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THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART PRESENTS “A GRAND LEGACY: FIVE CENTURIES OF EUROPEAN ART”

Elegant reinstatement of galleries opens January 12, 2003

BALTIMORE, MD (November 15, 2002)—The Baltimore Museum of Art’s distinguished collection of 15th- through 19th-century European art returns to the opulent galleries of the Jacobs Wing in a dramatic reinstatement. **A Grand Legacy: Five Centuries of European Art**, opening **January 12, 2003**, features *Rinaldo and Armida*, one of the world’s finest paintings by Sir Anthony van Dyck, as well as French and Northern European masterpieces by Frans Hals, Rembrandt van Rijn, Jean Baptiste Siméon Chardin, and Louise Élisabeth Vigée-Lebrun. The galleries also showcase a superlative collection of 19th-century French sculpture by Auguste Rodin and his teacher, Antoine-Louis Barye, and works on paper by notable artists such as Eugène Delacroix and Édouard Manet.

“The newly restored galleries in the Jacobs Wing are a grand showcase for the BMA’s impressive collection of European art,” said BMA Director Doreen Bolger. “This dramatic reinstatement is another opportunity for visitors to discover and appreciate the richness of our collection.”

The magnificent examples of European paintings and sculpture in the galleries are integrated for the first time with a fine selection of decorative arts—jeweled snuffboxes, Sèvres porcelain, and an exquisite French writing desk. An ongoing rotation of works on paper dating from the 15th century permits the BMA to display exceptional items from its Old Master print collection. Highlights include etchings and engravings by Rembrandt and Albrecht Dürer. The reinstatement also features three galleries of Renaissance and Medieval works, including Botticelli’s *Virgin and Child* and a 14th-century Burgundian *Madonna and Child* sculpture.

The Jacobs Wing galleries, designed by the great American neoclassical architect John Russell Pope, have undergone a three-year, \$1.9 million renovation and reinstatement. Physical improvements include a new roof and skylights, enhanced lighting designed by Gordon Anson of the National Gallery of Art, and the restoration of original woodwork, including floors and elaborate doorframes. The reinstatement builds on the success of the 2001 Cone Wing renovation and reflects the BMA’s ongoing commitment to presenting its collection in ways that create a dynamic and engaging visitor experience.

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This reinstallation is generously sponsored by The Richard C. von Hess Foundation. The Institute of Museum and Library Services, a federal agency that fosters innovation, leadership and a lifetime of learning, supported conservation of several important objects in this installation. The Jacobs Wing roof replacement was made possible through the use of capital improvement funds from the City of Baltimore.

A Grand Legacy: Five Centuries of European Art is curated by Sona Johnston, BMA Senior Curator of Painting & Sculpture.

Highlights

Highlights of the Jacobs Wing galleries include superb works from the 17th through 19th centuries, most notably van Dyck's *Rinaldo and Armida* (1629), a masterpiece of allegorical and Romantic painting. Other collection strengths include masterful examples of Flemish, Dutch, and French painting: the intriguing gaze of *Dorothea Berck* (1644) by portraitist Frans Hals, genre painter Chardin's portrayal of a lovely maiden tossing a ball in *The Game of Knucklebones* (c. 1734), Rembrandt's painting of his son peeking out from a dark canvas in *Titus* (1660), and the jewel-like beauty of the exotic *Princess Anna Alexandrovna Galitzin* (c. 1797) by French court portraitist Vigée-Lebrun. Other notable works include landscapes by Jacob van Ruisdael, Hubert Robert, and Francesco Guardi.

The reinstallation also includes the first space for the public display of the extraordinary George A. Lucas Collection of 19th-century French art. Composed of nearly 20,000 prints and drawings, as well as paintings, bronzes, and an unusual selection of artist's palettes, the collection provides a comprehensive survey of 19th-century graphic arts. Artists represented include Honoré Daumier, Eugène Delacroix, and Édouard Manet, as well as major examples of sculpture by Antoine-Louis Barye and notable works by French academic painters and members of the Barbizon School.

Two intimate galleries will feature rotating thematic exhibitions from this collection. The first gallery celebrates the friendship between art collector George A. Lucas and *animalier* sculptor and painter Antoine-Louis Barye with a selection of the artist's bronze sculptures of animals engaged in combat, as well as several works in watercolor. The second gallery will highlight a selection of paintings ranging from French academic painting to Orientalism, including works by Jean-Leon Gérôme and Benjamin Constant.

The Legacy of Great Baltimore Collectors

The treasures in the BMA's impressive galleries of European art are the result of the generosity of several prominent Baltimore collectors.

The galleries are named for Mary Frick Jacobs, a 19th-century doyenne of Baltimore society and one of the original incorporators of the Museum. She significantly expanded the BMA's holdings of European art when she left her collection to the Museum in 1938 with the provision that a wing be built to house it. Featuring European

paintings from the 15th through 18th centuries, the collection also includes 18th-century tapestries, furniture, and *objets d'art*.

The Jacob Epstein Collection, featured in the center gallery of the Jacobs Wing, was donated to the Museum in 1951 and includes two of the BMA's most important works: van Dyck's *Rinaldo and Armida* and Rodin's *The Thinker*. One of the founding trustees of the museum, Epstein came to America from Lithuania and built a retail empire in Baltimore. His collection dramatically expanded the Museum's Old Master holdings.

The reinstallation marks the first time galleries are dedicated to rotating displays from the 20,000-item George A. Lucas Collection, a premiere holding of 19th-century art that includes 19,000 prints and drawings and 300 oil paintings, as well as more than 140 bronzes by Antoine-Louis Barye. Lucas spent 50 years living in Paris collecting art and acting as an agent for several other discerning collectors, including William and Henry Walters of Baltimore and William Corcoran of Washington, D.C. He had the unusual fortune of forming his collection during the lifetime of the artists represented. The 1996 acquisition of the Lucas Collection was made possible through generous funding from the State of Maryland; the Bequest of Laurence Bendann; and donations from individuals, corporations, and foundations across the Baltimore community.

Other Baltimore collectors who helped form this diverse holding of European art include Saidie A. May and her sister Blanche Adler, Elise Agnus Daingerfield, and T. Harrison Garrett, as well as numerous donors of individual works who have enriched the collection through the years.

The Baltimore Museum of Art

Founded in 1914, The Baltimore Museum of Art is Maryland's largest art museum with more than 85,000 objects, ranging from ancient mosaics to contemporary art. The Museum presents a variety of major exhibitions each year, as well as special installations that showcase the Museum's incomparable collection. The BMA's preeminent holding of post-Impressionist and modern art—The Cone Collection—includes a group of 500 works by Matisse, considered the largest and most comprehensive collection in the world, as well as major examples by Picasso, Cézanne, Gauguin, van Gogh, and Renoir.

The BMA also features world-renowned works of modern and contemporary art; grand European paintings and sculpture from Old Masters through the 19th century; an extensive collection of prints, drawings, and photographs from the 15th century to the present; notable American decorative arts and Maryland period rooms; and African, Asian, Native American, and Oceanic art. The BMA's Sculpture Garden, 34 works of art on nearly three landscaped acres in the heart of the city, is one of the largest urban sculpture gardens in the U.S.

The BMA is also recognized for imaginative interactive programs for families and dynamic school programs that reach more than 30,000 students each year.

Visitor Information

The Baltimore Museum of Art is open Wednesday through Friday, 11 a.m. until 5 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 11 a.m. until 6 p.m.; and during the first Thursday of every month (except major holidays), 11 a.m. until 8 p.m. The Museum is closed Monday, Tuesday, New Year's Day, July 4, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.

Admission is \$7 for adults; \$5 for seniors ages 65 and over and college students; and free for children 18 and under. Admission is free on the first Thursday of every month and for related Free First Thursday activities.

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 410/396-7100 or visit the BMA's web site at www.artbma.org.

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Checklist and photography available upon request.