

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

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The Kress Collection

A GIFT TO THE NATION

By GUY EMERSON, Litt. D.

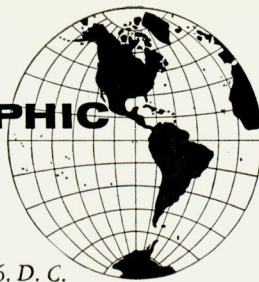
Art Director, Samuel H. Kress Foundation



NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC Society

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The Kress Collection

A GIFT TO THE NATION

*Masterpieces in galleries of 21 American cities
fulfill a chain-store founder's dream of sharing his
Old World art treasures with all the people of the land*

By GUY EMERSON, Litt.D.

Art Director, Samuel H. Kress Foundation

THE MUSEUM DIRECTOR was at first astonished and then openly skeptical when I called up and offered him some paintings.

"What kind are they?" he asked.

"Italian Renaissance paintings," I told him. "Very valuable ones."

"What do we have to do to get them?"

"Just provide a place to put them," I replied. "Could we discuss it at lunch?"

He was still dubious.

"Well, I don't go out to lunch," he said. "I bring it in a paper bag. And anyway, I'm very busy and don't think I can see you today."

So I made myself a little clearer. I would be in his city only for the day, I said; he must see me now or never. Shortly we were conferring in his office.

The upshot of the meeting was that the leading museum of a west coast metropolis received about a million dollars' worth of European paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Foundation. And the museum thereby became a partner in a plan based upon a democratic idea—that people throughout the United States, rather than a comparative few in one or two cities, should share in the Kress Collection of the world's great art.

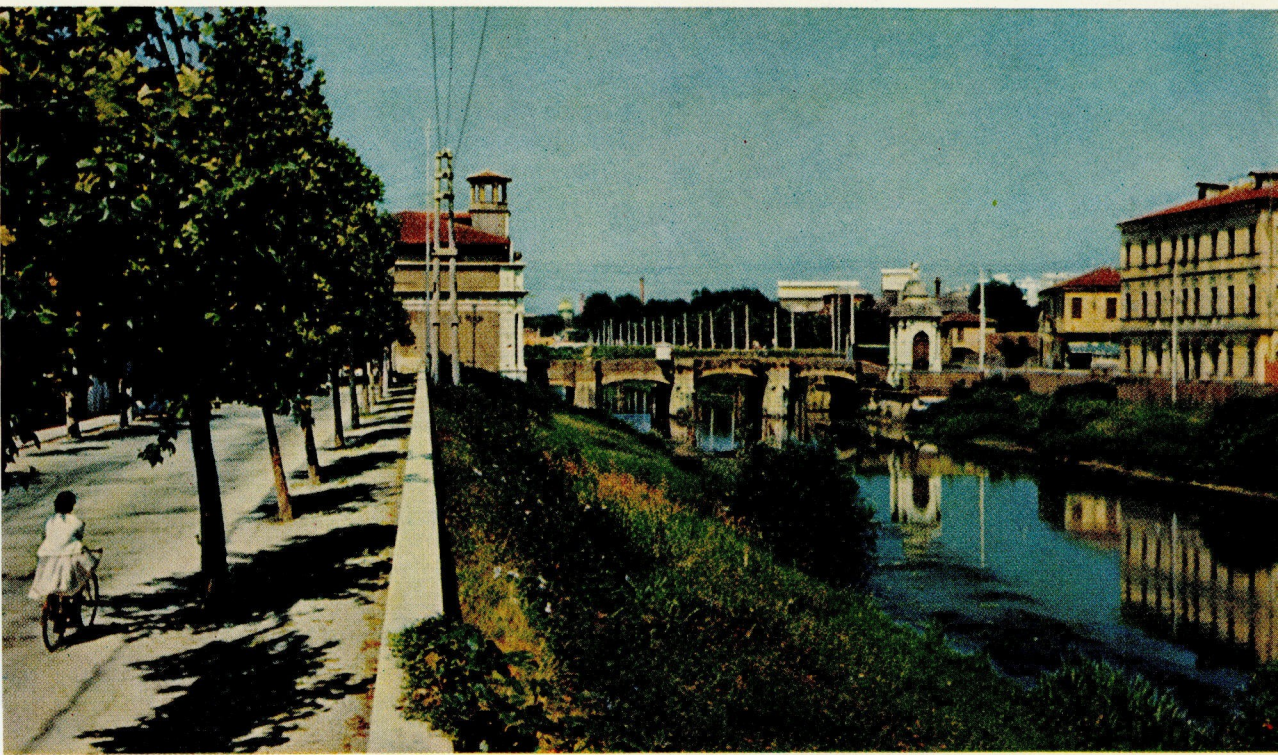
Hundreds of Paintings Bestowed

The art-donation program reaches a climax this December at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D. C. A special showing will present 93 paintings from Kress Collections in 21 cities. The selections come from State, municipal, and university museums that

PETER PAUL RUBENS (1577-1640) Flemish *Marchesa Brigida Spinola Doria*

With this exquisite portrait of a Genoese noblewoman, NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC introduces 29 paintings from Kress Collections in cities throughout the Nation. These representative works form part of a six-week exhibition that opens December 10, 1961, in the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D. C.

Diplomat as well as painter, Rubens served Spain in negotiating peace with England in 1629. This painting shows the granddaughter of a doge before a palace.





National Gallery of Art, SAMUEL H. KRESS COLLECTION © NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

CANALETTO (1697-1768) Italian *Portello and Brenta Canal at Padua*

Son of a stage painter, Antonio Canale (Canaletto) won immense popularity with his luminous panoramas. The Portello, a Padua city gate astride the main road to Venice, is the canalside structure at left center; it still stands (opposite, below). Distant dome caps the Church of Santa Maria del Carmine.

Is this the scene that Canaletto painted? Art experts agree that it is, but note dissimilarities between this photograph of Padua today and the vista as Canaletto observed it. Waterway is the Bacchiglione, not the Brenta. Bridge has four spans, not three as the artist portrayed it. But the Portello bears marked resemblance to Canaletto's, and a church dome is visible in the distance.

range westward from Allentown, Pennsylvania, to Honolulu, Hawaii. Also on display will be the National Gallery's own permanent Kress Collection of nearly 500 canvases, wood panels, and sculptures, and more than 1,300 magnificent Renaissance bronzes.

Twenty-nine of the paintings, representative of the collections in each of the regional galleries, are reproduced in these pages of your NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC.

In a ceremony during the exhibition, the 21

galleries will receive title to their paintings from the Kress Foundation, which has distributed them over the past 20 years. I know that millions of people throughout the country feel, as we do, a justifiable pride in the completion of this program.

Today all these cities, and indeed all Americans, benefit from the enterprise of a multimillionaire who was not content to enjoy his wealth in a conventional manner—a man whose aspirations carried him from drab coal



KODACHROME BY NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC PHOTOGRAPHERS B. ANTHONY STEWART AND JOHN E. FLETCHER © N.G.S.

Art treasures deck the apartment of Mr. and Mrs. Rush H. Kress, shown with their pet, Cotton. The New York residence formerly was the home of Mr. Kress's brother, the late Samuel H. Kress, founder of the Kress Foundation. Rush Kress now guides the Foundation, whose goals include sharing the Kress Collection with the Nation. The Canaletto on the wall now hangs in the National Gallery (preceding pages).

fields to a brilliant world peopled by some of history's greatest geniuses.

Each time I reflect on it, I am amazed and moved by the story of Samuel Henry Kress, a \$25-a-month schoolmaster who became a philanthropist ranking with Andrew Carnegie, the Rockefellers, and the Guggenheims.

There was little in Kress's beginnings to

The Author: Versatility marks Dr. Guy Emerson, retired banking executive and internationally known amateur ornithologist. In 1939 he sighted 497 species, a record that stood for 14 years. He has prepared his own edition of the Psalms, and in 1921 published a study of the American spirit entitled *The New Frontier*. His enthusiasm for art dates from Harvard days, when summer walking trips acquainted him with Europe's museums.

suggest that one day he would amass a vast fortune—built upon the sale of such prosaic wares as kitchen utensils, shelf paper, and hairpins—and use that wealth to endow his fellow Americans with gifts of beauty beyond price.

Born in 1863 in Cherryville, Pennsylvania, he was the son of a colliery office manager. The Kress family was descended directly from a German settler who came from Hesse-Nassau in 1752 and later served with the Northampton County militia in the American Revolution.

Sam finished high school at 17, then for seven years taught the sons and daughters of anthracite miners and quarry workers in a one-room school. Out of his salary he saved

enough to buy a small stationery and novelty shop at Nanticoke, 40 miles from his birthplace. This venture prospered, and soon he added a wholesale firm in Wilkes-Barre.

With these successes behind him, Kress decided to invade the five-and-dime chain-store field. He opened his first store in Memphis, Tennessee, in 1896. From this nucleus grew the empire that today operates 265 stores in 30 States.

Titians and Tintoretts Given Away

Enjoying the fruits of his success, Kress became a transatlantic commuter for both business and pleasure. Visiting the great European galleries again and again, he developed an enthusiasm for art. He found himself drawn more and more toward the great painters of Italy, particularly the masters of the Renaissance.

Before long, Sam Kress resolved to form a collection encompassing the work of every important Italian artist, so that Americans could study and enjoy a comprehensive selec-

tion at home. His original intent was to build a public gallery in New York City. But when plans took shape for the magnificent National Gallery of Art in Washington, D. C., he saw it as an ideal repository, in which the art treasures he had collected would be shared with others.

His many gifts to the National Gallery helped to place that institution in a class with such famous Old World museums as the Louvre, the Prado, and the Uffizi Gallery.

But that was not the end of it, for in the past two decades the Kress Collection has been spread nationwide. Direct gifts have brightened the walls of regional galleries with the works of such masters as Titian, El Greco, and Tintoretto.

"Too good to be true. There must be a catch in it."

These were the words I heard most frequently as I traveled about the United States for the past 15 years in my capacity as Art Director of the Kress Foundation, scattering largess in the form of rare works of art.

JACOPO TINTORETTO (1518-1594) Venetian *Summer*

Born Jacopo Robusti, son of a tintore, or dyer, Tintoretto acquired his name from his father's trade. Tintoretto studied under Titian, who discharged the youth, some biographers say, because he was jealous of his talent. Tintoretto's work has been described as Michelangelo's draftsmanship with Titian's color. "Summer" is one of a series depicting the seasons.

National Gallery of Art, SAMUEL H. KRESS COLLECTION © NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY





KODACHROME BY NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC PHOTOGRAPHER JOHN E. FLETCHER © N.G.S.

Light creates an illusion of space and pointed rocks suggest movement in Domenico Veneziano's "St. John in the Desert," a small wood panel. Once given away, it was later bought by Samuel Kress for \$145,000 (text, pages 860-3). Domenico portrays St. John the Baptist discarding his clothes for an animal skin as he begins a new life in the wilderness. No other painter has depicted this moment in the prophet's life. John Walker, Director of the National Gallery, where the painting now hangs, and Fern Rusk Shapley, Curator of Research for the Kress Foundation, show their delight.

It was not too good to be true. There was no catch in it. The Kress Foundation attached no strings to its gifts.

As recipients, the Foundation usually selected museums in cities served by S. H. Kress and Company stores. It required only that the museum provide fireproof display space with proper control of light, temperature, and humidity. The Foundation assumed all other responsibilities, such as restoration, framing, crating, shipping, and insurance.

North Carolina Joins Art World

An outstanding example is that of North Carolina, a progressive State that nevertheless lacked a major art collection.

The omission was a challenge to two native sons. One of them, Robert Lee Humber of Greenville, asked Sam Kress if he would give the State a million dollars' worth of paintings—provided the State Legislature would ap-

propriate an equal sum for art purchases.

The Legislature did so, and the Foundation made its gift, but between request and response many problems intervened. Mr. Kress suffered an illness that incapacitated him during the last decade of his life, and his younger brother, Rush H. Kress, already head of the stores, assumed leadership of the Foundation also. Then, too, there was no record of the original agreement.

Smoothing the way and enlisting the support necessary to assure the gift was former Governor Luther H. Hodges, now U. S. Secretary of Commerce. His vision and tact were responsible in no small degree for the fact that today the North Carolina Museum of Art at Raleigh possesses 73 pieces from the Kress Collection, the largest group outside the National Gallery.

Among the treasures to be shipped to Washington for the National Gallery show are ten

from Raleigh, including Rembrandt's "Young Man With a Sword" (page 831), Titian's "Adoration of the Child" (page 830), and Neroccio de' Landi's "Visit of Cleopatra to Antony" (page 832). As in the case of the paintings sent by the other galleries, all selections were made by Director John Walker and Chief Curator Perry B. Cott of the National Gallery, and by the Kress Foundation.

San Francisco Gets Its Patron Saint

At San Francisco's M. H. de Young Memorial Museum in Golden Gate Park, we were presented with a problem of a different nature. Dr. Walter Heil, then Director and now Director Emeritus, particularly wanted a painting that the Foundation was not in a position to bestow.

As an old friend, Dr. Heil had visited Sam Kress many times in his art-crowded pent-

house on Fifth Avenue in New York (page 826). There Dr. Heil had made mental note of the paintings he would select if ever they became available.

To use his own words, Dr. Heil's aim was to create for San Francisco a museum that would be "a miniature National Gallery—that is to say, a Kress Collection like the one in our big sister institution in Washington which covers the entire field of European painting from the end of the Middle Ages to the threshold of modern art."

The de Young, Dr. Heil pointed out, ranked as the oldest and largest municipal museum in the West, with an attendance of about a million persons a year.

What Dr. Heil wanted most of all was "St. Francis Venerating the Crucifix," by Doménikos Theotokópoulos (El Greco). This superb painting shows the gentle patron saint



National Gallery of Art, SAMUEL H. KRESS COLLECTION © NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

SIMON VOUET (1590-1649) French *Muses Urania and Calliope*

Following 14 years of study in Venice, Vouet returned to France in 1627 as the king's first painter and became the dictator of the Parisian art world. Few of his works have journeyed to the United States; this panel hangs in the National Gallery. Urania, muse of astronomy, wears a crown of stars and leans on a globe. Calliope, muse of epic poetry, cradles Homer's Odyssey.

TITIAN (1477?-1576) Venetian *Adoration of the Child*

Born Tiziano Vecelli, son of a rural magistrate, Titian considered himself the equal of the many great men who came to him to sit for portraits; he completely dominated the art of Venice. Painting vigorously for more than 80 years, Titian amassed a fortune from the masterpieces that poured out of his workshop on the Grand Canal. The dreamy quality of this early painting, here reproduced about actual size, contrasts with his vigorous later style.

North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, SAMUEL H. KRESS COLLECTION © NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

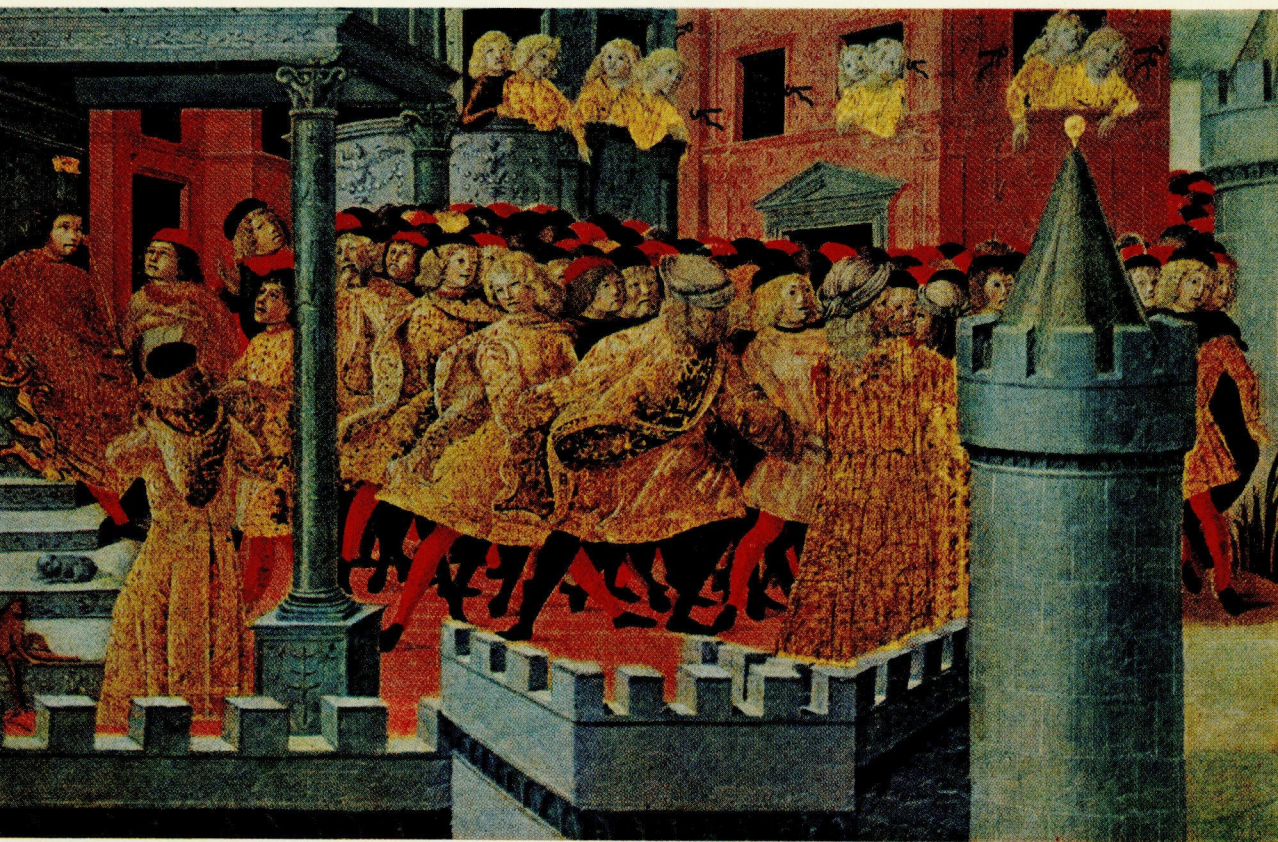




North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, SAMUEL H. KRESS COLLECTION © NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

REMBRANDT VAN RIJN (1606-1669) Dutch *Young Man With a Sword*

The serenity that marks this portrait, painted in 1635, reflects the happiest, most prosperous period of Rembrandt's life. His wife's death in 1642 ushered in a series of misfortunes that culminated in bankruptcy 14 years later. Elaborate trappings and rich colors distinguish this canvas from the sober style of many commissioned portraits by the artist. The subject may have been one of Rembrandt's pupils.



NEROCCIO DE' LANDI (1447-1500) Siense

This long, narrow panel may have decorated a cassone, Renaissance equivalent of the bridal hope chest. The painting closely follows Plutarch's story of Cleopatra's arrival by galley on the River Cydnus in southern Turkey: "She herself lay all alone under a canopy of cloth of gold, dressed as Venus in a picture, and

of San Francisco kneeling before the Saviour on the Cross (page 854). Dr. Heil saw it as the ideal choice for the city's Kress Collection.

Unfortunately the El Greco was not among the Kress Foundation's properties. Dr. Heil knew that the El Greco was in the hands of a New York dealer, bearing a price tag that put it far beyond the reach of the San Francisco museum.

To help Dr. Heil create his National Gallery in miniature, the Foundation purchased the St. Francis. It also bought Dr. Heil's personal favorite, "Young Mother," by Pieter de Hooch.

San Francisco recently added three galleries to the de Young Museum to house its 39 Kress Collection paintings. These works, assembled during five years of planning and research, encompass the major European schools from the 14th to early 19th century. They range from "A Crowned Virgin Martyr,"

painted about 1334 by the Florentine, Bernardo Daddi, to a portrait, "Don Ramón de Posada y Soto," painted in 1801 by Spain's great Francisco de Goya y Lucientes.

For the National Gallery show the de Young Museum is sending nine paintings, including the El Greco "St. Francis" and de Hooch's warm, glowing "Young Mother," regarded by Dr. Heil as representing perfectly the golden age of Dutch painting (page 853).

Bonanza Waits in Washington

Kress donations sometimes descend upon museum directors like bolts from the blue. Such an experience befell Richard F. Howard, of Birmingham, Alabama. Ten years ago Mr. Howard set off on a tour of museums to borrow paintings for his opening exhibition. Between planes at Toledo, Ohio, Mr. Howard heard himself being paged.



North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, SAMUEL H. KRESS COLLECTION © NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

Visit of Cleopatra to Antony

beautiful young boys, like painted cupids, stood on each side to fan her. Her maids were dressed like sea nymphs and graces, some steering at the rudder, some working at the ropes. . . . Venus was come to feast with Bacchus, for the common good of all Asia."

Answering the page, he found himself talking by telephone with David E. Finley, then Director of the National Gallery.

"Rush Kress is here and he wants to see you," Mr. Finley said. "How soon can you get to Washington?"

"I knew it must be important," Mr. Howard recalled, "so I replied, 'By the next plane.' A few hours later I was seated beside Mr. Kress in the big Board Room at the National Gallery. He wanted to know all about Birmingham, myself and my background, and my dreams for the Birmingham Museum of Art. Fortunately, I had come armed with blueprints of the galleries planned for the north wing of the new City Hall.

"I had told him of the air-conditioning equipment, the fact that the Police Department was just downstairs, and other details. Mr. Kress suddenly stopped me, swung his hand over a large expanse of floor space in-

dicated on a blueprint, and said: 'We will make this into a Kress gallery for you.'"

That was only the beginning of a frenzied period in Mr. Howard's life. Soon he was examining Kress paintings stored at the National Gallery, in New York, and at Huckleberry Hill, an estate in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania. In the Poconos, the Foundation maintains a fireproof laboratory and storage vaults equipped to keep temperature and humidity at the constant levels so vital to delicate works of art.

Police Escort Art-laden Van

The paintings selected by Mr. Howard were assembled at Huckleberry Hill, where the final preparations were completed by the Foundation's expert restorers and framers. Then, carefully crated, the paintings were loaded into a huge van and dispatched toward Birmingham, with Mr. and Mrs. Howard



KODACHROMES BY NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC PHOTOGRAPHERS B. ANTHONY STEWART AND JOHN E. FLETCHER © N.G.S.

Matching colors with a master, Conservator Mario Modestini of the Kress Foundation applies fresh paint to damaged areas of Vouet's "Muses Urania and Calliope" (page 829). Specialists in this demanding field must combine the skills of historian, radiologist, and detective to complete their tasks with fidelity. Early restorers often used brushes freely; modern workers apply new paint sparingly.

trailing closely in their own automobile.

Four days later the little convoy was met outside Birmingham by State and city motorcycle policemen and given a triumphant escort to City Hall.

The Kress donation stimulated such enthusiasm in Birmingham that a campaign for a modern museum was launched soon after the temporary quarters opened in 1951. Eight years later the Kress Collection paintings and other accessions were moved to the magnificent new Oscar Wells Memorial Building, the result of a bequest by Mrs. Helen Wells, widow of a prominent banker.

The Birmingham museum now owns 36 paintings, four stained glass windows, two sculptures, and 14 rare examples of early Italian furniture from the Kress Collection. Three of the paintings are to appear in the

National Gallery exhibition: "Christ Showing the Symbols of the Passion," by Jacopo del Sellaio; "Madonna and Child," by a Florentine painter in the workshop of Domenico Ghirlandaio; and "A Young Hero Armed by Bellona and Mercury," by Paris Bordone (page 862).

Spanish Touch for Arizona

When the first of the regional gifts was made, to the University of Arizona Art Gallery at Tucson, the Foundation donated 24 paintings that exemplify the chronological development of Renaissance art. Also included were a limestone statue of the Madonna and Child from 14th-century France and a 16th-century Florentine walnut chest.

As it happens, the Rush Kresses had made their winter home at Tucson for many years,

and Mrs. Kress formerly studied at the university. Both are keenly aware of southern Arizona's Spanish-American heritage and its strong cultural ties with the neighboring State of Sonora, Mexico.

Accordingly, the Foundation made an additional gift to the Arizona museum: 26 paintings by Fernando Gallego from the retablo, or altarpiece, of the Cathedral of Ciudad Rodrigo in the Province of Salamanca, Spain. The 15th-century retablo originally provided a Biblical narrative of man from the Creation to the Last Judgment, but about half the panels are now missing. The paintings at Tucson have been called the finest of their kind in the Americas.

Cannonball Lops Off a Head

Foundation technicians at Huckleberry Hill spent two years cleaning and restoring the panels. A portion of one damaged panel, the "Christ Delivered by Pilate," was left un-

repaired, however, as a reminder of history. In the Napoleonic Wars, Wellington's troops besieged a French force at Ciudad Rodrigo. The British fired a cannon ball that obliterated a face in the painting and set a fire that burned other panels.

The Gallego paintings spurred the Arizona Legislature to provide funds for the university's new art center, which now houses the Kress Collection.

The National Gallery show is to include four paintings from Tucson: Lucas Cranach the Elder's "Madonna and Child," Giovanni Battista Piazzetta's "Young Man in Oriental Costume," Giuseppe Bazzani's "The Incredible of St. Thomas," and Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun's "The Countess of Schoenfeld."

The last of these represents an art form that was highly popular and extremely lucrative in the 18th century—portraying the ladies of high European society. This painting, done in Vienna in 1793, depicts the wife

Dr. Franklin D. Murphy (left), Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Kress Foundation's Board of Trustees and Chancellor of the University of California, Los Angeles, examines the new book *Art Treasures for America*, an anthology of the Kress Collection, with Art Director Guy Emerson, author of this article.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC PHOTOGRAPHER WINFIELD PARKS





William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art, Kansas City, Missouri, SAMUEL H. KRESS COLLECTION © N.G.S.

GIOVANNI BELLINI (1430?-1516) Venetian *Madonna and Child*

One of the greatest Venetian painters, Bellini studied the variations of light as no previous artist had ever done. His early works, in tempera, show the careful draftsmanship and emotional intensity of the late 15th century. With maturity, he mastered the medium of oil, new to Venice, and the poised serenity of the high Renaissance.



Brooks Memorial Art Gallery, Memphis, Tennessee, SAMUEL H. KRESS COLLECTION © N.G.S.

THE MONTAIONE MASTER *Madonna and Child With Four Saints*

An anonymous artist of the school of Siena painted this gabled dossal, or altar painting, in the late 13th century. The work bears close resemblance to a Madonna in the Church of San Regolo at Montaione; hence the attribution. Woman at left holds an ointment jar, symbol of Mary Magdalene, while the figure at right clasps the thin cross associated with Margaret of Antioch.

of the Minister of Saxony to Austria with her young daughter (page 842).

The Spanish-American tradition runs strong in the border city of El Paso, Texas, across the Rio Grande from Juarez in Mexico. El Paso's lively art colony includes the nationally known Peter Hurd and Tom Lea, the latter a trustee of the Museum of Art. As Curator of Western Americana, Woody Crumbo, the Potawatomi Indian painter whose work has attracted wide attention, assists Director Reginald Fisher.

Dr. Fisher has made a fascinating comparison of early art in the Spanish Southwest and pre-Renaissance Italian painting, examples of which are in the El Paso Museum's Kress Collection. He explains:

"In the 18th and early 19th centuries, the folk artists of the Rio Grande Valley worked in the same cultural tradition as artists of Italy in the 1300's. The southwestern artists painted the same saints, the same episodes, in the same religious spirit that the Italians had shown—not because they copied a style but because they shared a culture. The Christian faith carried forth by St. Francis of Assisi, founder of the Franciscan order that helped

colonize this region, is the dominant influence in their work."

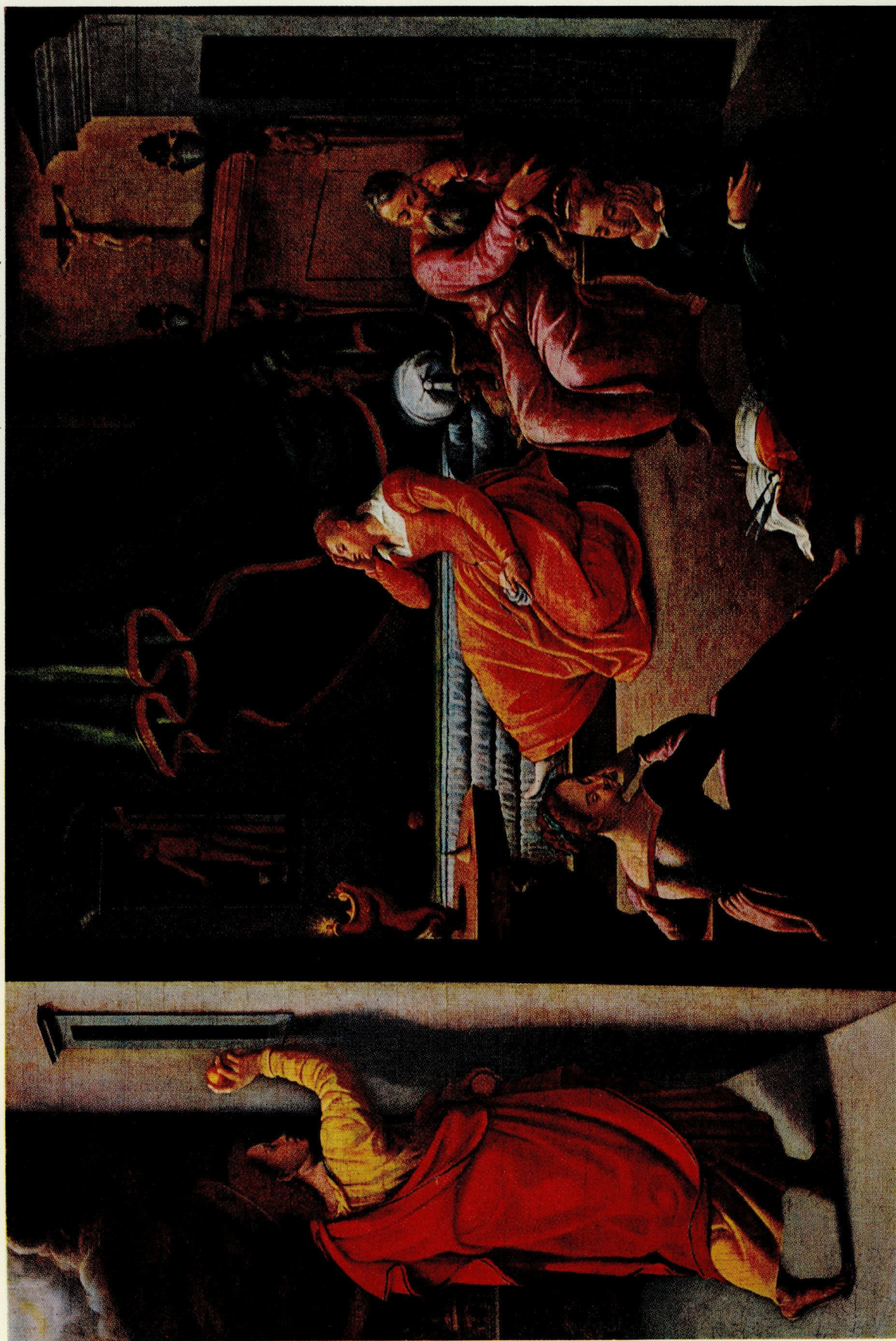
In addition to the Italian primitives, the El Paso Museum's Kress Collection of 56 paintings includes representatives of other periods and schools. From these, five were chosen for the National Gallery exhibition, including Anthony Van Dyck's famous "Portrait of a Lady" (page 843).

Memphis: Six Paintings Become 240

Another city holding a special place in the Kress Foundation's affections is Memphis, Tennessee. Here Sam Kress launched his first 5-10-25-cent store 65 years ago. Memphis's Brooks Memorial Art Gallery, surrounded by hollies and magnolias in beautiful Overton Park, opened in 1916.

Sixteen years later Mrs. Louise B. Clark became the director, and her experience offers a sort of capsule story of the growth of art museums in the United States.

"In the early days," Mrs. Clark told me, "we had 4,200 square feet of space and an annual budget of \$5,000. Our collection consisted of six paintings, ten prints, one Dresden
(Continued on page 843)

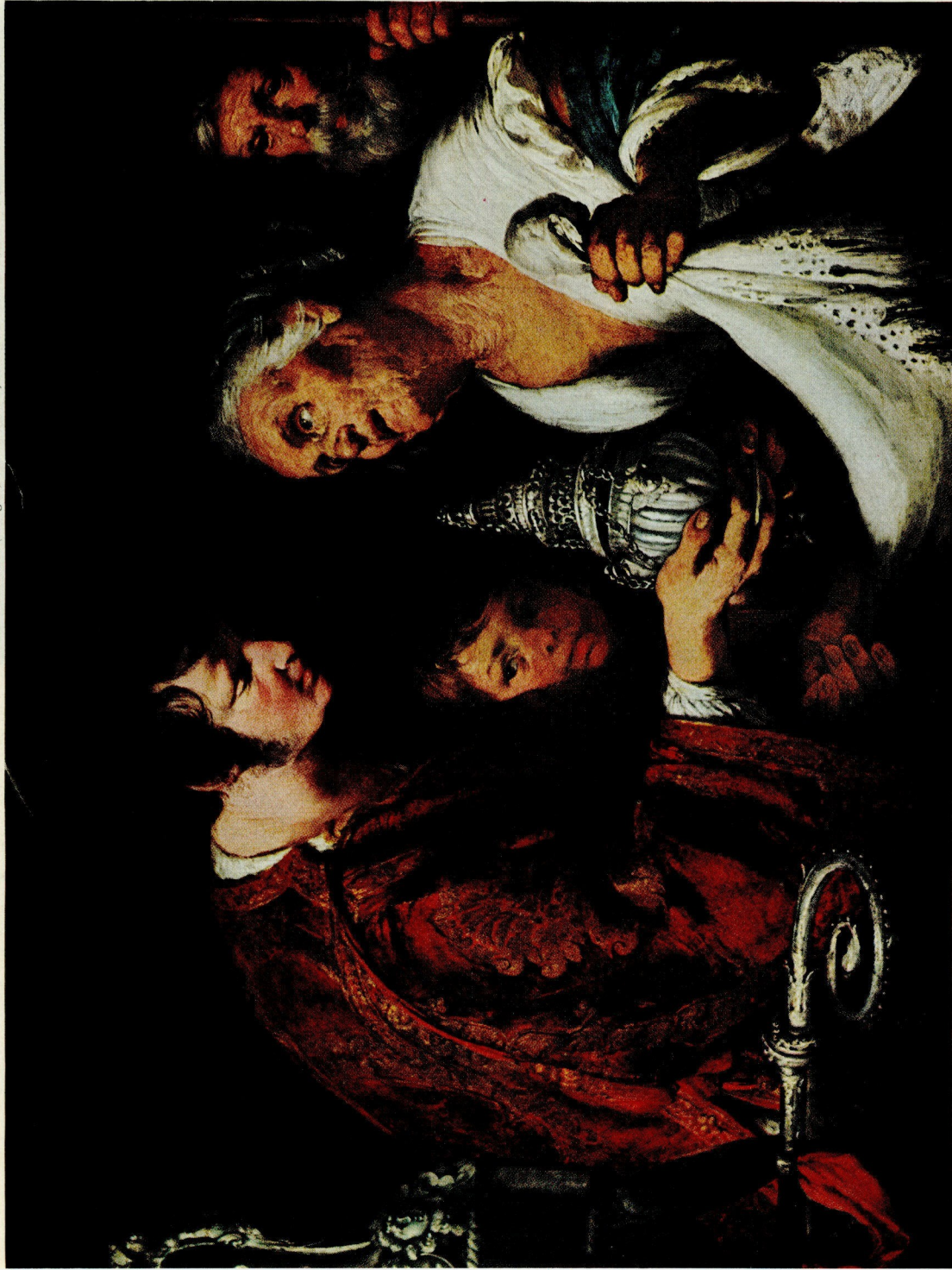


ANONYMOUS
FLORENTINE
Charity of St. Nicholas

An impoverished nobleman despairs because he lacks dowries for his three daughters. To a window comes St. Nicholas with an endowment in the form of three golden balls. In many countries the parents surprise children with gifts on December 5, eve of St. Nicholas's Day.

BERNARDO STROZZI
(1581-1644) Genoese
St. Lawrence Giving the Treasures of the Church to the Poor

When sentenced to die, Pope Sixtus II commanded his archdeacon, St. Lawrence, to distribute the church's gold and silver vessels to the needy. Strozzi spent 13 years in a Capuchin monastery.





FRANCESCO GUARDI (1712-1793) Venetian *View of Venice*

Guardi, like his master Canaletto, concentrated on scenes of his beloved Venice. Whereas Canaletto preserved architectural detail, Guardi dissolved reality into a shimmer of light and atmosphere. Canaletto won immediate popularity; Guardi stood in less esteem until Impressionism vindicated him. Here gondoliers ply the Grand Canal in the shadow of the Church of Santa Maria della Salute, while sailboats skim the Giudecca Canal at left.

Motor launches and steamships churn lagoons where sails once brought the world's trade to Venice. Otherwise two centuries have wrought little change in Guardi's view. Weather vane of fortune still caps the turret on the Dogana di Mare, the triangular customs house on the tip of Punta della Salute. Church of Santa Maria houses Titians, a Tintoretto, and other priceless works. Across the Giudecca Canal rises the Franciscan Church of the Redentore, built in thanksgiving for the delivery of Venice from the plague of 1575-6 — the same epidemic that took Titian's life. La Grazia Island lies in the distance.



The Columbia (South Carolina) Museum of Art, SAMUEL H. KRESS COLLECTION: KODACHROME BY JOHN SCOFIELD, NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC STAFF © N.G.S.





University of Arizona Art Gallery, Tucson, SAMUEL H. KRESS COLLECTION © NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

ELISABETH VIGÉE-LEBRUN (1755-1842) French *Countess of Schoenfeld*

Portraitist of the court of Marie Antoinette, Madame Vigée-Lebrun fled France and the Revolution in 1789. In Vienna she executed some 30 portraits of Austrian aristocrats, including this likeness of a noblewoman and her child.

SIR ANTHONY
VAN DYCK
(1599-1641) Flemish
Portrait of a Lady

An assistant to Rubens in Antwerp before he established himself as a master of portraiture, Van Dyck painted scores of fashionable women. Rich brocades, laces, and pleated ruffs—high style in the artist's time—made excellent subjects for his virtuoso brushwork.

His sitter wears her hair tightly drawn back from the forehead and bound by a jeweled fillet.

Painting hangs in the Museum of Art, El Paso, Texas (page 845).



El Paso (Texas) Museum of Art, SAMUEL H. KRESS COLLECTION © NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

vase, and 60 books. Today we have some 240 original paintings, including 27 Renaissance masterpieces donated by the Kress Foundation, as well as outstanding prints, textiles, early American glass, and a complete collection of porcelain birds and flowers made by Dorothy Doughty of Worcester, England. We now have about 20,000 square feet of space and an annual budget of \$65,000.

"Before the arrival of the Kress Collection in 1958," Mrs. Clark went on, "mid-southerners had to travel many miles, to such cities as Washington and New York, to see paintings by the Italian masters. Now Sunday-school classes, art instructors and students, and the general public come from all over Tennessee, Arkansas, and Mississippi to see

our beautiful collection. Interest in Italian painting has grown so that we have found it necessary to add many books on the subject to the library section of the gallery."

Four paintings from the Memphis gallery are scheduled for display at the National Gallery. They include "The Madonna and Child With Four Saints," by the Montaigne Master, an anonymous painter of the 13th-century Sienese school (page 837).

St. Martin's Friend Misidentified

The Kress Foundation's gift to the Denver Art Museum, arriving on September 20, 1954, in a special sealed car and with myself as escort, was undoubtedly the most impressive shipment ever to roll into that city's

Union Station. As trucks arrived at the museum with crate after crate of paintings and sculptures, reporters for press, television, and radio scurried about with cameras, tape recorders, and pencils.

When the Gothic stone sculpture of "St. Martin and the Beggar" emerged from its wrappings, a radio commentator with his tape-recorder microphone in hand asked the identity of the small figure at the foot of St. Martin's horse. He was told that the figure represented the donor, meaning the 15th-century Norman who gave the statue to a chapel in Villediers, near Le Mans, France.

When the tape was broadcast later, museum staff members were amazed to hear the figure described as a representation of "Mr. Samuel H. Kress, the donor."

Kress Gift Helps Fund Drive

Just as in Birmingham and other cities, the Denver Art Museum's Kress Collection, opening in 1954, created a veritable cultural renaissance in the city, State, and region.

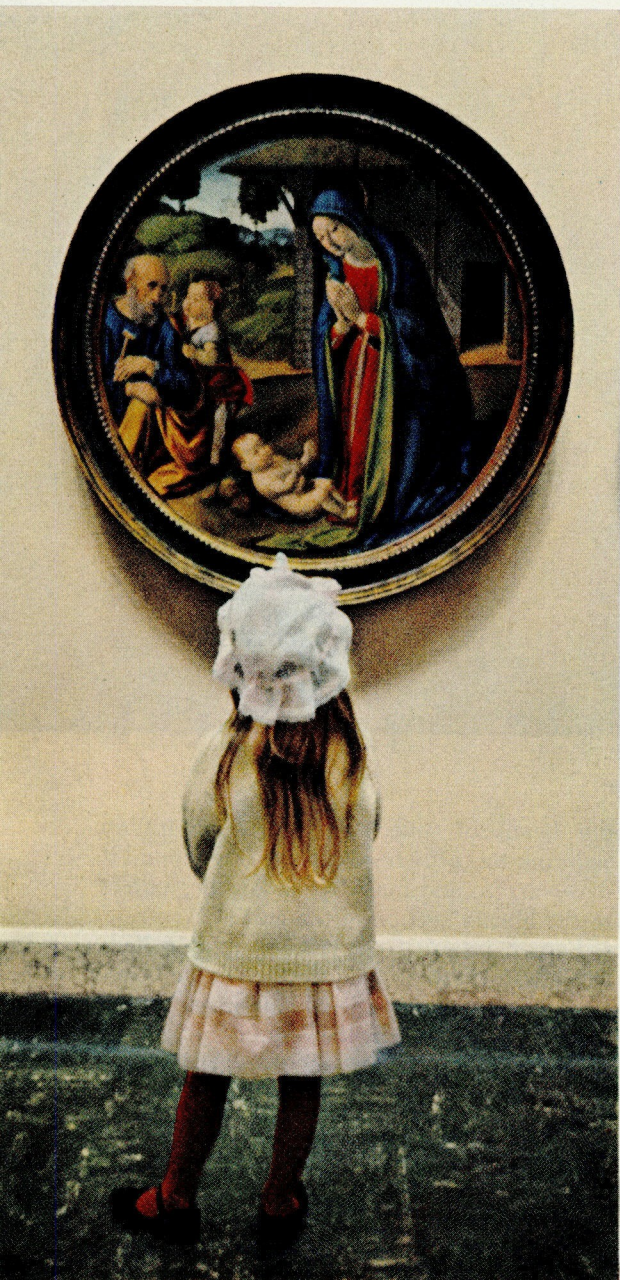
The stipulation that the gift be housed in fireproof, air-conditioned, and humidity-controlled quarters provided the impetus for a much needed building program. For years the museum's permanent collections had been displayed in cramped fourth-floor galleries in the City Hall.

After voters twice rejected financing through a municipal bond issue, the museum began a drive for private funds for a new building. The campaign was given a decided lift in January, 1953, by the announcement of the Kress Foundation gift. By the end of that year the museum listed 1,186 new accessions. Donors were confident that their contributions would be in good company with the Kress donations.

As the center of a seven-State area, Denver has an influence that reaches far beyond Colorado boundaries. On spring and summer Saturdays, trains and buses bring thousands of boys and girls from Kansas, Nebraska, Wyoming, and other States to see the sights of Denver. On their itinerary are the Renaissance masterpieces and other treasures in the museum, and the entire staff of Director Otto Karl Bach turns out to serve as guides and guards.

Following the throngs through the Kress gallery one Saturday, I was amused and touched to see a weary little boy curled up asleep on a Persian rug beneath "Madonna and Child With Four Saints," by the 15th-century Master of the XL Monogram.

From its Kress Collection of 35 paintings and three sculptures, Denver is sending six paintings, including "Nativity," by the un-



Junior art critic in the Seattle Art Museum studies a *tondo*, or circular painting, with the intentness of a connoisseur. "Adoration of the Christ Child," a devotional panel by Cosimo Rosselli, shows St. Joseph, the infant John the Baptist, and the Madonna praying over the Child. Rosselli, a member of the Florentine school, executed three frescoes in the Vatican's Sistine Chapel.



Head cocked, legs crossed, a Boy Scout in the El Paso Museum of Art seeks the proper angle to view Jusepe de Ribera's painting of St. Bartholomew. The white-bearded saint holds a knife, emblem of his martyrdom. While preaching in Armenia, tradition says, he was seized by heathens, skinned alive, and crucified.

El Paso caterer, preparing for a banquet at the museum, takes time out for a critical inspection of Van Dyck's "Portrait of a Lady."

Eye-filling spectacle of Bernardo Bellotto's "Entrance to a Palace" captivates young visitors to the El Paso museum.

845





Honolulu Academy of Arts, SAMUEL H. KRESS COLLECTION © NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

PIERO DI COSIMO (1462-1521) Florentine *St. John the Evangelist*

A lover of symbolism, Piero depicts a legendary incident in Ephesus, where St. John was ordered to drink a cup of poisoned wine. Before he could lift the chalice, the poison departed in the form of a snake. Fingers raised in Latin style give a blessing.



High Museum of Art, Atlanta, Georgia, SAMUEL H. KRESS COLLECTION © N.G.S.

GIOVANNI BATTISTA TIEPOLO (1696-1770) Venetian
Offering by Young Vestal Priestesses to Juno Lucina

In the 18th-century rococo period, architecture was the queen of the arts, painting a mere handmaiden. Tiepolo imbued most of his works with an architectural quality. Critics dispute the meaning of this canvas from the Palazzo Barbaro, Venice. Some doubt that the scene portrays Juno and the vestals, though Juno's bird, the peacock, perches on the temple portico. They suggest that the artist portrayed the offering of gifts from Mark Antony to Cleopatra.



identified Master of the Braunschweig Diptych, for the Washington show (page 856).

Medicine, not art, first attracted the Foundation to the Kansas City area. Shortly after the Foundation gave \$400,000 to strengthen the graduate-school program of the University of Kansas Medical Center in Kansas City, Kansas, Rush Kress was taken on a tour of the William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art in Kansas City, Missouri. He was told of the museum's weakness in some areas of Renaissance art. As a result, the Nelson gallery now owns a Kress Collection numbering 14 paintings and two sculptures. Six are to be

shown in the National Gallery display, including Giovanni Bellini's "Madonna and Child" (page 836).

Unique among the regional galleries, the Art Museum of Allentown, Pennsylvania, owes its very existence to a Kress Collection. It is also the only museum where paintings and sculptures are grouped together as a Samuel H. Kress Memorial Collection. Both circumstances derive from the fact that Sam Kress's birthplace, Cherryville, lies only ten miles away.

For years, the closest thing to a museum in Allentown consisted of two rooms in a stone



Philbrook Art Center, Tulsa, Oklahoma, SAMUEL H. KRESS COLLECTION © NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

house owned by the city park department. When civic leaders drew attention to the need for an important art collection, the Foundation offered a group of paintings—provided a suitable building was erected. The selections emphasized German and Dutch works, in recognition of the ancestry of many Allentown residents.

Meeting this challenge, local citizens, foundations, and corporations raised funds to buy a recently vacated church and transform it into a handsome museum. The gallery now owns a Kress Collection of 52 paintings and sculptures. Its six entries in the National Gal-

BERNARDO BELLOTTO (1720-1780)
 Venetian *View of Dresden*
From the Right Bank of the Elbe

Bellotto, who fell in love with Dresden at first sight, lived there 15 years. His paintings of the Altstadt, or old city, serve as a guide for reconstruction; World War II air raids destroyed 10 square miles of the German city. Augustus Bridge survived the bombings, but retreating Nazis blew it up. Our Lady's Church, whose dome rises beyond the span, was demolished and has been left in ruins as a memorial.

lery exhibition include two fine examples of the Dutch school—"The Young Fisherman," by Frans Hals (page 852), and "Soo de Ouden Songen," by Jan Steen (right).

Latest of the fine new museums to join the Kress Collection family is the Joe and Emily Lowe Art Gallery of the University of Miami, on the campus at Coral Gables. A special Kress Wing was tailor-made to house 40 paintings and four sculptures by Italian, Flemish, and North German artists of the 14th through 18th centuries. Six of the paintings are to be placed on display in the National Gallery exhibition. They include Bernardino Fungai's "Madonna and Child With Saints and Angels" (page 858).

Atlanta Draws Visitors From Afar

I wish I had space to detail the coming of Kress paintings to each of the galleries that the Foundation has aided. As Renaissance times set Europe's cultural pulses to throbbing, so the Kress gifts have brought stimulating days to the beneficiary cities.

Columbia, South Carolina, for example, which had no gallery only 11 years ago, now knows the pride of having lent paintings for exhibition in Venice and Milan, once centers of Old World renaissance.

Visitors to Oklahoma, primed for tomahawks and powwows, voice astonishment at encountering Bellotto's "View of Dresden" (page 848), part of the 34-painting Kress legacy to Tulsa's Philbrook Art Center.

Love of good painting is so universal that museum guides never know what nationality they will meet next. For example, some German visitors to this country made a special trip to the High Museum in Atlanta to see Kress Collection paintings, works that trace

changes of style from 13th-century Siena to 18th-century Rome.

A vibrant source book on the revolution in painting wrought by the Renaissance appears on the walls of the Portland, Oregon, Art Museum. Paintings from the late 13th to early 16th century follow a theme carefully worked out by the museum and enthusiastically fulfilled by the Foundation.

Houston, Texas, whose thriving port weaves increasingly closer ties with Latin

JAN STEEN (1626-1679) Dutch *Soo de Ouden Songen*

Steen's humorous scenes of everyday life often illustrated proverbs, and frequently he used members of his family as models. Failing to earn full livelihood as a painter, he worked at times as brewer and tavern keeper and shared the common pleasures he portrayed. Title of this work comes from an old Dutch adage: "As the old folk sing, the young folk pipe."



America, holds 36 Kress paintings, creations of men from the same cultural cradle that produced Columbus and the conquistadores.

And Kress paintings at the Honolulu Academy of Arts afford thousands of students and visitors to our newest State their introduction to one of the richest eras of Western painting.

Mention of students brings me to another Foundation program. In distributing the collection of 1,500 paintings and sculptures, we reserved some 150 for the Study Collections,

special ensembles of art that we placed on 19 college campuses across the country.

We arranged the Study Collections to illustrate, with original works, the changes that European art experienced through the ferment of the Renaissance. Distributed by geographical area, they are now providing, no doubt, many of our own great artists of the future with knowledge that no textbook can offer.

An encounter in Rome about 1920 gave Kress direction and purpose in his acquisi-

Allentown (Pennsylvania) Art Museum, SAMUEL H. KRESS COLLECTION © NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY





Allentown (Pennsylvania) Art Museum, SAMUEL H. KRESS COLLECTION © NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

tions. He met Count Alessandro Contini-Bonacossi, one of the period's foremost collectors, and Kress set out to emulate him.

Introduced by the count, Kress formed a lasting friendship with the late Bernard Berenson, the most famous Renaissance art authority of his time. Kress joined the select group of those who made regular pilgrimages to Berenson's villa I Tatti, near Florence, which was willed to Harvard University in 1959. Largely because of "B.B.'s" influence, Kress decided to concentrate upon Italian painting and sculpture.

How well he succeeded was summed up by David K. E. Bruce, former trustee and president of the National Gallery of Art and now our Ambassador to the Court of St. James's. In 1939, when Kress made his first donation to the Washington gallery then under construction, Mr. Bruce said: "Experts state that there is no private collection in the world, and few museums, which can illustrate in as complete a manner as the Kress Collection the development of the Italian school of painting and sculpture during the Renaissance period."

FRANS HALS (1580?-1666) Dutch
Young Fisherman

Hals demonstrated rare talent for capturing fleeting changes in the human face. His broad brush strokes and sharp contrasts of light and shade anticipated Impressionism.

PIETER DE HOOCH (1629-1683?) Dutch
Young Mother

De Hooch's canvases have been praised as poems of light wrought with conscientiousness and refinement. The artist painted this middle-class family scene about 1663.

M. H. de Young Memorial Museum, San Francisco, SAMUEL H. KRESS COLLECTION © NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY





M. H. de Young Memorial Museum, San Francisco, SAMUEL H. KRESS COLLECTION © NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

EL GRECO (1541-1614)

Spanish *St. Francis
Venerating the Crucifix*

Born Doménikos Theotokópoulos in Crete, El Greco studied under Titian in Venice before settling in 1577 in Toledo, Spain, where he acquired his nickname (the Greek). Scrap of paper at lower right bears his signature in Greek. Here St. Francis has withdrawn to the hills to pray.

LORENZO LOTTO

(1480-1556) Italian

Portrait of a Bearded Man

Eloquence without flamboyance is the hallmark of Lotto, as demonstrated by this simple figure against a plain background.

Kress Collection restorers of the "Bearded Man" revealed a quality and harmony of color hitherto hidden by extensive retouching.



Isaac Delgado Museum of Art, New Orleans, SAMUEL H. KRESS COLLECTION © N.G.S.

And Director Walker of the National Gallery has written: "This great collection owes its origin to . . . a conviction in the minds of two hardheaded men of affairs, Samuel H. Kress and Rush H. Kress, that works of art enrich and give meaning to human life." *

While building his collection, Sam Kress had many an eye-opening adventure on "Art Dealer's Row," which centers mostly along Manhattan's East 57th Street. Despite his lack of formal art training, he won the dealers' respect as a knowledgeable bargainer.

Here Kress became a principal customer and close friend of the late Lord Duveen of Millbank, head of Duveen Brothers, Inc., most famous of the art dealers. Duveen coached Kress, encouraged him, and sold him

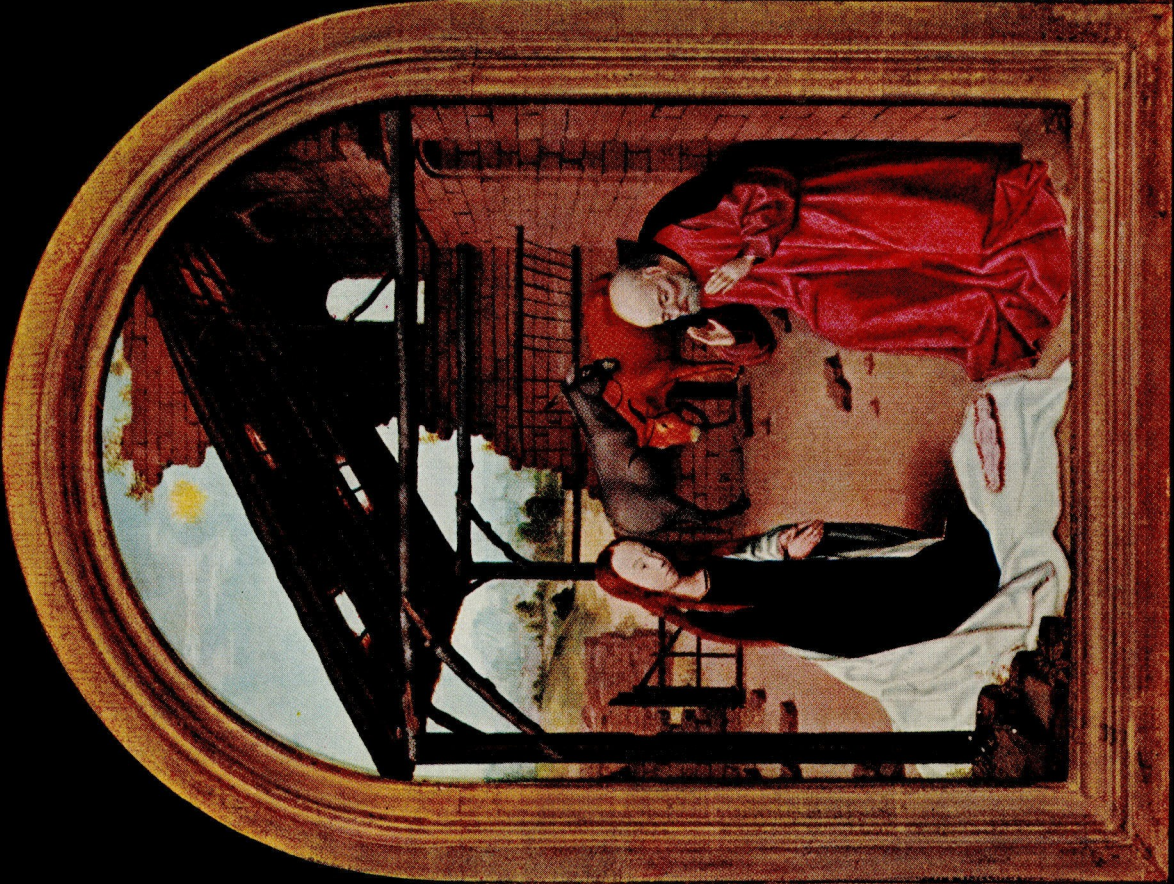
hundreds of art works, leading him to become the National Gallery's most lavish contributor of paintings and sculptures.

Masterpiece in Dime-store Window

The Kress-Duveen relationship was put to severe strain one Christmas season when the art dealer, strolling Fifth Avenue, was brought up short by an unbelievable sight in a Kress store window. It was Giorgione's magnificent "Adoration of the Shepherds," a costly painting that Duveen had recently sold to Kress.

Duveen's first reaction was extreme shock, but as a favored purveyor of masterpieces to Kress, he was in no position to complain about what he regarded as a breach of propriety. He did mention the matter, however, and gracefully accepted Kress's explanation: The spirit of Christmas had moved him to share his treasure with the New York shopping crowds. The Giorgione now hangs in the National Gallery.

*For an expert's description of the Kress Collection and its growth, see in the NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC: "The Nation's Newest Old Masters," November, 1956; and "Your National Gallery of Art After 10 Years," January, 1952, both by John Walker.



**MASTER OF THE
BRAUNSCHWEIG
DIPTYCH** Dutch
Nativity Triptych

An anonymous Dutch artist executed this 15th-century triptych. Because its style resembles that of the Braunschweig Diptych (two-leafed tablet), experts believe the same artist created both works. The Virgin and St. Joseph adore the Christ Child as shepherds approach the manger.

PAOLO VERONESE
(1528-1588) Venetian
Sacra Conversazione

Addressing Madonna and Child, St. Lawrence holds a palm frond, symbol of martyrdom. St. Agnes is accompanied by her lamb. St. Anthony Abbot, father of monasticism, carries a crutch, emblem of age.







BERNARDINO
FUNGAI

(1460-1516) Sienese
*Madonna and Child
With Saints and Angels*

Artists of the Sienese school loved to paint the Madonna. Fungai's restless, idealized paintings rarely expressed pathos or movement, but this tondo exhibits an almost playful freedom of composition.

As the Christ Child rides a flower-decked litter, He clings to an angel to keep from falling. St. Mary of Egypt kneels at right; a miraculous growth of hair answered her prayer for clothing in the desert. Behind the wall stand John the Baptist and Jerome, who also knew life in the desert.

St. Francis, on the distant hill, receives the stigmata. Below him St. Christopher carries the Infant Christ across a stream.

The painting, a favorite of Rush Kress, hangs in a new wing of the Joe and Emily Lowe Art Gallery in the University of Miami.

Gilded frame post-dates the panel, which illuminates the cover of this issue of the GEOGRAPHIC.

*Joe and Emily Lowe Art
Gallery, University of Miami,
SAMUEL H. KRESS COLLECTION
© NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY*



One of my favorite Kress stories involves Berenson and a wealthy young American businessman and an exquisite little wood panel called "St. John in the Desert." Years ago, before Kress had any connection with the painting, the young American appeared at Berenson's villa I Tatti, announcing that he wished to start a collection and desired expert guidance.

Berenson was away, so Mrs. Berenson

guided the young man around the galleries of Florence. She was highly impressed by his appreciation of art.

As the visitor prepared to leave, Mrs. Berenson remarked to Miss Nicky Mariano, B.B.'s assistant and secretary at I Tatti:

"He deserves one of our pictures for his collection, and I shall give him our small 'St. John in the Desert.' It is a charming thing but not definitely attributed to anybody. B.B.



Museum of Fine Arts of Houston, Texas, SAMUEL H. KRESS COLLECTION © NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

won't mind my giving it away, I'm sure."

When B.B. returned he immediately noticed a gap on the wall.

"That little St. John," he said. "What became of it?"

Mrs. Berenson told him.

It was a severe blow, for B.B. had valued the painting for its beauty alone, considering its attribution and probable worth as of secondary importance. However, he accepted

BERNARDO BELLOTTO

Market Place at Pirna

Pirna, Saxony, which escaped the air raids that wrecked neighboring Dresden, today looks much as it did two centuries ago. Sunlight bathes the City Hall and its clock tower. Empress Catherine II of Russia presented the painting to King Frederick II of Prussia.



the loss philosophically. He displayed equal stoicism many years later when the painting was discovered to be the work of Domenico Veneziano, and was sold to Sam Kress for \$145,000!

Visitors to the National Gallery may admire the panel, which measures $11\frac{1}{8}$ by $12\frac{3}{4}$ inches, or about the size of the NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC spread open before you (page 828). From a strictly commercial viewpoint, it may be said that Kress paid \$1,022.25 per square inch for the Domenico.

Foundation Also Aids Research

I first met Sam Kress in 1936, when he was the active head of his stores and I was a vice president of the Bankers Trust Company of New York. He was a shy, retiring bachelor, with a strong distaste for publicity. This quality is reflected in the Foundation he created in 1929, "to promote the moral, physical, and mental well-being and progress of the human race." Unlike most large organizations of its kind, the Kress Foundation even today has no public relations director.

The Foundation's many grants in the field of medical research, a special interest of Rush Kress, have been made public by the recipients rather than the donor. They include large donations to the New York University Medical Center, the American Heart Association, and the National Association for Practical Nurse Education, and the gift of a betatron unit to the Memorial Center for Cancer and Allied Diseases in New York City.

When Sam Kress's illness removed him

from business and philanthropic activity, the mantle fell upon his brother. Rush Kress invited me to join the Foundation's Board of Trustees in 1946. I accepted with reluctance; by that time I had retired from banking and looked forward to devoting more time to the National Audubon Society, which I served as president for four years and as a director for eighteen.

Soon afterward I was named Art Director of the Foundation, and found myself deeply involved in the distribution of paintings and sculptures to the 21 American museums. Rush Kress and I decided upon this plan after constant changes and substitutions in the National Gallery's collection made many works available for distribution elsewhere.

As selections for the various museums progressed, the delicate work of restoration and framing went forward. A collection of 800 original Renaissance frames, acquired for the Foundation by two Italian experts who combed Europe, was put in the hands of master framers working under the direction of Conservator Mario Modestini (page 834).

I never tire of visiting Mr. Modestini's laboratories in New York and at Huckleberry Hill. Using centuries-old skills as well as those born of modern science, he performs daily miracles of research and restoration. With X-rays and infrared rays he penetrates beneath centuries-old layers of paint and varnish to disclose altered designs painted over by the old masters.

Synthetics Replace Raw Egg

The Modestini laboratories employ an important advance in the restoration technique—the use of a synthetic medium to replace egg as a binder where paint has chipped or peeled. Tests made in the laboratories and under the big skylights atop the National Gallery suggest that polyvinyl acetate mixed with dry pigments is likely to stand the test of time far better than the traditional egg medium.

As the result of Mr. Modestini's painstaking work, paintings leave his laboratories looking as bright and fresh in color as they did when they stood on the artists' easels.

Besides the National Gallery and regional collections, the Foundation has made important contributions to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and to the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Gifts to the Metropolitan Museum include superb French furniture and porcelains from the collection of

Students with drawing boards head for a sketch class in the new Oscar Wells Memorial Building of the Birmingham (Alabama) Museum of Art, owner of the painting at left.

PARIS BORDONE (1500-1571)

Venetian *A Young Hero*

Armed by Bellona and Mercury

Titian's pupil, Bordone shows Bellona, goddess of war, strapping a shield on a nobleman. Mercury, known by his serpent staff, bestows a helmet.

Birmingham (Alabama) Museum of Art,

SAMUEL H. KRESS COLLECTION;

KODACHROME BY JAMES BLAIR © NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY



Seattle (Washington) Art Museum, SAMUEL H. KRESS COLLECTION © NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

PETER PAUL RUBENS *The Last Supper*

In this sketch for a ceiling decoration in an Antwerp church, the artist generates tension and excitement with gestures of head and hand. Rose red of Christ's mantle, the blue and yellow of St. Peter's robes, and the crimson glow of the curtains provide a striking color contrast.

Lord Hillingdon, and the magnificent Adam Room from Croome Court, country seat of the Earls of Coventry.

The Philadelphia Museum received a series of tapestries depicting scenes from the life of Constantine, after designs by Rubens and Pietro da Cortona. Originally from the Barberini Palace in Rome and then separated for many years, the tapestries have been reunited once more and will decorate the museum's great stairway.

Europe, too, benefited by Sam Kress's gen-

erosity. Grateful for the enjoyment he derived from the Old World's treasures and monuments, he saw in restoration work his best opportunity to reciprocate.

Among many Italian buildings which he restored wholly or in part through his personal philanthropy, he loved most of all the Gonzaga Palace in Mantua. Even now, at least two decades after his last visit there, members of the staff tell of his affection for this strange and beautiful palace with its miniature suite and private chapel for the

dwarfs whom the Dukes of Mantua kept for entertainment.

Following the pattern of these philanthropies, the Foundation has extended the work to other parts of Italy, to Greece and Turkey, and especially to Germany. Heavily bombed Nuremberg, ancestral home of the Kress family, has received large Foundation grants to assist in postwar rebuilding.

But the outstanding monuments to Sam and Rush Kress are the collection in Washington, which forms so important a part of our

magnificent National Gallery, and the affiliated regional groupings. Under the Kress plan of distribution, these masterpieces become available to millions of people who never would have seen them otherwise.

All involved in the Kress art project take pride in an achievement that brings to mind Bernard Berenson's words in the preface to his monumental, Kress-financed edition of *Italian Painters of the Renaissance*:

"Without art, visual, verbal and musical, our world would have remained a jungle."

ABRAHAM VAN BEYEREN (1620-1675) Dutch *Still Life*

Forgotten after his death but rediscovered by the art world two centuries later, Van Beyeren fancied the flickering highlight and the glittering reflection. Silver coffee pot on a banquet table mirrors part of the room.

Seattle (Washington) Art Museum, SAMUEL H. KRESS COLLECTION © NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

