Greek and Roman antiquities, 8 ivories, 15 works of goldsmiths and silversmiths, 33 vessels of rock crystal and precious stones, 2 jewels, 27 arms and armor, 1 clock, and 23 tapestries. Nearly all these works of art come from the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna.



This celebrated collection offers the American public a unique opportunity to view the works of six of the world's greatest painters at the peak of their achievement: Correggio, Titian, Tintoretto, Paolo Veronese, Rubens, and Velazquez. Also included in the exhibition will be a canvas considered by many critics as the greatest work of Jan Vermeer. Known as The Artist in his Studio, this picture was once part of the Czernin Collection in Vienna, and was subsequently selected by Hitler as the most important acquisition for his proposed museum at Linz.

The sculpture and objects d'art include a small group of carefully chosen masterpieces, beginning with Hellenistic and Roman cameos and continuing with ivories and bronzes from Alexandria, Byzantium, and Romanesque Germany. There is also a superb group of Renaissance bronzes by such artists as Bertoldo di Giovanni, Cattaneo, Vincenzo Danti, Leone Leoni, Riccio, and Giovanni Bologna.

Perhaps the most spectacular part of the Vienna treasure is the section that includes works of art in precious and semi-precious material: the gold objects, the rock crystals, and the jeweled and enameled goblets, bowls and plates. The climax of this section of the exhibition is the famous Gold Salt made by Benvenuto Cellini about 1540 and generally considered one of the high points of Renaissance craftsmanship and design.

There will also be on exhibition a remarkable collection of armor made for such celebrated members of the Habsburg family as Maximilian I, Ferdinand I, Maximilian II, and Matthias.



As a background for these treasures, magnificent tapestries have been lent by the Austrian Government. These include the Verdure tapestries with the arms of Charles V; another sixteenth century series illustrating the legend of Vertumus and Pomona; and a cycle showing the deeds of João de Castro, Viceroy of Portuguese India in the sixteenth century.

A canopy and hangings for a throne, woven in Brussels in 1566, recall the beauty and ceremony of the Austrian Court, whose rulers were for centuries among the most discriminating connoisseurs and enlightened patrons of art in Europe.

Selections from the great collection of the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna have recently been shown in London at the Tate Gallery and the Tower of London; also in Paris, Zurich, Brussels, Amsterdam, Stockholm and Copenhagen. The collection was brought to this country from England by the United States Navy, on board the naval store-ship MALABAR, which arrived at the U. S. Naval Gun Factory in Washington on October 24.

After being shown at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, the collection will go to the Metropolitan Museum in New York, the Art Institute in Chicago, and the M. H. de Young Memorial Museum in San Francisco.

David E. Finley, Director of the National Gallery of Art, said: "The National Gallery is proud to have the opportunity of showing the famous collection of works of art which has been sent to this country on loan by the Government of Austria.



It is a most generous gesture on the part of the Austrian Government and one that will be deeply appreciated by the people of the United States."

Mr. Finley added: "The presence of the collection in this country reminds us of the debt of gratitude which we, and lovers of art throughout the entire world, owe to that great soldier, General George Patton, and our American forces, who, with such courage and skill, rescued these works of art from the salt mines in Upper Austria where they had been hidden during the war. It is in recognition of this fact, and as a graceful gesture to the American people, that the Austrian Government has sent their treasures here on loan after a triumphal tour of many of the capitals of Europe."

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