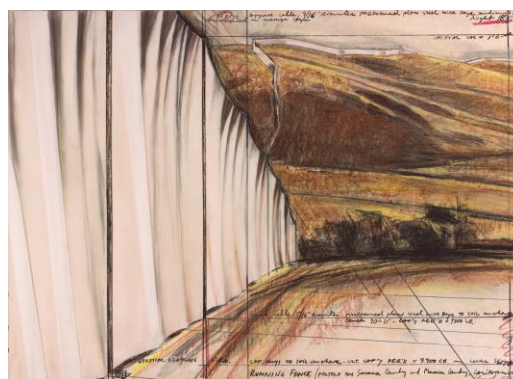


**North America's First Public Drawing Collection  
Surveyed in Exhibition at Bowdoin College Museum of Art  
Opening May 2017**

*Exhibition spans 500 years of drawing, including works by  
Peter Paul Rubens, Winslow Homer, John Singer Sargent, Michelle Stuart and more to  
examine the significance of the medium to western artistic practice and study*



From right to left: Winslow Homer, *The End of the Hunt*, 1892, watercolor over graphite. Gift of the Misses Harriet Sarah and Mary Sophia Walker.; Christo, *Running Fence*, 1976, graphite, pastel, charcoal, fabric collage. Museum Purchase, George Otis Hamlin Fund with the aid of a matching grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, Washington, D.C., a federal agency.

**Brunswick, Maine, December 8, 2016**—The Bowdoin College Museum of Art (BCMA) will present the first-ever survey of the museum's extensive collection of drawings, the oldest public collection of works on paper on the continent, illuminating the evolving and foundational role of drawing within western artistic practice. Entitled *Why Draw? 500 Years of Drawing and Watercolors at Bowdoin College*, the exhibition will be on view from May 3 through September 3, 2017, and includes more than 150 works by over 100 American and European artists across cultures, genres and time periods, such as **Peter Paul Rubens, Winslow Homer, Henri Matisse, Eva Hesse, and Roy Lichtenstein**, among many others. *Why Draw?* will be accompanied by a fully-illustrated catalogue that features original texts from renowned scholars and contemporary artists, all considering what compels artists to draw through close study of specific works in the exhibition. These rare insights, from iconic thinkers including **Richard Tuttle** and **James Siena**, form the touchstones of both the exhibition and the catalogue, guiding viewers through an examination of the historic, formal, and poetic reasons artists have been driven to drawing throughout art history.

Curated by Joachim Homann, Curator at BCMA, the exhibition builds on the foundation of Bowdoin's strong history of collecting works on paper, stemming back to the initial gift of 141 historic European drawings gifted to the college by its first benefactor James Bowdoin III in 1811. Since then the drawings collection has evolved to include nearly 2,000 works on paper, encompassing acquisitions and gifts from alumni, artists, and patrons. Spanning from a drawing from the workshop of **Raphael**, to the first-ever watercolor by **Winslow Homer** to enter a museum collection, to works produced in the past five years by **Natalie Frank, William Kentridge, and Titus Kaphar**, the exhibition highlights the role of draftsmanship in artistic practice through a diverse selection of masterworks from artists across a wide range of art history.

"We're delighted to have the opportunity to present a comprehensive survey of our renowned collection of drawings, which, through its distinct breadth and depth, provides rewarding insights into the evolving role

of drawing over the past 500 years of western artistic practice,” said Frank Goodyear, co-director of the Bowdoin College Museum of Art. “Museums are as much collections of people as they are of artworks, and *Why Draw?* is indebted to the artists, art historians, and art patrons who contributed to this exhibition, and truly helped shape the BCMA as an institution, through their generous gifts over time that would be near impossible to acquire today,” continued Anne Goodyear, co-director of the Bowdoin College Museum of Art. “As a museum at an institution of higher learning, the strength of our drawing collection provides tremendous opportunities to mount exhibitions, such as this one, which allow students, scholars, and visitors to enter into the thoughts and practice of artists and examine new ways of seeing.”

The exhibition considers drawing in Europe and the United States throughout time, observing how artists advanced the role of drawing in artist’s creative processes—from a primary tool to record the visual world to a medium distinguished for its expressive qualities and immediacy in the advent of photography and subsequent technological advances in the digital age, ultimately underscoring what makes drawing different from other forms of notation.

As curator Joachim Homann describes: “Rather than aiming for a coherent and systematically ordered set of reasons that compel artists to draw—a goal that seems elusive, given the widespread practice of drawing—we introduce a broad selection of works of art and each is probed for being a record of a directed artistic intervention. Each models a different way of embedding information in a work of art and adds a new facet to our understanding of drawing, offering insights into the creative process as it shaped work in artists’ studios of the past 500 years and continues to evolve today.”

Highlights of the exhibition include:

- A double-sided drawing after Donatello’s “*Miracle of Miser’s Heart*,” (1505-1520) from the workshop of **Raphael**, reproduces figurative groups from Donatello’s bronze reliefs for the high altar of Sant’Antonio, Padua.
- A rapid sketch by Peter Paul **Rubens**, *The Death of Dido* (1600-1603), depicts the first Queen of Carthage, falling on her sword.
- A preparatory drawing, *Study of Drapery* (1910-1916), by **John Singer Sargent** for the murals he painted for the Boston Public Library.
- *The End of the Hunt* (1892) was the first **Winslow Homer** watercolor to enter a museum collection, capturing the untamed nature of the Adirondacks.
- An early **Edward Hopper** drawing *Portrait of a Young Man* (1903) was created during his academic training at the New York School of Art.
- **Alberto Giacometti**’s portrait of his friend James Lord, sketched on the last page of a political review by French intellectual and literary figure Georges Bataille from 1948.
- **Michelle Stuart**’s record of the ground outside her home, entitled *Little Moray Hill* (1973), produced by placing the paper directly on the dirt and rubbed on it with graphite to transfer the most minute topographical distinctions.
- An untitled three-part drawing from 1975 by **Richard Tuttle**, who slices open the paper plane, simultaneously acknowledging the sheet’s materiality and bringing to mind the unseen reality usually obscured by the order that structures our field of vision.

- **Ed Ruscha's** *Fix* (1972), which completely obliterated the traces of the artist's hand in a drawing with gunpowder on paper, only to evoke verbally the medium's ability to record movement in permanence.
- *Tango for Page Turning* (2013), an animation created by **William Kentridge**, in conjunction with the opera *Refuse the Hour* (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 2012–13), reflects ongoing discussions between Kentridge and historian of science Peter Galison concerning the nature of time, the cosmos, and matter itself.
- *The Jerome Project* (2015) by **Titus Kaphar** combines the portraits of three young black men whose tragic deaths prompted a national conversation around racial profiling, policing, and gun violence: Trayvon Martin (died February 26, 2012), Michael Brown (died August 9, 2014), and Tamir Rice (died November 22, 2014), which outlines the subjects' faces in white chalk on Asphalt-coated roofing paper.

The fully-illustrated, 192-page catalogue that accompanies the exhibition is published by Del Monico-Prestel. In a departure from traditional scholarly catalogues, *Why Draw?* foregrounds artistic processes and personal perceptions of the impact and significance of drawing on artistic practice through time.

Information on programming related to the exhibition, which will include lectures by leading artists and scholars, will be announced in the coming months.

### **About the Bowdoin College Museum of Art**

The collections of the Bowdoin College Museum of Art are among the most comprehensive of any college museum in the United States. Collecting commenced over 200 years ago with a major gift from the College's founder James Bowdoin III and his family that included Gilbert Stuart's magnificent portraits of Thomas Jefferson and James Madison.

The Museum is housed in the landmark Walker Art Building, designed in 1894 by Charles Follen McKim. Located on the historic quadrangle of Bowdoin College, the building is graced by murals by John La Farge, Kenyon Cox, Elihu Vedder, and Abbott Thayer. A \$20.8-million renovation and expansion in 2007 provided a stunning setting for objects as diverse as monumental Assyrian reliefs from Nimrud, Iraq; European old master paintings; and works by American modernists. The Museum is the centerpiece of Bowdoin's vibrant arts and culture community and offers a wealth of academic and educational programs. The Museum is also a prominent summer venue for major exhibitions such as *Edward Hopper's Maine* (2011), *William Wegman: Hello Nature* (2012), *Maurice Prendergast: By the Sea* (2013), *Richard Tuttle: A Print Retrospective* (2014); *Night Vision: Nocturnes in American Art, 1860-1960* (2015); and *This Is a Portrait If I Say So: Identity in American Art, 1912 to Today* (2016).

Fully accessible, the Bowdoin College Museum of Art is open to the public free of charge from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday through Saturday; 10:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. on Thursday, and from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday.

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