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**HIGH TO PRESENT IMPORTANT EXHIBITION SHOWCASING THE
DISTINGUISHED HUBER FAMILY COLLECTION OF AMERICAN ART**

“Embracing Elegance, 1885–1920: American Art from the Huber Family Collection”

September 24–November 27, 2011

ATLANTA, August 18, 2011 –The High Museum of Art will host “Embracing Elegance, 1885–1920: American Art from the Huber Family Collection,” an important exhibition showcasing the collection of turn-of-the-century American art collected by Atlantans Russell and Jack Huber over the last 25 years. With 35 paintings, pastels and drawings, the exhibition will feature work by artists Cecilia Beaux, Frank W. Benson, Thomas Wilmer Dewing, Robert Henri, Lilla Cabot Perry, John Singer Sargent, Everett Shinn, John Sloan, John Henry Twachtman and J. Alden Weir. “Embracing Elegance, 1885–1920” and its accompanying full-color catalogue are co-organized by the Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College, and the High Museum of Art. The exhibition will be on view at the High from September 24 through November 27, 2011.



“By focusing on the period in American art that the Hubers love best—roughly the four decades that bracket the turn of the twentieth century—their collection as a whole provides an illuminating window into the dramatic cultural changes of the era, from the phenomenal growth of the cities and mass immigration to changing gender roles,” commented Stephanie Heydt, the High’s Margaret and Terry Stent Curator of American Art.

“Over the past 25 years, Jack and Russell Huber have built a highly selective and distinguished collection of American art from the turn of the twentieth century. We are grateful to the Huber family for their generosity in parting with their collection for an extended period and allowing us to share their works with our visitors,” stated David Brenneman, the High’s Director of Collections and Exhibitions.

The artists featured in “Embracing Elegance, 1885–1920” gravitated toward intimate, informal subjects, which they captured in an expressive manner influenced by the Aesthetic movement, Impressionism, urban realism and Post-Impressionism. The majority of the works reflect the common tendency of these artists to retreat from social issues and instead celebrate the beauty found in timeless landscapes, still lifes and intimate images of women at leisure. Introspective in mood and refined in taste, these works mirror the subtle shifts in cultural values, including a growing fascination with the life of the mind and an appreciation of art for art’s sake, rather than for moralizing, didactic or political purposes. Additionally, a select few images openly address social change, including the city scenes that depict a mix of classes and races by the artists of the Ashcan School, including John Sloan and Everett Shinn.

Most of the artists represented in the exhibition gave careful consideration to how they presented their works, which spurred innovation in terms of frame design. If the original frame was not available, the Hubers paired their works with elegant period examples. These carefully selected frames enhance the visual impact of the works and reflect the sophisticated frame aesthetics of the period.

On view concurrently will be the installation “Beaux Arts and Crafts: Masterpieces of American Frame Design 1890–1920,” on loan from the noted New York frame collector Edgar O. Smith. This exhibition brings together 15 frames by American makers from the late 19th and early 20th centuries—a golden era for innovations in frame design in the United States. Works of art in their own right, this selection of frames from the Arts and Crafts and Beaux Art periods perfectly embodies the spirit of turn-of-the-century aesthetic in America by celebrating hand-crafted, elegant and useful design. “Beaux Arts & Crafts: Masterpieces of American Frame Design 1890–1920” will showcase how by the late 1880s American artists had begun to pay more attention to their frames. This was inspired by a growing appreciation for handcraftsmanship and redefined designs in reaction to mass-production and the unrestrained ornamentation associated with Victorian taste. By the early 1900s more artists and craftsmen were creating frames that integrated historical European prototypes with distinct, contemporary forms, such as the sinuous curves of Art Nouveau or the hand-crafted appeal of the Arts and Crafts movement.

Exhibition Organization and Support

“Embracing Elegance, 1885–1920: American Art from the Huber Family Collection” is co-organized by the Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College, and the High Museum of Art, Atlanta. “Beaux Arts & Crafts: Masterpieces of American Frame Design 1890–1920” is organized by Gill & Lagodich Fine Period Frames, New York, and is on view at the High through the generous support of Edgar O. Smith. A full-color exhibition catalogue for “Embracing Elegance, 1885–1920: American Art from the Huber Family Collection” will feature an introduction and overview by Barbara MacAdam, with short entry essays by both curators, Stephanie Heydt and Barbara MacAdam. In addition, a scholarly focus essay on the Hubers’ important collection of late-19th-century American frames by Susan Larkin.

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 art; significant holdings of European paintings and decorative art; 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 the largest arts center in the Southeast as well as one of the four largest in the nation. The Woodruff is unique in that it combines five visual and performing arts divisions on one campus as one not-for-profit organization. Opened in 1968, the Woodruff Arts Center is home to the Alliance Theatre, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the High Museum of Art, Young Audiences and the 14th Street Playhouse.

Image: Lilla Cabot Perry (American, 1848–1933), *Angela*, 1891, oil on canvas, gift of Jack and Russell Huber 2005.279.

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