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*Boston Museum of Fine Arts*

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**Boston Museum of Fine Arts : Masterpiece paintings from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Masterpiece paintings from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston:

This magnificent art treasury, first published by Abrams in 1986 and now back in print, features 125 superb examples of Western painting from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, one of the finest-and among the oldest-collections in America. The artworks displayed here-reproduced in full color and accompanied by insightful commentary by the curatorial staff-represent the cream of the museum's holdings. Canvases by the Americans John Singleton Copley, John Singer Sargent, and Winslow Homer; by the European Old Masters Rubens, Titian, El Greco, Velzquez, and Rembrandt; by the great Impressionists Manet, Monet, Renoir, Czanne, and Van Gogh; and by modern artists such as Picasso, Pollock, and O'Keeffe bear evidence of the quality and scope of one of the great repositories of Western painting. THEODORE E. STEBBINS, JR., was for many years a distinguished curator of American paintings at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. PETER C. SUTTON, formerly a curator of European painting at the Museum of Fine Arts, is now director of the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, Connecticut. 125 illustrations in full color, 11 x 11"

.com Affluent Boston was among the first American cities to establish a museum of fine arts, in 1870. By 1888, an observer was describing the enthusiasm with which self-confident Boston families were buying the works of "those mad outlaws, the Impressionists." Such early acquisitions form the basis of the MFA Boston's superlative collection,

which could never be amassed today; the museum owns 38 works by Monet, for example, the largest group of Monets outside Paris. Masterpiece Paintings from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston presents 125 of the museum's finest treasures. Beginning with a crucifixion of 1310 by Duccio, the first great artist of the Italian Renaissance, they exemplify the different schools and styles of Western painting. The works are grouped by country rather than chronologically, the largest European section being French, from a delightful Watteau garden party to the huge Gauguin allegory *Where Do We Come From? Well-loved icons such as Renoir's *Dance at Bougival* and Sargent's *The Daughters of Edward Darley Boit* shine among lesser-known gems like a mysterious landscape by the Danish painter Holm. The short essays by the MFA's curators that describe each painting are succinct and enlightening. Issued to celebrate the refurbishing of a new wing, *Masterpiece Paintings* was first published in 1986; this is why the final section, titled "Modern Paintings," appears rather charmingly dated. So wide is the range and so high the quality of the paintings that the book forms a surprisingly complete and very enjoyable introduction to Western art history. --John Stevenson*

From *Library Journal* This lush feast for the eyes selects 125 of the finest American and European paintings in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. The short introductory essay provides a history of the museum and describes the development of the paintings collection. Each painting is faithfully reproduced in excellent color. An explanatory or interpretive commentary accompanies each work and gives the layperson a basis for better understanding the painting's meaning or the times or circumstances in which it was created. This is a beautiful book, with a lucid design and a comfortable size that makes it a pleasure to handle. For all collections. Lynell A. Morr, John Mable Ringling Museum of Art Lib . , Sarasota, Fla. Copyright 1987 Reed Business Information, Inc.