

THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART HISTORY HIGHLIGHTS 1914–2006

1914

The BMA is formally incorporated by eight civic-minded Baltimoreans.

1923

The Museum's inaugural exhibition opens at its temporary home in the Garrett mansion at 101 West Monument Street. Attendance tops 6,775 during its first week.

1924

Baltimore's citizens approve a \$1million dollar loan to construct a municipal museum. Prominent neoclassical architect John Russell Pope is commissioned to design the new building, which opens on April 18, 1929.

1925

One of the finest decorative arts collections in the region begins with the gift of the BMA's first period room (c. 1700). American decorative arts, especially from Maryland, become a great strength in subsequent years.

1927

Anthony van Dyck's masterpiece *Rinaldo and Armida* (1629), commissioned for King Charles I of England, becomes the centerpiece of the BMA's distinguished collection of European art.

1929

The BMA is one of the first art museums in the country to create an Education Department to present tours, lectures, and classes. Today, innovative programming reaches visitors of all ages, including 25,000 schoolchildren annually.

1930

An internationally renowned collection of master prints becomes the foundation for the BMA's outstanding holdings of prints, drawings, and photographs, which is particularly strong in 19th-century French art.

1936

The BMA presents one of the nation's earliest exhibitions of African art and goes on to form one of the most important collections on the East Coast. Several items are internationally known as the best of their type.

1936–1937

The BMA brings ancient mosaics from Antioch to Baltimore after participating in archaeological excavations.

1939

One of the earliest exhibitions of the work of contemporary African-American artists in the country opens, marking the beginning of a distinguished record of collecting and exhibiting both historical and contemporary works by African-American artists.

1950

Committed to "improving the spirit of appreciation for modern art in Baltimore," Cone sisters Etta and Claribel secure the BMA's international reputation through their gift of works by Matisse, Picasso, Cézanne, and Gauguin—one of the most outstanding collections of modern art in the world.

1960

The Museum's commitment to modernism is cemented when its leaders are invited to curate the Venice Biennale, the most prestigious international exhibition of contemporary art.

1970

"Vincent van Gogh: Paintings & Drawings" draws record crowds and establishes a new demand among the regional public for major art attractions. The 1991 Monet exhibition breaks all previous attendance records.

1980–1988

With the opening of the Wurtzburger Sculpture Garden—and in 1988 the adjoining Levi Sculpture Garden—the BMA creates an "art park" in the heart of the city that features a 100-year survey of modern sculpture.

1982

The BMA inaugurates its new east wing featuring an auditorium, a restaurant, The BMA Shop, and galleries for changing exhibitions. The new facility permits the BMA to expand its exhibition programming and to performing arts and film, attracting a wider and more diverse audience.

1994

The West Wing for Contemporary Art opens with 16 galleries for the display of a diverse and growing collection of post-1960 art.

2001

The BMA unveils completely redesigned galleries for the famed Cone Collection. The new installation showcases the world's most comprehensive holding of works by Henri Matisse.

2006

The BMA offers year-round free general admission for the first time in nearly two decades.