

Seattle Art Museum Announces Opening Exhibition Schedule for the New SAM Downtown

2007- 2009 exhibition schedule includes celebratory exhibition of new gifts to the collection and international exhibitions including a major show from the Musée du Louvre

(Seattle, WA) – February 13, 2007 - Today, the Seattle Art Museum (SAM) announced an ambitious opening exhibition schedule for its newly expanded downtown building, which will open on May 5, 2007. The exhibition program will feature extraordinary exhibitions from the Musée du Louvre, the Kobe City Museum in Japan and shows organized by SAM including a major exhibition of West Coast Salish Art.

Overall, the expansion provides the museum with over 70 percent more gallery space, in which SAM will install an entirely new presentation of its permanent collection. Having almost double the special exhibition space of previous years, the new Simonyi Special Exhibition Galleries are able to accommodate larger-scale special exhibitions or two special exhibitions at a time.

Two free floors of public space in the new SAM will be filled with art. At the time of the opening, the free space will be animated by a major installation by Cai-Guo Qiang's *Inopportune: Stage I and Illusion*, featuring nine cars, most of which are suspended from the 39-ft. high ceiling and have flashing LED lights.

“The new SAM downtown will exceed your expectations from the moment you walk in the door,” said Mimi Gates. “From the outset, our concept of the expanded SAM has been to open up the museum, literally and figuratively, and create a lively place well integrated into the heart of our city. SAM is a civic place, filled with great art and culture, which has broad-based community ownership and truly belongs to everyone.”

The opening exhibition, *SAM at 75: Building a Collection for Seattle*, on view from May 5 through Sept. 9, 2007, will showcase and celebrate major gifts made in honor of the museum's upcoming 75th anniversary in 2008. SAM plans to announce more details about these gifts in the coming weeks.



Featured in *Inspiring Impressionism*
Mary Cassatt
(American, 1844-1926)
The Family, 1893, Oil on canvas, 32
¼ × 26⅞ in.
Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk,
VA, Gift of Walter P. Chrysler, Jr.,
71.498

“It is a tremendous boon to our community that so many landmark works from incredible collections are coming to the Seattle Art Museum,” said Mimi Gates, SAM Director. “The museum’s collections are being enhanced as we move into a superb new facility, and it is an achievement that reflects the international importance of the city.”

In anticipation of SAM’s 75th anniversary in 2008, the museum undertook an ambitious acquisitions initiative to coincide with the building campaign and to celebrate one of the most lively and respected collecting communities in the country. When SAM downtown opens in May, approximately 200 highlights from these extraordinary gifts will be featured in the special exhibition galleries and integrated throughout the permanent collection galleries. This exhibition was made possible with generous support from Microsoft. Endowment support provided by the Kreielsheimer Exhibition Endowment. Additional support provided by contributors to the Annual Fund.

As part of *SAM at 75*, there will also be a special installation entitled *Five Masterpieces of Asian Art: The Story of their Conservation*. The installation will feature recently conserved Japanese and Korean masterworks including *Poem Scroll with Deer*, *Crow Screen* and *Preaching Buddha*. Conservation techniques and new scholarship gained from the process will also be on display.

SAM at 75 will be followed by the groundbreaking exhibition *Japan Envisions the West: 16th-19th Century Japanese Art from Kobe City Museum* (Oct. 11, 2007 – Jan. 6, 2008). Organized by the Seattle Art Museum in collaboration with Kobe City Museum, this international exhibition explores how Japanese saw Westerners and how Japanese artists responded to and interpreted Western art and culture from the 16th to the 19th century. *Japan Envisions the West* features 140 objects from Kobe City Museum including paintings, prints, maps, ceramics, lacquerware, metalware, glassware and textiles, along with 20 objects from the Seattle Art Museum’s collection. This exhibition commemorates the 50th anniversary of the sister-city relationship between Kobe and Seattle. “This extraordinary exhibition will further visitors understanding of the early intersection of Japan and the West, providing keen insight into how Japan viewed and learned the West from the 16th to the 19th century,” says Yukiko Shirahara, SAM’s John A. McCone Foundation Curator of Asian Art. “This is the first time that the Kobe City Museum is lending its greatest masterpieces from its superb collection of Namban art (Japanese art influenced by Portugal and Spain) and Kōmō (influenced by Holland) arts to the United States.” The exhibition was organized by Seattle Art Museum in collaboration with Kobe City Museum and made possible with generous support from The Atsuhiko and Ina Goodwin Tateuchi Foundation, The E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation, PONCHO, National Endowment for the Arts, U.S. Bank and Worldbridge. Additional support provided by Nippon Express and contributors to the Annual Fund.

Coincidental with *Japan Envisions the West* SAM will present *Gaylen Hansen, Three Decades of Painting* in the newly expanded special exhibition galleries. This exhibition is a retrospective of the work of Washington-based painter, Gaylen Hansen (b. 1921). The show features 20 paintings, drawn from public and private collections, including the artist’s own private collection. The exhibition was organized by Washington State University Museum of Art, Pullman. “The whimsical art of Gaylen Hansen will surprise and delight visitors of all ages,” says Michael Darling the Jon and Mary Shirley Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art.

SAM also announced today that it is the only West Coast venue for *Roman Art from the Louvre*, an exhibition of masterworks from the prestigious collection of the Musée du Louvre in Paris, France. Opening February 19, 2008, this large-scale exhibition is possible because of the museum's expansion which increased SAM's special exhibition space from 8,500 to 14,000 square feet. Showcasing approximately 180 prime examples of Roman art drawn from the Louvre's unsurpassed collection, the exhibition represents the largest number of pieces loaned by the Louvre for any single show. The exhibition brings to life ancient Roman society from the first century BCE to the fourth century CE. Visitors will meet emperors and members of the imperial court, elite and ordinary citizens, women and children, soldiers, gladiators, foreigners, and slaves. The masterworks include mosaics, frescoes, terracotta statuettes, monumental sculptures, marble reliefs and glass and vessels.

"It is the first time that these treasured works have been on view outside of Europe," said Margaret Laird, SAM's guest curator for the exhibition and assistant professor of Roman Art at the University of Washington. "One reason these works are traveling to the U.S. is because the Louvre is planning a new installation of their collection. Seattle audiences will get to preview the Louvre's new plans before they open in Paris." *Roman Art from the Louvre* is organized by the American Federation of Arts and the Musée du Louvre. This exhibition is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities.

Inspiring Impressionism, opening in summer 2008, launches an in-depth exploration of the links between the Impressionists and the artists that preceded them. Beneath the Impressionists' commitment to capturing contemporary life lay a deep exploration of the art of the past including their more recent early 19th-century predecessors. "This exhibition offers a rare opportunity to look at Impressionism in a new light," says Chiyo Ishikawa, SAM's Deputy Director for Art and Curator of European Painting and Sculpture. "The standard line of thinking is to present the Impressionists as the embodiment of modernity and rejection of the past. This exhibition reminds us that many of them, in fact, looked backward to the examples of older artists." The Impressionists learned from artists by making painstaking oil paintings, watercolors and drawings executed in museums, primarily the Louvre. These copies will be shown with the Old Masters' works that inspired them. The exhibition is organized according to subject—portraits, still-lives, landscapes, interiors and nudes—with specific comparisons drawn between particular works, as well as broader connections relating to issues of subject, composition and technique. These thematic groupings are punctuated with small dossier sections on three artists who drew most heavily on art historical sources: Édouard Manet, Edgar Degas and Paul Cézanne. The exhibition is organized by the Denver Art Museum.

In October 2008, SAM will present the first major exhibition and catalog of the unique artistry and culture of Coast Salish First Peoples of Washington State and British Columbia. Organized by SAM, *S'Abadeb (The Gifts): Coast Salish Art and Artists* will feature more than 150 works of art from national and international collections that offer a glimpse into the daily and ceremonial lives of the 35 groups that make up the Coast Salish. Within this visually stunning exhibition, prehistoric, historic and contemporary works will be shown side-by-side to emphasize the cultural exchanges beginning in the late 18th century as well as the ongoing vitality of the art traditions today. Dynamic multi-media presentations will be featured in the galleries that take visitors into the territories and lives of the Salish. Complimentary programming includes artist presentations, school tours, and a film festival. The exhibition and its components is a collaborative project with Salish representatives, humanities experts and museum staff.

“*S’Abadeb (The Gifts)* will be the first exhibition that allows the Salish people to define who they are, providing a counterpoint to long-held misconceptions of territorial and cultural classifications,” says Barbara Brotherton, SAM’s curator of Native American Art. This exhibition is organized by the Seattle Art Museum. The Henry Luce Foundation provided the leadership grant for the exhibition. Additional support provided by Contributors to the Annual Fund.

In 2009, the museum will host two outstanding exhibitions of American Art. The first is an important national traveling exhibition culled from the Yale University Art Gallery’s renowned collection of American art: it is *Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness: American Art 1660-1893 from the Yale University Art Gallery*, which will be on view from February through early May of 2009. The exhibition illuminates the American experience from the time of the settlements in the 17th century through the great Chicago world’s fair, the World’s Columbian Exposition, in 1893, a moment that celebrated America’s rise as an international force politically, economically, and culturally. The show features more than 230 paintings, prints, photographs, and decorative works by artists ranging from Paul Revere to Thomas Eakins and Winslow Homer.

“Seattle has never been host to such an amazing collection of iconic works of art that encapsulate the American experience from the 17th through the 19th century,” says Patricia Junker, SAM’s Curator of American Art, “and although the objects are familiar to all of us from our history textbooks, audiences outside New Haven, Connecticut, have rarely had the chance to see many of these works directly.” The works of art tell the story of their times, creating a vivid portrait of a young country struggling to invent a people and a nation and to define itself culturally, politically, and geographically. At the center of the exhibition is an extensive group of portraits and history paintings by John Trumbull that have never before been allowed to travel—these include the famous *Signing of the Declaration of Independence*, which was later made into a mural for the U.S. Capitol Rotunda. When Trumbull gave his works to Yale University in 1832 it was with the proviso that they always be on view at Yale, and they are prohibited from traveling elsewhere. Due to the expansion of the Yale University Art Gallery, the Trumbull paintings are allowed to travel this one time only, and so Seattle audiences will have, truly, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see Trumbull’s famous paintings outside of their home in New Haven, Connecticut. Many of the other works of art included in this show are also landmark examples of American art that are rarely lent.

Running concurrently with *Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness* will be a special exhibition of the work of an important but little known 19th century American painter. *The Indian Paintings of George de Forest Brush*, is co-organized by the National Gallery of Art and the Seattle Art Museum. It is the first exhibition of the extraordinary group of paintings that Brush created in the late 1880s focusing on ancient Meso-American and ancient Native North Americans. Featuring only 20 paintings, the show is tightly focused on the technical brilliance of Brush’s technique and the significance of his themes in American culture at this particular moment in history.

In May 2007, SAM Downtown will inaugurate an 118,000-square-foot addition designed by Brad Cloepfil of Allied Works Architecture. The expansion will enable the museum to showcase more of its permanent collection including modern and contemporary, African, Oceanic, Northwest Coast, Ancient Mediterranean, Islamic, European, American, and decorative arts as well as expand its special exhibitions and education programs. This is the

first phase of the museum's master expansion plan that will allow SAM to add almost 200,000 additional square feet in the future and enable the museum to grow gradually over time.

The museum is in the final phase of a highly successful fundraising effort, raising \$175 million of its \$180 million capital campaign goal to date. The campaign encompasses the Olympic Sculpture Park, expansion of SAM Downtown and renovations to the Seattle Asian Art Museum in Volunteer Park. To date, more than 7,000 donors have given to the campaign at all levels. The Kresge Foundation recently pledged a \$2.5 million challenge grant if SAM can raise \$180 million by October 2007.

Highlights of SAM Downtown's Advanced Exhibition Schedule

2007

- ***SAM at 75: Building a Collection for Seattle***
May 5 – Sept. 9, 2007
- ***Five Masterpieces of Asian Art: The Story of their Conservation***
May 5 – Sept. 9, 2007
- ***Japan Envisions the West:
16th-19th Century Japanese Art from Kobe City Museum***
Oct. 11, 2007 – Jan. 6, 2008
- ***Gaylen Hansen, Three Decades of Painting***
Oct. 11, 2007 – Jan. 6, 2008

2008

- ***Roman Art from the Louvre***
Feb. 21 – May 11, 2008
- ***Inspiring Impressionism***
June 19 – Sept. 21, 2008
- ***S'Abadeb (The Gifts): Coast Salish Art and Artists***
Oct. 23, 2008 – Jan. 11, 2009

2009

- ***Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness: American Art 1660-1893 from the Yale University Art Gallery***
Feb. 26 – May 24, 2009
- ***The Indian Paintings of George de Forrest Brush***
Feb. 26 – May 24, 2009

The Seattle Art Museum was founded in 1933 and is one museum in three locations: Seattle Art Museum Downtown, Olympic Sculpture Park and the Seattle Asian Art Museum. More information can be found at www.seattleartmuseum.org.