

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Major Plains Indian Exhibition to Open in Paris,
Travel to Kansas City and New York City**

Exhibition to Offer In-Depth View of Plains Indian Artistic Masterworks

Sept. 3, 2013 – The beauty, power and spiritual resonance of Plains Indian art will be on view in a major exhibition that opens in April 2014 in Paris, then travels to Kansas City and New York City. ***The Plains Indians: Artists of Earth and Sky*** will unite Plains Indian masterworks found in European and North American collections, from pre-contact to contemporary, ranging from a 2,000-year-old *Human Effigy* stone pipe to 18th-century painted robes to a 2011 beaded adaptation of designer shoes. Works of art collected centuries ago by French traders and travelers will be seen together with those acquired by Lewis and Clark on their famous expedition of 1804-06, along with objects from the early reservation era and contemporary works based in traditional forms and ideas.

The exhibition is being organized by Musée du quai Branly in Paris in collaboration with The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. It is curated by Gaylord Torrence, one of the nation's leading scholars of Plains Indian art and the Fred and Virginia Merrill Senior Curator of American Indian Art at the Nelson-Atkins.

“It is our goal with this exhibition to present the extraordinary vision of



Plains Indian artists throughout time to the present,” Torrence said. “The objects embody both the creative brilliance of their individual makers and the meanings and power of profound cultural traditions.”

The Plains Indians: Artists of Earth and Sky will be on view at Quai Branly in Paris from April 7 to July 20, 2014, then travel to the Nelson-Atkins from Sept. 20, 2014 to Jan. 11, 2015, then move to the Metropolitan Museum from March 2 to May 17, 2015.

The distinct Plains aesthetic – singular, ephemeral and materially rich – will be revealed through an array of forms and media: painting and drawing; sculptural works in stone, wood, antler and shell; porcupine quill and glass bead embroidery; feather work; painted robes depicting figures and geometric shapes; richly ornamented clothing; composite works; and ceremonial objects.



Many Nations are represented – Osage, Quapaw, Omaha, Crow, Cheyenne, Arapaho, Lakota, Blackfeet, Pawnee, Kiowa, Comanche, Mesquakie, Kansa and others. Objects will travel from France, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Canada and the United States.

The exhibition was conceived by Stéphane Martin, President of Quai Branly, who traveled to the United States in 2010 to explore the idea. He visited the new and highly acclaimed American Indian galleries at the Nelson-Atkins and invited Torrence to curate the exhibition. When the Metropolitan Museum agreed to be the third venue, the tour was complete.

“American Indian art has always been a passion of mine,” said Mr. Martin. “I am thrilled that Quai Branly will showcase the finest of these works, and I know our visitors will relish the chance to see Plains Indians objects that have long fascinated Europeans.”

The works on view will reflect the significant place that Plains Indian culture holds in European history and in the heritage of North America. They will also convey the continuum of hundreds of years of artistic tradition, maintained against the backdrop of monumental cultural change.

“At the Nelson-Atkins, we are attuned to the living culture and the emerging contemporary



art from Native peoples, and our goal is to always honor and showcase the finest of those works,” said Julián Zugazagoitia, Director & CEO of the Nelson-Atkins. “We are proud of the role that the Nelson-Atkins – in the center of North America – holds in this important exhibition, and we are proud to build on the legacy established by the landmark exhibition *Sacred Circles* presented at the Nelson-Atkins in 1977. That was a defining moment in the understanding of Native American art, and we believe *The Plains Indians* will be another historic moment.”

Thomas P. Campbell, Director and CEO of the Metropolitan Museum, said: "Through outstanding works of art from the Plains region, this ambitious exhibition demonstrates the long history of change and creative adaptation that characterizes Native American art. It is an important opportunity to highlight the artistic traditions that are indigenous to North America and to present them in the context of the Met's global collections."

A fully illustrated 320-page catalogue with essays by leading experts, edited by Torrence, will accompany the exhibition.

Image captions:

Painted Robe, Eastern Plains, possibly Illinois (Inoka) artist, c. 1700–1740. Native tanned leather and pigment, 42.4 x 47.8 inches. Musée du quai Branly, Paris, 71.1878.32.134.

Drawing from Maffett Ledger Book, Southern and Northern Cheyenne, Howling Wolf and others, possibly as many as 22 different warrior artists, c. 1874-1881. Paper, pencil, watercolor and crayon. 10.5 x 11.63 inches. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, New York. The Michael C. Rockefeller Memorial Collection, Purchase, Nelson A. Rockefeller Gift, 1968. 1978.412.207P68.

Jamie Okuma, Shoshone, b. 1977, Glendale, California. *Adaptation*, 2011 Shoes designed by Christian Louboutin, Paris (Chaotic 100 ankle boots), glass and 24k gold-plated beads, and polyester tassels, each: 6 1/2 x 3 3/8 x 8 1/2 inches. The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri. Purchase: the A. Keith Brodtkin Fund for the Acquisition of Contemporary American Indian Art. 2011.42.a,b.

Musée du quai Branly

From its vantage point on the banks of the Seine, at the foot of the Eiffel Tower, the musée du quai Branly strives to give the full measure of the significance of the Arts and Civilisations of Africa, Asia, Oceania and the Americas, at the crossroads of cultural, religious and historical influences.

As a place of scientific and artistic dialogue, a crossroads for exchanges between the general public, researchers, students or contemporary artists, the museum hosts a series of exhibitions, performances, conferences, workshops and screenings that punctuate its life throughout the year. All museum information on <http://www.quaibrantly.fr>.

For media interested in receiving further information, please contact: Lisa Veran, Media Relations Officer, 00 33 1 56 61 70 52, lisa.veran@quaibrantly.fr

The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

The Nelson-Atkins in Kansas City is recognized nationally and internationally as one of America's finest art museums. The Nelson-Atkins serves the community by providing access and insight into its renowned collection of more than 33,500 art objects and is best known for its Asian art, European and American paintings, photography, modern sculpture, and new American Indian and Egyptian galleries. Housing a major art research library and the Ford Learning Center, the Museum is a key educational resource for the region. The institution-wide transformation of the Nelson-Atkins has included the 165,000-square-foot Bloch Building expansion and renovation of the original 1933 Nelson-Atkins Building. The Nelson-Atkins is located at 45th and Oak Streets, Kansas City, MO. For museum information, phone 816.751.1ART (1278) or visit <http://www.nelson-atkins.org>.

For media interested in receiving further information, please contact: Kathleen Leighton, Communications and Media Relations Officer, The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, 816.751.1321, kleighton@nelson-atkins.org.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art

The Metropolitan Museum of Art is one of the world's largest and finest museums, with collections spanning more than 5,000 years of world culture, from prehistory to the present and from every part of the globe. The Metropolitan Museum's main building, located at the edge of Central Park along Fifth Avenue in Manhattan, and The Cloisters museum and gardens, its branch museum for medieval art and architecture in northern Manhattan, received more than 6 million visitors last year. Additional information about the Museum is available at www.metmuseum.org.

For media queries, please contact: Elyse Topalian or Naomi Takafuchi, Communications Department, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 212-570-3951 or communications@metmuseum.org.