



Brattleboro Museum & Art Center

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Marlboro College Visiting Professor of Art History to Give a Talk on the History of Art Collecting

Brattleboro, Vt. — In connection with its major current exhibit, “Vermont Collects: Modern & Contemporary Masters,” the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center will present a talk by Erin Benay, visiting professor of art history at Marlboro College, on the history of the private art collection. “Doors Wide Shut: The Private Art Collection from Raphael to Rauschenberg” will consider the motives for collecting art, from the Renaissance and Baroque eras to the present day. The talk will take place Thursday, September 10 at 7:30 p.m. Admission is \$6 for adults, \$4 for students, \$3 for seniors, and free for BMAC members and children 5 and under; pay at the door or call 802-257-0124, ext. 101.

“A child’s room is often stocked with marvels: bird nests, shells, shiny stones, books, and perhaps a drawing or two,” said Benay. “The great private art collections of the Renaissance began in much the same way as these playful assemblages. From cabinets of curiosities containing treasures from foreign lands, to paintings of nude women by Titian and Raphael, these early collections marked the beginning of the modern art museum.” In her talk, Benay will ask what the hoarding tendencies of the Jesuit Athanasius Kircher (1601-1680), founder of the ‘Kircherianum’—a museum filled with taxidermy animals and mechanical inventions—have in common with Richard Lauder’s recent and widely

publicized purchase of a Gustav Klimt painting for \$135 million. She will discuss how famous art collectors of the 19th and 20th centuries, like Henry Clay Frick, Isabella Stewart Gardner, and Peggy Guggenheim opened their formerly private realms of display to the public, much the way BMAC has done with its new exhibit.

Brattleboro native Erin Benay received her PhD in Art History from Rutgers University in 2009. Her area of specialization is late Italian Renaissance and Baroque painting. Prior to joining the faculty of Marlboro College she taught at Rutgers, Drew University, and in Urbino, Italy.

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Major support for the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center's 2009-2010 season is provided by BMAC members and Entergy Vermont Yankee, Foard Panel, C&S Wholesale Grocers, Sam's Outdoor Outfitters, and Chittenden Bank. The Museum's exhibits and gift shop are open 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., except Tuesday and Wednesday. Regular admission is \$6 for adults, \$4 for seniors, and \$3 for students. Members and children 5 and under are admitted free of charge.

Founded in 1972, the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center presents art and ideas in ways that inspire, educate, and engage people of all ages. Each season features compelling new exhibits of contemporary artwork by regional and internationally acclaimed artists, complemented by lectures, artist talks, film screenings, and other public programs. Located in historic Union Station in downtown Brattleboro, at the intersection of Main Street (Route 5) and Routes 119 and 142, the Museum is wheelchair accessible. For more information call 802-257-0124 or visit www.brattleboromuseum.org.

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