

Art at Vassar



A publication for the members of
The Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center
Fall 2011

Deaccessioning Revisited

On this page exactly six years ago I sketched out the conditions and procedures for when and how to review art collections with the purpose of judiciously removing works from the collections (deaccessioning) for public sale in order to promote the acquisition of new works of art. The process that began with that explanation has now reached its conclusion with a list of approximately one hundred paintings that will soon be deaccessioned from the Art Center collection and returned to the art market. This number represents one half of one percent of the total number of objects in our care.

All professionally managed museums should periodically take stock of their collections with an eye toward improving the overall quality by culling some works based on their condition, redundancy, or limited service to the program. All accredited museums have very specific procedures in place to guide the deaccessioning process replete with many consultations of stakeholders and checks and balances all along the way. Our procedure reads as follows:

Works of art to be considered for deaccessioning will be proposed by the curator(s) to the director. These proposed works will be discussed with representatives from the department of art.

At least one outside expert (preferably a museum professional) in the field will then be consulted and asked for recommendations in writing. The works will then be proposed formally for deaccessioning to the Collections Committee (of the Advisory Board) and the College Board of Trustees, who will be asked to vote for approval. Three independent appraisals will then be solicited.

The works will then be sold, preferably at public auction or, given an advantageous financial situation, through a reputable gallery or offered in exchange to another art institution.

Under no circumstances should any member of the Art Center staff, a trustee of the College, an art department faculty member or a member of the Advisory Board be permitted to acquire a work of art deaccessioned by the Art Center.

The money obtained by the sale of a work of art will return to the acquisition fund and the donor's name will be applied to the credit line of any subsequent purchase made with the fund with the notation "by exchange."

The process should be bathed in daylight, including the public disclosure of the works themselves, something that we will post on the Art Center website for all to see. Our collegial discussions over the list of proposed paintings resulted in the removal of twenty percent of them as we formed a more 360-degree view of each painting's worth to the program.

As a courtesy, we also try to contact the donor if still alive or his or her direct descendants if they can be located, to let them know of our forthcoming action. True collectors are very aware of the fluidity of collections as they improve, but sometimes their families require a more substantial explanation of why it is good to prune collections in order to improve them and how their family member's name will continue to be associated perpetually via the credit line on the newly acquired work of art.

Six years ago I wrote of the difference between collecting and accumulating and how collections are living things that evolve over time better to suit the mission of the institution. Those of us who garden will be quick to grasp the parallel between the cultivation of a landscape or an art collection. The deaccessioning process as a tool of cultivation will make us better stewards of the aesthetic garden we tend in a public trust.

James Mundy
The Anne Hendricks Bass Director



Complete Coverage

Marco Maggi: *Lentissimo* January 20 – April 1, 2012

UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

Marco Maggi, who is creating all new work for his upcoming exhibition *Lentissimo*, possesses a keen awareness of the tricks language often plays with logic. His attentiveness to paradox and to the hazards of the constant race forward in the name of progress is evident in his poetic approach to life and art. In a recent interview, Mary-Kay Lombino, The Emily Hargroves Fisher '57 and Richard B. Fisher Curator and Assistant Director for Strategic Planning, spoke to Maggi about this approach as well as his influences, processes, and philosophies.

Mary-Kay Lombino:

The materials you use are not typical fine art materials, but household items like aluminum foil, eyeglass lenses, parking mirrors, and reams of paper. What attracts you to such materials?

Marco Maggi:

Go slower and closer.

Speed is tragic in cars, arts, and malls. When I reduce my speed at Home Depot or Stop and Shop, I always discover amazing surfaces: from Macintosh apple skin to the silky back side of construction rulers. Each surface has many faces to establish intimate dialogues with my three tools: pencil, X-Acto knife, and time. After seeing one of my aluminum drawings on view, the viewer, returning to the supermarket, can give a second chance or smile to Reynolds foil rolls.

MKL:

The attention to detail in your works conveys the craftsmanship of the hand-made, yet they begin with objects that are industrially fabricated. This seems to set up a tension in your work because they are both high-tech and low-tech at the same time. Which aspect do you embrace more?

MM:

Digital!

Industry will never create a more digital tool than a hand: five digits instead of only zeros and ones. I love computers because they go faster and faster to allow us to go *lentissimo*.

Tension is a key word for me: tension between cold materials and personal hand, tension between text and texture, or between macro and micro.

I can find many dichotomies and tensions but not one specific intention in my work; I am only suggesting some protocol mutations.



Marco Maggi (Uruguayan 1957 -)
Vertical Carousel, 2010
Slide carousel, drypoint on aluminum in
80 slide mounts
Courtesy of Josée Bienvenu Gallery
© Marco Maggi

Marco Maggi (Uruguayan 1957 -)
HOTBED, 2009 (detail)
Cuts on paper
Courtesy of Josée Bienvenu Gallery © Marco Maggi



MKL:

You have a talent for transforming the artistic gesture into tightly controlled, almost obsessive mark making. How do you attain such control? Do you use mathematical systems to work out your compositions, or are your drawings all free form?

MM:

It's not a mathematical jail, it's not free form, and it's time.

My work has plenty of warm rules to try to make the time visible and the space invisible. Our illegible world is global and myopic. Braking time and reducing the scale is my answer. No big solutions or urgent revolutions: my proposal is a homeopathic process. Person by person, step by step, inch by inch.

MKL:

You must have extraordinary reserves of patience and dexterity to achieve such minute detail in your work. Are these attributes you have always had, or skills you had to acquire through practice in order to accomplish your artistic objectives?

MM:

If you trust in slow politics you must exercise humor and patience. Waiting... I try to build a second reality.

MKL:

Many of your works are quiet and understated and invite slow observation in order to discover some of the gems hidden in the details. Do you intentionally make art that unravels slowly as the viewer experiences the work more closely?

MM:

Yes, yes! That is the center of my protocol mutation proposal. Nowadays delicacy becomes a subversive activity because we love terahertz and long-distance lives. Fast viewers see, from far away, a drawing as a blank sheet. Slow viewers can read ten times more in the same drawing, switching perspective and conclusions many more times. My main focus is not the object or the subject. I focus on the time between the object and the viewer. I am interested in the specific protocol of manners and pace in the viewing process.

MKL:

Can you tell me about your interest in language and information (codes, maps, diagrams) and how that influences your work as well as the titles of your works?



Marco Maggi (Uruguayan 1957 -)
Global Myopia (Parking Mirror), 2010 (detail)
Cuts on mirror
Courtesy of Josée Bienvenu Gallery © Marco Maggi



Marco Maggi (Uruguayan 1957 -)
Global Myopia (Parking Mirror), 2010
Cuts on mirror
Courtesy of Josée Bienvenu Gallery © Marco Maggi

MM:

Building a second reality needs a lot encoding and planning. A language hotbed is always based in a growing alphabet, happy diagrams, and syntax.

To draw is very similar to writing in a language that I cannot read: a text with no hope of being informative. It's not a thread; it is training to stimulate our empathy for insignificance.

In recent years I have been working on a series titled *The Ted Turner Collection from CNN to DNA*. The project started by thinking about the word "cover". It's interesting to me that the mass media use the word "cover" to mean the opposite: to show something. They promise "complete coverage". Sometimes the coverage is so efficient that we cannot recognize the difference between live transmission and death. We are familiar with the DNA structure or genome alphabet but we cannot read a hair that obviously includes the information to clone our best friend. I have only one question: is the inability to relate to this a type of information blindness or should it be described as a new form of illiteracy? In either case the most advisable thing to do is to patiently resign ourselves to the fact that we are doomed to knowing more and understanding less—victims of semiotic indigestion. The extreme percussive of news prevents any repercussion of the news. An overdose of drama is the perfect anesthetic, a tool for censorship that is more efficient than a pair of scissors. We are setting up a society of dysfunctional information.

MKL:

Your *Hotbeds* remind me of Felix-Gonzales Torres's stacks of posters or photocopies on the one hand, and on the other hand they recall tiny abstract monuments strategically placed in the center of miniature city plazas. Which do you relate more to, the simple yet powerful gestures Torres made on the floor of art galleries and museums or the more grand achievement of erecting sculpture in a public space?

MM:

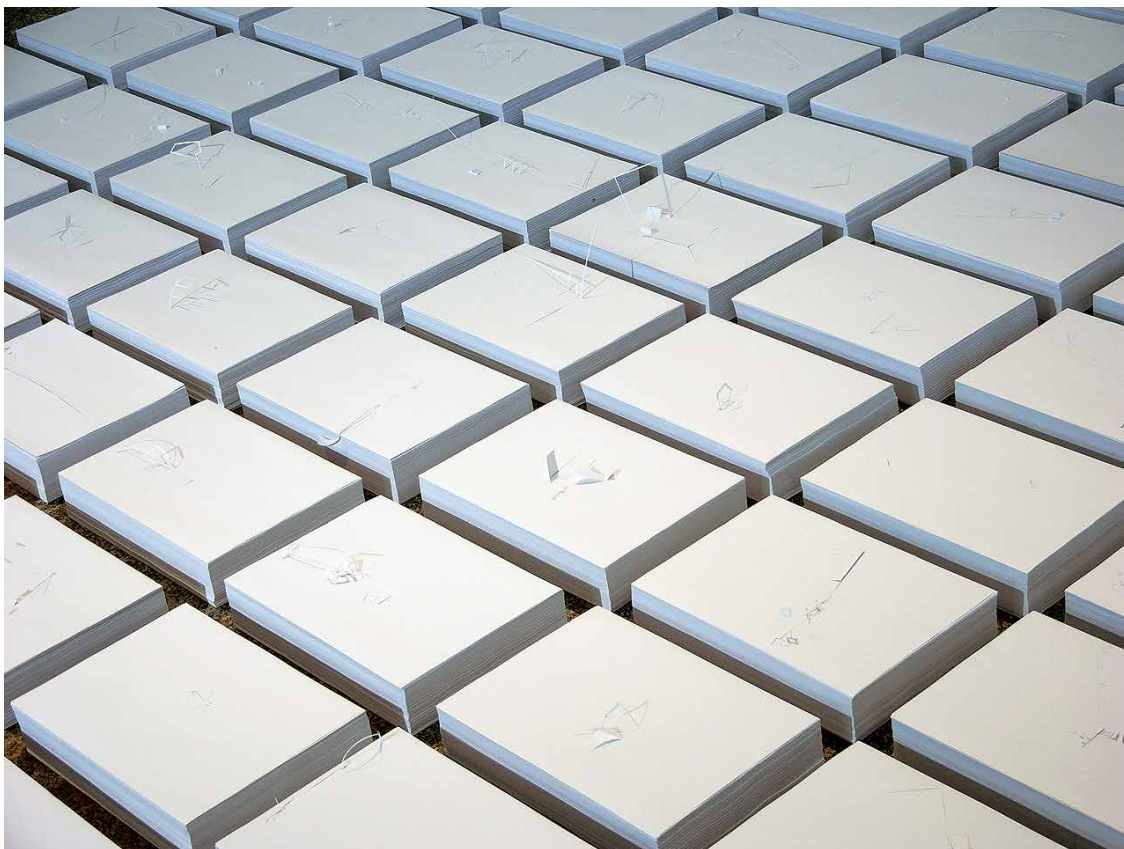
Influence is always invisible to its victims. I know that I really love Felix and his generous art dissemination, dynamics, and sublime contamination.

My *Hotbed* series is related to tectonic archives and books profiles. They are static landscapes in transition between constructing and demolishing, between models and ruins. The American ream is a paper-like micro sculpture and pedestal all in one.



Marco Maggi (Uruguayan, 1957 -)
Complete Coverage on Delaunay, 2011
Cuts on 500 pages
Courtesy of the artist © Marco Maggi

Marco Maggi (Uruguayan 1957 -)
HOTBED, 2009 (installation view)
Cuts on paper
Courtesy of Josée Bienvenu Gallery © Marco Maggi



Case Histories

A Taste for the Modern: Gifts from Blanchette Hooker Rockefeller, Edna Bryner Schwab, and Virginia Herrick Deknatel

June 24 – September 4, 2012

In the permanent collection of the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, works of art by twentieth-century modernists vie for attention. Avant-garde art by American painters in the circle around gallery owner and photographer Alfred Stieglitz evoke nature and the city. Oils and prints by mid-century expressionists present new, alternative, and tense worlds. How did these and many other adventurous modern works come to reside at the Art Center? *A Taste for the Modern* examines the modern-art collecting practiced by three generous alumnae and its origins via their gifts to the Art Center. Specifically, the exhibition highlights the personal art collections of Blanchette Hooker Rockefeller class of 1931, Edna Bryner Schwab class of 1907, and Virginia Herrick Deknatel class of 1929.

In the early decades of the twentieth century, the Old Masters and French Impressionists garnered most American art collectors' interests, and modern art appealed to a small though increasingly influential audience. In New York City, Stieglitz premiered the first American exhibitions by the European avant-garde and showed a handful of American modernists at his 291 gallery, located at 291 Fifth Avenue, and featured them in his journals *Camera Work* and *291*. He maintained his prominence with later galleries, including the Intimate Gallery and An American Place.

The much-publicized display of modern art at the Armory Show in New York in 1913 and subsequent showings in Chicago and Boston threw contemporary, controversial European art into the public's face with puzzling oils by Marcel Duchamp and others. Progressive American collectors, however, began to acquire these works. Soon, Mary Quinn Sullivan, Lillie P. Bliss, and their friend Abby Aldrich Rockefeller, initiated and advanced the idea for what became the Museum of Modern Art, which opened in New York in 1929.

The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) became a crucible for Blanchette Rockefeller as an art collector. A culture of collecting and interest in the arts informed her earlier life, but the museum and several of its associates were instrumental in her development and taste as an important collector of modern art.

Blanchette Rockefeller's inspiration to collect modern art came from the activities of her mother-in-law and Museum of Modern Art co-founder Abby Rockefeller. By the late 1940s, Blanchette was beginning to think of creating her own modern collection. With her involvement at MoMA, she started acquiring contemporary art, advised primarily by Alfred H. Barr, Jr., former Vassar College faculty and first director of MoMA, and making pur-



Paul Klee (Swiss, 1879- 1940)
Schwanenteich (Swan Pond), 1937
Black gouache over white ground or gesso
Gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller 3rd (Blanchette Hooker,
class of 1931), 1955.6.11

chases through a trust fund from her father's estate. The late 1940s and the early 1950s saw her heaviest collecting, primarily of contemporary and international paintings, drawings, prints, and sculpture by American, European, Japanese, and Latin artists. She gave some of these works to MoMA, while she donated one hundred and five to Vassar beginning in 1952 during the years when she was a trustee of the college.

In 1967, fifty-one works of modern art from the estate of Edna Bryner Schwab came to Vassar. She and her husband acquired post-impressionist and modern drawings and prints by Cézanne, Picasso, Georges Rouault, and others, while living in New York City. From the mid-1920s until at least 1940, they purchased numerous works by American modernists from Stieglitz.

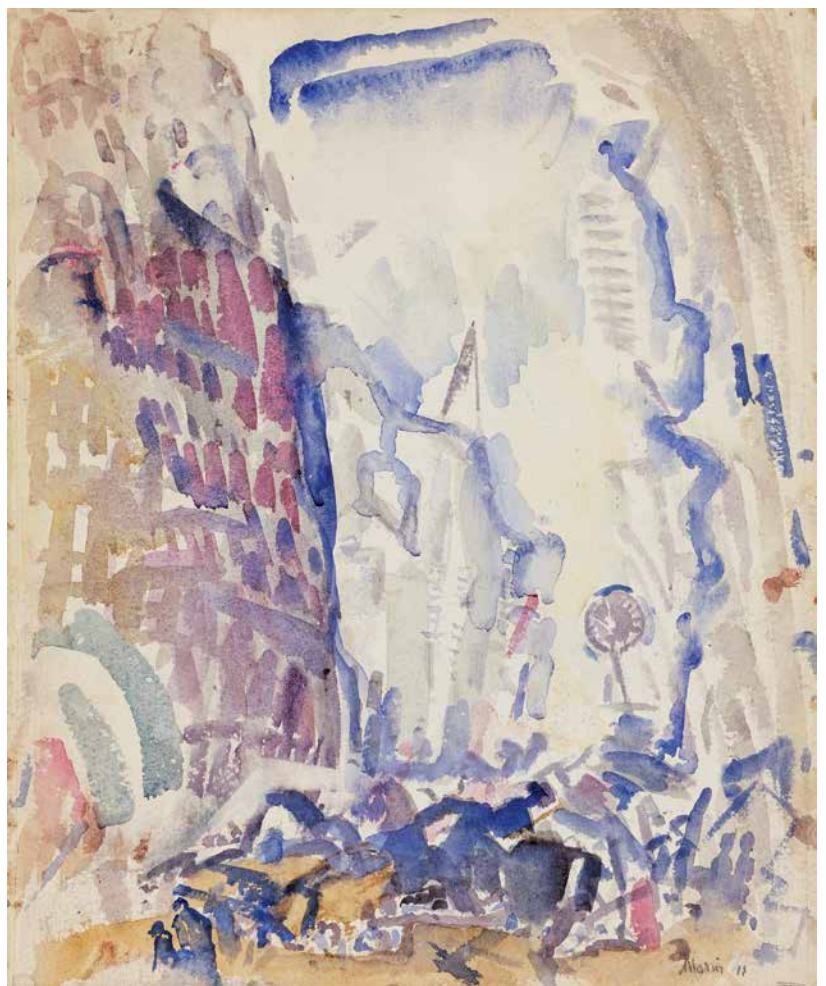
As a writer and nature-seeker, Edna Bryner (the name she used as a professional writer) felt a keen kinship with Stieglitz's modern landscape artists, especially Georgia O'Keeffe and John Marin. By the mid-1920s Edna and Arthur acquired two paintings by O'Keeffe, though the couple's financial resources were strained. In April 1924 "Teddy" (Bryner's nickname) wrote to Stieglitz enclosing a check for O'Keeffe's small oil, *Two Figs*, now in the Art Center's collection. Both Edna and Arthur sent checks for O'Keeffe's larger canvas, *Spring*, also in the Art Center's collection, paying for it in eight months. As Bryner reminded Stieglitz, "We were to pay \$400 for it just at any time, in any amounts we chose."

The couple also acquired works by Marin. By summer of 1928 Bryner sent a payment of \$50 to Stieglitz toward Marin's masterful watercolor, *Palisades, No. 4*, leaving a balance of around \$600 on the Marin account. He left the bookkeeping on the watercolor to Bryner, saying in his next letter, "I'm leaving all 'account keeping' to you. – It's the simplest way." All in all, Bryner bequeathed ten watercolors by the artist to the college. Eight are exhibited.

From 1975 until her bequest in 2009, Virginia Deknatel gave Vassar thirty-six works of art. In 2005 she donated the collage-inspired *Verre, guitare, partition (Glass, Guitar and Musical Score)*, 1922-23, by Picasso, the artist's first cubist oil to enter the permanent collection. Her gifts of important post-impressionist to contemporary drawings, prints, and sculpture anchored the collection still deeper into key moments of modern art. The donations encompassed a wide arc, from drawings by Cézanne to linoleum cuts by Picasso to bronzes by David Smith and Anthony Caro.

In 1929 Virginia Deknatel graduated from Vassar. Having taken fine arts courses at the college, she was also involved with the school's Experimental Theatre led by drama professor Hallie Flanagan. On a trip to the Soviet Union Professor Flanagan took Virginia and other students along to study experimental theater. She most likely met future husband Frederick Brockway Deknatel onboard the ship. They married in 1931. The following year he joined the Harvard Department of Fine Arts faculty as assistant to Paul Sachs, associate director of the Fogg Museum.

The Deknatels began collecting in the 1930s and 1940s and continued doing so into the 1960s. During summers and sabbatical leaves, they traveled regularly to Europe, especially to London and Paris, meeting contemporary artists, buying their work, and acquiring art by earlier modernists.



John Marin (American, 1870-1953)
Thirty Fifth and Fifth Avenue at Noon, ca. 1911
Watercolor
Bequest of Mrs. Arthur Schwab (Edna Bryner, class of 1907), 1967.31.5

Professor Deknatel devoted himself to teaching the history of modern art for forty years at Harvard. The development of Frederick and Virginia Deknatel's collection revolved around his teaching, for they acquired the works of those artists who were central to Frederick's courses on nineteenth- and twentieth-century art such as Eugène Delacroix, Cézanne, Pierre Bonnard, and Picasso.

After her husband died in 1973, Mrs. Deknatel continued collecting late nineteenth- and twentieth-century prints, and began acquiring sculpture. According to John Deknatel, his mother decided to collect sculpture in the 1970s with the intention of giving them eventually to Vassar. With these donations, she aimed to complement the substantial collection of important modern paintings in Vassar's permanent collection.

In revelatory fashion, the collecting ventures of all three of these alumnae come together in this exhibition. Exploring the history of their extraordinary acquisitions stirs and deepens our knowledge of the Art Center's development, and the exhibition and its catalogue give everyone the opportunity to see and study relatively recent stages in the Art Center's growth. In the end, their gifts to Vassar instilled great strengths in the museum's collections of modern and contemporary art.

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



Summer Reading

In conjunction with *A Taste for the Modern*, the Art Center hosted a summer book club. Members of the community assembled to discuss *An Object of Beauty* by Steve Martin with Art Center student docent and Pindyck scholar, Taylor Shoolery. The lively conversation about this fictional account of the world of contemporary collecting was enhanced with the viewing of two works of art mentioned in the text, Andy Warhol's *Marilyn* (1967) and *Flowers* (1970). The positive response has encouraged the museum to host art-inspired book club events in the future.

Pablo Picasso (Spanish, 1881- 1973)
Le chapeau à fleurs, 1963
Linoleum cut
Bequest of Virginia Herrick Deknatel,
class of 1929, 2009.1.18

Daniel Vosmaer's *View of a Dutch Village with Ruined Wall* (c. 1665) is one of the stars of the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center. A painting of stunning originality, it was included in a major 2001 exhibition, *Vermeer and the Delft School*, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and the National Gallery, London. Its view of a sun-dappled village with well-kept houses and park is immediately engaging, but the painting's real punch lies in its bold contrast of intactness and ruin. In the foreground the looming shapes of a damaged brick building and wall frame the tranquil townscape beyond, making the viewer wonder what caused the destruction and why it is boldly juxtaposed to meticulously maintained domestic structures.

Vosmaer often depicted the aftermath of the so-called "Delft Thunderclap" of 1654, an accidental explosion of an underground munitions depot which left much of the city in ruins. The Vassar painting probably depicts later vestiges of this event, since these broken walls appear fractured rather than gently weathered by time. If so, this scene must have reminded seventeenth-century viewers of civic survival. Indeed, the Delft explosion remains in the memory of Dutch citizens even today, since (ironically) the same gunpowder that almost destroyed Delft had been stockpiled during the recent war of independence that had freed the Dutch provinces from Spanish rule.

As a specialist in the art of this period, I'm always curious about historical context, but it's the visual quality of a painting that matters most to me. The stronger the artist's ability to render his or her vision, the deeper my response. Vosmaer's artful interplay of solids and voids and delicately painted sunlight on broken brick give visual form to the notion that the familiar physical world is both vulnerable and tenacious and exists within a process of constant transformation.

Partly because of my admiration for it, this image has virtually bracketed much of my professional life. The painting was purchased in London in 1962 on the advice of Curtis Baer, a collector of Old Master drawings who was then teaching a seminar I took as a Vassar junior. Later in the same year I wrote a term paper about the recently acquired Vosmaer for a course I now teach (Art 231, or Dutch and Flemish Painting of the Seventeenth Century). In the Fall of 1963, to my astonishment, a letter arrived at Harvard, where I had just begun work toward a Ph.D. in art history, asking that the paper be sent to *The Vassar Journal of Undergraduate Studies* for publication. I can assure today's students that this essay, written by an eager novice in the field, did not begin to approach the depth and sophistication of various term papers I've received in recent years. Yet because the artist is little known except to specialists, this short undergraduate piece has had a weirdly prolonged afterlife, popping up decades later in footnotes and bibliographies in various studies on Dutch landscape. Vosmaer gave me a generous professional send-off.

More recently, in 2005, this painting became one of the inspirations for an exhibition on depictions of ruins in Dutch art for which I acted as visiting curator at the Loeb Art Center. *Time and Transformation in Seventeenth Century Dutch Art* opened at Vassar in the spring of 2005, traveling on to the Ringling Museum in Sarasota and the Speed Museum in Louisville. When asked which of the eighty-two works in the show should be on the cover of the catalogue, I remember pausing only briefly because the answer was obvious.

Susan Donahue Kuretsky
Sarah Gibson Blanding Professor of Art



Daniel Vosmaer (Dutch, 1622-1669/70)
View of a Dutch Town with a Ruined Wall, c. 1662
Oil on wood panel
Purchase, Agnes Rindge Claflin Fund, 1962.2

Distance Learning

This past spring, the Art Center collaborated with the college's Office of Communication to produce *ArtTalks*, a series of digital shorts about the permanent collection. Vassar College faculty members, museum staff, and student docents presented short lectures about their favorite works of art in the galleries. You can view the two-minute lectures online at <http://bit.ly/vassararttalks>.

The Great American Frontier

The thirty-eight year-old photographer Andrew Joseph Russell was no doubt immediately attracted to the fascinating scene of ridges, lined with ancient striations and stark gullies, that rise in front of us in this photograph of the Rocky Mountains from around 1868. Before the Civil War, Russell, a portrait and landscape painter reared in New York's Finger Lakes region, studied the new medium of photography and with a camera shot landscape views and used them as the bases for canvases. As a captain in the war he became an official photographer for the U.S. Army, documenting the building of military railroads. After the war, in 1868 the Union Pacific Railroad Company hired him to document the construction of the eastern segment of the first transcontinental railroad.

This print is a reduced version of hundreds of photographs Russell made during the railroad project, produced in three trips during which he transported his cameras, glass plates, chemicals, and darkroom by wagon. After the project ended, his photographs were widely published in books, albums, and popular newspapers, and

used in lantern slides and travel guides on the West. This print, for example, appeared in 1870 in a book promoting geological study written by F. V. Hayden (1829-1887), head of the United States Geographical and Geological Survey. Thirty photographs illustrated the book and documented mostly natural sites along the Union Pacific Railroad's route in Wyoming, Utah, and California.

One year earlier, Russell's photographs were featured in an album, *The Great West Illustrated in a Series of Photographic Views Across the Continent*, published by the Union Pacific Railroad Company. Here we can get some sense of the thinking



Andrew Joseph Russell (American 1829/30-1902)
Bitter Creek Valley, Near Green River, ca. 1868
 Albumen silver print published in *Sun pictures of Rocky Mountain scenery, with a description of the geographical and geological features, and some account of the resources of the great West; containing thirty photographic views along the line of the Pacific Rail Road, from Omaha to Sacramento* (New York: Julius Bien, 1870), plate IX
 Gift of Winston and Jeffrey Adler Collection of Nineteenth-Century Photography
 1988.48.19

and aims behind the photography project that took a year and a half of strenuous work in untamed, rugged country. The book not only promoted the natural wonders of the new frontier, but it also promoted the region to interests back East. The preface notes that the album was meant to interest “all classes of people, and to excite the admiration of all reflecting minds as the colossal grandeur of the Agricultural, Mineral, Commercial resources of the West are brought to view.”

The “colossal grandeur” of the land arrested Russell's attention, and his sweeping documentary view here finds its roots in the panoramic Hudson River School-style scenes that he undertook as a young painter. Russell's stark albumen print, however, joins the work of several post-Civil War photographers, such as William Henry Jackson and Timothy O'Sullivan, who trekked across the frontier with cameras, photographing along the paths of the railroads and picturing the land for geological surveys.

Patricia Phagan

The Philip and Lynn Straus Curator of Prints and Drawings

At the beginning of every year candidates for the student docent position are asked, “Why do you want to be a student docent?” The overwhelming response is an almost pleading, “I want to *know* the collection.” When current docents are asked what they want to do in training sessions and in office hours, they urge, “I want to *know* the collection better.” To this end curatorial files are pored over, artists are googled, and a healthy pile of books are checked out from the library.

This is what many people do when they decide they want to *know* something. They turn to the internet or maybe the library and hope that through the absorption of facts they will find whatever it is they are looking for that will boost their intellectual confidence.

Recently, as a docent corps, we have begun to actively stop ourselves from this unquestioned impulse to run out of the galleries and back to our desks to learn about a work of art. The impetus for change came in a statement from twentieth-century thinker, J. Krishnamurti, who challenged his audience:

“Is it possible to educate you differently? ‘Educate’ in the real sense of that word; not to transmit from the teachers to the students some information about mathematics or history or geography, but in the very instruction of these subjects to bring about a change in your mind. Which means that you have to be extraordinarily critical. **You have to learn never to accept anything which you yourself do not see clearly, never to repeat what another has said.**”

We have changed the order of things in docent training. As a docent corps, we are taking advantage of our regularly scheduled gallery time to open ourselves to the opportunity of close consideration of a work of art. At the conclusion of the two-hour docent training seminar each week, twenty minutes are dedicated to quiet contemplation of a work of art. Students return each week to the same work. We look exclusively to the work of art *first* and *then* look to the text to act as an assistant to what we see, not as a director of what we see. This practice is not unique to the Art Center student docent program. This was a method promoted by the late art historian, Joanna Ziegler and continues to be championed by Rika Burnham, Head of the Education at the Frick Collection.

For example, when considering Karl Appel's *Child and Beast II*, a docent marveled at the varying thickness of the paint and diverse methods of application. After viewing footage of Appel hurling paint onto the canvas, the docent then explored the points of explosion and aggression in the Art Center painting. Another docent assigned *The Adventures of Ulysses: The Blinding of Polyphemus* painted by Master of the Johnson Collection Assumption of the Magdalene was at first disgruntled to be stuck with the mythological panel. The repeated viewing sessions enabled an appreciation for the complicated narrative illustrated by the artist and the rebellious attitude of Ulysses.

Minds may wander and time may slow to a crawl on some occasions, but there have been gradual appreciations and revelations. This practice has enabled docents to *know* the collection in new ways.

Nicole M. Roylance
Coordinator of Public Education and Information

New and Improved

Have you visited the Art Center blog, *Off the Wall* recently? The blog has been redesigned and new features have been added. In its first year online, the blog has connected over 10,000 virtual viewers to the Art Center collection. You can read about the daily happenings at the museum and learn more about the permanent collection and special exhibitions. The blog web address remains the same, <http://blogs.vassar.edu/flaceducation>.



Photo: ©Vassar College/John Abbott

Membership

JULY 1, 2010 – JUNE 30, 2011

The Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center is grateful to our members who have demonstrated their commitment to the traditions of excellence and arts education that have defined the Art Center for over 150 years. Thanks to our Members we were able to add significant works to our collection, offer special exhibitions that served both the Vassar community and the general population and lead engaging school programs in the galleries and throughout the Hudson Valley. The gift of membership ensures that students, professors and art lovers will be able to access this valuable resource for generations to come.

Director's Circle (\$5,000)

Mary Pick Hines '53 P '81
Arthur Loeb
Mary Ellen Weisl Rudolph '61
P '98

Benefactor (\$2,500)

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David John Nash P '13
Grace McGraw Parr '48
Belle Krasne Ribicoff '45 P '78
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Mary Coxe Schlosser '51 P '82
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Donor (\$500)

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Phebe Townsend Banta '61
Joan Hirschhorn Bright '83
Anne Holton Bushman '44
Mary Ann Bickford Casey '60
Whitney Wilson Donhauser '89
Elizabeth Lewisohn Eisenstein '45-4
Vivien Elmslie '45-4
Maryann Kallison Friedman '55
Beatrice Bronson Garvan '50
Miriam Mendlovitz Gold '53
Frances Aaron Hess '53
Katharine Candee Hunvald '52
Henry P. Johnson '88
Candace Jenks Lewis '66 P '01
Gay Patterson Lord '57
Jean Bronson Mahoney '52 P '80
P '82
Stephen Mazoh
Deborah and Jason D. McManus
P '00
Alice Pack Melly '56
Sylvia Allen Nelson '53
Mary Hyde Ottaway '59
Purcell Scheu Palmer '62
Charles E. Pierce, Jr.
William A. Plapinger '74 P '10
Sally Lyman Rheinfrank '63
Deborah Menaker Rothschild '71
Louise Edelman Sagalyn '47 P '84
Tessa Bowman Smith '54 P '83
Phyllis Davison Teasdale '43

Nora Ann Wallace '73
Lesley Jean Yu Walter '74 P '07
Sue Gotshal Weinberg '51
Ann Thom Welles '45-4
Georgia Elmes Welles '52
Allison Whiting '86

Sustaining (\$250)

Janet and Godfrey William
Amphlett P '13
Louise Leipner Arias '62
Mary Benjamin Arnstein '47
Catherine E. Baer
Lydia Pratt Blackshaw '52
Aurelia Garland Bolton '57
Sally Thackston Butler '52 P '77
Betty Oseid Carey '52 and
Michael E. Carey
Elizabeth Goodrich Chamberlain '38
Sally Dayton Clement '71 P '09
Katinka Podmaniczky Coleman '39
Julia Reed Blodgett Curtis '62
Stephen Dewhurst '75
Karen Domino '73
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P '99
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For a Limited Time Only

IN THE GALLERIES

At first glance, viewers might conclude that one of the galleries has an identity problem. Two Neoclassical paintings hang alongside a suite of contemporary photographs and a selection of Renaissance prints. Two weeks later, a few Japanese woodcuts join this cacophonous ensemble. What is going on?

For just over a decade the Art Center has made this space, the Project Gallery, available for professors to request the temporary installation of works of art. Used heavily by art faculty and occasionally by other professors in the past, the gallery has experienced increased demand as faculty from a wider range of disciplines have come to use original works of art with their students.

The Fall 2011 semester opened with an eclectic mix of photographs installed for students enrolled in English professor Judy Nichols' class, *Social Class and Imagination* (ENGL 101.17). Students wrote short observation papers on iconic photographs such as Dorothea Lange's *Migrant Mother, Nipomo, California* (1936) and Lewis Hines' *Girl at Spinning Machine, Cotton Mill* (1908), as well as Diane Arbus' *A Family on their Lawn One Sunday in Westchester, N.Y.* (1968). Later installations feature works to be used by students of drama professor Kenisha Kelly and history professor Lydia Murdoch.

Visitors often wonder what we do with the over 18,000 works in the permanent collection when they are not on view. They are not forgotten or overlooked. Depending on their subject, period, or medium they may be examined very closely in the Project Gallery for a limited time by students from such diverse disciplines as religion, anthropology, or even chemistry.



Lewis W. Hine
Girl at Spinning Machine, Cotton Mill, 1908
Gelatin silver print, 10 9/16 x 13 11/16"
Purchase, Betsy Mudge Wilson, class of 1956,
Memorial Fund, 1974.15

This fall, a number of works from the Art Center's permanent collection will be travelling to other institutions across the globe. Here is a short list of works that may be on view in your local museum:

Florine Stettheimer's *Natorium Undine* will travel to the Brooklyn Museum, the Dallas Museum of Art, and the Cleveland Museum of Art for the exhibition, *Youth and Beauty: Art of the American Twenties*.

Kay Sage's *Small Portrait* will be featured in *Double Solitaire: The Surrealist Works of Kay Sage and Yves Tanguy* at the Norton Museum of Art, and the Mint Museum of Art after having originated at the Katonah Museum of Art.

Two drawings from the Art Center collection by Willem de Kooning are currently on view in the MoMA retrospective of the abstract expressionist.

Check the host institutions' websites for exact exhibition dates and visiting hours.

ON THE ROAD



Florine Stettheimer (American, 1871-1944)
Natorium Undine, 1927
Oil and encaustic on canvas
Gift of Ettie Stettheimer, 1949.5

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CURRENT AND UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS:

**A Pioneering Collection:
Master Drawings from the Crocker Art
Museum**
September 16 – December 11, 2011

Marco Maggi: *Lentissimo*
January 20 – April 1, 2012

Mapping Gothic France
March 23 – May 20, 2012

Excavations: The Prints of Julie Mehretu
April 13 – June 17, 2012



Julie Mehretu (American, b. Ethiopia, 1970-)
Entropia (review), 2004
Lithograph and screenprint on Arches 88 paper
Courtesy of Highpoint Editions, Minneapolis
©Julie Mehretu

On the cover:
Marco Maggi (Uruguayan, 1957 -)
Yellow Hotbed, 2011 (detail)
Cuts on 49 reams of paper
Courtesy of the artist © Marco Maggi

Art
at Vassar

A publication for the members of
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Fall 2011