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Media Contact:

Leslie Denk, Director of Marketing and Communications
 (626) 844-6941; ldenk@nortonsimon.org

Gaze: Portraiture after Ingres

October 30, 2009–April 5, 2010

Pasadena, CA—In conjunction with the installation of Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres’s stunning *Comtesse d’Haussonville*, 1845, on loan from The Frick Collection in New York, the Norton Simon Museum presents *Gaze: Portraiture after Ingres*. This exhibition of close to 150 paintings, sculpture and photographs from the Norton Simon collections traces artistic engagements with portraiture following Ingres’s influence in the early to mid-19th century through to the present day, and examines why this genre, so seemingly laden with restrictions and expectations, appealed to some of the greatest avant-garde painters in the history of art. The exhibition includes such artists as Gustave Courbet, Edgar Degas, Vincent van Gogh, Amedeo Modigliani, Pablo Picasso, Marcel Duchamp and Andy Warhol, among many others.

Portraiture became extremely popular in France during Ingres’s long career. By the time of his death in 1867, the country was enjoying brief political stability under Napoleon III, and the emergent bourgeoisie were flaunting their new wealth by commissioning portraits. The exhibition begins with a series of portraits by Ingres’s contemporaries, such as Anselm Feuerbach, Claude-Marie Dubufe and William-Adolphe Bouguereau. These works demonstrate some of the traditional characteristics of the genre—a single sitter, realistically captured and artfully posed, placed among indications of wealth and social status.



Next to these academic pictures, the portraits by the Impressionists and Post-Impressionists reveal a perceptible shift in the genre. Moving out of the constructed world of the studio and into the world around them, Impressionist artists turned their attention and their brushes away from baronesses and countesses

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toward their wives, friends and even familiar local characters—in other words, to the lives of the modern world. Vincent van Gogh paints *Head of a Peasant Woman in a White Bonnet*, an earnest portrayal of his lover Sien de Groot, which was also a study for one of the characters in his later painting *The Potato Eaters*. Pierre-Auguste Renoir paints his friends, among them the artist Camille Pissarro and the art critic Georges Rivière, casually seated in his living room. And with his tremendous application of paint, Paul Cézanne nearly builds an image of his uncle Dominique.

Continuing with the work of 20th-century masters, the exhibition presents radical variations on portraiture, showing how and why, given the complete destruction of representation as early as the 1910s, artists returned to the genre over and over again. In his portrait of his wife, Jeanne Hebuterne, Amedeo Modigliani presents her in his characteristic elongated, Gothic style, removing nearly all detail from her face and form. In one of the most direct connections between Ingres and these avant-garde painters, Pablo Picasso paints his mistress and muse Marie-Thérèse Walter after Ingres's *Portrait of Madame Moitessier Sitting*, 1856. Andy Warhol's screen print of Jacqueline Kennedy, based on a photograph from President Kennedy's funeral, shows her twice, her distraught face shrouded in a black veil.



The fact that portraiture was engrained with tradition may be the reason the genre was so attractive to these progressive artists. With conventions come expectations, all of which could be confronted, undermined, toyed with and even silenced. Altogether, the works presented in *Gaze: Portraiture after Ingres* provide an opportunity to examine the evolution of portraiture—from its peak of classical perfection at the time of Ingres, to its focus on the modern world at the hands of the Impressionists, to its radical reworking by 20th-century masters.

Gaze: Portraiture after Ingres is organized by Leah Lehmbeck, Assistant Curator at the Norton Simon Museum. Lectures held in conjunction with the exhibition include “Matisse, Picasso and Beyond: How Portraiture Survived Modernism” by John Klein, Associate Professor of Modern and Contemporary Art at Washington University in St. Louis, on Saturday, February 20; “Outside of the Box: Portraiture after Ingres” by Leah Lehmbeck, Assistant Curator, Norton Simon Museum, on Saturday, March 13; and “Was Édouard Vuillard a Portrait Painter?” by Richard Brettell, Margaret McDermott Distinguished Chair of Art and Aesthetics, the University of Texas at Dallas, and the American Director of FRAME (French Regional and American Museum Exchange), on Saturday, March 27. All lectures are at 4:00 p.m. and are free with Museum admission. More information, including lectures organized in conjunction with Ingres's *Comtesse d'Haussonville*, can be found at www.nortonsimon.org.

About the Norton Simon Museum

The Norton Simon Museum is known around the world as one of the most remarkable private art collections ever assembled. Over a 30-year period, 20th-century industrialist Norton Simon (1907–1993) amassed an astonishing collection of European art from the Renaissance to the 20th century, and a stellar collection of South and Southeast Asian art spanning 2,000 years. Modern and Contemporary Art from Europe and the United States, acquired by the former Pasadena Art Museum, also occupies an important place in the Museum's collections. The Museum houses more than 12,000 objects, roughly 1,000 of which are on view in the galleries and gardens. Three temporary exhibition galleries feature rotating installations of artworks not on permanent display.

Location: The Norton Simon Museum is located at 411 West Colorado Blvd. at Orange Grove Blvd. in Pasadena, California, at the intersection of the Foothill (210) and Ventura (134) freeways. For general Museum information, please call (626) 449-6840 or visit www.nortonsimon.org. **Hours:** The Museum is open every day except Tuesday, from 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., and 12:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Friday. **Admission:** General admission is \$8.00 for adults and \$4.00 for seniors. Members, students with I.D., and patrons age 18 and under are admitted free of charge. Admission is free for everyone on the first Friday of every month from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. All public programs, unless stated otherwise, are free. The Museum is wheelchair accessible. **Parking:** Parking is free and no reservations are necessary. **Public Transportation:** The City of Pasadena provides a shuttle bus to transport passengers through the Pasadena Playhouse district, the Lake Avenue shopping district and Old Pasadena. A shuttle stop is located in front of the Museum. Please visit www.cityofpasadena.net/artsbus for schedules. The MTA bus line #180/181 stops in front of the Museum. The Memorial Park Station on the MTA Gold Line is the closest Metro Rail station to the Museum, and is located at 125 East Holly Street at Arroyo Parkway. Please visit www.metro.net for schedules.