



AMERICAN FEDERATION OF ARTS
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The American Federation of Arts (AFA) is a nonprofit organization whose founding in 1909 was endorsed by Theodore Roosevelt and spearheaded by Secretary of State Elihu Root and eminent art patrons and artists of the day. The AFA's mission is to enrich the public's experience and understanding of the visual arts, and this is accomplished through its exhibitions, catalogues, and public programs. To date, the AFA has organized or circulated approximately 3,000 exhibitions—with presentations in museums in every state, Canada, Latin America, Europe, Asia, and Africa—that have been viewed by more than 10 million people.

The AFA has a history of organizing exhibitions of exceptional quality that make substantial contributions to the field of art history. These exhibitions encompass a wide range of mediums, artists, historical periods, and cultural traditions, from Roman portraiture and Native American artifacts to American impressionism and contemporary art and sculpture. The AFA manages all aspects of its exhibitions—including developing the exhibition concept, negotiating loans of artworks, producing and publishing catalogues and educational materials, and traveling the exhibitions from venue to venue—and also collaborates with distinguished institutions around the world to tour important aspects of their collections. While the concepts for many exhibitions are developed by AFA curatorial staff, the AFA also welcomes outside proposals. AFA exhibitions are supported by the participation fee that each host museum pays, as well as by public and private funding.

Educational programming for both the museum community and the general public is an important component of the AFA's work. ArtTalks, the AFA's popular public lecture series, features leading figures in the art world sharing insights about their work and experiences. Guest speakers have included John Currin, Do-Ho Suh, Adam Gopnik, Peter Schjeldahl, and Lisa Yuskavage.

The AFA offers memberships for both museums and individuals. Museum members enjoy discounts on fine arts insurance and shipping along with the opportunities to present AFA exhibitions. Individual members are afforded exclusive access to the AFA's ArtScapes travel program; curator-led visits to museums, artists' studios, and private collections; invitations to AFA exhibition openings, and discounted tickets for ArtTalks, among other benefits.



Unloading the *Coming of Age: American Art, 1850s to 1950s* exhibition in Venice

CURRENT AND UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

A sampling of current and upcoming exhibitions includes the following:

MATISSE AS PRINTMAKER: WORKS FROM THE PIERRE AND TANA MATISSE FOUNDATION

Although Henri Matisse is primarily known for his painting and sculpture, he was also a prolific and innovative printmaker. *Matisse as Printmaker* includes examples of every type of printmaking utilized by Matisse, shedding light on a key but under-studied aspect of his oeuvre.

RICHARD BELL: UZ VS. THEM

Richard Bell, Australia's leading Aboriginal artist, describes himself as "more an activist than an artist," and many of his works address the politics of race, critiquing the contemporary art world's appropriation and exploitation of indigenous art. The first traveling exhibition in the U.S. of Bell's work, *Richard Bell* will include examples of the artist's painting, photography, and video work.

GODS AND HEROES: MASTERPIECES FROM THE ÉCOLE DES BEAUX-ARTS, PARIS

This rich overview of masterpieces is drawn from the École des Beaux-Arts, the original school of fine arts in Paris and a repository for work by Europe's most renowned artists since the seventeenth century. Included will be approximately 150 paintings, sculptures, and works on paper, all focused on epic themes such as courage and sacrifice.

ETRUSCAN ART FROM THE LOUVRE

Organized by the AFA and the Musée du Louvre, *Etruscan Art from the Louvre* will be the first major exhibition in the United States to examine the art of one of the ancient world's most mysterious and compelling civilizations. Included will be approximately 330 exquisite objects dating from the ninth century B.C. to the first century B.C., the period during which the Etruscan civilization prospered.



ROLLING HILLS, SATANIC MILLS: THE BRITISH PASSION FOR LANDSCAPE

Selected from the remarkable collections of National Museum Wales, this exhibition will offer audiences in the United States a rare opportunity to follow, in a single span, the rise of landscape painting in Britain—telling a story that begins during the Industrial Revolution and continues through the eras of romanticism, impressionism, and modernism, to the postmodern and post-industrial imagery of today. While showcasing masterpieces from the museum's collection, the exhibition will also offer new insights into the cultural history of Britain and the history of art, as well as the development of landscape painting in Wales.

ISLAND OF A THOUSAND FACES: THE HUMAN IMAGE IN NEW GUINEA

The first exhibition to explore the human form across the full breadth of New Guinea's artistic traditions, *Island of a Thousand Faces* will also be the first traveling exhibition in the United States in more than forty years to present a full survey of New Guinea sculpture. The exhibition is organized by the AFA and the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS

1909 The AFA is founded at a meeting convened by the National Academy of Art's Board of Regents, among whom are President William Howard Taft, former president Theodore Roosevelt, Cecilia Beaux, William Merritt Chase, Homer St. Gaudens, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, Andrew W. Mellon, J. Pierpont Morgan, Francis Davis Millet, Elihu Root, and Henry Walters.

1916 AFA's membership of 223 chapters includes every art museum in the U.S. and one in Canada.

1924 AFA arranges the first representation of American art at the Venice International exhibition. The exhibited 75 paintings by living artists are selected by a special committee.

1934 AFA launches the first nationally broadcast radio series on art, *Art in America*, with René d'Harnoncourt as program director. Discontinued during World War II, the radio program is reestablished in the '40s with the title "Living Art."

1942 AFA exhibitions include *Creative Art of the American Negro*, curated by Holger Cahill and considered at the time the most comprehensive show of "Negro" art ever held in the U.S.

1951 AFA organizes *Contemporary Berlin Artists*, an exhibition of 60 paintings and drawings by contemporary German artists for presentation in the U.S., and as a result a committee of German museum directors is formed—under the auspices of AFA and the Department of State—to advise on further programs.

1956 The USIA cancels the international tour of the AFA exhibition *Sport in Art* because of claims that 4 of the artists (Yasuo Kuniyoshi, Ben Shahn, Leon Kroll, and William Zorach) are pro-Communist. Following this controversy, the AFA is asked to withdraw 10 works from *100 American Artists of the Twentieth Century*, another show organized at the request of the USIA, because the artists are deemed "social hazards." AFA's 42 trustees vote unanimously not to comply, and the USIA cancels the exhibition.

1959 AFA's *Art and the Found Object* is the first major exhibition featuring this type of artwork. Duchamp recreates his first readymade sculpture, *Bottlerack* (1914/61), for the show.

1966 AFA circulates the first major exhibition of graphic work by pop and op artists Jim Dine, Ellsworth Kelly, Roy Lichtenstein, Bridget Riley, James Rosenquist, Victor Vasarely, and Andy Warhol, among others. Sponsored by Philip Morris, Inc., *Pop and Op* is an early example of the rising trend of corporate sponsorship of art exhibitions.

1974 AFA organizes *Masterworks from the Museum of Primitive Art*, a groundbreaking exhibition of more than 150 works from Africa, the South Pacific, Pre-Columbian America, and Native America that emphasizes the specific cultural significance of the tribal works on display and also critiques the negative connotations behind the term *primitive*. In 1977, this collection forms the newly opened Rockefeller Wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

1984 AFA's *Te Maori: Maori Art from New Zealand Collections* is the first major presentation of Maori art in the U.S. The exhibition of sculptures and carvings opens with an official dawn ceremony at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, with 100 Maori people participating. In New York, more than 200,000 visit the exhibition.

1994 AFA circulates *China's New Art, Post-1989*, the first major survey of the Chinese avant-garde to take place outside of mainland China.

2003 *Degas and the Dance*, an exhibition organized by the AFA with the Detroit Institute of Arts and the Philadelphia Museum of Art, is the first exhibition to concentrate on Degas' dance-related work. The exhibition is the basis of a documentary of the same name broadcast on PBS as part of their Great Performances series.

2009–10 AFA celebrates its 100th Anniversary.

AFA IN THE NEWS

"Turner to Cézanne: Masterpieces from the Davies Collection may very well be one of the most popular shows ever hosted by the Columbia Museum of Art." —**THE AIKEN STANDARD**

"Like the other creative outlets he explored, Matisse's printmaking helped to animate 20th-century art in indelible ways. The BMA's new exhibit [*Matisse as Printmaker*] opens a welcome window into that lively pursuit." —**THE BALTIMORE SUN**

"a timely, provocative . . . exhibition [*Color as Field: American Painting 1950–1975*]"
—**ROBERTA SMITH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES**

"[*Roman Art from the Louvre*] is undoubtedly one of the most impressive and important exhibits ever to come to Oklahoma City." —**THE OKLAHOMAN**

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