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CHEEKWOOD MASTERPIECE ART SERIES TO LAUNCH WITH DEGAS, MARCH 2024

*Inaugural series showcasing masterpieces in art launches with Degas sculpture
in conjunction with works on paper exhibition*

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (Jan. 31, 2024) – Cheekwood Estate & Gardens is proud to announce the Masterpiece Art Series, exhibiting a single masterpiece from world-renowned artists. The inaugural exhibition will take place in spring 2024 with the internationally recognizable bronze study for the *Little Dancer* sculpture by Edgar Degas, *Etude de nu pour la danseuse habillée*, a rare loan from the Marlene and Spencer Hays collection. The Masterpiece Art Series will run concurrently with Cheekwood’s presentation of ***Edgar Degas, The Private Impressionist: Works on Paper by the Artist and His Circle***, an exhibition highlighting work by the French master.

“The Marlene and Spencer Hays Foundation was founded with the mission to improve peoples’ lives through the arts, among other endeavors,” said Marlene Hays. “It is a joy to deliver on that promise in my own city of Nashville, and Cheekwood is a wonderful institution of the arts serving our community in the same way.”

Jane MacLeod, president and CEO of Cheekwood, added, “We are thrilled to have the Degas bronze from the Marlene and Spencer Hays collection as the debut masterwork for our new art series. To be able to launch the series with an iconic artwork from such a significant and renowned collection is a great honor. We look forward with enthusiasm to sharing this treasure with our community and visitors from around the world.”

The traveling exhibition, *Edgar Degas: The Private Impressionist, Works by the Artist & His Circle* opens on March 9 and will be on view through June 16 alongside the Masterpiece Art Series. *The Private Impressionist* is an enriching and, at times, personal exhibition illuminating the artist’s observations of human nature through his drawings on paper, along with photographs, prints, monotypes and a private letter. An additional selection of more than 40 works of art on paper by well-known artists, many of whom were friends of Degas including Mary Cassatt and Paul Cézanne, are part of the traveling exhibition, bringing Degas into focus as one of the most celebrated, elusive, complex and masterful artists in the world. *The Private Impressionist* exhibition is organized by Landau Traveling Exhibitions, Los Angeles, CA in association with Deneberg Fine Arts, West Hollywood, CA. The exhibition is underwritten locally by the Marlene and Spencer Hays Foundation.

Outside in the gardens, the French theme continues as visitors will be treated to the 12th annual *Cheekwood in Bloom*, a seasonal festival celebrating spring blooms spanning the botanical garden and arboretum’s 55 acres, this year themed *Belle Fleurs*, and running March 9 – April 14. Along with 250,000 blooming tulips, daffodils, violas, hyacinths and other varietal bulbs, the French influence will be on full display with signature designs and features of traditional parterre gardens such as scrollwork hedges and clipped vertical shrubs, and Cheekwood’s own mini-Eiffel Tower. Additional programming during *Cheekwood in Bloom* includes themed workshops and gardening classes, live musical performances and weekend festivities celebrating the season.

Cheekwood is open seven days a week during *Cheekwood in Bloom* from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Cheekwood members will have exclusive access to purchase priority tickets. For exhibition details, membership information and more, visit www.cheekwood.org.

About Cheekwood

With its intact and picturesque vistas, Cheekwood is distinguished as one of the leading Country Place Era estates in the nation. Formerly the family home of Mabel and Leslie Cheek, the 1930s estate, with its 30,000-square-foot Mansion and 55-acres of gardens, today serves the public as a botanical garden, arboretum and art museum with furnished period rooms and permanent collection galleries devoted to American art from the 18th to mid-20th centuries. The property includes 13 distinct gardens including the Blevins Japanese Garden and the Bracken Foundation Children's Garden, as well as a 1.5-mile woodland trail featuring outdoor monumental sculpture. Each year, Cheekwood hosts seasonal festivals including Cheekwood in Bloom, Summertime at Cheekwood, Cheekwood Harvest and Holiday LIGHTS. Cheekwood is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums and nationally as a Level II Arboretum. It is a three-time voted USA Today Top 10 Botanical Garden and in 2021 was recognized by Fodor's as one of the 12 Most Beautiful Gardens in the American South. Cheekwood is located eight miles southwest of downtown Nashville at 1200 Forrest Park Drive. It is open Tuesday through Sunday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., with extended days and hours of operation depending on the season. Check www.cheekwood.org for current hours and to purchase advance tickets required for admission.

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