



Masterworks Museum of Bermuda Art

www.bermudamasterworks.org

TOM BUTTERFIELD

Founder & Creative Director

When Masterworks opened its doors to the general public March 2, 2008 there was an air of great anticipation. After twenty-one years of individual and corporate support Masterworks opened the doors to Bermuda's first ever purpose built museum in the Botanical Gardens.

After years of being a nomadic collection, all the paintings were now under one climate controlled roof, in a world class museum with art storage facilities, a classroom, a main gallery, a smaller gallery dedicated to local artists and a members lounge, café and gift shop. This new museum is truly a cultural and historical treasure for Bermuda and her visitors and one that can only enhance our understanding of our culture and history.

It was a museum and an art gallery that comprised both the history of Bermuda, its architecture and a state of the art museum.

The old refurbished buildings held history that went back some 300 years with a water tank supporting the production of arrowroot and an old shed for cows. This was the image of life on the farm over 200 years ago.

The new museum was joined to the old and full of promise became the home for Winslow Homer, Georgia O'Keeffe, Wyeth and a host of other luminaries grounded in oil, watercolours and photographs.

Upon opening the museum it was immediately realised that the mandate and mission of the vision of master works could be expanded to encompass writers, musicians, sculptures and those who are generally inspired by the Muse of Bermuda.

It became apparent we could encompass the work and visitations of John Lennon, David Bowie, Eugene O'Neill, George Gershwin, Scott F Fitzgerald, Mark Twain, playwright Simon O'Neill and Arthur Rankin.



Above, Ogden Pleissner, "St. Georges", watercolour
Following page; Frank Small, "Welcoming Smile", about 1900, oil on board

I note some may question just who Arthur Rankin is and that would set off an alarm beside Mark Twain. As the creator of Rudolph the red nose reindeer and frosty the snowman his legacy in western creativity and art is without parallel.

Bermuda is most fortunate to have so many inspired men and women visit its shore, live on the island and have Arthur Rankin become a Bermudian.

The master works museum is a standalone collection in the world of art as it has never wavered from its muse and to that with Canadians Yousef Karsh, Michael Ondaatje and Jack Bush added to the artistic lexicon so that the future of the museum has assured its unique position in the world of art

Artists and Art in the Collection

The notion of this collection sprung from the vision of its founder, Tom Butterfield, who believed that through art inspired by Bermuda, one could be better informed about the history, culture and heritage of the island. Additionally, he felt that the influx of artists to Bermuda was not mere happenstance; rather the muse of the islands' unique light and landscape beckoned them.



Janet O. Smith

At the Masterworks Museum of Bermuda Art, you can experience Bermuda as seen through the eyes of artists like Winslow Homer, Georgia O’Keeffe, Charles Demuth, Jack Bush and Albert Gleizes among many others. Many of the paintings in the Bermudian Collection are landscapes of our beautiful island paradise, and others reflect the unique warmth of Bermuda’s people and cultural heritage.

Over the years, new Bermudian and international artists have contributed to the Bermudian Collection, enabling it to continue to evolve and grow in both traditional and contemporary genres. Our dream for the Collection is to be able to continue to acquire additional works and to create an environment of inspiration to our young, fledgling artists who will become the future.

Masterworks’ Mission

Our mission statement has a clear purpose to enrich the community through art and education. We believe that the Masterworks Collection is a unique celebration of Bermuda’s culture and intrinsic beauty, uniting the community and transforming lives through art and education.



Below; Winslow Homer, watercolour, dated 1901, "Island Water", one of three Homer pieces to be found at the Masterworks Museum



Above, Albert Gleizes, "Paysage des Bermudes", 1917, a mixed media on paper
Following page, Georgia O'Keeffe, 1934, a graphite drawing on her second visit to Bermuda and is one of 14 works that she executed during her visit.

Part of our mission is to build a major collection, not only of Bermuda art from the past, but also one that embodies the artists of today, as well as a vision for the future. By embracing all art forms, we hope to encourage artists from both Bermuda and abroad to develop their talents in our inspirational island setting. We also encourage the repatriation of works of art inspired by the island, and welcome any gift that may enhance our Collection.

The permanent collection of the Masterworks Museum of Bermuda Art began with twelve paintings depicting Bermuda. Today, the collection consists of over 1500 pieces of art covering all mediums including painting, photography, and sculpture, all drawing inspiration from the beauty of Bermuda. The scope of the collection covers work from the 1700s up until present day and the artists represented come from around the world, most notably, the United States, Canada, England, France and Sweden. Internationally acclaimed artists such

as Winslow Homer, Georgia O'Keeffe, Marsden Hartley, Charles Demuth and Henry Moore have a high profile presence in the Masterworks Collection, but still leave room for the talents of lesser-known local and foreign artists to shine brightly.



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