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from

THE FRICK COLLECTION

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*The Frick Collection Expands its
Free Acoustiguide Offerings
to Include Italian*

AND

***FIRST ITALIAN-LANGUAGE GUIDEBOOK TO
THE FRICK COLLECTION ALSO PUBLISHED***

Building on the success of its free Acoustiguide INFORM® Audio tours, The Frick Collection is pleased to announce that it is adding an **Italian** version to its offerings. Under Director Samuel Sachs II, The Frick Collection introduced the *ArtPhone* tour in English, French, German, Japanese, and Spanish, and became the **first North American fine arts museum** to offer a truly comprehensive museum tour in such large complement of multi-language programming (visitors may select from three hours of material in all of the languages available). Offered at no extra charge, *ArtPhone* tours have been avidly used by upwards of 94% of all visitors at The Frick Collection. The Italian version of *ArtPhone* has been made possible through a generous grant by **Bulgari**. Furthermore, this month the institution, in conjunction with Scala Publishers, will offer for sale the first Italian-language guide to *La Frick Collection/Una visita*, a remarkable offering among American museums.

Samuel Sachs II comments, "We have been thrilled to witness both the critical acclaim and positive public response to this important educational initiative. And, from the beginning, we felt strongly that the program should and would expand with the help of sponsors. We are truly grateful to **Bulgari** for taking this first important step with us. Now those who speak Italian may enjoy -- in their language -- the new audio tour and new guidebook, which include masterpieces by artists of their own country such as Bellini, Tiepolo, Titian, and Veronese."

The *ArtPhone* project and its current expansion was coordinated by former Curator **Edgar Munhall**, who wrote the script along with Curator **Susan Grace Galassi**, in conjunction with Acoustiguide writers. The Italian version features the voices of **Marco Grassi**, internationally known paintings conservator, and actress **Francesca Di Maura**. Available for selection on each tour are over 100 commentaries on the 1914 mansion and the paintings, sculptures, and decorative artworks it contains. A lightweight, cordless device that is hand-held (requiring no headphones) *ArtPhone* is a departure from standard tape-recorded tours. Using digital technology, *ArtPhone* enables viewers to choose, with the unit's push-buttons, the item or room about which they wish to learn. Topics may be selected or repeated in any order, or skipped, giving the visitor freedom to create an individualized tour. Plaguing the traditional system, is the tendency of large groups of listeners to cluster around works as they progress on their tours. The flexible "random access" of *ArtPhone*, instead, offers a smoother flow of traffic throughout an institution, as users create their own paths. The flexibility of *ArtPhone* is particularly well suited to The Frick Collection, where installations do not follow a chronological scheme, but provide, instead, a rich blending of paintings, sculptures, and decorative artworks from various periods -- all within the contemplative atmosphere of its founder's 1914 residence.

NEW GUIDEBOOK IN ITALIAN AND FIVE OTHER LANGUAGES

The new guidebook is part of a 6-language series of publications that presents succinct and lively commentaries on the most important works at The Frick Collection, along with views of some of the remarkable interiors in which they are presented. The book was released initially only in three languages (English, French, and German), and has been a runaway "Best Seller" in the Museum Shop of The Frick Collection, as the projected two-year supply flew off the shelves in well under half that time. The book was also honored in the 1999 Design Competition sponsored by the American Association of Museums.

Each commentary, drawn from the Acoustiguide tour transcript, provides key art historical information and a fresh interpretive viewpoint. In addition, a short biography is provided on each artist, or additional information on the historical background, and elements of architecture and decoration. The text is by Edgar Munhall, with Susan Grace Galassi, Ashley Thomas, and the Acoustiguide Corporation staff. The Italian *La Frick Collection/Una visita* -- along with other versions in English, French, German, Japanese, Spanish -- is available in the Museum Shop in softcover for \$19.95, or by calling (212) 288-0700 x 848 during regular museum hours.

ABOUT ACOUSTIGUIDE

More than 40 years ago, Acoustiguide invented the audio tour, and the company has remained at the leading edge of creativity and technology ever since. Acoustiguide provides audio programs for museums, heritage and historic sites, tourism attractions, zoos, aquariums and corporate clients in 22 countries around the world. Acoustiguide offers complete creative and production services, the most advanced audio technology and comprehensive on-site management. For more information, visit www.acoustiguide.com.

ABOUT THE FRICK COLLECTION

In the elegant galleries of The Frick Collection -- a museum housed in the former mansion of industrialist Henry Clay Frick (1849-1919) -- are some of the most exceptional works of Western art. Ranging from the Renaissance through the late nineteenth century, the Collection includes works by such celebrated artists as Bellini, Constable, Corot, Fragonard, Gainsborough, Goya, El Greco, Holbein, Ingres, Manet, Monet, Rembrandt, Renoir, Titian, Turner, Velázquez, Vermeer, and Whistler. In addition to major paintings by these and other masters, the Frick's galleries contain fine French porcelains, Italian bronzes, sculptures, and period furniture. The permanent collection is further enriched by frequent presentations of special exhibitions. Inspired by the eye of an individual connoisseur, The Frick Collection has grown over the years. Greeted with awe when the doors opened in 1935, today the Collection is internationally renowned as one of New York's most remarkable cultural treasures. Designed by Thomas Hastings of Carrère and Hastings and constructed in 1913-1914, the building was changed after Mrs. Frick's death in 1931, with alterations and additions made by the architect John Russell Pope. A new Reception Hall, built in 1977, was designed by John Barrington Bayley, Harry van Dyke, and G. Frederick Poehler, as well as two temporary exhibition galleries. The Frick Collection also operates the Frick Art Reference Library at 10 East 71st Street, both a research library and a photoarchive. The Library is one of the world's great repositories for the documentation and study of Western art and has served the international art world for more than seventy-five years.

BASIC INFORMATION

General Information Phone: (212) 288-0700

Website: www.frick.org

E-mail: info@frick.org

Where: 1 East 70th Street, near Fifth Avenue.

Hours: 10am to 6pm Tuesdays through Saturdays, and from 1pm to 6pm Sundays. Closed Mondays, New Year's Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving, December 24, and December 25. Limited hours (1:00 to 6:00pm) on Lincoln's Birthday, Election Day, and Veterans Day.

Admission: \$7, general public; \$5, students & senior citizens. See updated "Tour Information."

PLEASE NOTE TO YOUR READERS: Children under ten are not admitted to the Collection, and those under sixteen must be accompanied by an adult.

Subway: #6 local (on Lexington Avenue) to 68th Street station

Bus: M1, M2, M3, and M4 southbound on Fifth Ave to 72nd Street and northbound on Madison Avenue to 70th Street

Tour Information: now included in the price of admission is an Acoustiguide INFORM® Audio Tour of the permanent collection, provided by Acoustiguide. The tour is offered in six languages: English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish.

Museum Shop: the shop closes at 5:45pm, and is open otherwise the same days and hours as the Museum.

Group Visits: Please call (212) 288-0700 for details and to make reservations.

Public Programs: A calendar of events is published regularly and is available upon request.

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For further press information, please contact Heidi Rosenau, Communications Officer

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