

NEWS RELEASE



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Media Contacts

Michael Gillespie (973) 746-5555, ext. 234
mgillespie@montclairartmuseum.org

Raechel Lutz (973) 746-5555, ext. 219
rlutz@montclairartmuseum.org

Diane Wagner (312) 992-2370
Diane.wagner@bankofamerica.com

**MONTCLAIR ART MUSEUM PRESENTS FIRST EXHIBITION TO EXPLORE
THE INFLUENCE OF CÉZANNE ON EARLY 20TH-CENTURY
AMERICAN ART**

***Cézanne and American Modernism* Highlights the French Master’s Impact upon the
Development of American Modernism**

MONTCLAIR, NJ, August 18, 2009—The Montclair Art Museum (MAM) presents *Cézanne and American Modernism*, the first exhibition to examine fully the influence of Paul Cézanne (1839–1906) upon modern American artists from 1907 to 1930. The exhibition will explore the critical function American artists and others played in establishing the reputation of Cézanne, who has been universally acclaimed as the definitive bridge between late 19th-century Impressionism and the modern art movements of the 20th century. The show will run from September 13, 2009–January 3, 2010.

As the largest, most ambitious exhibition in the 95-year history of the Museum, *Cézanne and American Modernism* comprises 131 works, including 18 works by Cézanne and paintings, works on paper, photographs, and archival documents representing 34 American artists, as well as critics. Works in the exhibition are drawn from a wide range of museum collections, including MAM’s, and from important private collections. As a testament to its commitment to the community, MAM will not charge extra for this special exhibition but instead will retain its existing price structure.

Lora Urbanelli, MAM’s Director, said: “We want to make sure no one misses this once-in-a-lifetime event. That’s why we’re not charging extra for this special exhibition. We’re also expanding our hours, opening on Tuesdays and remaining open late on Thursdays, until 9 p.m. MAM Thursday Nights will see a full range of public programs. Docent-led tours of the exhibition will increase dramatically. We’ll have free audio tours—for both adults and children; visitors just need to bring their cell phones. We want everyone to learn about one of the greatest artists of the 20th century and to enjoy themselves.”

The exhibition, curated by Dr. Gail Stavitsky, Chief Curator, Montclair Art Museum, will be

presented in collaboration with The Baltimore Museum of Art and is made possible by Bank of America. It will be on view at The Baltimore Museum of Art from February 14 through May 23, 2010, and will then travel to the Phoenix Art Museum, where it will be on view from July 3 through September 26, 2010. Stavitsky is organizing the exhibition in collaboration with Katherine Rothkopf, Senior Curator and Department Head of European Painting and Sculpture, The Baltimore Museum of Art.

The traveling exhibition will be accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue co-published by Yale University Press.

The Exhibition

“American modernists played seminal roles in disseminating Cézanne’s influence and expanding access to his work through their artwork, dialogues, and writings, as well as through their organizing of exhibitions,” said Stavitsky. “A number of these artists were also advisers to the first American collectors of Cézanne’s work and even acquired examples themselves. Thus they played critical roles in the canonization of Cézanne, paving the way for his evolution from neglect and obscurity to universal prominence. Many of the French master’s works are in American private and public collections today, and since the mid-20th century, this country has taken the international lead in the scholarly discourse on Cézanne and his popularization.”

Cézanne’s transformative effect on the work of American artists is revealed by their adaptations of his stylistic hallmarks and through their serial approach to subject matter—still lifes, landscapes, figurative works, and portraits. These themes inform the organization of this exhibition, which opens with groundbreaking comparisons between the work of Cézanne and his American admirers. For the first time, Morgan Russell’s *Three Apples* (1910, Museum of Modern Art) will be paired with the painting that directly inspired it, Cézanne’s seminal *Five Apples* (1877–78, private collection of Eugene Thaw), which was lent to Russell by American collector Leo Stein.

A rare group of black-and-white photographs by Parisian photographer–gallery owner Eugène Druet of Cézanne’s paintings will be exhibited for the first time since they were lent by their owner, the leading American modernist Max Weber, and displayed at Alfred Stieglitz’s gallery 291 in 1910. Cézanne’s first one-man show in America at 291 is represented by the October 1911 issue of Stieglitz’s magazine *Camera Work*, with reprints of reviews. This exhibition and a show at New York’s Montross Gallery in 1916 were composed of watercolors by Cézanne. This first section of the show will feature examples of Cézanne’s works in this medium, which introduced his art to America. Works from these shows will be juxtaposed with examples by American artists, such as Charles Demuth and Max Weber. The landmark Armory Show of modern art (1913), which first featured Cézanne’s oil paintings (as well as his prints and watercolors), will be represented by rare postcards and a relatively unknown but seminal booklet on the artist by Elie Faure that was made available during the exhibition. Furthermore, the first Cézanne ever purchased by an American museum, *View of the Domaine Saint-Joseph* (1888-90, the Metropolitan Museum of Art), will be on view.

Cézanne’s influence upon American photographers of the early 20th century is examined for the first time, in recognition of the exceptional importance that Alfred Stieglitz, Edward Steichen, Paul Strand, and others played in introducing modernism to America. Still-life subjects suddenly emerge in avant-garde photography, and photographers’ serial approaches to landscape reflect Cézanne’s approach to his subjects.

Sections of the exhibition will be devoted to chronological, thematic approaches to Cézanne's renowned subjects. Still-life compositions by Max Weber, Morgan Russell, Charles Demuth, Arshile Gorky, Man Ray, and many others are included, followed by landscapes by several painters, notably Marsden Hartley, one of a number of American artists who traveled to Aix-en-Provence to experience firsthand Cézanne's native environment. Others found native counterparts to Cézanne's landscape motifs in New England, the West, and elsewhere. Portraits by Stanton-Macdonald Wright, Alfred Maurer, Weber, and others reveal American artists' admiration for the innovative portraiture of Cézanne. Cézanne's many variations on the theme of bathers in landscape settings were highly influential as modern incarnations of this classical, idyllic subject.

Exhibition Website

The Museum will maintain a site dedicated to the exhibition for journalists seeking further information, including a checklist, images, and related events and programs. Please visit montclairartmuseum.org/press_contact_form.

Education Programs

MAM is offering a wide variety of education and public programs for all ages in connection with the exhibition. Please consult the calendar on the home page of montclairartmuseum.org for complete information.

Note on Hours and Admission

In light of the difficult economic climate, MAM will not charge extra for this exhibition but retain its usual admission fees: \$12 for nonmember adults, \$10 for seniors and students with I.D. Free admission to members and children under 12. Complimentary audio tours—for both adults and children—will be available; just bring your cell phone. Group tours may be booked by calling (973) 746-5555, ext. 257 or by emailing tours@montclairartmuseum.org.

For this exhibition, the Museum will also expand its gallery hours, opening on Tuesdays and remaining open Thursday evenings. Hours: Tuesdays through Sundays, Noon–5 p.m., and Thursday nights, 5–9 p.m. MAM Thursday Nights will feature special programs.

Sponsorship

Cézanne and American Modernism is organized by the Montclair Art Museum and The Baltimore Museum of Art. This exhibition is made possible by Bank of America. Additional funding has been provided by The Leir Charitable Foundations, the Terra Foundation for American Art, The Henry Luce Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, Thaw Charitable Trust, The Blanche and Irving Laurie Foundation, and the Dedalus Foundation, Inc. This exhibition is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities.

Additional support is provided by Exhibition Angels Carol and Terry Wall, The Bershad Foundation, Inc., Rose and John Cali, Bob and Bobbie Constable, Patti and Jimmy Elliott, Jacqueline and Herb Klein, Jacqueline McMullen, Lyn and Glenn Reiter, Newton B. Schott, Jr., and Toni LeQuire-Schott, Adrian A. Shelby, Margo and Frank Walter, and Joan and Donald Zief as well as by Angela and Michael Frasco, Lynn and Stephen Glasser, Karen and Larry Mandelbaum, Katherine and Frank Martucci, Donna M. Uher, and Marica and Jan Vilcek. Marketing assistance has been provided by Ed Moed of Peppercom in New York City. Travel support for the national tour has been provided by Continental Airlines.

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ABOUT THE MUSEUM

The Montclair Art Museum, a notable, community-based institution with an international reputation, boasts a renowned collection of American and Native American art that uniquely highlights art making in the United States over the last three hundred years. The collection includes more than 12,000 objects: paintings, prints, original works on paper, photographs, and sculpture by American artists from the 18th century to the present, as well as traditional and contemporary Native American art and artifacts representing the cultural developments of peoples from all of the major American Indian regions. MAM's Yard School of Art is the leading regional art school, offering a multitude of comprehensive courses for children, youth, adults, seniors, and professional artists.

The Montclair Art Museum is located at 3 South Mountain Avenue in Montclair, N.J. Information and directions are available on the Museum website, montclairartmuseum.org, or by calling (973) 746-5555.

All Museum programs are made possible, in part, by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts, and by funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, the Vance Wall Foundation, and Museum members.

Bank of America and the Arts

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