

NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART  
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The first one-man show in the history of the National Gallery of Art, a retrospective exhibition of works by American painter and lithographer George Bellows, will be opened Saturday afternoon, January 19, at three o'clock, Director John Walker announced today.

Mrs. George Bellows, the artist's widow, and Anne and Jean, his two daughters, all favorite subjects of the painter, are among the special guests who are expected to attend the opening.

Bellows, whose portraits, sporting scenes, landscapes, and city scenes made him the best known and most popular painter of the first quarter of this century, was selected by the Gallery to inaugurate a new focus on its American collection.

Said Walker of the selection, "George Bellows was one of the greatest painters and lithographers American art has produced. He has captured more fully and brilliantly the passing scene of his day than any other artist of our past. We are extremely fortunate to be able to present Bellows as the first of a continuing series of exhibitions by other noteworthy painters from our own country."



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- 2 -

The exhibition, which will close February 24, is the largest ever assembled of works by Bellows and consists of sixty-three paintings and eighty-nine drawings and lithographs. The earliest painting in the retrospective is Bellows' first portrait, a sensitive portrayal of Clifton Webb, painted in 1905 when the artist and the actor were fellow students at the New York School of Art.

The last work was done in November, 1924, just two months before the artist's sudden death at forty-two, and is entitled "Jean, Anne and Joseph." The artist's two daughters, now Mrs. Earl M. Booth of Dobbs Ferry, N. Y., and Mrs. Maynard Kearney of Shaker Heights, Ohio, are shown in the foreground of a lyric summer landscape with the son of the farmer on whose place the Bellowses had vacationed.

More than a half dozen canvases portray Mrs. Bellows and his daughters, while "The Picnic" includes the entire family on the edge of Cooper's Lake, Woodstock, with the artist about to fish as his daughters play and his wife, Emma, spreads out the luncheon.

Among the other portraits included in the exhibition is one of Bellows' friend and admirer, Chester Dale, now President of the Gallery, who gave the first Bellows, the famed "Both Members of This Club," to its permanent collection in 1945. The Gallery policy is that twenty years must elapse after an artist's death before his works may be added to the permanent collection.



The exhibition contains a full selection of the vigorous boxing and sporting paintings which won Bellows immediate acclaim in the early years of this century. The full extent of Bellows' wide interests is shown in his sociological recordings of segments of fast growing New York City, his romantic landscapes and his powerful scenes of fishermen and the sea.

This large range over the contemporary scene led art critic Henry McBride to conclude his appraisal of Bellows in the catalogue prepared for the exhibition by saying, "The picture had to be painted. The difficulties were as nothing. For sheer courage Bellows challenges any artist we have so far produced."