

For immediate release
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THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary to Mrs. Ford

First Lady Betty Ford has been elected a Fellow for Life of the National Academy of Design, New York. She will receive her diploma and the National Academy's Sesquicentennial Medal Thursday, October 9 at 7:00 P.M. The Academy is located at 5 East 89th Street.

She will attend a reception in her honor that evening and receive a private preview of the Academy's exhibit, "A Century And A Half Of American Art: 1825-1975." Mrs. Ford was selected because of her interest in the arts, according to Academy President Alfred Easton Poor. She is only the third wife of a President to receive the honor in the 150-year history of the National Academy, the first national organization of professional artists in the U.S. Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt was named in 1934 and Mrs. Calvin B. Coolidge in 1925.

The exhibit Mrs. Ford will preview is an official New York State Bicentennial event which opens to the public October 11 through November 16. It includes more than 200 paintings, watercolors, graphics sculpture and architecture.

The Academy was created to educate art students and provide facilities to exhibit the works of professional artists.

Academicians and associates of the Academy are elected on the basis of recognized excellence, with the total number of national academicians limited to 125 painters, 50 sculptors, 25 architects, 25 graphic artists, and 25 aquarelists (watercolorists). There are also some 275 associates representing almost every State in the Nation. Over the past 150 years the National Academy's members have included among the painters Audobon, Durand, Rembrandt Peale, Remington, Sargent, and the Wyeths; sculptors Aitken, Fraser, and Saint-Gaudens; and architects John Russell Pope and Frank Lloyd Wright.

Modelled after the Royal Academy of Arts in London, the National Academy was founded in 1825 by 15 artists, including Samuel F. B. Morse, inventor of the telegraph, noted portrait painter, and the Academy's first president.

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Press contact for credentials: Warren Weiner, 215/561-8181