

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**The La Salle University Art Museum is proud to present “*Strategic Ambiguity: The Obscure, Nebulous, and Vague in Symbolist Prints*” on view from December 6, 2012 to March 1, 2013.**

This exhibition addresses the concept of strategic ambiguity in Symbolist prints of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Included are works by artists Odilon Redon, Jan Toorop, Paul Gauguin, Maurice Denis, Édouard Vuillard, Félix Vallotton, Henri Ibels, Pierre Bonnard, Félix Buhot, Pierre Roche, Henri Martin, Armand Point, Maurice Dumont, Jeanne Jacquemin, Georges de Feure, Valère Bernard, Carlos Schwabe and others. Print techniques represented in this survey include lithography, etching, and gypsography.

The selected works demonstrate how the Symbolist fascination with ambiguity seen in their choices of subject matter (i.e. half-human, half-animal hybrids such as harpies and sphinxes, gender ambiguity and androgyny) extended to formal strategies of representation that obscure form as well as content. According to the exhibition’s curator, Carmen Vendelin, “this exhibition places Symbolist art in the context of Modernism by focusing on the ways in which artists experimented with print media and explored technical means of suggesting formal ambiguity (i.e. flattening, abstracting, obscuring) both to better match form and content and to push the boundaries of figurative art.” The exhibition also includes prints by artists not typically included in the Symbolist canon, which demonstrates the permeation of the Symbolist aesthetic more broadly at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The exhibition catalogue will feature essays by the curator and La Salle faculty from several disciplines: Art History, Philosophy and German Literature. Each of the essayists will present related lectures during the run of the exhibition. The exhibition and programming will demonstrate the continuing relevance of Symbolist art to contemporary audiences and delve into the ways fine art prints can be a conduit to thinking about the relationship of Symbolist art to not only other arts, such as literature and theater, but also the sciences and philosophy.

In tandem with the main exhibition, the complete 12 print portfolio *Vom Tode Zweiter Teil (On Death Part II), Opus XIII*, 1898-1909 by German painter, sculptor, and printmaker Max Klinger (1857-1920), will be on view in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Hallway.

This exhibition is supported in part by a grant from the International Fine Print Dealers Association, The Philadelphia Cultural Fund, and The Pennsylvania Council on the Arts. Thank you to The Zimmerli Art Museum, Ken Ratner, and the Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art for lending works to this exhibition.

Programming for the exhibition:

Jan. 16: Public Reception, 5-7 pm, La Salle University Art Museum

Jan. 22: Curator’s Introduction by Carmen Vendelin, Curator of Art, 12:30-1:30 pm, Holroyd Hall, Room 190

Jan. 30: Lecture by Marc Moreau, Ph.D., Chair of the Philosophy Department, 1-2 pm, Holroyd Hall, Room 190

Feb. 6: Lecture by Siobhan Conaty, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Art History, 1-2 pm, Holroyd Hall, Room 190

Feb. 20: Explorer Café, “Synesthesia, Symbolism, and the Gesamtkunstwerk: Multi-sensory Experiences of the Arts,”  
3-4 pm, Holroyd Hall Atrium

Feb 26: Lecture by Vincent Kling, Ph.D., Professor of German and Literature, 12:30-1:30, Holroyd Hall, Room 190

Please visit our webpage for further details.

The La Salle University Art Museum is located on the lower level of Olney Hall on the campus of La Salle University at 19th St. and Olney Ave. Hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. Admission is free, though donations are accepted. Please call to schedule group visits. Special tours can be arranged. For further information call 215.951.1221 or visit the website at <http://www.lasalle.edu/museum/>.