Baltimore, MD (December 4, 2013)—The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) presents a compelling overview of one of the most visually arresting art movements of the 20th century. *German Expressionism: A Revolutionary Spirit*, on view January 29 – September 14, 2014, features more than 35 vivid paintings, prints, watercolors, drawings, and sculpture by Wassily Kandinsky, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Franz Marc, and others who contributed to this creative zeitgeist (spirit of the time). The exhibition includes rarely seen works from the BMA and select loans from private collections. It is curated by BMA Associate Curator of European Painting & Sculpture Oliver Shell.

German Expressionism emerged as a result of the country’s extraordinary industrial growth and modernization in the late 19th century. Two groups with similar ambitions formed to liberate themselves from the older generation, revolutionize art, and bring about a universal spiritual rebirth. *Die Brücke (The Bridge)* began in 1905 by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner and several architecture students in Dresden. *Der Blaue Reiter (The Blue Rider)* was organized in 1911 by Wassily Kandinsky and Franz Marc in Munich. Inspired by exhibitions of works by Vincent Van Gogh, Henri Matisse, and others, both groups explored increasingly subjective forms of representation. They also shared a vital sense of celebration and an eagerness for invention, especially in the graphic arts. They were soon joined by Paul Klee, Emil Nolde, Max Pechstein, and other like-minded spirits who believed that art could herald a renewal of society.

The exhibition explores two major themes embraced by this new generation of artists. Some showed a fascination with modern cities and mass entertainment, creating works such as Otto Dix’s print *Woman with Heron Feather* (1923) and Pechstein’s painting *The Circus* (1920), while others demonstrated a concern with nature and folk traditions or were inspired by the kind of authenticity they found in non-European “primitive” art. Many of these artists experimented with woodcut printing techniques that had flourished in the 16th century, creating intensely colored prints like Kandinsky’s *The Archer* (1908-1909) and Kirchner’s *Fir Trees* (1919). Other highlights include Alexei Jawlensky’s *Head of a Woman* (c. 1911) and important precursors to Expressionism such as Gustav Klimt’s painting *Pine Forest II* (1901).

The last section of the exhibition includes intense psychological portraits by Dix, Max Beckmann, and others whose artwork reflects the change in mood caused by the devastation of World War I and Germany’s economic and political collapse. By 1933, the era of Expressionism was largely over.

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ABOUT 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 90,000 works of art—including the largest holding of works by Henri Matisse in the world. The BMA has a long tradition of collecting the art of the day, beginning with the Cone sisters, whose avid acquisitions from living artists signaled the Museum’s commitment to collecting contemporary art. Other outstanding collections include European and American fine and decorative arts, 15th- through 19th-century prints and drawings, works by established and emerging contemporary artists, and objects from Africa, Asia, the Ancient Americas, and Pacific Islands. Two beautifully landscaped gardens display an array of 20th-century sculpture that is an oasis in the city. The Museum is located in the heart of Charles Village and adjacent to the main campus of The Johns Hopkins University. The BMA’s building encompasses 210,000 square feet and is distinguished by a grand historic building designed in the 1920s by renowned American architect John Russell Pope. Two beautifully landscaped gardens display an array of 20th-century sculpture that is an oasis in the city. Since 2006, the BMA has eliminated general admission fees so that everyone can enjoy the power of art.

RENOVATION
The BMA’s exciting multi-year renovation is underway. If you are visiting the BMA to see a specific work of art or collection, please call ahead to make sure it will be on view. In addition to renovating galleries, we continue to loan works and send traveling exhibitions from our outstanding collection to museums in the U.S. and abroad. Contact Visitor Services at 443-573-1701 during Museum hours for more information.

VISITOR INFORMATION
General admission to the BMA is free. The BMA is open Wednesday through Friday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 11a.m.-6p.m. (except major holidays). The Museum is closed Monday, Tuesday, 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.

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