

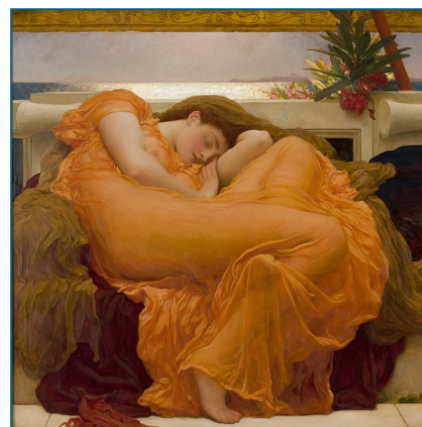
**MUSEO DE ARTE DE PONCE, LARGEST ART MUSEUM IN CARIBBEAN AND ONE OF THE BEST IN THE AMERICAS, LAUNCHES SPECTACULAR SIX-CITY TRAVELING EXHIBITION IN THE U.S., DEBUTING WITH EXHIBITION PARTNER MEADOWS MUSEUM IN DALLAS FEBRUARY 23, 2025**

The Sense of Beauty: Six Centuries of Painting from Museo de Arte de Ponce to showcase 60 masterworks of European, American and Puerto Rican art including works by Sir Frederic Leighton, Lucas Cranach the Elder, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Gustave Courbet, Elisabeth Louise Vigée-LeBrun, William-Adolphe Bouguereau, and José Campeche y Jordán, among others

Exhibitions to follow at Brigham Young University Museum of Art; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; Oklahoma City Museum of Art; Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art; and Cincinnati Art Museum

**PONCE, Puerto Rico & DALLAS (SMU) (December 20, 2024)**—Museo de Arte de Ponce (MAP) is launching a monumental traveling exhibition—*The Sense of Beauty: Six Centuries of Painting from Museo de Arte de Ponce*—with the Meadows Museum, SMU, its organizing partner and first venue. Sixty masterworks by leading lights of European, American and Puerto Rican painting, some traveling to the mainland United States for the first time, will be on display at the Meadows from Feb. 23 to June 22, 2025, after which they will travel to five additional institutions: the Brigham Young University Museum of Art (Provo, Utah); the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; the Oklahoma City Museum of Art; the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art (Hartford, Connecticut); and the Cincinnati Art Museum.

The Museo de Arte de Ponce’s signature 1965 building by Edward Durell Stone has been undergoing major repairs since 2020, when a series of earthquakes occurred off the southern coast of the island. Nevertheless, the beloved museum—among the most significant cultural institutions in the Caribbean—has remained vital. Facing the temporary closure of its galleries, the museum loaned several of its major works to museums around the world and organized a small-scale exhibition of Puerto Rican art that has been traveling in the U.S since 2022. Meanwhile, exhibitions have been mounted in the museum’s Annex Building, where research, conservation, education programs, and retail operations have continued unabated.



Frederic, Lord Leighton (English, 1830–1896), *Flaming June*, c. 1895. Oil on canvas, 46 7/8 × 46 7/8 in. (119.1 × 119.1 cm). Museo de Arte de Ponce. The Luis A. Ferré Foundation, Inc. 63.0406.

*The Sense of Beauty* was conceived and developed by Irida Rodríguez-Negrón, curator at Museo de Arte de Ponce, and launched by the museum under the leadership of Executive Director Deborah L. Roldán. “This tour happens at a pivotal moment for the Museo de Arte de Ponce as we continue renovations on our historic building while also keeping alive our mission to share the beauty of our collection both in Puerto Rico and abroad,” indicated Roldán. “We are delighted to inaugurate the exhibition tour of *The Sense of Beauty* at the renowned Meadows Museum. We are sister institutions in many ways and share parallel histories; both collections were started by visionary business leaders in the 1950s who later established museums to bring art to their communities, the Museo de Arte de Ponce in 1959 and the Meadows in 1965, the same year that Museo de Arte de Ponce opened its Durell building.”

As part of the partnership, the Meadows Museum—the leading North American institution focused on studying and presenting the art of Spain, which will be celebrating its 60th anniversary in 2025—will lend a “guest masterpiece” to the Museo de Arte de Ponce once it fully reopens: *Female Figure (Sibyl with Tabula Rasa)* (c. 1648) by famed Spanish artist Diego Velázquez (1599–1660).

“The Meadows is proud to have been the first museum approached to host this exhibition and we have enthusiastically supported its development from the beginning,” said Amanda W. Dotseth, The Linda P. and William A. Custard Director of the Meadows Museum and Centennial Chair in the Meadows School of the Arts, SMU. “We look forward to introducing North Texas audiences to the extraordinarily diverse and rich collection of the Museo de Arte de Ponce.”



Frederic Edwin Church (American, 1826–1900), *Morning in the Tropics*, 1872. Oil on canvas, 28 3/4 × 46 1/2 in. (73 × 118.1 cm). Museo de Arte de Ponce. The Luis A. Ferré Foundation, Inc. 59.0082.

The exhibition features 60 paintings spanning from the 16th to 21st centuries, which will be accompanied by descriptive texts in both English and Spanish. Among the paintings to be exhibited is the iconic *Flaming June* (1895) by Frederic, Lord Leighton (1830–1896), a major highlight of the museum’s internationally renowned Pre-Raphaelite collection.

Visitors will also be able to experience religious paintings by Lucas Cranach the Elder, Peter Paul Rubens and Anthony van Dyck; historical and mythical scenes by Jean-Léon Gérôme and Angelica Kauffmann; portraits by Sir Joshua Reynolds and Elisabeth Louise Vigée-LeBrun; landscapes by Frederic Edwin Church, Claude Lorrain and Gustave Courbet; and genre scenes by William-Adolphe Bouguereau and James Tissot.

Meadows Museum Curator Patricia Manzano Rodríguez will serve as the venue curator for the exhibition. Appointed to her current role in July 2024 after an international search, she is a widely recognized scholar and expert on 17th-century Spanish painting.

“The collection of the Museo de Arte de Ponce includes outstanding works by Spanish artists that will feel right at home at the Meadows, including paintings by El Greco, Jusepe de Ribera, Francisco de Goya, Raimundo de Madrazo y Garreta and Joaquín Sorolla y Bastida,” said Manzano Rodríguez. “For this reason, we are taking a different approach to exhibiting these canvases than the other venues, installing them alongside works in our permanent collection, where they can complement each other and spark dialogues.” Also unique to the Meadows Museum’s presentation are two polychromed wood sculptures by 17th-century artists Pedro de Mena and José de Mora, which will travel exclusively to the Meadows.

A gallery devoted to works by Puerto Rican artists will reflect the proud history and rich culture of the Caribbean island. Selections range from devotional images by the late 18th-century painter José Campeche y Jordán to the works of contemporary artists such as Myrna Báez, Francisco Rodón and María de Mater O’Neill.

Rodríguez-Negrón’s relationship with the Meadows Museum began more than a decade ago, when she served as the museum’s first Meadows/Kress/Prado Curatorial Fellow from 2011 to 2013. She also acted as a guest curator for the 2013 exhibition *The Stewart Album: Art, Letters, and Souvenirs to an American Patron in Paris*.

“Returning to the Meadows represents a homecoming for me in many ways. It is where my curatorial career began, guided by the expertise of Mark Roglán, the museum’s late director,” expressed Rodríguez-Negrón. “Collaborating on this project with my former colleagues has been a pleasure. Our team is excited about this opportunity to share our treasures with new audiences and showcase the exceptional collection of



Maria de Mater O’Neill (Puerto Rican, b. 1960), *Backyard*, 2000, oil on canvas. The Luis A. Ferré Foundation, Inc. Museo de Arte de Ponce. 2023.2697.4. Gift of Roderic Steinkamp.

which we are stewards. We hope everyone will visit Ponce and see more of it when our main galleries reopen!"

To enhance the enjoyment of the exhibition, the Museo de Arte de Ponce has created a bilingual, fully illustrated scholarly catalogue to accompany the exhibition, edited by Rodríguez-Negrón. It features an essay by the curator that recounts the history of the museum and the development of its collection, along with entries for each of the works included in the exhibition contributed by scholars from Puerto Rico and the U.S.

This exhibition has been organized by the [Museo de Arte de Ponce](#) in collaboration with the [Meadows Museum](#), SMU, Dallas, and is funded by a generous gift from [The Meadows Foundation](#). This project is supported in part by the [National Endowment for the Arts](#). Promotional support is provided by [NBC 5/KXAS](#), [Telemundo 39/KXTX](#), and the [Dallas Tourism Public Improvement District](#).

The Meadows Museum is located on the SMU campus at 5900 Bishop Blvd., Dallas, Texas 75205. Hours are 10 a.m.–5 p.m. Tuesday–Saturday, with extended hours until 9 p.m. on Thursday, and 1–5 p.m. Sunday. Parking is free for museum visitors. For more information, go to [meadowsmuseumdallas.org](http://meadowsmuseumdallas.org).

#### **ABOUT MUSEO DE ARTE DE PONCE**

Founded in 1959 by Luis A. Ferré, the Museo de Arte de Ponce is a non-profit organization dedicated to the collection, conservation, study and exhibition of works of art. With a permanent collection of more than 4,000 objects, the museum is a cultural icon in the Caribbean. Its main galleries are currently undergoing a retrofit process following the earthquakes of 2020 in Puerto Rico. During these renovations, the museum's collection has continued to grow and be appreciated in the United States and the rest of the world through loans and traveling exhibitions. [museoarteponce.org](http://museoarteponce.org).

#### **ABOUT THE MEADOWS MUSEUM**

The Meadows Museum is the leading U.S. institution focused on studying and presenting the art of Spain. In 1962, Dallas businessman and philanthropist Algur H. Meadows donated his private collection of Spanish paintings and funds to start a museum at Southern Methodist University. The museum opened to the public in 1965, marking the first step in fulfilling Meadows's vision to create "a small Prado for Texas." Today, the Meadows is home to one of the largest and most comprehensive collections of Spanish art outside of Spain. The collection spans from the 10th to the 21st centuries and includes medieval objects, Renaissance and Baroque sculptures, and major paintings by Golden Age and modern masters.

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