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| Phillips, Duncan (1886–1966) |
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| Art collector Duncan Phillips founded one of the first museums in the United States devoted to modern European and American art. Incorporated in 1918 and opened to the public in 1921, the Phillips Collection predated the Museum of Modern Art (established 1929) and the Whitney Museum of American Art (established 1931). It was housed in Phillips’ childhood home, an 1897 Georgian Revival house in the Dupont Circle neighborhood of Washington D. C. After graduating from Yale University in 1907, Phillips pursued his passion for art, which he collected and wrote about for the rest of his life. The sudden deaths of his father in 1917 and older brother in 1918 prompted him to found a museum in their memory, originally called the Phillips Memorial Art Gallery. Phillips served as the museum’s director until his death in 1966, when his wife, the artist Marjorie Acker, took his place. When she died in 1972, their son, Laughlin Phillips, assumed directorship. Rather than pursuing comprehensiveness, Phillips collected in depth the works of his favorite artists, including Honoré Daumier, Pierre Bonnard, George Braque, Karl Knaths, Arthur Dove, John Marin, Oskar Kokoschka, and Paul Klee. |
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| Further reading:  (Phillips)  (Phillips, A Collection in the Making)  (Turner)  (Passantino and David) |