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**THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART AND THE WALTERS ART MUSEUM
PRESENT *THE ESSENCE OF LINE: FRENCH DRAWINGS FROM INGRES TO DEGAS***

~One extraordinary exhibition on view at two museums~

BALTIMORE, MD—(June 13, 2005) For the first time, the renowned collections of 19th-century French drawings from The Baltimore Museum of Art and the Walters Art Museum are the subject of a major joint exhibition presented at each museum. *The Essence of Line: French Drawings from Ingres to Degas*, on view **June 19 through September 11, 2005**, features more than 150 rarely shown drawings and watercolors by some of the most influential French artists of the 19th century, including Eugène Delacroix, Honoré Daumier, Paul Cézanne and Edgar Degas. From revealing preparatory sketches to beautiful finished watercolors, these works survey the astonishing range of French art over the course of a century of innovation—Neoclassical landscapes and Symbolist fantasies; narrative scenes and poignant views of peasant life; and bawdy caricatures and social satire.



Edgar Degas. *Ballet Dancer Standing*, c. 1886-1890. The Baltimore Museum of Art: The Cone Collection. (On view at the Walters Art Museum.)

“The collections from The Baltimore Museum of Art and the Walters Art Museum encapsulate one of the nation’s strongest and richest collections of French art from this period,” said BMA Director Doreen Bolger. “These rarely shown works of art provide unique insight into the minds of some of the most fascinating artists and collectors of the 19th century.”

“Combined, these collections offer a more complete picture of 19th-century art production than is generally available in most places outside of New York, Paris or London,” said Walters Director Gary Vikan. “As this exhibition travels around the country, it will enhance Baltimore's reputation as a destination for cultural travelers.”

The Essence of Line: French Drawings from Ingres to Degas is thematically divided between the two institutions. The Walters Art Museum features approximately 75 drawings that emphasize how artists use drawing as part of their creative process. Preparatory drawings by Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, Théodore Géricault, Edgar Degas, Henri Fantin-Latour, Pierre-Auguste Renoir and others provide an intimate glimpse of the artist at work. These works include figure and facial studies, the discovery of the natural world through landscapes and images that depict mid-century thought on drawing, color and composition.

The Baltimore Museum of Art explores French drawings through the eyes of the collector in works by such masters as Mary Cassatt, Honoré Daumier, Jean-Léon Gérôme, Edouard Manet and Jean-Francois Millet, who distinguished themselves at the Paris Salons with their highly finished drawings intended for the market. These works, many originally enjoyed by collectors in private albums or portfolios, include genre scenes of contemplation, the poetics of nature, portraits, caricatures, satires and illustrations.

Both museum installations provide insights into the artistic, commercial and social functions that drawings served for their creators and collectors, as well as how collecting patterns influenced the development of modernism. The exhibition also includes works on loan from The Peabody Art Collection of the Maryland State Archives.

The exhibition will travel to the Birmingham Museum of Art, Alabama, February 19–May 14, 2006 and the Tacoma Art Museum, Washington, June 9–September 17, 2006.

The Essence of Line: French Drawings from Ingres to Degas is curated by BMA Senior Curator of Prints, Drawings & Photographs Jay Fisher, Walters Senior Curator of 18th- and 19th-century Art William Johnston and Project Research Associate Cheryl Snay, now Assistant Curator, Prints, Drawings & European Paintings at The Jack S. Blanton Museum of Art.

Previous collaborations between The Baltimore Museum of Art and the Walters Art Museum include the highly successful international traveling exhibition, *The Triumph of French Painting: Masterpieces from Ingres to Matisse* and *Book Arts in the Age of Dürer* in 2000.

The exhibition has been organized by The Baltimore Museum of Art and the Walters Art Museum with funding provided by The Richard C. von Hess Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts. The Walters venue has been generously supported by Stephanie and Jay Wilson, Millicent and Peter Bain, and Eleanor Abell Owen.

French Drawings in Baltimore

The BMA and the Walters have a combined holding of more than 900 French drawings from the 19th century, one of the nation's strongest and richest collections of French art from this period. These collections are among the few public holdings of 19th-century French drawings that were formed at the time and remain essentially intact. They offer a unique insight into the production and acquisition of art created during a pivotal moment in cultural history, the transition from academic traditions to modernism. The Walters' holdings, which were mostly assembled by William T. Walters (1819–94) with assistance from his agent George A. Lucas (1824–1909), reflect the preference for highly finished works prevalent among wealthy East Coast collectors during the second half of the 19th century. The BMA's collection demonstrates the taste and expertise of such prominent Baltimore collectors as Claribel and Etta Cone (1864–1929 and 1870–1949) and George A. Lucas, whose personal collection of works by mid-19th century French artists is considered one of the most significant resources in the United States for the study of art from this time period.

Catalogue

The exhibition will be accompanied by a 408-page, full-color catalogue featuring some of the finest works from these Baltimore collections. More than 100 illustrated entries reveal the significance of the work within the artist's oeuvre and patron's collection, as well as the work's technical properties and social content. Essays examine collectors of French drawings and their collecting habits, responses by contemporary critics and changes in materials and techniques that distinguish drawings of this period. Co-published by Penn State University Press, the catalogue will be available for purchase in each museum shop for \$39.95 paperback; \$75 hardcover.

Online Database

The Baltimore Museum of Art and the Walters Art Museum have jointly catalogued their combined collections of 19th-century French drawings in a searchable online database that makes approximately 900 rarely displayed drawings accessible to scholars and the general public. Users will be able to search the database by artist, title, provenance, subject, and date, and will have a variety of display options, including storing results in a virtual gallery of images. The web site will allow albums of works on paper assembled by collectors (many of which have been taken apart for conservation purposes) to be "reassembled," preserving the collectors' arrangements. Rarely displayed artists' sketchbooks will also be illustrated online, allowing viewers to "flip" through the pages. The database can be accessed at www.frenchdrawings.org.

PROGRAMS

Joint Gallery Tours

Sunday, June 26

The Walters Art Museum, 1 p.m. - The Baltimore Museum of Art, 3:30 p.m.

Free with museum admission at each institution

Join exhibition curators William Johnston and Jay Fisher for in-depth tours of the exhibition at each museum. Beginning at the Walters, examine drawings from the artist's point of view. Then travel to the BMA to explore French drawings through the eyes of the collector. Participants provide their own transportation between museums.

Beginning Drawing Workshop for Adults

with Michael Weiss, Maryland Institute College of Art

Saturday, July 30 and Sunday, July 31, 1–4 p.m.

Members, seniors (65+), students \$60; non-members \$85

Studio B in the Walters Art Museum's Family Art Center

Ages 17+

This workshop is designed for beginners who have always wanted to learn basic drawing skills. Included is an introduction to drawing and media, an informal tour of the exhibition, drawing exercises in the studio and galleries and critiques of students' work. Materials are included in the price of the workshop. This workshop is limited to 18 students.

ADMISSION AND HOURS

Admission to the exhibition is included with general admission at each respective museum.

The Walters Art Museum

Admission: Adults, \$10; seniors (65+), \$8; college students with ID, \$6; children ages 6–17, \$2; free for children under 6 and members. Admission to the permanent collection is free on Saturdays, 10 a.m.–1 p.m. and all day on the first Thursday of every month. Admission to *The Essence of Line* will be half-price at those times.

Hours: Wednesday–Sunday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m. The museum is closed on Mondays and Tuesdays.

Location: The Walters Art Museum is located on North Charles and Center streets.

General Information: 410-547-9000 or visit www.thewalters.org.

The Baltimore Museum of Art

Admission: Adults, \$7; seniors (65+) and college students, \$5; free for children 18 and under, and the first Thursday of every month.

Hours: Wednesday–Friday, 11 a.m.–5 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 11 a.m.–6 p.m.; and the first Thursday

of every month, 11 a.m.–8 p.m. The Museum is closed Mondays, Tuesdays, and July 4.

Location: The BMA is located on Art Museum Drive at North Charles and 31st Streets, three miles north of Baltimore's Inner Harbor.

General Information: 410-396-7100 or visit www.artbma.org

THE WALTERS ART MUSEUM

The Walters Art Museum is located in Baltimore's historic Mount Vernon Cultural District at North Charles and Centre streets and is one of only a few museums worldwide to present a comprehensive history of art from the third millennium B.C. to the early 20th century. Among its thousands of treasures, the Walters holds the finest collection of ivories, jewelry, enamels and bronzes in America and a spectacular reserve of illuminated manuscripts and rare books. The Walters' Egyptian, Greek and Roman, Byzantine, Ethiopian, and western medieval art collections are among the best in the nation, as are the museum's holdings of Renaissance and Asian art. Every major trend in French painting during the 19th century is represented by one or more works in the Walters' collection. Peabody Court is the official hotel of the Walters Art Museum. This historic property is just around the corner from the museum and features George's, a full-service restaurant. For hotel reservations, call 1-800-292-5500 and ask for the special Walters discounted rate.

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 Oceanic art. The BMA's sculpture gardens feature a 100-year survey of modern sculpture on nearly three landscaped acres.

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