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## National Gallery of Art to Open New Galleries for Photographs this Fall

### — Nation’s Art Museum Dedicates Suite of Galleries to Exhibitions of Photographs —

Washington, DC—On October 17, 2004, the National Gallery of Art will inaugurate new galleries devoted to photographs with the premiere of the exhibition, **All the Mighty World: The Photographs of Roger Fenton, 1852–1860**, on view through January 2, 2005.

The new suite of five galleries, which will be dedicated to the exhibition of photographs, is adjacent to state-of-the-art storage rooms for photographs. Encompassing approximately 3,000 square feet, the new galleries occupy the inner tier of the southwestern quadrant of the West Building ground floor.

The project, made possible in part through funding by Gail and Benjamin Jacobs, Edward J. Lenkin, and Diana Walker, was begun nearly two years ago. It involves the restoration of three galleries and the renovation of two rooms.

“All visitors will now have a chance to see the finest works in one of the most beautiful showcases for photographs in the country,” said Earl A. Powell III, director, National Gallery of Art. “We hope it becomes a new destination for visitors to the National Mall.”

Following the inaugural exhibition of photographs by Roger Fenton will be the exhibition **André Kertész**, February 6–May 15, 2005.

### Architectural and Design Considerations

Over the years, the space occupied by the new galleries has been altered more than once to accommodate the Gallery's changing needs. The current restoration/renovation will result in a suite of galleries that reflects architect John Russell Pope's original interior design for the West Building.

In three of the rooms, the walls and ceiling have been removed to reveal the original walls, marble bases and borders, and travertine wainscoting, and the original 16.5-foot ceilings have been exposed. The other two rooms are being renovated to duplicate as closely as possible the marble floors, travertine wainscoting, and door trims of the original building. The wall colors of the galleries will blend with the roman travertine marble trim.

The original plaster walls are being retained, but wooden panels will be installed for maximum flexibility in hanging frequently changing exhibitions. The rooms will be kept at the strict temperature and humidity levels maintained throughout the Gallery's exhibition spaces. Light levels will be adjusted to meet the special requirements of each exhibition of photographs.

The five rooms form a U-shaped suite of galleries directly off of the central corridor on the ground floor of the West Building. They are adjacent to newly renovated prints and drawings galleries, which will open November 17, 2004 with the exhibition, **Six Centuries of Prints and Drawings: Recent Acquisitions**, and the sculpture galleries, which were reopened in September 2002. The galleries surround a new storage room for photographs, a state-of-the-art facility where strict conservation conditions are maintained.

### **The Collection of Photographs**

The National Gallery of Art's collection of approximately 8,000 photographs encompasses the history of the medium from its beginnings in 1839. Started in 1949 with a gift of over 1,200 Alfred Stieglitz photographs from Georgia O'Keeffe and the Alfred Stieglitz Estate, and augmented with a further gift from Miss O'Keeffe of more than 300 Stieglitz portraits of her, the collection has now expanded to include work representing the finest examples of the art of photography from the last 160 years.

Highlights include a small but choice group of photographs by the inventor of the medium, William Henry Fox Talbot, as well as works by the pioneering Scottish photographers David Octavius Hill and Robert Adamson, and such celebrated Victorian practitioners as Julia Margaret Cameron and Lewis Carroll. French 19th-century photography is also well represented with work by Gustave Le Gray, Henri Le Secq, Charles Nègre, Edouard Baldus, and Nadar. Among the strengths of the collection are large and important groups of photographs by several major 20th-century American practitioners including Paul Strand, Ansel Adams, Walker Evans, Robert Frank, Frederick Sommer, Harry Callahan, and Lee Friedlander, as well as the unparalleled Alfred Stieglitz Collection.

### **State-of-the-Art Storage Rooms Complement New Galleries**

The new galleries will make it possible for works from the collection of photographs to be seen more frequently as part of changing exhibitions. However, because photographs are fragile and subject to deterioration if exposed to light for extended periods of time, the collection is stored under strict conservation guidelines and made available for study only by appointment.

The collection storage room for photographs consists of two rooms: one maintained at 62 degrees Fahrenheit and 40 percent relative humidity for optimum storage of black-and-white photographs, and the other at 50 degrees Fahrenheit and 40 percent relative humidity for color photographs. Storage at these temperatures and humidity levels extends the life of photographs by slowing the rate of change in their components.

The photographs from the collection not on display may be viewed and studied by appointment, Monday through Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon and from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., except federal holidays. To make an appointment, call 202-842-6144.

### **Project and Curatorial Team**

Design and installation of the galleries was carried out by Gallery chief of design Mark Leithauser, deputy chief of design Gordon Anson, and the department of design staff in consultation with Sarah Greenough, curator and head of the department of photographs. Design and installation of the study and storage rooms was carried out by

senior architect James Grupe, architect William Cross, and the department of architectural services staff. Overall construction was supervised by Darrell Willson, Gallery administrator.

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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 at [www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt](http://www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt) and on Twitter 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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