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## MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON, LAUNCHES NEW MULTIMEDIA GUIDE

### Guide Offers Video Interviews with Artists and Curators and Special Tours for Children and Families Featuring Animated Characters

BOSTON, MA (November 12, 2010)—There is a new way for visitors of all ages to encounter magnificent works of art at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA), including those on view in the new wing for the Art of the Americas. The MFA is launching a multimedia guide that features tours for adults with images, narration, and videos along with tours specially designed for children led by animated characters. These guides allow visitors to dig deeper and learn more about the works on display through the museum. The user-friendly device, which replaces the MFA's audio guide, is an Apple iPod Touch 3G.

The tour for adult visitors on the multimedia guide includes images and audio introduction for more than 500 works in the MFA's collection—each one assigned an identifying number on its gallery label that corresponds to “stops” in the guide. Of these, 120 are collection highlights, which have been translated into seven languages—Spanish, French, German, Italian, Russian, Chinese, and Japanese. Additionally, the guide incorporates special features for those who are blind, have low vision, are deaf or hard of hearing, allowing all visitors to use the same device. American Sign Language videos and video captioning for the deaf and hard of hearing will be available in 2011.

#### Art of the Americas Wing Highlights

A special aspect of the multimedia guide is its ability to serve as a resource for the examination of the evolution of art in all of the Americas—North, Central, and South—from antiquity to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, offering new perspectives on American art, history, and culture. Included in the guide are 120 stops for adults that highlight works in the wing for the Art of the Americas. There are also 30 videos that have been created for the guide, which feature a wide variety of people such as curators, conservators, and art experts, and include reflections from artists' family members, as well as historical photos that bring to life the stories of people and places associated with the art in the new wing. Video highlights include an interview with a fisherman describing life at sea as glimpsed in Winslow Homer's painting *Fog Warning* (1885); musical instruments in the MFA's collection being played, such as the *Resonator guitar* (1934); and Barry Gaither, Director of the National Center for African American Artists, discussing local Boston artist Alan Crite.

#### Tour for Children and Families

The multimedia guide includes a tour for children and families that has approximately 130 stops, 40 of which are works found in the new Art of the Americas Wing. These stops invite young people to discover the Art of the Americas collection through the eyes of three engaging characters: Lucia, a high school newspaper editor; Malone, an art detective; and Steve, a mischievous 10-year-old explorer. A short animated video clip developed in collaboration with WGBH Kids offers introductions to three characters that will guide families through all four levels of the wing.

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***Fresh Ink: Ten Takes on Chinese Tradition***

Works from the MFA's new special exhibition, ***Fresh Ink: Ten Takes on Chinese Tradition\****, on view through February 13, 2011, are also included in the multimedia guide. The groundbreaking exhibition highlights 10 artists from China and the Chinese diaspora who present new works that they created in direct response to masterpieces in the Museum's encyclopedic collection. The guide showcases the 10 artists by providing background information or a video on each, as well as curatorial narratives and an image of the work that inspired the artists. The ***Fresh Ink*** tour on the guide will also include an audio description of the work for those who are vision impaired.

The Museum's multimedia guide was developed by MFA educators and curators, in conjunction with Genuine Interactive, who is also working with the MFA on the redesign of mfa.org. The MFA worked with a team of advisors who are blind in the development of the audio descriptions. Multimedia guides are available for \$5 for MFA Members, \$6 for the general public, and \$4 for children.

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