



BERMUDA NATIONAL GALLERY

For immediate release

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Gifts and Kabuki Theatre highlight BNG Winter Exhibitions

Hamilton, Bermuda, February 1, 2007 — The Bermuda National Gallery's Winter Exhibitions will offer art lovers the chance to see some of the museum's most notable recent gifts for the first time as well as dramatic art from Japan with a special exhibit of woodblock prints devoted to the Kabuki Theatre.

The Exhibitions, which are sponsored by Endurance Specialty Insurance Ltd., (ESIL), a leading insurance and reinsurance provider, open to the public on February 7. Dan Izard, President of ESIL indicated that "Endurance is proud to once again sponsor an exhibition at the National Gallery and demonstrate our continued support for the Bermuda art scene."

Most of the Bermuda National Gallery's Permanent Collection has been received as gifts and **New Acquisitions: Recent Gifts to the Bermuda National Gallery** focuses on some of the more significant recent donations as well as other pieces that have been recently restored – most of which are being shown publicly for the first time. The exhibition includes international works by Whistler, Norman Lewis, Erté (Romain de Tiroff), and a stone sculpture by Shona sculptor Jonothan Mhondorohuma; along with Bermuda works by Edward James, Bill Ming, John Athill Frith, and Ethel Tucker.

BNG Director Laura T. Gorham said: "This exhibition illustrates the breadth and diversity of our collections policy and the care we take in restoring and preserving valuable works of art. It also enables us to publicly say 'thank you' to those people who have generously donated pieces to us. Like most smaller museums, we do not have the acquisitions budget of major metropolitan museums so we – and indeed Bermuda – are dependent on their generosity to help us build our Permanent Collection. We hope this exhibition will inspire other art collectors to consider the BNG as an ideal beneficiary."

The Art of Drama: Kabuki Theatre Through Woodblock Prints is the third Japanese woodblock exhibition staged by the BNG following its popular predecessors, *The Art of the Japanese Woodblock Print* (Winter 2003) and *Yoshitoshi: The Last great Ukiyo-e Artist* (Winter 2005). Drawn from the same private collection, this exhibition of more than 60 prints illustrates

how the technique of woodblock printing and traditional Japanese Kabuki Theatre developed together during the 17th and 18th centuries. Both Kabuki Theatre, which was known for the stylisation of its drama and the elaborate makeup and costumes worn by its performers, and woodblock printing were part of *ukiyo*, literally the “floating world”, the hedonistic lifestyle centred on the Yoshiwara pleasure district in Edo (now Tokyo).

The Japanese woodblock printing industry developed the print into a mass-produced popular art, easily affordable to people of all classes. In their time the prints were not considered true art, but were regarded as the movie star posters of their day. The industry turned the actors into cultural icons and, as they do today, the actors had huge fan clubs and supplemented their earnings by endorsing products.

The Winter Exhibitions also feature selections from the BNG’s Bermuda, African and European Collections with the Bermuda and European Collections housed in the newly-decorated Ondaatje Wing and Watlington Room respectively.

The revolving exhibition, **350 years of Art in Bermuda**, is presented as an historical timeline and follows the artistic, historical and cultural development of Bermuda through its decorative and fine arts from 1624 to the present day. The BNG’s Permanent Collection is complemented by significant private loans focusing on Bermuda’s early decorative arts of furniture and silverwork.

Celebrating the Diversity of African Heritage includes selections from the BNG collection, which encompasses sub-Saharan Africa and consists of traditional masks and sculptures from 19 ethnic peoples and cultures. The display includes works from the Senufo, Yoruba, Asante, Guro and Dogan peoples

The European Collection: 1500-1900 is a survey of Western European art from the Renaissance to the end of the 19th century. The collection includes paintings by Lucas Cranach, Alonzo Sanchez Coello, Richard Wilson, Sir Joshua Reynolds and Thomas Gainsborough as well as a Rodin sculpture.

The Winter Exhibitions continue to April 5, 2007. See below for information regarding exhibition-related lectures and programmes and the BNG’s updated calendar of events.

About the Bermuda National Gallery:** Opened in 1992 and located in the City Hall & Arts Centre in Hamilton, the Bermuda National Gallery is both the home of Bermuda’s national art collection and the centre of the Island’s thriving arts scene. It is the Island’s leading art museum with a richly diverse exhibition programme of past and present works by local and international artists that reflects Bermuda’s varied artistic heritage and multicultural community. The Bermuda National Gallery is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. from Monday to Saturday. Admission free. **For more details contact Director Laura Gorham on 441-295-9428, director@bng.bm or visit www.bng.bm.

***About Endurance:** Endurance Specialty Holdings Ltd., through its operating subsidiaries, is a global specialty insurance and reinsurance provider with almost 500 employees in Bermuda, the United Kingdom and the United States. Endurance Specialty Insurance Ltd., the company’s Bermuda operating subsidiary, is the firm’s original operating platform and currently writes property catastrophe reinsurance, casualty treaty reinsurance, excess casualty and professional liability insurance as well as other specialty business lines such as aerospace and healthcare. Formed in 2001, Endurance is publicly traded on the NYSE and has grown to approximately \$7 billion in assets and over \$2 billion in shareholders’ equity.*

BNG Calendar, February-June 2007

Wednesday Lunchtime Lecture Series Sponsored by the Ministry of Community & Cultural Affairs
Lunchtime lectures resume on February 7, at 12:30 pm – 1:30 pm. Check *The Royal Gazette* or our web site www.bng.bm for listings. \$5.00; Free to Members

Wednesday, February 7

Lunchtime Lecture Presentation

Sponsored by the Ministry of Community & Cultural Affairs

Walk through of the current exhibitions with BNG Curators, David Mitchell and Sophie Cressall

12:30 pm – 1:30 pm. \$5.00, Members: Free

Thursday, February 8

PartnerRe Art Lecture Series

Lecture 3

Twins of the Chonin: Kabuki Woodblock Prints

In Japan, during the Edo period (1603-1868), the wealth flowed from the samurai class to the *chonin*, the urban merchants and craftsmen, the lowest on the feudal social scale. Denied access to the full range of social outlets afforded the upper classes, the newly wealthy *chonin* developed their own artistic outlets, most notably Kabuki theatre and woodblock prints.

Noel Chiappa, a woodblock print aficionado, will talk on the role played by Kabuki theatre and woodblock prints in *ukiyo* (the floating world), the leisure activities of the cultural milieu developed by the *chonin*.

5:30 pm Reception for 6:00 lecture

Tickets: \$20; Members: \$10

Monday, February 12th

Japanese animated film

FAMILY PROGRAMMING

Miyazaki's Spirited Away

From one of the most celebrated filmmakers in the history of animated cinema comes the most acclaimed film of 2002. Hayao Miyazaki's latest triumph, filled with astonishing animation and epic adventure, is a dazzling masterpiece for the ages. It's a "wonderfully welcoming work of art that's as funny and entertaining as it is brilliant, beautiful and deep" (Joe Morgenstern, Wall Street Journal).

Spirited Away is a wondrous fantasy about a young girl, Chihiro, trapped in a strange new world of spirits.

When her parents undergo a mysterious transformation, she must call upon the courage she never knew she had to free herself and return her family to the outside world.

Approx. 125 minutes long/Colour/2002

10:00 am

Free to members, \$8.00 per family, which consists of maximum two adults and two children

Thursday, February 15

Mosaic: Hair

Ruth Thomas & Company

In honour of Black History and Education Month

Bringing Bermuda history and traditions to life.

5:30 pm Reception; 6:00 pm Performance

Tickets: \$20; Members \$10

Tuesday, February 20

Evening Art Workshop

Japanese Writing and Painting

Participants will learn 15 – 20 kanji, Japanese characters, their English pronunciations and meanings plus, a few basic sumi-e, Chinese brush painting techniques. Participants will then, working individually or in pairs, combine the characters and the brushwork to create original works. Contact Judy Wong, education@bng.bm for details.

Fee: \$25 Members only

5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

Tuesdays, March 6, 13 and 20

Evening Workshops

Printing without a Press

An introduction to monoprinting, relief printing on lino in black & white & reduction colour printing with lino. A short and intensive course on printmaking for ALL levels, with Bermudian artist, Vaughan Evans. Your own photographs will be the inspiration for your artwork and homework will be set between sessions! Interested? Contact Judy Wong, education@bng.bm for details.

Fee: \$114. Members only.

5:30 pm – 8:00 pm

Thursday, March 8

PartnerRe Art Lecture Series

Lecture 4

To you with all my heart: The Friendship of Whistler and Monet

By Dr. Katharine A. Lochnan, Deputy Director of Research and The R. Fraser Elliott Curator of Prints and Drawings, Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto

It seems astonishing that the friendship between Whistler and Monet is yet to be fully investigated. In Paris during the 1860s Monet walked in Whistler's footsteps. By 1870, they were both aware of each other's work. Whistler set out to promote Impressionism in Britain and link his name with that of Monet. It can be argued that Monet picked up where Whistler left off, and can be seen as Whistler's true artistic heir.

5:30 pm reception; 6:00 pm lecture

Tickets: \$20; Members: \$10

Thursday, March 15

Jazz Night with Gita - Celebrating the 15th Anniversary of the BNG

Join us for this extra special evening of entertainment, champagne, hors d'oeuvres with the wonderful jazz stylings of our own Gita Blakeney Saltus and the Tony Bari Trio

Organised in association with Robert Mondavi

5:30 pm – 8:00 pm

Cash bar

Tickets: \$25; Members: \$15

March 19 – 23

Poetry Week

A special programme for school groups, using the artwork in the BNG as inspiration for poetry writing; it offers a rare opportunity for children to work with poets of Bermuda. Contact Judy Wong, education@bng.bm, for details.

Wednesday, March 28

A Capella Concert

Harvard Krokodiloes and the Radcliffe Pitches

5:30 pm reception for 6:00 pm concert

Tickets: \$20; Members: \$10

Thursday, April 5

Exhibitions close at 4pm

Thursday, May 10

Members' Opening of The Summer 2007 Exhibitions

John Kaufmann Retrospective

Hair in African Art

6:00 pm – 7:30 pm

Thursday, June 7

PartnerRe Art Lecture Series

Lecture 5

Ori Z. Soltes, Georgetown University

5:30 pm reception; 6:00 pm lecture

Tickets: \$20; Members: \$10

Saturday June 16

BNG Annual Fundraising Gala

Theme: Jail House Rock

***all programming subject to change, please confirm with BNG prior to event*