



The Phillips Collection

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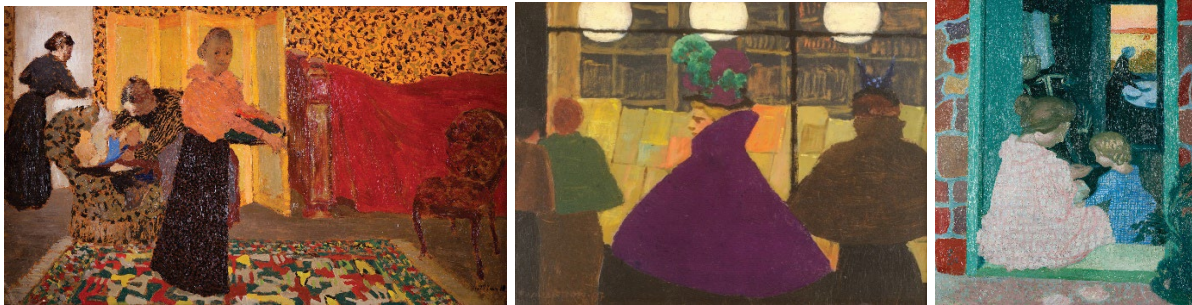
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The Phillips Collection Announces Details for Preservation, Study, and Display of The Nabi Collection of Vicki and Roger Sant

Selections from major promised gift of over 40 paintings and works on paper and two print portfolios by Nabi artists to be on continuous view at the Phillips



WASHINGTON, DC — The Phillips Collection announces the completion of a definitive agreement and plans for the preservation, study, and display of The Nabi Collection of Vicki and Roger Sant, establishing the museum as a center for the pursuit of knowledge and cultivation of Nabi art in the United States. First announced in 2019, the major [promised collection](#) will be a bequest from philanthropist Roger Sant and his late wife, Vicki, that will invigorate the museum’s permanent holdings and broaden the awareness and presentation of Nabi artists and their significant contributions to the history of modern art and aesthetics. Upon its future transfer to the Phillips, visitors will enjoy the opportunity to see these rarely seen seminal works from the Sant Nabi Collection on continuous rotational view in a newly named Sant Nabi Gallery and elsewhere throughout The Phillips Collection.

“We’re deeply honored by this meaningful, transformative gift from the Sants and are thrilled to see how it will manifest in the continued presentation and study of the Nabi movement and its influence on early 20th century modern art at the Phillips,” says **Vradenburg Director and CEO Jonathan P. Binstock**. “We’re grateful to Roger and Vicki for their generosity and trust to ensure the stewardship of their exquisite collection, which we dedicate in honor of Vicki’s profound impact on The Phillips Collection and her lasting legacy.”

Derived from the Hebrew *navi*, meaning “prophet,” Les Nabis were a group of French artists active in the last decade of the 19th century who shared a poetic belief in art’s intimate connection to everyday life. Inspired by Paul Gauguin and Post-Impressionist techniques, they embraced form and materials over content to free color and line through an intuitive, non-theoretical approach, conjuring complex and all-encompassing environments that simultaneously ground viewers in familiar scenes of everyday life.

For more than 20 years, Vicki and Roger Sant assembled one of the nation’s most distinguished private collections of Nabi art. Vicki Sant, who passed away in December 2018, was a trustee at the Phillips for more than 30 years and served at different times as the museum’s president, chair, and honorary chair. Before Vicki passed away, Roger and Vicki promised their collection to the Phillips, which includes more than 40 paintings and works on paper and two print portfolios.

“Vicki and I discovered our shared passion for Nabi art on a trip to France in 1993 with The Phillips Collection, where we attended a major exhibition of Nabi artists at the Grand Palais,” says **Roger Sant**. “While Vicki had long appreciated this moment in art history, this distinct period was a new discovery for me. I left eager to learn more and have this be our focus. So began our devoted collecting of Nabi art, which rather resembles the mutual admiration the Phillips and its founders have for the artists and their contemporaries.”

Building on its renowned holdings of artists working in Impressionist and Post-Impressionist circles established by museum founder Duncan Phillips, the Sants’ collection tremendously expands the depth and scope of the Phillips’s existing representation of Nabi artists Pierre Bonnard, Édouard Vuillard, and Ker-Xavier Roussel and provides its first examples by Maurice Denis, Aristide Maillol, Félix Vallotton, and Paul Ranson. Encompassing paintings, prints, sculptures, and works on paper, as well as screens, ceramics, tapestries, and stained glass, the Sant Nabi Collection reveals the breadth of the Nabis’ inventiveness across media, including the fine and decorative arts. The collection’s large concentration of Vuillard works will strengthen the artist’s existing holdings at the museum of four oils and one pastel with an additional 17 paintings, one drawing, and a complete print album, *Paysages et Intérieurs*.

In addition, a new center dedicated to the collection—the Sant Nabi Center—will facilitate the preservation, care, and study of Nabi art. Housed in the museum’s library and archives, scholars will be able to study the Sants’ collection through books, portfolios, artists’ monographs, exhibition catalogues, and more. The permanently restricted Sant Nabi Collection Endowment Fund will support the work of the Center and the care and display of the collection.

“The intimacy, beauty, and symbolism of the Sant Nabi Collection exemplify the shared ideals of these modern-day visual ‘prophets,’ who sought to break free from naturalism and chart a new path for modern art,” says **Elsa Smithgall, Chief Curator at The Phillips Collection**. “This exceptional body of work represents a fitting complement to important objects by members of the Nabis and the Post-Impressionists that are part of the museum’s founding collection.”

Les Nabis were the focus of the Phillips’s 2019 exhibition [Bonnard to Vuillard: The Intimate Poetry of Everyday Life](#), when the major bequest was first announced. One of the leading members of the Nabis, Bonnard will be the subject of a special forthcoming exhibition, *Bonnard’s Worlds*, opening at the Phillips in spring of 2024. Co-organized by The Phillips Collection and the Kimbell Art Museum in Fort

Worth, Texas, *Bonnard's Worlds* will reunite some of Bonnard's most celebrated works and transport viewers from the larger realms in which Bonnard lived—the landscapes of Paris, Normandy and the South of France—to the most private interior spaces of his dwellings and thoughts.

IMAGE GALLERY:

High-resolution press images are available upon request. Please contact Lauryn Cantrell, lcantrell@phillipscollection.org

IMAGES: (Left to Right) Édouard Vuillard, *Intérieur au lit ou La chambre nuptial (Interior with Red Bed or The Bridal Chamber)*, 1893, Oil on board mounted on cradled panel, 12 3/4 x 20 7/8 in., The Phillips Collection, Promised gift of Vicki and Roger Sant; Félix Vallotton, *Le passante (Passerby)*, 1897, Oil on cardboard, 7 7/8 x 11 in., Collection of Vicki and Roger Sant; Maurice Denis, *Mère et enfant (Mother and Child)*, 1898, Oil on canvas, 18 x 15 in., The Phillips Collection, Promised gift of Vicki and Roger Sant

ABOUT THE PHILLIPS COLLECTION

The Phillips Collection, America's first museum of modern art, was founded in 1921. The museum houses one of the world's most celebrated Impressionist and American modern art collections and continues to grow its collection with important contemporary voices. Its distinctive building combines extensive new galleries with the former home of its founder, Duncan Phillips. The Phillips's impact spreads nationally and internationally through its diverse and experimental special exhibitions and events, including its award-winning education programs for educators, students, and adults; renowned Phillips Music series; and dynamic art and wellness and Phillips after 5 events. The museum contributes to global dialogues with events like Conversations with Artists and Artists of Conscience. The Phillips Collection values its community partnership with THEARC—the museum's satellite campus in Southeast DC. The Phillips Collection is a private, non-government museum, supported primarily by donations.

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