



# LAUGHLIN PHILLIPS

*Magnificent Art in an Intimate Setting*

Degas, Rothko, Matisse, and others that had been collected by his parents, Duncan and Marjorie.

But the home had become an old building with primitive heating and air-conditioning systems and poor storage conditions that have threatened the life of the paintings.

So in 1979, Laughlin Phillips sold *The Washingtonian*—which he and Robert Myers had started up fourteen years earlier—and turned his full attention to the gallery. He embarked on a rebuilding effort that involved widening the museum's community involvement, upgrading the building, and restoring its paintings.

His efforts are paying off: 150,000 visitors now pass through the museum's doors each year. Many of Washington's notables have joined the gallery's patrons, board, and

advisory council. And the museum reaches out to local schools, which hold classes there when the collection is closed to the public.

In 1981, about 75 of the gallery's best paintings went on a grand tour of seven American and two Japanese cities. When the paintings returned, \$1 million had been raised—funds that went a long way toward renovations.

Since then, the original building has been renovated. Efforts have begun to conserve and restore the paintings, but much of that work still lies ahead. More renovations are planned for the building's annex, with expanded areas for temporary shows. Phillips has a vision of where the gallery should be, and he says it's about halfway there.

He's brought it a long way already.

**O**n a shady block of 21st Street, just off Embassy Row, stands one of Washington's treasures. The Phillips Collection is a rare find in this day of grand museums with lines of tourists clutching tickets to big shows.

Once the home of Laughlin Phillips, the gallery's director, the museum is filled with works by Renoir, Bonnard,