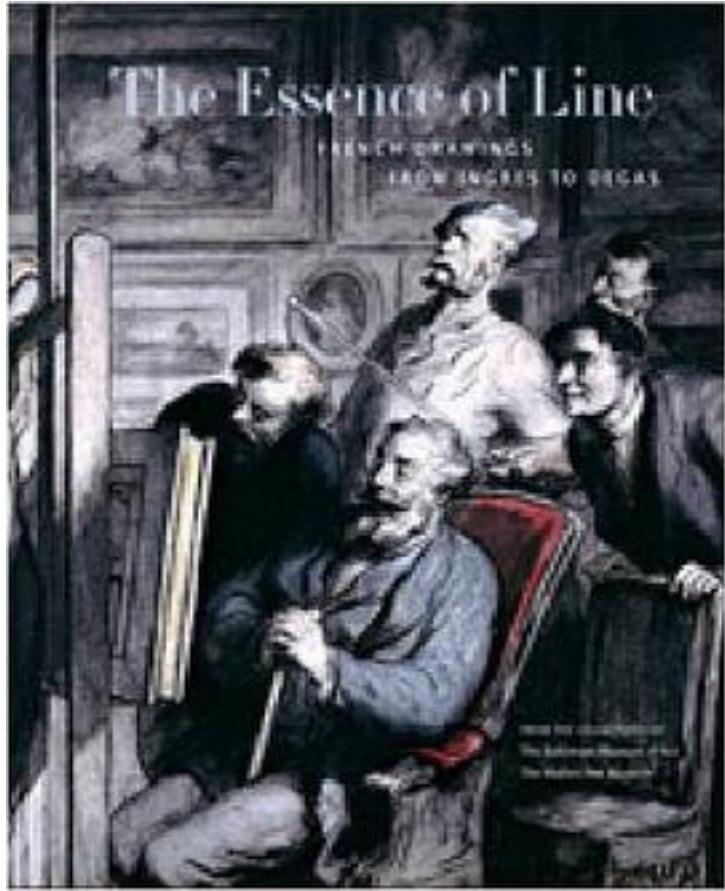


The Essence of Line



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Many patrons of the arts in nineteenth-century America built collections of paintings and sculpture imported primarily from England or Italy. Collectors in Baltimore - William Walters, George Lucas, the famous Cone sisters, among others - stand out in

this milieu for having developed a strikingly different aesthetic for their homes and newly founded public institutions. These collectors looked to France for models of culture and, acting upon a remarkable understanding of the educational needs and working methods of artists, assembled extensive collections of drawings by French masters, from David to Daumier, Degas, and Cezanne. The Essence of Line offers the first comprehensive discussion of the formation of these collections and their significance for the history of French art. The book leads off with essays by Jay M. Fisher, William R. Johnston, and Cheryl K. Snay that trace the history of collecting in Baltimore and afford new insights into the acquisition, display, and interpretation of drawings. In her essay, conservator Kimberly Schenck bridges the worlds of the collector and of the artist by examining the production and the use of drawing materials in an epoch of radical changes as much in technique as style. This book also provides a fully illustrated, scholarly catalogue for 100 of the most important of the nineteenth-century French drawings now held by the Baltimore Museum of Art, the Walters Art Museum, and the Peabody Art Collection. Published on the occasion of an exhibition jointly organized by the Baltimore Museum of Art and The Walters Art Museum, this book presents a brilliant panorama of sketches, watercolors, and presentation drawings, many of them little known outside a small circle of experts. It is correlated with an on-line archive of the entire corpus of nineteenth-century French drawings in the holdings of these Baltimore museums.

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目录:

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