

Art Lover's Day Out: The Walters and Baltimore Museum of Art

The Walters –

The Walters Art Museum is among America's most distinctive museums, forging connections between people and art from cultures around the world and spanning seven millennia. Through its collections, exhibitions, and education programs, the Walters engages the City of Baltimore, Maryland, and audiences across the globe.



Located in Baltimore's Mount Vernon neighborhood, the Walters is free for all. The museum's campus includes five historic buildings and 36,000 art objects. Moving through the museum's galleries, visitors encounter a stunning array of objects, from 19th-century paintings of French country and city life to Ethiopian icons, richly illuminated Qur'ans and Gospel books, ancient Roman sarcophagi, and images of the Buddha.

The Walters Art Museum was established in 1934 "for the benefit of the public." Originally called the Walters Art Gallery, the museum started when Henry Walters (1848–1931) bequeathed to the City of Baltimore an extensive art collection begun by his father, William T. Walters



(Pictured: Portraits of William Walters and his son, Henry Walters. Harry Connolly, The Walters Art Museum.)

(1819–1894), two buildings, and an endowment. While previous descriptions of William and Henry Walters have focused on their roles as philanthropists and art collectors, the museum is now addressing and examining their support of the

Confederacy and their Eurocentric collecting. In 2000, the Walters Art Gallery became the Walters Art Museum, a change that reflects the museum's role as a major public cultural institution. The museum's original collection and now three of the museum's five buildings are owned by the City of Baltimore and stewarded by the Walters.

Latin American Art / Arte Latinoamericano at **The Walters** –

Latin American Art / Arte Latinoamericano presents more than 200 artworks from the museum's expansive collection of art from South, Central, and North America and the Caribbean in one contiguous space for the first time in the museum's history. Encompassing works from 40 cultures, spanning more than four millennia, the beautifully reimagined North Court galleries—

renovated for the first time in 40 years for this permanent exhibition—create a space for visitors to engage with the collection through bilingual materials.



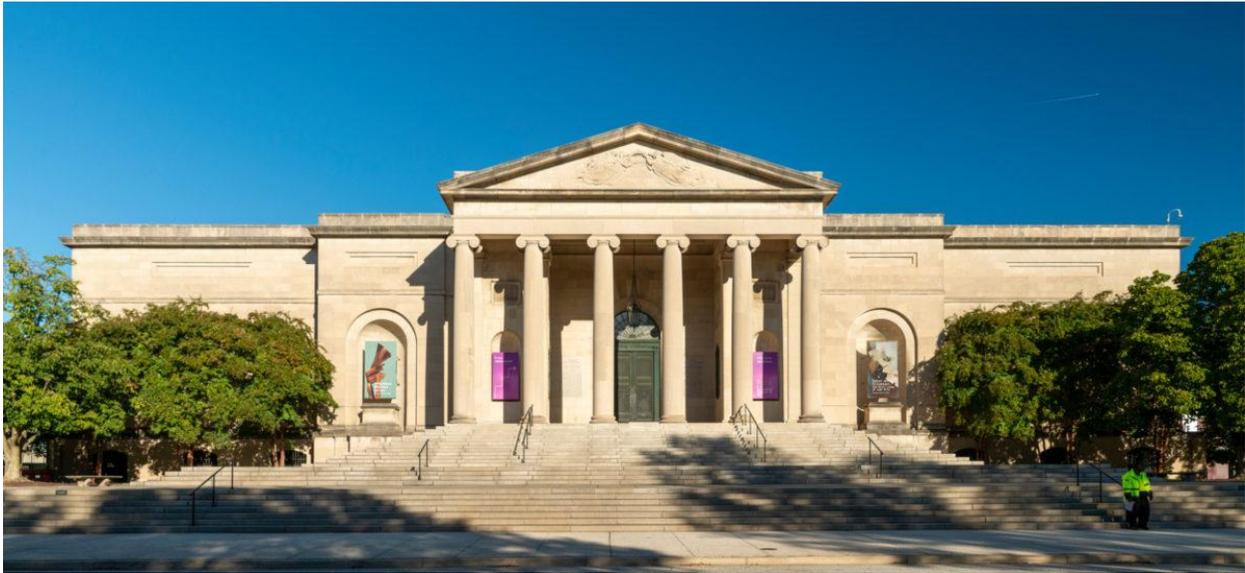
The exhibition presents objects by geographic area and theme, diving deep into location, materials, and the natural world of the Americas. Visitors will encounter examples of ancient ceramic, earthenware, gold, paint, shell, silver, stone, textiles, and more. Collection highlights include dozens of gold and jade ornaments from Colombia and

Central America; a large-scale Mexica (Aztec) statue of Macuilxochitl, patron god of music, dance, and gamblers; a colonial-era painting of Saint Rose of Lima; two Maya ceramic burial urns, colored with the special Maya blue colorant; and elaborately modeled Andean drinking vessels and ceramics ritually sprinkled with the red pigment cinnabar.

Latin American Art / Arte Latinoamericano is also an exceptional opportunity to see exciting recent acquisitions of contemporary art for the first time. Several acquisitions by living artists were made specifically for the exhibition, and include works by Jessy DeSantis, Melissa Foss, Eugenio Merino, Ana de Orbegoso, Uriarte Talavera, Pierre Valls, and Kukuli Velarde. These acquisitions explore key ideas such as migration, identity, and gender expression, and express visual and thematic resonances with art from the ancient Americas.

(Text and Image Sources: thewalters.org)

The Baltimore Museum of Art –



Founded in 1914 with a single painting, the Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) is home to 97,000 works, spanning the art of ancient Egypt to some of the most significant works of today. The BMA was created as part of the City revitalization plan after the Great Fire of 1904.

Major contributions to the collection came from the Cone sisters. Dr. Etta and Claribel Cone were raised in a very affluent Baltimore family and spent a good portion of their lives traveling abroad. In Europe, they acquired a substantial number of paintings, including works by Picasso, and Matisse. Claribel died in 1929, leaving her acquisitions to her sister, who willed the entire collection to the Baltimore Museum of Art in 1949. *(Pictured L to R: Etta, Claribel Cone).*



The BMA has a history of collecting art that responds to the present moment, including the gifts of the Cone sisters, which encouraged the Museum's commitment to contemporary art. The museum's curatorial team continues this long tradition, creating new ways to interpret art history and acquiring artworks that tell the rich and varied stories of our community.

Today, the museum's internationally renowned collection of 19th-century, modern, and contemporary art includes the largest holding of Henri Matisse's works in a public institution, alongside important examples of artistic expression from Africa, Asia, Europe, the Americas, and the Pacific Islands.

(Text Source: artbma.org, Image Source: <https://archives.nasher.duke.edu/matisse/stories.html>)

The Cone Sisters – Claribel and Etta Cone were dignified and stately Victorian ladies from a prosperous family in Baltimore. Their older brothers, Moses and Ceasar, made their fortune in North Carolina, building a textile empire. The brothers sent Claribel and Etta enough income to live independently and follow their passions for traveling and collecting art.

The sisters were best friends; they never married and lived in adjoining apartments that grew crowded with art. Their personalities were quite different, however. Claribel, the eldest by six years, attended Women's Medical College of Baltimore and, while she never practiced medicine, she became one of the world's first female pathologists in a laboratory at Johns Hopkins Medical School. She was bold and confident, while her sister Etta was more retiring, though Etta made most of the decisions when it came to buying art.



The sisters dressed in conservative floor-length black skirts long after they went out of style, yet their taste in art was hardly Victorian. They loved daring nudes, still life paintings in intense colors and bold, innovative landscapes. They favored modern paintings by artists practically unknown to their peers: Cézanne, Matisse, Picasso, Renoir. In the early 1900s, the Cone sisters were close friends with Gertrude Stein and her brother, Leo, and traveled with them through Paris and other European cities, visiting museums, galleries and artist studios—and buying art.

Claribel died in 1929, but Etta continued to acquire art and fill holes in their collection throughout the '30s and '40s before her death in 1949. Etta bequeathed the entire collection to The Baltimore Museum of Art: paintings, sculpture, works on paper, fabrics from around the world, precious lace dating from the Renaissance, jewelry in exotic gold and silver settings. After The Baltimore Museum of Art made its selections, the rest of the collection went to the Women's College of the University of North Carolina, the Weatherspoon Art Museum at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro. The Cone sisters had amassed one of the most important modern art collections of the 20th century.

(Text Source: <https://archives.nasher.duke.edu/matisse/stories.html>, Image Source: <https://www.baltimoremagazine.com/section/artsentertainment/claribel-etta-cone-sisters-left-baltimore-with-one-of-its-greatest-gifts-bma-matisse/>)

The Cone Collection –

The vision and philanthropy of Baltimore sisters Claribel and Etta Cone established the BMA's internationally renowned collection of works by French artist Henri Matisse.

Among the highlights of the Cone Collection are more than 600 works by Matisse—considered one of the greatest artists of the 20th century—including paintings, sculptures, drawings, prints, and illustrated books. To this incredible group of objects, the BMA has added more than 600 works by Matisse over the years, many of them from the artist's family.

Amassing more than 3,000 objects, the Cone sisters developed their collection to include such



masterworks as Matisse's iconic *Blue Nude* (1907) and *Large Reclining Nude* (1935), Paul Cézanne's *Mont Sainte-Victoire Seen from the Bibémus Quarry* (c. 1897), Paul Gauguin's *Vahine no te vi (Woman of the Mango)* (1892), and Marie Laurencin's *A Group of Artists* (1908).

The sisters also acquired paintings by Pablo Picasso, including *Mother and Child* (1922), and seminal prints and drawings from the artist's early years in Barcelona to his Rose period in Paris (1905–1906.)

During their extensive travels, the Cone sisters also purchased important works by American artists; more than 1,000 prints and drawings and illustrated books; a large group of textiles; jewelry, furniture, and other decorative arts; African art, Japanese prints; and antique ivories and bronzes.

Competition among museums for The Cone Collection began as early as 1940, but Claribel insisted that it go to The Baltimore Museum of Art if “the spirit of appreciation for modern art in Baltimore became improved.” Thus achieved, the collection came to the BMA upon Etta Cone's death in 1949, and has been on view in the BMA's Cone Wing since 1957.



(Text Source: <https://artbma.org/collection/modern>, Image Source: collection.artbma.org)