

BLANTON MUSEUM OF ART

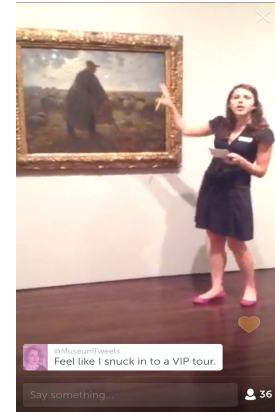
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Blanton Museum First to Use Live-streaming Platform, Periscope; Announces Periscope Tour Series

AUSTIN, Texas—July 1, 2015— On March 26, a few short hours after the launch of Periscope, a live-streaming app developed by Twitter, the Blanton Museum of Art in Austin became the **first museum** to use the platform in a formal program. Today, the Blanton announced the launch of *Color Bars*, a new monthly series of interactive Periscope tours. Named for both the test patterns used to calibrate analog television equipment as well as the reference patterns used to render the color of artworks in reproductions, *Color Bars* will give viewers the ability to interact directly with both artists and curators in an intimate setting. The next *Color Bars* tour, scheduled for July 10 at 11:30 CST, will feature artist Natalie Frank giving a tour of her exhibition *Natalie Frank: The Brothers Grimm*, which opens at the Blanton on July 11, 2015.



While live-streaming itself is not new, Periscope increases both its ubiquity and ease of use. More importantly, it leverages the power of Twitter's social graph to give users the opportunity to comment on or ask questions of the host in real time. For museums, the app can be used to live-stream tours or other programs to viewers around the world, enabling them to virtually “visit” an institution and actively participate, regardless of where they may live. Subsequent to the Blanton’s initial Periscope tour on March 26, other museums, most notably the British Museum, have also explored the possibilities of this platform.

“The Blanton is a pioneer in using digital and social media to reach new audiences,” remarks Koven Smith, Blanton Director of Digital Adaptation. “*Color Bars* will give visitors far and wide ready access to our celebrated collection and interpretive team. We are excited to augment our current efforts with this remarkable new platform.”

The Blanton’s inaugural Periscope event on March 26 (a curator-led exhibition tour) had nine live viewers, a number that surpassed the museum’s expectations given that the platform had launched only a few hours prior. The decision to initiate the *Color Bars* program was made after the Blanton’s second Periscope tour. Hosted on June 15, it attracted 153 participants, including users from as far away as the United Kingdom and Russia.

Averaging approximately twenty minutes in length, the Blanton’s *Color Bars* tours will highlight the museum’s exhibitions, collection, and other programming. To provide participants with rare and special access to experts in the field, the tours will be led by Blanton curators, educators and professional staff, with periodic guest tours by visiting artists and other museum professionals.

The next tour will take place **July 10 at 11:30 CST**, and will feature artist **Natalie Frank** discussing her

work in the Blanton's presentation of [Natalie Frank: The Brothers Grimm](#).

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About the Blanton Museum of Art

Founded in 1963, the Blanton Museum of Art is one of the foremost university art museums in the country and holds the largest public collection in Central Texas. Recognized for its modern and contemporary American and Latin American art, Italian Renaissance and Baroque paintings, and encyclopedic collection of prints and drawings, the Blanton offers thought-provoking, visually arresting, and personally moving encounters with art. The museum is located at the intersection of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Congress Avenue and is open Tuesday through Friday from 10–5, Saturday from 11–5, and Sunday from 1–5. Thursdays are free admission days and every third Thursday the museum is open until 9. Admission Prices: Adults \$9, Kids 12 and under FREE, Seniors (65+) \$7, Youth/College Students (13–21) \$5. Admission is free to members, all current UT ID-holders. For additional information call (512) 471-7324 or visit www.blantonmuseum.org.

Image Caption: Blanton curator Beth Shook leads a Periscope tour of the museum's current exhibition, *Impressionism and the Caribbean*