



MEDIA CONTACTS:

Anne Mannix
amannix@artbma.org

Kelly Linton
klinton@artbma.org

Sarah Pedroni
spedroni@artbma.org

443-573-1870

THE BMA PRESENTS MAJOR RETROSPECTIVE OF MATISSE'S SCULPTURE

Baltimore is the only East Coast venue for this celebrated exhibition co-organized by The Baltimore Museum of Art, Dallas Museum of Art, and Nasher Sculpture Center

BALTIMORE, MD (August 15, 2007) —The Baltimore Museum of Art is the last stop on the national tour for ***Matisse: Painter as Sculptor***, the first major exhibition of Henri Matisse's sculpture in the U.S. in nearly 40 years. On view **October 28, 2007 – February 3, 2008**, this widely acclaimed exhibition brings together more than 160 sculptures, paintings, and drawings from museums and private collections around the world to reveal for the first time how the insights Matisse gained in one medium led to innovations in another. Matisse's sculptural achievements are also shown in the context of works by his contemporaries and through multimedia presentations that illustrate the production of sculpture and the groundbreaking technology used to uncover the creative process of one of the greatest artists of the 20th century.

Co-organized by The Baltimore Museum of Art, Dallas Museum of Art (DMA), and Nasher Sculpture Center, ***Matisse: Painter as Sculptor*** is a special ticketed event with a complimentary audio tour. A special opening day celebration will be held on Sunday, October 28— with free admission for all on that day only—made possible by Bank of America, the exclusive national sponsor for the exhibition.

"This landmark exhibition, which draws on the BMA's world-renowned collection of works by Matisse, is a testimony to the Museum's dedication to shedding new light on this great artist," said BMA Director Doreen Bolger. "This is a once-in-a-lifetime chance to see Matisse's genius represented in bronze, on canvas, and on paper with works from around the world."

The exhibition is organized chronologically around nearly 50 of Matisse's great sculptural masterworks created from 1899 to 1950. Early works are presented in an atelier-like setting with large-scale reproductions of archival photographs of Matisse working in his studio. The dynamic relationship between Matisse's two- and three-dimensional objects is revealed as early as 1900 with the Rodin-inspired sculpture *The Serf* and dramatic *Male Model* painting. For these works, Matisse hired a well-known Italian model who posed for some of Rodin's most famous sculptures, and worked obsessively on the sculpture for at least three years. The artist's



Edward Steichen, *Matisse with plaster cast of The Serpentine*, Issy-les-Moulineaux, 1909. Archives Matisse, Paris

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fascination with the female figure in bronze begins with *Madeleine I and II* (1901–03), two variations bestowed with undulating curves and rippling surfaces that attract light. Matisse also incorporated representations of his own sculptures within paintings, including the celebrated *Still Life with Geranium* (1906) and *Still Life with Plaster Figure* (1906). The vibrant *Oil Sketch for the Joy of Life* (1905–06) shows an idyllic setting with women in many of the reclining and standing poses that Matisse modeled and painted throughout his career.

The second half of the exhibition highlights the artist's work in series such as the five portrait busts of *Jeannette* (1910–1914), three busts of *Henriette* (1925–29), and four monumental bronze reliefs known as *The Backs* (1909–30), Matisse's brilliant exploration of the abstraction of the human form. The artist's iconic reclining nudes are represented in bronze with the *Large Seated Nude* (1922–29) and *Reclining Nude I, II, and III* (1907–29), and on canvas with *Blue Nude: Memory of Biskra* (1907), *Odalisque with a Tambourine* (1925–26), and *Large Reclining Nude/The Pink Nude* (1935). The exhibition concludes with a selection of cut-outs such as *Blue Nude I* (1952), Matisse's final treatment of the reclining nude theme, that demonstrate how he transformed his sculptural ideas into brilliantly colored paper on canvas. All of the works in the exhibition are complemented by rarely shown drawings by Matisse that explore similar themes and a selection of works by Constantin Brancusi, Paul Cézanne, Edgar Degas, Alberto Giacometti, Pablo Picasso, Auguste Rodin, and other artists are included to provide a vivid context for Matisse's achievements.

NEW RESEARCH ON MATISSE

The first comprehensive technical examination of Matisse's sculpture was conducted in preparation for the exhibition. With the support of a Samuel Kress Curatorial Fellowship for Research in Conservation and the History of Art and The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Foundation, BMA Associate Curator of European Painting & Sculpture Dr. Oliver Shell and BMA Objects Conservator Ann Boulton compared the BMA's bronze casts with other casts by Matisse in the collections of the Musée du Louvre, Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, and the Musées Matisse in Nice and Cateau-Cambresis in France and the Museum of Modern Art, NY; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and Philadelphia Museum of Art in the U.S. The technical study involving 3-D laser scans, base tracing, X-ray fluorescence spectrometry, X-radiography, and ICPMS (Inductively Coupled Plasma Mass Spectrometry) analysis led to the discovery that bronze casts of the same edition had considerable differences in their methods of construction, patination, finishing, and size. Another major revelation was that Matisse made piece molds from the wet clay original after casting so that he could develop his models further to produce sculptures in series. He used this process for *Madeleine I and II* (1901–03) and *The Backs I-IV* (1909–30). Differences in patina between sand-cast works and those made in lost wax were also identified, contributing to the knowledge of how Matisse created various casts. This project reflects the active research on sculpture techniques and conservation at The Baltimore Museum of Art.

The exhibition includes two multimedia presentations that demonstrate how to look at sculpture and show how the three-dimensional laser technology was used to compare multiple casts of the same work and reveal differences unseen by the human eye. The laser scanning was conducted by Direct Dimensions, Inc. of Owings Mills, Maryland, and the multimedia displays were created by the Imaging Research Center of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, which previously worked with the BMA to create the interactive virtual tour of the Cone Sisters' apartments, on view in the Cone Wing at the Museum.

HANDS-ON MATISSE ACTIVITY CENTER

The exhibition concludes with a special activity center that encourages visitors to follow Matisse's advice to his students and "empathize with the models' postures." Visitors are invited to take the pose of one of Matisse's sculptures while others trace their darkened silhouettes on the wall. A table with armatures and plasticine offers opportunities for visitors to create a model that recalls one of Matisse's sculptures in the exhibition. A third activity focuses on the tactile nature of sculpture by presenting a variety of concealed portrait heads made by Baltimore sculptor Richard Cleaver that visitors can touch and identify.

CATALOGUE

In conjunction with the exhibition, a fully illustrated catalogue co-produced with Yale University Press presents new scholarship through a series of essays that offer insights into Matisse's sculptural work. Dr. Steven Nash discusses Matisse's patronage and the reception of his sculpture in America; Dr. Dorothy Kosinski probes the art historical context of Matisse's sculpture in dialogue with tradition and the avant-garde; Jay Fisher explores the use of drawing in the evolution of Matisse's sculptural ideas, and Dr. Oliver Shell examines the artist's ideas about the viewing of his sculpture, as revealed by his deliberate placement of sculpture in exhibitions. Dr. Shell and BMA Objects Conservator Ann Boulton also summarize technical studies undertaken during a joint fellowship at the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts at the National Gallery of Art. The catalogue is available only in hardback at The BMA Shop for \$60.

EXHIBITION ORGANIZATION & TOUR

Matisse: Painter as Sculptor is co-organized by The Baltimore Museum of Art, Dallas Museum of Art, and the Nasher Sculpture Center. The exhibition tour opened in Dallas at both the DMA and the Nasher (January 21–April 29, 2007), and is presented at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (June 9–September 16, 2007) and The Baltimore Museum of Art (October 28, 2007–February 3, 2008). The exhibition is curated by Jay Fisher, BMA Deputy Director of Curatorial Affairs and Senior Curator of Prints, Drawings & Photographs; Dr. Dorothy Kosinski, Senior Curator of Painting and Sculpture and The Barbara Thomas Lemmon Curator of European Art at the Dallas Museum of Art; and Dr. Steven Nash, (former) Director of the Nasher Sculpture Center; with the assistance of Dr. Oliver Shell, BMA Associate Curator of European Painting & Sculpture; Dr. Heather MacDonald, The Lillian and James H. Clark Assistant Curator of Painting and Sculpture at the Dallas Museum of Art; and Jed Morse, Assistant Curator at the Nasher Sculpture Center.

SPONSORS

The national tour of *Matisse: Painter as Sculptor* is presented by Bank of America, the exhibition's exclusive corporate partner. Presentation in Baltimore is generously sponsored by The Rouse Company Foundation and Jeanette C. and Stanley H. Kimmel.

The exhibition is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities. Additional organizing support is provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, The Richard C. von Hess Foundation, and The Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Foundation.

TICKETS

Matisse: Painter as Sculptor is a special ticketed event. Tickets go on sale September 7, 2007. All tickets include a complimentary audio tour. Tickets are timed on weekends, as they may sell out at peak times. General admission to the BMA and the collection is free.

Adults	\$15	Ages 6–18	\$6
Seniors	\$12	Age 5 & under	FREE
Students	\$10	BMA Members	FREE

Purchase tickets: **In person** at the BMA Box Office in the Visitor Lobby, Wednesday–Friday, 11 a.m.–5 p.m.; Saturday–Sunday 11 a.m.–6 p.m. No handling charges apply. **Online** at www.Tickets.com. A \$2.50 service charge per ticket, plus a \$1.50 handling charge applies to all Internet orders. Avoid lines by printing tickets on your home computer at the time of purchase. **By phone** through Tickets.com at 1-800-919-6727. A \$2.50 service charge per ticket, plus \$1.50 handling charge applies to all phone orders.

VISITOR INFORMATION

General admission to the BMA is free; special exhibitions may be ticketed. The BMA is open Wednesday through Friday, 11 a.m.–5 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 11 a.m.–6 p.m. The Museum is closed Monday, Tuesday, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day. 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.

MATISSE AT THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART

In the early 20th century, Baltimore sisters Claribel and Etta Cone visited Matisse's Paris studios of Henri Matisse and Pablo Picasso and began forming one of the world's greatest art collections. Over the course of nearly 50 years they assembled an exceptional collection of approximately 3,000 objects, which were displayed in their Baltimore apartments. The highlight is a group of 500 works by Matisse, considered the largest and most significant in the world. Etta Cone met Matisse in 1906, and her initial purchase of several drawings marked the beginning of a life-long passion for his art that continued throughout his career. With masterworks such as Matisse's *Blue Nude* (1907) and *Large Reclining Nude* (1935), competition among museums for The Cone Collection began as early as 1940, but Claribel insisted that it go to The Baltimore Museum of Art if "the spirit of appreciation for modern art in Baltimore became improved." Thus achieved, the collection came to the BMA upon Etta Cone's death in 1949, and has been on view since 1957. The collection has been the subject of exhibitions at prestigious museums around the world and celebrated in Baltimore with redesigned and expanded galleries that include a dynamic touch-screen virtual tour of the apartments where the Cone Sisters lived with their remarkable collection. Today the BMA's Matisse collection includes more than 550 works by Matisse: 42 oil paintings, 22 sculptures, 205 prints, 42 drawings, 19 books, 2 textiles, and 1 ceramic vessel, as well as 220 drawings, prints, and copper plates from the artist's first illustrated book, *Poésies de Stéphane Mallarmé*.