



ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **EUROPEAN SPLENDORS EXHIBITION OPENS AUG 26 AT THE ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART**

Paintings from Columbia Museum of Art Kress Collection Will Be on View Through Dec 23, 2021

**[For Release August 21, 2021 – Albany, GA]** — *European Splendors: Old Master Paintings from the Kress Collection* opens **Thursday, Aug 26, 2021** at the Albany Museum of Art with a special opening reception for AMA members. The exhibition opens to the public on **Friday, Aug 27**.

The exhibition of 29 Renaissance and Baroque paintings was organized by the Columbia Museum of Art in Columbia, S.C., with support from the Samuel H. Kress Foundation in New York. It was made possible at the AMA through support from the Walter and Frances Bunzl Family Foundation.

“The AMA is deeply honored to host these rare examples of Renaissance and Baroque painting from the Columbia Museum of Art and its incomparable Kress Collection,” AMA Executive Director Andrew J. Wulf, Ph.D., said. “This partnership is a symbol of what great alliances can accomplish as we share these cultural treasures with all our communities in Southwest Georgia.”

*European Splendors: Old Master Painting from the Kress Collection* will be on view in the Haley Gallery of the Albany Museum of Art, 311 Meadowlark Drive, through **Dec 23, 2021**. The AMA is open **10 am-5 pm Tuesdays through Saturdays**, and admission is free for everyone.

No flash photography will be allowed in the Haley Gallery during this exhibition.

“This is another example in which the AMA brings the art of the world to our community,” Wulf said. “We are thankful to the Bunzl Family Foundation for its support in making this possible, and to our members and partners who enable us to offer free admission every day. It is important that this opportunity is open to everyone in our community and region.”

The Renaissance was a period of rebirth for art, culture and politics. Centuries of social and cultural stagnation followed the fall of the Roman Empire, the period of almost 1,000 years that historian William Manchester has described as “a world lit only by fire.”

As the Middle Ages slowly opened to new ideas because of advances in literacy, science, and government, the world witnessed a revival that began to take firm hold in Italy starting in 1280. That gradual reawakening of ancient culture led to the Renaissance and its spirit of humanism that captivated the 15th and 16th centuries, reaching its height with the works of masters such as Michelangelo Buonarroti and Leonardo di Vinci.

Following that era of rediscovery, the Baroque Period (1600-1750) was an age of expansion. Where the Renaissance was a reverent revival of artforms from classical Greek and Roman antiquity in settings that were relatively static, Baroque art was dynamic, characterized by its deep colors, depictions of great drama and emotion, and intense lighting and shadowing.

“There is special beauty and elegance in each of these marvelous works,” Wulf said. “It is our hope that everyone in our area will take advantage of this opportunity that will enrich the soul.”

For those who want to know more about the artists and paintings, the object label for each artwork will include a unique QR code.

“By using your smartphone camera, you can open a link to online PDFs that go into great detail about each artist and painting,” Wulf noted. “There is a trove of information that you will learn about the artists and the stories behind the artworks.”

The AMA is following COVID health guidance by requiring guests over 3 years old to wear masks for everyone’s safety when they visit the museum. Use of hand sanitizer is encouraged and guests are asked to maintain social distancing of at least six feet from those not in their group.

“We want to ensure everyone enjoys this exhibition in a safe environment,” Wulf said.

The AMA also has a full slate of programming planned for the fall and early winter that will connect with *European Splendors: Old Master Paintings from the Kress Collection*. Several of the paintings are selected art objects for the AMA’s annual high school and college essay contest, *A Picture Is Worth a Thousand Words*. That contest, which offers prize money to the top three essayists in the high school and college divisions, gets underway on **Aug 31**.

The exhibition will be incorporated into the curriculum for school and youth organization field trips, and for the AMA’s monthly Toddler Takeover and Homeschool Day programs.

For those who would like to know more about Renaissance and Baroque art, the AMA is conducting a series of Thursday evening lectures. Each lecture begins at **5:30 pm**. Speakers will be:

- **Sept 9:** Charles Williams, professor of visual art, art appreciation and art history, Albany State University;
- **Sept 30:** Keaton Wynn, professor of art history and ceramics, Georgia Southwestern State University;
- **Oct 21:** Dr. Grace Harpster, assistant professor of art history, Georgia State University;
- **Nov 18:** Dr. Elissa Auerbach, professor of art history, Georgia College & State University;
- **Dec 9:** Dr. Joyce de Vries, professor and Department of Art & History chair, Auburn University.

The AMA Art Lovers Book Club will delve into the era when it meets at **6 pm** on **Tuesday, Sept 21** to discuss *The Agony and the Ecstasy*, a biographical novel of Michelangelo Buonarroti by Irving Stone. In his novel, Stone offers a compelling portrait of the famous sculptor and painter. Club meetings are free for anyone to attend.

In addition, those inspired by the beauty of the art can try their hand at drawing their own versions of these masterpieces this fall. Thursday evening sessions will be **5-6:30 pm** on **Sept 2, Nov 4** and **Dec 2**. A special Saturday session will start at **10 am** on **Oct 9** and continue until closing at **5 pm**.

The AMA will have paper and drawing materials available, or participants can bring their own dry media supplies. The sessions are free for AMA members. For non-members, the cost is \$5 if you use AMA materials and free if you bring your own.

Two musical events will connect to *European Splendors*.

At **6 pm** on **Saturday, Oct 2**, the Albany Symphony Orchestra will perform *An Evening of Italian Music* at the Albany Municipal Auditorium. It will be followed by a **7:30 pm** reception at the AMA, where the galleries will be open for viewing. Ticket information can be found on the symphony's website.

On **Thursday, Oct 21**, the Albany Chorale will present *European Splendor Exhibition*, a program of Renaissance and Baroque choral music, at **7 pm** at the AMA. Admission is free but donations will be accepted.

Yoga in the Gallery, a monthly program that places yoga in an art setting, will be conducted in the Haley. The Friday sessions start at 5:30 pm and are scheduled for **Aug 27, Sept 24, Oct 29** and **Nov 26**. The sessions are free for AMA members and \$10 for non-members. For adults with young children, the AMA will have volunteers who will watch the kids in AMAzing Space while parents participate.

Visitors also can experience the art of the Renaissance and Baroque periods in a unique way with *The Art of Sound*, which features soothing sounds created by Amanda Borghi, a certified sound healing facilitator and founder/owner of Inherent Sound. Doors open at 9 am and the session begins promptly at **9:30 am** on **Saturday, Oct 23** in the Haley Gallery. The cost is \$30 for AMA members and \$35 for non-members.

The Renaissance also will be seen on the streets of downtown Albany this fall. On **Saturday, Nov 13**, *AMA ChalkFest* returns to the 100 block of Pine Avenue. The theme for the professional and amateur chalk art, live music and tastings festival is *Masterworks*. The professional chalk artists who participate will create 50-foot-square re-creations and reinterpretations of masterpieces from the Renaissance and Baroque eras.

"The exhibition is a Renaissance in every sense of the word," Wulf said. "We have a plethora of events and programs inspired by these beautiful works of art. I hope everyone will come out and explore these paintings with us."

## CURRENT AMA EXHIBITIONS

- *European Splendors: Old Master Paintings from the Kress Collection* is in the Haley Gallery Aug 26-Dec 23, 2021.
- *Horse Power: Works by Cedric Smith* is in the East Gallery July 10-Dec 23, 2021.
- *Essay Topic: Write Down the Word WOMAN One Hundred Times, New works by Sanaz Haghani* is in the McCormack Gallery July 10-Dec 23, 2021

- *Escape Plan*, installation by Elinor Saragoussi, is in the West Gallery.

## **ABOUT THE ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART**

The Albany Museum of Art is located at 311 Meadowlark Drive in Albany, Ga., adjacent to Albany State University West Campus just off Gillionville Road. The museum is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. The Albany Museum of Art is open to the public 10 am-5 pm Tuesdays through Saturdays. Admission is free.

For more information about the AMA please visit our website, [www.albanymuseum.com](http://www.albanymuseum.com) or call 229.439.8400. Be sure to follow the @AlbanyArtMuseum on Twitter, AlbanyMuseum on Instagram and AlbanyMuseumOfArt on Facebook.

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