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# BMA PRESENTS MATISSE'S MASTERPIECE ILLUSTRATED BOOK, *JAZZ*

*Baltimore Symphony Orchestra hosts 'Jazz of Matisse' concert*

**BALTIMORE** (February 15, 2006)—The Baltimore Museum of Art presents a focus exhibition of Henri Matisse's illustrated book *Jazz* (1947), widely recognized as one of the greatest masterpieces among artists' books of the 20th century. **Matisse: Jazz**, a one-gallery exhibition on view **May 3–August 27, 2006**, features 20 folios displayed in cases, accompanied by several related paintings and works on paper by Pablo Picasso, Georges Rouault, and Fernand Léger.

"The BMA is home to the world's largest collection of works by Henri Matisse," said BMA Director Doreen Bolger. "We are fortunate to be able to present this masterpiece in its entirety from the Museum's own holdings."

Inspired by the artist's memories of the circus, folk tales, and voyages, the vibrantly colored stencil prints in *Jazz* are based on a series of collages Matisse created by cutting forms, shapes, and figures from painted paper. They are accompanied by a text — handwritten by the artist himself — that explores his artistic ideas and the inspiration of music. The prints correspond to the improvisational spirit of jazz music in their abstract compositions and surprising color.

The *Jazz* project began in 1943, and by the time it was published in 1947, cutouts had become Matisse's primary mode of expression, a final progressive step in his search for the essential unity of form and color. Many of the plates recount scenes from the circus and its performers. Matisse, like many artists working at the same time, saw the life of circus performers as a metaphor for the creative challenges of a visual artist. The exhibition includes works by several of Matisse's contemporaries that explore similar themes.

The illustrated book *Jazz* is part of The Cone Collection, The Baltimore Museum of Art's preeminent holding of post-Impressionist and modern art. Approximately 3,000 objects assembled by Baltimore sisters Claribel Cone (1864–1929) and Etta Cone (1870–1949) were bequeathed to the Museum in 1950. In addition to 500 works by Henri Matisse, considered the most important and comprehensive holding in the world, the collection includes 113 paintings, sculpture, drawings, prints, and illustrated books by Pablo Picasso.

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Henri Matisse. *Icarus*, from the illustrated book *Jazz*. 1947. The Baltimore Museum of Art: The Cone Collection. © 2006 Succession H. Matisse, Paris/Artists Rights Society (ARS) New York.

### **MODERN MASTERS SERIES**

*Matisse: Jazz* is the second exhibition in a two-part series showcasing the BMA's world-renowned collection of modern art. This series, which began with *Picasso: The Final Years* (on view January 11–April 16, 2006), offers a closer look at the genius of these two artists through intimate one-gallery exhibitions of works rarely on view to the public due to their sensitivity to light. Both exhibitions are presented in conjunction with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra's Explorer Series concerts, which feature masterworks from the BMA's collection in an innovative musical program.

These exhibitions are curated by Jay Fisher, BMA Deputy Director for Curatorial Affairs and Senior Curator of Prints, Drawings & Photographs.

The Modern Masters Series is generously sponsored by Mercantile Bank & Trust.

### **BSO EXPLORER CONCERT SERIES**

The BMA and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra partner for an exciting new concert series that blends the musical genius of Stravinsky, Beethoven, and Bernstein with masterpieces by Picasso, Monet, and Matisse. The Explorer Series, a unique concert experience presented at the Joseph Meyerhoff Symphony Hall in Baltimore and the Music Center at Strathmore in Bethesda, blends incredible music with commentary by special guest hosts and dramatic presentations of renowned works of art from the BMA's collection.

Call the BSO Ticket Office at 410-783-8000 to order or receive additional information.

### **Monet and the Impressionists**

Thursday, April 6, 8 p.m.\*

Friday, April 7 & Saturday, April 8, 8 p.m.

Sunday, April 9, 3 p.m.

Conductor Jahja Ling presents an evening of musical Impressionism featuring Debussy's *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*, Ravel's *Shéhérazade*, and Beethoven's "Eroica" Symphony No. 3, a work of artistic and political rebellion that was dedicated to Napoleon Bonaparte and later retracted in defiance.

### **The "Jazz" of Matisse**

Thursday, May 11, 8 p.m.\*

Friday, May 12 & Saturday, May 13, 8 p.m.

Sunday, May 14, 3 p.m.

Audience favorite James Judd delves into the vivid colors and textures of Matisse with the contrapuntal masterpiece Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor by Bach, *Bright Blue Music* by modern composer Michael Torke with piano soloist William Wolfram, and Bernstein's jazz-influenced Symphony No. 2, "Age of Anxiety."

\*Concerts held at the Music Center at Strathmore in Bethesda.

### **THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART**

The Baltimore Museum of Art is home to an internationally renowned collection of 19<sup>th</sup>-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 Picasso, Cézanne, and 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 15<sup>th</sup> century to the present; grand European painting and sculpture from Old Masters to the 19<sup>th</sup> 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.

### **VISITOR INFORMATION**

The Baltimore Museum of Art is open Wednesday through Friday, 11 a.m.–5 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 11 a.m.–6 p.m.; and during the first Thursday of every month (except major holidays), 11 a.m.–8 p.m. The Museum is closed Monday, Tuesday, New Year's Day, July 4, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. The BMA will close at 4 p.m. on Saturday, December 24. Admission is \$10 for adults; \$8 for seniors ages 65 & over; \$6 for college students (full time with ID); and free for ages 18 & 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 31<sup>st</sup> 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](http://www.artbma.org).

### **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT BMA PUBLIC RELATIONS AT 443-573-1870**

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