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## **THE BMA PRESENTS FOCUS EXHIBITION FEATURING THREE DECADES OF MATISSE'S DANCERS**

BALTIMORE, MD (November 7, 2012)—The BMA presents an intimate exhibition of more than 40 dance-themed prints, drawings, and sculptures by the great French artist Henri Matisse. On view in two of the Cone Collection galleries from **November 14, 2012 through February 24, 2013**, *Matisse's Dancers* spans three decades of the artist's career— from sculptures created in 1909-11 to delicate drawings of dancers sketched in 1949. The centerpiece of the exhibition is a rarely shown series of 11 transfer lithographs of a dancer/acrobat moving through various positions that evolve into an abstraction of reality, movement, and shape. These prints, drawn as lithographs in 1931-32, but published after Matisse's death, are among the most eloquent examples of the artist's way of seeing. The BMA has the largest and most significant collection of works by Matisse in the world.

"We are delighted to show another facet of the museum's outstanding collection of works by Matisse," said Deputy Director for Curatorial Affairs Jay Fisher. "As if we were present in the studio, we see how Matisse observes a dancer moving through various positions. With just a few drawn lines, he captures the essence of the figure's motion."

The 1931-32 lithograph series was made around the same time as the famous *Dance* mural in the Barnes Collection, recently unveiled in Philadelphia. During this period, Matisse made an enormous change in his work, turning to more simplified and structured compositions. The contrast can be seen in an earlier series of prints of dancers from 1926-27. These dancers are not working, but are lounging immobile on couches and chairs like his more familiar odalisques. Two later series of drawings from 1949 show Matisse's continuing abstraction of movement.

In addition to the prints and drawings, Matisse made sculptures of dancers to explore the challenges of capturing movement in three dimensions. Two early Matisse sculptures of dancers and the BMA's great *Serpentine* sculpture by Matisse will be exhibited along with works by a previous generation of artists who were equally fascinated with dancers, Auguste Rodin and Edgar Degas.

This exhibition is dedicated in memory of the artist's grandson and BMA National Trustee Claude Duthuit.

The exhibition is generously supported by Wilmington Trust through M&T Bank.

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### **MATISSE AT THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART**

The BMA has the largest and most significant collection of works by Henri Matisse in the world with approximately 1,500 works, including oil paintings, sculptures, prints, drawings, books, textiles, and a ceramic vessel, as well as 220 drawings, prints, and copper plates from the artist's first illustrated book, *Poésies de Stéphane Mallarmé*. This extraordinary collection began with a gift of 500 Matisse works from Baltimore sisters Claribel and Etta Cone, who had visited the Paris studios of Matisse and Pablo Picasso in the early 20th century and began forming one of the world's greatest collections of modern art. Over the course of nearly 50 years, they assembled an exceptional collection of approximately 3,000 objects, which were displayed in their Baltimore apartments. Etta Cone met Matisse in 1906, and her initial purchase of several drawings marked the beginning of a life-long passion for his art that continued throughout his career. With masterworks such as Matisse's *Blue Nude* (1907) and *Large Reclining Nude* (1935), competition among museums for The Cone Collection began as early as 1940, but Claribel insisted that it go to The Baltimore Museum of Art if "the spirit of appreciation for modern art in Baltimore became improved." The collection came to the BMA upon Etta's death in 1949, and has been on view since 1957. The collection has been the subject of exhibitions at prestigious museums around the world and celebrated in Baltimore with redesigned and expanded galleries that include a dynamic touch-screen virtual tour of the apartments where the Cone sisters lived with their remarkable collection. In recent years, the BMA has conducted ground-breaking research on Matisse's sculpture and organized major traveling exhibitions with accompanying catalogues on Matisse's sculpture and prints.

### **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, the BMA's outstanding collection encompasses 90,000 works of art, including the largest and most significant holding of works by Henri Matisse in the world, as well as masterpieces by Pablo Picasso, Paul Cézanne, and Vincent van Gogh. An expanding collection of contemporary art features iconic post-1960 works by Andy Warhol and Sol LeWitt, as well as exciting acquisitions by artists such as Kara Walker and Olafur Eliasson. The BMA is also recognized for an internationally acclaimed collection of prints, drawings, and photographs from the 15th-century to the present; grand European painting and sculpture from Old Masters to the 19th-century; distinguished American painting, sculpture, and decorative arts and Maryland period rooms; one of the most important African collections in the country, and notable examples of Asian, ancient American, and Pacific Islands art.

### **VISITOR INFORMATION**

General admission to the BMA is free; special exhibitions may be ticketed. The BMA is open Wednesday through Friday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 11 a.m.–6 p.m. (except major holidays). The Museum is closed Mondays, Tuesdays, New Year's Day, July 4, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. The BMA is located on Art Museum Drive at North Charles and 31st Streets, three miles north of Baltimore's Inner Harbor. For general Museum information, call 443-573-1700 or visit [artbma.org](http://artbma.org).

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