

## Harvard / News Release Art Museums

# Ethan Lasser Appointed Harvard Art Museums' Margaret S. Winthrop Associate Curator of American Art

Cambridge, MA

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The Harvard Art Museums are pleased to announce the appointment of Ethan Lasser as Margaret S. Winthrop Associate Curator of American Art, effective September 18, 2012. Lasser will join the Art Museums' Division of European and American Art.

Lasser's innovative work as a curator and academic experience align well with the Art Museums' teaching and research mission. From 2007 to the present, Lasser has been curator of the Chipstone Foundation in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, a research institute committed to advancing progressive scholarship in American art through exhibitions, publications, teaching, and public programming. In 2008, he reinstalled the foundation's permanent galleries at the Milwaukee Art Museum, a 13,000-square-foot exhibition space for American paintings and decorative arts. He has also served as adjunct professor in the Department of Art History at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he initiated the Object Lab, a summer program for undergraduates focused on teaching American art and craft history through hands-on research with artifacts. Lasser is currently developing two new exhibitions—*The Practice and Poetics of Repair* and *Makers: Craft and Industry in American Art*—both of which explore his interest in art-making processes and materiality. Lasser, who graduated magna cum laude from Williams College, has a PhD in art history from Yale University.

"Ethan's pursuit of new approaches to American art through provocative exhibitions and in-gallery teaching experiences make him a timely addition to the curatorial team during this pivotal period in the Harvard Art Museums' growth," said Thomas W. Lentz, Elizabeth and John Moors Cabot Director of the Harvard Art Museums. "He is already establishing his presence, contributing work on the plans for the reinstallation of the American collection in the galleries of our new facility."

The Harvard Art Museums' Division of European and American Art is responsible for over 70,000 drawings, paintings, photographs, prints, sculptures, and objects of decorative art dating from the 12th century to 1900 and held by the Fogg and Busch-Reisinger museums. The collection of American art is best known for colonial- and federal-period painting, late 19th-century painting and sculpture, and drawings and watercolors of all periods. It includes works by John Singleton Copley, Winslow Homer, John Singer Sargent, and James Abbott McNeill Whistler.

"I very much look forward to working with Ethan," said Stephan Wolohojian, Head of the Division of European and American Art and Landon and Lavinia Clay Curator at the Harvard Art Museums. "His fresh perspective on American art and close engagement with objects complement our work at the Art Museums. We are fortunate to have a strong curatorial platform in place for American art and impressive collections at the museums and across campus. Ethan will do a great job working with students and presenting Harvard's holdings to broader audiences."

“I am thrilled to be joining the Harvard Art Museums at such an exciting moment,” said Lasser. “The collection of American paintings and decorative arts is among the oldest and deepest in the country. I am looking forward to working with my new colleagues and all of the museums’ supporters to develop an innovative American art program that will capture the attention of students, faculty, and the community at large.”

Lasser joins Theodore E. Stebbins, Jr., Consultative Curator of American Art, in the Division of European and American Art. Stebbins continues to work on his multi-volume catalogue of American Paintings at Harvard.

#### About the Harvard Art Museums

The Harvard Art Museums, among the world’s leading art institutions, comprise three museums (Fogg, Busch-Reisinger, and Arthur M. Sackler) and four research centers (Straus Center for Conservation and Technical Studies, the Center for the Technical Study of Modern Art, the Harvard Art Museums Archives, and the Archaeological Exploration of Sardis). The Harvard Art Museums are distinguished by the range and depth of their collections, their groundbreaking exhibitions, and the original research of their staff. The collections include approximately 250,000 objects in all media, ranging in date from antiquity to the present and originating in Europe, North America, North Africa, the Middle East, South Asia, East Asia, and Southeast Asia. Integral to Harvard University and the wider community, the art museums and research centers serve as resources for students, scholars, and other visitors. For more than a century they have been the nation’s premier training ground for museum professionals and are renowned for their seminal role in developing the discipline of art history in this country. [www.harvardartmuseums.org](http://www.harvardartmuseums.org).

In June 2008 the building at 32 Quincy Street, formerly the home of the Fogg and Busch-Reisinger museums, closed for a major renovation. During this renovation, the Sackler Museum at 485 Broadway remains open and has been reinstalled with some of the finest works representing the collections of all three museums. When complete, the renovated historic building on Quincy Street will unite the three museums in a single state-of-the-art facility designed by architect Renzo Piano. [www.harvardartmuseums.org/renovation](http://www.harvardartmuseums.org/renovation).

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