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Peter Mardin

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Italians, Dr. Magherini said, are not likely to be overwhelmed because they are at home, and another notable group of travelers, the Japanese, usually move in large groups and prepare carefully for whatever lies ahead.

Previous Trouble Noted

One more detail: More than half of those hospitalized in her study had previous contact with a psychiatrist or psychologist. And that comes as no surprise to skeptics.

Dr. Elliot Wineburg, a specialist in stress-related disorders at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York, said that while he had not yet read the Florence study, he suspected that some victims suffered from common physical rigors of travel. As for hallucinations, "they would have come out sooner or later," he said in a telephone interview. "They could only occur not just with sensitive people, but sick people."

But another psychiatrist, Dr. Reed Moskowitz of the New York University Medical Center, said the study made sense to him. "These are people who have a great appreciation of beauty, and you're putting them in the Mecca of art," he said.

Meanwhile, Dr. Magherini reports that new cases keep turning up.

But she says patients recover after a few days of rest, adding that one obvious way to head off trouble is to avoid squeezing too much art into a short period of time.

U.S. News & World Report

Monday, May 22, 1989

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Peep show. Members of Congress who tend to see art through more conventional eyes than most critics may be in for a shock this summer when "The Perfect Moment," a 150-work retrospective of photographer Robert Mapplethorpe, who recently died of AIDS, opens at Washington's Corcoran Gallery. While the exhibit, which includes nude photos of children, homoerotic shots of males and a sadomasochistic self-portrait of the artist, has been acclaimed in Chicago and Philadelphia, it remains to be seen how it might influence Congress. Just as the exhibit opens, Capitol Hill will consider the appropriation for the National Endowment for the Arts, one of the show's financial sponsors. Gallery officials say they may post a warning, as did other museums, that the show may not be suitable for children. And probably not for some congressmen, either.

U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT, May 22, 1989

The Richmond News Leader

Sunday, May 14, 1989

Exhibit doesn't deserve subsidies, Parris says

By Peter Hardin

News Leader Washington correspondent

WASHINGTON — Rep. Stanford E. Parris, a Northern Virginia Republican running for governor, has blasted the use of federal subsidies for an exhibit displayed in Richmond that included a work depicting a crucified Jesus Christ submerged in urine.

"This picture meets the same standards of art as a swastika painted on the wall of a synagogue by a skinhead," Parris wrote in a letter yesterday to the National Endowment for the Arts.

"In my opinion, neither exhibit can be defined as art and neither deserve federal subsidies," he said.

The work by artist Andres Serrano was part of an exhibit displayed at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond from Dec. 13 to Jan. 29.

It was part of a traveling exhibit prepared by the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art in Winston-Salem, N.C. The National Endowment for the Arts has for seven years provided money for the Southeastern Center, as has the Rockefeller Foundation and the Equitable Life Foundation.

While the National Endowment for the Arts had not responded to Parris by midday, acting Chairman Hugh Southern has replied to earlier controversy about the exhibit.

Southern, in an earlier statement had said the endowment is forbidden by law from "interfering with the artistic choices made by its grantees."

"The National Endowment for the Arts supports the right of grantee organizations to select, on artistic criteria, their artist-recipients and present their work, even though sometimes the work may be deemed controversial and offensive to some individuals," he said.

"We at the endowment do, nonetheless, deeply regret any offense to any individual."

Parris, who represents Virginia's 8th District, is one of three Republicans seeking the GOP gubernatorial nomination.

He asked Southern for a "report of disciplinary and corrective actions you intend to take."

The National Endowment for the Arts gave \$75,000 to the Southeastern Center for its most recent funding year.