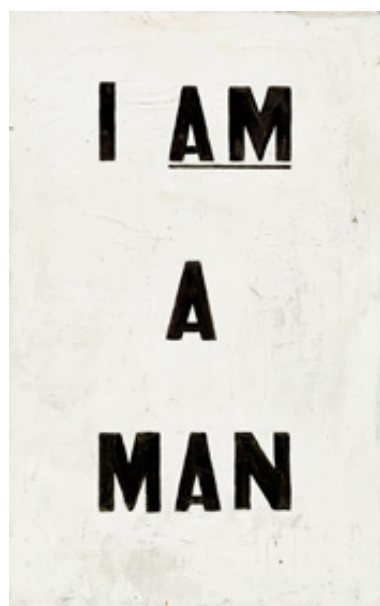


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## National Gallery of Art Acquires Major Works Across Media by Ligon, Castle, Fornari, Asselijn, Tripe, and More



Glenn Ligon, *Untitled (I Am a Man)*, 1988, oil and enamel on canvas  
National Gallery of Art, Washington, Patrons' Permanent Fund and Gift of the Artist  
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Washington, DC—At its recent meeting in October, the Board of Trustees of the National Gallery of Art accepted an impressive array of new acquisitions, augmenting the collections of paintings, sculptures, drawings, prints, illustrated books, and photographs. These new works include a major painting by the midcareer African American artist Glenn Ligon; a select group of 51 works by American artist James Castle; a spectacular baroque silver relief by Giovanni Antonio Fornari; outstanding Dutch paintings by Jan Asselijn, Jan van der Heyden, and Aelbert Cuyp; important collections of photographs by Linnaeus Tripe, Mark Ruwedel, and Robert Frank; a fine copy of the illustrated book the *Hypnerotomachia*, containing the most important series

of woodcuts in the Italian Renaissance; and a large pastel by Italian artist Francesco Paolo Michetti.

"The Gallery is thrilled to accept its first paintings by Glenn Ligon and Jan Asselijn as well as an outstanding group of works—including drawings, books, and constructions—by James Castle. We are also fortunate to strengthen key areas of our collections of sculptures, Dutch paintings, photographs, pastels, and illustrated books with fine examples in these media," said Earl A. Powell III, director, National Gallery of Art. "We depend on the continuing generosity of private donors to continue building the nation's art collection, now standing at more than 127,000 works, and we are enormously grateful."

### **Glenn Ligon, *Untitled (I Am a Man)***

The work of Glenn Ligon (b.1960) powerfully articulates issues of race and gender while leading viewers to reconsider problems inherent in representation. Acquired from the artist through Lühring Augustine Gallery, *Untitled (I Am a Man)* (1988) is the Gallery's first painting by Ligon, complementing a suite of etchings and a print portfolio. A reinterpretation of the actual signs that were carried by 1,300 striking African American sanitation workers in Memphis in 1968, and which were made famous in Ernest Withers' photographs of the march, this small, roughly made painting combines layers of history, meaning, and physical material in a dense, resonant object. As the first painting in which he appropriated a text, *Untitled (I Am a Man)* is Ligon's breakthrough. His work was recently featured in the 2011 midcareer retrospective *Glenn Ligon: AMERICA* organized by the Whitney Museum of American Art. *Untitled (I Am a Man)* will be on view in the modern and contemporary galleries on the East Building Concourse beginning November 20. The acquisition was made possible by the Patrons' Permanent Fund and the artist.

### **Fifty-one Works by James Castle**

The Gallery acquired 51 stellar works by James Castle (1899–1977), a remarkably expressive artist who lived his entire life in rural Idaho, far from the mainstream art world, yet mined popular culture in ways akin to Robert Rauschenberg and Ed Ruscha.

Castle made meticulously composed collages from found bits of paper and both drawings and collages based on images lifted from comic books and ads. He was drawn to typography and language, and was deeply invested in the making of artists' books. He was also an archivist of sorts, housing his drawings and books in bundles and handmade boxes. Considering Castle's fascination with books and language, it is surprising to learn that he was profoundly deaf from birth and likely never learned to sign, read lips, use spoken language, or read in any conventional sense of the term. Working with the Gallery's curator, the James Castle Collection and Archive offered 51 outstanding works to the National Gallery as a partial gift/partial purchase. The acquisition was made possible by the James Castle Collection and Archive, the Pepita Milmore Memorial Fund, the Avalon Fund, Buffy and William Cafritz, the Eugene L. and Marie-Louise Garbáty Fund, and the Edward E. MacCrone Fund.

### **Giovanni Antonio Fornari, *Holy-Water Stoup***

The Gallery has acquired its first major example of baroque silver: a holy-water stoup (c. 1765–1775) by Giovanni Antonio Fornari (1734–1809) that reputedly once belonged to the duke of Nemi, Luigi Braschi Onesti (1745–1816), nephew and adoptive son of Pope Pius VI. Nearly two feet high, the spectacular object incorporates gilt bronze and lapis lazuli. It features a large central medallion with the preaching of Saint John the Baptist, beneath which is the receptacle for holy water. With its asymmetrical design and whimsical arrangements of figures, the composition exemplifies the *barocchetto* or "little baroque" style of mid-18th-century Rome. Fornari's relief complements the Gallery's copper repoussé relief *The Agony in the Garden* (c. 1700) by Angelo de' Rossi and the marble relief *The Virgin Mary Swoning over the Dead Body of Christ at the Foot of the Cross* (c.1710) by Pierre-Étienne Monnot, thus rounding out the Gallery's collection of Italian 18th-century sculpture. The purchase of the holy-water stoup was made possible through the Patrons' Permanent Fund; it will go on view in the West Building Ground Floor sculpture galleries in early 2013.

### **Dutch View Paintings by Asselijn, Van der Heyden, and Cuyp**

The Gallery added its first work by Jan Asselijn (c. 1610–1652), a major figure in the Dutch Italianate tradition. A prolific draughtsman, he painted very few works while

working in Italy, but once he returned to Amsterdam around 1646, he began producing evocative Italianate scenes for the Dutch market eager for such views. *The Tiber River with the Ponte Molle at Sunset* (c. 1650) depicts one of Asselijn's favorite subjects: the bridge that was built over the Tiber river just north of Rome in 206 BC. This bucolic, late-afternoon scene is infused with atmospheric light effects. The painting's distinguished provenance dates back to the early 18th century, when it was in the collection of Willem Lormier, a major collector of Dutch art. The acquisition of this Italianate landscape, which adds an important dimension to the Gallery's Dutch collection, was made possible by the Florian Carr Fund, the New Century Fund, and the Nell and Robert Weidenhammer Fund.

Two remarkable Dutch paintings from the collection of George M. and Linda H. Kaufman, Jan van der Heyden's *View Down a Dutch Canal* (c. 1670) and Aelbert Cuyp's *A Pier in Dordrecht Harbor* (early 1640s) were also given to the Gallery. The Van der Heyden painting is an excellent example of the artist's detailed rendering of the urban landscape, while Cuyp's painting captures the ever-changing weather along the inland waterways near Dordrecht. Both works are welcome additions to the Gallery's ever-growing Dutch collection.

### **Photographs by Linnaeus Tripe, Mark Ruwedel, and Robert Frank**

The department of photographs acquired 77 photographs at the October meeting of the Board of Trustees. This included 30 rare works by the British photographer Linnaeus Tripe made in Burma in 1855, acquired with the Edward J. Lenkin Fund, the Diana and Mallory Walker Fund, and the Stephen G. Stein Fund. These photographs were made soon after Tripe had learned how to photograph and demonstrate both the exceptional formal rigor of his photographs and their remarkable aesthetic power.

The Gallery also acquired 26 photographs by the American photographer Mark Ruwedel that were purchased with funds donated by Alfred H. Moses and Fern M. Schad, and donated by Peter T. Barbur, Greg and Aline Gooding, and Dan and Jeanne Fauci. An important addition to the Gallery's holdings of contemporary landscape photographs, this group examines the barely visible grades of now defunct 19th-century railroad lines running across the western United States. In addition, five photographs by

Ruwedel from his series *Dusk*, made between 2007 and 2010, were acquired with funds donated by Alfred H. Moses and Fern M. Schad. Taken at sunset, these pictures depict newly constructed houses that were abandoned by their owners during the recent collapse in the housing market. Mr. and Mrs. Fauci also donated four additional photographs by Ruwedel from the *Ice Age* series, made between 1993 and 2004.

Adding to its world-class holdings of works by Robert Frank, the Gallery acquired 10 photographs by the artist, including two portraits of Willem de Kooning donated by Frank himself, and three photographs by Walker Evans made in Bridgeport, Connecticut in 1941, donated by Kent and Marcia Minichiello.

### **The 1499 *Hypnerotomachia***

The Gallery has acquired a very fine copy of what is widely regarded as the most beautiful illustrated book of the Italian Renaissance. The *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* was published in Venice by the great Aldus Manutius. Translated into English editions as *Poliphilo's Strife of Love in a Dream*, the book unfolds in a series of dreams and across a landscape of fantastic imagery that invokes ancient mythology and interprets antique forms. Its greatest importance and influence are due to the 172 inventive and sophisticated woodcuts, as well as to the elegance of its design and the refinement of its typography. These illustrations, probably by the Paduan miniaturist, Benedetto Bordone, bear comparison with the art of Andrea Mantegna and that of the leading figures of the Florentine Renaissance. Above all, it was the general vision of these illustrations—that stories of classical antiquity should be seen as peaceful, loving, real, and elegiac events set in hospitable landscapes—that led to the "poetry" of Venetian painting, culminating in the National Gallery's great *The Feast of the Gods* (1514/1529) by Giovanni Bellini and Titian, currently on view in the West Building. The Gallery's acquisition of the *Hypnerotomachia* was made possible by the Florian Carr Fund.

### **Francesco Paolo Michetti, *Southern Italian Women Dressed for Church***

As the Gallery continues to build its collection of outstanding works by modern Italian artists, the Board acquired Francesco Paolo Michetti's (1851–1929) impressive pastel, *Southern Italian Women Dressed for Church* (c. 1880). Michetti was born in southern

Italy and was always passionate for his native country. After early success in Paris in 1871–1875, he returned to work in Italy, transforming his academic background with impressionism's new studies of vibrant light and sparkling, luminous color. Pastel was a natural medium for him in its freshness, spontaneity, and bridge between drawing and painting. The flashing touches of black and white, the brilliant details and textures contrasted with open space and sketchy forms, the seemingly casual but effective verticals of the three studies (all at different scales) ranged across the large sheet, and the wonderful colors and patterns of the chevron-striped blouse and the woven textile make this an outstanding 19th-century work. The acquisition was made possible by the Florian Carr Fund and The Ahmanson Foundation.

## **Study Rooms**

Works on paper not on display may be viewed and studied by appointment in the Gallery's Print Study Rooms or Photograph Study Room by qualified scholars and students in accordance with the Gallery's rules and requirements. Single visitors as well as small groups are welcome.

The Study Rooms are open Monday through Friday from 10:00 a.m. to noon and 2:00 to 4:00 p.m., except on federal holidays.

To make an appointment to view prints or drawings, please telephone (202) 842-6380. To make an appointment to view photographs, please e-mail [photographs@nga.gov](mailto:photographs@nga.gov) or telephone (202) 842-6144. Appointments should be made at least two weeks in advance.

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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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