



## THE HESS COLLECTION JOINS TATE BRITAIN TO COMMEMORATE THE CENTENARY OF FRANCIS BACON'S BIRTH

**Mount Veeder, Napa Valley (Sept 16, 2008)** – One of the most prized paintings in the Hess Collection flies to London this month at the request of the renowned Tate Britain Museum. Tate officials requested the loan of the painting, "Study for a Portrait" by Francis Bacon, for a major exhibit of Bacon's work. Bacon, a British artist who lived from 1909 to 1992, is considered one of the most important artists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Francis Bacon traveling exhibition opens on September 11 in London and then moves to two additional prestigious museums, Museo Nacional del Prado in Madrid (February 3-19 April 2009) and New York City's Metropolitan Museum of Art (May 18 – August 16 2009) before returning to the Hess Collection, Mount Veeder-Napa Valley at the end of August 2009.

The Francis Bacon exhibit is the cornerstone of celebrations honoring the centenary of the artist's birth and will be the first major display of Bacon's work in London or New York in over 20 years. The exhibit presents Bacon's career in its entirety, featuring his most significant works and focuses on his key subjects and themes as well as offering new and original insights into his work. The core of the exhibit consists of 65 paintings from public and private collections in Europe and the United States.

Bacon's dark depictions of twisted human forms and visceral landscapes confronted viewers with direct and representational metaphors for the horrors of their age – World Wars I, II and the Holocaust – at a time when most respected art was highly abstract.

"Bacon insisted that there was a human need to express our individual and social experience by representing the human image in painting. He was a bit of a lone wolf, self educated and of the mind that purely abstract art missed the point by moving painting into a less tangible realm where interpretation was given almost completely to individual experience. He wanted intensely to remind us that (in his view) humans are just another animal in an indifferent cosmos " said Robert Ceballos, museum director for the Hess Collection, Mount Veeder-Napa Valley. "He is one of those rare artists whose various works represents a significant turning point in paintings history."

Vintner Donald Hess, named by *Art in America* as one of the world's leading collectors of modern art, purchased Bacon's "Study for a Portrait" in 1984, in a London gallery exhibition. The painting, depicting a portrait of a seated, rather spectral male figure in a box-like, confining space, appears on a regular basis in the galleries of The Hess Collection Museum, open free to the public seven days a week at the Hess Collection Winery, in Napa.

The Hess Collection on Mount Veeder produces distinctive estate-grown Napa Valley wines acclaimed for their complexity, structure and elegance. The mountain winery is a leader in sustainable and organic practices across its 310 vineyards acres on Mount Veeder and single vineyard designates in the Napa Valley. The historic winery has earned international recognition for its wine, culinary and visitor programs and provides free public access to Donald Hess' extensive private contemporary art

museum. Fine wines of The Hess Family include Artein (California), Peter Lehmann Wines (Australia), Glen Carlou (South Africa) and Colomé (Argentina). The South African and Argentinean wineries also exhibit major pieces from the Hess Art Collection in their museums: Glen Carlou is showing Deryck Healey, Ouattara Watts and Andy Goldsworthy; Colomé will inaugurate the first James Turrell museum in the world in 2009.

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