Passport to Paris Will Take Visitors on a Parisian Voyage through 300 Years of Art History

Three exhibitions open at the Denver Art Museum October 27

(Denver, Colo.) – The Denver Art Museum (DAM) will host Passport to Paris, a suite of three exhibitions, October 27, 2013–February 9, 2014. The trio of shows will focus on French art from the late 1600s to early 1900s, and explore changes in art and society during three important centuries in art history. The museum will offer a full suite of complementary activities that highlights France and the French aesthetic. Additionally, a partnership with Colorado Symphony will allow both institutions to provide immersive and interactive experiences to their audiences.

“Through three related yet distinct exhibitions, our visitors will experience the richness and complexity of French art, from the grand and monumental art of the time of Louis XIV to the lively depictions of contemporary life of the impressionists,” said Christoph Heinrich, Frederick and Jan Mayer Director of the Denver Art Museum. “This is a rare opportunity to view the work of masters—Degas, Monet, Pissarro, Toulouse-Lautrec, Van Gogh among others—and not just their paintings, but also their sketches and drawings, which is often the foundation for later masterpieces.”

Included in the Passport to Paris trio are Court to Café: Three Centuries of French Masterworks from the Wadsworth Atheneum; Nature as Muse: French Impressionist Landscapes from the Frederic C. Hamilton Collection and the Denver Art Museum; and Drawing Room: An Intimate Look at French Drawings from the Esmond Bradley Martin Collection.

“This is a time when major shifts in politics and society were reflected in the arts,” said Angelica Daneo, associate curator of painting and sculpture at the DAM. “Paris became the artistic center of Europe and the leading capital for taste, culture and fashion.”

Court to Café: Three Centuries of French Masterworks from the Wadsworth Atheneum

Court to Café features 50 masterpiece paintings from the collection of the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, Conn. In order to create an immersive experience, the DAM will display costume arts on loan from the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and decorative arts and furniture from the museum’s collection to provide context for the paintings on display. This aspect is unique to Denver and illustrates the museum’s commitment to connecting visitors to the creative process of artists. The artworks visually unfold the richness of French painting during the period ranging from the 17th through the early 20th century, and include religious and mythological subjects, portraits, landscapes, still lifes and genre scenes. Following the social history of French art, the exhibition will take viewers through four themed sections in the galleries. Each area reveals the cultural and societal shifts of the period and how they were reflected in art. The exhibition will be on view in the Anschutz Gallery on level two of the Hamilton Building.
Nicolas Poussin, François Boucher, Edgar Degas, Camille Pissarro, Auguste Renoir, Paul Cézanne, Vincent van Gogh, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec and Claude Monet are among the masters represented. This exhibition tour is the first time that all of these works have been shown as a group. It is accompanied by an exhibition book titled *Masters of French Painting, 1290-1920: At The Wadsworth Atheneum*, by Eric M. Zafran.

**Nature as Muse: French Impressionist Landscapes from the Frederic C. Hamilton Collection and the Denver Art Museum**

*Nature as Muse* displays the stunning work of 19th century impressionist artists. Focusing on landscape paintings, the exhibition will feature about 36 artworks from the private collection of Frederic C. Hamilton and the DAM’s own holdings. This is the first time that the masterworks from Hamilton’s private collection have been on view to the public. The exhibition will be on display in the Gallagher Family Gallery on level one of the Hamilton Building.

In the beginning of the 19th century, artists could take their easels and paints and work outside, free from the constraints of studio space and light. Utilizing loose brushstrokes and a soft color palette, the impressionists told the story of the French countryside through their canvases. Artists on view include Claude Monet, Berthe Morisot, Camille Pissarro, Auguste Renoir and Alfred Sisley. The DAM is producing an illustrated catalog for the exhibition.

**Drawing Room: An Intimate Look at French Drawings from the Esmond Bradley Martin Collection**

Inspired by the drawings cabinets of gentlemen and connoisseurs, this exhibition will offer a space where visitors can get close to artworks whose intimate nature invites contemplation and close up viewing. Curator Angelica Daneo notes the special immediacy of a work-on-paper where little separates the viewer from the direct hand of the artist. The exhibition will be on view in the Martin and McCormick Gallery on level two of the Hamilton Building.

Comprised of approximately 39 works-on-paper, the exhibition includes a range of techniques from rapid sketches in ink and pencil to finished pastels. Many artists represented in the exhibition *Court to Café* also appear in this show. The artworks represent exquisite examples of draughtsmanship by some of the most celebrated French masters and allow an in-depth look into the creative process of artists. The entire exhibition is drawn from the private collection of Dr. Esmond Bradley Martin. Martin, a world authority on the illegal trade of wildlife products, is an avid art collector and drawings enthusiast. The exhibition will be accompanied by an illustrated catalog written by Kathleen Stuart, curator of the Berger Collection at the DAM.

**Colorado Symphony at the DAM**

The DAM and the Colorado Symphony have engaged in a thoughtful partnership to enhance the artistic experience of the exhibition. The Colorado Symphony will provide a soundtrack featuring the music of French composers for the *Court to Café* audio tour.

Every Saturday at 1 p.m., November 2–February 9, various ensembles comprised of musicians of the Colorado Symphony will present a 45-minute performance at the museum. Visitors will be able to experience and appreciate the French masterworks on display in the context of their time, when both music and visual arts were responding to the same changes in history and taste.

Additionally, the themes and artists explored in *Passport to Paris* will surface in the Colorado Symphony’s 2013/14 season. Digital imagery of impressionist masterpieces will be projected during French-inspired Masterworks programs in addition to one *Inside the Score* concert and the high school youth concert program.
Masterworks performances are **Passport to Paris**, November 1–3; an all-Ravel program, **Andrew Litton in Concert**, November 22–24; **Return to Paris**, January 17–19; and **Inside the Score, Impressionism**, November 15. Complete concert information can be found at www.coloradosymphony.org.

“As a conductor, the period of art history represented by **Passport to Paris** offers a very rich opportunity,” said Scott O’Neil, the Colorado Symphony’s resident conductor. “It was the one time in history that the noteworthy artists and composers, the practitioners of visual and auditory art that we now know as masters, were alive and working at the same time. It was a very special and unique time, when these people knew each other.”

**Exhibition Tickets**

Included in a ticket to **Passport to Paris** are **Court to Café**: Three Centuries of French Masterworks from the Wadsworth Atheneum; Nature as Muse: French Impressionist Landscapes from the Frederic C. Hamilton Collection and the Denver Art Museum; and Drawing Room: An Intimate Look at French Drawings from the Esmond Bradley Martin Collection.

**Passport to Paris** requires a special exhibition ticket that includes entrance to the suite of three shows, an audio guide for **Court to Café** and general museum admission. A specific entry time is required for **Court to Café**, but patrons can visit the other exhibitions freely. Tickets go on sale to DAM members September 3 at 10 a.m. and September 17 at 10 a.m. for nonmembers. Patrons can purchase tickets via the website, www.denverartmuseum.org, or by calling 720-913-0130.

**Exhibition Hours**

The DAM is planning expanded hours for **Passport to Paris**. On select Thursday evenings from October 31–February 6, the Hamilton Building and exhibition will remain open until 7 p.m. The DAM will also offer expanded hours during holidays and the closing weekend.

Museum members have the exclusive opportunity to visit **Passport to Paris** and the Hamilton Building on select Mondays when the museum is normally closed. Patrons should visit the ticketing page on www.denverartmuseum.org for full ticket availability.

**Hotel Packages**

The DAM is working with a number of downtown Denver hotels to create special, themed packages to add to the Parisian experience. Hotel packages will be available and posted on www.parisindenver.com starting September 1, 2013.

**Exhibition Credit Line**

**Passport to Paris** exhibition support is provided by the Annual Fund Leadership Campaign and the citizens who support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD). **Court to Café**: Three Centuries of French Masterworks from the Wadsworth Atheneum was organized by the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, Connecticut, and is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities. Local support of **Court to Café** is provided by the Stockman Family Foundation. Promotional support is provided by 5280 Magazine, CBS4 and The Denver Post.

**Media Resources**

Online Newsroom: www.denverartmuseum.org/press
Exhibition Overview: http://www.denverartmuseum.org/exhibitions/passport-paris
Facebook: www.facebook.com/denverartmuseum
Twitter: www.twitter.com/denverartmuseum

The Denver Art Museum is located on 13th Avenue between Broadway and Bannock Streets in downtown Denver. Open Tuesday–Thursday, Saturday–Sunday 10 a.m.–5 p.m., Friday 10 a.m.–8 p.m., except the final Friday of the month January–October when the museum stays open until 10 p.m. for the Untitled event; closed Mondays, July 4, Thanksgiving and Christmas. Admission for Colorado residents: $10 adults, $8 seniors and students. Admission for non-Colorado residents: $13 for adults, $10 for seniors and students, $5 for visitors aged six to eighteen, free for children under 6. Please note that there is a special museum admission ticket required for some special exhibitions. General museum admission is free the first Saturday of each month, thanks to Target and the citizens who support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD). The Cultural Complex Garage is open; enter from 12th Avenue between Broadway and Bannock or check the DAM website for up-to-date parking information. For information in Spanish, call 720-913-0169. For more information, call 720-865-5000 or visit www.denverartmuseum.org.

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