

Updated: April 24, 2006

Six Centuries of Master Drawings Celebrate 15th Anniversary of Arrival of Woodner Collection at National Gallery of Art, Washington April 30—November 26, 2006 (extended through December 31, 2006)

Exhibition to Include Selections from Recent Gift of 74 Drawings



Fra Bartolommeo

One Angel Blowing a Trumpet and Another Holding a Standard, c. 1500

pen and brown ink, squared in red chalk for transfer on laid paper; laid down

National Gallery of Art, Washington, Woodner Collection, Gift of Andrea Woodner, 2006

Washington, DC—The National Gallery of Art will celebrate the 15th anniversary of the

arrival of the preeminent Woodner collection in an exhibition of 116 drawings spanning more than six centuries, including works by such artists as Botticelli, Leonardo da Vinci, Dürer, Raphael, Rembrandt, Fragonard, Goya, Ingres, Degas, and Picasso. The exhibition will be on view in the West Building from April 30 through November 26, 2006 (extended through December 31, 2006).

Master Drawings from the Woodner Collections is a tribute to the achievement of the late Ian Woodner, who formed one of the foremost private collections of old master and modern drawings in the United States. The exhibition also honors the continuing generosity of his daughters, Dian and Andrea Woodner, who placed the core of the collection at the Gallery in 1991. The daughters donated 44 works in a series of gifts made between 1991 and 2005, and Andrea recently gave an additional 74 drawings, many of which will be included in the show.

“Ian Woodner was a connoisseur whose appreciation of a wide range of types and styles of drawings led him to form a collection of extraordinary breadth and depth,” said Earl A. Powell III, director, National Gallery of Art. “The Gallery is deeply grateful for the generosity of the Woodner family and the continued support of Andrea and Dian Woodner.”

The exhibition is organized by the National Gallery of Art, Washington.

The Exhibition

Master Drawings from the Woodner Collections presents a broad range of western European drawings with an emphasis on Italian and German works from the Renaissance. The exhibition is arranged chronologically and by region. Highlights include two works that Woodner termed the “crown jewels” of his collection. The first is Benvenuto Cellini’s monumental nude *Satyr* (1544/1545), a finished study of a bronze sculpture designed to stand at the entrance to the French royal palace at Fontainebleau. The second is a page from the famed *Libro de’ Disegni* assembled after 1524 by Giorgio Vasari, a painter and architect who was the first systematic collector of artists’ drawings. Vasari pasted the drawings he owned onto large-scale album pages, arranging them harmoniously on both sides of the sheets. The page in

the Woodner Collections, bearing a total of ten drawings by the Renaissance masters Botticelli, Filippino Lippi, and Raffaellino del Garbo, is widely regarded as one of the most beautiful and impressive of the few pages surviving intact.

The earliest works in the exhibition are two rare sheets from the 14th century. One is a page from a model book by an unknown Austrian artist. The other, attributed to the Paduan painter Altichiero da Zevio, shows a band of knights in armor storming a medieval castle.

More than half of the exhibition is devoted to works from the 15th and 16th centuries, including works by Raphael, Leonardo, and Albrecht Dürer. The most important figure in German Renaissance art, Dürer is represented by an outstanding group of four drawings: three figurative works and one vividly-colored book illumination. Leonardo's petite and comical *Grotesque Head of an Old Woman* (1489/1490) is also included.

Dutch and Flemish artists predominate in the 17th-century drawings, with several landscapes including Rembrandt's evocative *View of Houtewael near the Sint Anthoniespoort* (c. 1650), which demonstrates his remarkable ability to express space, light, and atmosphere with an economy of means. The 18th century is represented by outstanding works from François Boucher, Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo, Jean-Baptiste Greuze, and Jean-Honoré Fragonard.

The 19th-century drawings include a pair of elegant portraits by Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, and the eerie, powerful image *Cactus Man* (1881) by French symbolist Odilon Redon, one of Woodner's favorite artists. Three works from the 20th century close the exhibition: two masterly drawings by the young Pablo Picasso, *Two Elegant Women* (1900) and a blue-period *Head of a Woman* (c. 1903); and an imposing study of a female nude by Georges Braque (1927).

Ian Woodner (1903–1990)

Born in New York City in 1903 to Polish immigrant parents, Ian Woodner studied architecture at the University of Minnesota and continued his studies with a scholarship to the Graduate School of Architecture at Harvard University. By 1944, his architectural success led him to open a real estate development firm: the Jonathan Woodner

Company.

Woodner's prosperous real estate ventures allowed him to pursue his lifelong interest in the arts, evident at an early age by the remarkable watercolors and drawings he produced. During the 1940s, Woodner began to buy and sell minor impressionist paintings and Cycladic figurines, and for a short time he owned an art gallery on Madison Avenue in New York. By the mid-1950s, he had developed a penchant for old master drawings, and he spent the next several decades, until his death in 1990, collecting them extensively. Woodner took advantage of several unusual opportunities that arose from the sale of important European collections, including 74 drawings from Chatsworth that were auctioned by Christie's in 1984. Upon his death, the stewardship of the collection, including more than one thousand drawings, passed to his daughters Dian and Andrea Woodner, who placed 145 works on deposit at the National Gallery of Art in 1991. Since then, they have given many of those drawings to the Gallery and continue to make generous gifts.

Exhibition Curator and Catalogue

The curator for the exhibition is Margaret Morgan Grasselli, curator of old master drawings at the National Gallery of Art. Grasselli has organized numerous exhibitions at the National Gallery of Art, including **Watteau, 1684–1721** (1984), **The Drawings of Annibale Carracci** (1999), and **Colorful Impressions: The Printmaking Revolution in Eighteenth-Century France** (2003). Published by the National Gallery of Art in 1995, the 424-page catalogue, **The Touch of the Artist: Master Drawings from the Woodner Collections**, includes 130 color plates, a biography of Ian Woodner, and detailed essays on more than 100 works in the exhibition written by Grasselli and an international team of 53 scholars. The catalogue is available in the Gallery Shops for \$60 hardcover and \$39.95 softcover. To order call (800) 697-9350 or (202) 842-6002; fax (202) 789-3047; or e-mail mailorder@nga.gov.

Related Activities

National Gallery of Art lecturer J. Russell Sale will lead a Gallery Talk, **Master Drawings from the Woodner Collections** on May 30 and June 1, 4, 7, and 9, at 12

noon.

Five concerts presented in honor of **Master Drawings from the Woodner Collections** will be held in the West Building Lecture Hall at 12:10 p.m., unless otherwise indicated. Concerts at the National Gallery are open to the public and free of charge. For further information, call (202) 842-6941.

May 3: 16th- and 17th-century music for voice and lute, featuring Barbara Hollinshead, mezzo-soprano, and Howard Bass, lute

May 10: 17th- and 18th-century music for voice and instruments performed by Arco Voce. The concert will be held in the East Building Small Auditorium

May 17: Music by Gabrieli, Scarlatti, and 16th-century Italian composers performed by Stephen Ackert, harpsichord

May 24: 16th- and 17th-century music for wind instruments performed by Piffaro

May 31: Music for voice and instruments by Buxtehude, Caccini, and Monteverdi performed by Ars Lyrica

Information about the exhibition and links to related activities can be found on the Gallery's Web site at www.nga.gov/exhibitions/woodnerinfo.htm (<http://www.nga.gov/exhibitions/woodnerinfo.htm>) .

###

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 at www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt and on Twitter 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:

Press Office

National Gallery of Art

2000B South Club Drive

Landover, MD 20785

phone: (202) 842-6353 e-mail: pressinfo@nga.gov

Deborah Ziska

Chief of Press and Public Information

(202) 842-6353

ds-ziska@nga.gov