

Lecture by Author Margaret Leslie Davis

“The Two First Ladies: First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy and the 1963 Exhibition of the Mona Lisa”



Forty five years ago, "Lisa Fever" swept the nation as Da Vinci's masterpiece visited America. Sent as a personal loan to President and Mrs. Kennedy by the French government, the famous painting was exhibited in Washington D.C. and New York for fifty-two days.

Nearly two million Americans, for many their first visit to an art museum, stood in long lines for a chance to see the Mona Lisa. The visit of the Mona Lisa produced the greatest outpouring of appreciation for a single work of art in American history and pioneered the phenomenon of the blockbuster museum show. The popular First Lady was a pacesetter in the arts, and through the successful exhibition of the Mona Lisa and its enormous impact at home and abroad she demonstrated her sincere commitment to culture.



Author Margaret Leslie Davis will address Jacqueline Kennedy's surprising and extensive role in the exhibition of France's revered treasure with archival photographs and historic film footage.

Visit the [National Gallery of Art Website](#) to hear the Podcast from its Notable Lecture Series

The Secret Service escorts the Mona Lisa along a red carpet as the painting arrives in New York City on December 19, 1962.

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