

# PRESS RELEASE

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## ***SEEING NATURE: LANDSCAPE MASTERWORKS FROM THE PAUL G. ALLEN FAMILY COLLECTION OPENS AT SEATTLE ART MUSEUM FEBRUARY 16***

Iconic landscape paintings from the 17th to the 21st century by Turner, Monet, Klimt, O’Keeffe, Hockney, Ruscha, and more



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SEATTLE, WA – The Seattle Art Museum (SAM) presents *Seeing Nature: Landscape Masterworks from the Paul G. Allen Family Collection* (February 16–May 23, 2017), illustrating the evolution of European and American landscape painting across five centuries by artists such as J.M.W. Turner, Claude Monet, Gustav Klimt, Georgia O’Keeffe, David Hockney, and Ed Ruscha. Drawn from Microsoft co-founder and philanthropist Paul G. Allen’s private collection, one of the most significant in the United States, the exhibition offers a unique opportunity to see the natural world through the eyes of great artists.

In *Seeing Nature*, 39 paintings organized in rough chronological order showcase key moments in the development of the landscape genre—from intimate views of the world to an artist’s personal reflections on nature. Many of the works on view have never been publicly exhibited prior to this exhibition.

As a starting point for considering European landscape painting and its relationship to sensory experience, the exhibition begins with Jan Brueghel the Younger’s allegorical series *The Five Senses* (ca. 1625). Evocative works interpreting Venice, Italy, are also featured, including paintings by Canaletto, Édouard Manet, and J.M.W. Turner.

At the heart of the exhibition are significant examples of French Impressionism: five paintings by Claude Monet, including *The Water-Lily Pond* (1919), as well as Paul Cézanne’s *Mont Sainte-Victoire* (1888-90). A rare landscape by Austrian artist Gustav Klimt—*Birch Forest* (1903)—immerses the viewer in a forest scene; surrealist works by Max Ernst and René Magritte introduce inventive approaches to the genre.

The final galleries present 20th-century American landscape paintings, including epic, wide-ranging works depicting the Grand Canyon by Thomas Moran, Arthur Wesley Dow, and David Hockney, as well as more atmospheric, contemporary works by Gerhard Richter, Ed Ruscha, and April Gornik.



“With Paul Allen’s commitment to this city, it’s especially fitting that Seattle is the final stop for this exhibition of incredible works,” says Kimerly Rorschach, SAM’s Illsley Ball Nordstrom Director and CEO. “*Seeing Nature* presents an extraordinary opportunity for audiences to see these landscape masterpieces that are rarely displayed publicly.”

“For centuries, artists have used landscape painting to explore the human connection to nature,” says Chiyo Ishikawa, SAM’s Susan Brotman Deputy Director for Art and Curator of European Painting and Sculpture. “These masterworks reveal the genre as a vehicle to evoke a particular place and, in many cases, express an emotional state. In some ways, they all reflect a subjective idea of nature—whether exalting it, feeling nostalgia for a lost ideal, or expressing discomfort with the state of the world. We Seattleites, who live in a place of stunning natural beauty and dramatic weather changes, understand that our relationship with the landscape is very personal.”

Co-organized by the Seattle Art Museum, the Portland Art Museum, and the Paul G. Allen Family Collection, the exhibition makes its final stop at SAM. After opening at the Portland Art Museum (October 10, 2015–January 10, 2016), it traveled to The Phillips Collection in Washington, D.C. (February 6–May 8, 2016), the Minneapolis Institute of Arts (July 10–September 18, 2016), and the New Orleans Museum of Art (October 14, 2016–January 15, 2017).

A 158-page full-color catalogue accompanies the exhibition. It features an interview with Paul Allen and a foreword by Kimerly Rorschach, SAM’s Illsley Ball Nordstrom Director and CEO, and Brian J. Ferriso, PAM’s Marilyn H. and Dr. Robert B. Pamplin Director. Chiyo Ishikawa wrote the introductory essay.

Interpretative technologies in the galleries offer other ways to engage with the exhibition. Visitors can “paint” landscape postcards using touchscreens in the Digital Studio, and they can learn more about select paintings via an augmented reality smartphone experience, accessible on touchscreens in the galleries or via smartphone with the free Layar app.

#### RELATED PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

Art Beyond Sight and docent tours, as well as programs for educators and school groups, will be offered in conjunction with the exhibition in addition to the following public programs.

#### **February 16**

##### **Seeing Nature: Opening Celebration**

Seattle Art Museum

Celebrate the exhibition, *Seeing Nature: Landscape Masterworks from the Paul G. Allen Family Collection*, with a free public opening event featuring music, performances, art-making, and more.

#### **February 25**

##### **Family Fun Workshop: Color Your World**

Seattle Art Museum

Look closely at the bright reds, cool blues, and exciting yellows that artists use to paint beautiful landscapes. Ages 3-6 and caregivers.

#### **March 2, April 6**

##### **Teen Art Lab**

Seattle Art Museum

Create a mural from natural materials in response to *Seeing Nature: Landscape Masterworks from the Paul G. Allen Family Collection*. Support for teen programs is provided by Hearst Foundations.

#### **March 3**

##### **First Friday Lecture**

Seattle Art Museum

Join Chiyo Ishikawa, Susan Brotman Deputy Director for Art and Curator of European Painting and Sculpture, as she discusses *Seeing Nature: Landscape Masterworks from the Paul G. Allen Family Collection*. Free and open to the public.

**March 16, April 20, May 18**  
**Seeing Nature: Soundscapes**

Seattle Art Museum

Explore the sights and sounds of nature with our pop-up in-gallery performances. Every third Thursday of the month. Free with admission.

**March 18**  
**Family Fun Workshop: Hearing Nature**

Seattle Art Museum

Uncover the connection between music and painting in this lively workshop. Ages 6-10 and caregivers.

**March 24**  
**SAM Remix**

Seattle Art Museum

#SAMRemix returns for an evening of performances, tours, dancing, creating, and exploring SAM's collection and special exhibitions. Choose your own adventure during this creative late-night out inspired by *Seeing Nature: Landscape Masterworks from the Paul G. Allen Family Collection*. Remix is sponsored by Starbucks Coffee Company. Supporting sponsor is Russell Investments. Media sponsors are The Stranger and KEXP 90.3 FM.

**April 22**  
**Family Fun Workshop: All the Wild Things**

Seattle Art Museum

Spot all the wild things in art. Whether it's colorful flowers, big animals, or teeny tiny blades of grass, discover and learn about art and create a landscape based on all the wonders you see. Ages 3-6 and caregivers.

**May 13**  
**Family Fun Workshop: Globe-Trotting**

Seattle Art Museum

Discover cities near and far as you travel through art across the globe. Sail through the canals of Venice, walk the ramparts of the Coliseum, explore rainy Seattle, and then work in the studio to create your own 3-dimensional city. Ages 6-10 and caregivers.

**April & May, Dates TBA**  
**SAM Creates: Landscape**

Seattle Art Museum & Olympic Sculpture Park

Two week-long intensive art-making workshops every day from 1-4 pm lead by local artists, focused on the techniques of landscape painting in diverse media.

Family Fun Workshops presented by



Support for Family Fun Workshops provided by **The Thanksgiving Foundation**.

EXHIBITION ORGANIZATION AND SUPPORT

The exhibition is co-organized by Portland Art Museum, Seattle Art Museum, and the Paul G. Allen Family Collection. This exhibition is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities.

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Vulcan Inc. has also provided generous in-kind support.

**Image credits:** *Birch Forest*, 1903, Gustav Klimt, oil on canvas, 43 1/4 x 43 1/4 in., *Grand Canyon of Arizona at Sunset*, 1909, Thomas Moran, oil on canvas, 30 x 40 in.

### **ABOUT SEATTLE ART MUSEUM**

As the leading visual art institution in the Pacific Northwest, SAM draws on its global collections, powerful exhibitions, and dynamic programs to provide unique educational resources benefiting the Seattle region, the Pacific Northwest, and beyond. SAM was founded in 1933 with a focus on Asian art. By the late 1980s the museum had outgrown its original home, and in 1991 a new 155,000-square-foot downtown building, designed by Robert Venturi, Scott Brown & Associates, opened to the public. The 1933 building was renovated and reopened as the Asian Art Museum in 1994. SAM's desire to further serve its community was realized in 2007 with the opening of two stunning new facilities: the nine-acre Olympic Sculpture Park (designed by Weiss/Manfredi Architects)—a "museum without walls," free and open to all—and the Allied Works Architecture designed 118,000-square-foot expansion of its main, downtown location, including 232,000 square feet of additional space built for future expansion.

From a strong foundation of Asian art to noteworthy collections of African and Oceanic art, Northwest Coast Native American art, European and American art, and modern and contemporary art, the strength of SAM's collection of approximately 25,000 objects lies in its diversity of media, cultures and time periods.