

THE MENIL COLLECTION TO PRESENT *PICASSO THE LINE*
SEPTEMBER 16, 2016 – JANUARY 8, 2017,
THE FIRST EXHIBITION TO EXPLORE THE ESSENTIAL ROLE OF
LINE DRAWING IN THE ARTIST'S PRACTICE



HOUSTON, TX, August 18, 2016 — Supremely gifted as a draftsman and fascinated from an early age by the highly linear art of Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, Pablo Picasso made line drawings during each stage of his career, from the Blue and Rose Periods to Cubism to his Classical Period and beyond. The Menil Collection is the first museum to provide a full-scale exploration of this distinctive aspect of his art, in the exhibition *Picasso The Line*. Picasso's work convinced John and Dominique de Menil where other modern art failed. Initially reluctant to engage with the art of their time, as Mrs. de Menil stated, "The reservations that at first tempered admiration vanished before the genius of the greatest artist of our time."

Presented exclusively at the Menil Collection, where it will be on view from September 16, 2016 through January 8, 2017, *Picasso The Line* is organized by guest curator Carmen Giménez, founding director of the Museo Picasso Málaga, whose previous exhibitions have included the groundbreaking *Picasso and the Age of Iron* (1993) and *Picasso Black and White* (2012-13) for the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York. Clare Elliott, Associate Curator at the Menil Collection, has managed the exhibition on behalf of the museum.

Said Menil Director Rebecca Rabinow, "We are pleased to continue the Menil Collection's tradition of seeking new ways of looking at and understanding the work of twentieth century masters like Pablo Picasso. With Carmen Giménez's expertise we have assembled a carefully selected group of drawings that condenses Picasso's vast output into an approachable and beautiful installation."

David Breslin, the John R. Eckel, Jr. Foundation Chief Curator of the Menil Drawing Institute, added, "Carmen Giménez has created a thrilling exhibition that is retrospective in scope yet incisive in its focus. *Picasso The Line* brings together line drawings from all of Picasso's most important periods and shows the extraordinary range of media in which he made these works, from pen and pencil to charcoal and *papier collé*. The Menil Collection has a longstanding commitment to drawing as a distinct art form, and this exhibition demonstrates the conceptual and material richness the medium affords."

Picasso The Line will present more than 90 works on paper from public and private collections in the United States and Europe, dating from 1901-02 (shortly after Picasso settled in Paris) through 1970, not long before his death in 1973. The exhibition includes seldom-seen drawings by Picasso from the Menil's holdings, as well as works on loan that have never before been exhibited in the United States.

Exhibition curator Carmen Giménez said, "Picasso has long been recognized as a master across disciplines and one of the most accomplished draftsmen of the last century. This exhibition will explore how he followed up on the groundbreaking lesson of Ingres, trying to resolve the three dimensions of form with merely a linear arrangement, thus relinquishing perspective. The first exhibition to fully examine Picasso's line drawings, it will convey the critical position that these powerful works hold within his oeuvre."

The exhibition will be accompanied by a fully illustrated, 176-page scholarly catalogue with essays by Carmen Giménez, David Breslin, and Clare Elliott. With 130 illustrations, this new book provides an insightful reevaluation of the role of line in the work of Picasso, offering new insights into his vision and working methods and illuminates his contributions to the evolution of art in the twentieth century.

Bank of America is the Lead Corporate Sponsor for *Picasso The Line*.

This exhibition is organized by the Menil Collection with exceptional support from the Musée national Picasso-Paris. Major funding is provided by Madame Bérengère Primat, The Eleanor and Frank Freed Foundation, Janie C. Lee and David B. Warren, and Susan Vaughan Foundation. Additional support comes from Richard and Susan Anderson; Mike and Diane Cannon; Schlumberger Limited; Skadden, Arps; Bloomberg Philanthropies; Jones Day; Clare Casademont and Michael Metz; Janet and Paul Hobby; John R. Eckel, Jr. Foundation; Linda and George Kelly; Anne and David Kirkland; Franci Neely; Susanne and William E. Pritchard III; Leslie and Shannon Sasser; Anne

and Bill Stewart; Marcy Taub Wessel, Henry J. N. Taub II, and the Taub Foundation; and the City of Houston.

United Airlines is the exclusive travel partner of the Menil Collection.

Public Programs

Picasso's Lines and Drawing's Possibilities

Friday, September 16, 7:00 p.m.

Exhibition curator Carmen Giménez, who has devoted much of her career to the study of Picasso's work, explores the ideas behind *Picasso The Line* with David Breslin, the John R. Eckel, Jr. Foundation Chief Curator of the Menil Drawing Institute.

The Modern Body: Picasso and the Ballets Russes

Monday, September 26, 7:00 p.m.

Through conversation, drawings, videos, and live demonstration, Oliver Halkowich, soloist with the Houston Ballet, and dance critic Theodore Bale investigate the two ballets Picasso created with the choreographer Léonide Massine.

One Whom Some Were Following: The Steins and Picasso before Fame

Wednesday, October 26, 7:30 p.m.

Menil director Rebecca Rabinow discusses the fascinating relationship between Picasso and the American expatriate siblings Leo and Gertrude Stein.

Picasso's Hinge: Drawing from Cadaqués to Papier Collé

Friday, November 4, 7:00 p.m.

Trevor Stark, postdoctoral fellow at Columbia University, examines the connections between the highly restrained drawings Picasso created in the summer of 1910 and the paper collages he began two years later.

Picasso's Paris

Saturday, November 5, 3:00 p.m.

As part of their Stop, Look, and Listen! series, the Da Camera Young Artists explore the musical world of Picasso, including his collaborations with composer Igor Stravinsky.

Public programs are free and open to the public. Unless otherwise noted, programs take place in the Menil Collection foyer. Seating is limited.

About the Menil Collection

A legacy of the philanthropists John and Dominique de Menil, the Menil Collection opened in 1987. The museum presents regular rotations of artworks from its growing

permanent collection, organizes special exhibitions and programs throughout the year, publishes scholarly books, and conducts research into the conservation of modern and contemporary art. The Menil Collection's main museum building, the first building in the United States designed by Renzo Piano, anchors a parklike 30-acre campus, which also includes the Cy Twombly Gallery, a site-specific Dan Flavin installation, the Byzantine Fresco Chapel—now a venue for long-term installations by contemporary artists—and outdoor sculpture. A new building for the Menil Drawing Institute by Johnston Marklee, expected to open in 2017, will be the first freestanding facility in the United States designed expressly for the exhibition and study of modern and contemporary drawings. The museum is open Wednesday through Sunday, 11am to 7pm, and charges no admission fee.

Also at the Menil

Francis Alijs: The Fabiola Project – On view through January 28, 2018

As Essential as Dreams – On view through October 16, 2016

Andy Warhol: Sunset – Opening August 19, 2016

Holy Barbarians: Beat Culture on the West Coast – Opening November 18, 2017

ReCollecting Dogon – Opening February 3, 2017

Between Land and Sea: Artists of the Coenties Slip – Opening April 14, 2017

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Image: Pablo Picasso, Violin on a Table (Violon sur une table), 1912. Watercolor, charcoal, and paper on paperboard, 24 1/2 × 18 1/4 in. (62.2 × 46.4 cm). The Menil Collection, Houston. © 2016 Estate of Pablo Picasso / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

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