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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART SALUTES "THE GREATEST GENERATION" IN SPECIAL WORLD WAR II DISPLAY AND FILM PREMIERE



Portion of the French National Loan hung in the National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC. Picture taken in December of 1944.

Washington, DC - On March 17, 1941, as the United States girded for war, the National Gallery of Art was dedicated in a glittering ceremony featuring a speech by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. In a matter of months, the Gallery became a source of respite and inspiration for the soldiers and civilians flooding into wartime Washington. The Gallery's wartime years are commemorated in a special installation, **That the Freedom of the Human Spirit Shall Go On: World War II and the National Gallery of Art**, on view through September 7. The display is located in the West Building Founders' Room, which was transformed into an air-conditioned lounge for men and women in uniform during World War II.

The display features photographs documenting the Gallery's wartime service to military personnel and war workers, and its efforts to protect its art collection. The photographs include scenes of President Franklin D. Roosevelt at the Gallery's dedication, visiting servicemen enjoying the galleries and reading rooms, and paintings being moved for safe storage. Also on view are original guest register pages recording the thoughts of visiting service personnel from across the nation.

It was during the World War II years that the Gallery began a series of free concerts of classical music to entertain the troops and boost civilian morale. The free Sunday concerts, now in their 62nd year, have become a popular Gallery tradition. The 2,500th free concert will be performed on Sunday, June 13, 2004, at 7:00 p.m. in the atrium of the East Building, which is celebrating its 25th anniversary. For more information about the concert series, visit www.nga.gov/programs/music/index.shtm (<http://www.nga.gov/programs/music/index.shtm>).

Gallery Hosts Premiere of Film on Washington's Newest Memorial

The National Gallery of Art will also host the public premiere of a new feature-length documentary about the design and building of Washington's newest memorial, *The World War II Memorial: A Testament to Freedom* (Robert Uth and Glenn Marcus, 2004, 60 minutes). The film includes interviews with key artists and craftsmen who contributed to the memorial, including architect Friedrich St. Florian and master sculptor Raymond Kaskey. Firsthand accounts of the war, including interviews with Yogi Berra, James Arness, Tony Curtis, Robert Dole, George McGovern, and John Eisenhower, are interwoven with the story of the memorial's construction. This project was made possible with generous support from the Disabled American Veterans National Service Foundation and Ford Motor Company.

Part of Washington, DC's 100-day tribute, "America Salutes the Greatest Generation," the film can be seen in the East Building Auditorium May 26 through May 29 at 12:30 p.m., and May 31 at 12:30 and 2:30 p.m.

For more about World War II resources at the Gallery, see www.nga.gov/resources/ww2res.htm (<http://www.nga.gov/resources/ww2res.htm>).

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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>) .

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. Follow the Gallery on [Facebook](http://www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt) at www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt and on [Twitter](http://twitter.com/ngadc) at 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.

For additional press information please call or send inquiries to:

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