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Release Date: September 10, 2010

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**EXPLORE THE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN
PHOTOGRAPHS AND PRE-RAPHAELITE PAINTINGS
IN FIRST EXHIBITION AND CATALOGUE AT THE
NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, OCTOBER 31, 2010–
JANUARY 30, 2011**



Julia Margaret Cameron
The Sunflower, 1866-1870

albumen print

National Gallery of Art, Washington, Paul Mellon Fund

Washington, DC—The first exhibition to explore the rich dialogue between Victorian-era British photography and Pre-Raphaelite painting showcases how these parallel artistic phenomena informed and inspired one another. ***The Pre-Raphaelite Lens: British Photography and Painting, 1848–1875*** includes some 100 photographs and 20 paintings and watercolors by leading artists such as Julia Margaret Cameron, Lewis Carroll, John Everett Millais, and Dante Gabriel Rossetti. On view at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, West

Building, from October 31, 2010 through January 30, 2011, the exhibition chronicles the roles photography and Pre-Raphaelite art played in changing concepts of vision and truth in representation in the Victorian era.

"The Gallery is delighted to showcase the exciting relationship between Pre-Raphaelite painting and the development of early 19th-century British photography," said Earl A. Powell III, director, National Gallery of Art. "We are grateful to the many lenders, both public and private, who have generously shared works from their collections and made this exhibition possible."

Exhibition Support

The exhibition has been organized by the National Gallery of Art, Washington, in association with the Musée d'Orsay, Paris, where the exhibition will be on view from March 6 through May 29, 2011.

The exhibition is made possible through the generous support of the Trellis Fund and the Ryna and Melvin Cohen Family Foundation and Marcella and Neil Cohen. Early support for research was provided by the Marlene Nathan Meyerson Family Foundation.

The exhibition is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities.

The Exhibition

The rich exchange between photography and painting is examined in the exhibition through thematic sections on portraiture, literary and historical narratives, modern-life subjects, and landscape.

In the years immediately following the introduction of photography in 1839 a group of British painters calling themselves the Pre-Raphaelites came of age. Looking to the art that preceded Raphael and answering John Ruskin's call to study nature, these young painters were also motivated by the possibilities of the new medium of photography, particularly its ability to capture every detail.

In their quest to represent the visible world, the Pre-Raphaelites developed a bold new realist language that borrowed from the innovations of photography, including such radical qualities as abrupt cropping, planar recession, and a lack of modulation between forms. Debuting in 1848, their canvases shocked viewers, and the artists were initially accused of painting from photographs. In the decades that followed, photographers were determined to secure for their medium the status of fine art and looked to Pre-Raphaelite visual strategies and subjects extracted from literature, history, and religion.

Cameron, Carroll, Roger Fenton, Henry Peach Robinson, Oscar Gustave Rejlander, and several lesser known photographers had much in common with painters such as William Holman Hunt, John William Inchbold, Millais, and Rossetti, as all contended with the question of how to observe and represent the natural world and the human face and figure. Many of these photographers and painters had personal associations with one another. Select paintings by Hunt, Millais, and Rossetti as well as Inchbold, William Bell Scott, and George Frederic Watts are interspersed with the photographs on view. Works by Ruskin are also on display, including a group of recently rediscovered daguerreotypes. One of them, *Fribourg, Switzerland* (c. 1854 or 1856), is paired with the 1859 watercolor that Ruskin based on the photograph.

Rossetti's *Jane Morris (The Blue Silk Dress)* (1868) is shown alongside photographs of the same subject—artist William Morris' wife—commissioned and staged by Rossetti himself a few years earlier. Several portraits of the young actress Ellen Terry are exhibited together, including *Choosing* (1864), which Watts made shortly after their marriage (she wears a wedding dress designed by Hunt). She posed, again in wedding dress, for both Cameron and Carroll not long after. The Pre-Raphaelites also posed for photographers, including David Wilkie Wynfield, Cameron, and Carroll. Moreover, these photographers and painters made similar choices of subjects in nature—sharing compositional and framing devices—as seen in such landscapes as Fenton's *Bolton Abbey, West Window* (1854) and Inchbold's 1853 painting of the same medieval ruins. Finally, groups of works based on Shakespearean, Arthurian, and Tennysonian subjects reveal their obsession with illustrating literary, historical, and mythological heroes and heroines.

Curator and Catalogue

The curator of the exhibition is Diane Waggoner, associate curator, department of photographs, National Gallery of Art, Washington.

Published by the National Gallery of Art in association with Lund Humphries, a fully illustrated catalogue includes essays by Waggoner; Tim Barringer, Yale University; Joanne Lukitsh, Massachusetts College of Art and Design; Jennifer L. Roberts, Harvard University; and Britt Salvesen, Los Angeles County Museum of Art. The 240-page catalogue includes 200 illustrations and is available in October for purchase in the Gallery Shops in hardcover and softcover. To order, please visit our Web site at www.shop.nga.gov; call (800) 697-9350 or (202) 842-6002; fax (202) 789-3047; or e-mail mailorder@nga.gov.

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 at 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. For information call (202) 737-4215 or the Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) at (202) 842-6176, or visit the Gallery's Web site at www.nga.gov. Follow the Gallery on Facebook at www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt and on Twitter at <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.

For additional press information please call or send inquiries to:

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