

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

Press Office

TEL 404-733-4437

FAX 404-733-4529

prinfo@woodruffcenter.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**HIGH PRESENTS FIRST-EVER MAJOR EXHIBITION DEVOTED TO
THE GAME OF GOLF AT AN AMERICAN ART MUSEUM**

*“The Art of Golf” Explores History of the Sport through Art; Charles Lees’s Iconic 1847
Painting “The Golfers” Travels to the United States for First Time for Exhibition*

**“The Art of Golf”
February 5–June 24, 2012**

ATLANTA, November 9, 2011 – Organized by the High Museum of Art and the National Galleries of Scotland, “The Art of Golf” will explore the royal and ancient game as depicted by landscape and portrait artists, photographers and Pop artists through the ages. This will be the first-ever exhibition devoted to the game by a major American art museum. Comprising approximately 90 works from artists as diverse as Rembrandt, Charles Lees, Norman Rockwell and Andy Warhol, “The Art of Golf” will examine the game’s origins, its foundation in Scotland and its growth in America in the 20th century. The exhibition will also feature a large format introductory video that features golf legends Sir Michael Bonallack and Jack Nicklaus. The exhibition will be accompanied by a full-color catalogue.



“The Art of Golf” continues the High’s multi-year partnership with National Galleries of Scotland and will be on view at the High Museum of Art from February 5 to June 24, 2012. It will tour to additional U.S. venues, yet to be announced, through the summer of 2013.

“The Art of Golf” brings together rare and sometimes whimsical works—some that have never been on public display—into an artistic narrative exploring the history of the sport,” said Michael E. Shapiro, the High’s Nancy and Holcombe T. Green, Jr., Director. “We are thrilled to be exploring the intersection of sport, history and art with our audiences, while at the same time continuing the tradition of bringing the world’s greatest works of art to Atlanta.”

The exhibition will begin with a display devoted to the depiction of *kolf*, a cousin of the modern game, as depicted in early Dutch landscape and genre paintings of the 17th century. This section will include Rembrandt’s famous etching “The Ringball Player” (1654) and winter landscapes by Hendrick and Barent Avercamp, which depict *kolf* being played on the frozen canals of Holland. Following in the display will be Scottish artworks of the 18th century, including the earliest known depiction of golf being played in Scotland (ca. 1740). Also included will be a series of iconic Scottish golfing portraits from the National Galleries of Scotland, including a stunning full-length portrait of the tartan-clad Sir James and Sir Alexander MacDonald (ca. 1749) by William Mosman and an incisive portrayal of William Inglis, Captain of the Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers (ca. 1790), by Sir Henry Raeburn, the

HIGH MUSEUM OF ART/*The Art of Golf*

preeminent portraitist of the Scottish Enlightenment. Among many objects that will be lent from the collection of the world-renowned Royal and Ancient Golf Club in St Andrews, Scotland, is the charming portrait of “Old Tom Morris” by Sir George Reid. Morris was one of the great early players, winning four British Opens in the 1860s and also earning fame as a clubmaker and course designer.

The centerpiece of the exhibition is known as greatest golfing painting in the world: Charles Lees’s “The Golfers,” which portrays in detail a match played on the Old Course at St Andrews in 1847. Jointly owned by the National Galleries of Scotland and the Royal and Ancient Golf Club, this masterpiece has never before traveled to the United States, though reproductions of it hang in golf clubhouses around the world. Displayed alongside the painting will be several preparatory sketches, all portraits of individuals who can be identified in the painting, and an early photograph by Hill and Adamson to which Lees referred as he composed his painting. Also included in this section will be *golfiana* (antique balls, clubs and clothing) to illustrate the very different equipment used in the earliest days of the sport.

Moving into the early 20th century, the exhibition will present a series of elegant golfing scenes by Sir John Lavery, which capture the chic glamour and appeal of the game in the Roaring Twenties. This section will also feature Art Deco railway posters advertising Scotland’s premier courses to an expanding audience in Britain, and a series of photographs by Harold Edgerton, developer of strobe photography, that features the great Bobby Jones, Jr., hitting a golf ball. Other artists featured in this section include Childe Hassam, James McNeill Whistler, Norman Rockwell and Andy Warhol (an iconic screenprint of golfing superstar Jack Nicklaus, 1977, part of Warhol’s “Athlete Series”).

Fittingly, the exhibition will also feature a special section on legendary American hero and Atlanta native Robert Tyre “Bobby” Jones, Jr. (1902–1971), who popularized golf on the international stage. The exhibition will include portraits of Jones and notable photographs that illustrate his importance to the game and the bond he created between the United States and Scotland, where he came to love and admire the Old Course at St Andrews.

“The Art of Golf” will close with a series of aerial photographs by Patricia and Angus Macdonald, newly commissioned by the National Galleries of Scotland, which capture the beauty of iconic Scottish golf courses and explores the effects that human activity has had on the land.

“The National Galleries of Scotland are delighted to support an exhibition with such broad appeal. With 27 million registered golfers in the United States this exhibition will draw new audiences to its hosting venues,” commented Michael Clarke, director of the Scottish National Gallery. “The strength of this exhibition lies in its seamless blend of art with a sporting narrative, attracting the broadest possible audience, golfers and art enthusiasts alike.”

Exhibition Organization and Support

“The Art of Golf” is organized by the High Museum of Art, Atlanta, in collaboration with the National Galleries of Scotland. The exhibition is made possible by Lead Sponsor Sotheby’s, The Imlay Foundation, The Sara Giles Moore Foundation, the Friends of Golf and the Friends of Scotland: Frances Bunzl, Marcia and John Donnell, Gayle Kennedy, Jo Ann and Nick Nicholson, Kathy and Bill Rayner, Sharon and Chip Shirley, Margaretta Taylor, Joan N. Whitcomb, and Audio Visual Sponsor AVYVE. Additional support is provided by The Fay and Barrett Howell Exhibition Fund and The Eleanor McDonald Storza Exhibition Endowment Fund. The managing curator of the exhibition is Julia Forbes, the High’s Shannon Landing Amos Head of Museum Interpretation, and the consulting curator is Dr. Catherine Lewis, Kennesaw State University professor, golf historian and author of nine books, including “Don’t Ask What I Shot: How Eisenhower’s Love of Golf Helped Shape 1950s America.” The exhibition will be accompanied by a full-color catalogue featuring essays by Dr. Tico Seifert, Senior Curator of Northern European Art, National Gallery of

HIGH MUSEUM OF ART/*The Art of Golf*

Scotland; Jordan Mearns, research assistant, National Galleries of Scotland; Dr. Catherine Lewis; Dr. Richard A. Lewis, Curator of Visual Arts, Louisiana State Museum; and Rand Jerris, Senior Managing Director of Public Services, United States Golf Association. “The Art of Golf” will be on view at the High from February 5 through June 24, 2012. It will tour to additional U.S. venues, yet to be announced, through the summer of 2013.

The National Galleries of Scotland

The National Galleries of Scotland (NGS) houses one of the world’s finest collections of Western art ranging from the Middle Ages to the present day. These holdings include the National Collection of Scottish Art, which is displayed in an international context. Every year the NGS welcome more than one million visitors from Scotland and the rest of the world to its various Galleries located in Edinburgh. These comprise the Scottish National Gallery, the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art and the Scottish National Portrait Gallery.

The Scottish National Gallery, founded in 1850, is one of Scotland’s top visitor attractions and is located right in the heart of Edinburgh. Many of the great names of Western art are represented, including Botticelli, Raphael, Titian, Rembrandt, Rubens, Watteau, Constable, Turner and most of the Impressionists and Post-Impressionists. Major international exhibitions are held every summer to coincide with the Edinburgh International Festival.

The Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art is home to Scotland’s outstanding national collection of modern and contemporary art. Its two buildings, Modern One and Modern Two, host special exhibitions and selections from the permanent collection, which ranges in date from ca. 1900 to the present day. A particular strength is its world-class holdings of Dada and Surrealism.

The Scottish National Portrait Gallery opened to the public in 1889 and was the first purpose-built portrait gallery in the world. It exhibits portraits of notable Scots from the seventeenth century to the present day and also houses a major collection of photography. The Portrait Gallery has recently been enlarged and restored as the result of a major building program that was completed in November 2011.

High Museum of Art

The High Museum of Art, founded in 1905 as the Atlanta Art Association, is the leading art museum in the southeastern United States. With more than 12,000 works of art in its permanent collection, the High Museum of Art has an extensive anthology of 19th- and 20th-century American and decorative art; significant holdings of European paintings; a growing collection of African American art; and burgeoning collections of modern and contemporary art, photography and African art. The High is also dedicated to supporting and collecting works by Southern artists and is distinguished as the only major museum in North America to have a curatorial department specifically devoted to the field of folk and self-taught art. The High’s media arts department produces acclaimed annual film series and festivals of foreign, independent and classic cinema. In November 2005 the High opened three new buildings by architect Renzo Piano that more than doubled the Museum’s size, creating a vibrant “village for the arts” at the Woodruff Arts Center in midtown Atlanta. For more information about the High, please visit www.High.org.

The Woodruff Arts Center

The Woodruff Arts Center is ranked among the top four arts centers in the nation. The Woodruff is unique in that it combines four visual and performing arts divisions on one campus as one not-for-profit organization. Opening in 1968, the Woodruff Arts Center is home to the Alliance Theatre, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the High Museum of Art and Young Audiences. To learn more about the Woodruff Arts Center, please visit www.woodruffcenter.org.

HIGH MUSEUM OF ART/*The Art of Golf*

#

Media contacts:

Nicole J. Taylor Assistant Manager of Public Relations
Tel: 404-733-4585 | E-mail: nicole.taylor@woodruffcenter.org

Media outside the southeastern United States please contact:

Alison Buchbinder Resnicow Schroeder Associates
Tel: 212-671-5165 | E-mail: abuchbinder@resnicowschroeder.com

Aga Sablinska Resnicow Schroeder Associates
Tel: 212-671-5177 | E-mail: asablinska@resnicowschroeder.com

Image: Charles Lees (Scottish, 1800–1880), “The Golfers,” 1847, oil on canvas, 51½ x 84¼ inches, Scottish National Portrait Gallery, purchased with the assistance of the Heritage Lottery Fund, The Art Fund and the Royal and Ancient Golf Club, 2002, PG 3299.