

Art at Vassar



A publication for the members of
The Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center
Fall/Winter 2015/16

Art Collecting and an Evolving Curriculum

It is axiomatic at art museums on college or university campuses where art is collected, that there is value added if the art can serve the curriculum directly. In fact, wherever possible it *should* serve in this way. We should see our role as laboratories for learning about the intellectual value of works of art in partnership with our teaching faculty. When our institutions were less complex this meant often that an acquisition might prove useful to the teaching of art history or studio practice. On occasion there might also be a department from another part of campus that found a work of art useful to its teaching. In earlier, Eurocentric times, the shared assumptions about what constituted great art were more basic. The Northern European Renaissance art survey was well served by the acquisition of an engraving by Albrecht Dürer. The Roman art survey and the Classics department might find the acquisition of a first-century inscribed Roman sarcophagus fragment of use.

No one should be surprised now that some of those old assumptions are no longer valid and that academic department structures and course offerings have evolved to be more pluralistic and reflective of personal interpretation and revision by current faculty of the earlier standard canons. The coming and going of faculty often signals change in the nature of what is taught since today relatively little of the curriculum is considered absolutely fundamental. Additionally, the retirement of a tenured faculty member with an established field of interest, let us say American art, does not insure that this part of the curriculum is sacrosanct and will continue with the hiring of the next professor. In the zero-sum growth mindset of many campuses, that now-open teaching post might be redistributed to another department altogether. Best case considered, the American courses might remain on the books, tended by a part-time adjunct appointment whose continued presence is tenuous enough to prevent the further cultivation of library or visual art resources in the particular field. It is no wonder that some retirement-age faculty are reluctant to leave and watch their intellectual legacy and academic garden plot turn into a rank, untidy vacant lot.



Such curricular evolution holds a potentially strong impact on museum collection development. To change collecting priorities and even curatorial expertise suddenly to adapt to curricular movement would create chaos. However, to react not to fashions but to seemingly long-term curricular trends, let's say the growth of Asian studies, by building collections makes perfect sense. But, today, even what might appear a solid trend can itself fade within a generation, the victim of the attraction of the next shiny academic object. At Vassar, some fifteen years ago, we started to channel more acquisition funds into Asian art, particularly Japanese works, at a time when we had a full-time tenured professor of Asian art who was especially keen on working with original objects. The results were dramatic over that time span and we invested funds in a still undervalued market. But now the landscape has altered and the teaching of Asian art is no longer full-time, nor focused on Japanese art. Do we continue to collect in this area or concentrate elsewhere? Should we not feel the same excitement and commitment to this field in spite of the shift of institutional priorities? Likewise, the teaching of traditional American art history at Vassar has been in caretaker mode for the past three years, seeing three different part-time adjunct instructors during that period. Considering the strength of our American collection, in development for 150 years, should we suspend collecting these works if we are not guaranteed that they will be immediately useful? This kind of dilemma is not just Vassar's going forward but that of many of our peer institutions. Fortunately, we and other college and university museums have on staff a person whose job it is to make our existing collections and our future acquisitions known to faculty and work with them to explore integration within their own pedagogical goals. While this is not complete insulation from the nature of curricular adjustment, it is a way that will allow us to be more nimble as we consider augmenting a venerable art collection with works both important and useful.

James Mundy
The Anne Hendricks Bass Director

Gordon Parks at Life

Gordon Parks: The Making of an Argument

September 25–December 13, 2015

ON VIEW

Gordon Parks (1912–2006), *Life* magazine's first black staff photographer, profoundly changed the way African Americans are represented in the mainstream media. Parks was born into poverty and segregation in Fort Scott, Kansas, in 1912. An itinerant laborer, he worked as a brothel pianist and railcar porter, among other jobs, before buying a camera at a pawnshop, training himself, and becoming a photographer. In addition to his tenures photographing for the Farm Security Administration (1941–1945) and *Life* magazine (1948–1972), Parks also found success as a film director, writer, and composer. Parks was an artist first, embracing photography as a creative endeavor, interested in perfecting his craft and developing his own style. Yet many of his *Life* photo essays conveyed a moral, political, and social agenda of addressing decades of oppression that he and others had experienced. Parks was familiar with *Life*'s primary interest in the power of pictures and he used his time at the magazine to disrupt stereotypes about race in America. He simultaneously forged an independent artistic approach to photography and struck a balance between creative autonomy and his own commitment to social causes. Maintaining this balance was a personal struggle for Parks, as he recalled in the late 1970s: "The problem was clearly defined from the beginning. It would be hard not to betray myself, to remain faithful to my emotions when facing the controversial issues of Black and White. I was a journalist first, but I would have to remain aware that being true to my own beliefs counted even more."¹



Gordon Parks (American, 1912-2006)
Self-Portrait, ca. 1948
Gelatin silver print
Courtesy The Gordon Parks Foundation

Early in his career as a photojournalist, Parks published "Harlem Gang Leader" in the November 1948 issue of *Life*. The resulting story led to a twenty-four-year career at the magazine and helped to establish Parks as one of America's most significant social photographers of the twentieth century. His main focus for the story was Leonard "Red" Jackson, a seventeen-year-old leader of a New York gang called the Midtowners. Parks spent a month with Jackson, accompanying him to fights, diplomatic sessions with other gangs, quiet moments at home, neighborhood children's street games, and even the wake of another fallen gang member. Russell Lord, the Freeman Family Curator of Photographs at the New Orleans Museum of Art, notes that in the case of the "Harlem Gang Leader" pictures, "Parks' presence became so familiar that at times he seems almost invisible, the lives (and deaths) of his protagonists unfolding before his camera as if it, and he, were not even there."² The photos prove it: Parks became a welcome companion at Jackson's activities at home and in the streets. "One of Parks' greatest strengths was his unwavering trust in people," says Peter Kunhardt, executive director of the Gordon Parks Foundation, which is in Pleasantville, New York. "This trust opened up doors for him to create intimate and profound portraits of his subjects, sometimes despite harsh conditions."³

During his time with these young gang members, Parks produced hundreds of images that are by turns artful, emotive, poignant, and sometimes shocking. From this body of work, the editors at *Life* selected twenty-one visually commanding photographs to reproduce in a graphic, adventurous layout in the magazine, often cropping or enhancing details in the pictures. The ten-page spread was the first of its kind to feature up-close images of inner city violence and the private and public lives of black youth. Many of the images showed Parks' emerging style for which he later became known, including acute angles, closely framed faces, and dramatic lighting. However, the intentions of the magazine and those of the artist did not always align. Parks hoped that his photographs would bring attention to



Gordon Parks (American, 1912-2006)
Untitled, Harlem, New York, 1948
Gelatin silver print
Courtesy The Gordon Parks Foundation

the plight of inner-city black families, while the *Life* editors were primarily striving for a compelling story. In each step of the process of creating this groundbreaking photo essay—from Parks choosing the shots, to the editors choosing which images to reproduce from his selection—any intended narrative by artist or editor was complicated by the other’s voice. Parks was troubled by the photo essay. He felt that Red Jackson, who was forced to live in a world marked by fear and violence, was not at fault for his situation and that the emphasis the magazine’s editors placed on the violent aspects of life in Harlem created a one-dimensional story.

Gordon Parks: The Making of an Argument offers visitors to the Art Center a behind-the-scenes look at the editorial decisions leading up to the publication of “Harlem Gang Leader.” Comprised of vintage photographs, original issues of *Life* magazine, contact sheets, and proof prints, *The Making of an Argument* traces the editorial process and parses the various voices and motives behind the production of the picture essay, raising important questions about photography as a documentary tool and a narrative device, its role in addressing social concerns, and its function in the world of publishing. The photographs in the exhibition are presented both as stand-alone prints and in their photo essay form, amid the text and advertisements of the magazine. This allows visitors to engage with the photographs on a purely visual level and to consider the tone and narrative suggested by the *Life* magazine editors’ selection.

Gordon Parks (American, 1912-2006)
Gang Member with Brick,
 Harlem, New York, 1948
 Gelatin silver print
 Courtesy The Gordon Parks Foundation



Gordon Parks (American, 1912-2006)
Untitled, Harlem, New York, 1948
 Gelatin silver print
 Courtesy The Gordon Parks Foundation



The topic of this exhibition, and Parks' personal resolve to make a difference, can be seen in the context of events that have dominated the news in the last couple of years, such as the recent uprisings for social justice in Ferguson and Baltimore and the shooting of unarmed black youth Trayvon Martin in Florida in 2012, among other numerous incidents. We hope that this exhibition, which reveals the importance of powerful black voices in the struggle to eradicate racism in America, will resonate with a twenty-first-century audience and encourage a deeper consideration of issues of race, representation, and the power of photography as an effective tool for communication.

Gordon Parks: The Making of an Argument was organized by the New Orleans Museum of Art, in collaboration with the Gordon Parks Foundation. Funding for the presentation at Vassar is provided by the Horace Goldsmith Exhibition Fund and the Friends of the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center Exhibition Fund.

Mary-Kay Lombino

*The Emily Hargroves Fisher '57 and Richard B. Fisher Curator
and Assistant Director for Strategic Planning*

1 Gordon Parks, *To Smile in Autumn: A Memoir* (New York, Norton, 1979), 93.

2 Russell Lord, *Gordon Parks: The Making of an Argument* (New York: Steidl, 2013), 29.

3 *Ibid.*, 9.

Gordon Parks (American, 1912-2006)
Untitled, Harlem, New York, 1948
Gelatin silver print
Courtesy The Gordon Parks Foundation



Exposing Everyday Americans to Art

The Art Center has recently received a large group of preparatory American mural studies from the 1930s and 1940s from longtime donors of works from this period, Susan and Steven Hirsch, class of 1971. The gift includes twenty-one color sketches by Anton Refregier, the leftist Russian-born Woodstock, New York, painter. They were made in conjunction with his twenty-nine panels for the Rincon Annex of the San Francisco Post Office. These works join six other Rincon studies by Refregier donated earlier by the Hirsches. Commissioned by the federal government's Section of Fine Arts, this post office mural project was the last to be completed and was one of over a thousand commissioned across the country to celebrate the history of the nation and to expose everyday Americans to art.

Awarded in 1941 and completed in 1948, the Rincon Annex commission is a major work of the American mural movement of the Great Depression era and one of the last



Anton Refregier
(American, b. Russia 1905–1979)
Study for "1846—California Becomes an Independent Republic," for the Mural Series at the Rincon Annex, San Francisco Post Office, ca. 1947
Tempera on board
Gift of Susan and Steven Hirsch, class of 1971, 2015

icons of the socially conscious art of the period. Exploring the historical past of the area, Refregier had started out by making pencil sketches of episodes as his wife, Lila, read from the *WPA Guide to San Francisco*. Focusing largely on the hard life of pioneers and workers, the artist considered his drawings to be a history of the trials and obstacles of the region's people. After winning the commission, Refregier made preliminary designs followed by full-size cartoons. He then transferred the designs onto gessoed plaster walls at the post office site and used casein tempera to paint thin washes of sunburnt reds and oranges, acidic yellows, brilliant blues, and smoky blacks, creating murals renowned for their striking coloration.

Our "Curator's Choice" is related to panel 10, entitled "1846—California Becomes an Independent Republic," in which pioneers, acknowledging independence from Mexico, raise the California Bear Flag at Sonoma, above San Francisco. The spirited tempera study of a bearded man wearing a California miner's hat appears to be a preliminary work for this panel, which shows a pioneer on the left side of a star- and bear-studded flag grabbing a rope to help hoist the flag up the staff.

In later years, Refregier's San Francisco panels became politically controversial. His leftist orientation and questions over his naturalized American citizenship fed opponents of the murals who criticized the artist's unidealized depictions of pioneers and multiple themes of worker strife. In 1953, a subcommittee of the United States House of Representatives sponsored a resolution and convened a hearing to explore the evidence and opinions for destroying Refregier's murals and to hear those in favor of keeping them. Following a well-organized defense, the resolution to destroy the murals never came out of committee, in effect saving these monumental works.

Patricia Phagan
The Philip and Lynn Straus Curator of Prints and Drawings

Examining More of the Iceberg *American Stories 1800–1950*

January 29–April 17, 2016

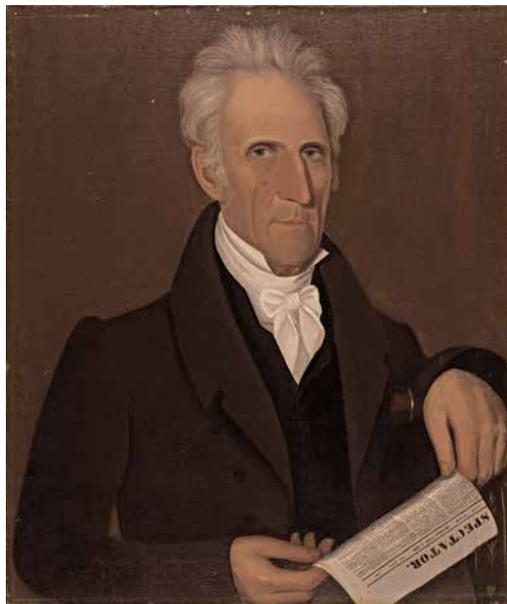
EXHIBITION FEATURE

When Elias Lyman Magoon sold his personal art collection and library to Matthew Vassar's college in 1864, the vast majority of over three hundred paintings were American contemporary landscapes and genre scenes. Over the century and a half that followed, more American paintings were added to the collection and a few were deaccessioned at times before 1960 when our own artistic heritage was held in far lower esteem than that of Europe's. Gifts to the collection have made up the lion's share of the American works acquired to this date, although some purchases have also strengthened the collection. While we have dedicated three galleries to exhibiting what we call the Founding Collection along with additional works from the same period, many fine American works cannot be shown on a regular basis due to lack of gallery space and the keen competition for it from a collection that spans the eras from Egyptian antiquity to the twenty-first century. *American Stories 1800–1950* presents us with an opportunity to exhibit the less visible part of this large iceberg of a collection and explore the development of American art from the time when the American Republic was still in its infancy through its rise as a world political and economic power.

Early American artists, working without the patronage of royalty, an official art academy, or the Church, could only support themselves by providing a practical and desirable consumer product such as portraits. Itinerant artists such as Ammi Phillips, represented in the exhibition by his portrait of Dutchess county resident Archibald Campbell, fulfilled this service handily in spite of lacking formal training. Other works of this kind in the show, such as Samuel Howes's triple portrait of members of the Ashton family, the pendant portraits of George and Elizabeth Collins with their daughter Phebe by Rembrandt Peale, or the portrait of the eight-year-old but very mature-appearing Louisa Nicoll by William Sidney Mount rehearse the same successful formula—half- or bust-length portraits of a size that could inhabit the parlor or dining room of a modestly proportioned Federal-period house before improvements in central heating permitted the grander proportions of homes in the last third of the nineteenth century. All of these paintings stem from the first third of the century.

It is not as if all artists of this period were restricted from larger conceptual vistas, however. Benjamin West (1738–1820) and Washington Allston (1779–1843) were exceptions to this general rule and were artists interested in adapting the grand European traditions of history painting, often setting their scenes taken from the Bible or other literary sources including classical mythology against Romantic and Classical landscapes. West is represented in the exhibition by one of his literary works, the scene of *Thetis Bringing Armor to Achilles*.

A number of American painters during this era likewise turned their attention to larger vistas of a more literal sort, depicting landscape, especially that native to North America, in more specific and accurate terms. The story of the land, its sublimity, and its many moods would aggregate in the group of artists that Magoon himself patronized, the so-called Hudson River School. This group of painters, appearing as they did in the second third of the nineteenth century, benefitted from the development of the American economy and the founding of its early cultural institutions such as the National Academy of Design (1825)



Ammi Phillips (American, 1788-1865)
Portrait of Archibald Campbell
Oil on panel
Gift of Adrienne Anderson McCalley, 1991.36.1

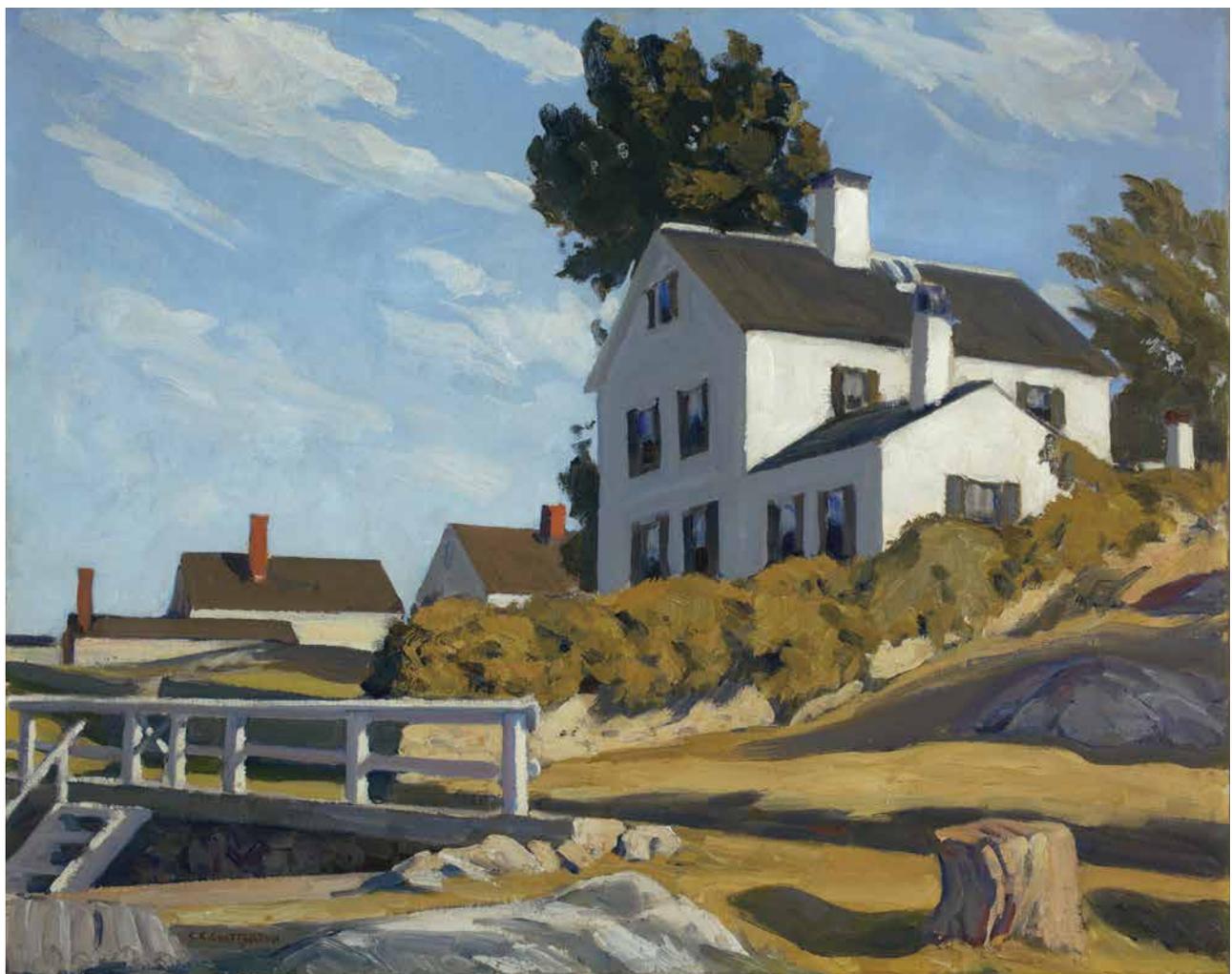


Benjamin West (American, 1738-1820)
Thetis Bringing Armor to Achilles
Oil on canvas
Gift of Matthew Vassar, 1864.1.72

and its organized exhibitions. They were also more socially interconnected via fraternal organizations such as the Sketch Club (1829), which evolved into The Century Association (1847), where artists could dine together, exhibit their work, and become more mutually supportive. Reverend Magoon loved this aspect of the artists of his day and he set about assembling a body of work, mostly small in scale owing to his modest finances, that not only held delectation and edification for him but also was the work of someone he knew personally and admired as a kindred spirit to himself. Thus, his collection naturally featured the main figures such as Asher B. Durand, Thomas Cole, Frederic Church, and Sanford Gifford, whose work we have long exhibited in our permanent galleries, but also those of lesser modern reputations such as Samuel W. Griggs (1827–1898), Louis Remy Mignot (1831–1870), Aaron Draper Shattuck (1832–1928), and Henry A. Ferguson (1842–1911). It is interesting to note that most of these artists were in their twenties when Magoon became acquainted with them and their work, suggesting that he liked discovering talent and was also attracted to the affordability of young painters' works.

An artist featured in *American Stories* with five works, Clarence Kerr Chatterton's career is actually a Vassar story. Chatterton, a Newburgh, New York, native, arrived at Vassar in 1915, the year the Taylor Hall art building was opened. He was only the second professor of painting at Vassar, succeeding the popular founding faculty member, Henry Van Ingen. Chatterton would have a long tenure of his own at the College, only retiring in 1948 having taught some 3,000 students. He was the product of the New York School of Art and was taught by William Merritt Chase and Robert Henri among others. He was a friend of Edward Hopper and the two shared a studio during their student days. He would go on painting excursions with Hopper and such works as *White House on the Maine Coast* call to mind the Maine canvasses of his more famous colleague.

Clarence Kerr Chatterton (American, 1880-1973)
White House on the Maine Coast
Oil on canvas
Gift of Sally Dodge, class of 1930, 1980.14

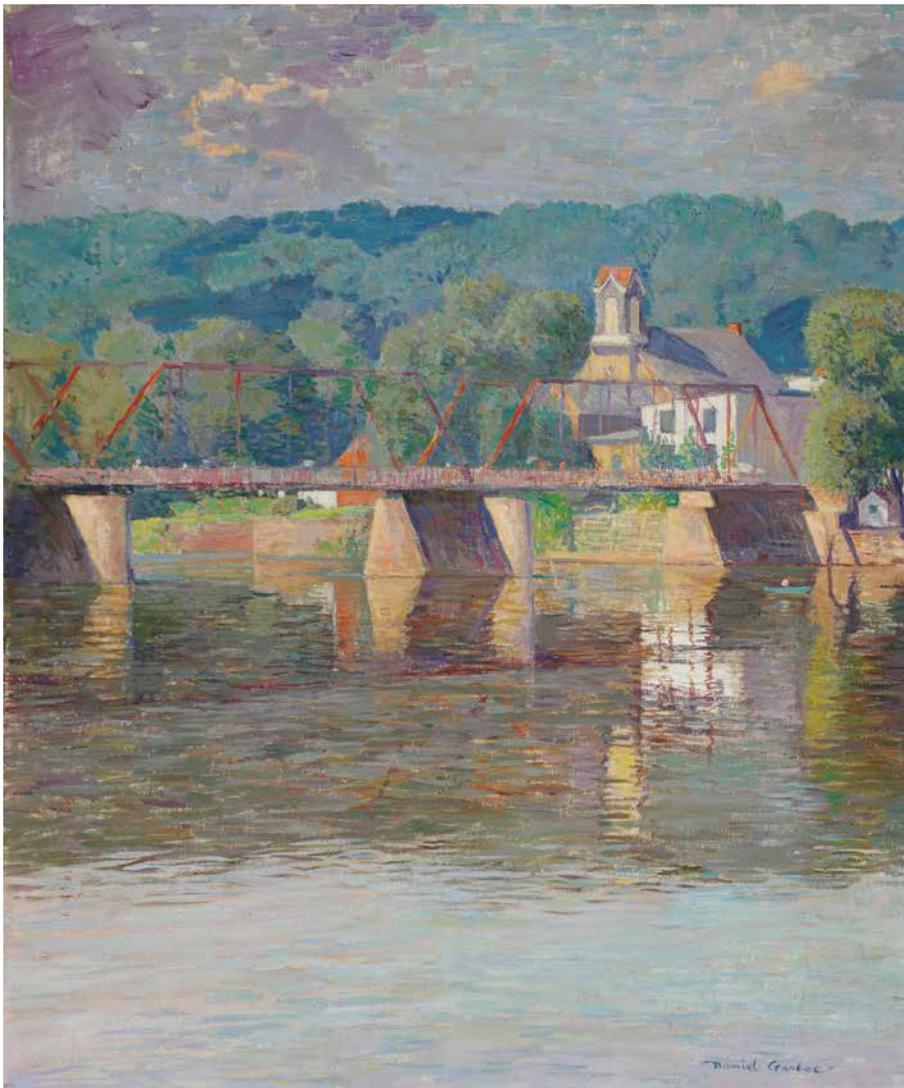


While Chatterton represented a more traditional view of painting during the onset of the Modern Age, Vassar's collection has been enriched by gifts of various works of American Modernism. Foremost among these were the many paintings and works on paper bequeathed to Vassar by Edna Bryner Schwab, class of 1907, and Paul Rosenfeld whose estate was executed by Schwab. These works had been acquired largely from the various galleries in New York City directed by Alfred Stieglitz. While we exhibit on a regular basis key works by Marsden Hartley, Arthur Dove, and Georgia O'Keeffe from the Stieglitz Circle, *American Stories* allows us to delve deeper in our storage and present additional works by these artists who together with such figures as Andrew Dasburg (1887–1979) and Francis Criss (1901–1973) departed from strict realism in the wake of the Armory Show in 1913. However, adherence to certain forms of realism did continue after this seminal exhibition, especially during and after the Great Depression. Social Realism, as it was termed, found many receptive artists and a few represented in *American Stories* will be new discoveries for many, especially the work of Milton Bellin (1913–1997) whose *Honky Tonk* is a slice of the American Scene as was the early work of Minna Citron, represented by her poignant depiction of a blind woman selling newspapers in the New York City subway. Their work will be contrasted with the better-known subjects and style of Ben Shahn (1898–1969). With their exposure in this exhibition, the artists in *American Stories* provide us with a greater understanding of the depth and breadth of Vassar's American holdings.

James Mundy
The Anne Hendricks Bass Director, and curator of the exhibition



Milton Bellin (American, 1913-1997)
Honky Tonk
 Oil on canvas
 Gift from the Estate of Milton Bellin, 1998.7.5



Daniel Garber (American, 1880-1958)
The Bridge at New Hope, 1952
 Oil on canvas
 Bequest of Elinore Ridge, class of 1926, 1999.5

A Major Renaissance Painting Restored

In 1917, among the many gifts of Italian painting from between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries donated by Charles M. Pratt, was a large canvas (65 ½ x 138 ¼ inches) by Lambert Sustris, a sixteenth-century Netherlandish artist transplanted to the Veneto. The painting, once attached to a palace wall, came to us with the title *The Triumph of Education*. The work is an allegory and clearly derived from Raphael’s famous Vatican fresco, *The School of Athens*. Recent research has demonstrated that the subject portrayed, together with five other known works by Sustris, is an interpretation of a scene from the *Tabula Cebetis*, a text by an anonymous author of the first century but dating several centuries earlier, that describes an image in the Temple of Chronos in Athens or Thebes where the story of human progress is presented in concentric circles filled with obstacles. One of those obstacles was *The Circle of False Education*, likely what we see here but presented seemingly in a more positive light than in the text.

The Sustris painting, dating from around 1540, was for many years unexhibitable owing to its poor condition. Its rejuvenation was thought by some to be an impossible task but the challenge was taken on by Sandra Webber of the Williamstown Art Conservation Center with the dramatic results illustrated here in the before and after conservation photographs that show a restoration of original colors and the disappearance of certain compositional elements such as the mountains in the left and right backgrounds. The work on our painting also signaled the final project for Webber who retired upon its completion. The revived Sustris will go on exhibit in the galleries this autumn. — J.M.



Before Treatment

Lambert Sustris
(Italian, ca. 1515 - after 1560)
The Circle of False Education
from the *Tabula Cebetis*
Oil on canvas
Gift of Charles M. Pratt, 1917.1.11

After Treatment



Before Vassar College opened in 1865, Matthew Vassar acquired the first photographs for the Vassar College Art Gallery from his friend and College Trustee, the Reverend Elias Magoon, a Baptist minister and avid art collector. This early collection comprised a half-dozen calotypes that depict scenes from English country life and they were the only photographs in the collection for over one hundred years. All this changed in 1973 when a major gift from the Charles E. Merrill Trust was dedicated to the purchase of two hundred photographs by living American artists such as Danny Lyon, Barbara Morgan, Steven Shore, Aaron Siskind, Frederick Sommer, Brett Weston, Garry Winogrand, and Minor White. Thanks to gifts and purchases over the last four decades, today the Art Center currently owns more than 3,000 works of photography. The collection includes nineteenth-century works by such innovators as Eadweard Muybridge, Charles Marville, Giorgio Sommer, Seneca Ray Stoddard, and Julia Margaret Cameron; masterworks by twentieth-century icons such as Berenice Abbott, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Alfred Stieglitz, Edward Weston, Diane Arbus, Imogen Cunningham, Paul Caponigro, Walker Evans, Harry Callahan, and Lee Friedlander; and more contemporary work with fine examples by Cindy Sherman, Gregory Crewdson, Richard Misrach, Laurie Simmons, Larry Sultan, Joel Sternfeld, Louise Lawler, Sherrie Levine, Rineke Dijkstra, and Thomas Ruff, among many others. Areas of strength include portraits, street photography, landscapes, documentary photography, and work by photographers emergent since 1950, many of them women.

The first photography exhibition at Vassar, *New Art from Photosensitized Materials*, was organized in 1973 by then Director Nicolai Cikovsky, Jr. Since then, photography has played a large part in the exhibition program at the Art Center with one exhibition dedicated to photography almost every year. In the recent past there have been one-person exhibitions of work by Emmet Gowin, Kunié Sugiura, Andreas Feininger, Eirik Johnson, and Malick Sidibé and several thematic group exhibitions. The spring 2015 exhibition, *Through the Looking Glass: Daguerreotype Masterworks from the Dawn of Photography*, was a comprehensive survey exhibition of 140 daguerreotypes featuring important examples from both sides of the Atlantic and exemplified the breadth of the exhibition program encompassing the early history of photography. Exhibitions such as these have received a great deal of positive press and public reaction, evidenced by reviews in major publications such as *The New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal* which have helped Vassar establish and maintain a reputation beyond our immediate audience. Publications and traveling exhibitions that originate at Vassar further reinforce the significance and prominence of our exhibition program among our peers in the photography world and beyond. Exemplary is the publication that accompanied the exhibition *The Polaroid Years*, which won the Association of Art Museum Curators' first prize for outstanding exhibition catalogue in 2013. That exhibition, which traveled to The Norton Museum of Art in West Palm Beach, Florida, during their high tourist season, increased our visibility as a major contributor to scholarship in the field.

In order to provide support for this lively program, the Art Center developed the Advisory Council on Photography. The genesis of the idea for forming the Council came about in the late 1980s in the period during which Sandra Phillips served as curator, but it wasn't until 1997 during a meeting in California that the idea took hold. The Council was subsequently founded the following year by Michael and Joyce Axelrod, class of 1961, who continue their membership today. Their enthusiasm and vision for a council was shared by Thomas Levine, class of 1982, and the first meeting took place in the fall of 1998. The advocacy group



has grown to include a diverse group of Vassar friends, alumnae/i, and photography aficionados. Besides providing key support for photographic acquisitions at the Art Center, Council membership provides the occasion for gatherings among photographers, photography collectors, and other enthusiasts of the medium. The semi-annual meetings include a variety of activities, such as visits to exhibitions and collections, lectures by prominent members of the field, and dialogues with contemporary photographers discussing their work. The Photo Council has a current membership of eighteen people including some alumnae/i along with members of the broader photographic community. This small number of members allows for an intimate dynamic between the Council and the curator.

Members support photography research and the acquisition of photographs for the collection of the Art Center through annual dues. Of the more than one hundred acquisitions to date sponsored by the Council, notable acquisitions include nineteenth-century photographs by Édouard Denis Baldus, Napoleon Sarony Studio, and Robert MacPherson, as well as twentieth- and twenty-first-century works by Cartier-Bresson, Robert Frank, Emmet Gowin, Philip-Lorca DiCorcia, Gabriel Orozco, Vik Muniz, and Peter Hujar. Over the last ten years, the Council has chosen to purchase works by Candida Höfer, Ari Marcopoulos, Richard Barnes, and André Kertész among others.

With an exceptional collection and focused programming in place, membership in the Advisory Council on Photography provides a congenial way to have a direct, tangible effect on the educational experience of Vassar students and to help foster the continued advancement of the medium at the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center. If you're interested in learning more, please contact Mary-Kay Lombino directly at malombino@vassar.edu.

Mary-Kay Lombino
*The Emily Hargroves Fisher '57 and Richard B. Fisher Curator
and Assistant Director for Strategic Planning*

MUSEUM SHOP

Banner Bags

You can go to MoMA's museum store and buy Japanese socks made from 100% recycled fabric. You can buy a fleece jacket made of recycled plastic soda bottles at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History. And now you can go to the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center and buy a shoulder bag made of recycled exhibition banners. You've seen these large banners hanging in the piers with in the stone colonnade outside the Art Center, boldly announcing each temporary exhibition for the duration of the show. But from a design standpoint, these banners have an interesting life before and after the run of the exhibition.

To create an eye-catching banner that clearly communicates the content of the exhibition, the Art Center's curators work with Vassar's graphic designers in the Office of Communications, George Laws and Charles Mosco. Together, they decide on a visually compelling image from the exhibition that will translate well to the large banner format. They think about what font best captures the spirit of the exhibition's subject matter or aesthetic and work from there toward a final design. Staff members get attached to these beautiful exterior signifiers of the Art Center's interior treasures. And the sturdy material from which the banners are fabricated to withstand the elements seemed to call out for an extended lifecycle.

Enter Pranit Prizzia, a resident of Highland, NY, whose husband Tony Prizzia is a volunteer at the Art Center. A professional seamstress since 1993, when she began working in her native Thailand, she is the proprietor of her own shop, Tailoring and Design by Pranit, also in Highland. We commissioned Pranit to design and make bags of various shapes and sizes from each banner, which she does with an eye toward careful cuts that maximize the amount of useful fabric and the delightful placement of key graphic elements in prominent locations on the bags. Thanks to her skill, these one-of-a-kind banner bags have become a popular seller in the museum shop and a great souvenir of past exhibitions.



Membership

July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015

The following list represents members who joined the Art Center or renewed their membership between July 1, 2014 and June 30, 2015.

Director's Circle (\$5,000+)

Jo Ann Citron '71
Thomas J. Connelly P '18
Mary Pick Hines '53 P '81
Arthur Loeb
Lynn Gross Straus '46

Benefactor (\$2,500 - \$4,999)

Christie's
Jane Hertzmark Hudis '81
Jonathan Kagan & Ute Kagan
Joan Oestreich Kend '56
Mary Ellen Weisl Rudolph '61 P '98

Patron (\$1,000 - \$2,499)

Frances Beatty Adler '70
Andrea M. Baldeck '72
Anne Hendricks Bass '63 P '94
Brent Feigenbaum '82
Sheila ffolliott '67
Emily Hargroves Fisher '57 P '88
Bettie Schroth Johnson '56
James K. Kloppenburg '77 P '11 P '14
Linda Carr Milne-Tyte '62
Belle Krasne Ribicoff '45 P '78
Rebecca Schmitt Richardson '52
Mary Cox Schlosser '51 P '82
David Smiley '80
Allison Whiting '86
Matla Wiener '69

Donor (\$500 - \$999)

V. Maureen Andola &
Charles M. Andola
Phebe Townsend Banta '61 &
George E. Banta
Thea Fuchs Benenson '57
Joan Hirschhorn Bright '83
Anne Holton Bushman '44
James T. Curtis '84
Elizabeth Lewisohn Eisenstein '45-4
Beatrice Bronson Garvan '50
Nancy Gail Harrison '74
Ann Snyder Harrod '60
Juliette Saisselin Killion '81
Ann Rasmussen Kinney '53 &
Mr. Gilbert H. Kinney
Jennifer C. Krieger '00
Ellen Gordon Milberg '60
Sylvia Allen Nelson '53 &
Harry D. Nelson, Jr.
Marian Phelps Pawlick '47
Sally Lyman Rheinfrank '63
Whitney Lucas Rosenberg '89
Milbrey Rennie Taylor '68
Sue Gotshal Weinberg '51
Ann Thom Welles '45-4
Georgia Elmes Welles '52
Hope Henneke Wismar '57

Sustaining (\$250 - \$499)

Jane Callomon Arkus '50
Sally Thackston Butler '52 P '77
Mary Ann Bickford Casey '60
Elizabeth Goodrich Chamberlain '38
Sally Dayton Clement '71 P '09

Julia Reed Blodgett Curtis '62 &
John R. Curtis, Jr.
Stephen Dewhurst '75
Christopher D. Drago '98
Charles Engel P '08
Mary Lloyd Estrin '66 P '01 P '06
Tania Goss Evans '59
Margot Hirsh Feely '52
Joanne Bluestone Feuerman '64
Kathy Mae Kelsey Foley '74 &
Ernest P. Foley
Fay Gambee '62
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Edith Glazener P '82
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Sharon Harper (American)
Moon Studies and Star Scratches, No. 11, Clearmont, Wyoming, 2005
Luminage print on Fuji Crystal Archive paper, mounted
Courtesy and © of the artist

Art at Vassar

A publication for the members of
The Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center
Fall/Winter 2015/16

On the cover:
Louis Remy Mignot (American, 1831–1870)
A Winter View from Newburgh, 1856
Oil on panel
Gift of Matthew Vassar, 1864.1.57

