

## **BMA PRESENTS 19TH-TO-21ST CENTURY JAPANESE KIMONO AND OBI NEVER BEFORE ON VIEW**

BALTIMORE, MD (Updated September 9, 2016)—The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) presents *Kimono & Obi: Romantic Echoes from Japan's Golden Age*, an exquisite selection of late 19th-to-21st century kimono and obi on view in the museum's Jean and Allan Berman Textile Gallery, July 10, 2016–January 15, 2017. Never before exhibited, these stunning garments, including seven kimono and an array of obi, were made after sumptuary laws were lifted early in the Meiji period (1868-1912), when commoners were no longer banned from wearing showy clothing with colors like red or purple.

The centerpiece of the exhibition is an early 20th-century long-sleeved kimono or *furisode*—yuzen-dyed, hand-embellished with gold and silver leaf, metallic pigments, and embroidery, and lined in red silk decorated with gold and silver leaf.

As Japan entered the industrial age in the late 1800s, kimono and obi expressed increased prosperity and new found wealth. Many of the kimono from this era display decorative motifs with symbols from Japan's Heian period (794 to 1185) when the Imperial Court was considered its most powerful, refined, and romantic. For example, fan motifs depicted on this bridal kimono on view represent the *hi-ogi*, or cypress wood fans the empress and ladies of the Heian Court held to hide their faces from the stares of men. In the context of a wedding, this motif signaled the bride's status as "Princess for the Day" and represented the opening of a new and wonderful life ahead as a married woman.



Organized by Curator of Textiles Anita Jones and consulting curator Ann Marie Moeller.

This exhibition is generously sponsored by The Coby Foundation, Ltd.

### **THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART**

The Baltimore Museum of Art is home to an internationally renowned collection of 19th-century, modern, and contemporary art. Founded in 1914 with a single painting, the BMA today has 95,000 objects—including the largest public holding of works by Henri Matisse. Throughout the museum, visitors will find an outstanding selection of American and European painting, sculpture, and decorative arts; works by established and emerging contemporary artists; significant artworks from China; stunning Antioch mosaics; and an exceptional collection of art from Africa. The BMA's galleries also showcase examples from one of the nation's finest collections of prints, drawings, and photographs and exquisite textiles from around the world. The 210,000-square-foot museum is distinguished by a grand historic building designed in the 1920s by renowned American architect John Russell Pope and two beautifully landscaped sculpture gardens. As a major cultural destination for the region, the BMA hosts a dynamic program of exhibitions, events, and educational programs throughout the year. General admission to the BMA is free so that everyone can enjoy the power of art.

**Image:** *Furisode*. 1912–1940. The Baltimore Museum of Art: Gift of Mrs. D.M. Cheston, Baltimore, BMA 1990.113