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## **Bruce Museum to Receive Promised Gift of a Major Collection of European and American Art**

***Promised Gift of 70 Works by European and American Artists Includes Paintings, Sculpture, and Works on Paper by Mary Cassatt, Alberto Giacometti, Childe Hassam, Winslow Homer, Edward Hopper, Henry Moore, Camille Pissarro, and Andrew Wyeth***

***Transformative Gift is Accompanied by Leadership Grant for the New Bruce Expansion Project***



Edward Hopper (American, 1882-1967), *Bridle Path*, 1939, oil on canvas, 23 3/8 x 42 1/8 in.

**GREENWICH, CT, April 13, 2022**—The Bruce Museum announces the promised gift of a major collection of European and American art—ranging from French and American Impressionism to the works of Winslow Homer, Edward Hopper, Alberto Giacometti, Henry Moore, Andrew Wyeth, and others—which will come as a bequest from an anonymous Greenwich couple. The private collection of 70 works, encompassing paintings, sculpture, watercolors, drawings, prints, and photographs, will be the largest gift of art in the Bruce Museum’s 112-year history.



“This gift is unprecedented in its scale and quality, and these works will further define the New Bruce as a museum that explores global stories of Modern and Contemporary art,” said Robert Wolterstorff, the Bruce Museum’s Susan E. Lynch Executive Director and CEO. “We are profoundly grateful to the donors of these magnificent works, who have actively supported the Greenwich community for decades and now can be assured that their generosity will inspire and educate generations to come.”

Coming at a transformative moment for the Bruce Museum, the announcement of the promised collection accompanies a substantial leadership grant the donors have made to the New Bruce building campaign. The \$60 million renovation and expansion project will double the size of the existing building and create new, modern, and spacious galleries for exhibitions and installations, as well as state-of-the-art spaces for education and community events.

The New Bruce is scheduled to open in March 2023, with the addition of more than 12,000 square feet of gallery space in the William L. Richter Art Wing, including a 4,500-square-foot gallery for changing exhibitions and five new galleries for the growing permanent art collection. The Museum’s Curator of Art, Margarita Karasoulas, who joined the Bruce in November after previously serving as Assistant Curator of American Art at the Brooklyn Museum, will organize an installation of select loaned works from the gift to celebrate the grand opening of the New Bruce. At the time of the gift’s fulfillment, the works will be exhibited in a dedicated gallery in the Museum’s Richter Art Wing.

Seen as a whole, the collection principally focuses on the European and American figural tradition from the 1870s to the 1990s, beginning with Winslow Homer’s watercolors *Boy on Dock* (1873) and *Fishergirls Coiling Tackle* (1881), the latter from his important Cullercoats series, and ending with Andrew Wyeth’s watercolor *Cape May* (1992). Andrew Wyeth is also represented by two tempera paintings—*Sheepskin* (1973), from his famous Helga series, and *The Huntress* (1978), a light-filled interior depicting another model, Siri Erickson. These are complemented by outstanding watercolors and graphite drawings by the artist.

Among the works in the collection are singular masterpieces. Edward Hopper’s *Two Comedians* (1966), the artist’s last work, depicts the painter and his wife Josephine dressed as clowns, or *commedia dell’arte* characters, on stage against a darkened backdrop. A second Hopper oil, *Bridle Path* (1939) shows a trio of riders in Central Park. Another highlight of the collection is Mary Cassatt’s *Two Little Sisters* (c. 1901-02), which is complemented by a group of Cassatt’s highly important color etchings with aquatint, which stand as icons of graphic art, revolutionary works that translated the aesthetic of Japanese color prints into the Impressionist idiom.

Included are works by the French Impressionist master Camille Pissarro, notably *Le Marché de Gisors, Grande-Rue* (*The Market of Gisors, on the Grande-Rue*, 1885) and *Fenaison à Éragny* (*Haymaking at Éragny*, 1891), both created during the years when Pissarro was most influenced by the pointillist technique of his friend Georges Seurat.

The collection is particularly strong in sculpture, including Alberto Giacometti’s *Femme Assise* (*Seated Woman*, 1956); several sculptures in various media by Elie Nadelman, including *Circus*



*Performer* of painted wood (c. 1919); and bronzes by the American sculptor Harriet Frishmuth, including *The Star* (1918). Multiple bronzes by Henry Moore, covering a span of over 30 years, include the early *Family Group* (1946). Together, they will place the Bruce Museum among the forefront of public collections in the United States of Moore's work.

The promised gift's other highlights include oils and watercolors by Childe Hassam, including *Rainy Day on the Avenue* (1893) and *The White Dory* (1895); John Singer Sargent's superb oil *Girl Fishing* (1913); a delightful Joan Miró oil, *Femmes et Oiseau dans la Nuit (Women and Bird in the Night)*, 1946); an extremely rare Blue Period watercolor by Pablo Picasso, *Le Guitariste (Guitar Player)*, 1903); and a bold abstract watercolor by Wassily Kandinsky, *Rosa Rot (Rose Red)*, 1927).

"It is an extraordinarily rich collection that will transform the Bruce Museum, giving us a deep stake in European and American Impressionism, Modernism, and Realism," Wolterstorff said. "This visionary gift will make the Bruce a place to experience again and again. Works like these will become old friends that you seek out each time you visit. And they will become vital to our education and public programs. Great works of art such as these will change your life, the lives of your kids, the life of this community."

"We have collected these artworks simply because we think they are beautiful and we enjoy seeing them every day in our home," the donors said. "We have lived in Greenwich a long time and what better place to share our collection with the community than the exciting New Bruce."

Adds James B. Lockhart III, Chair of the Bruce Museum Board of Trustees: "On behalf of my fellow Trustees and all who love the Bruce Museum, I am sincerely humbled by the generosity, the foresight, and altruism of this local family. The gift of this exceptional collection is a truly a game-changer for the Museum and our community. We also hope this couple's commitment to the future of the Bruce will inspire others to endow the Museum with their own philanthropic support and consider gifting works of art to the permanent collection."

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### **About the Bruce Museum**

Located in Bruce Park overlooking Greenwich Harbor, the Bruce Museum is a community-based, world-class institution that offers a changing array of exhibitions and educational programs to promote the understanding and appreciation of art and science.

For over a century the Bruce Museum has delighted and engaged its visitors by presenting exceptional exhibitions in art, science, and the intersections between the two disciplines. Ahead of its time when textile merchant Robert Moffat Bruce (1822-1909) conceived of the museum and bequeathed the building to the Town of Greenwich in 1908, the Museum is at the heart of contemporary efforts to bring together art and science, technology and creativity, creating moments of discovery and dialogue. The first exhibition at the Bruce Museum took place in 1912 and featured works by local artists known as the Greenwich Society of Artists, several of whom were members of the Cos Cob Art Colony. Their works formed the nucleus of the Museum's art holdings and continue to be a strength of a collection which has grown to focus on



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global art from 1850 to the present. Other strengths include Ancient Chinese sculpture, Native American Art, the Hudson River School, modernist works on paper, and photography. Over the years, the community, through its generosity, has built the Museum's varied collection to nearly 25,000 objects. Early Museum directors pursued a parallel development of the natural sciences, building strengths in the mineral and avian collections.

In 2019, the AAM-accredited Museum broke ground on its current expansion project, which will take the building from 33,000 to over 70,000 square feet. The New Bruce will feature state-of-the-art exhibition, education, and community spaces, including: a changing gallery for art and five new permanent galleries in the new William L. Richter Art Wing; a changing gallery for science; a new permanent science exhibition, *Natural Cycles Shape Our Land*; three new classrooms in the Steven and Alexandra Cohen Education Wing; and a bistro, an auditorium, and grand hall. The new building connects the Museum to its picturesque setting in Bruce Park in a dramatic new way. The New Bruce campus will feature a sculpture-lined, landscaped walking path and inviting spaces for relaxation and contemplation—natural enhancements to Bruce Park and an anchoring connection to the retail hub of Greenwich Avenue. The grand opening of the New Bruce is planned for spring of 2023.

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