

INTRODUCTION

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There are few things as exciting for me as visiting a museum I have never seen or a private collection that is unknown to me. London Art Week, with the sheer volume of art works that are on show – from ancient statues to medieval stained glass, from *plein-air* sketches to pieces by contemporary artists – is an equally exhilarating experience.

London is, of course, an astounding treasure house for the curious, with its public museums and exhibitions, and for a few days at the end of June and early July it offers, in addition, a veritable cornucopia of discoveries, rarely seen works, newly presented paintings and sculptures, fascinating juxtapositions of works of art, and all of this in an amazing array of spaces.

Galleries and dealers display the very best they have to the discerning, the cultivated or the just inquisitive. Museums might acquire a few works, but most will be bought by private collectors.

As the Director of the National Gallery, I know how important it is that this should happen. It may come as a surprise to many to know that more than half of the pictures in the Gallery have come as gifts from individual collectors.

I look forward to joining you at London Art Week this Summer.

www.nationalgallery.org.uk



PAUL HUET (1803–1869)

Trees in the Park at Saint-Cloud, c.1820, oil on canvas, 37.6 x 55.5 cm

Presented by the Lishawa Family in memory of Kate (Lishawa), 2005

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