

Press Release

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ELISSA WATTERS APPOINTED ASSOCIATE CURATOR OF EUROPEAN ART AT HIGH MUSEUM OF ART

ATLANTA, July 14, 2026 — Today, the High Museum of Art announced the appointment of Elissa Watters as its Frances B. Bunzl Family associate curator of European art. In her role, Watters will be responsible for overseeing the museum's European Art department, including related exhibitions and programs, as well as its collection of more than 1,100 paintings, sculptures and works on paper spanning six centuries of artistic endeavor, from the 1300s through the 1900s. She will join the High on July 20, 2026.

Most recently, Watters served as guest curator at USC Fisher Museum of Art and at the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center in Brattleboro, Vermont, and as a research assistant at the Getty Research Institute. From 2018 to 2021, she was the Florence B. Selden senior fellow at Yale University Art Gallery, where she conducted collection research, led public programs and facilitated a significant promised gift of drawings and woodcuts by German artist Renate Geisberg-Wichmann. Her previous positions also include guest curator at Williams College Museum of Art in Williamstown, Massachusetts.

"With her combination of academic training, on-the-ground experience and creative approach to artistic interpretation, Elissa is well suited to lead our European Art department, which covers a wide range of time periods and subject matter and presents unique challenges and opportunities to build connections with our audience," said the High's Director Rand Suffolk. "Her embrace of collaboration also stood out as a great fit for the museum. I know she'll be an incredible asset to our curatorial team."

Established in the early 20th century, today the High's European Art collection boasts important holdings of Impressionist, Post-Impressionist, Renaissance and Baroque paintings; 19th-century landscapes and European and French sculpture; and prints ranging from iconic Renaissance engravings to an important suite of lithographs by Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. Many of the most celebrated European artists are represented, such as Albrecht Dürer, Giovanni Bellini, Anne-Louis Girodet de Roussy-Trioson, Charles Cordier, Claude Monet, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Camille Pissarro, Edgar Degas and Amedeo Modigliani. When Watters joins the High, she will comprehensively review the collection to support future exhibition projects and to chart

avenues for strategic development within areas of interest, particularly late 19th- and early 20th-century art, including refining and expanding the museum's holdings of works on paper.

"We look forward to Elissa joining the curatorial team at the High, as her interests, expertise, and vision will undoubtedly lead our European art program in compelling new directions while building upon the strengths of the past," noted Kevin W. Tucker, the High's chief curator. "Her global sensibilities and perspectives will further enrich our efforts to connect our various collections and exhibitions in exciting and thoughtful ways."

Watters is receiving her Ph.D. from the University of Southern California, with a dissertation on radical artmaking in western Germany between the World Wars. She received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Dartmouth College and a Master of Arts from the Williams College Graduate Program at Clark Art Institute. Since 2018, she has been a member of the Association of Print Scholars.

"I am thrilled and honored to join the High," said Watters. "The museum's commitment to welcoming and engaging all visitors through thoughtful exhibitions, programs and collecting strategies aligns with my interest in community-minded approaches to curatorial practice. I look forward to working with such an inspiring group of colleagues to develop the European Art program and put European art in conversation with other parts of the collection."

About the High Museum of Art

Located in the heart of Atlanta, the High Museum of Art connects with audiences from across the Southeast and around the world through its distinguished collection, dynamic schedule of special exhibitions and engaging community-focused programs. Housed within facilities designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architects Richard Meier and Renzo Piano, the High features a collection of more than 20,000 works of art, including an extensive anthology of 19th- and 20th-century American fine and decorative arts; major holdings of photography and folk and self-taught work, especially that of artists from the American South; burgeoning collections of modern and contemporary art, including paintings, sculpture, new media and design; a growing collection of African art, with work dating from prehistory through the present; and significant holdings of European paintings and works on paper. The High is dedicated to reflecting the diversity of its communities and offering a variety of exhibitions and educational programs that engage visitors with the world of art, the lives of artists and the creative process. For more information about the High, visit www.high.org.

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