

Images available upon request

Recently Gifted Collection of British Masterworks to be on Display for the First Time at the Denver Art Museum

Exhibition showcases groundbreaking new scholarship on major Tudor paintings

DENVER – June 22, 2020 – The Denver Art Museum (DAM) is pleased to present *Treasures of British Art: The Berger Collection*, an exhibition showcasing about 60 paintings recently gifted to the museum by the Berger Collection Educational Trust (BCET) in 2018. The BCET's gift is the largest gift of European old masters to the DAM since the museum received the Kress Collection in the 1950s. Organized by the DAM and curated by Kathleen Stuart, curator of the Berger Collection at the DAM, the exhibition will present a chronological selection of works ranging from the 1400s through the late 1800s, telling the story of Britain's rich cultural history. Extended through Dec. 6, 2020, the exhibition invites visitors to immerse themselves in the places, personalities and events that shaped a nation over the course of five centuries. Select works in this DAM-organized exhibition previously traveled to five museums nation-wide in recent years.

“We are thrilled to honor the legacy of the collection's founders—William M.B. and Bernadette Johnson Berger—with this historical exhibition,” said Christoph Heinrich, Frederick and Jan Mayer Director of the DAM. “The Berger Collection represents one of the most remarkable collections of British art in America. We are delighted to present this gift from the Berger Collection Educational Trust in a way that honors the Bergers' intention for the collection—namely that it serves as an educational resource to teach visitors about British art and culture.”

Treasures of British Art will present 500 years of British cultural history through the stories of its people, captured by the enduring brilliance of artists of the time. The exhibition will feature devotional images, portraits, landscapes and



sporting scenes by the greatest artists of the British School—including Thomas Gainsborough, Thomas Lawrence and John Constable—as well as non-British artists who spent significant time in Britain, such as the Flemish artist Anthony van Dyck and American artists Benjamin West and John Singer Sargent.

This exhibition will present groundbreaking results of recent research conducted on the collection's renowned group of portraits from the Tudor era. Among the findings,

conservators discovered—using dendrochronology (tree-ring analysis)—that the portrait of Henry VIII is one of five stylistically similar Tudor royal portraits painted on wood from the same tree. In an incredibly rare circumstance, this painting from 1513 remains in its original wooden frame. Additional details and analysis of the research will be unveiled when the exhibition opens in 2019.

“We are immensely proud to present the results of this scholarly research undertaken by curators and conservators at the Yale Center for British Art, the Hamilton Kerr Institute at Cambridge University and the National Portrait Gallery in London,” said curator Stuart. “By employing state-of-the-art imaging techniques—digital x-radiography, infrared reflectography, ultraviolet fluorescence and x-ray fluorescence—the researchers uncovered new information about the artists, sitters and processes used to create some of the oldest and most important paintings in the collection.”

Beyond the groundbreaking forensic discoveries, visitors will be fascinated by the timeless relevance of artwork subjects featured in *Treasures of British Art*. The exhibition will display how international exchange influenced British art, history and culture. Visitors will recognize collection favorites such as *The Radcliffe Family* by Thomas Hudson and *Edward, Prince of Wales (later Edward VI)* by Hans Holbein and studio. Artworks rarely seen in recent years will also be on view, such as *Papirius Praetextatus Entreated by His Mother* by the Royal Academy founder Angelica Kauffman and *Portrait of Three Girls* by a follower of William Larkin. Not since the DAM’s 1999 landmark exhibition *600 Years of British Painting* will so many works from the Berger Collection be on view.



Treasures of British Art will be on view on level 2 of the Hamilton Building. This exhibition is included in general admission, which is free for members and youth 18 and under. A catalog accompanying the exhibition is available in The Shop at the Denver Art Museum and through the [online shop](#). A related academic symposium was held at the DAM in September 2019. #TreasuresatDAM



EXHIBITION SPONSORS

Treasures of British Art: The Berger Collection is organized by the Denver Art Museum. The exhibition is made possible by the Berger Collection Educational Trust. Support is provided by Friends of Painting and Sculpture, a support group of the Denver Art Museum, the generous donors to the Annual Fund Leadership Campaign and the residents who support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD). Promotional support is provided by *5280 Magazine*, CBS4, Comcast Spotlight and *The Denver Post*.

MEDIA RESOURCES

Online Newsroom: www.denverartmuseum.org/press

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THE BERGER COLLECTION

The Berger Collection at the DAM is comprised of 65 British artworks gifted to the museum by the Berger Collection Educational Trust (BCET), owner of the collection since 1999. The paintings are part of the collection formed in the mid-1990s by the late William M.B. Berger and his wife Bernadette Joan Johnson Berger. The gift enriches the museum’s painting and sculpture collection, currently strong in artwork from the early Italian Renaissance and 19th-century France.

THE DENVER ART MUSEUM

The Denver Art Museum is an educational, nonprofit resource that sparks creative thinking and expression through transformative experiences with art. Its holdings reflect the city and region—and provide invaluable ways for the community to learn about cultures from around the world. Metro residents support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD), a unique funding source serving hundreds of metro Denver arts, culture and scientific organizations. For museum information, call 720-865-5000 or visit www.denverartmuseum.org.

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IMAGE CREDIT LINES:

Image 1: British School, *Henry VIII*, about 1513. Oil paint on panel, housed in its original frame; 15 x 9-3/4 in. Promised Gift of the Berger Collection Educational Trust, inv. TL-17964.

Image 2: George Stubbs (1724–1806), *A Saddled Bay Hunter*, 1786. Oil paint on panel; 21-3/4 x 27-3/4 in. Gift of the Berger Collection Educational Trust, 2019.10.

Image 3: Thomas Gainsborough (1727–1788), *A Coastal Landscape*, about 1782-84. Oil paint on canvas; 25-1/8 x 30-1/8 in. Gift of the Berger Collection Educational Trust, 2019.13.