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**DELAWARE ART MUSEUM PRESENTS
THE BAROQUE WORLD OF FERNANDO BOTERO**

Wilmington, DE (February 21, 2008)—The Delaware Art Museum presents *The Baroque World of Fernando Botero*, a major retrospective exhibition featuring 100 paintings, sculptures, and drawings, on view March 15, 2008 – June 8, 2008. Fernando Botero (b. 1932), well known for his extravagantly rounded figures, is one of the most internationally popular artists working today. Using a broad range of media, the Colombian-born Botero has created a world of his own, one that is at once accessible and enigmatic.

“Botero’s brilliant colors and massive forms make you stand up and take notice immediately,” said Dr. Mary F. Holahan, Curator of Collections and Exhibitions at the Delaware Art Museum. “But then his paintings and drawings and sculptures take you through a more subtle range of emotions—empathy, outrage, curiosity, and just plain good humor. The result is that you just keep wanting to come back to look again and again!”

The Baroque World of Fernando Botero presents a selection of the best works from various stages in Botero’s development as an artist. Drawn from Botero’s private collection and assembled over the past 50 years, this exhibition includes favorite works that the artist was unable to part with, as well as pieces reacquired years after they left his possession. Many have never before been exhibited in public. And the exhibition goes beyond the Delaware Art Museum’s galleries, as three of Botero’s sculptures are being mounted in the Museum’s Copeland Sculpture Garden: *Hand*, *Smoking Woman*, and *The Rape of Europa*.

Fernando Botero’s roots are in Medellín, and his earliest artistic impressions were molded in a Colombian town close to the Andes mountains. His first images drew upon the Spanish colonial Baroque, a movement of extravagant richness, featuring the sumptuous decorations that flourish on the walls of churches in South America.

Botero has spent most of his years as an artist away from his native Colombia, but his art has maintained an uninterrupted link to Latin America. Latin American Baroque imagery is reflected in Botero's work when portraying himself as a small boy in the arms of Our Blessed Lady of Colombia, carrying a diminutive flag with the national colors, or in depictions of his mother as a widow, in her desperate struggle to survive with her three young children. Botero can also shock viewers with images of terror and violence, referring to the political instability, the attacks, the kidnappings, and the torture prevalent in his country.

The exhibition follows Botero in his extensive studies of the history of European art, focusing on the influence of Velazquez in Spain; Ingres, Delacroix, and Courbet in France; and Renaissance artists in Italy. He also turned his attention to Mexico, where the monumental murals by Diego Rivera and David Siqueiros had a profound impact. Botero absorbed the dramatic self-portraits of Frida Kahlo and her idiosyncratic interpretation of Latin American folklore, and was intrigued by the mysteries of Pre-Colombian artifacts.

Another important theme illustrated in the exhibition is the reality of contemporary life in Latin America as observed by Botero's satirical eye. A section is presented on everyday life in South America: women observed in the intimacy of their boudoir, street scenes, dance halls, and the suggestion of houses of ill repute. Even in his still-life paintings, Botero is capable of introducing a hint of menace, creating a sense of uneasiness difficult to define.

Botero's superb craftsmanship is evident in his drawings, especially those executed in pastel. His pastels have a thoroughly finished look and a richness of color, and they have been compared to early etchings by Picasso. Botero has also worked in bronze and marble sculpture, a seminal element in his oeuvre. His monumental bronzes were seen along the Champs Elysées in Paris, in front of the Palazzo Pitti in Florence, and along Park Avenue in New York.

Organizer

The Baroque World of Fernando Botero is organized and circulated by Art Services International, Alexandria, Virginia.

Catalog

The Baroque World of Fernando Botero is accompanied by a fully illustrated, full-color exhibition catalog. The author is Dr. John Sillevs, Curator of the Gemeentemuseum, The Hague, who selected the works for this exhibition. The catalog is published by Art Services International.

Sponsors

The Baroque World of Fernando Botero is presented in Delaware by DuPont. The Delaware Art Museum received a MetLife Foundation *Museum and Community Connections* grant to support programming for this exhibition. In Delaware, this exhibition is made possible, in part, by grants from the Delaware Division of the Arts, a state agency dedicated to nurturing and supporting the arts in Delaware, in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts.

Press Preview

Members of the press are invited to preview *The Baroque World of Fernando Botero* on Thursday, March 13, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at the Delaware Art Museum. Dr. Mary F. Holahan, Curator of Collections and Exhibitions, will lead a tour and answer questions. Please RSVP by Monday, March 10.

Special Events

- **Latin American Chocolate and Coffee Tasting**

Saturday, March 15 / 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. / \$20 per person

Taste the flavors of Latin America, renowned for distinctly delicious chocolates and coffees, in this celebration of Botero's art and his Colombian heritage. Call 302-571-9590 to RSVP.

- **Scale Shift: Botero and Distortion in Contemporary Art**

Friday, April 18 / 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. / \$15 Adults / \$5 College Students

Dr. Don Bacigalupi, Director of the Toledo Museum of Art, addresses the prominence of distortion and tradition in Botero's work, both of which have echoes elsewhere in contemporary art. Call 302-571-9590 to RSVP.

- **Botero Family Day**

Sunday, May 4 / noon – 3:30 p.m. / Free

Families are invited to enjoy tours, art activities, and performances by Toxique Trottoir, featuring four dancers dressed in gargantuan costumes inspired by the world of Fernando Botero.

- **Big and Bold: The Art of Fernando Botero**

Tuesdays, May 6, 13, and 20 / 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. / \$30 for the series / \$10 individual lectures

Join Monica Dominguez Torres, Ph.D., as she explores the fascinating world of Fernando Botero. Dr. Dominguez Torres is Assistant Professor and Associate Chair of Art History at the University of Delaware, specializing in Renaissance and Baroque art in the Hispanic world. Call 302-571-9590 to RSVP.

Special Offer for Visitors to the Philadelphia Museum of Art

The Philadelphia Museum of Art will display the exhibition *Frida Kahlo*, on view February 20, 2008 – May 18, 2008. *Frida Kahlo* presents over 40 of the artist's most important self-portraits, still lifes, and portraits, plus a selection of nearly 100 photographs of Kahlo and Diego Rivera.

During this time, the Delaware Art Museum is celebrating Latin American art with two exhibitions—*Frida Kahlo: Through the Lens of Nickolas Muray*, an exhibition of nearly 50 photographs of Frida Kahlo on view February 2, 2008 – March 30, 2008, and *The Baroque World of Fernando Botero*. Visitors to the Philadelphia Museum of Art's exhibition *Frida Kahlo* who bring their ticket stubs to the Delaware Art Museum will receive 50% off admission here through June 8, 2008, so that they may also enjoy *Frida Kahlo: Through the Lens of Nickolas Muray* and/or *The Baroque World of Fernando Botero*.

Images

Images of works from *The Baroque World of Fernando Botero* may be downloaded here:

<http://delartsales.org/pafiledb/pafiledb.php?action=category&id=23>

About the Museum

The Delaware Art Museum, located at 2301 Kentmere Parkway, Wilmington, DE 19806, is open Tuesday through Saturday 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. and Sunday noon – 4:00 p.m. Admission fees are charged as follows: adults (18 – 59) \$10, seniors (60+) \$8, college students \$5, and youth (7 – 17) \$3, with children 6 and under entering for free. Admission fees are waived every Sunday thanks to support from AstraZeneca. For more information, call 302-571-9590 or 866-232-3714 (toll free), or visit the website at www.delart.org.

Founded in 1912, the Delaware Art Museum holds a world-renowned collection that focuses on American art and illustration from the 19th century to the present as well as the British Pre-Raphaelite movement. The Museum offers the outdoor Copeland Sculpture Garden, the Helen Farr Sloan Library & Archives, studio art classes, the interactive Kids' Corner learning area, the delART Café featuring free Wi-Fi access, and the Museum Store with distinctive books and gifts.

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