

**THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART ACQUIRES IMPORTANT WORK
BY GEORGES BRAQUE**

NEW YORK, September 5, 2008—The Museum of Modern Art has acquired Georges Braque’s *Homage to J.S. Bach* (1911-12), widely acknowledged as one of the artist’s most important Cubist works. Acquired from The Sidney and Harriet Janis Collection by exchange and an anonymous promised gift, *Homage to J.S. Bach* joins more than 80 other important works from the Sidney and Harriet Janis Collection that were acquired by the Museum in 1967. This painting also joins another recently acquired Cubist painting by Braque, *The Table (Still Life with Fan)*, (L’Estaque or Paris, fall 1910), promised anonymous gift and bequest of Florene May Schoenborn (by exchange).

“This extraordinary painting is celebrated as one of Braque’s most poetic and mysterious Cubist paintings,” said John Elderfield, Chief Curator Emeritus of Painting and Sculpture. “The Museum is delighted that, with its acquisition, along with that of *The Table (Still Life with Fan)*, the representation of Braque’s Cubist pictures in the collection now equals that of Picasso’s.”

Painted in the winter of 1911-12, a key moment in Cubism’s development, it initiated the use of stencil lettering, which Picasso would almost immediately follow Braque in adopting. This initiated the practice of introducing signs and symbols to the painted surface of Cubist paintings, which subsequently led to the development of collage. The stenciling of “JS BACH” on this canvas not only offers clearly defined, readable shapes, in contrast with the painterly surface, but also conveys personal meaning, given that Braque (French, 1882-1963), the amateur musician, had introduced musical instruments into the limited Cubist vocabulary of subjects culled from the everyday surroundings of the studio and café. By choosing a composer with a name similar to his own, Braque suggests an alignment between the two, an element in keeping with the ubiquitous use of puns within the texts in analytic cubist works of this period.

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