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## FIRST EXHIBITION DEVOTED EXCLUSIVELY TO REMYNTON'S INNOVATIVE PAINTINGS OF NIGHT PREMIERES AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART APRIL 13 - JULY 13, 2003

Washington, DC -- **Frederic Remington: The Color of Night**, the first exhibition devoted entirely to the renowned American artist's nocturnes, will be on view from April 13 through July 13 in the East Building of the National Gallery of Art. Remington's night paintings, considered by many scholars to be his most compelling works, explore the aesthetic and technical challenges of painting darkness. The exhibition includes 29 paintings, some of which have not been seen publicly since the early 1900s. The exhibition has been organized by the National Gallery of Art in association with the Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, Oklahoma, where it will be on view August 10 through November 9, 2003; it will travel to the Denver Art Museum, December 13, 2003, through March 14, 2004.

In the decade preceding his premature death, Frederic Remington (1861-1909) produced a series of more than 70 paintings that took as their subject the color of night. Surprisingly, his nocturnes are filled with color and light—moonlight, firelight, candlelight. Immediately recognized as innovative works, these paintings confirmed Remington's position as an American artist of the first rank.

"We are pleased to present the first exhibition focused entirely on Remington's nocturnes, revealing a little-known side of this celebrated American artist," said Earl A. Powell III, director of the National Gallery of Art. "We are enormously grateful to the private and institutional lenders who have loaned key components of their collections to this exhibition, and to Target for its generous support."

## Exhibition Support

This exhibition is proudly sponsored by Target Stores, as part of its commitment to arts and education.

"Target has a long history of supporting the arts," said Laysha Ward, vice president of community relations, Target Corporation. "We are proud to sponsor an exhibit that showcases the rich traditions and cultures of early America and provides people with an opportunity to experience the western frontier through the imaginative works of Frederic Remington."

## The Exhibition

Frederic Remington has long been celebrated as one of the most gifted interpreters of the American West. In recent years, Remington works once viewed as "traditional" and "documentary" have come to be seen by scholars as experimental and imaginative. Among the paintings that have drawn particular attention are the late nocturnes, with their ghostlike images and dramatic tonalities.

While still a young man, Remington established himself as the premier illustrator of western subjects. As he matured he turned his attention away from illustration, concentrating instead on painting and sculpture. About 1900 Remington became intrigued with nocturnal images. Before his death in 1909 from complications following an appendectomy, Remington completed more than 70 nocturnes. Astonishing in their coloristic effects, Remington's nocturnes reflect his interest in technological innovations, including flash photography and the advent of electricity. They are also deeply personal paintings that often mirror the artist's experience of combat during the Spanish-American War.

The exhibition presents 29 of Remington's finest nocturnes, including *The Scout: Friends or Foes?* (1902-1905), an early example of Remington's mature style; *Evening on a Canadian Lake* (1905) and *Coming to the Call* (1905), two works exemplifying Remington's technique of composing images that pose questions; and *The Call for Help* (1908) and *Moonlight, Wolf* (1909), two paintings depicting frozen moments of

panic and fear.

## **The Artist**

Hailed as a chronicler of the American West, Frederic Remington was a multitalented artist who enjoyed success as an illustrator, writer, sculptor, and painter. His drawings of cavalry troops, cowboys, and Indians filled popular periodicals such as *Harper's Weekly* and *Collier's*. One contemporary critic declared that most easterners got their image of the West from Remington's work.

Though identified with the American West, Remington actually spent much of his life in the East. Born in Canton, New York, in 1861, Remington briefly attended the School of Fine Arts at Yale before starting work as a reporter. As a young man, he traveled widely, sketching the people and places of the new American frontier. By 1886 he was established as an illustrator, selling work to many of the major magazines. By the mid-1890s he was one of the most popular and successful illustrators of the age.

In 1898, at the outbreak of the Spanish-American War, Remington went to Cuba as a war correspondent. He was deeply shaken by the reality of combat. His return to the U.S. was followed by a period of great creativity, in particular, his experimentation with nocturnal images. Filled with danger, threatened violence, and menacing silence, these paintings often mirror, metaphorically, Remington's experience of war.

In his short lifetime (he died at age 48), Remington produced more than 3,000 drawings and paintings, 22 bronze sculptures, a novel, a Broadway play, and over 100 articles and stories. Coinciding with the closing of the American frontier and the first decade of the twentieth century, the night paintings are seen by many as elegies for a vanished past.

## **Exhibition Curator, Catalogue, Programs, and Resources**

Nancy K. Anderson, associate curator of American and British paintings at the National Gallery of Art, is curator of the exhibition and principal author of the catalogue.

Anderson was curator of two prior Gallery exhibitions: **Albert Bierstadt: Art and Enterprise** in 1991 and **Thomas Moran** in 1997.

Published in conjunction with the exhibition, *Frederic Remington: The Color of Night* is another first, the only scholarly publication ever devoted to Remington's nocturnes. It includes essays by Nancy Anderson on the evolution of Remington's nocturnes; Alexander Nemerov, professor of art history at Yale University, on the influence of photographic innovations on Remington's work; and William C. Sharpe, professor of English at Barnard College, on Remington's place within the tradition of the nocturne in music, literature, and painting. Copublished by Princeton University Press and the National Gallery of Art, the catalogue will be available in the Gallery Shops, through the Shops Web site ([www.nga.gov](http://www.nga.gov)) (<http://www.nga.gov/home.htm>) and by telephone (800-697-9350), for \$49.95 hardcover, \$29.95 softcover (228 pp., 136 color plates, 23 black and white plates).

Exhibition curator Nancy Anderson will deliver a lecture, **Frederic Remington: The Color of Night**, on Sunday, April 20, at 2:00 p.m. in the East Building auditorium.

A special symposium, **The Art of Darkness: Frederic Remington's Nocturnes**, will be held Saturday, April 26, 1:00-5:00 p.m. in the East Building auditorium. Speakers include William H. Truettner, senior curator, Smithsonian American Art Museum; Peter H. Hassrick, emeritus director, Charles M. Russell Center for the Study of the American West, University of Oklahoma; Alexander Nemerov, professor of art history, Yale University; and William C. Sharpe, professor of English, Barnard College.

These events are free of charge; seating is available on a first come, first served basis.

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## 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 along 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. With the exception of the atrium and library, the galleries in the East Building will be closing gradually beginning in July 2013 and will remain closed for approximately three years for Master Facilities Plan and renovations. For specific updates on gallery closings, visit [www.nga.gov/renovation](http://www.nga.gov/renovation) (<http://www.nga.gov/renovation>) .

For information call (202) 737-4215 or the Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) at (202) 842-6176, or visit the Gallery's website at [www.nga.gov](http://www.nga.gov). Follow the Gallery on [Facebook](http://www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt) at [www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt](http://www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt) and on [Twitter](http://twitter.com/ngadc) at [twitter.com/ngadc](http://twitter.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.

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