

## The Met Makes Its Images of Public-Domain Artworks Freely Available through New Open Access Policy

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New York City, NY – Thomas P. Campbell, Director and CEO of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, announced today its adoption of a new policy: all images of public-domain artworks in the Museum's collection are now available for free and unrestricted use. This updated policy, known as Open Access, utilizes the Creative Commons Zero (CC0) designation. This policy change is an update to The Museum's 2014 Open Access for Scholarly Content (OASC) initiative. The Met's Open Access policy facilitates the use of more than 375,000 images of public-domain artworks for both scholarly and commercial purposes. The Museum is collaborating with global partners to enable greater access to the collection.

In making the announcement, Mr. Campbell said: "We have been working toward the goal of sharing our images with the public for a number of years. Our comprehensive and diverse museum collection spans 5,000 years of world culture and our core mission is to be open and accessible for all who wish to study and enjoy the works of art in our care. Increasing access to the Museum's collection and scholarship serves the interests and needs of our 21st-century audiences by offering new resources for creativity, knowledge, and ideas. We thank Creative Commons, an international leader in open access and copyright, for being a partner in this effort."

"Sharing is fundamental to how we promote discovery, innovation, and collaboration in the digital age," said Ryan Merkley, CEO, Creative Commons. "Today, The Met has given the world a profound gift in service of its mission: the largest encyclopedic art museum in North America has eliminated the barriers that would otherwise prohibit access to its content, and invited the world to use, remix, and share their public-domain collections widely and without restriction. This is an enormous gift to the world, and it is an act of significant leadership on the part of the institution. I want to congratulate Thomas P. Campbell, the board of trustees, and The Met staff for making such a strong commitment to collaboration and sharing, and I hope that other institutions, both public and private, will follow the path they are setting out here today."

To maximize the reach of The Met's Open Access initiative, the Museum announced its new partnerships with Creative Commons, Wikimedia, Artstor, Digital Public Library of America (DPLA), Art Resource, and Pinterest. The Museum also welcomes its first Wikimedian-in-Residence, Richard Knipel, who will collaborate with Wikimedians around the world to bring images of public-domain artworks into Wikimedia Commons, Wikipedia, and diverse GLAM-Wiki initiatives. Creative Commons will support search and re-use of The Met collection with its CCSearch beta at <https://ccsearch.creativecommons.org/themet>. The Met has also created a public GitHub repository.

"The Met has again proven itself a leader among the world's great cultural institutions. By opening their vast collection of art and antiquities to be freely available under Creative Commons Zero, they are lighting the way for other institutions to follow," said Katherine Maher, Executive Director of the Wikimedia Foundation. "Wikipedia's hundreds of millions of users from around the globe will now be able to experience The Met's greatest treasures, no matter where they live. This remarkable cultural heritage is now free for anyone to view, share, and use."

Loic Tallon, The Met's Chief Digital Officer, said: "In our digital age, the Museum's audience is not only the 6.7 million people who visited The Met's three locations in New York City this past year, but also the three-billion-plus internet-connected individuals around the world. Adopting the CC0 designation for our images and data is one of the

most effective ways the Museum can help audiences gain access to the collection and further its use by educators and students, artists and designers, professionals and hobbyists, as well as creators of all kinds. I am particularly delighted to be launching the Museum's CC0 policy in collaboration with Creative Commons, Artstor, DPLA, Pinterest and the Wikipedia community, and for their support in bringing the Museum's collection to their users."

The Met's new agreement with Artstor, a service affiliated with the education not-for-profit ITHAKA, will make the images discoverable throughout its digital resources, which support a global education community and provide tools to encourage image and data use in research and teaching.

"We are thrilled to help further the impact of The Met's bold public digital access initiative through our work in the global educational community," said Kevin Guthrie, President of Artstor and ITHAKA. "We look forward to making these 375,000 images available so that teachers, students, and researchers around the world can find them, use them, and most importantly re-use them. The CC0 license for these images is a sea change that will help educators and students advance our collective understanding of art and human values by encouraging their use, not only in traditional classrooms and scholarly publications, but also in new digital projects and online courses." Guthrie added, "Access is just the beginning. We look forward to continuously finding ways to work with those engaged in education to enhance and encourage the reach of this collection."

The public can also find images offered from this initiative on Pinterest, thus making the collection more easily accessible to their community.

Evan Sharp, co-founder and Head of Product at Pinterest, said: "Pinterest is where more than 150 million people discover ideas for their lives, whether they collect images of artistic masterpieces or the art of the everyday. We're honored to partner with The Met to make this unprecedented collection accessible to the Pinterest community."

The rollout of this change in policy is an ongoing process, as the Museum continues to collaborate with new and existing partners to develop our content-distribution efforts and explore new opportunities.

While all images of works the Museum believes to be in the public domain are included in this initiative, certain works are not available for one or more of the following reasons: the work is still under copyright, or the copyright status is unclear; privacy or publicity issues; the work is owned by a person or an institution other than The Met; restrictions by the artist, donor, or lender; or lack of a digital image of suitable quality.

The Museum continues to work with Art Resource for licensing images of works under copyright or other restrictions, or for images not available on The Met's website.

The Met's Open Access initiative is made possible through the continued generous support of Bloomberg Philanthropies.

"The Metropolitan Museum of Art's new initiative brings its collection to an even larger audience. One of the first museums to offer audio guides, invest in mobile apps, and develop a robust website, The Met continues to be a leader in providing access to its encyclopedic resources for millions of people all over the world," said Kate D. Levin of Bloomberg Philanthropies.

Related blog posts about The Met's new image policy can be found on [Now at The Met](#) and [Digital Underground](#), as well as on the websites of our partners [Creative Commons](#), [Wikimedia Foundation](#), and [Artstor](#).

Additional information and instructions can also be found at [metmuseum.org/openaccess](http://metmuseum.org/openaccess)

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