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Henri ROUSSEAU

February 21–June 4, 1985

The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, NY 10019 (212) 708-9400

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FINAL WEEKS OF HENRI ROUSSEAU AT MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

"New York hasn't seen such a production since MOMA's 1942
Rousseau show...."

Kay Larson
New York Magazine
March 11, 1985

"Rousseau's innocence might have been invented to refresh
the culturally burdened."

Robert Hughes
Time
March 25, 1985

"In both his life and his work, we can examine him as an object
lesson in modern art."

Roger Shattuck
Horizon
March 1985

"Although limited in size...the show concentrates on works of
unquestioned importance and authenticity."

John Ashbery
Newsweek
February 25, 1985

"...by far the most comprehensive Rousseau exhibition that has
been seen in this country. Nor can we count on seeing its like
again."

John Russell
New York Times
February 15, 1985

- more -

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Additional support has been provided by the National Endowment for the Arts.

An indemnity for the exhibition has been provided by the Federal Council on the Arts and Humanities.

The much-celebrated landmark exhibition of the paintings of HENRI ROUSSEAU is on view for its final weeks at The Museum of Modern Art in New York. Organized jointly by the Museum and the Réunion des Musées Nationaux de France, the exhibition includes approximately sixty works by the artist, dating from 1886 to his final completed painting, The Dream, of 1910. The exhibition includes virtually all of Rousseau's masterpieces, and is unique in that it is the first major retrospective of the artist's work ever held. The only previous in-depth exhibition of Rousseau's art was organized by The Museum of Modern Art in 1942, but its contents were limited to works then in American collections.

Carolyn Lanchner, curator in The Museum of Modern Art's Department of Painting and Sculpture, and William Rubin, director of the Department, worked together with Michel Hoog, curator of the Musée de l'Orangerie in Paris to organize the exhibition. HENRI ROUSSEAU opened last September at The Grand Palais in Paris, and has been seen by over one-quarter million visitors since it opened at The Museum of Modern Art in February of this year.

The exhibition and its accompanying publication were made possible by a generous grant from PaineWebber Group Inc. The exhibition has received additional support from the National Endowment for the Arts, and an indemnity was provided by the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities.

The essence of HENRI ROUSSEAU is formed by the unparalleled collections of the two sponsoring institutions. The Museum of Modern Art has both The Sleeping Gypsy of 1897 and The Dream of 1910 in its permanent collection.

The Réunion has held such major Rousseau paintings as War (1894) and The Snake Charmer (1907) for many years. Its collections were recently enhanced by the gift of a group of Rousseau paintings from the estate of Pablo Picasso and from the Walter-Guillaume bequest. Many of these paintings have never been exhibited before in the United States, including a large portrait of a woman (c. 1895) that Picasso acquired in 1908 and kept in his studio throughout his life. Works from the Walter-Guillaume bequest include The Wedding (1904-05), Old Junier's Cart (1908), and Child with a Doll (c. 1906). In addition, several paintings appear on loan from distinguished public and private collections in Switzerland, Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Japan.

Although the details of Rousseau's personal history, as well as critical interpretations of his work, have been frequently clouded by controversy, he was known and appreciated by many of the prominent artists of his day, including Pissarro, Renoir, Degas, Puvis de Chavanne, Redon, Gauguin, Toulouse-Lautrec, and Signac. In 1893 he retired from the municipal service to focus on his painting completely. By 1911 his work was not only deeply admired by Delaunay, Picasso, Léger, Beckmann and Kandinsky, it had begun to play a significant role in the developments of their own styles.

The objects in the HENRI ROUSSEAU retrospective are limited to works of unquestioned authorship. This criteria, as well as the presentation of Rousseau's most ambitious paintings in conjunction with his more modest works, bring his accomplishments and mastery into a clear focus that is long overdue.

A comprehensive catalog in both English and French editions has been published in conjunction with the exhibition by The Museum of Modern

Art and the Réunion des Musées Nationaux de France. The volume is approximately 300 pages, including sixty-six color plates with detailed commentaries, 167 black-and-white illustrations, and illuminating essays by Carolyn Lanchner, William Rubin, Roger Shattuck, and Henri Béhar.

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For further information, please contact the Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, New York 10019, 212/708-9750.