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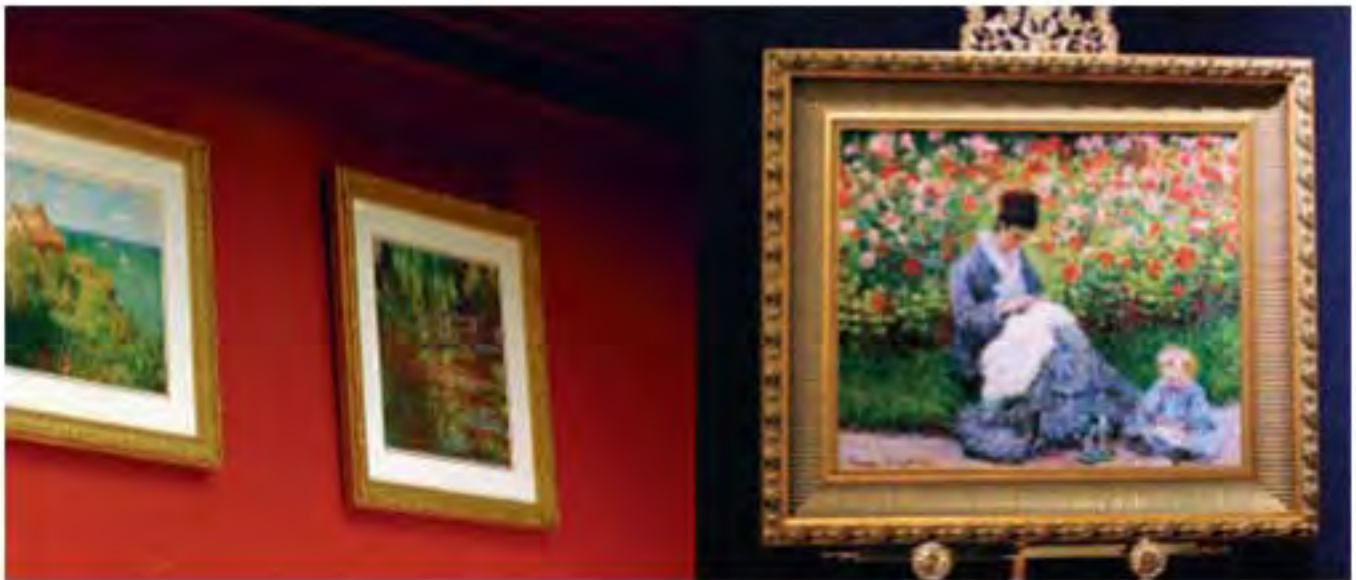
Museum of Fine Arts, **Boston**

The gentle hues of Claude Monet's

signature water lilies. The swirling lines of a Japanese woodblock print. The play of light and shadow across a watercolor by John Singer Sargent. Many images linger with art enthusiasts long after visiting the Museum of Fine Arts (MFA), Boston. Since the museum started using Epson technology to create digital fine art reproductions in-house, art enthusiasts can now enjoy these masterpieces even longer.



Today patrons can take home favorite images as fine art prints, meticulously produced on Epson UltraSmooth Fine Art Paper with Epson UltraChrome Ink, from the Museum Bookstore & Shop and the museum's website at www.mfa-publications.org. The reproductions are also available for sale at galleries displaying MFA works on loan, through MFA traveling exhibitions to other venues, or via licensing agreements with corporate buyers or interior designers.

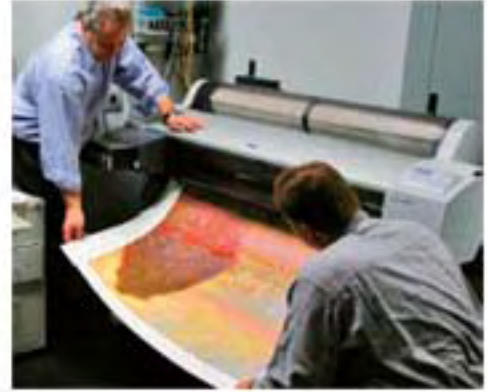


"Digitizing works in the collection and actually seeing the result from our in-house specialists is an exciting step forward for museums like the MFA," said Debra LaKind, MFA Head of Rights, Licensing and Visual Archives. "We're amazed at how easy it is to create digital fine art reproductions that meet our requirements of color accuracy and longevity. The additional revenue stream generated by the sale of fine art prints allows us an opportunity to provide increased digital access to the collection."

"Art enthusiasts are thrilled to stand in front of these masterpiece paintings and then take home a reproduction."

The MFA's Epson prints are also delighting visitors to the Bellagio Gallery of Fine Art in Las Vegas, where many have purchased fine art prints of French Impressionist Claude Monet's masterpieces at the Gallery Store. The Bellagio Gallery is offering the prints to complement its exhibition, Claude Monet: Masterworks from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. The MFA agreed to loan 21 paintings from its world-famous Monet collection.

"The Bellagio venture has been another vehicle for the MFA to reach diverse art enthusiasts, those who are thrilled to stand in front of these masterpiece paintings and then take home reproductions of the original art they've just seen," said LaKind. The MFA is recognized for the quality and scope of its encyclopedic collections, which include an estimated 400,000 objects. As one of the country's finest art museums, the MFA is famed for its Impressionist paintings, Asian and Egyptian collections, and early American art. One of the museum's educational missions is to share its collections with as many individuals as possible. The Epson fine art prints have provided another means towards fulfilling that goal.



Will the Original Please Stand Up?

The amazing likeness starts with a high-resolution digital photograph of the museum's original work of art, from which the fine art print is made. Rather than assigning the task to an outside vendor, digital imaging specialists within the museum then work on the digital image and painstakingly color match the printed reproduction to the original. "Who better to create the print than the museum staff itself?" said LaKind. "We have direct access to the work of art, so we can color correct against the original, not just the transparency or digital file. Furthermore, we can draw from our vast archive of images and offer thousands of reproduction possibilities."

The museum then produces the final print with the Epson Stylus Pro 9600 printer at true 1440x720 dpi (dots per inch) resolution. To meet the criteria of the MFA and its devotees, the printer, ink and paper must work as one to recreate the work of art down to the finest detail. Before the print passes the museum's quality control, the demure young woman's fair skin tone in a reproduction of Pierre-Auguste Renoir's Dance at Bougival must flawlessly mimic the original masterpiece.

"One reason the prints look so real is our proven photo lighting technique, which treats the painting as a 3-D object with surface dimension," said John Woolf, MFA senior digital imaging and photography specialist, "but the final key piece of the puzzle is the combination of Epson printer, inks and paper."

The Epson printer upholds such high standards of authenticity and longevity through the system, the collaboration of its advanced Micro Piezo® ink jet technology, Epson UltraChrome™ pigment inks and UltraSmooth Fine Art Paper. The MFA reproduces original works of art with exceptional accuracy due to Epson pigment ink and archival paper technology, which brings a wider color gamut than traditional pigment inks.

An MFA treasure like Winslow Homer's The Blue Boat doesn't simply depict a blue boat; it creates a precise shade of blue as counterpoint to the color of the surrounding water and sky. The MFA has learned to pinpoint the slightest minutiae of a piece, or it couldn't sell the fine art print to the discerning buyer.

Brilliance That Last

Unlike dye-based inks and the inks used for printing posters, the Epson UltraChrome pigment ink system is also one of the most archival ink sets currently available. Wilhelm Imaging Research, the leading independent testing lab for the longevity of color printing materials, predicts that prints made with the Epson Stylus Pro 9600 and Epson UltraChrome pigment inks, framed under glass under normal indoor lighting conditions, will last over 100 years on Epson's UltraSmooth Fine Art Paper.

The MFA's fine art prints are reproduced on Epson UltraSmooth Fine Art paper, a 100 percent cotton, acid-free, optical brightener-free, buffered archival ink jet paper. The paper has an ink jet coating engineered for the highest resolution and color saturation possible with current digital printing technology.

"This could never have happened without UltraSmooth Fine Art Paper," said Woolf. "Its archival qualities are a prerequisite for us to sell to the public, while the lack of optical brighteners, natural white base and smooth surface are essential for fine art reproduction."

With exchangeable black ink modes, plus a new Light Black ink, the Epson Stylus Pro 9600 also turns out breathtaking black and white prints from the museum's photo display, Pyramids and Temples of the Nile, originally recorded on 11x14 inch glass plate negatives.

Taking Home A Piece of History

Art enthusiasts can browse through a selection of the MFA fine art prints at www.mfa-publications.org. The museum sells fine art prints either unframed or framed in its Museum Bookstore & Shop. While the Epson Stylus Pro 9600 can handle virtually any media type up to 44 inches wide, the MFA currently offers three sizes from 16x20 inches to 24x30 inches. The museum can also process custom orders and has plans to offer even larger sizes in the near future.

The Epson printer has completely transformed the museum's perception of what it can achieve through digital printing. "Only two years ago, we were relying on an outside vendor to produce our fine art prints," said LaKind. "Now that we have complete control over the whole process, we find that we're doing a much better job overall."

"Epson has given us the tools to create outstanding, faithful reproductions of original works in our collections, and that kind of quality and consistency reflects well on the museum. I'm looking forward to where our in-house fine art digital printmaking will take us in the years to come."