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Edgar DEGAS
L'Absinthe, 1876
Musée d'Orsay, Paris

NATIONAL GALLERIES OF SCOTLAND ANNOUNCE BAILLIE GIFFORD AS SPONSOR OF MAJOR SUMMER EXHIBITION

IMPRESSIONISM AND SCOTLAND

19 July – 12 October 2008

NATIONAL GALLERY COMPLEX, The Mound, Edinburgh

Admission £8 (£6)

The National Galleries of Scotland is delighted to announce that Baillie Gifford & Co, the Edinburgh-based investment management firm, is to sponsor this year's major summer exhibition at the National Gallery Complex in Edinburgh.

Baillie Gifford & Co, which celebrates its centenary in 2008, will sponsor the much-anticipated international exhibition, *Impressionism and Scotland*. This exhibition of over 100 paintings, pastels and watercolours runs from 19 July to 12 October and will explore the Scottish taste for Impressionism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, assessing the impact of modern European art on Scottish art and artists. Highlights will include Renoir's *The Bay of Naples* (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York), the first Impressionist painting to be bought by a Scot; Degas's *L'Absinthe* (Musée d'Orsay, Paris), which was 'hissed' when it came up for auction in the early 1890s, due to its 'depraved' subject-matter; and Sir John Lavery's *The Tennis Party* (Aberdeen Art Gallery), a rare example of Scottish modern life painting. Other major Impressionist works will be on loan from private and public collections in the UK, Germany, the USA and Australia. Artists represented in the show will include Manet, Monet, Degas, Sisley, Pissarro, Renoir, Whistler, Van Gogh, Cézanne, Gauguin, Toulouse-Lautrec and Matisse, as well as the Glasgow Boys and the Scottish Colourists

In the late nineteenth century Scotland was a powerful industrial nation and Glasgow was second city of the British Empire. A rising generation of rich industrialist and mercantile collectors developed a taste for avant-garde European art, many of them acquiring works which are now of international importance. Initially collectors in Aberdeen forged links between the artists of the Hague School – the so-called Dutch ‘Impressionists’ – and Scots artists such as George Reid and William McTaggart. Many Scots collectors also acquired the work of Camille Corot and the artists of the Barbizon School; and in Glasgow – under the influence of the art dealer Alexander Reid – they were among the first to invest in the work of Degas, Manet, Monet, Renoir and Whistler. Pictures acquired by such collectors were frequently loaned to public exhibitions and were seen by contemporary Scottish artists. Exposed to these works in the 1880s and 1890s, artists of the ‘Glasgow School’, such as John Lavery, James Guthrie and E.A. Walton, began to emulate their European contemporaries. They painted in the open air, depicting both rural and modern-life subjects, but they avoided the controversial café scenes of Manet and Degas. They were commonly referred to by critics, sometimes pejoratively, as ‘impressionists’, even though their essentially tonal style of painting was quite different from the ‘scientific’ impressionism of Monet and his contemporaries.

In the early twentieth century a new generation of artists emerged in Scotland – S.J. Peploe, J.D. Fergusson, Leslie Hunter and F.C.B. Cadell, later known as the Scottish Colourists. These artists all traveled to France and an early interest in Manet and Impressionism was soon superseded by a fascination with the decorative expressionism of Matisse and the ‘Fauves’. After the First World War Scottish collectors learned to appreciate the Colourists’ brilliant colour and expressive handling and, partly through their influence, turned to Post-Impressionism, acquiring works by Van Gogh, Cézanne, Gauguin, Toulouse-Lautrec and Matisse.

This exhibition will highlight some astonishing parallels between the work of Dutch, French and Scottish artists, whose work will be hung side by side: Corot and Walton; Bastien-Lepage and Guthrie; Degas and Crawhall; Manet and Fergusson; Matisse and Hunter. It will demonstrate that, despite these influences, both at home and abroad Scottish artists developed their own instinctive brand of Impressionism, quite unlike the more analytical approach of the French Impressionists.

Baillie Gifford & Co, based in Edinburgh and employing 533 people, is one of the UK’s leading independent investment management groups with £55.5 billion of funds under management and advice as at 31 December 2007.

Alex Callander, joint senior partner, Baillie Gifford & Co said: ‘It is a privilege to be involved with this marvellous exhibition during our centenary year, an appropriate parallel as some of

the pieces on display are around 100 years old. The works in the exhibition also demonstrate the vision of many Scottish collectors, and the great talent of Scottish artists.'

John Leighton, Director-General of the National Galleries of Scotland said: 'Baillie Gifford & Co has been enormously supportive of the NGS, sponsoring some of the most significant and successful exhibitions of the past decade. Their continued generosity will allow us to mount one of the major highlights in this year's cultural calendar – a fascinating exhibition that will do much to illuminate the complex relationship between French and Scottish art in the period from 1860 to 1930.'

Following its run in Edinburgh, a condensed version of *Impressionism and Scotland* will be shown at Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum in Glasgow, from 31 October 2008 to 1 February 2009.

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For further information please contact the Press Office at the National Galleries of Scotland on pressinfo@nationalgalleries.org or 0131 624 6325/ 332/ 247 www.nationalgalleries.org

Notes to Editors:

Baillie Gifford & Co has sponsored the following National Galleries of Scotland exhibitions: *Phoebe Anna Traquair 1852-1936* (1993); *Sir James Gunn 1893-1964* (1995); *David Livingstone and the Victorian Encounter with Africa* (1996); *George Rodger: The African Photographs* (1996); *The Winter Queen: The Life of Elizabeth of Bohemia 1596-1662* (1998); *Turner & Sir Walter Scott: The Provincial Antiquities and Picturesque Scenery of Scotland* (2000); *Andrew Geddes (1783-1844): Painter - Printmaker: 'A Man of Pure Taste'* (2001); *The King Over the Water: The Life of Prince James Francis Edward Stewart* (2001); *Rubens: Drawing on Italy* (2002); *Below Stairs: 400 Years of Servants' Portraits* (2004); *Gauguin's Vision* (2005)