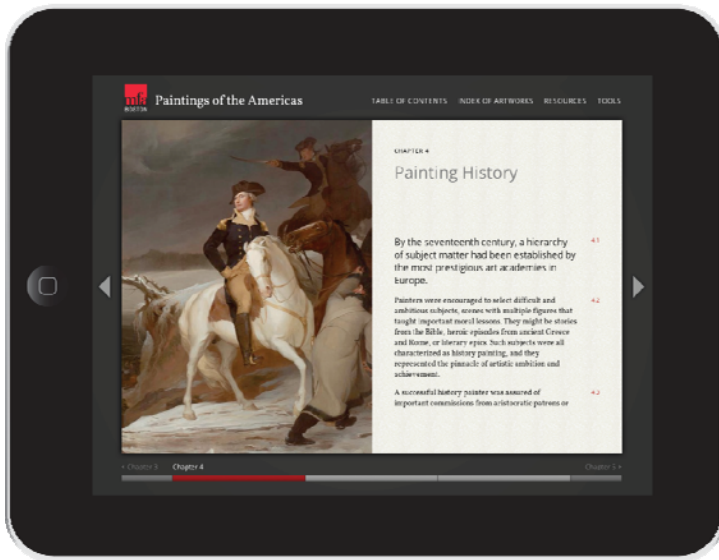


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MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON, TO LAUNCH ITS FIRST ONLINE CATALOGUE, *PAINTINGS OF THE AMERICAS*



Paintings of the Americas is the MFA's first online catalogue, which is offered for free at www.mfa.org/americanpaintings

BOSTON, MA (February 16, 2012)—Just in time for Presidents' Day, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA), will debut on February 20 its first online catalogue, *Paintings of the Americas*. The free digital publication, available at www.mfa.org/americanpaintings, will feature a selection of more than 400 paintings from its collection of nearly 2,000 (including new acquisitions) created by artists from the 17th through the 20th centuries. The online catalogue was produced to complement the Museum's Art of the Americas Wing. This is the first publication in a generation to document the MFA's world-renowned holdings of American paintings, along with those that represent the broader spectrum of the Americas.

With its elegant design, ease of use, and access to a wide range of information, *Paintings of the Americas* tells a compelling story through a chronological exploration of diverse works from North, Central, and South America. It also showcases masterworks by John Singleton Copley, Mary Cassatt, John Singer Sargent, Thomas Eakins, Winslow Homer, Georgia O'Keeffe, and Wifredo Lam. Support for this publication was provided by the Mr. and Mrs. Raymond J. Horowitz Foundation for the Arts, the Ann and William Elfers Publication Fund, the Wyeth Foundation for American Art, and the Vance Wall Foundation.

"We are especially pleased to introduce to our online visitors—including families, students, and museum lovers—a new way to experience for free one of the world's finest collections of American paintings in a format that will be regularly added to and updated as new information is entered into our database," said Malcolm Rogers, Ann and Graham Gund Director of the Museum.

In 2000, the MFA was one of only a few museums in the world to make its collection available online, and today, the majority of its 450,000 works can be viewed on the web. Now, with the new online catalogue, readers using a personal computer or tablet, such as an iPad, will be able to dig deeper into information about 425 paintings by browsing artwork by chapter, title, and artist; bookmarking favorites; reading essays; and enjoying interviews with curators and conservators. The catalogue's online format will allow content to be regularly updated and, in the future, the number of paintings featured will expand, as will the range of scholarly background information.



The Tea (Le Thé), about 1880, Mary Stevenson Cassatt

Beginning with a Director's Foreword by Malcolm Rogers and an introduction by Elliot Bostwick Davis, the John Moors Cabot Chair of the Art of the Americas Department, the catalogue is organized into 12 chapters, with headings written by Erica E. Hirshler, the MFA's Croll Senior Curator of American Paintings. It will highlight works that reflect the broader definition of the art of our nation and the Americas by incorporating a greater number of paintings by women, indigenous artists, artists of color, Latin American artists, and self-taught artists. A selection of newly acquired works by African American artists from the John Axelrod Collection also will be showcased in the online publication.

"Complementing the opening of the Museum's Art of the Americas Wing, the online catalogue represents painters from the colonial Americas, the United States, and those from North, Central, and South America. As in our galleries, we hope visitors to the publication will discover a range of artistic expression that derives inspiration from a variety of cultures, periods, and styles found around the world and closer to home," said Davis, who oversaw the creation of the catalogue led by Karen E. Quinn, the MFA's Kristin and Roger Servison Curator of Paintings, and Erica E. Hirshler.

Recent scholarship, innovative design, and the latest digital publishing technology will bring the Museum's works to audiences as never before—completely for free. "We are committed to publishing the MFA's collections by the best means available, whether the delivery 'device' has printed pages or a touch screen. This type of catalogue is well-suited to the digital realm. It represents a true marriage of traditional museum publishing and all the scholarship behind it, and the accessibility and connectivity made possible by the web," said Emiko Usui, Director of MFA Publications.

MFA Publications, the publishing imprint of the MFA, offers a wide variety of scholarly and general-interest books on the visual arts, including essays, biographies, and exhibition and collections catalogues. *Paintings from the Americas* is one example of the innovative ways MFA Publications shares works from the Museum's collection with readers. Another is the creation of e-books, such as *Sargent's Daughters: The Biography of a Painting* (2009) by Erica E. Hirshler, Croll Senior Curator of Paintings

in the Art of the Americas at the MFA, which explores the genesis of one of the Museum's great iconic works, *The Daughters of Edward Darley Boit* (1882) by John Singer Sargent. The book can be downloaded from a variety of e-book retailers, including Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and iBooks. Additionally, beginning this summer, MFA Publications will provide to online visitors at www.mfa.org/publications several downloadable PDFs of select out-of-print publications, such as *Sargent's Murals*, originally published in 1999. Written by Carol Troyen, Pamela Hatchfield, and Lydia Vagts, the book celebrates the famous murals Sargent created for the MFA's rotunda and colonnade in the early 20th century, and the subsequent restoration process that was undertaken by the MFA in 1999. Included among upcoming publications is a printed catalogue and an e-book version to complement *Sargent's Watercolors* (title TBD), an exhibition jointly sponsored by the MFA and Brooklyn Museum, which will open at the MFA in the fall of 2013. Produced by MFA Publications, the catalogue will feature a lead essay by Erica E. Hirshler, which places Sargent's watercolors in the context of his own works in oil and in relationship to 20th-century watercolor practice. Other contributors are Antoinette Owen, Senior Paper Conservator at the Brooklyn Museum, and Annette Manick, Head Conservator, MFA, Boston; Richard Ormond, Director, John Singer Sargent Catalogue Raisonné; Teresa A. Carbone, Andrew W. Mellon Curator of American Art and Karen Sherry, Associate Curator of American Art.

In November 2010, the MFA opened its Foster + Partners-designed Art of the Americas Wing, featuring 53 galleries devoted to the art of all of the Americas—North, Central, and South—as well as the Ruth and Carl J. Shapiro Family Courtyard, a soaring, glass-enclosed gathering space. The plan was designed to enrich the ways in which visitors encounter the Museum's great works of art, improve navigation through its galleries, as well as enhance and increase space for the MFA's encyclopedic collection, educational programs, conservation facilities, and special exhibitions. In September 2011, the MFA opened the Linde Family Wing for Contemporary Art, a continuation of the Museum's expansion and renovation. Open seven days a week, the MFA's hours are Saturday through Tuesday, 10 a.m. – 4:45 p.m.; Wednesday through Friday, 10 a.m. – 9:45 p.m. Admission (which includes two visits in a 10-day period) is \$22 for adults and \$20 for seniors and students age 18 and older, and includes entry to all galleries and special exhibitions. Admission is free for University Members and children 6 and younger. Youths 17 years of age and younger are admitted for free during non-school hours. On school days until 3 p.m., admission for youths 7–17 is \$10. Wednesday nights after 4 p.m. admission is by voluntary contribution (suggested donation \$22). The Museum is closed on New Year's Day, Patriots' Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. For more information, visit www.mfa.org or call 617.267.9300.

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