



Working collaboratively with your fine art logistics partners, an agent's perspective on working through a complicated project and assessing options.



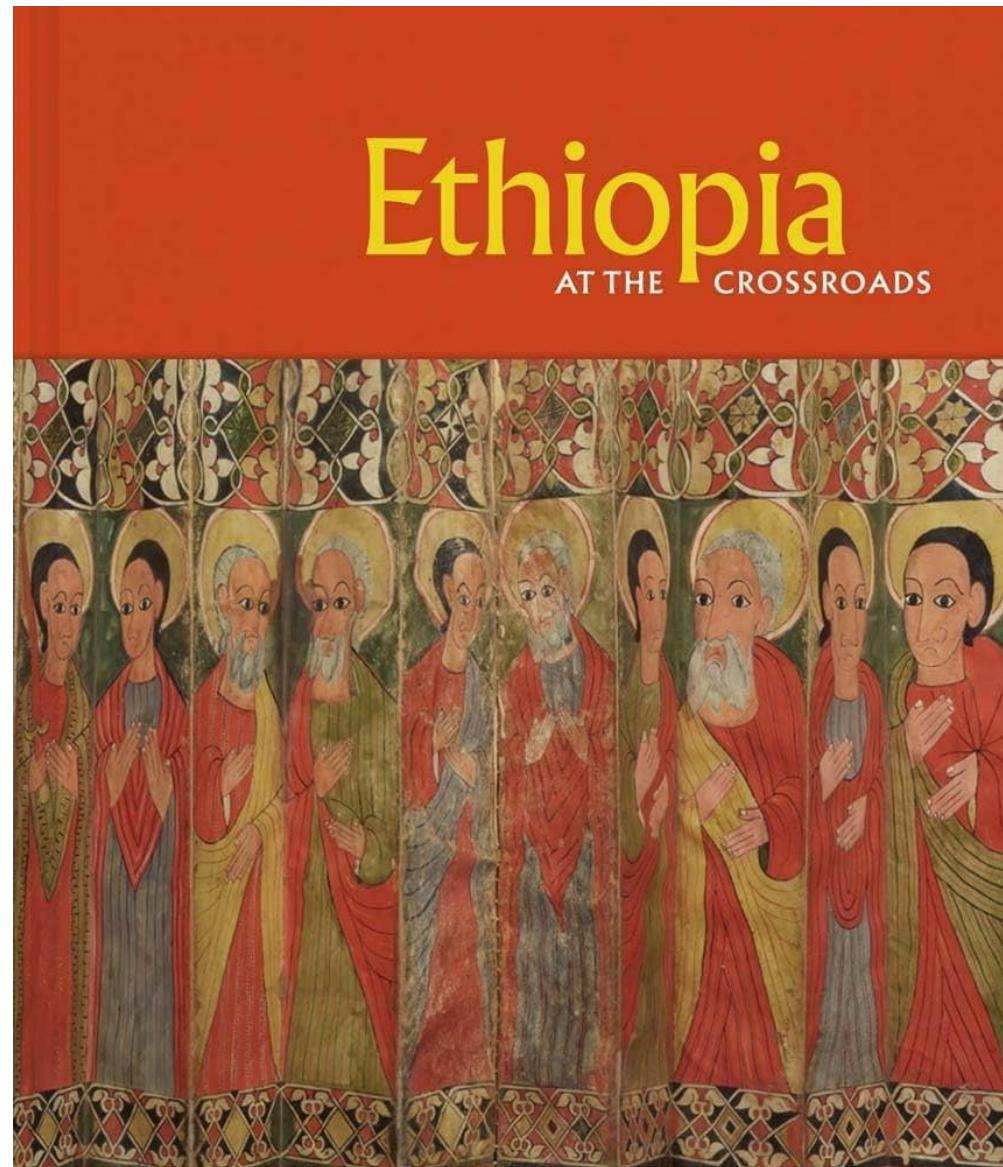
KC Serota
Special Projects Manager

When the project came to Masterpiece for planning and estimating, I jumped at the opportunity.

One previous version of the project had built a preliminary budget, but working with Mary Cochran and the Walters team, we thought it best to work through a number of options to find the best possible scenario for handling a complicated set of loans from Ethiopia.

Originally, there were more loans from other lenders in Addis Ababa and perhaps on a wish list from other cities as well, but due to a number of factors including budget and security concerns the loans were limited to those from one institution in Addis.

Additional contemporary loans came from an Ethiopian owned gallery in London. While the majority of the exhibition was handled directly by the Walters and consisting of many loans from domestic institutions.

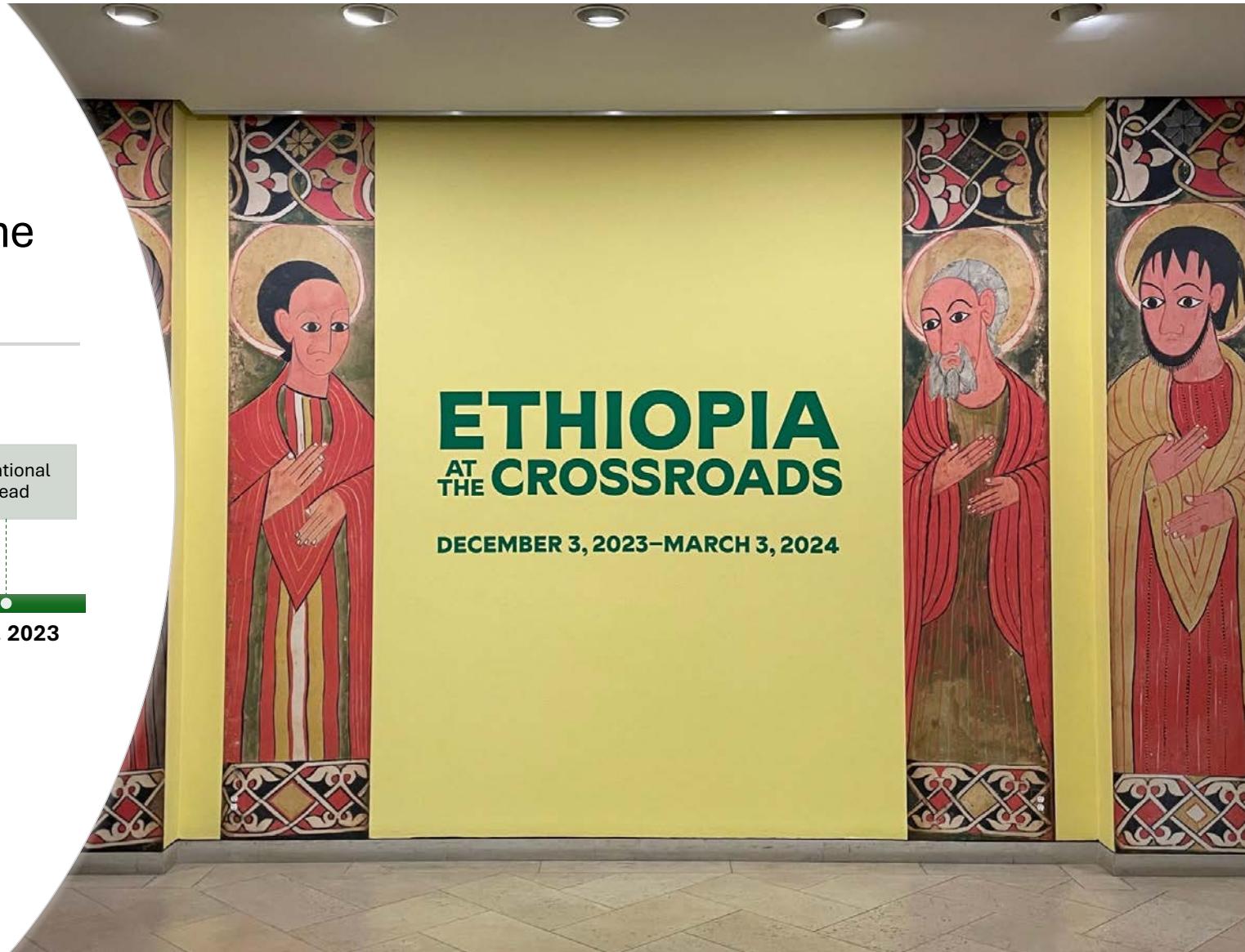


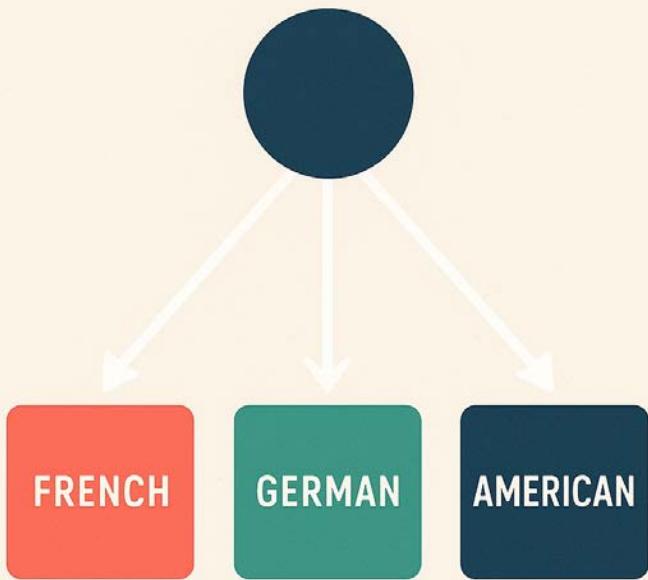
Operational Timeline for Project



ETHIOPIA AT THE CROSSROADS

DECEMBER 3, 2023–MARCH 3, 2024





We started the process by mapping the necessary resources to maintain high-quality museum services that would be well-received by both the lending and borrowing institutions.

It was decided that due to lack of materials the crates would need to be built outside of Ethiopia and we identified three options for the crates and handling with a French company, a German company and working with our own vendors in the US.

French: Long-history of working with African projects, highest price.

German: Great expertise in working with African countries, most in-depth planning and routing information and trusted partners on the ground in Addis.

American: Best price, most distance from the local agents and concerns about working with local partners in Addis effectively.

After reviewing the options, the best combination of pricing and experience was chosen.

hasenkamp

 **Panafric**
Global Logistics





Working through the logistics process:

SITE VISIT

After choosing our partners for the exhibitions, Hasenkamp sent Stefan Behnke to Addis Ababa for a site visit to measure all objects for crating.



CRATE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

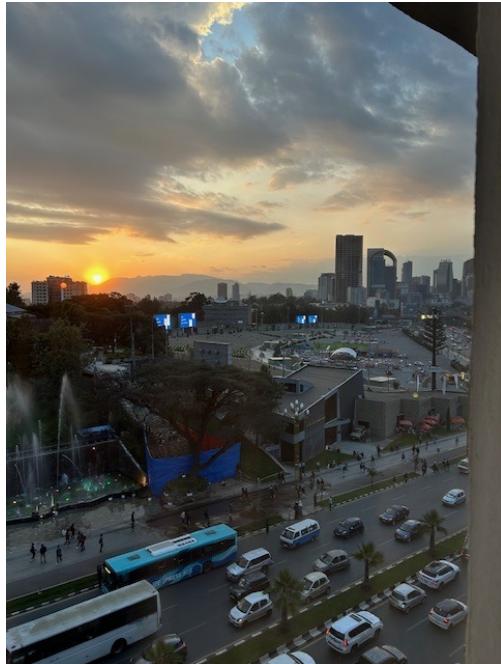
On return to Germany Stefan worked with Hasenkamp's crate shop to design crates. In collaboration with the Walters it was decided that two tray-pack crates would work best for these objects and spread the weight between more than one crate.



DELIVERY OF CRATES

One month prior to the packing and loans shipment we worked with Hasenkamp on planning for shipment and delivery of the empty crates from Cologne to Addis Ababa.





Packing and shipping the loans to Baltimore:



PACKING IN ADDIS

Hasenkamp sent two staff to assist the local staff with packing of the crates for export to the US and to oversee the entire export process.



COURIER

Walters sent their own courier to oversee the process and to travel on board with the crates to the US.



FLIGHT

Shipment arrived on a direct flight from ADD to IAD – Washington Dulles.



ARRIVAL AND TOUR

Exhibition proceeded through three venues: Walters, Peabody Essex and the Toledo Museum of Art.



Exhibition runs for three venues in the US

Walters Art Museum

December 2023 – March 2025

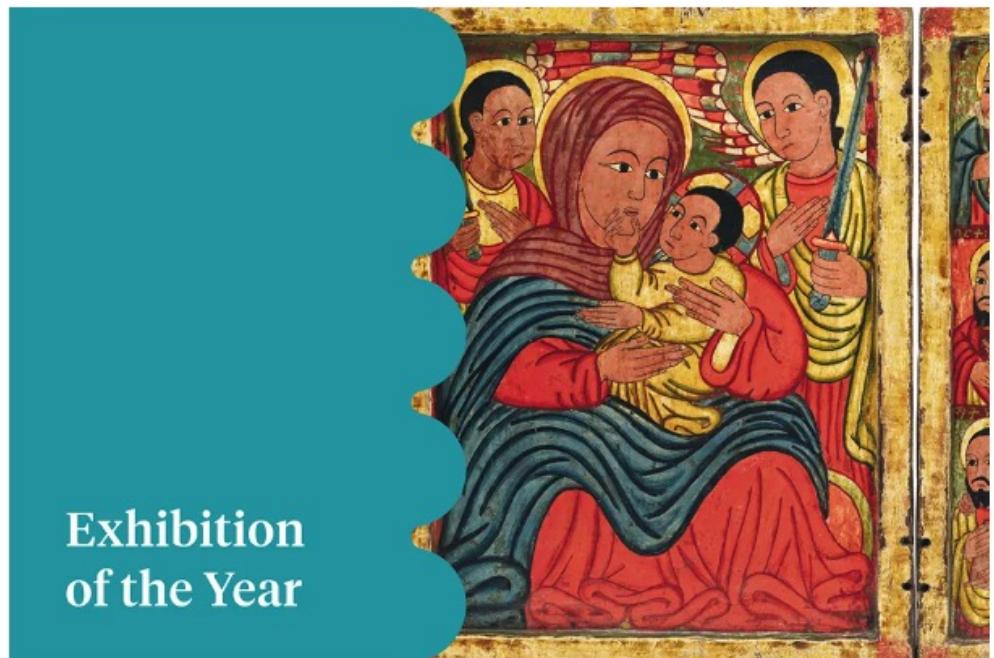
Peabody Essex Museum

April 2024 – July 2024

Toledo Museum of Art

August 2024 – November 2024

APOLLO AWARDS
2024



'Ethiopia at the Crossroads'

[Walters Art Museum, Baltimore](#)

3 December 2023–3 March

Fall 2024 - Planning for the return trip to Ethiopia



WALTERS AND TOLEDO WORKED
TOGETHER TO ARRANGE THE RETURN
SHIPMENT

HASENKAMP AGAIN WORKED WITH
PANAFRIC TO MAKE THE CUSTOMS
ARRANGEMENTS FOR RETURN TO
ETHIOPIA

RETURN LOGISTICS WITH FINAL
DOCUMENTS WERE NEEDED VERY
EARLY IN THE PROCESS TO MAKE SURE
ALL NECESSARY FORMALITIES WOULD
ALLOW IMMEDIATE ENTRY IN ETHIOPIA

The Return Trip to Addis

- The exhibition closed at the Toledo Museum of Art in early November 2024, the Walters sent Mary Cochran as courier to return the Ethiopian loans back to the Institute for Ethiopian Studies in Addis.
- I traveled along to get a firsthand look at the handling process in Addis Ababa on the return.



Beyond fascination and interest in Ethiopia – why did I join this return trip?

As more exhibitions involve loans from Africa it is important that fine art agents get to know the resources and process of working in various countries where we may be less familiar.



Ethiopian Airlines Cargo is Africa's largest cargo operator serving 125 international destinations.

They are one of the few airlines allowing upper deck cargo to several destinations across Africa with links to Europe via Liege, Belgium and onwards to the US.

- On arrival in Addis Ababa, we were met by staff from Panafric who brought us to the cargo area where Stefan from Hasenkamp was already awaiting the cargo.

- Panafric worked with the Director of the Institute for Ethiopian Studies to gain access from Ethiopian Airlines to the cargo area and for us to oversee de-palletization and movement of the crates to the cargo building.



While the type of trucks available were limited this closed box truck was provided for a safe and quick journey from the airport to Addis Ababa University where the institute is located.





On arrival at the Institute the Ethiopian customs officials needed to see all of the loans to confirm that everything that was exported was being returned to the museum and receive official sign-off that everything was back. Here the individual trays that held the objects are seen with handles and straps for ease of handling.



Mary Cochran and Karen French, a conservator from the Walters did the condition reports alongside the staff from the IES and their director Dr. Takele Merid





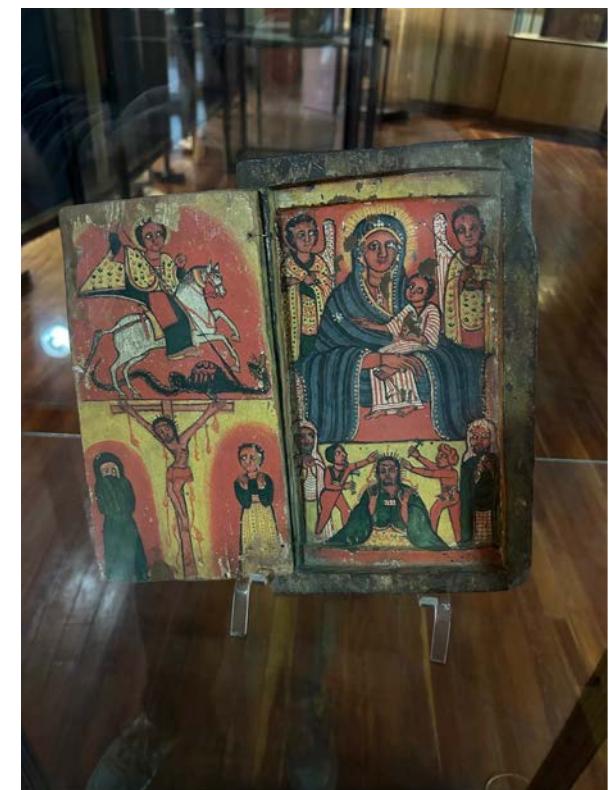
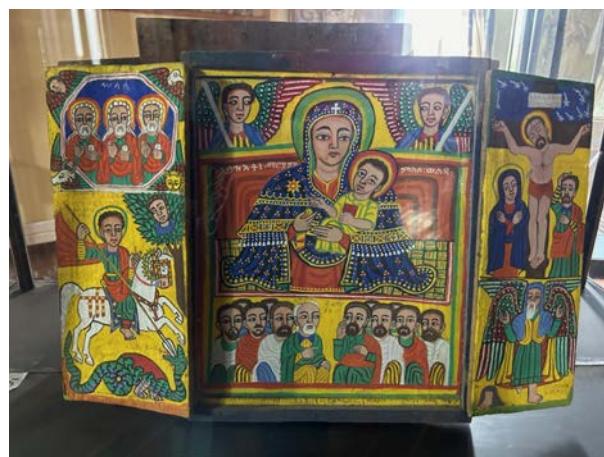
With the returns complete Mary and Karen worked with local museum professionals in Addis Ababa to discuss art handling materials and techniques employed in the transfer.



Permanent collection gallery on the third floor of the Institute for Ethiopian Studies, where many of the icons quickly went back on display following the return.



Institute for Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa University



Permanent Collection Gallery
Institute for Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa University

With the work complete, I went to explore a little further into Ethiopia to see some of the places where the icons had originally come from and see some that were still in use by their communities today.

Church of Saint George
(Bete Giyorgius), Lalibela,
Ethiopia



Sunday services in Lalibela at the rock-hewn churches



Priest and caretaker of the Medagie Abo Church holding icons and manuscripts outside of Lalibela.

While these particular objects did not travel to the US, most icons are kept within churches and monasteries in Ethiopia as living objects used and worshipped by the community.





Debre Berhan Selassie Church, Gondar

Simien Mountains National Park



We ended our journey in Northern Ethiopia with the gelada monkeys and an incredible Thanksgiving Day (2024) meal of Ethiopian vegetarian cuisine prepared by a chef in a tent with one battery operated light.

With great thanks to the Walters Art Museum and their tour partners for putting their trust in Masterpiece, and in me, for working through this fascinating project.



THE WALTERS
ART MUSEUM