



MUSEUM
TRAVEL
ALLIANCE

The Arts in America's Heartland Kansas City & Crystal Bridges

with Jennifer Dasal, Lecturer

May 14 – 19, 2024



Dear Travelers and Friends,

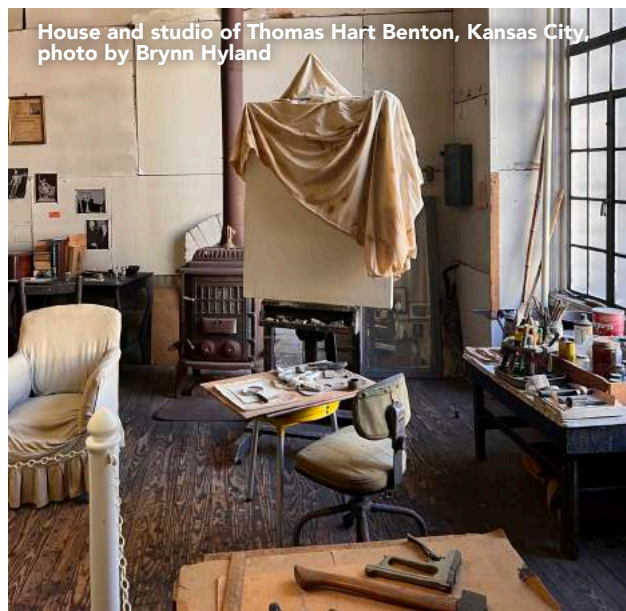
This May, please join me for an inspiring inside look at art in America's heartland, where two ambitious cities have emerged as global art destinations. In Kansas City, Missouri, curators will guide us through museum collections that have earned the city global acclaim. Then we will travel to Bentonville, Arkansas, to share a full-day, curator-led private experience at Alice Walton's breathtaking Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, beautifully set amid 120 acres of native Ozark forest.

As an art historian, author, museum curator, and creator/host of the *ArtCurious* podcast, I've devoted my life's work to helping people connect with art more deeply. On this journey carefully curated by the Museum Travel Alliance, I am excited for us to savor and explore masterpieces by artists I've admired, many of whom I've covered in detail on my podcast, including [Caravaggio](#), [Georgia O'Keeffe](#), [Thomas Eakins](#), [Henry Ossawa Tanner](#), [Andy Warhol](#), and those rowdy Abstract Expressionist rivals, [Jackson Pollock](#) and [Willem de Kooning](#).

During our three-day stay in Kansas City, highlights include a private look at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art's wealth of European paintings, featuring a rare Caravaggio work in the U.S. Our private tour of the striking Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art will excite us with works by giants like Pollock, Rauschenberg, and Johns. On a special trip to Harry S. Truman's hometown of Independence, Missouri, we'll take an inside look at his Presidential Library, which reopened after a \$29 million renovation.

Our extended private look at Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art will leave us in awe. The museum itself, composed of glass pavilions surrounded by serene ponds, is a masterpiece designed by architect Moshe Safdie. Inside, you'll have up-close viewings of American artworks by a range of famous masters, including Georgia O'Keeffe's *Jimson Weed/White Flower No. 1*, which I discussed in detail on [my podcast](#). Our guided walk through the museum's grounds will be just as alluring. We'll stroll along art trails unveiling outdoor sculptures, a site-specific installation by James Turrell, and Frank Lloyd Wright's Usonian-style, Bachman-Wilson House, relocated here from New Jersey.

Springtime in Missouri and Arkansas is ideal for basking in the glory of American art, set against the enchanting backdrop of pine forests and natural springs. I sincerely hope you'll accompany me on this culturally rich and visually stimulating journey through America's heartland.



House and studio of Thomas Hart Benton, Kansas City, photo by Brynn Hyland

Sincerely,

Jennifer Dasal
Lecturer
Museum Travel Alliance

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

DISCOVER why the art world is talking about Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, co-founded by Alice Walton in Bentonville, Arkansas, and gorgeously designed as a series of glass pavilions surrounded by serene ponds

REVEL in a special day-long inside look at Crystal Bridges's extraordinary American art collection, including masterworks by Mark Rothko, Andy Warhol, Georgia O'Keeffe, Asher B. Durand, and Norman Rockwell

EXPERIENCE an expert-guided tour of Crystal Bridges's 120-acre Ozark campus, admiring its outdoor sculptures, a site-specific installation by James Turrell, and Frank Lloyd Wright's Bachman-Wilson House

ENJOY curatorial tours in Kansas City of the encyclopedic collections of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, where you will have a close look at its European masterpieces, including a rare Caravaggio work in the U.S.

GO behind the scenes with a curator at the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, discovering art by Georgia O'Keeffe, Hans Hofmann, Rashid Johnson, and others

TAKE a private tour of the Moshe Safdie-designed Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, which boasts arches inspired by the rolling plains of Kansas and Missouri (*pending confirmation*)

VENTURE to Harry S. Truman's hometown of Independence, Missouri, for a special inside look at his technologically advanced presidential library, which underwent a recent \$29 million renovation

STEP back in time on a guided visit to the home of Thomas Hart Benton, noted painter and Missouri native, whose on-site studio has been virtually untouched since his death

Note: Please be aware that the presence of specific artists' works in museum collections is subject to change due to loans for exhibitions, restoration processes, and regular collection rotation.

TRAVELING WITH YOU



Jennifer Dasal

Jennifer Dasal is an art historian and the creator and host of the acclaimed [ArtCurious podcast](#) (2016–23), which introduced listeners worldwide to “the unexpected, the slightly odd, and the strangely wonderful in art history.” In September 2020, Dasal's first book, *ArtCurious: Stories of the Unexpected, Slightly Odd, and Strangely Wonderful in Art History*, was released by Penguin Books.

Dasal is the former curator of modern and contemporary art at the North Carolina Museum of Art (NCMA), where she worked for 13 years. She earned a B.A. from the University of California, Davis, and an M.A. from the University of Notre Dame, both in art history. She also completed Ph.D. coursework in art history at the Pennsylvania State University.

The Arts in America's Heartland Kansas City & Crystal Bridges

May 14 – 19, 2024



Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, Kansas City

TUESDAY, MAY 14: ARRIVAL IN KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

Arrive in Kansas City and transfer to the Hotel Kansas City. This evening, gather for a welcome reception and dinner.

R,D

WEDNESDAY, MAY 15: KANSAS CITY

Delight in a private morning visit to the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Missouri's largest contemporary art museum. Discover its vast holdings bridging the gap between modern and contemporary art, the core of which is more than 100 paintings collectively known as *The History of Art*. Delight in up-close viewings of artworks by the likes of Louise Bourgeois, Helen Frankenthaler, Hans Hofmann, Rashid Johnson, Joan Mitchell, Richard Mosse, Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning, and Georgia O'Keeffe.

After lunch at leisure this afternoon, take a behind-the-scenes excursion to the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts (*pending confirmation*). Featuring a proscenium theater and concert hall, this splendid building was designed by Crystal Bridges architect Moshe Safdie and master acoustician Yasuhisa Toyota. The center's distinct geometric shapes cleverly mirror the shifting Missouri skies. This evening, you may explore Kansas City's acclaimed culinary offerings on your own.

B

THURSDAY, MAY 16: KANSAS CITY

Begin the day with a curatorial visit to the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. Upon arrival, you'll encounter a whimsical artwork of immense scale outside the museum: two 5,500-pound badminton shuttlecocks, created by the artists Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen. The duo reimagined the museum's building as a badminton net and its lawn as a playing field, placing the massive shuttlecocks as if they'd just landed on opposite sides of the net.

Inside, your curator will introduce you to a selection of the museum's more than 35,000 works of art ranging from ancient Greek sculptures to outstanding modern and contemporary pieces by Paul Klee, Pablo Picasso, Andy Warhol, Donald Judd, and other artists.

One of the museum's most cherished treasures is Caravaggio's *Saint John the Baptist in the Wilderness*, a rare work by the Italian Baroque master in a U.S. museum. Commissioned in 1604 by papal banker Ottavio Costa, the oil painting depicts John's spiritual growth through Caravaggio's characteristic use of light and shadow.

After lunch at leisure this afternoon, you may opt to spend some additional time at the marvelous Nelson-Atkins to peruse the galleries on your own. Alternatively, visit the beautifully preserved house and studio of Thomas Hart Benton (1889–1975), the Missouri-born muralist and painter known as one of the founders of the American Regionalism art movement. Benton vividly captured scenes of rural U.S. life, family, and history in his paintings, and you will have an exclusive look at his creative process. Enjoy dinner at a local favorite this evening.

B,D

FRIDAY, MAY 17: KANSAS CITY / INDEPENDENCE / BENTONVILLE, ARKANSAS

After checking out of the hotel in Kansas City, embark on a short excursion to Independence, Missouri, the hometown of President Harry S. Truman. Delight in a special inside look at the impressive, technologically advanced Harry S. Truman Presidential Library & Museum, established in 1957 and reopened in 2021 after a \$29 million renovation, the largest in its history. Discover its complete reimagination of Truman's vast legacy, featuring interactive exhibits like *Loyalty Oath*, which puts you in the place of the 33rd President during some of his most consequential decisions. Stop to see a colorful mural from Thomas Hart Benton, 1961's *Independence and the Opening of the West*, specially commissioned for the library.



Independence and the Opening of the West mural by
Thomas Hart Benton, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library & Museum,
Independence, photo by Brynn Hyland



Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, Arkansas

The group will have lunch in Independence before transferring by motor coach to Bentonville, Arkansas, where you'll enjoy a two-night stay. You may opt to visit the sprawling Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art early at your own pace, taking advantage of the museum's late hours on Friday and exploring the pavillions at dusk. You may also enjoy the evening at leisure to admire the charming, rapidly growing Ozark town of Bentonville. B,L

SATURDAY, MAY 18: BENTONVILLE

Spend today exploring the sublimely beautiful Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art. Designed by architect Moshe Safdie and set in a natural ravine, the museum's linked pavillions are surrounded by two sparkling ponds fed by natural springs. Immerse yourself in Crystal Bridges's expansive collection of American artworks by artists such as Norman Rockwell, Andy Warhol, Georgia O'Keeffe, John Singer Sargent, Edward Hopper, Henry Ossawa Tanner, Thomas Eakins, Kehinde Wiley, and Jordan Casteel. You may also see its newly opened 2024 exhibitions, including *Exquisite Creatures*, a gathering of three-dimensional compositions by artist and naturalist Christopher Marley exploring the relationship between art, nature, and science.

Outside, wander through the lovely Crystal Bridges campus, strolling along wonderful nature walks through its 120 acres of Ozark forest. Discover outdoor artworks such as James Turrell's *The Way of Color* installation, part of the artist's *Skyspace* series, and Celeste Roberge's *Chaise Gabion*, a stone-and-stainless-steel piece that blends sculpture and furniture, set on the East Terrace.

You may also stop for a look at Frank Lloyd Wright's Bachman-Wilson House, which was relocated here in 2013 to save it from floods at its original location along New Jersey's Millstone River. The entire 1956 house was disassembled and shipped to Bentonville, where it was meticulously reconstructed on the Crystal Bridges grounds. Its floor-to-ceiling glass walls open onto the natural landscape, and flowing mahogany woodwork epitomizes Wright's signature elongated style. After today's expansive tour of Crystal Bridges, gather for a festive farewell reception and dinner this evening. B,R,D

SUNDAY, MAY 19: BENTONVILLE / RETURN

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for flights home. Alternatively, time permitting, you may enjoy more of Bentonville's sites on your own. B

DISCLAIMER: The itinerary is subject to change at the discretion of the Museum Travel Alliance and Arrangements Abroad. For complete details, please carefully read the terms and conditions at <https://museumtravelalliance.com/faq.php>.

ACCOMMODATIONS

HOTEL KANSAS CITY

Step back in time at this historic boutique hotel, a Gothic Revival gem that first opened its grand doors in 1922 as a bustling social club. Now fully restored, the hotel's ornate architectural details transport you to the Roaring Twenties, while modern amenities keep you grounded in the present. Stroll under towering stained glass, cozy up in hand-hewn walnut booths, and experience the glamor of a bygone era. Here, the spirited Jazz Age lives on.

21C MUSEUM HOTEL BENTONVILLE

At this unique hotel, contemporary art meets elegant hospitality, sweeping you away to an avant-garde world of boundary-pushing exhibitions and installations. Upstairs, chic rooms outfitted with luxe beds and amenities provide a modern oasis. Downstairs, 12,000 square feet of galleries offer an evolving showcase of today's most cutting-edge creations. Have breakfast next to a buzzing neon sculpture, then stroll through surreal landscapes and multimedia wonders.



Hotel Kansas City



21C Museum Hotel Bentonville

PROGRAM RATE

\$5,999 per person, double rate

\$7,999 single rate

RATE INCLUDES

- Five nights hotel accommodations as per itinerary
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, R=Reception, D=Dinner). Bottled water, soft drinks, juices, and coffee/tea with all meals; house wine and beer at all included meals
- Airport/hotel/airport transfers for all participants
- Group transfer by motor coach from Kansas City to Bentonville
- Escorted sightseeing, transportation, and entrance fees for all included visits
- Taxes, service, and portage charges; gratuities to local guides, drivers, restaurants for included meals, hotel breakfast staff, and hotel housekeeping staff

NOT INCLUDED IN RATE Airfare; meals not specified; alcoholic beverages other than what is noted in inclusions; personal items and expenses; excess baggage; trip insurance; any other items not specifically mentioned as included.



Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, photo by jpellgen

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THE ARTS IN AMERICA'S HEARTLAND: KANSAS CITY & CRYSTAL BRIDGES • MAY 14 – 19, 2024
RESERVATION FORM

Full payment is due at the time of reservation. To reserve a place, please call the Museum Travel Alliance at 212-324-1893 or 855-533-0033; fax: 212-344-7493; email: trips@museumtravelalliance.com; or complete and return this form with full payment, which is payable to *Museum Travel Alliance*. Mail to: Museum Travel Alliance, 260 West 39th Street, 17th Floor, New York, NY 10018-4424.

Name(s) in full as on passport(s). Please print.

Address

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone (home) _____ (business) _____

Fax _____ E-mail _____

ACCOMMODATIONS

Hotel room preference One bed Two beds Single
I wish to share a room with _____

MTA MUSEUM AFFILIATION _____

FORM OF PAYMENT

Enclosed is my check (payable to *Museum Travel Alliance*) Debit card Credit card

Name on debit/credit card

Debit/credit card number

3- or 4-digit security code _____ Expiration date _____

I/We confirm that I/we have carefully read and agree to the *Terms & Conditions* of this Program (see <https://museumtravelalliance.com/faq.php> to review or call for a copy). I/We agree to full payment at the time of reservation..

Signature (required) _____ Date _____

Signature (required) _____ Date _____