



HIGH MUSEUM OF ART ATLANTA

1280 PEACHTREE STREET, N.E. • ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30309

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MODERN ART MASTERPIECES FROM THE PHILLIPS COLLECTION COMING TO THE HIGH THIS SPRING

***Exhibition features 75 extraordinary works by artists including
Degas, Cézanne, Gauguin, Manet, Matisse, Monet, van Gogh and Picasso***

ATLANTA, Dec. 6, 2018 – The High Museum of Art will be the exclusive venue in the Southeast for “European Masterworks: The Phillips Collection” (April 6 through July 14, 2019), an exhibition comprising 75 iconic paintings and sculptures from America’s first museum of modern art. These incomparable Impressionist, Post-Impressionist and Expressionist artworks exemplify the distinctive eye of collector Duncan Phillips, who opened his acclaimed museum in Washington, D.C., in 1921.

Visitors to the exhibition will encounter exquisite examples of Romanticism and Realism by Eugène Delacroix, Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, Honoré Daumier, Gustave Courbet and Édouard Manet in dialogue with masterpieces by Claude Monet, Alfred Sisley, Edgar Degas, Paul Cézanne, Paul Gauguin and Vincent van Gogh. Also featured are superb works by modern artists who held a special place in Phillips’ pioneering collection and who shaped the look of the 20th century, including Pierre Bonnard, Georges Braque, Nicolas de Staël, Alberto Giacometti, Wassily Kandinsky, Henri Matisse, Amedeo Modigliani and Pablo Picasso. Many of the works in the exhibition have not traveled together in more than 20 years.

The grandson of a prominent Pittsburgh industrialist, Phillips built this extraordinary collection over the course of his life to share it with an international audience. He believed that “the really good things of all ages and all periods could be brought together ... with such delightful results that we recognize the special affinities of artists.”

“The Phillips Collection is one of the most satisfying focused art collections I know. It is a veritable who’s who of late 19th and early 20th-century modernism, but it is also intensely personal,” said Claudia Einecke, the High’s Frances B. Bunzl Family curator of European art. “The collection shows Duncan Phillips’ penchant for strong, expressive color and design — as in the works of van Gogh and Bonnard — as well as his affinity for artists whose independence of spirit he admired, such as Daumier and Klee. This exhibition delivers a one-two punch: the highest artistic excellence and evidence of a collector’s exceptional discernment and personal conviction.”

“We are terrifically pleased to bring these compelling and beautiful works from The Phillips Collection to the High,” said Kevin W. Tucker, chief curator at the High. “We hope our visitors will take full advantage of this special opportunity for an intimate viewing of these masterworks representing some of the most important artistic achievements in the history of modern art.”

The works in the exhibition will survey the incisive stylistic and conceptual shifts in the development of modern art during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, from Courbet, Monet and Matisse to Kandinsky, Giacometti and beyond. This broad view will be overlaid by Duncan Phillips’ notion of “units” (in-depth representations of some of his favorite artists), which comprise:

- Three paintings by Daumier, including the powerful oil on canvas “The Uprising” (“L’Emeute”; ca. 1848)
- “The Open Window” (1929) and three other important paintings by Bonnard
- Seven paintings by Braque, including the late lyrical landscape “The Shower” (1952)
- Picasso’s “The Woman with Green Hat” (1939) along with three other paintings and two sculptures

Organized by The Phillips Collection and a team led by Joseph Holbach, director of special initiatives, and Renée Maurer, associate curator, the exhibition tour included stops at the Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth, Texas (May 14 – Aug. 13, 2017) and the Mitsubishi Ichigokan Museum, Tokyo, Japan (Oct. 17, 2018 – Feb. 3, 2019). Einecke is the presenting curator for the High.

Exhibition Catalogue

A fully illustrated publication accompanies the exhibition. Authored by Eliza E. Rathbone and Susan Behrends Frank, the catalogue features an essay by Robert Hughes and contributions by Maurer, Susan Badder, Johanna Halford-Macleod, Klaus Ottmann, Elsa Smithgall and Vesela Sretenović.

About Duncan Phillips

Duncan Phillips (1886–1966) was the younger son of Major Duncan Phillips, a Pittsburgh businessman and Civil War veteran, and Eliza Laughlin Phillips, whose father was a banker and co-founder of the Jones and Laughlin steelworks. He moved with his family to Washington, D.C., in 1895. After graduating from Yale in 1908, Phillips wrote extensively about art and published his first book, “The Enchantment of Art,” in 1914. Along with his brother, Jim, Phillips began to collect art in 1916 with the support of his parents. His father's death in 1917 and Jim's death from influenza in 1918 were stunning blows to Phillips, and he and his mother responded by founding the museum, originally called the Phillips Memorial Art Gallery. In October 1921, just before the museum opened, Phillips married artist Marjorie Acker, and the two worked together closely to build the museum’s collection. Over the ensuing years, Phillips continued to write about art, build strong relationships with artists as patron and collector, present numerous exhibitions and frequently rearrange works of art in the galleries. He served as the museum's director until his death in 1966.

Exhibition Organization and Support

“European Masterworks: The Phillips Collection” is organized by The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C. This exhibition is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities. This exhibition is made possible by Exhibition Series Sponsors Delta Air Lines, Inc., and Turner; Premier Exhibition Series Supporters the Antinori Foundation, Sarah and Jim Kennedy, and Louise Sams and Jerome Grilhot; Benefactor Exhibition Series Supporter Anne Cox Chambers Foundation; Ambassador Exhibition Series Supporters Tom and Susan Wardell, and Rod Westmoreland; and Contributing Exhibition Series Supporters the Ron and Lisa Brill Family Charitable Trust, Lucinda W. Bunnan, Corporate Environments, Marcia and John Donnell, W. Daniel Ebersole and Sarah Eby-Ebersole, Peggy Foreman, Robin and Hilton Howell, Mr. and Mrs. Baxter Jones, and Margot and Danny McCaul. Generous support is also provided by the Alfred and Adele Davis Exhibition Endowment Fund, Anne Cox Chambers Exhibition Fund, Barbara Stewart Exhibition Fund, Marjorie and Carter Crittenden, Dorothy Smith Hopkins Exhibition Endowment Fund, Eleanor McDonald Storza Exhibition Endowment Fund, The Fay and Barrett Howell Exhibition Fund, Forward Arts Foundation Exhibition Endowment Fund, Helen S. Lanier Endowment Fund, Isobel Anne Fraser–Nancy Fraser Parker Exhibition Endowment Fund, John H. and Wilhelmina D. Harland Exhibition Endowment Fund, Katherine Murphy Riley Special Exhibition Endowment Fund, Margaretta Taylor Exhibition Fund, Massey Charitable Trust, RJR Nabisco Exhibition Endowment Fund, and Dr. Diane L. Wisebram.

About the High Museum of Art

Located in the heart of Atlanta, Ga., the High Museum of Art connects with audiences from across the Southeast and around the world through its distinguished collection, dynamic schedule of special exhibitions and engaging community-focused programs. Housed within facilities designed by Pritzker Prize–winning architects Richard Meier and Renzo Piano, the High features a collection of more than 17,000 works of art, including an extensive anthology of 19th- and 20th-century American fine and decorative arts; major holdings of photography and folk and self-taught work, especially works by artists from the American South; burgeoning collections of modern and contemporary art, including paintings, sculpture, new media and design; a growing collection of African art, with work dating from pre-history through the present; and significant holdings of European paintings and works on paper. The High is dedicated to reflecting the diversity of its communities and offering a variety of exhibitions and educational programs that engage visitors with the world of art, the lives of artists and the creative process. For more information about the High, visit www.high.org.

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