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CELEBRATE AFRICAN DRUMS AND DRUMMING AT THE BMA DURING KWANZAA FAMILY DAY ON DECEMBER 21

BALTIMORE, MD (November 7, 2008)—Feel the beat at the BMA! Celebrate the art of drums and drumming at The Baltimore Museum of Art's annual **Kwanzaa Family Day** on **Sunday, December 21**, from **1–5 p.m.** Inspired by the sixth principle of Kwanzaa, *Kuumba* or creativity, the Kwanzaa Family Day features joyous musical experiences, dynamic performances, and storytelling. Come and enjoy this FREE event, which has become a Baltimore tradition. For more information call, 443-573-1832 or visit artbma.org.

Highlights of this year's Kwanzaa Family Day include a performance by **Fritete African Drum & Dance Ensemble**. Inspired by *Fritete*, meaning "things of the ancient," this dance ensemble offers audiences an engaging, first-hand exploration of ancient West African cultural traditions. Using call and response chants, energetic dances, and drum rhythms on authentic instruments, the group promotes themes of courage, hope, and sharing.

Lesole's Dance Project performs native dances that give a snapshot of the clothing, customs, and high-energy of South Africa. Led by native South African dancer Lesole Maine, the group highlights the unique qualities of modern and Afro-Fusion styles of dance. Through the traditional *Indlamu* dance to the percussive *Gumboot* to the forceful *Pantsula*, Lesole's Dance Project brings upbeat urban dances with a cultural twist!

Master storyteller **Baba Jamal Koram** uses drums to bring stories alive with the history, music, and lore of African and African-American cultures. Blending contemporary and traditional storytelling techniques with wit and wisdom, his stories encourage youth to make intelligent choices and improve their character. Hear stories including the folk-inspired *African Stories in the Americas* and a lighthearted children's story, *Under the Griot's Tree*.

AFRICAN ART COLLECTION AT THE BMA

One of the first museums to start an African art collection, the BMA has one of the most important collections of African art in the United States, including an unparalleled 19th- to mid-20th-century Female Dance Headdress *D'mba* from the Baga in Guinea. The African art collection now numbers more than 2,000 objects ranging from ancient Egyptian to contemporary Zimbabwean art. Works of art originate from

across the continent and were used in royal courts, public and esoteric performances, and religious contexts, with examples from Bamana, Yoruba, Kuba, Ndebele, and many more communities. Highlights include works by acclaimed Liberian carvers Zlan and Sonzanlwon and the legendary brasscaster Ldamie. Recent acquisitions include a Lozi throne carved in the court of Lozi King Lewanika of western Zambia and a Hausa Koranic prayer board.

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. Throughout the Museum, visitors will find an outstanding selection of 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 the Pacific Islands. Two beautifully landscaped gardens display an array of 20th-century sculpture that is an oasis in the city. As a major cultural destination for the greater Baltimore region, the BMA organizes and presents a variety of dynamic exhibitions and innovative programs throughout the year, and frequently hosts special events with cultural and educational partners. The Museum is located in a park-like setting in the heart of Charles Village and adjacent to the main campus of The Johns Hopkins University. It is distinguished by a grand historic building designed in the 1920s by renowned American architect John Russell Pope with an impressive wing for contemporary art added in 1994.

VISITOR INFORMATION

General admission is free; special exhibitions may be ticketed. The BMA is open Wednesday through Friday, 11 a.m.–5 p.m.; and Saturday and Sunday, 11 a.m.–6 p.m. 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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