

PRESS RELEASE

Minneapolis Institute of Art Presents “Eyewitness Views: Making History in Eighteenth-Century Europe”

First-ever exhibition to focus on view paintings as depictions of contemporary events

Minneapolis Institute of Art
2400 Third Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55404
artsmia.org



Luca Carlevarij (Italian, 1663-1730); *Regatta on the Grand Canal in Honor of Frederick IV, King of Denmark, 1711*, The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles

Minneapolis, July 27, 2017— This fall, the Minneapolis Institute of Art (Mia) presents the first-ever exhibition to focus on view paintings as depictions of contemporary events. “Eyewitness Views: Making History in Eighteenth-Century Europe” features approximately 40 paintings from the golden age of European view painting. Commissioned by rulers, princes, and ambassadors, master view painters such as Antonio Canaletto, Giovanni Paolo Panini, Bernardo Bellotto, and Francesco Guardi recorded memorable events, ranging from the spectacular Venetian carnival to an eruption of Vesuvius; in the process, they produced some of their most significant works. Many of the themes and events depicted—including the introduction of political leaders into office, natural disasters, and major sporting events—have parallels today, and the emotions they evoke remain the same. On view September 10 through December 31, 2017, “Eyewitness Views: Making History in Eighteenth Century Europe” is co-organized by J. Paul Getty Museum, Minneapolis Institute of Art, and Cleveland Museum of Art.

“‘Eyewitness Views’ offers a captivating view of why and how Venice, Rome, and other European centers of power and grandeur made history,” said Patrick Noon, Elizabeth MacMillan Chair of Paintings at Mia. “With this exhibition, visitors can encounter bygone worlds of gaudy refinement and imposing spectacle as mediated by many of Italy’s most celebrated painters of the eighteenth century.”

Featured paintings depict many of Europe’s most recognizable cities, including Venice, Rome, Naples, Paris, Warsaw, and Madrid. Vividly detailed and gorgeously painted, these grand canvases transport viewers to sites—such as Saint Peter’s Basilica in Rome or onto a gondola floating along the Grand Canal in Venice during a regatta—where they could experience what it was like to be a witness to history.

Mia



One of the Reuters images that will be a part of the exhibition at Mia.
Pope Francis in Rio de Janeiro, July 28, 2013.
REUTERS/Stefano Rellandini

Unique to Mia's installation, Thomson Reuters has provided Reuters photos of iconic events to be incorporated into the display to connect visitors to the themes of the exhibition and contemporary life.

Exhibition Themes and Highlights

"Eyewitness Views" is organized according to four thematic sections:

- *Memory and Manipulation*: Explores whether view painters were faithful chroniclers, capturing events just as witnessed, or if they manipulated reality to meet the expectations of the status-conscious clientele.
Highlights: Michele Marieschi's *Doge Pietro Grimani Carried into Piazza San Marco after his Election* (about 1741); Francesco Battaglioli's *King Ferdinand VI and Queen Barbara of Braganza in the Gardens at Aranjuez on the Feast of Saint Ferdinand* (1756).
- *Civic and Religious Ritual*: Examines some of Europe's historic events, religious feast days, and public rituals. Whether sacred or secular, these occasions were filled with civic pride.
Highlights: Giovanni Antonio Canaletto's *Venice: Feast Day of Saint Roch* (about 1735); Bernardo Bellotto's *Procession of Our Lady of Grace in Front of Krasinski Palace* (1778).
- *Festival and Spectacle*: Showcases the no-expense-spared pageantry and entertainment in Venice and Rome in the 1700s, including the ceremonial regatta and celebrations of royal births and marriages.
Highlights: Giovanni Paolo Panini's *The Musical Performance in the Teatro Argentina in Honor of the Marriage of the Dauphin* (1747); Luca Carlevarijs' *Regatta on the Grand Canal in Honor of Frederick IV, King of Denmark* (1711).
- *Disaster and Destruction*: Presents scenes of devastation caused by warfare, fire, natural disaster, and political turmoil. This grouping stands apart by downplaying the presence of rulers and nobility in favor of the lower classes.
Highlights: Pierre-Jacques Volaire's *The Eruption of Vesuvius* (1771); Hubert Robert's *The Fire at the Opera House of the Palais-Royal* (about 1781).

General admission for the exhibition is \$20; \$16 My Mia members, or free for My Mia members at the Investor level and above. Tickets go on sale August 25 and can be purchased online or by calling 612.870.6323.

Catalogue and Programming

"Eyewitness Views: Making History in 18th-Century Europe" is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue published by Getty Publications and authored by Peter Björn Kerber, assistant curator of paintings at the Getty Museum. The hardcover catalogue is available in The Store at Mia for \$45.

Mia will offer public events related to the exhibition, including an opening-day talk by exhibition curator Peter Björn Kerber (J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles). Kerber will examine how Roman and Venetian artists specializing in topographical views and history paintings recorded important contemporary events ranging from state visits to civic and religious celebrations. Sunday, September 10, 2PM: \$10; \$5 for My Mia members, free for Paintings Affinity Group members.

Mia will also host "Third Thursday: Instameet" on Thursday, September 21, from 6 to 9 p.m., which highlights the exhibition's themes. The event is free and features live music, a cash bar, and art-making activities. Admission to "Eyewitness Views" is free for guests who sign up for My Mia. Public tours are also offered.



Francesco Guardi (Italian, 1712-1793); *The Meeting of Pope Pius VI and Doge Paolo Renier at San Giorgio in Alga, 1782*, Oil on canvas. Guido Bartolozzi Antichità SRL

Support

The exhibition was organized by the J. Paul Getty Museum, Minneapolis Institute of Art, and Cleveland Museum of Art, and is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and Humanities. Lead Sponsor: Thomson Reuters. Major Sponsors: Crosby Family Fund for Exhibitions, Delta Air Lines, Inc. Media Partner: Star Tribune.

Exhibition Tour

"Eyewitness Views: Making History in 18th-Century Europe" debuted at the J. Paul Getty Museum May 9–July 30, 2017. The exhibition travels to the Minneapolis Institute of Art (September 10–December 31, 2017), and then to Cleveland Museum of Art (February 25–May 20, 2018).

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About The Minneapolis Institute Of Art

Home to more than 89,000 works of art representing 5,000 years of world history, the Minneapolis Institute of Art (Mia) inspires wonder, spurs creativity, and nourishes the imagination. With extraordinary exhibitions and one of the finest wide-ranging art collections in the country—Rembrandt to van Gogh, Monet to Matisse, Asian to African—Mia links the past to the present, enables global conversations, and offers an exceptional setting for inspiration.

General admission to Mia is always free. Some special exhibitions have a nominal admission fee.

Museum Hours

Tuesday, Wednesday, Saturday 10am–5pm

Thursday, Friday 10am–9pm

Sunday 11am–5pm

Monday Closed

For more information, call + 1 612 870 3000 or visit artsmia.org

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