

MoMA PRESENTS FOCUSED EXHIBITION OF CLAUDE MONET'S LATE PAINTINGS OF WATER LILIES AND HIS POND AT GIVERNY

Exhibition Presents Six Exceptional Paintings, Including Four from MoMA's Collection on View Together for the First Time Since the Museum's Reopening in 2004

Monet's Water Lilies

September 13, 2009–April 12, 2010

The Michael H. Dunn Gallery, second floor

NEW YORK, September 4, 2009—The Museum of Modern Art presents ***Monet's Water Lilies*** from September 13, 2009, to April 12, 2010, an installation that features the full group of late paintings by Claude Monet (1840–1926) in the collection for the first time since the Museum's reopening in 2004. The four MoMA paintings are a mural-sized triptych (*Water Lilies*, 1914–26); a single panel painting of the water lilies in the Japanese-style pond that Monet cultivated on his property in Giverny, France (*Water Lilies*, 1914–26); *The Japanese Footbridge* (c. 1920–22); and *Agapanthus* (1914–26), the majestic plants in the pond's vicinity. These works are complemented by two loans of closely related paintings—*Water Lilies* (1914–26), from the collection of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and *Water-Lilies, Reflections of Weeping Willows* (c. 1918), from a private collection on extended loan to The Metropolitan Museum of Art. *Monet's Water Lilies* is organized by Ann Temkin, The Marie-Josée and Henry Kravis Chief Curator of Painting and Sculpture, The Museum of Modern Art.

Monet devoted the last 25 years of his life to the portrayal of the pond and its surroundings in Giverny. By the 1910s, his work centered on the creation of large-scale panels of the water lilies, a group of which he would donate to the French state for permanent installation in the Orangerie in Paris. After Monet's death, many of these last works remained in his studio, left under the care of the artist's son. But for two decades art historians and collectors reserved their interest for his earlier Impressionist work. The work of the 1910s and 1920s was regarded as far too unstructured, and much of the work left in the studio was considered unfinished.

After the end of World War II, a sudden turnabout occurred, and keen attention was focused on Monet's last paintings. In a quintessential case of contemporary art transforming attitudes toward earlier art history, the large scale and gestural freedom of Abstract Expressionism illuminated the late Monet as a predecessor of great relevance. In 1955 MoMA became the first public collection in the United States to acquire one of Monet's large-scale Water Lilies compositions. Since then, the history of their reception has been intertwined with the history of the Museum, both because of the water lilies' importance for scores of contemporary artists, and for the beloved position they hold for the general audience.

SPONSORSHIP:

The exhibition is made possible by Hanjin Shipping.

PUBLICATION:

The exhibition is accompanied by a small publication by Ann Temkin, with Nora Lawrence, Curatorial Assistant, Department of Painting and Sculpture, that recounts the history of Monet's late works at MoMA, and focuses on their resonance with the art and artists of our time.

Claude Monet: Water Lilies is published by The Museum of Modern Art and will be available at MoMA Stores and online at www.momastore.org. It is distributed to the trade through Distributed Art Publishers (D.A.P) in the United States and Canada, and through Thames + Hudson outside North America. Paperback, 6" x 8" / 52 pages / 40 illustrations. Price: \$12.95.

PUBLIC PROGRAM:**Monet's Water Lilies**

Wednesday, October 14, 6:30 p.m.

The Celeste Bartos Theater, The Lewis B. and Dorothy Cullman Education and Research Building, 4 West 54 Street

Ann Temkin gives a lecture on the exhibition and discusses MoMA's role in helping to bolster the reputation of the *Water Lilies* in the 1950s and how contemporary taste can alter the reception of historical works of art. Tickets (\$10; members, corporate members \$8; students, seniors, and staff of other museums \$5) are available online, www.moma.org/thinkmodern, or at the Museum at the lobby information desk or the Film desk.

MORNINGS WITH MONET PRIVATE TOURS:

MoMA will offer private group tours of *Monet's Water Lilies* on selected Sundays during the run of the exhibition. *Mornings with Monet* include a light breakfast followed by a one-hour tour before the Museum opens to the public. The tours examine the life and work of Claude Monet with a close study of the exhibition and a look at related works in MoMA's collection. Tickets to *Mornings with Monet* also include Museum admission for the day. The first four *Mornings with Monet* tours will be offered at 9:30 a.m. on September 13, October 18, November 8, and November 29. Tours will continue on selected dates, to be announced, through April 2010.

Mornings with Monet are limited to 25 people per tour. Tickets are \$75 (\$65 for members). Check-in begins at 8:45 a.m. and includes coffee and croissants; tours begin at 9:30 a.m. For reservations, contact MoMA Group Services at (212)708-9685 or groupservices@moma.org.

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For downloadable high-resolution images, register at www.moma.org/press.

Public Information:

The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53rd Street, New York, NY 10019

Hours: Wednesday through Monday: 10:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Friday: 10:30 a.m.-8:00 p.m.
Closed Tuesday

Museum Admission: \$20 adults; \$16 seniors, 65 years and over with I.D.; \$12 full-time students with current I.D. Free for children 16 and under. Free for members.
Admission includes admittance to Museum galleries and film programs.
Free admission during Target Free Friday Nights 4:00-8:00 p.m.

The public may call 212/708-9400 for detailed Museum information. Visit us on the Web at www.moma.org