

**Media Contacts:**

Paula Webster, Communications  
Dahesh Museum of Art  
[pwebster@daheshmuseum.org](mailto:pwebster@daheshmuseum.org)  
212-663-0142  
917-566-7992

Scott McDowell  
Director of Communications  
Syracuse University  
[semcdowe@syr.edu](mailto:semcdowe@syr.edu)  
212-826-1449

**Dahesh Museum of Art and Syracuse University Continue their  
Collaboration with Third Exhibition at Palitz Gallery**

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***The Essential Line: Drawings from the Dahesh Museum of Art***  
***February 9—March 24, 2011***

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***First in-depth exhibition of Dahesh Museum's excellent drawing collection***

New York, New York— Drawing, an integral part of 19th-century academic training and art-making process, is the focus of the third collaboration in three years between the Dahesh Museum of Art and Syracuse University. ***The Essential Line: Drawings from the Dahesh Museum of Art***, a new exhibition opening this winter at Palitz Gallery/Lubin House (February 9 - March 24, 2011), explores the medium of drawing in all its variety while showcasing the Museum's collection. This exhibition has been organized with the University's Graduate Program in Museum Studies

The rich selection highlights the nature of drawing in the 19th century. Among the 40 works on view, there are rare drawings by Lawrence Alma Tadema, Rosa Bonheur, Léon Bonnat, Alexandre Cabanel, Paul Delaroche, Gustav Doré, Jean Lecomte Du Nouÿ, Frederic Lord Leighton, and Tommaso Minardi, as well as

unfamiliar but talented draftsmen. This is the first time the Dahesh Museum of Art's important drawing collection has been exhibited in depth.

Drawing was the cornerstone of 19th-century artistic professionalism and excellence. Initial artistic training at the *École* and ateliers was exclusively drawing—first copying after Bargue prints and moving on to life studies. A number of more finished figure and portrait studies carry this forward as artists continued to refine their skills throughout their careers. Some figural studies are preparatory for paintings (Dumas, Friant). Other preparatory studies are compositional studies (Alma Tadema and Cabanel). There are highly finished drawings that may even be stand-alone works of art (Doré, Lhermitte). Self-portraits are a genre that speaks both to the self-awareness of artists in this century and a subject matter with a long tradition (Rapin). Subjects range from mythology to history to religion to genre. Some drawings indicate *plein-air* activity.

The exhibition originated as a joint venture between the curatorial staff of the Dahesh Museum of Art and the Museum Studies Program at Syracuse. The staff of the DMA selected a group of 43 drawings from the collection, plus 5 important drawings on loan from the private collection of Gina Milano, representing the diversity of technique and subject matter of 19th-century academic drawings. Syracuse students had access to these drawings, conducting research, writing didactic labels, organizing an exhibition on campus in the SUArt Galleries, and contributing to a related exhibition at the Palitz Gallery in New York.

According to J. David Farmer, the Dahesh Museum's Director of Exhibitions, "Giving graduate students in Museum Studies the use of our Collection is an ideal extension of the partnership that can exist between a university and a museum, and a model for others interested in opening doors between cultural

institutions. In entrusting our collection to future curators, we are helping to prepare the next generation of museum professionals.”

While the student exhibition emphasized the academic training process, the show mounted in New York City will be re-focused to illustrate the centrality of drawing for all artistic practice throughout an artist’s career. ***The Essential Line*** explores how drawing was used in the teaching and training of the young artists; as preparatory sketches for paintings or prints; or a sketch album, as a form of visual note taking. Some drawings follow classical themes, some are humorous—caricatures or proto-cartoons—others are highly finished and existed as works of art in themselves. Nineteenth-century art training was so rigorous that even student works were very often stunning.

Edward A. Aiken, Director of the Museum Studies Program at Syracuse says, “This project provided an extraordinary opportunity for the students to learn about the fundamental importance of teamwork to the curatorial effort. We are grateful to the Dahesh Museum of Art for the loan of their superb drawings, which enabled our students to take what they learned in a classroom and apply their knowledge to the hands-on curatorial experience of mounting a public art exhibition. In doing so, they demonstrated the University’s vision of Scholarship in Action.”

***The Essential Line; Drawings from the Dahesh Museum of Art*** can be seen at The Palitz Gallery from **Monday to Saturday, 11- 6**, beginning February 9, 2011. The Palitz Gallery is located at 11 East 61<sup>st</sup> Street, between Fifth Avenue and Madison Avenue in New York City. **Admission is Free.** For more information, call Lubin House (212) 826-0320 or visit [daheshmuseum.org](http://daheshmuseum.org) and [lubinhouse.syr.edu](http://lubinhouse.syr.edu).