

22 November 2011



Régnier painting is centenary gift

A centenary appeal launched earlier this year to mark the 100th anniversary of the Friends of Nationalmuseum has raised a total of SEK 10.66 million. The donations have funded the purchase of a painting by Flemish artist Nicolas Régnier, which was handed over to Nationalmuseum at a gala evening on 21 November.

The goal of the Friends of Nationalmuseum centenary appeal, launched earlier in 2011, was to make a significant gift to the museum before year-end. The appeal itself raised SEK 5.33 million from donors, but the total raised was SEK 10.66 million, thanks to a decision by the association's board to match all donations. The centenary celebrations wrapped up at a gala evening on 21 November, at which the gift was handed over: a painting entitled *Fortune Telling Scene* by Flemish artist Nicolas Régnier (c. 1591–1667).

The work is significant because it complements and enriches Nationalmuseum's collection of 17th-century Italian art. It is one of a suite of three works on the same theme dating from Régnier's time in Rome. While in Italy, he encountered the artistic tradition started by the great Caravaggio. Works from this tradition typically depict emotional manoeuvring, reinforced by powerful light effects and deep colours. In Régnier's painting, the young woman invites the onlooker to be party to the joke being played on the sleeping man. The work, considered one of Régnier's finest, is full of exquisite details such as the torn-up cards, the wax that has trickled down the candlestick, and the shadow cast by the young man's eyelashes.

The Friends of Nationalmuseum is an association founded in 1911 to fund art purchases and support the museum in other ways. Then, as now, the museum was short of funds to acquire pieces for its collections. Over the years, the association has also promoted Nationalmuseum's activities and provided professional development grants to museum employees. Among the many works donated over the years, the most notable include a self-portrait by Rembrandt,

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La Grenouillère by Auguste Renoir and *The Love Lesson* by Antoine Watteau. The Friends of Nationalmuseum have also donated works by contemporary artists such as Christian-Pontus Andersson and Helena Hörstedt.

For more information, go to www.nationalmuseivanner.se.

Further information

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Illustration

Nicolas Régnier, *Fortune Telling Scene*, oil on canvas, 97 x 131 cm (38" x 52")

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