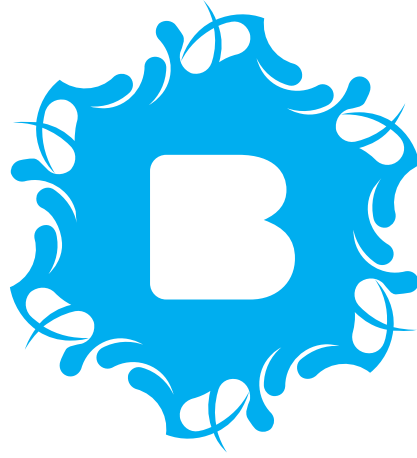


# Press Release



November 2012

## **First Expansive Sargent Watercolor Exhibition in Twenty Years Combines Holdings from Brooklyn Museum and Museum of Fine Arts, Boston**

***John Singer Sargent Watercolors on View at Brooklyn Museum April 5 through July 28, 2013***

**Press Preview, Thursday, April 4, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

The Brooklyn Museum, together with the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, has organized the landmark exhibition *John Singer Sargent Watercolors*, which unites for the first time the holdings of Sargent watercolors acquired by each of the two institutions in the early twentieth century. The ninety-three watercolors in the exhibition—including thirty-eight from Brooklyn's collection, most of which have not been on view for decades—provide a once-in-a-generation opportunity to view a broad range of Sargent's finest production in the medium.

Brooklyn's Sargent watercolors were purchased en masse from the artist's 1909 debut exhibition in New York. Their subjects include Venice scenes, Mediterranean sailing vessels, intimate portraits, and the Bedouin subjects, executed during a 1905–6 trip through the Ottoman Levant, that Sargent considered among the most outstanding works of the group. Among the Brooklyn watercolors are *Santa Maria della Salute* (1904), a carefully wrought painting that explores in detail the features of one of Venice's greatest works of architecture; *The Bridge of Sighs* (circa 1903–4), a vigorously painted work that captures the action of gondoliers at work; *Bedouins* (circa (1905–6), a watercolor of expressive force and coloristic vibrancy completed during Sargent's travels in Syria; *A Tramp* (circa 1904–6), a portrait of a world-weary man notable for its intimacy and directness; *Gourds* (1908), distinctive for its dense brushwork and brilliant palette; and *In a Medici Villa* (1906), which reveals the artist's love of formal Italian gardens and his preference for unexpectedly framed compositions.

The watercolors purchased by the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, in 1912, were painted by Sargent with his Boston audience in mind and are more highly finished than the Brooklyn works. They feature subjects from his more recent travels to the Italian Alps, the villa gardens near Lucca, and the marble quarries of Carrara, as well as portraits. Included are *Corfu: Lights and Shadows* (1909), a work that explores the colors and tones of sunlight and shadows cast on brilliant white surfaces; *Simplon Pass: Reading* (circa 1911),

## **Brooklyn Museum**

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which highlights the artist's affinity for luxuriant compositions of casually interlinked figures; *The Cashmere Shawl* (circa 1911), a work that approximates the verve and virtuosity of Sargent's grand portraits in oil; *Carrara Lizzatori I* (1911), a dynamic impression of the quarry; and *Villa di Marlia, Lucca: A Fountain* (1910), which captures the vibrant interplay of light and shadow around which Baroque gardens were designed.

The exhibition will also present nine oil paintings, including Brooklyn's *An Out-of-Doors Study, Paul Helleu and His Wife* (1889), and Boston's *The Master and His Pupils* (1914).

The culmination of a yearlong collaborative study by a team of curators and conservators from both museums, *John Singer Sargent Watercolors* explores the extension of the artist's primary aesthetic concerns throughout his watercolor practice, which has traditionally been viewed as a tangential facet of his art making. New discoveries based on scientific study of Sargent's pigments, papers, drawing techniques, paper preparation, and application of paint will be featured in a special section of the exhibition that deconstructs the artist's techniques. In addition, select works throughout the exhibition will be paired with videos that show a contemporary watercolor artist demonstrating some of Sargent's working methods.

The exhibition will be on view at the Brooklyn Museum from April 5 to July 28, 2013, and at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, from October 13, 2013, to January 20, 2014. It will then travel to the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

*John Singer Sargent Watercolors* is organized by the Brooklyn Museum and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. The exhibition is co-curated by Teresa A. Carbone, Andrew W. Mellon Curator of American Art, Brooklyn Museum; and Erica E. Hirshler, Croll Senior Curator of American Paintings, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Other members of the project team include Antoinette Owen, Senior Conservator, Brooklyn Museum; and Annette Manick, Head of Paper Conservation, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

The Brooklyn Museum and MFA Publications are co-publishing a fully illustrated book to accompany the exhibition. Co-authored by the collaborative exhibition team, the volume includes a lead essay by Erica E. Hirshler; a collaborative essay by the lead project conservators, Antoinette Owen and Annette Manick; as well as chapters that expand upon the exhibition's thematic framework.

Generous support for the exhibition and catalogue was provided by The Mr. and Mrs. Raymond J. Horowitz Foundation for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts. The presentation in Brooklyn was made possible by the Henry Luce Foundation, the Robert Lehman Foundation, and Sotheby's. Additional support for the catalogue was provided by a publications endowment established by the Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Foundation and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.



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**GENERAL INFORMATION****Admission:**

Contribution \$12; students with valid I.D. and older adults \$8. Free to Members and children under 12 accompanied by an adult. Group tours or visits must be arranged in advance by calling extension 234.

**Museum Hours:**

Wednesday and Friday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Thursday 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; first Saturday of each month, 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

**Directions:**

Subway: Seventh Avenue express (2 or 3) to Eastern Parkway/Brooklyn Museum stop; Lexington Avenue express (4 or 5) to Nevins Street, cross platform and transfer to the 2 or 3. Bus: B41, B69, B48. On-site parking available.