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Historic American Paintings in The Brooklyn Museum of Art:

A Critical Collection History

with Selected Entries

by

Teresa A. Carbone

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Art History in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

2003

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Art History in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

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Abstract

Historic American Paintings at the Brooklyn Museum of Art:

A Critical Collection History with Selected Entries

by

Teresa A. Carbone

Advisor: D. H. Barbara Weinberg

This dissertation participates in the current interest in the critical analysis of museum collections. The subject is The Brooklyn Museum of Art's historic American painting collection from 1851 to 1951. The critical essay begins with a consideration of the collection's ideological origins in Brooklyn's social reform movement, and its actual founding through the bequest of the philanthropist Augustus Graham to fund the purchase of work by living American artists for a permanent gallery at the Brooklyn Institute. It demonstrates that Graham's introduction of art exhibitions at the Brooklyn Institute (1843 to 1849) and his interest in the patronage of American art were shaped by the reformist rhetoric of the young Brooklyn journalist Walt Whitman. The essay continues with a consideration of the reestablished American painting collection at the new Brooklyn Museum, from 1897 to 1951. It examines the expansion of the collection under a new generation of professionalized directors and curators, with particular focus on the competing agendas for contemporary and historical painting initiated respectively by the director William H. Fox and the Museum's more conservative trustees from 1914 to 1930. Finally, it considers the seminal tenure of curator of John I.H. Baur, and his role in assembling for Brooklyn one of the leading collections in the field. The essay is followed by detailed entries on selected paintings from Brooklyn's collection.

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Preface

All too often we ascribe to collections a sort of internal evolutionary logic, assuming that what they are today is what they were always meant to be. The majority of museum collections, however, are organic entities, that emerge from a more or less definitive point of origin and grow by fits and starts, at the instigation of individuals or groups who continue to redefine institutional priorities and redirect collecting methods. Particularly in the case of collections formed over the course of many decades, active periods of collection growth predictably alternate with intervals of relative stasis, in response to shifting institutional priorities as well as to vicissitudes of the marketplace. In universal survey museums, discrete collection areas may at times take precedence over one another.

In the field of American art, we tend to assume that painting collections have followed an inevitable course to their current configurations as so many mini-surveys--witness how often collection catalogues are introduced by a survey of American art history, rather than by critical collection histories. This only serves to obscure the uniqueness, or quirkiness, of individual collections, and it leaves unexamined the collections that might have been, had different choices been made in the course of their growth.

Comprehensive, critical studies of public collections of American art--and there are few to date--must admit to the near impossibility of an undeterred collecting trajectory, in the ideological as well as the practical sense. They should document not only the timely purchase and fortuitous gift, and the seminal exhibition and progressive

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installation. They should consider the frustrated collecting agendas, foiled acquisitions and missed opportunities, and the institutional and cultural contexts in which they occurred, with the goal of a more accurate understanding of the rise and progress of American art.

Even critical collection histories, however, can have the appearance of self-evident narratives, obscuring the complex and time-consuming methodology of information gathering required to complete them. In the preparation of the history of the Brooklyn Museum of Art's collection of historic American oil paintings, my approach was necessarily two-fold in treating two very different eras in the institution's history.

In the investigation of the role of the Fine Arts during the early years of the Brooklyn Institute, the most pressing problem was the dearth of early Institution documentation aside from terse accounts of regular board meetings. Additional information about the early Institute's leaders and activities, and the Brooklyn milieu in which they operated, were culled primarily from contemporaneous newspaper reports. A synthesis of these accounts was further contextualized through a three-part survey of the American social reform movement, accounts of other American antebellum cultural institutions, and period writing and contemporary analyses regarding ideologies of cultural uplift. Relevant newspaper articles by Walt Whitman were additionally considered within the framework of his life and greater oeuvre.

In constructing a history of the American oil painting collection as reincarnated in the new Brooklyn Museum from 1897 to 1951, my information gathering was three-part in nature. The first step was the in-depth research of individual works in the collection

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and a further consideration of the timing and circumstances of their entry into it. In addition to the monographic and archival sources required to document individual artists and their paintings, I additionally consulted Museum documents including departmental files, registrar's records, the Museum Archives.

The second step consisted of identifying the broader sequence into which Brooklyn's American acquisitions fell, and the specific institutional situations underlying the patterns, trends, and anomalies within that sequence. As a necessary complement to charting the growth of the collection, I conducted a parallel survey and analysis of the patterns in the deaccessions made from the painting collection prior to 1951. A survey of sixty years of documentation held in the Museum's archives, including the discrete records of directors, curators, and departmental staff, were invaluable in this regard. I further consulted contemporaneous accounts of Museum activities in the painting field during the same period of time, both in the form of Museum publications (catalogues, journals, and bulletins), and accounts published in the popular and scholarly press. Many newspaper reviews were available in the form of the Museum Archive's extensive clipping scrapbooks (known as the "Museum Yearbooks.") The consideration of such important events as special exhibitions and reinstallations, to which many American acquisitions were closely tied, was particularly crucial to the formation of a more complete picture of the collection's growth. Additional biographical research on key figures in the formation of the collection (staff, trustees, and donors) was also required to have a clearer sense of their contributions.

This process was followed by a third step that entailed contextualizing the Brooklyn Museum of Art's American painting collection history against the background

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of continually evolving philosophies of museology (pertaining to both acquisition and display) and comparative collection histories. In the consideration of museum theory, it quickly became apparent that additional research into the work and writings of certain key figures (including Benjamin Ives Gilman, Charles Cotton Dana, and Brooklyn's own Philip N. Youtz) was necessary. It then became easier to see how the decisions and actions of individuals responsible for shaping Brooklyn's collection conformed or departed from the prevailing ideas of their times. Tabulating the growth and changes of comparative collections at other major museums was relatively easy in those instances where a comprehensive collection history was available (these included Elizabeth M. Kornhauser's history of the Wadsworth Atheneum collection, Judith Barter's account of the Art Institute of Chicago collection, and Susan Matheson's very helpful recent history of Yale's collections.) For the purposes of this study, The Metropolitan Museum of Art undoubtedly was the most important point of comparison, owing to the fact that Brooklyn's collecting in the field was often plotted and measured by its directors, trustees, and curators, specifically in relation to the activities of its neighbor across the river. It thus was necessary to devote particular attention to aspects of the growth of The Metropolitan's American painting collection, as well as to the American art exhibitions that were mounted there prior to 1951. In the absence of a written history of the Metropolitan's collection, it was necessary to complete a survey of The Metropolitan's three-volume collection catalogue and a synthesis of accession numbers and credit lines into a rough collection history. I additionally surveyed unpublished deaccession records in The Metropolitan's Departments of American Art in order to compose a more complete picture of that collection's development.

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It should be mentioned that no picture of the Brooklyn Museum of Art's collection of historic American painting would be complete without consideration of its large and fine holdings of American watercolors, which lie outside the purview of this study. For a more complete understanding of these joint collections, the reader should consult the extensively researched and insightful accounts of the founding and growth of the watercolor collection in Linda S. Ferber and Barbara Dayer Gallati's Masters of Color and Light: Homer, Sargent, and the American Watercolor Movement (1998).

I chose the end of John Baur's tenure at the Brooklyn Museum in 1951 as the endpoint of the following study for a number of reasons, the most important being that, from then on, owing largely to its new-found strength and integrity, the collection was regarded definitively as a collection of *historic* American painting. The forty-year competition with contemporary art for a starring role in the Museum was left behind, in effect ending a long era. The perception of the historical American collections as discrete and whole was further solidified through the institution of the "post-1945" line of demarcation within the painting collection soon thereafter, firmly parting the two areas practically and conceptually.

Brooklyn's collection has continued to grow in many remarkable ways that resonate with, and differentiate it from, others in the field. It is my hope that potentially forthcoming, critical histories of other collections of American art will provide an even clearer sense of what made the founding and cultivation of Brooklyn's collection of historic American oil paintings both unique and compelling.

Teresa A. Carbone

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Chapter I: "Ardent, Radical, and Progressive": Augustus Graham, Walt Whitman, and American Art at the Brooklyn Institute

At the Brooklyn Museum of Art, American art has played a unique role as the institution's founding collection. Brooklyn's fine arts collection originated in the 1850s with the acquisition of American paintings of the nineteenth century--the contemporary art of the period. The American collection is additionally distinguished in consistently having retained its prominence within museum's greater collection from the late 1890s. At that moment the Museum's rate of acquisitions increased exponentially, under the professionalized guidance of directors and curators, in response to the opening of the new, ambitiously scaled McKim Mead and White building in which they are still housed today.

The following chapter offers a close, critical consideration of the inception of the Brooklyn Museum of Art's historic American painting collection. It culminates where the collection began: in the highly unusual stipulation of the bequest of Augustus Graham, a Unitarian philanthropist who nearly single-handedly underwrote the early Brooklyn Institute, to commission works by living American painters for a permanent public gallery of art. Though well known as fact, Graham's bequest, which was indeed the germ of what would become The Brooklyn Museum of Art's large and important collection of historic American paintings, has never been explored in a way that fully reveals its uniqueness or the social and ideological context in which it occurred.

By the end of his life, Augustus Graham was a wealthy and religious man who long had been immersed in the work of antebellum social reform movement. The early

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Brooklyn Institute and the other charitable institutions in which he was deeply involved were founded in order to inspire or persuade the rising tides of young laborers to embrace values and behaviors that would elevate their lives and American society as a whole, or at least save it from a decline that appeared imminent, as the forces of urbanization and industrialization eroded the once-firm authority of government, church and family. In this chapter I will question how the fine arts, and American art in particular, garnered a place in the otherwise abstemious offerings of the new institutions of reform: the Sunday Schools, the libraries, the urban missions. I will explore their introduction at the Brooklyn Institute through a series of seminal loan exhibitions organized by the trustees in the 1840s, and their promotion for the purpose of social uplift by the young Brooklyn Eagle editor Walt Whitman throughout the late 1840s and into the 1850s. Moreover, I will suggest that Whitman's advocacy of the arts, articulated in the emphatic language of the antebellum reform movement, was the primary formative influence on Graham's designation of the painting purchase fund at the time of his death in 1851. This chapter will thus explore how two very unlikely co-conspirators brought about a defining moment in the history of American art in New York. It will conclude with a brief consideration of subsequent dormancy of Brooklyn's American painting collection from the 1860s through the 1880s, precisely that period when the nation's first great universal survey museums were founded.

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Part One: The Mission of the Brooklyn Institute

The Brooklyn Museum of Art's American painting collection was initiated for the use by the Brooklyn Institute, a lyceum-like organization whose heyday spanned the 1840s. The Institute had emerged in 1843 from an earlier organization, the Apprentices Library Association, which had been incorporated in 1824 by a group of progressive Brooklyn reformers as a lending library for the edification of young, working-class men and women.[1] When the Apprentices Library Association introduced a lecture series in 1827, it moved the library in the direction of a lyceum, an organizational type introduced in the American northeast by Josiah Holbrook, a Yale-educated traveling lecturer, and avidly promoted by advocates of social uplift from the late 1820s through the antebellum period.[2] Primarily a venue for public lectures, the community lyceum was intended for the general diffusion of practical knowledge which ultimately might lead to the moral, social, and economic improvement of the attendees; although politics and religion were rigidly excluded from the programs of the early lyceums, it was clear that the civic leaders who organized and operated them were not without their biases in seeking to shape the attitudes and values of an increasingly diverse voting public.[3]

The expansion of the Apprentices Library Association's activities to embrace the practices of the lyceum movement was not surprising, give the latter's rapid spread and rise in influence at the time, and the lecture series would remain the organization's most highly valued feature after its reconstitution as the Brooklyn Institute in 1843, by which time it was housed in the former Lyceum Building on Washington Street.[4] It is important to note here that the philanthropic and egalitarian ideology of the original Apprentices

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Library Association endured as the institution was transformed over the period from 1824 through the 1850s. This ideology was diametrically opposed to that underlying the founding of society libraries for the elite, such as the Boston Athenaeum, which sought to foster civic pride, cultural attainment and social solidarity among a distinctive upper class.[5]

Unlike its initiation of the lecture series, however, the Brooklyn Institute's instigation of ambitious loan exhibitions in 1843 demonstrated a significantly different impulse, and probably should be attributed directly to Augustus Graham's assumption of the leadership of the Institute presidency. Graham, a figure at once elusive and ubiquitous in Brooklyn society, was literally a self-made man. Born in England as Richard King, Graham had emigrated to Maryland where he assumed a new identity, became an established merchant, was married in 1806, and naturalized under his assumed name the following year. He abandoned both his family and his business, however, to move to upstate New York with his former partner, John Bell, who also assumed the Graham name and a new identity as Graham's brother. They conducted business there as merchants and brewers until their move to Brooklyn in 1815. The "Graham Brothers" ran a Brooklyn brewery until 1822, when they retired as wealthy men. They subsequently incorporated the Brooklyn White Lead Factory (a paint manufactory) on Dock Street, and established their residence on the corner of Front and Dock Streets.[6]

Despite or perhaps because of his own transgressions in adopting a spurious identity, abandoning his family in Maryland, and establishing his fortune in the production of alcoholic beverages in the age of a burgeoning temperance movement, Graham developed a profound dedication to Brooklyn's Unitarian community; and he

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enacted his redemptive commitment through work for the Brooklyn Institute and a host of charitable institutions that came to rely on his extraordinary generosity.[7] His founding role in the Apprentices Library Association (he was a member of the original board of directors in 1824 and served as vice-president from 1827 through 1831) exemplified the doctrine underlying Unitarian reform efforts: the advocacy of self-improvement as a path to moral edification and social progress. Graham continued to embrace an essentially optimistic approach to reform in his orchestration of public programs as Institute president during the period from 1840 until his death in 1851.[8] As Steven Mintz has remarked in a recent discussion of middle-class reform efforts in the antebellum period, reformers like Graham were, in their best guise, institution builders who invested in the individual as the primary agent of social improvement.[9] More precisely, it was through active self-control and self-improvement, and a deliberate rejection of irresponsible, unproductive, or anti-social behavior, that broader social progress would be achieved. According to Mintz, activists in the antebellum reform movement were motivated both by a religious belief in the possibility and necessity of moral and social improvement, and by a secular, Enlightenment-derived belief in equality and social progress that was among the legacies of the American Revolution. The latter impulse, for example, fully informed Graham's decision in 1843 to designate Washington's Birthday as the Brooklyn Institute's anniversary, to be honored through the presentation of awards to the leading students.[10] Although Graham also is likely to have appreciated the ways in which social reform might benefit Brooklyn in the economic sense, the motivation for his donation of the Lyceum Building and an endowment to the Institute on July 4, 1848, and of his final, substantial bequests to numerous Brooklyn institutions, must be seen at least in part as a

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beneficent investment in the moral and social fiber of his extended community of Brooklyn neighborhoods for generations to come.[11]

Part Two: The Introduction of the Fine Arts at the Brooklyn Institute, 1841-1849

One year after Graham's appointment as President in 1841, the Apprentices Library Association (so-called until 1843) embraced artistic training with the initiation of a program of classes in mechanical, architectural, landscape and figure drawing for the young patrons of the library. From 1843 through 1849, however, the fine arts were assigned a more expansive role with the inauguration of annual loan exhibitions featuring large selections of paintings as well as machinery and manufactured wares, all broadly described as "specimens of any unusual, ornamental, or curious works of Nature or Art." The exhibitions were all the more remarkable for having few rivals in greater New York in the 1840s, when only the National Academy of Design, the American Art-Union (from 1839 to 1851), the New-York Gallery of the Fine Arts (a static collection), and the American Institute of the City of New York (1828-1876) held regular annual exhibitions. The American Institute's annual exhibitions were perhaps most comparable to those of the Brooklyn Institute in their inclusion of manufactures in addition to fine and decorative arts.[12] As Ethan Robey has explained recently, however, the American Institute Fairs, mounted expressly for the promotion of American goods and manufactures, showcased with few exceptions the work of commercial artists, architects, printmakers, and photographers, rather than the historic and contemporary fine arts

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objects, by leading artists, that constituted the art component of the Brooklyn Institute exhibitions.[13]

The organizers of the 1843 exhibition assembled an impressive array of 163 works of American and European art drawn from Brooklyn and New York collections and presented free of charge to members and their families and at an admission fee of 12 1/2 cents to non-members. In both number and quality, the American paintings rivaled the annual display mounted by the National Academy of Design; popular highlights included Asher B. Durand's Sunday Morning (1839, now The New-York Historical Society) and William Sidney Mount's The Barn Dance (unidentified). Numerous New York artists were among the lenders, including Durand, John Casilear, Thomas Doughty, Alvan Fisher, Henry Peters Gray, Charles Cromwell Ingham, John Gatsby Chapman, as well as Brooklyn artists including Regis Gignoux and Thomas Thompson. Of particular notice was Gilbert Stuart's full-length portrait of George Washington (1796, BMA 45.179), on loan from Brooklyn's prominent Pierrepont family.[14] Response to the display was enthusiastic, although a reviewer for the Brooklyn Daily Eagle noted that the paintings vied with such appealing features as the "grand display of dahlias" in the lower room. According to the same writer, "The chief point of attraction is the picture gallery, where the splendid full length of Washington by Stewart [sic] is the observed of all observers. . . . It is, indeed, a picture to be studied, and we expect to see crowds of Gothamites rushing hither upon that errand."[15] The address marking the October opening was delivered by Gabriel Furman, the prominent Brooklyn lawyer and judge, and former Apprentices Library secretary whose avocation was the study and documentation of early Brooklyn history.[16] It is interesting to note that less than a week later Furman delivered a

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formal address (devoted exclusively to the advocacy of a Protective Tariff on imported goods) to mark the opening of the Sixteenth Annual Fair of the American Institute.[17]

The success of the 1843 annual no doubt encouraged the organizers in their preparation of the 1844 exhibition. The latter effort was led by a trio of Institute trustees including Long-Island Star publisher Alden J. Spooner, who would lend seven modest works to the exhibition.[18] In order to encourage new individuals to participate as lenders, the trustees issued a pamphlet soliciting loans in the service of a clearly articulated goal: "to diffuse a taste for the Fine Arts, and thus to patronize and encourage meritorious artists, particularly of our own country."[19] The expansion of the Institute's original mission from an emphasis on technical training to the promotion of a level of art appreciation and patronage capable of encouraging and supporting American artists was a distinctly progressive move, and one that would inform the activities of the institution in the decades that followed. The 160 works in the 1844 exhibition were, ironically, predominantly European (or copies after European works), including paintings attributed to Raphael, Tintoretto, "Ruysdell", Velasquez and Salvator Rosa. Thirteen of the European works were lent by David Leavitt, a highly successful Brooklyn-based businessman and banker, a partner of Augustus Graham in the Brooklyn White Lead Company, and for many years Graham's neighbor. Among the American works were John Vanderlyn's portrait of Theodosia Burr (circa 1802-03, Yale University Art Gallery), lent by a Mrs. J. Webb, three landscape subjects by Jasper Cropsey, Mount's Fortune Telling (Dregs in the Cup (1839, now The New-York Historical Society), lent by the artist, and a work entitled Children Playing (location unknown) by the Brooklyn Institute's own pupil Walter Libbey.[20]

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The degree to which the Institute expected from the outset that the exhibitions would function as educational tools is revealed in a report to the board that noted with great satisfaction that the visitors had included "several private schools, 27 Sunday schools, all the public schools (8), the orphans under the sisters of Charity, and by the children of the Brooklyn Orphan Asylum."[21] The board's attention to so distinct an audience of working class and underprivileged children demonstrates the Unitarian-based reform agenda that continued to serve as the ideological foundation of the Institute's programs. It was understood that children who experienced beauty and creative achievement through an exhibition of this type would be instructed and inspired to reserve their leisure time for edifying and productive pursuits rather than for idleness or inappropriate activities.

By 1845 the Institute was in full stride, most notably with its highly touted lecture series, and the trustees were actively expanding the range of programmatic offerings. Among their goals at the year's outset were a lecture series for children; a drawing school open to all; exhibitions of natural history and technology; and expansion of the library. The trustees also intended "to throw open a gallery containing specimens of the finest European artists, with productions of the best painters of our own country."[22] This ambitious project was very likely on the minds of Institute officials when the 1845 annual exhibition opened that fall. As in 1843, the installation was dramatically dominated by the work of American painters, ranging from a substantial assortment of portraits, to genre subjects by James Goodwyn Clonney (a lender) and William Tylee Ranney, and the notable history panting Surrender of Guatemozin (location unknown) by Peter Rothermel. Among the canvases were a number of didactic subjects that must had

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particular appealed to administration: Thomas Cole's Elijah at the Entrance of the Cave (current location unknown), lent by the artist, and Daniel Huntington's Communion with the Sick (current location unknown), on loan from R. Robb, Esq. The prominent New York collector Charles E. Leupp loaned works by Durand and Francis William Edmonds, and the local art scene once again was represented by Gignoux and Libbey. Also making an appearance was the famous Winter Scene in Brooklyn (circa 1819-20, BMA 97.13, see Appendix of Entries) by the late Brooklynite Francis Guy, on loan from the son of its original owner, James C. Parshall.[23] A Brooklyn Eagle reviewer, who devoted his attention to the more accessible features of the fair (including the "pyramid of flowers" and "mammoth representatives of the vegetable kingdom"), nevertheless praised the entire enterprise,

> We visited the rooms of the Institute last evening and were exceedingly gratified, not only with the entertainment which the directors had prepared for us, but also with the very large throng of citizens, both male and female, old and young, that we found in attendance. . . . Had the intrinsic merits of the exhibition proper been less than they were it would still have been an ample reward for the trouble of visiting it to witness so goodly an array of the fairest representatives of Brooklyn, and so much of that subtle element called *Brooklyn feeling*.[24]

The Brooklyn Institute exhibitions had clearly found a willing and enthusiastic audience among both critics and the public; and despite the broadly representative nature of the art exhibitions (which included a range of American and European artists), these events were perceived as a demonstration of *local* character, pride and cultural attainment.

A year later, during the run of the 1846 annual exhibition, the trustees formally announced their intention to establish a permanent Gallery of Art to be formed primarily from donations of art by the community. The setting for the announcement was an exhibition (152 works) that was dramatically strong in American entries. It included a

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wealth of portraits by the major New York painters (Huntington, Inman, Elliott, and F.R. Spencer) and a surprising range of figure subjects, from a Native American subject by William Ranney and an ideal figure by Henry Peters Gray, to Christian Mayr's remarkable portrayal of an African American wedding celebration, Kitchen Ball at White Sulphur Springs (1838, The North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh), lent by the artist.[25] In support of their move to expand the role of fine arts beyond the yearly exhibition event, the trustees noted for the record,

> We know there are worthy citizens who are ignorant that we have the nucleus of a Gallery of Art and would be glad to increase it. We now invite donations of Art, the intention is to form a gallery at all times free to the public under proper restrictions, as a means of refining and elevating the taste for art culture.[26]

Part Three: Promoting American Art for Brooklyn: Walt Whitman and the Language of Social Reform

The timing of the announcement by the Institute board, led by Graham, was not entirely surprising, given widespread theories about the fine arts as instruments of improvement, particularly on the poorly educated. This promotion was an outgrowth of the expanding influence of Mechanics Institutes and design schools in Continental Europe and in England, and especially the rhetoric emerging from England's Government School of Design (founded in 1836). The Government School of Design initiated a collection of casts in 1837 and a collection of historical and modern decorative objects in the mid-1840s, and its administration articulated a broad range of goals for them: the elevation of public taste, which would create a demand for better-designed objects; the

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reinvigoration of the designs by industrial artists; and the uplift of the attitudes and behaviors of the general public.[27] Anthony Burton has noted that general social uplift was the most vaguely articulated of these goals, "Then, as now, the belief that placing works of art in front of people's eyes would somehow uplift their souls was an article of faith. . . . Yet many of the people who believed that art was good for you could not have told you quite how it was good for you. The word 'silent' often conveniently concealed uncertainty about the effect of art . . . ."[28] Perhaps the notion of the *silent* effect of art on individuals had something to do with the fact that visual appreciation could occur independent of literacy.

This type of rhetoric was also current in the American press, often emerging directly from British sources. An article published in The Anglo-American in 1845, for example, offered a review of comments delivered by the secretary of the Manchester School of Design. With a nod to early-nineteenth-century Scottish philosopher Dugald Stewart's Common Sense philosophy,[29] the school's secretary George H. Jackson described the viability of improving taste through exposure to art and natural beauty, and he outlined the ameliorative effects of improved taste on individuals in all walks of life, on "the welfare and progress of art," and on "national and individual prosperity."[30] Most interesting for this discussion, however, were Jackson's comments on the methods through which improvement might be achieved, the most viable being the public "emporium" where the "up-grown man" would have access to art and manufactures during his own leisure time and in the company of his family,

> It is not merely as it regards their influence on art, that I would advocate their establishment; I would also plead for them on account of the moral effects they would produce amongst the mass of people. I think it would

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> be readily admitted, that, if such places were opened and frequented by them, they could not fail to elevate their notions, and purify their actions.[31]

Comparable thinking was at play even closer to home, in the assertive opinions of the young new editor of the Brooklyn Daily Eagle, the aspiring poet Walt Whitman. Over the course of his three-year tenure at the newspaper, which had been founded in 1841 as the organ of the Kings County Democratic party, he steered its editorial voice in a liberal direction, advocating for the expansionist policies of President James K. Polk, the hotly debated Wilmot Proviso (1846) prohibiting the extension of slavery into new territories, and an agenda of progressive social reform.[32] Whitman had been on the job only a matter of days when he wrote the first of many editorials on the arts in which he employed the emphatically egalitarian and nationalistic language of the American antebellum reform movement, striking a chord resonant with the ideas and goals of Graham and the Institute board. In "Polishing the Common People," he called for the infusion of American life with the edifying force of the fine arts. Acknowledging that American society had not yet had the opportunity to evolve a need for or appreciation of the arts ("They are the fruit of time--long in ripening"), he asserted, "Yet we could wish the spreading of a sort of democratical [sic] artistic atmosphere, among the inhabitants of our republic, even now." Whitman recommended the immediately accessible resources of "tasty prints, cheap casts of statuary, and so on," and even suggested that the presence of flowers in the home was equally improving. Anticipating resistance to his views, he added, "Such results, we know, escape the minds of men who judge hastily and superficially; but we are assured the invisible sway of even a picture has sometimes controlling influence over a man's character and future life."[33]

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Whitman undoubtedly knew that his comments were in accord with the developing agenda of the Institute trustees. He had a unique tie to the institution, having served briefly as the acting librarian of the Apprentice's Library Association in 1835; and he continued to champion the Brooklyn Institute library's program in his new editorial capacity. In a missive published late in 1846, he directly addressed "the young men of Brooklyn" with a reform-minded message in which he praised the example of young laborers who had improved their situation in life through study, "If, instead of engaging in scenes, associating with companions, and haunting places, that lead them to become fond of gambling . . . or of intemperance . . . they would but covet the far higher and far purer pleasures of literature, half the misery and guilt that generally afflict men would be precluded them."[34] Whitman was thoroughly immersed in the ideas and language of reform by 1839, when he began a series of moralistic pieces called "The Sun-Down Papers" for the Long Island Democrat, in which he drew heavily on the popular reform literature of the period. During the 1840s he also wholeheartedly embraced the temperance movement, as demonstrated most dramatically in his sensational novel Franklin Evans (1842).[35] Whitman's reformist sentiments were based at least in part on his espousal of the Unitarian motive as expressed in William Ellery Channing's famous and well-published address entitled "Self-culture" (1838) in which he advocated for each individual's development of their moral, religious, intellectual and social self.[36] Whitman's promotion of reform dove-tailed with his active advocacy of philanthropy, which he described in August of that year as, "a vision . . . of the relation existing between all men, as members of one great family; the duty and pleasure of loving and helping one the other . . . as being of the same flesh and blood and bone, and bound

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together by the ties of a common brotherhood, and a common interest . . . ." He urged, "Let us rejoice in its existence, and seek to give divine second birth in action."[37] Issuing from within Brooklyn's small and close-knit cultural circles, Whitman's boosterism must be viewed in the context of his professional and social ties to Institute trustees and leading Brooklyn philanthropists like Graham and Alden Spooner, for whom he had worked at the Long Island Star.[38]

Far from being strictly local, Whitman's comments on the arts also demonstrated a broader national advocacy of American art as early as 1846. He had urged the United States government to purchase the collection of paintings of Native Americans by George Catlin precisely because it was "emphatically American, and of such decided importance to Art and to our national History."[39] He nevertheless appears to have found the goal of a more local uplift effort to be more immediately pressing during the mid-1840s. Whitman prefaced his remarks on the Institute's fall exhibition of 1846 with a reminder to readers of the Eagle's advocacy for the amenities of life, "we go heartily for all the rational refinements and rose-colorings of life--such as music, mirth, works of art, genial kindness, and so forth." Continuing in the same vein, he spoke more specifically about the local popularization of the arts, "We wish every mechanic and laboring man and woman in Brooklyn would have some such adornment to his or her abode . . . a print hung on the wall, a pot of flowers, or even the occasional noise of an accordeon [sic]"; and noted that even in the poorest individual should make room for "the appetite for beauty and the intellectual."[40] While he remarked only briefly upon specific works in the exhibition, he reserved particular praise for a number of portraits, and for Mayr's Kitchen Ball at White Sulphur Springs in its return appearance at the Institute. Whitman also

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devoted attention to Francis Guy's Winter Scene in Brooklyn (BMA 97.13; see Appendix of Entries), a work that has become an icon of Brooklyn's American collection. Referring to the painting as "a regular feature in these Exhibitions," he commented, " Snow Scene, Brooklyn thirty years ago . . . stood out in as bold relief as ever; and we paid due respect to it. Perhaps few things will be able to bring before the eyes and realization of the next race the fact how rapidly Brooklyn has 'went' in the progress of improvement, more fully than this well delineated picture."[41] Most important, in his closing remarks Whitman called emphatically for an ongoing presence of the fine arts in Brooklyn life in the form a gallery similar to that envisioned by the Institute trustees, "We commend these Exhibitions--and hope the spirit which prompts them will increase and multiply in Brooklyn. We wish some plan could be formed which would result in a perpetual free exhibition of works of art here, which would be open to all classes."[42]

While his views were in keeping with the progressive British rhetoric on the subject, Whitman employed a distinctly egalitarian tenor that resonated with the language used two years earlier in support of the recently founded New York Gallery of the Fine Arts, a private collection whose guardians intended to install it for permanent, free public use.[43]An 1844 petition requesting that New York City provide a permanent, municipal space for the gallery was forcefully direct in asserting the socially ameliorating role of public art galleries,

> They are believed to exercise a salutory influence on the moral character of the people, and if properly encouraged in this city, would be especially beneficial for our youth, who, for want of intellectual resorts of this character, contract habits of the most pernicious tendency. . . . a portion of mankind will look at pictures, when they will not look into a book . . .therefore an institution of this kind . . . will become a co-laborer in the great movement of this age . . . PUBLIC EDUCATION.[44]

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It should be noted here that the audience for which the guardians of the Brooklyn Institute and New York Gallery of the Fine Arts was not identical to that targeted by every budding art institution formed in the 1840s. The Wadsworth Atheneum, formed in 1844 by the Hartford collector Daniel Wadsworth, was intended for an erudite, elite audience, well prepared to appreciate the aspects of aesthetic taste on display.[45]

One year later, in his announcement of the 1847 fall season, Whitman acknowledged the growing public role of the Institute and commended its leaders, "Being decidedly the most interesting feature of Brooklyn life, [the Institute] has so insinuated itself into the affections of a large class of our citizens that its absence would create a blank much to be deplored. For this, thanks to the assiduity and unselfishness of a comparatively small number of gentlemen, of whom Brooklyn ought to be proud."[46] Whitman paid more direct attention to the exhibition in a follow-up article that was largely complimentary and devoted considerable attention to local artists, "Our Brooklyn artists are as well represented as they ought to be, and we find on the catalogue the names of Frothingham, Oddie, Havel, Powers, Gignoux. Their works, we think, should of themselves attract the presence at the Institute of our Brooklyn people . . . ."[47] He reserved the highest praise for three canvases by the conservative landscape painter Thomas Doughty, whose compositions mirrored the tradition of the English picturesque.[48]

The 1847 annual exhibition also drew praise from of a writer for the sophisticated New York journal The Literary World who penned a lengthy review mixing praise for the Institute's ambitions, and success to date, with concern for what was perceived to be its difficult location,

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> Our neighbors on the other side of the river have shown, for the last few years, a very commendable spirit in relation to the Fine Arts, and evinced an earnest desire to do something for themselves that may serve to distinguish them . . . from this great whirlpool of a city that swallows up everything in its vicinity . . . . Laudable as this undertaking is, we fear that Brooklyn is destined to be too much of a suburb ever to assume a distinct and separate being of its own . . . . It is too much dependent upon its great neighbor for its instruction and amusement . . . . Yet . . . they still continue what must ever be an unequal contest, with an energy that deserves success, though it may not command it.[49]

The author went on to address the exhibition, and to commend the motives of the trustees in initiating the Institute's programs in the service of the social uplift movement,

> We accordingly find this is the sixth annual exhibition of the Brooklyn Institute . . . . We so gladly hail any attempt to elevate the public taste by cheap exhibitions of meritorious works of art, that we feel well inclined to give them a helping hand in this particular . . . . Art belongs to the people . . . it is a boon to all mankind, and may be enjoyed by all who have eyes to see. . . . We have gone through the exhibition . . . looking not for faults but for beauties, which, we are glad to say, we have found in great abundance.[50]

In contrast to Whitman, the Literary World critic made little mention of Brooklyn painters individually or as a group, directing attention instead to the leading lights of the New York art world, and duly stating that a number of the canvases had appeared in recent exhibitions at the National Academy of Design. Among the mentioned highlights were Huntington's well-known Woman of Samaria (location unknown), a Study from Nature and a portrait by Durand, Frothingham's copies after Gilbert Stuart's Atheneum portraits of George and Martha Washington, Edwin White's figure subject entitled Artist and Pupil (location unknown), and the work by Doughty that Whitman had commended.[51]

The 1847 exhibition was the last that Whitman would review for the Eagle. He left the newspaper in January 1848, having abandoned the conservative Democratic

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platform it had served since its inception.[52] In this interim period, before Whitman re-emerged in 1850 as an independent spokesman for the cause of American art in Brooklyn, the Eagle editors continued to advocate on behalf of the Institute. In 1849 the newspaper offered a message of general support, noting particularly the thriving natural history collection (the additions to which were enumerated in great detail in a weekly column) and the program of drawing instruction,

> The institute is, we believe, doing a great deal of good. It has a valuable collection of facts and specimens in natural history and weekly meetings which are of much interest; it has also a variety of classes under instruction in drawing, and has sent out some of our most successful artists whose works have been justly and widely renowned. . . . We understand that money, books, specimens of natural history, works of art will always be acceptable . . . .[53]

In 1849 the last of the Brooklyn Institute's annual exhibitions drew particular critical attention. Described by the Eagle critic as "one of the most attractive we have ever seen," including Emanuel Leutze's Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn (location unknown) among the highlights. The same writer offered both praise and encouragement,

> This annual pleasure which is furnished by the managers of the Institute is for the purpose of cultivating a taste for the arts in our beautiful city, and has been got up at a large expense. It is, like the lectures, free to all the subscribers, and to those who are not for the usual fee of 25 cents. The Institute has become the principal source of public instruction and amusement in our city, and is every year . . . and becoming more and more the favorite resort for the intelligent and fashionable part of our citizens. We trust that the elegant entertainment which the managers have now furnished to the public, may have the effect greatly to increase the number of annual subscribers, and place in the hands of the Institute the means of further improvement, and of presenting additional attractions to the lovers of science and art.[54]

Nevertheless, with little note taken or comment registered about the decision, the Brooklyn Institute abandoned its annual exhibitions in 1850, leaving a distinct void in the cultural life of what was by then the third largest city in the United States.[55] Given that

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there had been no internal organizational changes (the officers of the Institute's board had not changed), one viable explanation is that the "large expense" noted by the Eagle had become too great a stress on the organization, which clearly remained reluctant to institute higher entrance fees for non-members. Another is that the trustees believed that the role of the Institute exhibitions had been usurped in the spring of 1850 by the debut exhibition of the new Brooklyn Art Union (discussed below). If this were the case, Institute trustees need not have assumed that their eager, established audience would have been sated by the smaller and more circumscribed offerings of the Art Union, which focused exclusively on the current work of local artists. The Institute exhibitions had been important and successful in part because they drew upon historical as well as current American and European art, and also included large displays of manufactures and natural specimens in a manner especially typical of the antebellum era. As might be expected, there were sporadic local attempts to compensate for the absence of the Institute's wide-ranging exhibitions. Among the more notable examples was a production called the "Brooklyn Museum," which in October of 1850 advertised the staging of a variety of popular theatricals as well as a "Gallery of Fine Arts" featuring a so-called "beautiful and choice collection of CURIOSITIES."[56]

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Part Four: Whitman's Campaign for American Artists and the Graham Bequest for Contemporary American Painting

A development that temporarily proved more fortunate for culture in Brooklyn, and ultimately for the Brooklyn Institute, was the beginning of Walt Whitman's more activist involvement with the visual arts at precisely this time, as his personal ties to Brooklyn artists became closer and more numerous. As Ruth Bohan has noted, the poet's attention to art intensified between 1849 and 1855, when fully one third of his newspaper articles directly addressed the subject. Most important, Whitman became a vocal supporter of the Brooklyn painters Thomas Thompson and Robert Hoskins (both regular contributors to the Brooklyn Institute exhibitions; and Hoskins a drawing instructor at the Institute) in their effort to establish the Brooklyn Art Union, an organization modeled on New York's American Art-Union and devoted to the exhibition, promotion and sale of paintings by American artists.[57] Whitman and his artist colleagues indeed were successful, and the first exhibition of the Brooklyn Art Union opened at the Brooklyn Institute in early April of 1850. The stage had been set at the Institute just weeks before, when the Reverend Dr. Vinton lectured on the topic "Truth in Art," a Ruskin-inspired discourse in which he was compelled to "deprecate the little encouragement that was given in this country generally to the promotion of works of real merit in art."[58] The exhibition of twenty-seven works by resident artists of Brooklyn was declared a success by local critics; an Eagle writer concluded, "The [Brooklyn Art Union] is now fairly established, and from the eclat that has attended its introduction into existence, it bids fair to be one not only of a permanent nature, but destined to take a high position in artistical

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distinction."[59] The enhanced profile of American art at the Institute, even if not carried out directly through the Institute's programming, cannot have been lost on Graham. Whitman's rhetoric gained momentum the following year, when he once again embraced the mission of popular uplift through the arts in his remarkable New York Evening Post editorial "Something About Brooklyn Art and Artists." Here, however, he advocated not just for the benefits of art appreciation, but for the force of creativity,

> Nearly all intelligent boys and girls have much of the artist in them, and it were beautiful to give them an opportunity of developing it in one of the fine arts. . . . What a glorious result it would give, to form of these thousands a close phalanx, ardent, radical, and progressive. . . . Then, would not the advancing years foster the growth of a grand and true art here, fresh and youthful, worthy this republic, and the greatest of the ages? . . . for the thrift and shrewdness that make dollars, are not everything that we should bow to, or yearn for, or put before our children as the be all and end all of human ambition.[60]

In seeking the artist in every common individual, and conjuring a legion of radical creators, Whitman was showing signs of moving beyond the well-entrenched reform movement and toward the idea of activist artist population that would inform the startlingly bold preface to the first edition of Leaves of Grass in 1855.

By April 1851, Whitman was the acknowledged spokesman for the Brooklyn Art Union and as such was called upon to deliver the opening address for the second annual exhibition before an audience at the Brooklyn Institute. Although he focused his remarks on the aesthetic propensities of the ancient Greeks, he began them with a resonant call to Americans to create a place in their lives for art and the ideal,

> Among such people as the Americans, viewing most things with an eye to pecuniary profit . . . ambitious of the physical rather than the intellectual; a race to whom matter of fact is everything, and ideal nothing--a nation of whom the steam engine is no bad symbol--he does good work who, pausing in the way, calls to the feverish crowd that in the life we live upon this beautiful earth, there may, after all, be something vaster and better

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> than dress and the table, and business and politics. . . . It is the glorious province of Art, and of all artists worthy the name, to disentangle from whatever obstructs it, and nourish in the heart of man, the germ of perception of the truly great, the beautiful and the simple.[61]

Even after transferring his support from institutions to artists, Whitman's original faith in the ameliorative effects of art informed one of his most forceful cultural commentaries of the decade.

Augustus Graham died within the year. Prior to his death, he had outlined a will through which much of his substantial fortune was distributed to a list of charitable and educational institutions with which he long had been associated.[62] His will is a fascinating document, containing unpredictable as well as expected assignments of monies. Graham had selected a total of twenty institutions, only three of which received over five thousand dollars (the other seventeen recipients included such notable Brooklyn charities as the Home of Indigent Respectable Females and the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, and a few more remote institutions including Antioch College in Ohio). The first of two institutions to receive ten thousand dollars was the American Unitarian Association in Boston, a choice through which Graham posthumously demonstrated the ardor of his religious faith and his allegiance to the ideology on which his philanthropy was founded. The second and somewhat more surprising designation was the American Colonization Society. This organization that represented the most conservative faction of the anti-slavery movement in its opposition to the assimilation of freed blacks and concomitant promotion of an African homeland in Liberia, a cause in which Graham notably was joined by Whitman.

Of course, the most dramatic designation in the bequest was Graham's allocation of twenty-seven thousand dollars for the Brooklyn Institute, with more specific

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designations to its discrete programs. While the largest portion ($12,000) was provided for the continuation of Sunday evening lectures, five thousand was reserved for the support of a School of Design, and a Gallery of Fine Arts, which was to consist of works commissioned from living American artists. Endowed by Graham's purse and vision, the Brooklyn Institute was the only institution of its time known to have commissioned works from living American painters in order to build a permanent collection. Given Whitman's energetic promotion of the work of living American painters in the very same milieu during the months and years just prior to Graham's designation, one can confidently assume that his rhetoric informed and reinforced Graham's priorities.

Having been an observer of the New York art scene for so many years, Graham surely was aware of the challenges to any organization undertaking to establish a permanent public collection in the New York. Opinion on the subject had been plentiful in the preceding decades, often stimulated by the temporary exhibition of private collections that commanded public attention for brief intervals. On the occasion of the exhibition of the painter William Dunlap's collection in 1838, for example, a critic for the New-York Mirror bemoaned the absence in the United States of any of the traditional mechanisms for the formation of a public collection,

> a nation of freemen, with no privy-purse to cheer and sustain the exertions of genius, with no nobility, save the nobility of talents and enterprise, to spend millions in a commendable pride on the arts, with no despoiling army to tear from the walls of a vanquished foe her dearest and most valued treasures, what can she do towards forming a National Gallery of paintings?[63]

In the years immediately following, some observers of the New York art scene appear to have believed that only private collections of American art, like those being built by Luman Reed and his peers, held the promise of cultural promise of cultural institutions

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for American artists and audiences. In 1840, a contributor to the New-York Mirror suggested that despite the frequency with which wealth changed hands in the United States, there were American private collections "that exceed[ed] in richness and taste any collection to be found in our public institutions."[64]

Despite the pessimistic outlook for fledgling public galleries of American art, after a delay of several years the Brooklyn Institute would forge ahead, armed with Graham's bequest. In the interim, an occasional attempt was made to fill the breech with a new venue for the arts in Brooklyn. Among the most notable was a short-lived entity called the "Brooklyn Gallery of Art," which opened in 1852 with an exhibition and the promise of an art subscription and art lessons for children, all intended to cultivate a higher taste for the arts. Continuing its advocacy for a permanent presence for the arts in Brooklyn, the Eagle commented, " . . . we have now by far the best gallery of pictures which has ever been on exhibition in this city, and if our friends will take a little interest in the matter it will soon become an institution and be a place of which we may be justly proud." Demonstrating an understanding of the community commitment required to support a cultural institution, the same writer asserted encouragingly, "We believe that there are a thousand persons in this city who, if the subject was pressed home upon them, would willingly contribute five dollars each for the sake of sustaining such a gallery as a public institution . . . . No institution has ever been founded in this city with more brilliant prospects of success and of great and permanent usefulness . . . ."[65]

The Brooklyn Gallery of Art appears to have expired by 1855, a year that would prove to be a momentous one in Brooklyn's cultural life, as the occasion for the initiation of Graham's legacy of an endowed collection and the production of Walt Whitman's

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greatest artistic achievement. That June the Brooklyn Institute's Committee on Fine Arts reported that arrangements had been made with Asher B. Durand and Daniel Huntington, the presiding deans of American art, for each to execute a painting for the Institute's fledgling gallery.[66] The unique and momentous nature of this action was remarked upon in the July Fourth edition of The Crayon (a periodical co-edited by Durand's son John),

> A few days since, a commission for a picture was received by Mr. A.B. Durand, for which he is to receive the sum of one hundred and seventy-five dollars, the amount being the interest of a fund bequeathed for the purpose of procuring, annually, 'a specimen of the Fine Arts by a native-born artist.' . . . We believe the art bequests above mentioned are the only ones ever made in this region, with special direction to the public encouragement of the Fine Arts. If there be any others, we would like to chronicle them.[67]

The last remark was a clear indictment of New York's cultural elite and its municipal officials in their double failure to provide consistent patronage of American artists and to achieve a permanent and accessible art gallery in the city. The declaration was more deeply resonant in following on the heels of the recent demise of the New-York Gallery of the Fine Arts.[68]

Considering that the Institute committee might alternatively have selected less important, local Brooklyn artists, their choice of Durand and Huntington as the recipients of the inaugural Graham commission emphatically demonstrated a desire to provide the collection with an auspicious beginning. Although the degree to which the trustees directed Durand in his choice of subjects is unclear, the painter clearly embraced the commission with a precise understanding of its import, and responded by painting a moving allegory to cultural progress modeled on the pictorial precedents established by Thomas Cole's visions of progress encoded in the American wilderness. Durand's completion of the picture The First Harvest in the Wilderness (1855, BMA 97.12) was

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announced in the January 1856 issue of The Crayon, where it was described in great detail,

> The scene represented is a wild country in the midst of forests and mountains, with a clearing, where, in the middle distance, a settler's log-house stands by the side of a primitive road . . . . By the side of the road, and opposite the house, is a field of grain, with the settler engaged in reaping his crop, and upon this field alone, being the main light of the picture, the sunlight streams down from a heavily-clouded sky. . . . The sentiment of the picture is also in keeping with the circumstances belonging to its production. The field of Art is, in the country, but just emerging into the reality of a clearing, upon which the sun of encouragement does shine, if it gleams from clouds and is surrounded by shadows. As an illustration, Mr. Graham may be considered the pioneer in the wilderness, and all honor be to his memory for being the first to make a clearing. The name of Graham is placed on a rock in the foreground of the picture, over which twines a convulvus vine.[69]

Especially with his insertion of Graham's inscribed name into the foreground of the scene, Durand consciously created for Brooklyn a collection cornerstone whose institution-specific character was as utterly unique as its overall subject and execution was representative of the period's most vital vein of American painting.

The year 1855 was equally significant for Walt Whitman. Four years after his call for a phalanx of self-appointed artists to rise among the population of Brooklyn, Whitman had finally abandoned both his faith in the American political process, and in organized reform and uplift, in order to engage in the more radical project of his own poetry. As described by his biographer David S. Reynolds, "A decade earlier, [Whitman] had been a dandyish Democratic journalist, sporting a vest and polished cane, almost sheepishly loyal to political leaders and party principles. Now he was a roughly dressed carpenter who sneered at politicians and looked for redemption among the common people."[70] In the preface to his first and most provocative edition of Leaves of Grass, published in the spring of 1855 by the small Brooklyn press operated by James and Andrew Rome,

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Whitman emphatically pronounced the poet to be the only individual capable of leading the United States: "[The poet] is the equalizer of his age and land . . . he supplies what wants supplying and checks what wants checking."[71] Or as Reynolds explains, "In the absence of a viable political democracy, the poet announces a new cultural democracy formed by various kinds of phenomena, from spiritualism to phrenology, from art to physiology."[72] Although in his role as promoter of the Brooklyn Art Union Whitman had helped to pave the way for the Brooklyn-based art groups that succeeded it[73] he himself had ceased to believe in institutions as progressive social forces and had invested alternatively and exclusively in the individual.

And what might Whitman have thought of Durand's fulfillment of the inaugural Graham bequest with a quiet allegorical memorial to enlightened benevolence? Whitman had thoroughly admired Durand's work in the late forties, when he was actively writing art criticism, but his responses to individual works were rarer by the mid-fifties.[74] He appears to have been sympathetic to the general theme adopted by the Durand, however, if one considers one of the poems he added to the more conservatively organized second edition of Leaves of Grass, published in September, 1856, by which time Durand's painting was at the Institute. In "Song of the Broad-Axe," Whitman rhapsodized at length on the innumerable chains of events initiated by acts of clearing and building in the name of transformation and progress. He begins the third stanza with an image reminiscent of the Durand, "The log at the wood-pile, the axe supported by it,/ The sylvan hut, the vine over the doorway, the space clear'd/ for a garden." Whitman advances the process dramatically in stanza nine, always beginning with the axe, "The axe leaps!/ The solid forest gives fluid utterances,/ They tumble forth, they rise and form,/Hut, tent, landing,

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survey,/ Flail, plow, pick, crowbar, spade,/Shingle, rail, prop, wainscot, jamb, lath, panel, gable,/ Citadel, ceiling, saloon, academy, organ, exhibition-house, library . . . .".[75] If Whitman was more resistant to institutional agendas in 1855, he still acknowledged their emergence from a sequence of constructive actions originating in the individual.

Part Five: In the Wake of Graham and Whitman, The Temporary Retirement of Art at The Brooklyn Institute

The Institute's profile in the art world diminished over the course of the 1850s, very likely because the arts figured less prominently in the institutional agendas of Graham's immediate successors, Charles M. Olcott, Rollin Sandford, and Peter G. Taylor. The lecture series continued to be the Institute's most successful program, continuing throughout the decade with impressive rosters of speakers, including the educator Horace Mann and the architect A.J. Davis.[76] When the Brooklyn Daily Eagle published a promotional piece on the occasion of the Institute's sixteenth anniversary in 1855, the Gallery of Fine Arts that had been so enthusiastically anticipated in the 1840s was conspicuously absent from the text. The message of individual improvement and uplift, however, remained at the fore, "In an age like the present, when almost everything is done for pecuniary gain, an institution like this, devoted to the public interest and the improvement and encouragement of the youth of our city, has large claims for our consideration and regard."[77]

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Daniel Huntington completed a painting in fulfillment of his portion of the inaugural Graham commission three years later, in 1858.[78] The canvas was an allegorical figure subject entitled The Sketcher: A Portrait of Mlle. Rosina, A Jewess (BMA 97.33), in which the artist represented an idealized, Italianate figure--of a type for which he was well-known--seated out-of-doors, sketching a palm tree on her tablet of paper. In contrast to The First Harvest in the Wilderness, The Sketcher attracted little notice, even when exhibited at the National Academy of Design in 1859. The Graham commission and the painting's intended destination in the Institute's permanent collection also went unremarked.

In the decades immediately following the inaugural Graham bequest, the Institute's Fine Arts committee acquired only a handful of works. They purchased a painting of Niagara (1860, formerly BMA 00.61; now collection of Jo Ann and Julian Ganz Jr.), by Jasper F. Cropsey in January, 1862, for the price of one hundred seventy-five dollars (the same as that paid for the Durand seven years earlier). [79] Their ambitions became increasingly modest during this period, as demonstrated by their request in June, 1865, for funds to purchase chromolithographs after portraits of Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses S. Grant, and Martha Washington--purchases indicative of the heightened patriotism of the early post-Civil War years.[80] The last notable work to enter the collection during the 1860s was a painting of Bear Brook Beach, Frenchman's Bay, Coast of Maine (location unknown) by the little-known artist A.W. Warren, purchased in 1865.[81]

The Institute's neglect of the arts from the late fifties was perhaps most surprising during the war years, when many artists, philanthropists and civic leaders enlisted art

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exhibitions and sales in the effort to support the Union cause. Among the most prominent and successful of these was the Art Exhibition of the Metropolitan Fair in Aid of the U.S. Sanitary Commission, mounted in Brooklyn in the spring of 1864. This display of hundreds of works of art lent by artists and collectors was the impressive centerpiece of the highly popular event that raised money to support the well being of Union troops. The exhibition was more of a testament to the vitality of the war effort than to Brooklyn's cultural life, however, for it would stand uncontested as the city's most notable art exhibition of the era.

Ultimately, the Institute's neglect of the arts in the post-bellum period, along with its gradual cessation of a wider range of activities, was the result of an economic decline. In order to complete renovations carried out in 1867 after a fire on the premises, the trustees took out a mortgage on the building and were subsequently forced to devote incoming proceeds to relief of the debt. It should be noted that the Institute's financial fate stood in stark contrast to the overall economic condition of the city, which was flourishing as a result of the wartime manufacturing and trade boom, and the lively speculative financial climate that followed in its wake. During the period of its thirty-year absence from the Brooklyn art scene, the Institute's cultural activities were superseded by Brooklyn Art Association, whose annual exhibitions were the most prominent art events in the city. In addition to providing an exhibition outlet for a growing number of American artists, from Brooklyn and elsewhere, the Association's most notable accomplishment was the organization of a seminal exhibition entitled "The First Chronological Exhibition of American Art," with which it inaugurated its new Montague Street quarters in 1872. Although the Institute's renovations had included the creation of a

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picture gallery, the only notable use of the space appears to have occurred in February of 1870, when a little-documented loan exhibition, apparently of modest proportions, was mounted.

By 1879 the Institute's painting collection, for which there had been such high expectations, consisted of seven founders portraits (see Appendix of Entries for William Dunlap, Portrait of Robert Snow, BMA 97.9)[82] and eight additional pictures: Durand's The First Harvest in the Wilderness, Huntington's The Sketcher, Cropsey's Niagara, Guy's Winter Scene in Brooklyn (presented to the Institute in 1846), two small landscapes by C.R. Loveridge, one of Frothingham's heads of George Washington, and a copy after a portrait of Benjamin Franklin. The trustees were forced to acknowledge that the original Graham bequest, then generating about one hundred dollars per year, was inadequate for the purchase of art "worthy of the Institute," and that no further purchases would be immediately forthcoming. They stated for the record, "A favorable opportunity presents itself for patriotic and public spirited citizens to help on this work, by increasing the endowment fund for art purchases, or by presenting works of art to the Institute. Without some such aid the Gallery of Art must of necessity languish."[83]

The Brooklyn Institute indeed was not alone in finding fine American paintings difficult to acquire in the post-war decades, when the field was beginning to realize its potential on the New York art market. As the organization of new museums increasingly became a topic of public discussion around 1870, their advocates often described wealthy private collectors, who were setting records prices for American paintings, as obstacles to institutional collecting of American art. In an article on the challenges facing the "projected National Gallery" in New York (the future Metropolitan Museum of Art), S.S.

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Conant, a culture critic, commented, "the works of our best artists are in such demand for private houses that it would be difficult to get together, at once, a representative collection such as a national gallery ought to have."[84]

Conclusion

Aside from the dormancy of the American art collection, the great irony of the temporary decline of the arts at the Brooklyn Institute was the degree to which their introduction there in the early 1840s had been a highly progressive development shepherded by guardians, Graham and Whitman the most prominent among them, who believed completely in the improving role of the visual arts in the lives of ordinary citizens. In the decades after Graham's death and Whitman's detachment from the institutional reformist cause, the Institute's trustees and supporters did not sustain a commitment to the arts. This development is additionally ironic in that it coincided with a widespread reawakening to the educational and social value of the arts in the United States in the wake of the Civil War; and the movement that reached a crescendo around 1870 in the rededication and creation of numerous American museums. As early as 1863, James Jackson Jarves asserted in a British journal, "so far from stifling the growth of institutions of a high order or of art, [the war] has the effect of stimulating them, because it convinces Americans that the only security of the republic lies in the enlarged culture of all classes of citizens."[85] This opinion prevailed even in 1870, by which time American rhetoric on the educational value of art museums was reaching a fevered pitch. George

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Fiske Comfort wrote that year, "In the great intellectual awakening, which has followed our late national convulsion, the public attention has been turned in a marked degree to certain deficiencies in our educational system. Especially has the lack been felt of those institutions for the promotion of aesthetic culture, which are found in every nation and almost in every city in Europe." [86] As Joel Orosz has explained more recently, the trauma of the war years generated a dramatic commitment to the progress of public education as the means to national economic recovery and cultural advancement.[87] Thus while it is tempting to attribute the temporary lapse in the Brooklyn Institute's arts agenda to the impact of the war, it was a development that was at odds with the general post-war trend throughout the country.

The rising population of wealthy, cosmopolitan champions of the nascent Museums of the 1870s placed practical education at the forefront of their goals. And at this same moment, formerly elitist institutions including the New-York Historical Society and the Wadsworth Atheneum, and commercially driven museums such as P.T. Barnum's American Museum, reshaped galleries and programs with educational relevance as their goal. The language employed particularly in promoting the newly defined missions of these institutions seems to echo the rhetoric exercised on behalf of the Brooklyn Institute twenty years earlier. Consider the message of egalitarian uplift embedded in the address delivered by Frederic De Peyster to the highly conservative New-York Historical Society in 1865,

> . . . is there not imposed upon us a most solemn responsibility to make this city a source of intelligence and virtue for the whole land? And what can we do in our sphere . . . lay the foundations of a Library, Museum of Antiquities and Science, and Gallery of Art . . . which shall rouse the public mind to noble impulses by the magic influence of genius, which shall stimulate scientific discovery, which shall add strength to all moral

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> and religious institutions and ideas, which shall be a home for the poor for whose elevation our very system of government is designed.[88]

For a decade, from 1841 to 1851, Augustus Graham had promoted a similarly progressive agenda. His agenda further distinguished by its clearly defined religious mandate and its deliberate attention to the power of the arts. It was, however, one that his immediate successors at the Brooklyn Institute ultimately could not and did not sustain. By 1870, Institute trustees were having little success in soliciting members for funds needed to maintain the building and "to invite lecturers and entertainments of a character calculated to improve the morals of the people and to educate them in the arts and sciences which dignify and ennoble human nature."[89]

Graham's agenda for the visual arts could not have emerged so forcefully or have endured as long as it did without the vocal advocacy of the journalist and Brooklynite Walt Whitman for art in the lives of ordinary Americans and for American artistic productions in particular. Given Graham's early personal transgressions, and Whitman's subsequent personal radicalism, their concomitant embrace of a role for art within reformist institutions is remarkably fortuitous. The depth and coincidence of Graham's and Whitman's commitment to art in the lives of the aspiring working class brought about a unique and highly progressive episode in American museum history. It would be left to a later generation, newly attuned to the value of art in a democratic society, to revive the commitment to American art at the Brooklyn Museum at the turn of the century.

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Notes

[1] For a summary history of the Apprentices Library Association and its transformation into the Brooklyn Institute see Linda Ferber, "History of the Collections," Masterpieces in The Brooklyn Museum (New York: Brooklyn Museum and Harry N. Abrams, 1988), 8-10. A building to house the new library was erected on Washington Street in 1825 and dedicated on July 4th of that year by the Revolutionary War hero Lafayette, during his historic tour of the United States. Owing to a lack of funds, the library closed in 1835 and the building was sold to the city the following year. It reopened in 1838 in rented space in the building erected on Washington Street in 1836 for the Brooklyn Lyceum (founded in 1833).

[2] In 1826 Holbrook issued a leaflet entitled American Lyceum of Science and the Arts, Composed of Associations for Mutual Instruction and Designed for the General Diffusion of Useful and Practical Knowledge, outlining the methods and goals of the public lyceum; see Carl Bode, The America Lyceum: Town Meeting of the Mind (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), 22-23.

[3] Ibid.

[4] The board of the Library Association decided in 1840 to reorganize its operations; Augustus Graham purchased the Lyceum Building for its use in 1842, and in 1843 the Library Association was consolidated with the Lyceum under the name of the Brooklyn Institute.

[5] For example, see the analysis of the founding philosophy and subsequent operation of the Boston Athenaeum in the ante-bellum period presented in Ronald Story, "Class and Culture in Boston: The Athenaeum, 1807-1860," American Quarterly 27 (May 1975): 178-99.

[6] The Graham household indeed was complex. After their arrival in Brooklyn they were joined by a putative widowed sister, Maria Graham Taylor (d. 1829). Their family later increased by one more when a Mrs. Isabella Taylor (1776-1829), their housekeeper, assumed the Graham name and the identity of a sister. The two men temporarily moved to separate residences about 1842, the year of John Bell Graham's marriage to Maria Louisa Thompson and of the arrival of Augustus Graham's English nephew, Robert Sherwell, in Brooklyn. By 1844 they had resumed a joint residence. It is interesting to notes the commentary on this unusual domestic situation published by the Brooklyn historian Henry Stiles in 1884, "Whatever the motives which induced them to practice the peculiar comedy of their Brooklyn life, it is certain that brothers and sisters can rarely be found to agree in more perfect harmony than in their case. . . . [The two Graham brothers] kept no separate accounts; lived from a common purse; and their union was always most affectionate, while their probity and business habits derived for them general respect and consideration. They continued to live together as partners till death severed their connection." Stiles, History of Kings County, Including the City of Brooklyn, N.Y. (Brooklyn: W.W. Munsell & Co.,1884), 2:1302. An article in the New York Herald

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generated new interest in the "Graham" story in 1886; see "Three Tangled Lives," New York Herald, October 24, 1886, 17.

[7] Graham sponsored the new minister of the First Unitarian Congregation two years after its incorporation in 1835. A second Unitarian society was founded in 1840 and held its services at the Lyceum Building, which then housed the Brooklyn Institute under Graham's leadership. When the two congregations united in 1842, the first joint service was held there as well. (A permanent church was established on the corner of Pierrepont and Monroe Streets in Brooklyn Heights in 1844.) It is interesting to note, however, Graham's abstention from communion, a fact suggesting that he suffered a degree of personal guilt. On the First Unitarian Church of Brooklyn, see Olive Hoogenboom, The First Unitarian Church of Brooklyn: One Hundred Fifty Years, A History (Brooklyn: First Unitarian Church of Brooklyn, 1987), 36-41.

[8] The philosophical principles of American Unitarianism were established by William Ellery Channing (1780-1842), who contested Calvinist beliefs in predestination and original sin and in their place preached personal salvation through moral behavior and good works. The credo of his American Unitarian Association, organized in 1825, "Deeds not creeds," was demonstrative of the Unitarian advocacy of moral and ethical responsibilities of individuals to their neighbors. As discussed in Steven Mintz, Moralists and Modernizers: America's Pre-Civil War Reformers (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 22-23.

[9] Ibid., xx, xvii.

[10] Ibid., xxi.

[11] Mintz (Ibid., xvii) points out that in as much as the values middle-class reformers sought to instill--self-discipline, industriousness--might be viewed as a means to class-based social control, there was an essentially egalitarian thrust to many of their efforts, in contrast to those of an earlier generation of elite reformers. The latter efforts produced many of the voluntary societies that evolved into public institutions. Mintz is not alone in viewing antebellum reform efforts as more complex and progressive than earlier believed. In her study of the contemporaneous Sunday school movement, Anne M. Boylan writes, "Some analysts, examining the language that reformers used to explain the need for schools, prisons, and asylums, have found common threads of fear and coercion. They argue that fear--of immigration, urban growth, and social disorder--was the primary motive behind the formation on new institutions, and that coercion of the urban poor was the primary objective. . . . The men and women who devised institutions to deal with poverty, ignorance, and intemperance were not merely an old elite struggling to keep alive a dying social order; they were themselves part of an emerging leadership class with close ties to the urban mercantile and manufacturing economy. . . . 'Social control' is then better described not as a process of coercing recalcitrant urbanites to adopt alien behavioral patterns, but as a process of transmitting to others the personal qualities and values--self-control, delayed gratification, self-improvement--that reformers believed essential to individual and national progress"; see Anne M. Boylan, Sunday School: The

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Formation of an American Institution, 1790 - 1880 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 3. It is interesting to note in this regard the stipulation issued by Graham along with his 1848 donations to the Institute, which totaled over $22,500. All funds above building expenses were to be used "to defray the expense of so many free lectures, on Sunday evenings . . . on the power, wisdom, and goodness of God, as manifest in His works. I desire and so direct that neither the lecture room nor any other part of the building shall be used for any political purpose, or any exhibition or lecture on any subject having a demoralizing tendency, but that the whole building and income thereof, shall be used and appropriated, to improve the mental, moral and intellectual condition of the readers of the library, and the community at large"; see Duncan Littlejohn, "Records of the Brooklyn Institute, 1823-1875," 25, typescript, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[12] A helpful compilation of exhibitions on view in New York during the antebellum period is "Appendix B," in Catherine Hoover Voorsanger and John K. Howat, eds., Art and the Empire City: New York, 1825-1861 (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000).

[13] Ethan Robey, "The Utility of Art: Mechanics' Institute Fairs in New York City, 1828-1876," Ph.D. Diss. (New York: Columbia University, 2000).

[14] Annual Exhibition of the Brooklyn Institute (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Institute, 1843).

[15] "Fair of the Brooklyn Institute," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, October 19, 1843.

[16] Furman (1800-1854) served as a judge in the Brooklyn municipal courts, from 1827 to 1830, and as state senator, for the Whig Party, from 1839 to 1842, see Appleton's Cyclopedia of American Biography, vol. 12, 565. Among his noted lectures were "Aboriginal Remains in America," delivered in 1841. His passion for literary pursuits surely informed his activities in the service of the ALA. Henry Stiles quoted from Furman's memoirs, "There is nothing on earth to compare, in the least degree, with the joy and comfort, which attends literary research . . . . It strikes me that a man truly literary cannot be immoral"; see Henry R. Stiles, A History of the City of Brooklyn . . . ., 3 vols. (Brooklyn: Published by subscription, 1867-70), 2: 42. Furman published Notes, Geographical and Historical, Relating to the town of Brooklyn, on Long Island, in 1824; in 1874 a compilation of his work was published as Antiquities of Long Island, by Gabriel Furman. To Which is Added a Bibliography by Henry Onderdonk.

[17] Honorable Gabriel Furman, Address delivered before The American Institute at Niblo's Saloon during the Sixteenth Annual Fair (New York: Robert Craighead, Printer, 1843).

[18] Alden Spooner (1783-1848) owned the Long Island Star from 1811 until 1840, when he was named surrogate of Kings County and passed the newspaper on to his son. He was held in exceedingly high esteem for his role in purchasing Brooklyn properties for reservation as park space (notably in Fort Greene) and for his founding role in such Brooklyn philanthropic institutions as the Apprentices Library Association, the Lyceum of Natural History, and the Female Seminary of Brooklyn. Although in his capacity as the

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Eagle's editor Whitman often feuded with the Star over matters of politics, he referred to the elder Spooner with great respect, referring to him on one occasion as "our old friend Mr. Spooner, one of the best-hearted old men in the State of Long Island"; as quoted in Thomas L. Brasher, Whitman as Editor of the Brooklyn Daily Eagle (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1970), 31. Spooner was later described by Brooklyn historian Henry Stiles as "liberal to the utmost extent of self-sacrifice, and foremost in acts of benevolence. A New England man, and tracing his descent from John Alden, he yet held to no rigor of creed, but was tolerant of all denominations, and in charity with all men." A biographical sketch of Spooner is included in Stiles, History of the City of Brooklyn, 3: 928-31 n 2.

[19] Flier, dated September 11, 1844, Brooklyn Historical Society. Spooner's co-sponsors were Samuel Lounsbery and Abraham Halsey. Halsey served as the first treasurer of Brooklyn Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, founded earlier in 1844.

[20] Catalogue of Paintings, Sculpture and Other Works of Art (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Institute, 1844).

[21] Littlejohn, "Records of the Brooklyn Institute," 21.

[22] Ibid.

[23] [Third] Annual Exhibition of the Brooklyn Institute (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Institute, 1845). It should be noted that both the 1844 and 1845 catalogues were printed as the third in the series.

[24] "Exhibition of the Brooklyn Institute," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, October 3, 1845, 2.

[25] Fifth Annual Exhibition of the Brooklyn Institute (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Institute, 1846).

[26] Littlejohn, "Records of the Brooklyn Institute," 23.

[27] The Government School of Design merged with the Museum of Manufacture at Marlborough House in 1852, was reconstituted as the South Kensington Museum in 1857, and renamed the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1899. The development of the earliest collections of the South Kensington Museum and the evolution of its pedagogical agenda are treated in two recent articles: Clive Wainwright, "The Making of the South Kensington Museum, I: The Government Schools of Design and the Founding Collection, 1837-51," and Anthony Burton, "The Uses of the South Kensington Art Collections," Journal of the History of Collections 14 (2002): 3-24 and 79-96. Burton pays particular attention to the first director, Henry Cole, and first curator, J.C. Robinson. In the earliest years of the Museum, Cole was especially interested in the improving effect of the collection on a broad audience of consumers (82). He notes as well that by 1857 the emphasis had shifted to education of the industrial artist (85).

[28] Burton, "The Uses of the South Kensington Art Collections," 85.

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[29] Dugald Stewart (1753-1828) was a key proponent of the Enlightenment era Scottish Common Sense School of philosophy, which posited a theory of basic, common sense intuitions that constitute the foundations of truth. Common Sense philosophy was the most influential system of thought in Great Britain and the United States from the late eighteenth century through the mid-nineteenth century.

[30] "On the Means of Improving Taste, in Reference to Art," Anglo-American 14, (February 8, 1845): 381.

[31] Ibid., 382.

[32] Whitman's tenure at the Brooklyn Daily Eagle ran from March of 1846 through January of 1848, and is examined in detail in Brasher, Whitman as Editor of the Brooklyn Daily Eagle. He had previously promoted the Democratic agenda by writing for the Long Island Democrat; and he contributed to the Democratic Review throughout the 1840s.Whitman's politics during this period are discussed in David S. Reynolds, Walt Whitman's America: A Cultural Biography (New York: Random House, 1995), 113-33.

[33] [Walt Whitman], "Polishing the Common People," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, March 12, 1846, 2.

[34] [Walt Whitman],"A Few Words to the Young Men of Brooklyn." Brooklyn Daily Eagle, December 17, 1846, 2.

[35] Reynolds, Walt Whitman's America, 60, 94-97.

[36] In 1847 Whitman praised Channing's piece in a review of a new edition, describing it as "an unsurpassed piece, either as to its matter or manner"; [Walt Whitman], "Books," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, March 28, 1847, 2.

[37] [Walt Whitman], "Philanthropy," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, August 14, 1846, 2.

[38] Whitman resumed work at the Long Island Star (where he previously had worked from 1832 to 1835) in the fall of 1845, when he had resumed residence in Brooklyn (he previously had lived in Brooklyn from 1823 to 1835) after four years in Manhattan. Details of Whitman's biography are drawn from Reynolds, Walt Whitman's America. Although Whitman wrote on a wide range of subjects for the Star (including temperance, education, and theater) the Federal Whig and Republican inclinations of the newspaper Alden Spooner had shaped very likely were not to Whitman's liking, and may have led to his move to the Brooklyn Daily Eagle in March of the following year.

[39] To quote more fully, " . . . we fear unless Government act promptly, we shall never again have the opportunity of restoring to our country these paintings and memorials so emphatically American, and of such decided importance to Art and to our national History"; "That Indian Gallery," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, July 22, 1846, 2. In his first article on the subject he wrote, "By all means the government must purchase Catlin's

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Indian collection--for the National Institute which is to be founded under the Smithsonian bequest"; "Memorials of the Red Men," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, July 9, 1846, 2.

[40] [Walt Whitman], "About Pictures & c.", Brooklyn Daily Eagle, November 21, 1846, 2.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid.

[43] The New York Gallery of Fine Arts was established in 1844 by the New Yorker Jonathan Sturges in an effort to maintain intact the collection of works by living American artists formed by the culture-minded New York merchant Luman Reed. The Gallery opened for exhibition for the first time in 1844 at the National Academy of Design. It subsequently was housed at the Rotunda from 1845 to 1848, and returned to the Academy in 1854. Unable to sustain itself through admission fees or expand sufficiently to gain a larger audience, the collection was warehoused in 1854 and ultimately was given to the New-York Historical Society.

[44] As published in the New York Evening Post, February 16, 1845, and quoted in Maybelle Mann, "The New-York Gallery of Fine Arts: 'A Source of Refinement,'" American Art Journal 11 (January 1979): 76. It is interesting that the statement included in the catalogue for the first exhibition, in 1844, was distinctly more idealistic and elevated in tone: "A Gallery of Art in a city, is a source of refinement. It opens a fountain of pure and improving pleasure to the stranger, to the idler, to the young, to our families, to our children . . . idling and relaxation here, can hardly fail to be an improvement. Pictures of fair and spiritual beauty, forms of majestic virtue, portraitures of heroism and patriotism, shall lift the thoughts above their wonted range, to nobleness and sanctity . . . ." Catalogue of the Exhibition of the New-York Gallery of Fine Arts, quoted in Mann, 76. There were contemporaneous instances in which art was openly discussed in terms of its potential for ameliorating divisions among social classes. In an article encouraging the formation of a gallery of contemporary British art, a writer for the British journal The Athenaeum argued in 1843, "Surely the very pressure of the times, with all its painful manifestations, affords additional and urgent reasons--were any needed--to use every possible means for diminishing, at least in respect to the appliances of intellectual enjoyment, that awful disparity in the condition of the higher and lower classes of our countrymen, from which, if unchecked, modern civilization has so much to dread"; as discussed in Kathryn Moore Heleniak, "Victorian Collections and British Nationalism: Vernon, Sheepshanks and the National Gallery of British Art," Journal of the History of Collections 12 (2000): 100.

[45] The formation of the Atheneum brought together the Gallery of Art, the Connecticut Historical Society, the Young Men's Institute (a lyceum), and the Natural History Society. For the Gallery of Art, Wadsworth initially supplemented his own collection with the purchase of fifty paintings from the defunct American Academy of Fine Arts, formerly run by his uncle-in-law the painter John Trumbull, and a portion of Trumbull's own estate. The early history and progress of the Wadsworth Atheneum are critically considered in Joel J. Orosz, Curators and Culture: The Museum Movement in America,

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1740-1870 (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1990), 149-55, 195-201. Orosz noted (154-55) that in its earliest phase the Athenaeum was not opened evenings or weekends, and geared its collection catalogue to a sophisticated audience.

[46] [Walt Whitman], "Brooklyn Institute.--Exhibition of paintings.--Lectures.--Concerts," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, November 6, 1847, 2.

[47] [Walt Whitman] "Local Intelligence: & c.," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, November 18, 1847, 2.

[48] Describing what he found to be "the most beautiful of the trio", Doughty's "A Scene on the Tioga (location unknown)," Whitman wrote, "too much commendation cannot be bestowed upon it . . . ."; ibid.

[49] "The Fine Arts. Exhibition of Paintings at the Brooklyn Institute," Literary World 2 (November 27, 1847): 405.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Ibid., 406.

[52] The political situation underlying Whitman's departure from the Eagle is discussed in Brasher, Whitman as Editor of the Brooklyn Daily Eagle, 21. Whitman had become a supporter of the Barnburner faction of the Democratic party in New York State which soon broke away to form the Free-Soil Party. Whitman was one of fifteen Brooklyn delegates to the first Free-Soil Party convention in Buffalo in the summer of 1848. Their platform opposed the extension of slavery into new territories, but exercised a racist agenda in proposing to exclude free black from those territories on order to safeguard opportunities for white workers. The conservatism of Whitman's position in the matter is made strikingly apparent in his 1847 editorial entitled "American Workingmen, Versus Slavery," in which he argued "the influence of the slave institution is to bring the dignity of labor down to the level of slavery . . . . And this it is which must induce the workingmen of the north, east, and west to come up, to a man, in defense of their rights, their honor, and that heritage of getting bread by the sweat of the brow, which we must leave to our children"; Brooklyn Daily Eagle, September 1, 1847, 2. This episode in Whitman's political life is considered in Reynolds, Walt Whitman's America, 122-23. It is interesting to note in this regard that Brasher (164-65) has suggested that Whitman's opposition to the extension of slavery may have been inspired in part by a lecture delivered at the Brooklyn Institute in 1847 by the Reverend Giles on "The Worth of Liberty."

[53] "Brooklyn Institute," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, May 30, 1849, 2.

[54] "Exhibition of Paintings," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, October 26, 1849, 3.

[55] The Institute exhibitions were outlived by all of the contemporaneous annual exhibitions mentioned earlier, at the National Academy of Design, the American Gallery

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of the Fine Arts, the American Art-Union, and the American Institute of the City of New York.

[56] "Amusements," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, October 4, 1850, 3.

[57] Ruth L. Bohan, "'The Gathering of the Forces': Walt Whitman and the Visual Arts in Brooklyn in the 1850s," in Walt Whitman and the Visual Arts, ed. Geoffrey M. Sill and Roberta K. Tarbell (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1992).

[58] "Brooklyn Institute," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, February 1, 1850, 3. It is interesting to note that in January of 1850, in keeping with the Institute's original mission, Horace Greeley lectured on "Self Culture": "He urged young men never to wait for opportunities; never to go out and hunt them up; but to work earnestly in their present position till opportunities sought them out and then to yield to the call"; "Brooklyn Institute," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, January 25, 1850, 2.

[59] "Brooklyn Art Union. Second Notice," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, April 13, 1850, 2.

[60] New York Evening Post, February 1, 1851, as quoted in Emory Holloway, ed., The Uncollected Poetry and Prose of Walt Whitman, 2 vols. (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1921), 1:236-38.

[61] "Art and Artists. Remarks of Walt Whitman, Before the Brooklyn Art Union, on the Evening of March 31, 1851," Brooklyn Daily Advertiser, April 3, 1851; reprinted in Holloway, Uncollected Poetry and Prose, 1:241-47.

[62] The writer of his obituary in the Eagle commented, "Mr. Graham's great and leading characteristic was his goodness. By his industry and close attention to business he accumulated a large fortune which was dedicated to the public good. He was . . . the main prop of many of our most important charitable institutions"; "Death of Augustus Graham," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, November 28, 1851. The content of Graham's will was published in the Eagle, "Bequests of Augustus Graham, Esq., Deceased," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, December 2, 1851.

[63] "The Fine Arts. The Dunlap Exhibition," New-York Mirror 16 (December 1, 1838): 182-83.

[64] "The Fine Arts. The Pencil. Private Galleries," New-York Mirror 17 (March 7, 1840): 294.

[65] "To Brooklyn Men," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, November 12, 1852, 3.

[66] Littlejohn, "Records of the Brooklyn Institute," 32.

[67] "Domestic Art Gossip," Crayon 2 (July 4, 1855): 9-10.

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[68] As Maybelle Mann has discussed ("The New-York Gallery of the Fine Arts," 86), the New York Gallery of the Fine Arts was closed and stored away because, among its supporters and the public in general, "there was no understanding of the special needs of a museum, particularly the importance of having either government support or a permanent endowment to supply continuing funds, although this problem was cited in many magazine articles that made comparisons with European museums." The closure certainly came as no surprise to one observer, who had predicted its downfall owing to its maintenance of an admission charge: a J.K. Fisher wrote in a letter to the Literary World, "The free system must be extended to the exhibitions, or they will not be much looked at, or much spoken of. And if this be done funds must come from some source, or there will be small means to pay expenses, much less to obtain a collection worthy of attention"; "Fine Arts, Galleries, Exhibitions, Etc.," Literary World 5 (February 9, 1850): 133.

[69] "Domestic Art Gossip," Crayon 3 (January 1856): 30. Fine Arts Committee member Samuel Lounsbury reported to the board on the completion of the commission on February 2, 1856; see Littlejohn, "Records of the Brooklyn Institute," 33.

[70] Reynolds, Walt Whitman's America, 307.

[71] "Preface" to Leaves of Grass (1855 ed.), in Walt Whitman, Leaves of Grass, New York: First Vintage Books/The Library of America Edition, 1992.

[72] Reynolds, Walt Whitman's America, 325.

[73]Among the most notable were the Brooklyn Sketch Club, founded in 1857; the Brooklyn Art Association, founded in 1861; and the Brooklyn Academy of Design, founded 1866.

[74] In his review of the 1847 spring exhibition at the National Academy of Design, for example, Whitman has said of Durand, "all he does is good"; "The National Academy of Design, New York," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, April 14, 1847, 2.

[75] Whitman, Leaves of Grass, 331, 338.

[76] Although topics continued to be wide-ranging (and generally were more theoretical than practical), they were increasingly current, and even political, such as a lecture on "The Rights of Women" delivered in 1854 by Ernestine L. Rose.

[77]"Brooklyn Institute," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, November 12, 1855, 2. In addition to the lecture series, the piece touted the Institute's drawing classes, the Natural History department, the free lectures to youths and the free library.

[78] It is interesting to note that in the "Domestic Art Gossip" article on Durand's completion of The First Harvest in the Wilderness, mention of Huntington's role in the inaugural Graham commission was added briefly and in closing, "Mr. Huntington is to

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paint the next picture for the Institute collection"; "Domestic Art Gossip," Crayon 3 (January 1856): 30.

[79] Littlejohn, "Records of the Brooklyn Institute," 39. The painting was deaccessioned in 1976.

[80] Ibid., 47.

[81] Ibid.

[82] The portraits were: Robert Snow, by William Dunlap (see Appendix of Entries), a work initially acquired by the Apprentices Library Association; Augustus Graham, by Thomas Thompson (BMA 97.2); General Robert Nichols, by Francis B. Carpenter (BMA 97.8); Thomas S. Woodcock, and William Everdell, by Ferdinand T.L. Boyle (BMA 97.6 and 79.131); and William H. Cary, by John B. Whittaker (BMA 97.4).

[83] Littlejohn, "Records of the Brooklyn Institute," Addendum, np.

[84] S. S. Conant, "Fine Arts," Putnam's Magazine 13 (April 1869): 509-10.
[85] James Jackson Jarves, "Art in America: Its Conditions and Prospects," Fine Arts Quarterly Review 1 (October 1863): 400.

[86] George Fiske Comfort, "Art Museums in America," Old and New 1 (April 1870): 503.

[87] See Orosz's discussion Orosz, Curators and Culture, 180-237.

[88] Quoted in Orosz, Curators and Culture, 219-20.

[89] "The Brooklyn Institute," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, February 23, 1870, 2.

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Chapter II: Restarting an American Painting Collection, 1897-1913

Part One: New Ideologies for New Museums

At the very moment that the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences entered a period of relative dormancy, and underwent a virtually complete shut-down of art-related programs, culture critics throughout the nation were busy accelerating the public dialogue about the arts, and more particularly about the ideology of their use in the education of the population of the United States. While some writers on the subject offered a nod to the goal of generalized social uplift of the kind introduced by the Institute's trustees in their last, futile missives of the institution's early era, the majority of those writing about 1870 wholeheartedly embraced the more pragmatic and economically motivated South Kensington ideology and methodology: the improvement of the design and production capabilities of the working class through highly didactic art historical displays. While the critic Eugene Benson described in general terms the enrichment of even the poorest life through the "cultivation of the artistic perceptions," for example, he called more specifically for a museum "of the architecture and sculpture and painting of all epochs, classified and arranged, not merely to gratify the curiosity of the idle mind, but *for the study of workmen and special students of the fine arts*."[1] Charles C. Perkins, a vocal proponent of the South Kensington model in his role as Secretary of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, called for a democratization of aesthetic taste in the service of American productions, "The rich heritage of beautiful forms of every kind and shape which the past has left us is now made to minister to the enjoyment and education of the people, and

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thus taste, . . . will gradually permeate the masses, and bring about the time when the artist and the artisan shall once more join hands . . . ."[2] At this early stage, while the new American museums were still in the process of finding their economic footing, Perkins advised that they should avoid attempting to form "ideal and impossible museums," and should direct their efforts to "museums mainly composed of reproductions . . . . These will answer our purpose, *as we aim at collecting material for the education of a nation in art, not at making collections of objects of art.*"[3]

In his initial outlook, Perkins framed one pole of the debate that ensued in the succeeding decades over the relative merit of reproductions and masterpieces as the content of survey museums in the United States. Within this debate, the role of so-called "native" art entered the discussion with some regularity. American art was included particularly in discussions revolving around the cultivation of the new collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the city in which the majority of the nation's leading artists then worked. Writing about the proposed museum in 1869, S.S. Conant noted, "It is proposed, we believe, to give the New York gallery a cosmopolitan character,--to mingle with the works of American Artists productions of the most eminent painters and sculptors of Europe, and to obtain, if possible, from the great galleries of the old world, specimens of ancient and medieval art."[4] The influence of the American artists who were among the museum's founders in support of American representation should not be underestimated, although they were not alone in viewing the new crop of museums as a potential stimulus for the field of American art.[5] When the Metropolitan opened its new building in Central Park in 1880, a writer for the New York Evening Post commented on the integration of American and European paintings in the picture

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galleries, "You walk through the two large western galleries and you feel that American art is not so bad after all, because you see that it stands up like a man by the side of its fellows and neither blushes nor faints. . . . The eye is not really shocked to find a Gérôme balancing an Eastman Johnson, a Troyon balancing a William Magrath, a Bouguereau balancing a Henry A. Loop."[6]

By the late 1880s in Brooklyn, backers of American art were eager for more effective representation than the Brooklyn Art Association was providing at the time. Although the Association's initial plans for its Montague Street quarters (opened in 1872) specified a space dedicated to the display of a permanent collection, no such gallery was created; works known to have come into the "collection " apparently went unseen, and encountered an uknown fate. Riven from the outset by tensions between artist and lay members, the organization moreover had become increasingly ineffectual, and by the late 1880s had ceased to offer even its regular staple of annual exhibitions.[7] One vocal critic, who asserted that the Brooklyn Art Association had lost "the confidence of the painters and the adherence of the people," criticized the quality of its school, the lack of exhibitions and lectures, and its disinterest in "the permanent art interests of the city." C. M. Skinner went on to comment, "Brooklyn collectors--and they are many and wealthy--have fallen into the habit of patronizing only New York sales and exhibitions, a habit that smacks of provincialism, but is shared largely by the whole population of the city that crosses the bridge or the ferries for its shopping and its amusements . . . ."[8] Skinner may have been thinking, for example, of George I. Seney, a remarkable collector of paintings who had a gallery wing on his Remsen Street home, and who began to make significant gifts of American art to the Metropolitan Museum of Art by 1887.[9]

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A sense of urgency among interested Brooklynites also may have arisen out of reports of cultural progress in smaller cities in the United States, including the rapidly developing urban centers of the Midwest. In an article entitled "The Western Art Movement," Ripley Hitchcock chronicled the ongoing creation and growth of museums and art schools in St. Louis, Cincinnati, and Chicago, among others. He notably touted their status as "museums and schools . . . of the people and for the people . . . ," rather than as offshoots of privately amassed collections. With the war era still a recent memory, Hitchcock described founders of an art association in Kansas as "men who fought for 'free soil' . . . now collecting autotypes and casts . . . ." His evocation of cultural progress in the "West" recalls Durand's allegory in The First Harvest in the Wilderness,

> History has recorded the period of chasing or being chased by the red man, of clearing forests and breaking prairies, the marvelous growth of agriculture, commerce, and manufactures, and the resultant wealth. But of the working of that most abstract of all ideas, the art feeling, little has been told. And now it is suddenly made manifest that the most active among the current phases of that formative condition which we call American art is the movement in progress throughout our West.[10]

Movement toward the creation of a suitably important museum for Brooklyn began in 1888 when a Citizens' Committee on Museums of Art and Science, inspired by progress in Manhattan and elsewhere, called for the organization of a Brooklyn institution equal to the combined resources of Manhattan's Metropolitan Museum of Art (founded in 1870) and American Museum of Natural History (founded in 1869). The findings of the committee, which remarkably sustained a focus on the working class audience to which the early Brooklyn Institute had directed its programs, propelled the institution into a new era. This period of rededication to the mission and progress of the

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Institute was marked in 1889 by the delivery of an address, entitled "The Museums of the Future," at the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences, by George Brown Goode, Assistant Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution and a leading theorist in the museum field. [11]

Goode, who believed that the efficacy of visual learning had been proven by the success and impact of the great expositions of the era, called for a national system of museums similar to that established in Great Britain through the South Kensington program. He also embraced the South Kensington focus on a working class audience, but he couched his remarks in the context of the democratic society of the United States, "The museums of the future in this democratic land should be adapted to the needs of the mechanic, the factory operator, the day laborer, the salesman, and the clerk, as much as to those of the professional man and the man of leisure."[12] Goode furthermore advocated highly orchestrated installations of objects through which a "cemetery of bric-a-brac" (a reference to earlier museums) would be transformed into "a nursery of living thoughts." He continued, "the people's museum should be much more than a house full of specimens in glass cases. It should be a house full of ideas, arranged with strictest attention to system"; and the staff was to be "well informed, scholarly, practical, and fitted by tastes and training to aid in the educational work."[13] He encouraged the Institute to move forward, stating,

> The founding of a public museum in a city like Brooklyn, is a work whose importance can scarcely be overestimated. . . . Opportunity such as that which is now open to the members of the Brooklyn Institute occur only once in the lifetime of a nation. It is by no means improbable that the persons now in this room have it in their power to decide whether in the future intellectual progress of this nation, Brooklyn is to lead or to follow in the rear.[14]

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Most important for the Institute's future, Goode urged its leaders to build collections that would not be redundant of those nearby--read the Metropolitan's holdings. He thus initiated an impulse that would recur regularly to significant effect over the course of the succeeding.[15]

In the years immediately following Goode's address, the Brooklyn Institute underwent a dramatic transformation, beginning in 1890 with its re-incorporation as The Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences, and the appointment of the Harvard-trained scientist Franklin W. Hooper as it first director. Plans were made for a grand new building to house the collections, which were organized into two departments, Fine Arts and Natural History, divisions that would be joined by Ethnology in 1903. Also in 1890, William Henry Goodyear was appointed titular curator of the Fine Arts Department. Goodyear came to Brooklyn from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where he had served as curator from 1882 to 1886, and curator of the Department of Paintings from 1886 to 1888, a relatively quiet period in the history of the Metropolitan's collection of American paintings.[16] Goodyear's interest in art very likely had been stimulated during his years of study at Yale University, a moment of growing momentum for the School of Fine Arts; he graduated in 1867, the year that Yale mounted a seminal loan exhibition of American art.[17] Goodyear's active curatorial tenure at Brooklyn began only after the opening of the new McKim, Mead and White building in 1897, prior to which he was a key lecturer at the Institute, offering programs of talks primarily in the field of Ancient and Classical art.[18]

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Part Two: The Brooklyn Museum's First Loan Exhibitions, 1897-1900

Adopting a tradition practiced by the early Brooklyn Institute and updated by many of the newer Museums beginning in the 1870s, the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences celebrated the opening of the building's West Wing in 1897 with a major loan exhibition of European and American painting. Institute officials must have been conscious of playing a game of catch-up in mounting the exhibition; The Metropolitan Museum of Art had held loan exhibitions as early as 1873 at the Douglas Mansion, and had mounted irregular, semi-annual loan exhibitions from the time of the move to Central Park in 1880. Even the younger Art Institute of Chicago, founded in 1882, had initiated annual exhibitions in 1888, featuring works of Paris-trained American Realists.[19] Brooklyn's 1897 loan exhibition nevertheless was a great success, owing primarily to the work of its organizing chair, Colonel Henry T. Chapman, a prestigious Civil War veteran, highly active collector, and Institute trustee. He was joined on the committee by two other trustees: Carll H. De Silver, a soon-to-be retired Wall Street broker and avid collector of American painting of the period; and John S. James. De Silver. Chapman's response to the agenda of the new Brooklyn Institute suggests that C. M. Skinner had been correct in suggesting that local collectors previously had no choice but to offer their loans and gifts to Manhattan institutions. Chapman lent seventy-five canvases (out of the 583 objects in the exhibition) from his own collection. They included selections by Courbet and Géricault from his French nineteenth-century holdings; and American works ranging from pictures by the young Arthur B. Davies (three of which were later

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purchased out of Chapman's 1913 estate sale for the Museum), to an astonishing five works by the long-forgotten, antebellum genre painter John Quidor.

The first exhibition (and its catalogue) was organized entirely by lender, demonstrating the significance placed on the generosity of these important supporters of the new institution. It was thus distinguished from the loan exhibitions of the early Brooklyn Institute, in which collector-lenders figured far less prominently than artist-lenders. Other major lenders of primarily American works included (according to their order in the catalogue): Latham A. Fish (works by Henry Ward Ranger, James M. Hart, F.A. Silva, William Trost Richards, and George H. Boughton); Charles C. Markam (works by Charles Loring Elliott, Charles Wilson Peale, Henry Inman, and George A. Baker); David McCosker (works by Rembrandt Peale, Louis Mignot, and George Inness); and Robert J. Kimball (works by William Bradford, William H. Beard, William Hart, and David Johnson). The influential collector William T. Evans lent fifty American works, including canvases by George Inness, Albert Pinkham Ryder, Homer Martin, Dwight Tryon, and Thomas Wilmer Dewing. Among the more notable of Evans's loans were Wyatt Eaton's Ariadne (1888, Smithsonian American Art Museum), George de Forest Brush's The Indian Hunter (location unknown), and Winslow Homer's Sunday Morning in Virginia (1877, Cincinnati Art Museum).

While the exhibition primarily represented the late nineteenth-century American taste for the French Barbizon aesthetic and its American counterpart, it nevertheless offered a remarkably broad spectrum of American works. In addition to early American portraiture (represented, as it had been in the early Institute exhibitions, by the Pierrepont George Washington by Gilbert Stuart, 1796, BMA 45.179; See Appendix of Entries),

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early nineteenth-century landscape was present in the form of Thomas Cole's Prometheus Bound (1847, lent by his son Theodore; now Collection of Mr. and Mrs. John W. Merriam, on loan to the Philadelphia Museum of Art) and The Titan's Goblet (1833, lent by C.J. Falconer; now The Metropolitan Museum of Art); and early genre painting in the form of Chapman's Quidors and William Sidney Mount's Cider Making (1841, The Metropolitan Museum of Art). Most important, and in further contrast to the 1840s loan exhibitions, the 1897 exhibition included numerous works that eventually made their way into the Institute's collection. Daniel Ridgway Knight's The Shepherdess of Rolleboise (1896, BMA 98.14; see Appendix of Entries), the artist's entry to the Paris Salon of 1896, was donated by the lender and Institute trustee Abraham Abraham on the occasion of the exhibition. An impressive total of fourteen works exhibited the 1897 exhibition eventually entered the collection.[20]

The so-called "loan collection," into which a few of the Institute's small permanent collection were blended, remained on view throughout the year. The installation interestingly was divided into two sections placed on two different floors: the European and contemporary American paintings in the third floor galleries; and the colonial and early American portraits, the portraits of figures active in the early Brooklyn Institute, and what were described as American "landscapes of great historic value," in galleries on the first floor.[21] The segregation of the two groups demonstrated an inclination to distinguish works of current aesthetic interest from those regarded as having a merely antiquarian value. The bias may have been Goodyear's, for he would go on to demonstrate a somewhat stronger interest recent American art. It is interesting to note that Goodyear's successor at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the American painter

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George Henry Story appears to have had greater sympathy for the early material, given his organization of a large exhibition entitled "Early American Art" in 1895.

The loan exhibition of 1898 was organized by a slightly larger committee that included Chapman, De Silver, and the collector H.H. Benedict. It was framed less as an exhibition, however, than as an ongoing installation. Neither the galleries nor the catalogue were arranged by collector, the contributors apparently willing to diminish their individual profiles for the greater goal of a credible display; and the accompanying publication was simply entitled Catalogue of Paintings.[22] Many works had already become expected features of the installation, including Chapman's Quidors; others debuted in 1898, including William Lamb Picknell's Scene in Florida (formerly BMA 48A1.48, location unknown), just presented to the Institute by the prominent dealer Samuel Avery. Acquisitions of American paintings were only trickling in at this point, however, and appear meager in comparison with the number of American works entering the Metropolitan Museum of Art at the same moment.[23]

In 1898 Brooklyn's collection was given a small boost, however, when James A.H. Bell, a descendant of Brooklyn Institute founder Augustus Graham, bequeathed a small group of works to the Institute, including George Henry Hall's The Flower Seller of Seville (formerly BMA 98.15; location unknown) and portraits by the German-born Charles Christian Nahl (including John Graham, 1851, BMA 98.2; and Mrs. John Graham, 1849, BMA 98.3.) The local press reported, "the new Institute Museum on Eastern Parkway is distinctly the gainer through the recent permanent addition of the Bell pictures, cleaned and renovated and hung conspicuously in the east gallery of the skylight [third] floor." Goodyear, who was quoted at length, noted a fine example of the work of

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the French artist François Boucher, and added, "the pictures are cheerful and attractive as to subjects; they are all bright-colored and good examples of the given artists. Several are of exceptional high quality." His remarks implied the unevenness of the Bell collection, however, and he concluded somewhat unexpectedly by commenting on an earlier Institute acquisition, a copy of little distinction, " . . . the first prize must be awarded to the portrait of Benjamin Franklin, an old Institute possession, which has no superior in the whole list of American portrait art. The Franklin is a great painting." Goodyear also predicted, "the Cropsey [1860, also an earlier acquisition, formerly BMA 00.61; now collection of Jo Ann and Julian Ganz] will have great historic value in a few years as representing the stage of hardworking effort when American landscape art was struggling for appreciation and recognition."[24]

By 1899 the Brooklyn Institute had achieved it goal of making the annual renewal of the loan collection an event to which the public regularly directed its attention. When the installation reopened that year, a writer for the New York Tribune noted, "an exhibition of pictures that invited the attention of strangers coming to New York is to be found in the loan collection at the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences." The writer remarked that prominent collectors had generously provided examples of old master paintings as well works "that connoisseurs have declared to be among the best productions of certain American artists." The latter list included landscapes by Ryder and Inness, John Smibert's portrait of Martha Washington as a child, and five works by Quidor."[25] In 1900 as well, although the installation was heavily weighted in favor of European works, American painting was represented by a broad, if uneven, spectrum of works including: Benjamin West's The Nativity (from Chapman's collection; now

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Swarthmore College?); Martin Johnson Heade's The Salt Marsh (from the Brooklyn collection of B.T. Frothingham; location unknown); and three canvases by Theodore Robinson (from the collection of E.A. Rorke.)[26]

Part Three: New Growth in Acquisitions and Installations, 1902-1913

For most American art museums founded in the late nineteenth century, the first two decades of the twentieth century were years of new and vigorous expansion, as donors of objects and funds embraced collection building with a vengeance. Particularly in the field of acquisitions, however, collectors and donors offered objects and attempted to initiate collecting agendas that did not necessarily accord with goals set out by trustees and curators. Brooklyn's early acquisitions in American paintings were no exception, following a haphazard course that brought together objects representing diverse periods and divergent styles.

Before considering the relatively undirected growth of Brooklyn's collection in the post-1900 period, it should be noted that this era was also the occasion for one of the most forward looking developments in its history: the creation in 1902 of the Robert B. Woodward Fund for the purchase of new American art. The substantial fund of $25,000 was presented by Robert B. Woodward (an Institute trustee from 1887 to 1915) in memory of his brother General John B. Woodward, formerly a lifelong Institute trustee, and Institute president from 1882 to 1894. In a very clear echo of the original Augustus Graham bequest of 1851, the funds were restricted to use for "the encouragement of

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American art by the purchase, from time to time, of oil paintings of artists practicing their profession in the United States of America . . . ."[27] The terms of the gift further stipulated that the selection of paintings by the Institute president and the trustee Art Committee was to privilege works appearing in current exhibitions at such venues as the National Academy of Design, the Society of American Artists, and the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. The designation of contemporary American art acquisitions as the goal of the Woodward Fund may have irked the more conservative trustees, given that in 1899 they had bridled at William T. Evans's presentation to the Institute of a tenebrous Wyatt Eaton portrait of William Cullen Bryant (1878, BMA 99.1; see Appendix of Entries). They responded in 1901 with what they perceived to be a corrective purchase of a more conventional portrait of the writer by Daniel Huntington (1866, BMA 01.1507), a gesture they would not always be able to make in response to an unappreciated gift or bequest. Boards and curators of many young American museums were having similar experiences, as their collections increasingly were molded by a wider circle of donors. The Institute meanwhile continued to benefit from the participation of more predictable collector-trustees, including Charles Schieren, a highly regarded Brooklyn industrialist and philanthropist, the mayor of Brooklyn from 1894 to 1895, and Brooklyn Institute trustee from 1898. Schieren, who was particularly enthusiastic about the work of Ralph Albert Blakelock, placed eight works by the artist on loan to the Institute in 1903, and ultimately gave nine Blakelocks (see Appendix of Entries) to the collection.

The growth trend in the paintings collection was substantial enough that in 1904 the Brooklyn Eagle reported that the Institute had begun the practice of annual reinstallations of its galleries specifically to accommodate the growing number of loans

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and purchases. An Eagle writer remarked that June, "lack of room is especially noticeable in the department assigned to paintings, and several interesting and important possessions of the Institute cannot be shown for lack of wall space." Among the works mentioned were a landscape by George Bogert presented by George Hearn, a trustee of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences and a leading collector of nineteenth century paintings; and Woodward Fund purchases including Charles Warren Eaton's Connecticut Pines (1904, BMA, 04.296).[28] When the reinstallation opened that November, the Brooklyn Citizen reported, "although the accessions are not numerous, the changes entirely revolutionize the appearance of the galleries." The reviewer noted that Goodyear had reorganized the galleries according to a more deliberate plan that "made possible the much-to-be-desired classification of paintings according to styles, periods, and color harmonies, in so far as this is possible, in view of the very large dimensions and high walls of the lower gallery." Goodyear had added a number of paintings "to the line," where European and American works continued to be mixed, notably inserting into the main installation one of Chapman's large Quidor paintings, Peter Stuyvesant Watching Festivities on the Battery (measuring 11 x 7 feet; location unknown), about which the newspaper commented, "this is one of the most remarkable paintings in the United States for the period . . . and has not been seen to great advantage as previously hung in the entrance gallery."[29] The noted acquisitions in the rehung galleries included William Trost Richards's On the Coast of New England (fomerly BMA 04.182; location unknown), presented by Samuel P. Avery in the same year that the dealer gave The Titan's Goblet (formerly featured in the Institute's loan collection) to The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

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Goodyear achieved another critical success with the reinstallation of 1905, the year in which the domed, central section of the museum was opened. The Citizen commented, "many additions in the form of purchases and liberal donations have been made, and under the rehanging and rearranging the gallery presents an almost entirely new appearance. To Professor William H. Goodyear is due greatly the credit for the magnificent display, and the artistic manner in which the collection is placed."[30] The changes included the addition of two large canvases by the American orientalist Edwin Lord Weeks: The Hour of Prayer at the Pearl Mosque, Agra (circa 1891, formerly BMA 05.83; location unknown), a gift of the prominent Brooklyn collector and future Institute officer George D. Pratt; and Group of Camels Feeding, Morocco (formerly BMA 05.84; location unknown), a Museum purchase. It is interesting to note the Citizen reviewer's further remarks, "in the hanging of all these and the rehanging of the pictures previously on view an effort has been made, not only for correct spacing, but for the proper balance of color, with the result that the galleries, taken as a whole, produce an agreeable effect even before the pictures are studied in detail."[31] One has the sense that Goodyear was gradually establishing an acceptable order out of a relatively random selection of pictures.

As with most collections, Brooklyn's steady collection growth was punctuated with moments of exceptional progress, one of which occurred in the year 1906. The most dramatic development in acquisitions was the bequest of forty-four oil paintings and eleven watercolors (as well as a small group of sculptures) by Caroline Herriman Polhemus, the wife of Henry D. Polhemus (a descendant of early Brooklyn settlers) and an active philanthropist. The Polhemus paintings were largely representative of a certain

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late-nineteenth-century taste for cabinet-scale European and American genre subjects of a highly anecdotal nature. Among them, however, were fine American figure subjects such as Thomas Waterman Wood's New Cider (1868, BMA 06.311; see Appendix of Entries). Caroline Polhemus also collected landscapes, and those in her bequest included a number of attractive works, of which Arthur Quartley's On Synepuxent Bay, Maryland (1876, BMA 06.309) and Arthur Parton's Misty Morning, Coast of Maine (circa late 1860s, BMA 06.31) are most impressive. Goodyear put the entire collection on view in 1907, as part of the celebration of the opening of the East Wing of the building, installing it near the Museum's entryway. As in the case of the Bell pictures, his published comments on the paintings revealed a firmly tempered admiration, particularly for the earlier nineteenth-century works. He remarked, "the preponderance of genre will inevitably tend to interest the general public and will thus materially contribute to the popularity of the Brooklyn Gallery without lowering its standard; for it is a notable feature of the Polhemus bequests that they have a general evenness of excellence which does not forsake the occasional examples of a generation just passing away and yet sometimes almost forgotten."[32]

The Polhemus bequest was complemented by other acquisitions as well, the total growth leading a reporter for the New York Herald to note in June that the regular rehanging of the galleries was an increasingly pressing necessity, owing less to the return of works to their owners than to the need for "room for the canvases which are continually being presented to the Institute." According to the same writer, the new crop of acquisitions constituted "a most varied and valuable collection . . . a splendid showing on the walls of the big north gallery."[33] The two works singled out for particular notice

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were both gifts to the Institute: Louis Comfort Tiffany's On the Way Between Old and New Cairo, Citadel Mosque of Mohammed Ali, and Tombs of the Mamelukes (1872, BMA 06.329; see Appendix of Entries) and Robert Swain Gifford's The Coast of New England (formerly Near the Marsh) (1880, BMA 06.76) the latter of which was described as "a landscape to gladden the heart oppressed by the atmosphere of city streets."[34]

Perhaps the most interesting acquisition of 1906, however, was the purchase of James McNeill Whistler's Portrait of a Lady, Miss Florence Leyland (circa 1876/78, Portland Museum of Art, Maine) with monies raised from collection funds and a group of eleven donors including H. H. Benedict, Carll H. De Silver, George A. Hearn, Charles A. Schieren, and A. Augustus Healy. President of the Institute from 1895 to 1920, Healy had made his career in the family leather firm but had nurtured a passion for art through his work on behalf of the Institute and in his own collecting. He had found the Whistler with a London dealer and very likely had instigated the fundraising, considering the purchase a particularly significant step in the development of the American collection. The acquisition was announced with notable fanfare in the December 2nd edition of the Eagle, for which Goodyear had written a lengthy article. His remarks reveal, however, that he, and perhaps the Museum's administration as well, anticipated a negative response to the work. Noting that the painting was best viewed "in focus," he recommended viewing it initially from a variety of positions to determine from which vantage point it appeared clearest. He continued, "The greatest modern artists have all aimed at a certain mystery and reticence of effect. That all parts of a picture should be equally clear and that all should be exactly and literally detailed is equally contrary to the laws of vision and (in modern art) to the suggestions of good taste." He furthermore credited Whistler's

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monochromatic portraits with "a subtlety of treatment which approaches and reaches, the effect of optical mystery . . . in the gradations of tomes by which the figure melts into the background and coalesces with the surrounding atmosphere . . . .[35] In his annual report for 1906, Goodyear was able to state that the ninety paintings accessioned that year exponentially exceeded the total for any other prior year, and represented "A phenomenal fact in the early life of the Museum."[36]

Collection growth at Brooklyn, as at many other museums, posed new curatorial challenges in the arena of permanent installations. To coincide with the opening of galleries in the new, East Wing of the Museum in 1907, Goodyear orchestrated a completely new configuration of the painting collection, implementing a more deliberately art historical arrangement according to school and chronology. It is telling that Goodyear's plan, although celebrated at the time of its completion, represented a "scientific" approach that already was falling out of fashion among progressive museum professionals. Benjamin Ives Gilman, Secretary of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, was the most vocal figure in the new movement that sought to divorce fine arts collections in particular from their original didactic missions, and from the attendant use of historical classification as the organizing principle of art galleries. Gilman found the most resistant opponent to his ideas in Brooklyn's Goodyear.

Gilman and Goodyear had engaged in a telling exchange the previous year, when Gilman delivered an address at the organizing meeting of the Association of American Museums wherein he outlined and promoted "a selective or anthological principle for public art museums." Gilman proposed that only a museum's finest collection objects should be selected for exhibition in optimally arranged and lit displays, and that the

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remainder of collections should be housed in compact storage "for the use of students and investigators, . . . open, however, to all applicants." Although Gilman recommended a chronological arrangement in both areas, he added, "in the public galleries the arrangement would be based on aesthetic, in the study halls on scientific, considerations." He predicted that this type of selective installation would prevent the untutored visitor from being overwhelmed by entire collections, many of which were growing at astonishing rates, and it would also provide them with a qualitative selection of the finest objects.[37]Gilman had at least one ideological ally in Roger Fry, Goodyear's current curatorial counterpart at The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Fry stated his position in an article entitled "Ideals of a Picture Gallery," where he explained that because The Metropolitan's picture collection thus far had been "brought together by no fixed and determined law," he had no choice but to implement a qualitative, aesthetic installation rather than a comprehensive, historical one. He continued, "We must . . . so arrange the galleries that it shall be apparent to each and all that some things are more worthy than others of prolonged and serious attention. . . . It is only by some such emphasis on what has high and serious merit, that we can hope in time to arouse an understanding of . . . the language of art."[38]

As reported in the Nation, Goodyear emerged as Gilman's most vocal opponent, raising objections "in a very trenchant but courteous rejoinder." As recounted there, "Professor Goodyear held that the selection of the best is practically impossible, being based simply on individual taste or caprice, and that our only certitudes are of an historic sort. Hence history and chronology are the only safe guidelines for a director, and the best arrangement for the student will turn out to be the best also for the man in the street."

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The writer for the Nation suggested, however, that most professionals in the field tended to agree on matters a of taste, and added, "the unwieldiness of modern collections plays into the hands of the anthologist." Qualifying Gilman's approach as "advanced," and Goodyear's "orthodox," the author offered in closing, "Mr. Gilman looks forward to a large public enjoying impressions of art, and a small public deeply studious of its history; Professor Goodyear is skeptical as to the aesthetic public, but hopes for a great increase in the number of the studious."[39] While Gilman's theories were embodied in the arrangement of galleries in the new Huntington Avenue home of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, in 1907, Goodyear exercised his own agenda in the installation of the newly configured Brooklyn galleries in the fall of that year.[40]

Although the Institute was the primary cultural resource for Brooklyn's population of 1.5 million inhabitants, Goodyear took the daring step of closing the painting galleries from July to November of 1907 to achieve his major reinstallation of the painting collection in the original West Wing galleries and in three new galleries in the East Wing. The press described the reinstallation as a "rearrangement and reclassification," undoubtedly taking their cue from Goodyear himself.[41] For the first time, Goodyear segregated the American pictures in the West Wing; and within the American section he also had separated the forty-five historical American works (which notably included the Quidor he formerly had hung "on the line" with the later pictures) from the 113 "modern" paintings. By way of comparison, it is interesting to note that by 1906 the Metropolitan Museum of Art had 186 paintings on view in its galleries devoted to American art; the work ranged from colonial portraits to canvases by Whistler, with particularly strong

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holdings in mid-nineteenth-century figure and landscape painting, and the early American material distinctly segregated from the later material.[42]

In response to Brooklyn's installation, The World marveled at the fullness of the galleries despite the expansion that had doubled the installation space for paintings.[43] A writer for the Eagle, who described Whistler's portrait of Florence Leyland as the chief attraction of the long gallery, remarked, "It is a fine exhibit of American artists and the splendid arrangement of the various paintings reflects credit on the museum."[44] The Brooklyn Times noted enthusiastically that many of the paintings were making their debut after having been in storage for five or six years. The same writer noted that that the spacious new galleries made a "third line" unnecessary, and added, "Where before inadequate facilities prevented appreciation, and limited the pleasure of studying the paintings, now good lighting in most of the rooms, and harmonious color arrangement makes the galleries a source of genuine enjoyment."[45] Other reviewers agreed that the new gallery settings were markedly more sympathetic. The Eagle writer commented specifically, "Backed by a wall of green burlap and so hung that the low-toned pictures are on the north side where the light is strongest, many pictures will be viewed for the first time under really advantageous conditions. Under the crowded hanging which existed before there was little opportunity for artistic arrangement or grouping."[46] Among the recent American paintings acquisitions included in the new installation was Elliott Daingerfield's The Midnight Moon (circa 1906, BMA 07.272), the 1907 Woodward Fund purchase.

The years immediately following the gallery reorganization were relatively quieter ones for Goodyear and his department, with the highly notable exception of A. A.

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Healy's purchase for the collection in 1909 of a large body of watercolors by John Singer Sargent.[47] Acquisitions of oils entered at a somewhat slower pace for several years, but included such notable works as Frederick A. Bridgman's An Interesting Game (1881, BMA 08.220), a 1908 gift from George D. Pratt, an Institute trustee from 1908 to 1929; and Charles D. Hunt's Lake Henderson (1881, 08.222), presented by Frederick B. Pratt in 1908. The trustee art committee chose Edward W. Redfield's February (formerly BMA 08.10; location unknown), a work recently shown at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, as the 1908 Woodward Fund purchase, for the substantial price of one thousand dollars, making their first move away from their former use of the fund to acquire American Barbizon works. The expenditure of the Polhemus Fund that year on an unattributed portrait of Abraham Lincoln (undated, BMA 08.217) from the collection of Henry T. Chapman is somewhat more surprising.

General activity in the field of American oils began to increase once again in 1911, and the teens ultimately proved to be a particularly rich period for gifts and purchases for the American painting collection. The millionaire dry-goods merchant and Institute trustee George A. Hearn, who had developed a substantial collection of Old Master paintings and Barbizon- and Impressionist-inspired American art, and who had presented a large gift of paintings to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1906, presented five oils to the Institute in 1911.[48] Among the most interesting were J. Alden Weir's The Flower Seller (circa 1879, BMA 11.522; see Appendix of Entries) and Gaines Ruger Donoho's large, 1882 Paris Salon entry, La Marcellerie (1881, BMA 11.533), which went on view with the Hearn gift in late December.[49] Hearn, who had previously given several

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smaller works to the Institute, added the gift of Irving Eanger Couse's Lovers (Indian Love Song) (1905, BMA 12.91) in 1912.[50]

While all of the Hearn gifts represent one particular moment in American painting production, a more inclusive enumeration of acquisition from 1911 demonstrates the unpredictable and haphazard nature of the collection's growth at this moment. In addition to the purchase of five paintings from the estate sale of John LaFarge, the Museum acquired a broad spectrum of American pictures as gifts: Dolce far niente (circa 1909-10, BMA 11.518) by John Singer Sargent, and Head of an Old Man (circa 1876, BMA 11.521) by the Munich-trained Charles Ulrich; two early nineteenth-century works, Henry Inman's Mrs. Robert Lowden (circa 1840, BMA 11.549) and Thomas Cole's The Old Mill at Sunset (formerly BMA 11.529; now collection of Jo Ann and Julian Ganz, Jr.); and the Whistlerian Silver Light (1911, BMA 11.530), painted by Leon Dabo that year. A similar variety characterized the gifts of American paintings in 1912, when Elihu Vedder's mural study, Rome Representative of the Arts (1894 BMA 12.919) was presented by William T. Evans, and Rembrandt Peale's George Taylor (1811, BMA 12.85) was given by Eliza Herriman Griffith.

Beginning in 1912, however, purchases occasionally pointed in a decidedly new direction; among the most notable of these was the purchase of Robert Henri's Laughing Girl (1910, BMA 12.93) from Macbeth Galleries. A group of stellar, although less adventurous, purchases followed in 1913: William Merritt Chase's Still Life, Fish (1912, BMA 13.54); George Inness's On the Delaware (1861-63, BMA 13.75), purchased by a subscription of Institute members; Ryder's Evening Glow, The Old Red Cow (early to mid-1870s, BMA 13.34); and John Twachtman's decoratively abstracted Meadow

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Flowers (early 1890s, BMA 13.36), purchased out of a sale of paintings owned by William T. Evans. While the Inness and Ryder purchases conformed to established late-nineteenth-century American tastes, the choice of the Twachtman was indicative of the newer taste for American Impressionist painting that took hold by about 1910. George D. Pratt's 1914 gift of two works by Theodore Robinson (Willows, circa 1892, BMA 14.550; and French Hamlet, circa 1893, BMA 14.578; see Appendix of Entries) further strengthened the Museum's holdings in that area.

The collection's increasingly steady growth continued into in 1913, when Mary Block De Silver presented in memory of her husband Carll H. De Silver an impressive group of paintings from his collection. They included William Merritt Chase's The Antiquary Shop (1879, BMA 13.53; see Appendix of Entries) and In the Studio (1882, BMA 13.50); Inness's Royal Beech in New Forest, Lyndhurst (1887, BMA 13.76; see Appendix of Entries); and Wyant's Keene Valley (circa 1884-86, BMA 13.43). New acquisitions were numerous enough that year to warrant fresh comment by the press. A writer for the Eagle devoted particular attention to the recent Schieren gift, "While it is with intense satisfaction that the appreciative Brooklynite pauses to study a group of canvases from the well known Chapman collection, recently presented to the museum through the munificence of Mr. Charles A. Schieren, these, the picture lover knows, he may have the opportunity to enjoy at all times."[51] The Schieren works included works by William Babcock, Blakelock, and Davies, the latter of which attracted the attention of a reviewer for the New York Times, "The Brooklyn Museum is happy in showing these pictures in which the collector has played his proper role and has supported the artist at his moment of complete poetic expression . . . ."[52] The Institute

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trustees clearly had plans to capitalize on this momentum when they hired William Henry Fox, a new director who would shepherd Brooklyn's American painting collection into a new phase of growth.

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Notes

[1] Eugene Benson, "Museums of Art as a Means of Instruction," Appleton's Journal of Popular Literature 42 (January 15, 1870): 80-81. Benson's views were in keeping with the philosophy initially implemented by the Metropolitan Museum of art, as later articulated by Joseph H. Choate at the ceremonies opening the new Central Park building in 1880, "[the founders'] plan was not to establish a mere cabinet or curiosities which should serve to kill time for the idle, but gradually to gather together a more or less complete collection of objects illustrative of the history of art in all its branches, from the earliest beginnings to the present time, which should serve not only for the instruction and entertainment of the people, but should also show to the students and artisans of every branch of industry . . . what the past had accomplished for them to imitate and excel," quoted in Winifred E. Howe, A History of the Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1913), 199.

[2] Charles C. Perkins, "Art. I.--American Art Museums," North American Review 328 (July 1870): 1.

[3] Perkins, "Art. I.—American Art Museums," 8. As the new museums began to find secure financial footing after the turn of the century, Perkins and his peers at the Museum of Fine Arts and other cosmopolitan museums refocused their efforts on the building of collections of original masterpieces. Steven Conn considers this phenomenon in Chapter Six, "From South Kensington to the Louvre: Art Museums and the Creation of Fine Art," in Museums and American Intellectual Life, 1876-1926 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

[4] S. S. Conant, "Fine Arts: The Projected National Gallery," Putnam's Magazine 13 (April 1869): 510.

[5] In his address at the historic organizational meeting held at the Union League Club in 1869, the writer William Cullen Bryant noted that the Metropolitan Museum of Art would provide American artists "opportunity for the larger treatment of important subjects" for which there was little demand among private patrons; quoted in Howe, A History of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 110. It is interesting to note that Bryant's remarks have the ring of an earlier moment in the uplift movement, particularly in his reference to the generally improving power of the arts, "The influence of works of art is wholesome, ennobling, instructive. Besides the cultivation of the sense of beauty . . . which is of near kindred to the moral sentiments--the intelligent contemplation of a great gallery of works of art is a lesson in history, a lesson in biography, a lesson in the antiquities of different countries." Howe, 111.

[6] New York Evening Post, March 29, 1880; as quoted in Howe, A History of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 190.

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[7] The origins, activities, and demise of the Brooklyn Art Association are chronicled in detail in Clark S. Marlor, A History of the Brooklyn Art Association with An Index of Exhibitions (New York: James F. Carr, 1970).

[8] C. M. Skinner, "Art in Brooklyn," American Art Illustrated 1 (January 1887): 133.

[9] Among Seney's early gifts to the Metropolitan were works by George Fuller, Alexander Wyant, and Frank Millet.

[10] Ripley Hitchcock, "The Western Art Movement," Century Magazine 32 (August 1886): 576.

[11] In an insightful, recent essay, Steven Conn has discussed the Victorian investment in object-based learning as the motivation underlying the foundation of the era's museums. "Because objects . . . were seen by late Victorian as the site on meaning and knowledge, many intellectuals regarded museums as a primary place where new knowledge about the world could be created and given order." He suggests furthermore that by the mid-nineties twenties most museums had abandoned scientifically systematic displays of objects because they could no longer convey increasingly complex discoveries; see "Museums and the Late Victorian World," in Steven Conn, Museums and American Intellectual Life, 1876-1926 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 15, 22.

[12] George Brown Goode, "The Museums of the Future," United States National Museum Annual Report (1889): 431-32.

[13] Ibid., 427, 433.

[14] Ibid., 436.

[15] Ibid., 440.

[16] It is interesting to note that at the Metropolitan Goodyear's purview included paintings, drawings, prints, textiles, photographs and books for exhibition. It might also be pointed out that Goodyear apparently was the Metropolitan's second choice to head the department. Howe notes that "another gentleman" had been offered the position but declined it, believing that the post would be too inactive to interest him. Howe, A History of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 218 n1.

[17]The exhibition, "First Annual Exhibition of the Yale School of the Fine Arts . . . ," included works form the permanent collection as well as works loaned for to the exhibition by many of the prominent artists then at work in New York. The exhibition is discussed in Susan B. Matheson, Art for Yale: A History of the Yale University Art Gallery (New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 2001), 42-43.

[18] The lectures began in 1891, jointly sponsored by the Institute's Department of Fine Arts and the Brooklyn Art Association's Department of Painting, and continued for

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several decades. Goodyear was an active participant for the duration of his tenure, and he was joined by a roster of speakers including some regulars (Louise Both-Henderson, whose title was Institute lecturer in the History of Art) and guest specialists including Ernest Fenollosa, who spoke on Asian art in 1895. The lecture series are documented in the annual Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences Prospectus, which began publication in 1891.

[19] Judith A. Barter, "American Art in the 'Great Grey City': The Evolution of a Collection at The Art Institute of Chicago," in Judith A. Barter, Kimberly Rhodes, and Seth A. Thayer, American Arts at The Art Institute of Chicago: from Colonial Times to World War I (Chicago: Art Institute of Chicago, 1998), 21.

[20] The works included in the 1897 exhibition that were later accessioned into the collection were: Arthur B. Davies's Children of Yesteryear, Landscape with Pigs, and Place of the Mothers; Charles Loring Elliott's John Charles Fremont; Daniel Huntington's James Stranahan; Henry Inman's Rydal Water; Daniel Ridgway Knight's The Shepherdess; Charles Christian Nahl's Portrait of Augustus Graham; Robert Loftin Newman's Madonna and Child; Junius Brutus Stearns's The Adoption of the Constitution; Gilbert Stuart's George Washington; Thomas Waterman Wood's New Cider, and Calculation; and Alexander Wyant's Keene Valley.

[21]The exhibition is documented in the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences Prospectus, (1897-98): 41-43.

[22] Catalogue of Paintings (Brooklyn: Museum of the Institute of Arts and Sciences, 1898).

[23] During the late 1890s the latter ranged from early works by Samuel Pratt, Charles Willson Peale and Washington Allston, to contemporary works by Thomas Hovenden, William Merritt Chase, and Will Low.

[24] "Bell Pictures: Many Valuable Acquisitions Now on View at the Museum Art Galleries," Brooklyn Standard Union, March 14, 1899; "Museum Art Treasures: Recent Additions to Institute Gallery Collection," Brooklyn Times, Brooklyn, March 14, 1899; and "Brooklyn Institute News," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, March 14, 1899; Brooklyn Museum Yearbooks (clipping scrapbooks), Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives (hereafter cited as Yearbooks.)

[25] "Attractions at Institute: A Fine Collection of Paintings to be Seen," New York Tribune, September 24, 1899, Yearbooks.

[26] Catalogue of Paintings (Brooklyn: Museum of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences, 1900).

[27] "$50,000 Memorial Gift to Brooklyn Institute," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, April 12, 1902, Yearbooks.

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[28] "Some New Paintings in the Brooklyn Institute Museum," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, June 19, 1904, Yearbooks. Other Woodward Fund purchases mentioned in the article were works by George Traver and Joseph Boston, both of whom practiced a brushy, Barbizon-inspired style.

[29] "Many Changes Made at Art Exhibition," Brooklyn Citizen, November 20, 1904, Yearbooks.

[30] Other dramatic changes included the installation of never before exhibited works of American sculpture in the new central section of the museum, and the loan exhibition of seventy American watercolors form the collection of G. H. Buek. "Exhibit of Art Works at Institute Museum," Brooklyn Citizen, June 1, 1905, Yearbooks.

[31] "Many New Paintings at Institute Museum," Brooklyn Citizen, June 1, 1905, Yearbooks.

[32] "Polhemus Paintings on Exhibit To-day," Brooklyn Daily Standard Union, March 3, 1907, Yearbooks. Goodyear's remarks were also quoted in the New York Herald, where he added, "The pictures by Wood Perry and T.W. Wood belong to a now almost extinct class of American genre painters and yet were among the best of their school in 1870." "Polhemus Paintings on View To-Day at the Institute of Arts and Sciences," New York Herald, March 3, 1907, Yearbooks.

[33] "Notable Paintings Added to the Institute's Galleries," New York Herald, June 17, 1906, Yearbooks.

[34] Ibid.

[35] William H. Goodyear, "Brooklyn Institute Owns a Whistler," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, December 2, 1906, Yearbooks.

[36] Goodyear enumerated the totals from previous years: 1899 - 3; 1900 - 6; 1901 - 9; 1902 - 5; 1903 - 8; 1904 - 7; 1905 - 8; see William H. Goodyear, "Report on the Department of Fine Arts," Museums of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences: Report upon the Condition and Progress of the Museums for the Year Ending December 31, 1906 (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences, 1906).

[37] As reported in "A Selective Art Museum," Nation 82 (May 24, 1906): 422. Gilman's remarks were delivered in critical response to the ideas promulgated by George Brown Goode, particularly in his lecture "Museum History and Museums of History" (1888) published in Report of the Smithsonian of 1897. Gilman took exception particularly to Goode's statement that "An efficient museum may be described as a collection of instructive labels each illustrated by a well selected specimens"; as quoted in Gilman's essay "Dr. Goode's Thesis and Antithesis," Proceedings of the American Association of Museums (1915) and reprinted in Benjamin Ives Gilman, Museum Ideals of Purpose and

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Method (Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1918), 77. Gilman's opinion was that while Goode's thesis might apply to science museums or the like, it was ill-suited to fine arts museums which were essentially not didactic. He wrote as early as 1904, "Thus neither in scope nor in value is the purpose of an art museum a pedagogic one. An institution devoted to the preservation and exhibition of works of the fine arts is not an educational institution, either in essence or in its claims to consideration. . . . The distinctive purpose of an art museum may be precisely defined as the aim to bring about that perfect contemplation of the works of art it preserves which is implied in their production and forms their consummation"; see Benjamin Ives Gilman, "On the Distinctive Purpose of Museums of Art," Communications to the Trustees of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston 1 (March 1904); reprinted in Gilman, Museum Ideals of Purpose and Method, 94.

[38] Roger E. Fry, "Ideals of a Picture Gallery," Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art 1 (March 1906): 58-59.

[39] "A Selective Art Museum", 423.

[40] Frank Jewett Mather, who described Gilman's transformation of the Museum of Fine Arts as a radical step, wrote, "It strikes uncompromisingly at the theory of comprehensive, chronological display which has prevailed for a full half-century." Frank Jewett Mather, "An Art Museum for the People," Atlantic Monthly 100 (December 1907): 729.

[41] "Museum Galleries Open Again to the Public," New York World, November 10, 1907, Yearbooks. In his annual report that year, Goodyear noted that the expansion, which accomplished the first enlargement of the picture galleries since 1897, made possible the "re-arrangement and re-classification" of the picture collection; William H. Goodyear, "Report on the Department of Fine Arts," in Museums of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences: Report upon the Condition and Progress of the Museums for the Year Ending December 31, 1907 (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences, 1907), 19.

[42] "Paintings by American Artists in the Museum" Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art 1 (September 1906): 131-135.

[43] "Museum Galleries Open Again to the Public."

[44] Ibid.

[46] "Resort for Lovers of Art in Brooklyn," Brooklyn Times, November 11, 1907, Yearbooks.

[46] "Museum Galleries Open to Public Today," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, November 10, 1907, Yearbooks.

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[47] The purchase of the Sargent watercolors is documented in Barbara Dayer Gallati, "Controlling the Medium: The Marketing of John Singer Sargent's Watercolors"; in Linda Ferber and Barbara D. Gallati, Masters of Color and Light: Homer, Sargent, and the American Watercolor Movement, (Washington, D.C.: Brooklyn Museum of Art and Smithsonian Institution Press, 1998), 117-141.

[48] Hearn's gift to the Metropolitan comprised ten American landscapes. For further details on the Hearn gift to the Metropolitan, see "Mr. George A Hearn's Gift to the Museum, and to the Cause of American Art," Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art 1 (February 1906): 33-36.

[49] "Hearn Pictures Shown," Art News 10 (December 30, 1911): 7.

[50] "Hearn Enriches Museum," Art News 11 (November 2, 1912): 4.

[51] The same reviewer commented on the exhibition of the Shepherd Collection, "The collection is rich in gems by our American artists, a fact which gives a home feeling and makes the viewer appreciate more readily the bond existing between our men and the best workers of the modern Holland school, for whose productions the collection is notable." Of the American pictures, he goes on to name Inness's Tenafly Oaks, and works by Homer Martin, and A.H. Wyant. See "Six Collections of Paintings on View in Museum," New York Herald, March 16, 1913, Yearbooks.

[52] "Exhibitions at the Brooklyn Museum--The American Water Color Society at Knoedler's," New York Times, March [?], 1913, Yearbooks.

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Chapter III: Past or Present Tense?: The Contest Between Historic and Contemporary American Art at the Brooklyn Museum, 1914 - 1920

Part One: William Henry Fox and a New Contemporary Art Agenda

William Henry Goodyear's role in shaping and displaying the Institute's painting collection was greatly modified when William Henry Fox, a lawyer and arts administrator formerly of the John Herron Institute (Indianapolis Museum of Art), was hired to succeed Franklin Hooper as Institute director in 1914. Fox's appointment was part of a larger reorganization through which the Museum and the two others sections of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences (the Botanic Garden and the Education Division) became independent entities under three directors; and after which Museum division was renamed the Brooklyn Museum. Presented with a dual mandate to establish the precedence of the fine arts over the sciences at the Institute, and to reorganize Goodyear's galleries,[1] Fox forged ahead in a partnership with Institute president that largely marginalized Goodyear, whom Fox later described merely as "a fine cabinet scholar."[2]

Fox himself was eager to overhaul the painting galleries, of which he had the following first impression, "The scene that assailed our eyes was awful. The walls of a room one hundred and ten feet long by forty feet wide with smaller galleries adjacent were covered with three rows of paintings, without regard to their relation to each other, a veritable maelstrom of clashing harmonies, color, subject, school, resting heavily on a wooden cimaise . . . ."[3] Fox immediately retired many works from view and created a

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series of alcoves along the walls to increase space and provide the opportunity to create "harmonious groupings."[4] In doing so he adopted a modified version of the anthological approach promoted by Gilman (and rejected by his own colleague Goodyear), but did do without offering the complementary "study storage" spaces prescribed by Gilman for use by specialists interested in viewing the large numbers of objects not selected for inclusion in the formal galleries. Other changes included the removal of "anachronistic lighting fixtures," which he replaced with recessed lighting.[5] He later recalled that certain board members, including Robert B. Woodward, resisted the dramatic changes while others, including George D. Pratt, were effective advocates for his ideas.[6]

Fox also continued the active program of purchases in the field of American painting, although he later credited Healy's connoisseurship for many of the selections made during the first decades of the century.[7] Among the most important American purchases of 1914 were six oils by Albert Pinkham Ryder, secured from a London representative of Cottier & Co., Ryder's early dealer.[8] In order to avoid the controversy that already had begun to surround the attribution of Ryder's paintings, the artist was summoned to the Museum to authenticate the works.[9]

Apparently from early on in his tenure, however, Fox envisioned contemporary art as potentially the primary feature of the Museum's wide-ranging collections. He was largely motivated by a desire to "avoid copying the excessive old master atmosphere of the Metropolitan Museum,"[10] a goal that recalled George Brown Goode's 1889 recommendation to Brooklyn trustees that they avoid forming collections redundant of others in the city. Fox, who went so far as to propose, unsuccessfully, to the Metropolitan Museum that the two institutions pursue complementary directions in their acquisitions,

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quickly implemented a program of exhibitions of contemporary American and foreign artists.[11] Fox and Goodyear initiated the series in April, 1915, with the highly successful opening of "Contemporary American Painters," an invitational exhibition of 107 works by seventy-eight artists. While the invited painters included many artists (Chase, Cecilia Beaux, Kenyon Cox, Dewing, Thomas Eakins, and Ryder) whose careers had flourished in the late nineteenth century as opposed to the twentieth, a number of younger figures (Henri, John Sloan, George Luks, George Bellows, and Middleton Manigault) represented the newer generation of American painters.[12] Over one thousand visitors attended the opening despite a driving snowstorm, setting the tone for the exceedingly enthusiastic reception of the exhibition.[13]

Goodyear wrote a summation of the exhibition for the Brooklyn Museum Quarterly, in which he touted its "undeniable atmosphere of freshness and spontaneity." He drew attention to physical features of the installation, including the "low single line hanging, and open spacing . . . much in its favor, and the pictures . . . carefully toned as regards juxtaposition." He added, "The new alcove arrangement, which divides the gallery into a series of eight separate divisions, is an indispensable feature of . . . and most important merit." Aware that the exhibition might provoke comparison with contemporaneous, juried shows at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and National Academy of Design, Goodyear asserted, "it is undeniable that the *relative* [to the total number] number of pictures which must be instantly admitted to be of the very highest rank and interest, is very much greater in Brooklyn. . . . Frankly speaking, the standard is impeccable." Defending what might be perceived as the untested quality of many of the newer works, he also commented,

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> the larger portion of them are what may be called critics' pictures . . . it is the mission of the critic to know a good picture of a new kind, and, by firm insistence on the fact that it is a good one, to raise the public by degrees to his own standard. The time is nearly past when men like Bellows, Luks, Glackens, Beal, Lever, and Kroll need to be defended. They are among the most vigorous and hopeful representatives of American art.[14]

The reviews of the exhibition were overwhelmingly positive, and in fact were published as an addendum to Goodyear's article in the Brooklyn Museum Quarterly. Henry McBride, an avid proponent of Modernism, wrote,

> The best exhibition of American art of the year is now . . . in the Museum of the Brooklyn Institute. Most of the best known artists of the country have contributed . . . irrespective of varying schools and cliques. . . . The officers of the Museum have evidently worked hard in their efforts to do something worth doing in the cause of native art, and have succeeded eminently. . . . it far eclipses the exhibition of American painting in the Metropolitan Museum of Art.[15]

In a measured nod to the relative conservatism of Brooklyn's view of Contemporary work, however, McBride added,

> The fact that our most modern men, such as John Marin, Max Weber, Samuel Halpert, Maurice Prendergast . . . are not represented, is a matter of slight consequence. . . . The important matter for congratulation is that works by those whom the public does understand, the academicians and the impressionists, are advantageously shown.[16]

Numerous critics, including the relatively conservative Royal Cortissoz of the New York Tribune, considered the unjuried exhibition an impressive and significant step forward and commented, "the institution would appear to have decided simply that it would make a collection according to its own judgment. . . . The principle of independence on which it has proceeded excites only the warmest appreciation."[17] Cortissoz's views were seconded by the painter and exhibitor John Sloan, who took the occasion to write encouragingly to Fox (rather than to Goodyear) about the selection and

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installation, "I want to say that the present show in the Brooklyn museum in addition to being a good collection of pictures is the best and only really democratically hung large exhibition I have ever seen--I hope that the Museum and its director get the credit they deserve."[18] "Contemporary American Painters" appears to have made a sustained impression on many in the New York art world. Writing for the Evening Post, Forbes Watson described the event as an "unprecedented in the history of the Museum," and he expressed a hope that the public response would encourage the administration to make it an annual event.[19] An editorial writer for the Eagle likewise commented on the exhibition's positive impact, "No one can overestimate the benefit that would come to greater Brooklyn by the regular occurrence of exhibitions of this kind. It will lead to a better appreciation of the older acquisitions in the Museum galleries that have not been so frequently and eagerly inspected as they deserve."[20]

Among the most interesting reviews of "Contemporary American Painters", however, was that written in June by the painter and critic Guy Pène du Bois, who asserted that although the selection included many works previously exhibited in New York, the exhibition was deserving of effusive critical reviews, if only for its support of young artists. He continued,

> while the exhibition . . . may not have been extraordinary, as an act, it flew, quite impudently, in the face of precedent. . . . The Brooklyn Museum . . . is within the magnetic circle of the largest museum in America. . . . Bow therefore to the little Brooklyn Museum for its disregard of the precedent established by its neighbor--the Metropolitan Museum of Art. At this point, by lack of prudence or superb bravery it has proved its youth.[21]

Pène du Bois was more critical of the seven purchases made from the exhibition, adding,

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"In the pursuit of pictures out of the exhibition, however, [Brooklyn] stretched its short legs so that its feet might fall into the footsteps of the Metropolitan Museum. . . . The museum took an adventurous step out into a speculative wilderness, then in a frenzy of fear rushed back to the cover of old fashioned traditions."[22] He referred to the Metropolitan's tendency, in the first decade of the century, to seek works by a passing generation of American painters, a policy that was opening articulated in 1905.[23] Brooklyn's seven purchases did not represent a particularly progressive strain of work, although it should be noted that they were no less daring than contemporaneous purchases out of the annuals of the Carnegie Institute or the Art Institute of Chicago (the latter accomplished through a newly founded Friends of American Art) to augment their collections[24] The most freely painted of the group was Hayley Lever's expressively brushed Winter, St. Ives (circa 1914, BMA 15.279), while today the best-known of the seven today is Dewing's Lady in Gold (circa 1912, BMA 15.322), a work representative of Gilded Age refinement rather than the forces of Modernist expressionism.[25] The general impression made by the exhibition and purchases, however, was that expressed by the painter-critic Arthur Hoeber in his comment, "Obviously the Brooklyn Museum in Eastern Parkway is picking up and taking its place among the institutions of that sort that are really doing things."[26]

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Part Two: Champions of Tradition: Museum Trustees and the Cause of Historic American Painting, 1915 - 1920

The comparison of Brooklyn with the Metropolitan Museum of Art, made so pointedly by Guy Pène du Bois and others in response to the 1915 exhibition, was increasingly put forward, a development in which Brooklyn's administration undoubtedly took pleasure as a rising competitor in the field of American art. As far as contemporary art was concerned, it is interesting to note that while the Metropolitan had not yet staged group exhibitions of living artists, its collection was growing in large part through gifts and purchases of works by turn-of-the-century painters, after an initial influx of gifts of earlier American paintings at the time of the Museum's founding;[27] by 1910 The Metropolitan's acquisition of works by Winslow Homer, Ryder, John Singer Sargent, Whistler and American Impressionists Mary Cassatt, Robinson, and Twachtman, had outpaced the addition pre-1890s material, a change for which the substantial gifts of George A. Hearn were largely responsible.[28]

One of the more pointed comparisons with The Metropolitan's American collections occurred in the fall of 1915, in reference to colonial rather than contemporary American painting. That November a writer for Art News remarked on the fact that a number of Copley portraits were currently on view at the Brooklyn Museum, including the recently purchased, Mrs. Benjamin Davis (circa 1764, BMA 15.317), and Mrs. Alexander Cumming (1770, BMA 22.84, see Appendix of Entries), a future gift on loan from trustee Walter Crittenden. The Art News writer commented, "In the awakened cause of early American painting the Brooklyn Museum has made a significant step. . . . While

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Brooklyn is to be congratulated in this acquisition, it is a matter for deep regret that this fine specimen of the art of Copley should not have been obtained by the Metropolitan Museum, whose collections . . . are wanting in fine examples of early American masters . . . ."[29] The remarks were a slight exaggeration, given that by 1906 The Metropolitan owned about a dozen eighteenth-century American portraits, owing at least in part to the interest it had demonstrated in the field through the 1895 exhibition "Early American Art." The Metropolitan made remarkably fewer purchases in the decade that followed, however, a development that is all the more surprising considering its presentation of the exhibition "American Colonial Portraits" in 1911. The Metropolitan may already have been at work to rectify the situation, however, for by the end of 1915 it had purchased Copley's portrait of Mrs. Jerathmael Bowers (circa 1763, The Metropolitan Museum of Art).

The year 1915 was ultimately a very productive one in the field of American acquisitions at the Brooklyn Museum, owing particularly to the bequest of paintings from the collection of Charles Schieren. It included the seven works by Blakelock mentioned earlier, as well as Asher B. Durand's Landscape (Birch and Oaks) (formerly Beech and Maples, circa 1855-57, BMA 15 .326), and two works by Alexander Helwig Wyant (BMA 15.302 and BMA 15.303). Also in 1915, William Merritt Chase presented the Museum with his portrait of Lydia Field Emmet (circa 1892, BMA 15.316; see Appendix of Entries). The recent additions to the collection received lengthy notice that year in Lorinda Munson Bryant's What Pictures to See in America; Bryant introduced the section on Brooklyn by noting, "the Museum has a splendid collection of paintings by American artists. Some of the pictures are of peculiar interest, as they represent rather unusual

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moods of the artists."[30] Among the examples she provided were Inness's The Valley of the Shadow of Death (location unknown). Bryant also praised works by John LaFarge, Winslow Homer's Unruly Calf (formerly BMA 06.79; Private Collection, Chicago), and Chase's In the Studio (circa 1882, BMA 13.50). She added, "The collection of Albert P. Ryder's pictures in the Museum, a recent acquisition, will grow in value with the passing years. Our first impression is that an exquisite color scheme has been carried to the nth power of perfection. . . . The very smallness of the pictures enhances their gem-like qualities . . . ."[31]

In 1916 the board of trustees allowed Fox and Goodyear to continue dividing their American acquisitions almost equally between early and contemporary painting; their selections included Stuart's forceful portrait of Isaac Barré (1785, BMA 16.25) and J. Alden Weir's impressionistic Willimantic Thread Factory (1893, BMA 16.30). That year they also launched the program of international loan exhibitions of contemporary art with the "Exhibition of Contemporary Swedish Art." Fox would later assert that he had been wrongly accused of allowing the foreign shows to dominate the exhibition program during his tenure, and noted that "the records of the Brooklyn Museum will show that two-thirds of the exhibitions were American against one-third foreign and the permanent accessions of works of American origin far outnumber those from foreign sources."[32]

Fox's claim certainly held true for the year 1917, perhaps the strongest one yet for the Museum's American exhibition program. Fox and Goodyear mounted two important exhibitions: "Early American Paintings," and "Works of American Painters, 1860-1885." "Early American Paintings," a loan exhibition of 192 eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century works (fifty-one of which were miniatures), came about because of the

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passionate interest of two self-taught colonial painting experts and Museum trustees, John Hill Morgan and Walter H. Crittenden.[33] As collectors in the field, both Morgan and Crittenden were eager to raise the level of connoisseurship of early American art at this moment when spurious works had begun to flood the market for ancestral portraits. Morgan, the more dedicated scholar and connoisseur, may have become interested in the field during his student years (the 1890s) at Yale University, where early American paintings figured prominently in the permanent collection of its Art Gallery.[34] By the mid-teens, he was entrusted by trustee Robert B. Woodward with building an early portrait collection for Brooklyn, as Morgan later recalled,

> When I went on the board . . . Colonel Woodward asked me to make a survey of the Museum's American portraits and suggest a plan for acquiring a collection as part of the Museum's exhibits. I did this, and a few years later organized the exhibition of 1917, the first retrospective of American portraits of which I know. From then on I purchased from time to time portraits as the funds were available, trying to buy one example of each important artist.[35]

"Early American Paintings" was remarkable not only for its impressive checklist of major and minor artists, but for the innovative installation, for which Morgan very likely should be credited. In addition to fifteen works by Stuart, fourteen by Copley, and nine by Sully (the popular favorites of the moment), the exhibition included works by the lesser known Colonial painters Joseph Badger and Joseph Blackburn. Also among the less predictable selections were six portraits by Samuel S.B. Morse, whose career as an artist had receded into obscurity; and some mid-nineteenth century works from the permanent collection whose inclusion demonstrated the degree to which "Early American Painting" was regularly applied to all works produced prior to the Gilded Age.[36] Many of the lenders to the exhibition had Brooklyn connections: Morgan loaned eleven works

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from his collection; and Brooklyn resident Herbert Lee Pratt's remarkable loan of sixty-four works (about one third of the exhibition) led one reviewer to comment, "the long galleries were skillfully hung with choice oil paintings of olden times, and there is something like surprise in the fact that so many celebrated painters, represented on the walls, are in the possession of Brooklynites." The same writer pointed to "an outpouring of citizens last night for the opening" as a sign of the exhibition's merit.[37] Regarding the installation, a reviewer for the New York Times noted that the paintings were "shown with as much regard as possible for chronological sequence and appropriate grouping, giving opportunities in a number of instances for comparison of an artist with himself." As interesting for the viewer, however, was the imaginative inclusion of the series of complementary "period rooms," about which the same writer commented, "the furniture belongs to the museum, and is admirably arranged in small rooms constructed for the purpose. The objects are brought together with an appearance of intimacy and relationship difficult to achieve."[38]

Numerous critics perceived the exhibition as both a response to the rising popularity of colonial pictures among collectors and a guarantee of the field's continued growth. A writer for the Christian Science Monitor suggested the exhibition's significance as well as the risks involved in the colonial portrait market,

> The Fates and Charles Henry Hart [a leading expert-dealer in the field] have smiled upon the Brooklyn Museum's exceptionally important and significant loan exhibition--supplementing that institution's own rapidly growing collection of early American art. . . . Nearly all these exhibits are family heirlooms of great value . . . . [The exhibition] could not come at a more opportune time. Some of the recent high-figured (and high-handed) transactions in 'Stuarts' and 'Copleys' make it only too evident that, the visible supply of fairly authenticated originals being exhausted, recourse is being had to the underground supply . . . .[39]

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Charles Caffin, a noted historian of American painting, qualified the exhibition more seriously as "the most representative and comprehensive display of the beginnings of painting in this country that has ever been held." He, too, pointed to the timely quality and potential influence of the exhibition,

> tribute to American painters is the watchword of the season. Notwithstanding the large prices that are being paid for foreign works, there is a feeling shared by dealers as well as by art institutions, that the present time is one to enforce the claims of American painters to the consideration of American collectors and art lovers. In this movement the Brooklyn Museum of Art is taking characteristically a lead.[40]

Morgan and Fox respectively must have been exceedingly pleased with the response to the exhibition for it placement of colonial portraiture on a highly visible stage, and for its success in broadening the Museum's audience for the fine arts. Given that there were no purchases out of the exhibition to augment the Museum's holdings, the success of the exhibition itself must be viewed as their primary goal.

The exhibition "Works of American Painters, 1860 - 1885," was mounted later in 1917 in celebration of the opening of the Catskill aqueduct, complementing The Metropolitan Museum of Art's concurrent exhibition of Hudson River School paintings--an area in which its holdings were already substantial, including works by Cole, Casilear, Durand, and Kensett. Brooklyn's display comprised a very mixed assortment of art largely from the permanent collection (only twenty-nine of the eighty-three paintings were loans). Although some choices were predictable--including works by such popular favorites as Chase, Inness and Wyant--works by earlier nineteenth-century artists including Robert Loftin Newman and Louis Rémy Mignot, were more surprising. In his introduction to the catalogue, where he offered a brief sketch of artistic developments in

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the United States, Fox noted that paintings in the exhibition were flanked by the permanent collection of early American works on one side and contemporary painting on the other, perhaps in an effort to draw attention to art that currently was more popular.[41] The critical disregard for mid-nineteenth century American paintings at the time was demonstrated emphatically in Helen Appleton Read's comment in the Eagle,

> The exhibition, although roughly placed within the dates 1860-1880, nevertheless contains two distinct periods, the going out of the old, provincial Hudson River school and the coming in of the new and cosmopolitan spirit. . . . The lowest ebb of American painting is admirably represented by the works of Regis Gignoux . . . and . . by Louis Mignot's Niagara. . . . It is to Inness, Wyant, and Homer Martin we must turn for the enduring quality of charm."[42]

One cannot ignore the climate of intense wartime nationalism that formed the backdrop for the American exhibitions mounted at the Museum in 1917. Although American art's direct response to the war was limited to the work of a relatively small number of artists (ranging from Childe Hassam's celebratory flag paintings to the inflammatory anti-war illustrations of John Sloan), the war inflected many domestic events, including cultural ones. Museums channeled patriotic fervor into exhibition programs and framed their presentations in the posture and language of ardent nationalism. Despite his true scholarly intent in the field of early American portraiture, for example, John Hill Morgan had entitled his introductory essay to the "Early American Paintings" catalogue "Lest We Forget," and had asserted therein that the early artistic tradition of the United States had been "a spontaneous expression of culture arising out of the deeds of our forefathers and the special conditions which surrounded life in the early days of our country."[43] Thus if the war-time mood did not necessarily inspire such projects, it clearly had a significant impact on their execution. The Museum respond

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more directly to the war in Europe with exhibitions including "Lithographs of War Work in England and America by Joseph Pennell, which ran concurrently with "Works of American Painters, 1860-1885."

The decade closed with consistent attention to the dual purchase priorities in American art: early art in the form of Blackburn's Letitia Wyseman Clagett (circa 1760; BMA 18.43); and recent works including Cassatt's Woman in a Red Bodice and Her Child (circa 1901, BMA 19.95), and George de Forest Brush's Mother and Child: A Modern Madonna (1919, BMA 19.93). In 1918, however, the Museum also was presented with works by Walter Libbey (including his Self-Portrait, , BMA 18.25), the mid-nineteenth-century American portrait and genre painter whom the young critic Walt Whitman had designated the ideal, democratic American artist (see Chapter I.)

Part Three: The Twenties: Buying the Old and Showing the New

The twenties at the Brooklyn Museum were seemingly more disorderly as far as exhibitions were concerned, but they were significantly productive in the area of American acquisitions. The decade's exhibitions began with a dramatic gesture in support of American art when the Museum hosted the National Academy of Design's 1920 spring annual. Macbeth Galleries reported in their Art Notes that, "for once the Academy is not complaining about exhibition space, and over six hundred canvases have been accepted." The comparison with the Metropolitan loomed large once again, "It seems a real pity that the Metropolitan Museum could not, for once, have put itself on record as encouraging

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contemporary artists. . . . Certainly no Academy exhibition ever looked so well, and even the number of inferior pictures always found in so large a collection of current work, do not detract from the general dignified impression of the rooms."[44] The attendance of 3,500 visitors at the opening must have pleased Brooklyn's administration, although they must have been aware that it would be a phenomenon difficult to repeat.

The exhibition program was otherwise somewhat uneven in the early twenties; a handful of oddly mixed and relatively minor monographic American exhibitions were mounted, including those of works by Whistler (1920), Robert Loftin Newman (1921), Edwin Willard Deming (1922), Hamilton Easter Field (a memorial exhibition, 1922), Frederick Kost (1924), and Dorothea Drier (1925). The department of Fine Arts was also effected by the death of longtime curator William Henry Goodyear in 1923; if Goodyear had no longer conceptualized exhibitions after Fox's arrival, he had remained an effective facilitator. Goodyear's absence must explain, at least in part, the fact that a group of loan exhibitions mounted in 1924 to celebrate the Centennial of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences were unremarkable in their presentation of American oils primarily from the permanent collection.[45] In 1925 Fox replaced Goodyear with an unlikely candidate, Herbert B. Tschudy, a watercolorist and previously a staff artist responsible for scene painting in the ethnographic galleries on the Museum's first floor. Fox may have deliberately installed a relatively unopinionated individual in the position, for he appears to have steered the department's course according to his own agenda, as would his successor Philip Youtz during the latter half of Tschudy's tenure.

As the decade progressed, Fox remained committed to refocusing the Museum more exclusively on contemporary art, in part to court the city government on whom he

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was depending for funds to complete yet another expansion. He later recalled, "I had to present the museum in a different guise from that of the Metropolitan. To make our collection the authoritative representation of modern art, with the backing of the artists and the friends, would carry much more weight with the authorities than to attempt to repeat the successes of the older institution with earlier art."[46] He thus embarked on a new program of exhibitions, although hampered by the divergent interests of Frank L. Babbott, Healy's successor as Institute president in 1921 and a devoted enthusiast of pre-Modern painting. Babbott, who had devoted himself to philanthropy and collecting since his retirement from business in 1901, had served on the board since 1915 and would hold the presidency until 1928. Fox found support, however, in Walter Crittenden, who despite his personal interest in colonial portraiture was a vocal proponent of acquisitions in the contemporary field. In January, 1921, Crittenden informed Fox that he had recommended over the dissent of his fellow trustees that the Museum pursue a course of collecting similar to that of the Musée de Luxembourg in Paris. Like Fox he was eager to set an acquisition agenda distinct from the Metropolitan's, "We cannot compete with the Metropolitan, except in special lines . . . but it seems to be that taking the best advice and buying very carefully only things which we think are distinguished and will last we shall make some mistakes but more hits and in the end would save money or rather get things which we could not afford to buy after the death or appreciation of the artist's work."[47]

Among the first exhibitions mounted in fulfillment of Fox's renewed agenda in the contemporary field was a 1925 exhibition entitled "Paintings in Oil by American and European Artists." While the American entries conformed largely to a conservative, representational mode inspired by the less radical strains of European Modernism, the

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exhibition also served as a forum for such rising young artists as Andrew Dasburg, Stuart Davis, Edward Hopper, and Bradley Walker Tomlin. Other painters on the exhibition's roster of 120 included Ernest Blumenschien, Stefan Hirsch, Robert Spencer, and Isabel Whitney.[48] The linking of living American and European artists became a leitmotif in the exhibitions mounted at Brooklyn in the 1920s, including the First Exhibition of the National Society of Mural Painters, organized independently but installed at Brooklyn in the winter of 1925. That exhibition included works by Edwin Howland Blashfield, Irving Eanger Couse and William de Leftwich Dodge, as well as by Maurice Denis and Albert Besnard.[49]

Fox's efforts in this direction were acknowledged publicly once again in 1926, when the Museum organized an installation of works by young American painters to celebrate the opening refurbished galleries. Art Notes again responded supportively,

> The Brooklyn Museum is one of the most progressive of our big institutions, and it is rapidly growing both in its physical size and the scope of its influence. . . . It is significant that its first installation was not a collection of old masters . . . but a collection of the work of younger, and mostly unknown painters from the art school colonies throughout the country. The arrangement was by schools, so that it was possible to see just what each group is contributing to our art growth. All kinds of thought, or lack of it, were to be found, and the result was stimulating and optimistic. Brooklyn does not believe that a museum permanent collection should be used to support new and untried artists, but it does believe that spare wall space can be used to give the younger men a chance.[50]

The reinstallation was followed by a sequel to the 1925 exhibition entitled "Paintings by Modern French and American Artists," comprising 115 works. In addition to the French paintings (which ranged from twenty-three canvases by Cezanne to two oils by Picasso, and numerous works Barbizon School paintings), the exhibition featured twenty-four oils and twenty-six works on paper by Arthur B. Davies, all lent by Lizzie Bliss. Americans

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were otherwise in the minority, with six works by Prendergast, and two by Inness (both from the permanent collection) among the significant entries.[51] The preponderance of works by Davies was related to Fox's effort to court Lizzie Bliss in the hope that she eventually would present her significant collection of modernist art to Brooklyn, an effort that he later remarked had been frustrated by Babbott and his supporters.[52]

Fox embarked on a far more daring project in the fall of 1926, however, when he offered Brooklyn's painting galleries to Katherine Dreier's avant garde Société Anonyme for an exhibition entitled the "International Exhibition of Modern Art." It was to date the most radical representation of modern art undertaken by the Museum (surpassing the Museum's seminal 1921 exhibition "Post-Impressionists and their Predecessors") and in fact would remain so for decades to come. Fox had been willing to take this significant risk in the interest more to demonstrate an general openness to contemporary art than out of a personal commitment to the aesthetics embraced by the Société's members. He praised the participating artists for being well-trained, original and "sincere in purpose and by no means committed to sensationalism," but he added, "I am not to be classed as a partisan of their movement. . . . I confess that my own sympathies are to a greater degree with the ideals of my artist contemporaries of the twenty or thirty years that precede the war."[53] Fox later wrote in his memoir that "far from exciting ridicule by its eccentricities and supposed inability to make an impression of reasonableness, harmony, and grace, it emphasized these very qualities in presenting a dignified exhibition which gained the plaudits of the press . . . ." He continued, "it is true that the exhibitions in some cases resorted to media which are not deemed canonical, but this occasioned no serious shock when the artist's intention was apparent," a reference to such works as Marcel Duchamp's

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The Large Glass (1915-1923, Philadelphia Museum of Art), which made its debut in the exhibition.

The Société Anonyme exhibition was an important event for the Museum, attracting approximately 52,000 visitors over the course of its run and generating a flood of reviews in major as well as minor newspapers and journals. Enthusiastic critics, led by the Sun's Henry McBride, found in the progressive, non-objective work a true expression of the new, modern age. A writer for the New Yorker commented, "we are forced to cross the river [into Brooklyn] to see that this was the year 1926."[54] Many others, including Helen Appleton Read of the Eagle, admired the abstractions for their design principles but found them otherwise lacking in content and meaning. She remarked, "They clear away cobwebs and stir the imagination. But to what? To thinking how the next picture or plastic may gain in construction, design, restraint and craftsmanship." Read had particular praise, however, for the twenty-eight American exhibitors (one quarter of the artists), whose works were dispersed throughout the exhibition in the mix of 106 artists from twenty-three countries; and she singled out such important young modernists as John Marin, Georgia O'Keeffe, Joseph Stella, and Charles Demuth.[55] Despite Fox's hesitancy, and his unwillingness view the Museum's hosting of the exhibition as direct advocacy of the avant-garde aesthetics on view, he was commended for accommodating so challenging an array of art.

Fox's choice in modernist ventures in 1927 was probably better suited to the Museum's audience, while still offering a look at some of the newer art on the horizon. The loan exhibition of works from the private collection of Albert Gallatin, a New Yorker with an interest in progressive American And European art, show-cased thirty-

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seven oils, almost two-thirds of which were American. The paintings ranged from the American Impressionism of Twachtman, Ernest Lawson, and William Glackens, to the more progressive canvases of Max Kuehne, Guy Pène du Bois, and Marsden Hartley.[56] Fox continued to press his agenda for contemporary art through the remainder of the decade and into the early thirties, primarily with the nearly annual exhibition series of "American and Foreign Artists." Although the majority of exhibitors were artists who today are exceedingly obscure, this series occasionally featured rising painters and sculptors and remarkable works. The 1928 exhibition, for example, featured Joseph Stella's new five-paneled work New York: The Voice of the City of New York Interpreted (The Newark Museum).[57] The exhibition of 1929 notably included twelve paintings by Isabel Whitney, and twenty-three sculptures by Malvina Hoffman. Under Fox's directorship the Museum also hosted such affiliated group exhibitions as the annual exhibitions of the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors (1926 and 1928); American Painters of Paris (1927); and New Society of Artists (their ninth annual, in 1928). He supplemented these with smaller monographic exhibitions including those of the works of Georgia O'Keeffe (1927) and Arthur B. Davies (1928).

While enormous progress was made in the Museum's contemporary exhibition program during the 1920s, exhibitions of colonial and nineteenth-century art were dramatically few in number. They included a 1928 exhibition of twenty-four works from John Hill Morgan's personal collection of early American portraits, including three Copleys, three Charles Willson Peales, and three Gilbert Stuarts.[58] Following the run of the exhibition, he allowed two of the earliest portraits to remain on loan for use in the period rooms. By the mid-twenties, the board of trustees had given Morgan a free hand in

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evaluating and further expanding the Museum's collection of early American portraits, resulting in the addition of thirty-one works in the field, though purchase and gift, over the course of the decade. He mounted an organized effort in 1926, when he requested to have "laid out" all the American portraits dating prior to 1850, noting, "it seems wise to me to take an account of stock, and to see what gaps need to be filled."[59]

Morgan interestingly had made his most important purchases of early portraiture on behalf of the Museum during the first half of the decade, before this general evaluation; they included Charles Willson Peale's Mrs. David Forman and Child (circa 1875, BMA 23.59), Raphaelle Peale's Still Life with Cake (1822, BMA 24.72), Thomas Sully's Anne Waln (circa 1808, BMA 22.1831), Charles Loring Elliott's John Charles Frémont (1857, BMA 20.666), and the more unusual choices of Jeremiah Theus's Elizabeth Rothmaler (1757, BMA 23.61) and John Wollaston's William Allen and Mrs. William Allen (circa 1757, BMA 24.80 and 24.81). With colonial portrait scholarship still in an early phase, Morgan's science was hardly a perfect one. In 1927, for example, he initiated the purchase of a group five vaguely attributed portraits in order to acquire two John Smiberts believed to be among them; only one of the pair was authentic, while one of the unattributed works has recently been given to Smibert's hand (Portrait of a Woman, possibly Mrs. James Gooch, circa 1740, BMA 27.947). Morgan surely was sensing the pressure of competition from other museums in the search for increasingly desired colonial works. The Metropolitan, for example, actively purchased in this field more than any other area during the twenties, securing works by Joseph Badger, Theus, Hesselius, and perhaps most important, Charles Willson Peale's portraits of Samuel

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Mifflin (1777, The Metropolitan Museum of Art) and Mrs. Samuel Mifflin and Her Granddaughter Rebecca Mifflin Francis (1777, The Metropolitan Museum of Art).

The nature of Morgan's further involvement in the decoration of some of the Museum's original period rooms indicates that he hoped to achieve for early American art a status exceeding antiquarian value. He wrote in response to a list of works proposed for installation in the colonial period rooms in 1928, "I think there are too many, and that we should not entirely denude the American exhibit of all its fine portraits."[60] Although he appears to have been successful in retaining a place for early American painting in the permanent galleries, not all of the acquisitions he recommended were approved. In 1927 the board declined to purchase of a replica by Benjamin West of his important history subject The Death of Wolfe (location unknown) despite Morgan's rationale, "the price is high and the space required large . . . [and] the classic school has been entirely superseded, but this picture, from its size and the scene depicted, should be of interest to all Americans."[61] Morgan's significant efforts on behalf of this segment of the collection very likely were the catalyst for other gifts of early American pictures, including Copley's Mrs. Alexander Cumming, presented by Walter Crittenden in 1922; and Gilbert Stuart's Mrs. Robert Auchmuty (1816, BMA 21.55), the gift of Herbert Lee Pratt in 1921.

In dramatic contrast to Morgan's board-supported program of early American acquisitions, purchases of more recent American paintings during the 1920s appear to have proceeded haphazardly despite Fox's organized exhibition program in the field. Although they can hardly be qualified as contemporary, Fox's purchases included such important American Impressionist canvases as John Singer Sargent's An Out-of-Doors Study (also known as Paul Helleu Sketching with His Wife) (1889, BMA 20.640) in

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1920, Theodore Robinson's The Watering Pots (1890, BMA 21.47; see Appendix of Entries), probably on the recommendation of its first owner Frank Babbott, in 1921. The most adventurous purchase of the early twenties probably was George Bellows's Sand Team (1917, BMA 24.85), in 1924. This work was joined by a sequence of significant gifts in the field: John Sloan's Haymarket (1907, BMA 23.60), presented by Mrs. Harry Payne Whitney in 1923; Rockwell Kent's Down to the Sea (1910, BMA 25.758), a 1925 Babbott gift; and the most remarkable addition, the 1928 donation of Georgia O'Keeffe's Pansy (1926, BMA 28.521.) By the end of the decade, Fox also added to the holdings of more recent realism with purchases of Adolph Borie's Girl Meditating (1916, BMA 28.421) and Henry Lee McFee's Still Life (BMA 29.1390).

During the 1920s, the temporarily forgotten field of Hudson River School paintings was given a minor boost by the addition of two small studies by Thomas Cole (Castle and River, circa 1832, BMA 21.107; and Study for The Cross and the World: The Pilgrim of the Cross at the End of His Journey, circa 1846-47, BMA 33.274) presented as the gifts of two Brooklyn donors. The height of the Gilded' Age's Beaux Arts style also was provided a new permanent presence in the collection through the gift of two large murals by Robert Blum (The Mood to Music, 1895, BMA 26.152; and The Vintage Festival, 1896-98, BMA 26.151.)

Among the works offered to the Museum during the 1920s were important paintings that did not conform to institutional collecting priorities. In 1922, for example, when C.W. Cranmer was actively seeking to place works by Thomas Eakins in public collections on behalf of the artist's wife Susan McDowell Eakins,[62] Fox declined owing to lack of funds from purchasing any pictures at the time, an explanation that leads one to

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believe that funds were being restricted for Morgan's purchases at the time. In response to Cranmer's renewed offer in 1925, Fox replied directly to Susan Eakins, "Naturally we should be glad to have Mr. Eakins represented in our collection--permanently, I hope, sometime when our funds will permit."[63] Fox finally added an Eakins to the collection in 1927 with the purchase of Letitia Wilson Jordan (1888, BMA 27.50) from Macbeth Galleries in New York. Eakins's factual portraiture had not yet attracted the level of admiration it would garner several decades later, however, as revealed in Herbert Tscudy's guarded remarks for the Brooklyn Museum Quarterly, "[Eakins's] somewhat heavy-handed treatment of the feminine type, while at first glance repellant, is more than outweighed by the more significant personal traits which are so ably expressed in this painting."[64] When news of the purchase reached Cranmer and Susan Eakins, Cranmer contacted Fox to express their delight as well as to offer the Museum Eakins's imposing The Crucifixion (1880, Philadelphia Museum of Art) for purchase.[65] Fox declined, and additionally rejected the artist's Walt Whitman (1887-88, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts) in 1930, but proceeded immediately thereafter to purchase Eakins's watercolor Oarsmen on the Schuylkill (Private Collection, formerly BMA 30.14).[66] He then wrote to the dealer William Griscom, "for the present we have come to the end of our purchases of paintings, especially of Eakins. I do not think I can get the trustees to take any more of them."[67] Brooklyn's trustees would change their minds, however, before the thirties came to a close, and as the terrain of the American field began to shift.

In summarizing the Brooklyn Museum's accomplishments in the field of American art during the 1920s, it is helpful to consider remarks published in 1928 by the critic Margaret Breuning, who devoted substantial attention to the Museum in her

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comparative review of art currently on view in New York. After bemoaning the absence of a collection catalogue, and the fact that that much of the permanent, painting collection was in storage to accommodate temporary exhibitions, she offered the following commendation, "Many of these works are by contemporary men, many of them quite young and coming, to be sure, but happily not arrived. This policy of considering art as something living and functioning, rather than dead and to be preserved, and to be encouraged in the lifetime of the artist, is a particular feature of the museum and its director, Mr. William Fox." Breuning specifically enumerated the recent acquisitions of works by Sloan, Kent, and Bellows (mentioned above), as well as Van Dearring Perrine's Race to the River (circa 1925, formerly BMA 25.528), Birger Sandzen's Creek at Moon (1921, BMA 22.101),and Robert Spencer's White Tenements (1913, BMA 25.761), respectively two recent gifts and the most recent Woodward Fund purchase. From among the older generation of artists in the galleries, Breuning singled out Ryder, Robert L. Newman, Twachtman, and Weir. She had particular praise for Dewing's Lady in Gold, and Thomas Eakins's Letitia Wilson Jordan, of which she wrote, " . . . it is difficult to pass casually this superb portrait so thoroughly individual and original in its approach and execution."[68] Breuning's comments were a vindication of Fox and his plans for the American collections, and, more specifically, an affirmation his albeit hesitant addition of the Eakins to the fold.

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Part Four: Fox's Project Comes to an End

By 1929 the debate on issues of collection building, particularly in the field of American art, was becoming increasingly heated as proponents of living artists heightened their criticism of museum administrators and curators who devoted their attention and monies to the art of earlier centuries. To cite just one example, Lee Simonson, a designer and the editor of the progressive art and design magazine Creative Art, wrote an article objecting to both the widespread focus on pre-contemporary art and the general deracination of objects placed in museum displays. On an elemental level, Simonson challenged what had become the traditional mission of museums, stating, "there is no sound psychological basis for our glib assumption that enlightenment, uplift and inspiration result almost automatically from turning the average, aspiring citizen loose amid a miscellaneous accumulation . . . . The greatest museum is at best incomplete, an assemblage of disjointed fragments wrenched from the settings that originally justified their creation."[69] He made particular note of the neglect of modern painters by The Metropolitan Museum of Art, whose Hearn fund purchases he viewed as retardataire, and pointedly suggested that "an important gallery [of contemporary art] could be established tomorrow by purchasing one representative picture by every important American painter whom the Metropolitan trustees have ignored."[70]

Simonson invited contributions to Creative Art from "curators and directors . . . who advocate radical experiments in museum planning and museum policy," including John Cotton Dana, A.E. Gallatin, and Duncan Phillips; they, in Simonson's view, had embraced the goal of establishing in art "a sound relation to human psychology and

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contemporary needs."[71] The responses of these individuals provide a telling barometer of the refocused priorities of this progressive segment of the museum community in 1929. John Cotton Dana, the innovative director of the Newark Museum and a well-published museum theorist, expressed his belief that a society could not be creative if its own creative work was not supported and appreciated,

> If the eyes of a people are turned eagerly toward things that have been wrought out in other lands and in ancient times; if the purses of a people are opened wide for the purchase and the fashionable and costly installation of the products of artists of other days, and are opened grudgingly, if at all, for the patronage of men and women of the present day and hour . . . then the age of art for that people is surely not at hand.[72]

Holger Cahill wrote about Dana's Newark Museum, which in 1925 had "set out consistently to acquire a collection of Contemporary American art." Among the twenty-six paintings purchased in 1926 for the opening of the new museum building were works by Luks, Sloan, Bellows, Glackens, Pene du Bois, Augustus Tack, and Gifford Beal. Cahill began his discussion by commenting that "attempts to get together American collections have been frustrated by such things as conservatism and conflicting opinions among trustees and committees, lack of any vital interest in Contemporary art among museum staffs, and in some cases lack of funds." He noted that Dana had risen objectively above the fray to commit himself to the cause of living artists; and he quoted Dana, whose words recall Fox's attitude toward the Société Anonyme, "I don't yet see what these modernists are driving at, but I buy their paintings and sculptures for the Newark Museum because I think I ought to do it." Cahill added that the other institutions making notable headway in the same direction were the Cleveland Museum of Art and the Brooklyn Museum.[73]

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One might assume that Fox was attentive to the dialogue conducted in Creative Art in 1929, and that he also considered the list of desirable contemporary artists provided by Albert Gallatin in the latter's short article on his Gallery of Living Art. Gallatin had founded the small museum, which he ran with Henry McBride from 1927, for the permanent, public display of a comprehensive group of works by living artists. Among their initial choices were paintings by Alexander Brook, Demuth, Preston Dickinson, Hartley, Yasuo Kuniyoshi, John Marin, and Charles Sheeler. Fox's use of the 1930 Woodward Fund for the purchase of Glenn O. Coleman's Fort Lee Ferry (1923, BMA 30.1153), and Bertram Hartman's Trinity Church and Wall Street (1929, BMA 30.1109) moved the collection in a parallel direction. Hartman notably had been represented by forty paintings in Brooklyn's "American and Foreign Artists" exhibition that year. In 1931, Fox's efforts with Lizzie Bliss were rewarded with her presentation of five works by Davies to the Museum, including the large, abstracted figural mural The Dawning (1915, BMA 31.275).

The movement of purchases into a more progressive vein was a relatively short-lived phenomenon in the 1930s, however, as a marked sea-change began to redirect the Museum's acquisitions of American art. In Fox's correspondence with the Griscom Galleries in 1930, for example, he inquired about works primarily by an earlier generation of artists: George Fuller, Winslow Homer, Murphy, Twachtman, Weir, and Wyant. He mentioned a few of the younger men, including Luks, Bellows, and Augustus Tack.[74] The Museum board may have begun to wield greater influence over purchases made in the last years of Fox's tenure. The trustee Walter Crittenden, for example, contacted Robert McIntyre of Macbeth Galleries in 1932 in search of a Homer marine for

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the collection. McIntyre responded that "at the moment it seems out of the question to obtain a marine by Homer except by paying a very fancy price, and I doubt even then a high price would tempt the owners of the great marines to part with them." He recommended the artist's more unusual In the Mountains (1877, BMA 32.1648), noting, "in a chronological presentation [it] would be a weighty item."[75]

By coincidence, the nineteenth-century portion of the collection was strengthened dramatically in 1932 through the bequest of Michael Friedsam, the business successor to the department store magnate Benjamin Altman. Although Fox later remarked that Friedsam had largely imitated Altman in the formation of his collection under the guidance of the dealer F. Kleinberger,[76] the bequest garnered the Museum important canvases, including Inness's Homeward (1881, BMA 32.827) and Sunset over the Sea (1887, BMA 34.488; see Appendix of Entries), and other worthy paintings like Samuel Coleman's luminous On the Viga (1892, BMA 32.797), and J. Francis Murphy's Stormy Day (1887, 32.849). Smaller gifts strengthened the nineteenth-century holdings at the same time, including William Trost Richards's League Long Breakers Thundering on the Reef (1887, BMA 32.140), a bequest of Alice Crowell in 1932; and John F. Kensett's exceptional Lake George (1870, BMA 33.219) presented in 1933 by the daughter of the noted Brooklyn collector John C. Southwick.

In 1932 the collection also gained, in part temporarily, a group of American paintings assigned by the Henry Ward Ranger Fund through the National Academy of Design. Among the most interesting were Robert Henri's Woman in a Manteau (1898, BMA 39.600), which remained in the collection; and Cecelia Beaux's remarkable Man with the Cat [Henry Sturges Drinker] (1898, Smithsonian American Art Museum),

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recalled in 1952 by the Smithsonian Institution for the then National Collection of Fine Arts (today's Smithsonian American Art Museum), according to the terms of the fund.[77]

Renewed attention to nineteenth-century American painting was not unique to the Brooklyn Museum at the outset of the thirties. A crop of inventive survey exhibitions were mounted, primarily by the newer museums, at the beginning of the decade; in 1932 they included "The Development of American Painting, 1700-1900" at the Newark Museum and "American Painting and Sculpture" at the Museum of Modern Art. Brooklyn joined the fray that year with "American Impressionists and Other Artists of the Period, 1880-1900," a broad umbrella under which a variety of Gilded Age collection material was installed along with loaned works by such artists as Eakins, Inness, Robinson, Ryder, Twachtman, and Cassatt. The author of the brief, accompanying catalogue framed the exhibition as a presentation of paintings from an era of "peace and plenty . . . unclouded by war or international difficulties," which lay in stark contrast to the post-1900 period, when "the disturbing element of the ultra-modern art, with its tragic forebodings, crept into the work of the American artist . . . ."[78] Writing for the periodical Parnassas, Margaretta Salinger reviewed the exhibition in the context of two concurrent exhibitions contributing to the conceptualization of a history of American art (Hudson River School paintings at Macbeth Galleries, and turn-of-the-century pictures at the Milch Galleries). She reported, "After seeing the three groups it would be limited and blind to refuse to admit the validity of the American school of painting which produced Eakins and [Letitia Wilson Jordan]. Derivative often, lacking experience and technic as frequently, the artists represented seem however, to have possessed the common assets of conviction and enthusiasm . . . ." Salinger continued, "The Brooklyn show is a really

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splendid array,--one hundred and twenty canvases . . . judiciously chosen and well hung. . . . . Both the Milch and Brooklyn shows start with Inness . . . who, chronologically and stylistically, forms the transition from the Hudson River landscapes to those painted by men like Robinson . . . ." [79]

The Museum's own editorial comment on the exhibition, published in the Brooklyn Museum Quarterly, demonstrated the degree to which an art historical approach to American art was beginning to take hold,

> Occurring in a year devoted so whole-heartedly to Americana, this exhibition it was hoped, would . . . serve as a link between the colonial and the ultra-modern artists. . . . To the American artist of the '90s, the world presented an aspect of comparative peace and infinite hope. . . . Their style seems to us, in a more troubled era, the essence of calm and lyric beauty. . . . The present fever to exalt the early American will no doubt moderate in time, and it will be then that the painters represented in this exhibition may claim the place which is theirs . . . . are they not the vital link between colonial America, and the choppy currents of today's artistic seas?[80]

During the early 1930s, as the anxiety generated by the widening Depression steadily heightened, Americans predictably sought to anchor the increasingly challenging currents of contemporary art in a secure, national past. The self-consciousness of that effort in the case of the 1932 Brooklyn exhibition is nevertheless surprising. As if in response to this bifurcated impulse, the Museum's painting purchases continued to tread two increasingly divergent paths, as demonstrated in 1934 with the Woodward Fund purchase of Katherine Dreier's non-objective Unknown Forces (1926, BMA 34.6077)--a complete break with previous Woodward selections--and Charles Willson Peale's historically significant George Washington (1776, BMA 34.1178), commissioned by John Hancock and secured for the Museum by John Hill Morgan, its staunch colonial portrait advocate.

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Notes

[1] William Henry Fox, Memoirs of Dr. William Henry Fox, 1858-1952, bound typescript, 286, 305. Art Reference Library, Brooklyn Museum of Art (hereafter cited as Fox Memoirs). Fox claimed that Goodyear's treatment of the exhibits had influenced the board not to appoint him director.

[2] Ibid., 286.

[3] Ibid., 283-84.

[4]Ibid., 292-93. Fox later claimed that his progressive alcove arrangement had inspired Jean Guiffrey of the Louvre, then in the United States to reinstall the paintings galleries of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, to employ a similar arrangement in the long gallery of the Louvre.

[5] Ibid., 370.

[6] Ibid., 292.

[7] Ibid., 288.

[8] "Museum's New Purchases," Art News 13 (December 26, 1914): 6.

[9] Brooklyn Museum of Art, Records of the Office of the Registrar, Accession Book I, Record 12418.

[10] Fox Memoirs, 292.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Contemporary American Paintings, (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Museum of Art, 1915.)

[13] The Eagle reported, "While an orchestra played behind a bank of palms in the dome room on the top floor of the museum, the visitors filed past the members of the committee and expressed their appreciation of the work represented by the exhibition"; "1,200 Visitors See Institute Art Show," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, April 11, 1915, Yearbooks.

[14] William H. Goodyear, "The Exhibition of Contemporary American Paintings at the Brooklyn Museum," The Brooklyn Museum Quarterly 7 (April 1915): 247, 249, 251. Goodyear's text was also printed in Brooklyn Times for April 16, 1915. In response to the

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physical arrangement of the pictures, Elisabeth Luther Carey of the New York Times described it as "A model of what exhibition arrangement should be," with adequate space and light for each work; the New York Times, April 14, 1915, as quoted in "Extracts from the Press Reviews of the Exhibition," Brooklyn Museum Quarterly 7 (April 1915): 253.

[15] Henry McBride, "Season's Best Art Show in Brooklyn," New York Sun, April 4, 1915, Yearbooks.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Royal Cortissoz in the New York Tribune, April 4, 1915; quoted in "Extracts from the Press Reviews of the Exhibition," 253. It is interesting to note that, in 1898, the Worcester Art Museum had initiated invitational exhibitions of contemporary artists, from which they derived annual purchases, primarily of American Impressionist works, for the collection; see David R. Brigham, "Worcester's Pioneering Paintings Shows," Antiques (November 1997): 731-739.

[18] John Sloan to William Henry Fox, April 14, 1915, Records of the Department of Painting and Sculpture: Exhibitions, "Contemporary American Paintings," 1915, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[19] Forbes Watson in the New York Evening Post, April 3, 1915; quoted in "Extracts from the Press Reviews of the Exhibition," 255.

[20] Editorial in the Brooklyn Daily Eagle, April 5, 1915; as quoted in ibid.

[21] Guy Pène Du Bois, "The Apron Strings of Academic Art," Arts and Decoration (June 1915): 319, 325, 338.

[22] Ibid.

[23] "Collections of American Art," Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art 1 (November 1905): 5-6. The writer noted that, in their annual report, the trustees of the museum had articulated a desire to build the American painting collection because foreigners would expect the country's premier art museum to have substantial holdings by American artists. They also had suggested that gifts of American art would be forthcoming if requested, and to that end they had prepared and included in their report, "lists of the deceased American artists who are not represented at all, or not adequately represented in the collections."

[24] Judith A. Barter, "American Art in the 'Great Grey City': The Evolution of a Collection at The Art Institute of Chicago," in Judith A. Barter, Kimberly Rhodes and Seth A. Thayer, American Art at the Art Institute of Chicago (Chicago: Art Institute of Chicago, 1998) 28.

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[25] In addition to the Lever, Dewing, and Hassam, the seven works included: William Jacob Baer's Portrait (BMA 15.304); Albert Lorey Groll's WashoeValley, Nevada (BMA 15.330); Edward Potthast's On the Beach (BMA 15.291); and Benjamin Koopman's Interior (formerly BMA 12520); "Recent Purchases of American Paintings," 259-261.

[26] Arthur Hoeber, unidentified clipping, 1915, Yearbooks.

[27] The Metropolitan had established something of a niche in memorial exhibitions, including those of works by Whistler (1910) and Winslow Homer (1911).

[28] This is not to say that other gift and bequests did not strengthen the earlier portion of the collection. In 1915, for example, the Maria DeWitt Jessup bequest added works by John Casilear, Frederic Church, Asher B. Durand, Sanford Gifford, and John F. Kensett.

[29] "Copleys in Brooklyn," Art News 14 (November 27, 1915): 9.

[30] Lorinda Munson Bryant, What Pictures to See in America (New York: John Lane Company, 1915), 145

[31] Ibid., 146, 148, 152.

[32] Fox Memoirs, 381.

[33] A highly active board member from 1907 to 1947 and a respected Brooklyn lawyer, Crittenden was later described by Fox as the owner of one of the finest collections in Brooklyn, and Fox's best art advisor after Healy's death; Ibid., 290.

[34] Morgan received his B.A. in 1893, and a law degree in 1896. He served as a New York State legislator from 1899 to 1903, and joined the board of the Brooklyn Museum in 1914.

[35] John Hill Morgan to Philip N. Youtz, December 27, 1934, Records of the Office of the Director, Morgan, J. H. (02), 1934-35, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[36] John Hill Morgan, Catalogue of an Exhibition of Early American Painting (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Museum, 1917).

[37] "Art Events Crowd for Instant View: Brooklyn Museum Exhibition of Old-Time American Artists Works is Unique," unidentified clipping [February 1917], Yearbooks.

[38] "The Exhibition of Early American Art at the Brooklyn Museum." New York Times, February 4, 1917, Yearbooks. The rooms were arranged to represent a 17th century bedroom and dining room, and an 18th century parlor and dining room.

[39] "New York Art Exhibitions and Gallery Notes: Early American Art at Brooklyn . . . " Christian Science Monitor, [February 1917], Yearbooks.

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[40] Charles H. Caffin, New York American, February 4, 1917, Yearbooks. Other writers concurred with Caffin's estimation of the exhibition's value. The New York Globe commented, "Seldom is an opportunity given the public to study our early art to such advantage, and the museum is to be congratulated upon obtaining so complete an exhibition"; see "Art and [--]: Early American Art in Brooklyn," New York Globe, February 19, 1917, Yearbooks; and American Art News declared it "well worth the journey to the windswept heights of the Eastern Parkway . . . ," "Early Americans in Brooklyn," American Art News 15 (February 10, 1917): 4.

[41] William Henry Fox, "Introduction," in Works of American Painters, 1860-1885: A Special Historical Exhibition to celebrate the opening of the Catskill Aqueduct, The Brooklyn Museum of Art (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Museum, 1917), np.

[42] Helen Appleton Read, "Art Exhibition at the Museum," Brooklyn Daily Eagle [November 1917], Yearbooks.

[43] Morgan, Catalogue of an Exhibition of Early American Paintings, np.

[44] Macbeth Galleries, Art Notes 70 (April/May 1920): 176.

[45] Catalogue of a Loan Exhibition of Brooklyn Art Treasures and Original Drawings by American Artists (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Museum, 1924).

[46] Fox Memoirs, 418.

[47] Walter Crittenden to William H. Fox, January 21, 1921.Records of the Office of the Director, Babbott, F.L. [01], file 688, 1920-24. Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives. A memorandum of the January 20 meeting at Babbott's home indicated that the purchase of contemporary art was first on Crittenden's list of pressing items Records of the Office of the Director, Babbott, F.L. [01], file 688, 1920-24, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[48] Catalogue of An Exhibition of Paintings in Oil by American and European Artists (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Museum, 1925). The majority of the 120 artists in the exhibition are little-known today.

[49] Catalogue of the First Exhibition of the National Society of Mural Painters (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Museum, 1925).

[50] Macbeth Galleries, Art Notes 83 (May 1926): 1470.

[51] "Paintings by Modern French and American Artists," typed checklist, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[52] Fox later noted that the Davies show he mounted in 1928 had been a gesture to court Lizzie Bliss, but that his efforts were frustrated by board members who conveyed to her

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their disregard for modern art. Fox Memoirs, 420. Lizzie Bliss ultimately presented the bulk of her collection to the new Museum of Modern Art.

[53] Ibid., 408.

[54] Ruth L. Bohan, "The Société Anonyme's Brooklyn Exhibition, 1926-1927: Katherine Sophie Dreier and the Promotion of Modern Art in America," Ph.d. Diss. (College Park: University of Maryland, 1980) 230.

[55] Ibid., 235.

[56] The objects on loan also included works on paper. It is interesting to note that Tschudy was rather apologetic for having had to install the collection in a cramped space. He wrote to Gallatin, "As you will see when you come to the Museum, this was the best we could do for the moment in the way of hanging." Typed checklist of Gallatin pictures, and Herbert Tschudy to Albert E. Gallatin, February 17, 1927, Records of the Department of Painting and Sculpture, Loans In, 1928, file 1422, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[57] Catalogue of a Group Exhibition of Paintings, Sculpture and Drawings by American and European Artists. (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Museum, 1928).

[58] Morgan offered to place a portion of his own collection on loan to the museum for the winter of 1927, while he and his family were traveling; John Hill Morgan to William Henry Fox, December 29, 1927, Records of the Office of the Director, 1913-33, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[59] Morgan to Fox, February 26, 1926, Records of the Department of Painting and Sculpture. Morgan, J. H., file 1269, 1917-1941, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[60] Morgan to Fox, September 25, 1928, Records of the Department of Painting and Sculpture. Morgan, J. H., file 1269, 1917-1941, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[61] Morgan to Fox, January 24, 1927, Records of the Department of Painting and Sculpture. Morgan, J.H., file 1269, 1917-1941. Morgan quoted the price of $12,500, but noted that he believed the picture could be had for $7500.

[62] Cranmer wrote, "The widow of the artist is anxious to see these paintings properly placed during her lifetime, so that this opportunity is presented for your consideration." C. W. Cranmer to William Henry Fox, January 30, 1922, Records of the Office of the Director, 1913-33, file 746, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[63] William Henry Fox to Susan McDowell Eakins, November 18, 1925, Records of the Office of the Director, 1913-33, file 917, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives. Cranmer had informed Fox that Susan Eakins had written to Stuart Culin, the Museum's curator of ethnology, proposing an exhibition of Eakins's work. Cranmer commented, "We have, as

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you know long been anxious to have some of this art represented in your Museum, and are willing to make any reasonable concessions to achieve this end"; Cranmer to Fox, April 7, 1925, Records of the Office of the Director, file 746, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives. Fox retrieved the letter and in his response apologized to Mrs. Eakins; Susan Eakins to Fox, March 25, 1925, Records of the Office of the Director, 1913-33, file 917, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[64] Herbert B. Tschudy, "Thomas Eakins," Brooklyn Museum Quarterly 14 (April 1927): 39-40.

[65] Cranmer stated that although the "Philadelphia museum" was considering the purchase of the entire Eakins collection, he and Susan Eakins "would like to see in a gallery similar to yours the Crucifixion, however"; Cranmer to Fox, June 8, 1927, Records of the Office of the Director, 1913-1933, file 746, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[66] Regarding the Whitman portrait, he wrote to Griscom, "It is not possible to get our Museum Committee to purchase the portrait of Whitman as they have put an embargo upon the buying of any more paintings at the present time until we catch up in other departmens"; Fox to William Griscom, Jr., February 21, 1930, Records of the Office of the Director, 1913-33, Griscom Galleries, file 746, 1922-33, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[67] Fox to Griscom, February 25, 1930, Records of the Office of the Director, 1913-33, file 746, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[68] Margaret Breuning, Exploring New York's Art Galleries (New York: Robert M. McBride & Company, 1928), 219.

[69] Lee Simonson, "What Have Art Museums to do with Art?" Creative Art: An Illustrated Magazine of Fine and Applied Art 4 (1929): xxix-xxv.

[70] Ibid., xxiii.

[71] Ibid., xxvi.

[72] John Cotton Dana, "The Museum as Art Patron," Creative Art 4 (March 1929): xxiv.

[73] Holger Cahill, "Newark: The Museum and Contemporary American Art," Creative Art 4 (1929): xxxvii, xxxv, xxxviii.

[74] Fox to Griscom, February 25, 1930.

[75] Robert McIntyre to Walter H. Crittenden, November 7, 1932, Records of the Office of the Director, 1926-32, Macbeth, William, Inc., file 934, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

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[76] Fox Memoirs, 956.

[77] The others paintings were Maynard Dixon's Shapes of Fear; Jerome Meyers's Street Shrine; Leopold Seyffert's In My Studio; Elmer Schofield's The Rapids; and Ernest Blumenschein's The Burro, all of which were recalled. The terms of the fund allowed recall of the paintings by the Smithsonian during the five year period beginning ten years after the death of the artist. See Leonard Carmichel, Secretary, Smithsonian Institution, to Charles Nagel, December 1954; and additional correspondence in the Records of the Department of Painting and Sculpture, Objects: Ranger Fund, file 1035, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[78] "Foreword," in Catalogue of an Exhibition of Paintings by American Impressionists and Other Artists of the Period, 1880-1900 (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Museum, 1932).

[79] Margaretta M. Salinger, "Three Shows and the American Tradition," Parnassus 4 (February 1932): 20-21.

[80] E. H., "Painters of the Nineties," Brooklyn Museum Quarterly 19 (April 1932): 52-53, 55.

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Chapter IV: John I.H. Baur and the Unexpected Triumph of the Historic American Painting Collection

Part One: Philip Youtz and the Revision of Brooklyn's Galleries

The purchase of both the Dreier[1] and the Peale involved a new player at the Museum: Philip N. Youtz, an architect and passionate advocate of modernist design, succeeded William Henry Fox as director of the Museum in 1934, after serving as acting director the previous year. Youtz ultimately changed the face of the American painting collection by hiring and empowering the young new curator John I.H. Baur. Before Baur's arrival, however, he dealt directly with the players on hand, including Morgan, whose autonomy he attempted to curtail. In the case of the Peale purchase, for example, Youtz issued a press release about the acquisition before Morgan confirmed the work to be the portrait commissioned by Hancock. Seeing the incident as a lost opportunity for the promotion of Brooklyn's Early American collections, Morgan wrote testily to Youtz, "I think the Museum would have received almost nationwide publicity. As it is now, the matter is, what the reporters call, 'old stuff', and the portrait's value to the museum is in large part negligible."[2]

Shortly thereafter, the two men appear to have locked horns over the issue of the placement of Colonial portraits in the period rooms, which Morgan formerly had arranged with Luke Vincent Lockwood, the curator of decorative arts. When Morgan wrote to Youtz about the matter, he first familiarized the new director with the contributions he had made to the Museum since the teens, and then stated, "I do not think

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that our fine American portraits . . . should be permanently in these rooms. They should be shown from time to time in one or two bays so that students can examine and study them as part of our exhibits."[3] Youtz appears to have disagreed, very likely viewing the paintings as of primarily antiquarian interest, for Morgan returned to the subject early in the new year, "My thought is that we need decoration rather than portraits in the American rooms. . . . most of the portraits cannot be seen at all. . . . You have taken out some of the bad portraits and left in the American rooms some good ones, it seems to me." Very likely sensing the potential undoing of his efforts to raise the estimation of colonial paintings, he strongly recommended the return of works by Blackburn, Copley, Peale, Smibert, and Wollaston to the galleries.[4]

As director, Youtz intended to implement his own museological priorities, which were based primarily on his belief that the general public, uninterested in aesthetics or art history, was more likely to be engaged by and understand the social history of art. He was one of the earliest, vocal proponents of a "social science approach to art in adult education," about which he wrote in the Brooklyn Museum Quarterly of 1934,

> The best therapy for the pathological condition of our time which has separated art and life, thereby demoralizing art and impoverishing life, is a new kind of art education which will stress the vital social connection of art. . . . We must learn to live with art and not make an idol out of it. Art is life, not something to be placed in a shrine and substituted for life.[5]

Youtz's philosophy hinged on his reading of art objects as historical "facts" surpassing written history in authenticity, a concept upon which he elaborated in a 1936 article entitled "The Scientific Basis of the Art Museum."[6]

Youtz devised a collection plan and program policy for the Brooklyn Museum to achieve his desired aim of "culture history with a special emphasis on social and

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industrial applications of art." He designated "aboriginal" art of the Americas and industrial art as collecting priorities (the latter in response to Brooklyn's role as an industrial center), and advocated highly didactic installations in all permanent galleries and temporary exhibitions.[7]

Youtz reorganized the installations throughout the Museum into culturally specific chronologies, often employing a significant amount of complementary didactic labeling and visual aids. The American galleries were completed by the spring of 1936, at which time Youtz notably wrote to John Hill Morgan in a conciliatory tone and invited him to tour the reinstallation. He explained, "[they] begin with living American artists on the West side, American water colors on the South side, where they have North light, XIX Century American painters on the East side, and on the North side our fine collection of American portraits for which you were so largely responsible." He purposefully added that he had developed the plan in order to accommodate Morgan's desire to see the portraits incorporated into the painting galleries once again.[8]

Youtz's agenda for the American painting collection over the course of his four-year tenure as director (1934-38) remains difficult to discern, however, despite the specificity of his overarching goals for the Museum. In the fall of 1935, by which time the Depression was profound, he decided to solve some portion of the Museum's deepening financial woes though a massive sale of historic American and European paintings in the collection, including such fine works as Inness's Sunset over the Sea. Fortunately for the Museum, a review and valuation of the art provided by Robert McIntyre of the Macbeth Galleries was so dismissive that no action was taken to disperse

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the material.[9] This attempt and others unfortunately angered and alienated John Hill Morgan to an extreme degree, leading him to resign from the board that year.

Youtz's willingness to dispose of a significant number of historical pictures, of admittedly varying merit, suggests that his sympathies were with the contemporary material. One of his first decisions as acting director had been to retitle Herbert Tschudy's position Curator of Contemporary Art, although departmental records indicate that Tschudy acted primarily as an administrator charged with implementing Youtz's plans and decisions. Youtz also demonstrated a decided interest in contemporary art when he capped his chronological installation of the collections (beginning with early cultures on the first floor) with the inauguration of a Gallery of Living Artists on the sixth floor. He had very definite ideas regarding the gallery's use, which he outlined in a memorandum to Tschudy just prior to its opening in March; Youtz restricted the galleries for the works of living artists, and requested that Tschudy originate ten exhibitions per year, not to include exhibitions of affiliated artists' organizations.[10] Youtz became so adamant about the latter rule by the end of the year that he instructed Tschudy to organize an exhibition of American miniatures rather than accommodate the Brooklyn Society of Miniature Paintings (longstanding exhibitors at the Museum.)[11] Perhaps owing to these new pressures, Tschudy organized his last exhibition as Curator of Contemporary Art in 1935. The roster of "Oil Paintings by Living Artists" included such thirties realists as Louis Bosa and Virginia Beresford. Among the twenty-five artists, there were only a handful generally known today, including Paul Kelpe, Irene Rice Pereira, and Werner Drewes.[12]

Given his demonstration of interest in contemporary art, one might assume that Youtz's intentions regarding American acquisitions would be relatively predictable. In

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1935, however, when he inaugurated the Museum's seminal Design Laboratory (a resource through which modern designers gained access to collection material in a notable reinvigoration of the South Kensington philosophy), he also declined the purchase of what might have been the collection's most important American acquisition of the decade. In May of that year the painter Joseph Stella wrote to Youtz to offer for sale his remarkable, five-panel New York: The Voice of the City of New York Interpreted (The Newark Museum), one of his entries in Brooklyn's 1928 exhibition of contemporary art. Stella quoted the price as five thousand dollars but demonstrated both his eagerness to place the paintings in the Brooklyn Museum and the financially depressed climate by adding, "due to the conditions of the present times, I will accept the amount that the Committee can afford to pay."[13] The panels apparently were already at the Museum, and were among a group of paintings Tschudy had recommended to Youtz in response to the director's request for a list of works "which relate definitely to the machine," apparently to be used as examples in a lecture Youtz was planning.[14] Youtz surprisingly responded negatively to Stella, "I admire your panels very much and think they would make marvelous mural decorations in an industrial school. They do not seem to me, however, the kind of thing for a museum."[15] One might have imaged that Stella's panels would have provided Youtz with an art work which embodied his dual interests in industrial design and contemporary art.

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Part Two: Enter John Baur, Apostle of the Contemporary

The fortunes of Brooklyn's American painting collection were to be less profoundly effected by Youtz's own efforts at reorganization than by an inquiry he sent in 1933 to Theodore Sizer, a former curator and the acting director of the Yale University Art Gallery, asking for the referral of an individual to become the Museum's supervisor of education (a role performed at the time by Herbert Spinden, curator of Ethnology). Youtz viewed the position as essential to the achievement of his goal of audience building, and sought someone with "new and vital ideas" in order to reshape the programs and to fulfill "the museum's responsibility to compensate for the monotony of public school practice." Youtz asserted, "We now have about 100,000 students a year and we have an opportunity to influence a borough of some two and one-half million population." He continued, "I think we need a radical but I believe he should be a person with a pretty good grounding. . . . What we need is someone who is capable of thinking out what ought to be the unique educational contribution of the Museum and of putting this plan into effect." [16] At Sizer's suggestion, in 1934 Youtz offered John Baur, who was somewhat more junior than the candidate he desired, a volunteer position in the education department for several months, with the prospect of rapid promotion.[17]

Despite the importance Youtz placed on the role of the museum educator, Baur's own ambitions lay in the curatorial field. He began his career at Brooklyn in 1934 as Supervisor of Education, but in 1936 he was named Acting Curator of Contemporary art, a post in which he would permanently replace Tschudy that fall. By the end of the year, the entire painting collection, from the Renaissance to the present, was placed in his

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charge, demonstrating Youtz's substantial confidence in Baur's abilities. Baur brought enormous sensitivity and insight to his work at Brooklyn. He had been exposed to museums at an early age through the work of his father, Paul V.C. Baur, a Yale University classics professor, curator of the Yale University Art Gallery's Stoddard collection of Greek vases from 1913, and curator of classical archaeology from 1930. As a student at Yale (B.A. 1932, M.A. 1934), young Baur also benefited from training by the first generation of professional curators. Chief among them was Sizer, who had been instrumental in developing the American collections and presided over the organization of such important exhibitions as the "George Washington Bicentennial Exhibition" (1932), the "Hundredth Anniversary Exhibition" (1932), and the Garvan collection.[18]

Presumably with Youtz's encouragement, Baur embraced the Museum's existing contemporary painting agenda (cultivated so effectively by Fox) in his very first curatorial efforts at the Museum. As part of his bid for the position of Curator of Contemporary art, in March of 1936, he submitted a proposal for an exhibition entitled "Six American Artists."[19] The exhibition, which opened the following October, featured about eighty recent works by a roster worthy of Gallatin or Dana: Alexander Brook, Guy Pène du Bois, John Flanagan, Leon Kroll, Charles Sheeler, and John Sloan.[20] Youtz apparently approved, for Baur won his promotion, and Alexander Brook's Bacchante (circa 1934, BMA 36.867) was purchased out of the exhibition as the Woodward Fund acquisition of 1936.

Soon after receiving his appointment, however, Baur became consumed with making order out of what had become a very large and under-documented painting collection. He later recalled that that during his first two years as curator he spent much

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of his time in the Museum's basement, surveying and cataloguing the collection, and photographing every work "just to get record photographs of quantities of paintings that had been tucked away there . . . ." He added that, in the process, "We got rid of quite a lot of deadwood from the collection . . . ."[21] Baur's "housekeeping" was initially directed at the "portraits of Brooklyn Institute worthies," which had formerly hung in the library. His suggestions for their disposal included turning the group over to the greater Brooklyn Institute, and as a result the canvases never left the building.[22] It is important to note, however, the degree to which such objects held only antiquarian interest for Baur, and the extent to which the vital role played by American art at the early Brooklyn Institute had receded from the institutional memory: Baur had included Thomas Thompson's portrait of Augustus Graham (circa 1842, BMA, 97.2), the founder of the Museum's American painting collection, on the list of expendable works.[23]

Baur continued to advance the cause of contemporary art for at least a few years, chosing Henry Varnum Poor's View over Nyack—Winter (BMA, 36.307) as another Woodward Fund purchase of 1936. His view of contemporary American art adhered to relatively progressive lines, breaking free of the stable of turn-of-the-century painters who had passed for "contemporary" even into the 1920s. Baur also saw an opportunity in updating the existing holdings of works by living artists. To this end, in a highly ironic turn of events, he wrote to Joseph Stella in 1936 to propose the exchange The Virgin (1922, BMA, 28.207), acquired by the Museum as a gift in 1928, for one of the artist's more challenging, recent works,

> We are rearranging our galleries of Contemporary Art . . . and are anxious to have represented some of the more recent trends, especially abstract painting. . . . I wonder, therefore, if you would consider exchanging one of your more modern canvases for an old one . . . We feel that with so little

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> abstract painting, such a canvas would be of greater interest to the public and would perhaps represent your work more fairly.[24]

Stella replied two days later that he would come to see the galleries and added cryptically, "I have something of great interest to propose to you."[25] The painter apparently visited Baur at the Museum, although the only record of their meeting is Baur's one-line hand-written note stating, "Mr. Stella has no abstract painting which he could exchange for The Virgin."[26] It is tempting to assume that Stella again offered New York (The Voice of the City of New York Interpreted); if so, Baur declined, for the panels were purchased the following year by the Newark Museum.

In the years immediately following his appointment, Baur's personal goal for the collection was the addition of works by the emerging American Scene painters, paintings that aptly responded to Lee Simonson's call in 1929 for art in "sound relation to human psychology and contemporary needs." Although he orchestrated the purchase of Thomas Hart Benton's Louisiana Rice Fields (BMA, 38.79) with Woodward Funds in 1938, Baur subsequently was frustrated in his efforts by the board's distaste for the new realism. He later recalled the trustees'extremely negative response to his proposal of the purchase of John Stuart Curry's Hogs Killing Rattlesnakes (1930, Art Institute of Chicago, acquired as a gift in 1947), a work he described decades later as "one of the most dramatic and best of the American Scene group." He recounted, "the trustees were horrified by it. They turned it down. . . ."[27] Philip Youtz's successor Laurance Roberts (who spent the last three years of his tenure, from 1938 to 1946, on leave to serve in World War II) also was resistant to current trends; in 1940 he refused to provide gallery space to artists of the WPA, anticipating that their productions would lead to "the lowering of standards which such an exhibition would bring to the Museum."[28]

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It was thus in significant measure out of necessity that John Baur refocused his energies primarily on historic American paintings for the duration of his career at Brooklyn. He did occasionally express his interest in newer art, as in a 1939 interview for a Brooklyn Daily Eagle series entitled "Curators of Culture." The reporter's remarks indicate the degree to which Baur had quickly achieved the public accessibility that he, like Youtz, prized so highly; the writer stated, "[Baur] is, you see, distinctly of the new generation of curators, who are also apparently distinguished for their lack of high-hattedness. . . . He talks of art in nice, sensible tones, such as average people use in discussing the weather, and you don't realize until afterward that he has been giving you the lowdown on a whole art period . . . ."[29] Baur indeed had adopted many of Youtz's ideas regarding the educational role of museums and the mandate for effectively designed, didactic installations and exhibitions. In his 1937 article entitled "Rebirth of the Museum," Baur celebrated the recent development in which "museums have rediscovered the public, their needs, and their interests; and the public is beginning to rediscover the museums." Describing the museum's mission as the communication of the "larger human and social relationships" of objects, and its potential to be "a new and vital force in modern adult education," he enumerated a list--worthy of Youtz--of tools including effective groupings within installation, ample labels, maps, and modern gallery settings.[30]

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Part Three: Redefining American Art: Baur's Initiatives for the Historic Painting Collection

With his goals reformed, Baur proceeded to launch a three-fold program of exhibitions, acquisitions and deaccessions that dramatically reshaped nineteenth-century American art at the Museum, and influenced collecting and scholarship throughout the field of American art. He later recalled pointedly that even this change in direction was regarded by the board with only half-hearted enthusiasm, "They generally went along with [the nineteenth-century paintings] because the prices were not high and they didn't find them controversial; although I don't think they found them terribly attractive either."[31] Undaunted, Baur actively sought to expand his expertise in the field, at first by enrolling in a course of lectures on early American painting offered by William Sawitsky, one of the seminal experts in the field, through the auspices of the New-York Historical Society and New York University.[32] He also derived inspiration from the efforts of his peers, and particularly from A. Hyatt Mayer's 1939 exhibition, entitled "Life in America," mounted at The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Mayer's inclusion of such lesser-known nineteenth-century American painters as Fitz Hugh Lane led Baur to pursue their works for Brooklyn's collection.[33]

The 1930s and the early forties were the occasion for a steady stream of American survey exhibitions.[34] In this context, it is all the more interesting that Baur deliberately embarked on a different course, originating monographic exhibitions and exhibitions of discrete groups of artists, such as his "Leaders of American Impressionism"(1937) and "The Eight" (1943). In "Rebirth of the Museum," he had made particular note of the

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educational opportunities offered by the type of exhibition "which presents a single movement or school in the realm of art," and remarked further on their potential "to evaluate these movements, not only as art but also as significant social phenomena."[35] Baur clearly sensed that monographic and small group exhibitions also would be the most effective in fulfilling his new agenda for pre-contemporary acquisitions. By 1939 his purchases firmly indicated his new, multi-faceted approach to historical American art: the purchase of William Sidney Mount's Caught Napping (1848, BMA, 39.608) pointed to his forthcoming monographic investigations of long-forgotten nineteenth-century painters; that of Thomas Eakins's William Rush Carving the Allegorical Figure of the Schuylkill (1908, BMA, 39.461; see Appendix of Entries) demonstrated his interest in enriching the existing holdings of works by major nineteenth-century artists; and that of John Hesselius's portrait of Mrs. Elizabeth Smith (1762, BMA 39.609) represented his intention to build upon the Museum's seminal acquisitions in the colonial field. All three purchases were achieved using the Dick S. Ramsay Fund, a designated purchase fund for American art given in 1932 in memory of a longtime Brooklyn trustee, and a resource that would prove invaluable for Baur as he set out to reshape the Museum's American holdings.[36]

With collection building now foremost in his mind, about 1940 Baur took the unprecedented step of producing a very deliberate outline of his extended plan for acquisitions in the Department of Painting. He began by stating that the limited purchase funds for European painting could be used most advantageously for the acquisition of oils and watercolors by living artists not yet represented in the collection (he noted recent purchases of work by Segonzac and Utrillo). Baur then identified the far more extensive

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American purchase funds as the means for truly creative collection building, with an eye to assembling a comprehensive representation of American oils. He acknowledged the existing "nucleus of an excellent collection," but described it as "weakest in the extremes" of early colonial (17th and early 18th century) and contemporary pictures; and he named such limners as Robert Feke and the Duyckincks, and living painters including Hartley, William Gropper, and Ernest Fiene, as among those whose work he sought to acquire. With regard to contemporary art he asserted intrepidly, "I believe the Museum has an important role to play in the recognition of living talent, and that it will gain, both aesthetically and financially by acquiring the work of such painters before their death." After that brief note, however, he identified in greater detail other "isolated gaps" in the eighteenth and nineteenth century areas that he hoped to fill with works by artists including Benjamin West, John Trumbull, Washington Allston, Samuel F. B.Morse, David Gilmor Blythe, Richard Caton Woodville, and a few turn of the century artists such as Whistler and Glackens. Baur also recommended the further strengthening of the representation of "the more important men," along the lines of his recent Eakins purchase. He advocated care in the use of the purchase funds, noting that some opportunities required quick action, while others required time to allow for the adjustment of market prices. Baur concluded by predicting that the Museum possessed the possibility "of making the collection an outstanding one in the city," thus suggesting openly, for the first time, the Museum's willingness to compete with the collections across the river on equal terms.[37] He reached his goal within a decade, building an outstanding collection at a moment that coincided with a period of notable inactivity in American art acquisitions at The Metropolitan.

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Baur's success in acquisitions stemmed from a unique combination of energy and determination, resourcefulness, and a commitment to original research. He quickly developed relationships with a group of dealers who responded to his interests, relying primarily on Harry Shaw Newman of The Old Print Shop, the independent Victor Spark, and Bill Davidson, whom Baur later recalled had moved Knoedler & Co. further into the field of American art.[38] Time and again, Baur demonstrated a profitable eagerness and flexibility, as in the instance when he was able to acquire two early Hudson Valley portraits, the unattributed Pierre Van Cortlandt (circa 1731, BMA, 41.151; see Appendix of Entries) and John Van Cortlandt (circa 1731, BMA, 41.152), in 1941, because the owner declined to ship them to the Metropolitan for consideration. Baur drove upstate with a group of trustees from the Museum's art committee and purchased the pictures on the spot.[39] In 1942 he invested in William Williams's graceful portrait of Deborah Hall (1766, BMA, 42.45), found by a dealer in a New Jersey attic, despite its exceedingly poor condition. The painting was successfully conserved by Sheldon Keck, the Museum's conservator, with whom Baur frequently collaborated on American projects.

As demonstrated by these three acquisitions, Baur consistently devoted attention to colonial portraiture, making important purchases of works by Feke and John Watson in 1943, both in consultation with John Hill Morgan.[40] Baur had a distinctive preference for early material, however, and particularly for portraits that possessed a strong, decorative simplicity (examples include the unattributed Hudson Valley portrait of Wyntje (Lavinia) Van Vechten, 1720, BMA 43.36; John Mason Furness's John Vinal, circa 1792, BMA 41.878; and Ralph Earl's Clarissa Seymour, 1789, BMA 48.8.) Significantly less comfortable with the grander, more florid, works of the Federal Era, he demonstrated an

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uncharacteristic vehemence in his opposition to the purchase of the Pierrepont George Washington by Stuart (BMA, 45.179), an important work that had appeared in the Institute's and Museum's galleries on numerous occasions before its acquisition in 1945. Baur's distaste for the portrait was intact several decades later when he recalled,

> [The board members] were particularly fond of Gilbert Stuart. And once they bought over my opposition and for a huge price at the time, a portrait of Washington, one of the Lansdowne portraits of Washington by Stuart, really a great big ugly picture which now of course has quintupled in value and as an investment was probably a good enough buy then but aesthetically I thought it was a disaster.[41]

Baur built the collection with remarkable steadiness and seeming ease, quickly reaching many of specific the goals he had set out in his collection plan. He located a significant number of prime acquisitions as a result of his program of monographic exhibitions, for which he carried out extensive research years in advance of their opening--an unusual practice at the time. Although he later credited Lloyd Goodrich with having providing some initial advice on research in the field, Baur was independently successful in tracing the immediate descendants of numerous nineteenth-century artists who were still in possession of significant bodies of work.[42] Among the results of his ingenious sleuthing were the 1940 gift of two great Eastman Johnson paintings, A Ride for Liberty—The Fugitive Slaves (circa 1862, BMA, 40.59.A), and Not at Home (circa 1873, BMA, 40.60), presented to the Museum by the artist's grand-daughter Gwendolyn Conkling.

Baur's publications for these exhibitions reshaped the concept of the exhibition catalogue at Brooklyn and contributed to their reinvention in the field of American art. In numerous instances he devoted several years to the production of what he described as small monographs. He later commented, "They were an attempt to do as complete a

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biographical study and critical study as I could. I was always anxious is possible to find letters, diaries, original documents, that kind of thing before it was too late."[43] He recalled, for example, that after researching Quidor's life with little result, he decided to look the artist's name up in the New York phone book. He found the names of three descendants, including a grandson who was in possession of three paintings by the artist.[44]

Throughout the early forties, Baur appears to have had the support of his director, although he worked more or less independently during the period of Roberts's wartime leave, from 1943 to 1946. Roberts initially sought some external approval of Baur's early efforts, inviting Royal Cortissoz, the aging critic, to the Museum in 1942, to "see what progress we have made in the last four year in the building up of our American collection, especially in the late Eighteenth and Mid-Nineteenth century periods." Roberts added, "We are most anxious to know if we may have your advice on the way in which our collection may be further strengthened . . . ."[45]

The press was taking notice of the collection's rapid expansion, which by 1942 included such turn-of-the-century American realist works as George Luks's Hester Street (1905, BMA, 40.339; see Appendix of Entries), Alfred Maurer's Carrousel (circa 1901-02, BMA, 42.253), and William Glackens's East River Park (formerly Park by the River), (circa 1902, BMA, 41.1085); as well as nineteenth-century works including a version of Edward Hicks's Peaceable Kingdom (circa 1833-34, BMA, 40.340), William Michael Harnett's Still Life with Three Castles Tobacco (1880, BMA, 41.221), and Louis Comfort Tiffany's rare, urban subject, Duane Street (circa 1877, BMA, 47.175). All but one of the aforementioned acquisitions were accomplished using the Dick S. Ramsay

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funds. A review of the new additions to the galleries published in the Eagle that drew attention to one picture in particular, "Holding a place of honor was Ralph Blackelock's rich lustrous Moonlight [circa 1885-89, BMA, 42.171] which was praised was praised bountifully by New York critics when shown in the Babcock gallery's Blakelock show last season."[46] Moonlight surpassed in size and quality all of Blakelocks in the collection, and thus was consistent with Baur's goal of improving existing holdings of works by major American artists. Baur's monographic exhibitions that year comprised concurrent installations of works by William Sidney Mount and John Quidor, in connection with which he purchased the latter's Wolfert's Will (1856, BMA, 42.46, see Appendix of Entries) for the collection.

Baur managed to make very occasional purchases of modern art, including the Woodward-funded acquisitions of Hartley's Ghosts of the Forest (circa 1939-40, BMA, 40.711) in 1940, and Bernard Karfoil's The Awakening (BMA, 41.680) in 1941. His efforts were supplemented by gifts of Reginald Marsh's large The Bowl (1933, BMA, 42.404) presented by William T. Evans in 1942; Luigi Lucioni's The Barre Granite Shed (1931, BMA, 42.199), offered that year by Mrs. Horace Havemeyer; and Max Weber's portrait of Abraham Walkowitz (1907, BMA, 44.65), a 1944 gift of the sitter.

In 1943 Baur honored the last living artists of The Eight with a retrospective. While preparing the exhibition, he consulted with Everett Shinn, and purchased the artist's Keith's Union Square (circa 1906, BMA, 42.6). His correspondence with the dealer Antoinette Kraushaar indicates that he also had begun to seek out works by Glackens in 1941. In response to Baur's inquiry, Kraushaar stated that she was sending three of the artist's works to the Museum on approval, and assured him that "if we should

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at any time be able to offer the 'Nude with Apple' for sale, we will give you the first chance of it."[47] (The painting entered Brooklyn's collection in 1956, after Baur's departure.) One of his goals for the The Eight exhibition was to contextualize the original 1908 exhibition at the Macbeth Galleries, to which end he installed a large photomontage of contemporaneous New York sights in the introductory gallery, arranged the galleries by artist, and selected predominantly early works. In a review of the exhibition, a writer for Art Digest commented that additionally, "Two late works by each artist were displayed in the large entrance to the Museum, wisely segregated from the main showing so as not to interrupt the almost magic tonal flow of the earlier paintings. Generally, these are much brighter in color, lack the impact of those 'outlaw' days."[48]

Baur experienced significantly less success in 1946 with his exhibition of the works of Theodore Robinson. He attributed its failure to the public's reading of American Impressionism as a pale imitation of the French work. He later commented,

> The Robinson show made very little stir at the time because, while it was some fifty years after his death, there had not yet been much revived interest particularly in the late 19th century American painting, or in the American Impressionists of which he was one of the leading figures. So from the point of view of popularity it was a flop. On the other hand, if I hadn't done it then we might have lost the remaining diaries too.[49]

Perhaps partially in reaction to the cool reception of the Robinson exhibition, from 1946 Baur temporarily refocused his acquisition efforts on mid-nineteenth-century American landscape. The field had begun to regain the attention of Americanists, dealers, and collectors after roughly five decades of neglect, during which they had been absorbed by French-influenced Barbizon and Impressionist aesthetic landscapes. Following in the path established by colonial American art in the museum field and on the market, Hudson River School landscapes gradually regained the respect and enthusiasm of a newly

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nationalistic audience, drawn to distinctly American subject matter cast in Romantically envisioned compositions and emotive colors. Among the factors contributing to this shift in taste in museums of the period was the exhibition entitled "The Hudson River School and the Early American Landscape Tradition," mounted in 1945 by Frederick Sweet at the Art Institute of Chicago, and sent to the Whitney Museum of American Art.[50] Although Baur addressed the landscape vogue in a 1946 with an exhibition of works by Inness, his purchases of landscape paintings in the mid-forties demonstrated a distinct preference for small-scale and rather simply-conceived landscape images, rather than high-toned, excessively detailed or operatically expressive ones. His choices for the collection included Henry Ary's View of Mount Merino Near Hudson (1849, BMA, 46.94), John Williamson's Tappan Zee, from Glenwood (1872, BMA, 47.197), George Henry Durrie's Summer Landscape Near New Haven (circa 1849, BMA, 46.162), and Thomas Chambers's Staten Island and the Narrows (circa 1835-55, BMA, 48.53), once again all Ramsay Fund purchases. In this general area, Baur also focused his attentions more specifically on the work of the so-called Luminists, whose aesthetic and oeuvres he addressed in a number of seminal publications. Within this somewhat more esoteric sub-group he purchased Fitz Hugh Lane's Off Mount Desert Island (1856, BMA, 47.114), and Martin Johnson Heade's Summer Showers (circa 1865-70, BMA, 47.8), one of the artist's finest works.

Baur held his course in acquisitions through the last years of his tenure, continuing to build the holdings in colonial portraiture, nineteenth-century American genre and landscape, and lesser-known artists of the period. Among the most notable of the additions to these categories were, respectively, Joseph Blackburn's Portrait of a

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Woman (circa 1762, BMA, 50.57), George Caleb Bingham's Shooting for the Beef (1850, BMA, 40.342), Jasper Cropsey's Bareford Mountains, West Milford, New Jersey (1850, BMA, 51.8), and Stacy Tolman's The Musicale (1887, BMA, 51.211). His highly focused buying also inspired a number of important gifts of paintings created by the artists whose reputations he was successfully reviving: in 1948, for example, the imaginative collector Alastair Bradley Martin presented the Museum with two remarkable works: Quidor's The Money Diggers (1832, BMA, 48.171, see Appendix of Entries); and Charles Deas's Prairie Fire (1847, BMA, 48.195). Baur organized fewer exhibitions at this time, but they included "The Coast and the Sea," a seminal gathering of American marine painting; and "John F. Peto," the first retrospective of the artist's work, organized with the assistance of the artist's daughter, from whom he purchased Still Life with Lanterns (late 1880s, BMA, 48.166) in 1948.

One of Baur's most interesting late purchases was Washington Allston's large Italian Shepherd Boy (circa 1821-23, BMA 49.97). While Allston had been part of the canon of early American art beginning with the first histories in the field, his pictures were rare, and their tonalism and archaized drawing could not have been considered a predictable success among the Museum's audience in 1949. Baur nevertheless undertook the purchase from the dealer Victor Spark for the combined price of four thousand dollars and the exchange of twenty-five pictures from the collection, almost all of which were exceedingly minor works by minor artists.[51] Baur had deaccessioned numerous works during the first ten year of his tenure (that is, prior to 1946), predictably chosing canvases by the minor, late-nineteenth-century academic artists in whom he had no interest, and redundant works by minor American Barbizon painters. They included George Bogert's

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Holland Scene (formerly BMA 33.258) William Anderson Coffin's A Thunder Shower (formerly BMA 12.90), Bruce Crane's Winter on the Brandywine (formerly BMA 17.44), Franklin DeHaven's The Gloaming (formerly BMA 16.35), Louis Loeb's Temple of the Winds (formerly BMA, location unknown), Francis David Millet's The Well Known Footstep (formerly BMA 32.843), two landscapes by J. Francis Murphy (formerly BMA 32.846, and 32.850), Charles Yardley Turner's Chrysanthemums (formerly BMA 12227), Edwin Lord Weeks's The Hour of Prayer at the Pearl Mosque, Agra (location unknown, formerly BMA 05.83), and Thomas Waterman's Wood's Calculation (formerly BMA 661A1.188).

By the late 1940s, however, Baur was more willing to consider releasing more significant works from the collection, with the very clear intent of replacing them with what he believed to be superior works. To cite just one example, which provides an indication of the vastly expanded appreciation of Eakins's work by 1950, Baur purchased that artist's Home Scene (BMA, 50.115) by exchange for three other works from the collection: the Winslow Homer watercolors The Unruly Calf (formerly 06.79) and Children on the Beach (formerly 11.548); and perhaps more surprising, the Museum's only Whistler oil--and the celebrated acquisition of 1906--Portrait of A Woman (Miss Florence Leyland).

A number of Baur's deaccession choices were predictable, given what we know about his taste: in 1951 he released Henry Inman's Rydal Water (formerly BMA 01.11); and in 1951, Gilbert Stuart's Portrait of Honorable John Watts, Sr. (formerly BMA 12850), one of Morgan's most celebrated acquisitions of the teens. Among his selections for deaccession, there were a number that today we might regard as regrettable, including

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Eakins's Portrait of Frank Hamilton Cushing (formerly 28.74; now the Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa) in 1947, and Ralph Earl's Portrait of Truman Marsh (formerly 19.100; now the Montclair Art Museum, New Jersey) in 1948. The type of collection refinement in which Baur engaged was to become more common in the 1950s, under the influence of a newly configured canon of historical American art, informed by recent exhibitions and highly visible collection building carried out by Baur and a handful of other Americanists. Among the most dramatic of these efforts was a major sale of American works from the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1956, through which that Museum divested itself of such unfashionable the nineteenth-century narrative pictures as Asher B. Durand's God's Judgement upon Gog (1851-52, Chrysler Museum, Norfolk, Virginia);; and turn-of-the-century works academic including Charles H. Davis's Evening (location unknown), Richard E. Miller's Chinese Statuette (location unknown), and William Lamb Picknell's Bleak December (location unknown).

By 1950, however, Baur had become restless in his position at Brooklyn. In 1949 he had published his important introduction to the catalogue of the Karolik Collection (in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston), whose formation he had guided in a direction similar to that he had set for Brooklyn. The essay celebrated the collection's embodiment of the new canon of nineteenth-century American art, and effectively constituted a summation of his work in the historic American painting field at Brooklyn. He wrote there,

> the donors of the M. and M. Karolik Collection have realized an avowed purpose of greater importance than usually accomplished by the individual collector. Proposing to demonstrate precisely what happened in the art of painting in this country between 1815 and 1865 . . . they have gathered pictorial evidence which reveals not only the existence of a vigorous American art during these years, but also the development of artistic forces which influenced in many ways our later painting. . . . our traditional history of this period is oversimplified and only partially

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> correct . . . the Karolik Collection may justifiably claim a pioneering role, for it is the first to be formed with the purpose of such a re-evaluation in mind.[52]

With his acquisitions agendas in the fields of eighteenth and nineteenth-century American painting largely fulfilled, Baur's frustration with the board's resistance to contemporary acquisitions became increasingly intolerable. Sporadic Woodward-funded purchases of works including Sheeler's Incantation (1946, BMA, 49.67) in 1929, and Karl Knaths's Autumn Leaves (1948, BMA, 50.58) in 1950, could not fulfill his ambition to make a more significant contribution to the contemporary field.

In 1951, during an unpaid leave form the Museum, Baur published Revolution and Tradition in Modern Art, a volume that clearly indicated the direction in which he intended to move his scholarship, and thus began his detachment from the Museum. He considered the book his debut in the field of 20th century art, and his first effort to compensate for the fact that to date there had been "no attempt to really examine all of the stylistic strands of American art, the ideological ones and to bring them together."[53] It was with some regret that Baur ultimately left the Brooklyn Museum in 1952 to take up his next post as Curator at the Whitney Museum. While the reasons he offered in his letter of resignation were chiefly financial, he also sensed that he would need to curtail his independent work in the contemporary field owing to Brooklyn's worsening financial straits. He wrote to Charles Nagel, former Yale colleague and the director who, from 1946, had allowed him remarkable autonomy, "it is still an awful wrench to leave Brooklyn. Parting from the Painting collection seems like deserting my own baby. . . . It has been a hard decision to make." [54]

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Conclusions

Baur left Brooklyn's American painting collection dramatically richer than it had been at the time of his arrival, and he reinvigorated the Museum's previous reputation for seminal exhibitions of American art. The magnitude of his accomplishment in collection building was revealed by a 1954 benefit exhibition of American paintings from Brooklyn's collection mounted at Knoedler Galleries in New York; of the seventy-four works on view, nearly all were Baur's purchases, and nearly all remain among the highlights of the historic collection today.[55]

Baur's shaping of the collection also contributed largely to the fact that, if so desired, the American holdings can be presented and interpreted as a remarkably rich and continuous survey of historic American art. As this discussion has demonstrated, however, a survey collection in the historic American field was hardly the goal of those individuals most directly responsible for building Brooklyn's American painting collection, before Baur's initially resigned, and subsequently inspired, devotion to the task.

From the time George Brown Goode addressed Brooklyn's trustees in 1889, the Museum's board repeatedly acknowledged the need to differentiate Brooklyn's permanent holdings and exhibition programs from those of The Metropolitan; and to that end, for a period of thirty years, Brooklyn's directors and curators attempted to steer a course toward contemporary American art. Such important resources as the Woodward purchase fund for recently exhibited American art enabled them make some significant

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achievements in the field. Their exhibitions of contemporary American art were even more significant.

Throughout this period from 1914 to 1934, and after, however, Brooklyn's trustees were more comfortable in advocating acquisitions and exhibitions of historic American art. The historic field had constituted a significant presence in the new Brooklyn Museum's first exhibitions and loan collection installations at the turn of the century, and it was steadily supplemented through important gifts and board-supported purchases throughout the teens and twenties. Baur's ability to further enlarge and enrich the collection, a talent unanticipated by Youtz when he hired the young graduate as an educator in 1934, ultimately fulfilled and probably surpassed the expectations of the Museum's earliest supporters of the historic American painting cause.

Baur's spectacularly successful tenure was difficult to match, but it was made even more so when, during the 1960s, the market for American art began to show signs of strong new activity, and the prices for works by the best known artists accordingly began a gradual but continuous rise. Particularly under the watch of curator Donelson Hoopes, from 1965 to 1969, the Museum nevertheless succeeded in adding representative works in what were then most popular areas of American painting: colonial portraits and Hudson River School landscapes, with Cole's The Pic-Nic (1846, BMA 67.205.2) and Copley's Mrs. Sylvester Gardiner (circa 1772, BMA 65.60; see Appendix of Entries). Under the more recent stewardship of Linda Ferber, the American collection has been further updated in response to post-Baur revisionist scholarship, through which areas including nineteenth-century history painting, and the works of African-American artists have risen to new prominence in a reconfigured canon. Among the relatively recent

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acquisitions in these fields are Robert Walter Weir's The Embarkation of the Pilgrims (1857, BMA 75.188) and Joshua Johnson's Portrait of John Jacob Anderson and Sons, Edward and William (circa 1812-15, BMA 1993.82). It may go without saying, however, than an accurate appraisal of the past fifty years of American art at the Brooklyn Museum of Art will require more critical distance than can be achieved at present.

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Notes

[1] In February, Youtz instructed Tschudy to return two other paintings offered by Dreier because a decision to purchase Unknown Forces had been made. Philip N.Youtz to Herbert Tschudy, February 15, 1934, Records of the Office of the Director, 1933-38, Tschudy, 1933-36, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[2] Morgan to Youtz, October 30, 1934, Records of the Office of the Director. Morgan, J.H (02), 1934-35, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[3] Morgan to Youtz, December 27, 1934, Records of the Office of the Director. Morgan, J.H (02), 1934-35.

[4] One of the issues on Morgan's mind was the inadequate lighting, which had been arranged by Luke Vincent Lockwood, curator of decorative arts, and a colleague respected by Morgan, to suggest the dimly-lit interiors of Colonial homes. Morgan to Youtz, February 6, 1935, Records of the Office of the Director. Morgan, J.H. (02), 1934-35.

[5] Philip Newell Youtz, "Art as Culture History," Brooklyn Museum Quarterly 21 (July 1934): 62. Youtz's place in the "Culture History" movement in American museums during the thirties and forties is outlined in Theodore Lewis Low, The Educational Philosophy and Practice of Art Museums in the United States (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1948), 75-82. Low also notes that Youtz's approach was generated in part by the Depression-era realization that the welfare and future of cultural institutions depended on the support of a broad audience to which Museums had not devoted significant attention. Ibid., 68. Low noted that Youtz was in a prime position to act on his theories, "As Director of the Brooklyn Museum he took advantage of the shadow cast by the Metropolitan to embark on a course which would differentiate between the two institutions. Ibid.,77.

[6] Philip Newell Youtz, "The Scientific Basis of the Art Museum," Museum News 13 (January 1, 1936): 7-8.

[7] Philip N. Youtz, Report upon the Condition and Progress of the Museums for the Year Ending December 31, 1934 (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences, 1935): 5. Youtz outlined his installation design theories in an article entitled "Curing the Blind," in which he blamed much of the public's lack of interest in art museums on dull designs and uncomfortable settings. Philip N. Youtz, "Curing the Blind." Brooklyn Museum Quarterly 22 (October 1935): 190-193.

[8] Youtz to Morgan, April 30, 1936, Records of the Office of the Director. Morgan, J.H. (02), 1934-35.

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[9] Robert McIntyre to Herbert S. Tschudy, September 24, 1935, Records of the Department of Painting and Sculpture, Lists of Paintings to Be Deaccessioned, 1935, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[10] Youtz to Tschudy, March 3, 1935, Records of the Office of the Director, 1933-38, Tschudy, 1933-36, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[11] Youtz to Tschudy, December 6, 1935, Records of the office of the Director, 1933-38, Tschudy, 1933-36.

[12] Exhibition of Oil Paintings by Living Artists, (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Museum, 1935).

[13] Joseph Stella to Youtz, April 22, 1935, Records of the Department of Painting and Sculpture, Purchases [rejected, 1935-46]: M-Z, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[14] Tschudy to Youtz, February 21, 1935, Records of the Office of the Director, 1933-38, Tschudy, 1933-36, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives. Tschudy explained that there were few works in the collection that Youtz might find suitable, but recommended a number of watercolors currently on view in the biennial exhibition. He furthermore recommended works by Earl Horter, Carroll Bill, and "Joseph Stella, a few of whose pictures, based on bridge construction, we have in storage."

[15] Youtz to Stella, May 11, 1935, Records of the Department of painting and Sculpture: Objects. Purchases [rejected, 1935-46]: M-Z.

[16] Youtz to Theodore Sizer, September 27, 1933, Records of the Office of the Director, 1935-36, Yale University, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[17] Youtz to Sizer, July 9, 1934, Records of the Office of the Director, 1935-36, Yale University.

[18] Susan Matheson, Art for Yale, 73, 117.

[19] Baur wrote to Youtz, "I am submitting it, as you suggested, in the hope that if you approve it may lead to at least a trial appointment in that Department. I think the show is definitely worth while, and it has been planned, as you will see, with an eye on the budget . . . ." John I. H. Baur to Youtz, March 24, 1936, Records of the Office of the Director, 1936-37: Contemporary Art, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[20] Checklist, typescript, Records of the Department of Painting and Sculpture: Exhibitions, Six American Artists, 1936, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives. Among the notable works in the exhibition were Sheeler's Shaker Buildings, and Sloan's Southwestern subjects.

[21] "Tape-Recorded Interview with John I. H. Baur at the Whitney Museum," January 22, 1970, Conducted by Paul Cummings, 14 (tape 1, side1), Oral History Collection,

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Archives of American Art , Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. (hereafter cited as "Baur Interview").

[22] Baur to Youtz, October 8, 1936, Records of the Office of the Director, 1936-37, Contemporary Art, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[23] "Brooklyn Institute Portraits," typewritten checklist, Records of the Department of Painting and Sculpture, American paintings, file 1372, 1929-1941, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[24] Baur to Stella, May 5, 1936, Records of the Department of Painting and Sculpture, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[25] Stella to Baur, May 7, 1936, Records of the Department of Painting and Sculpture, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[26] John I.H. Baur to Joseph Stella, May 8, 1936. Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives, Records of the Department of Painting and Sculpture, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[27] "Baur Interview," 10 (tape 1, side 1).

[28] Laurance had been approached by Audrey McMahon, head of the New York City Art Project with the request. He additionally hoped the board would turn down the request because of lack of space and reluctance to offer permanent space to any single art organization, and mentioned that Juliana Force was already in agreement. Crittenden concurred. Laurance P. Roberts to Walter H. Crittenden, December 19, 1940, Records of the Office of the Director, 1940-41, BIAS, Crittenden, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[29] "Curators of Culture," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, April 4, 1939, Yearbooks.

[30] John I. H. Baur, "Rebirth of the Museum," Journal of Adult Education 9 (April 1937): 161-63.

[31] "Baur Interview," 16 (tape 1, side 1).

[32] Ibid., 10 (tape 1, side 1).

[33] Baur noted that although the emphasis of the exhibition was more cultural than aesthetic, it brought artists including Fitz Hugh Lane before a broader public. "Baur Interview," 27 (tape 1, side 2).

[34] These exhibitions included: the Cleveland Museum of Art's "American Painting from 1860 Till Today" (1936); The Virginia Museum's "Main Currents in the Development of American Painting"(1836); the Whitney Museum of American Art's "A Century of

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American Landscape Painting, 1800-1900" (1938); the Carnegie Institute's "A Survey of American Painting"(1940); and "Romantic American Painting," mounted by the Museum of Modern Art (1943).

[35]Baur, "Rebirth of the Museum," 163.

[36] Dick S. Ramsay, a Kentucky-born Brooklyn businessman who made his fortune in the manufacture of coal stoves, was a prominent resident of Brooklyn's Columbia Heights, an active participant in the city's civic affairs, and a trustee of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences from 1909 to 1927. Ramsay himself bequeathed to the Museum a purchase fund for American art in the amount of $25,000, with the provision that Ramsay Fund works would be installed together as the Dick S. Ramsay collection. The Ramsay Fund was increased substantially in 1932 though the bequest made by Ramsay's foster-sister Ione M. Spears in the amount of over $310,000, also designated as a purchase fund for American art. Information provided by Deborah Wythe, Museum Archivist, Brooklyn Museum of Art.

[37] John I. H. Baur, "Outline of Policy, Department of Painting and Sculpture: Purchasing," Records of the Office of the Director: Painting and Sculpture, 1940-41, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[38] "Baur Interview," 10 (tape 1, side 1).

[39] Ibid., 11-12 (tape 1, side 1).

[40] When Baur was investigating the possibility of purchasing Watson's portrait of Governor Lewis Morris, Morgan informed him that the Metropolitan Museum of Art was also interested in the picture. The painting was purchased by Brooklyn that year, with financial assistance from Morgan, who clearly was interested in further strengthening the portion of the collection that he had done so much to shape. Baur consulted with Morgan that fall when considering the Feke. Morgan, who had known the picture decades earlier, examined it in order to render an opinion on which Baur ultimately relied in promoting the purchase. Baur to Morgan, June 2, 1943; and Morgan to Baur, November 15, 1943, Records of the Department of Painting and Sculpture: Objects, Purchases accepted, file 1343, 1940-46, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives. Morgan's departure from the Museum's board was thus only a temporary loss. Even if he had remained on the board, it is unlikely that he would have donated a substantial portion of his own collection to the Museum. His allegiances remained with the Yale University Art Gallery, where he served as curator of American art from 1931 to 1945; and he and his wife Leila donated their collection to the gallery over the period from 1937 to 1951. Yale responded to the gift in 1946 with the "John Hill Morgan Memorial Exhibition of American Art"; see Matheson, Art for Yale, 126.

[41] "Baur Interview," 40 (tape 1, side 2).

[42] Ibid., 10 (tape 1, side 1).

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[43] Ibid., 12 (tape 1, side 1).

[44] Ibid., 33 (tape 1, side 2).

[45] Roberts to Royal Cortissoz, June 2, 1942, Records of the Department of the Director, 1941-21, Department of Painting and Sculpture, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[46] "Lustrous Blakelock Enters Brooklyn Museum," Art Digest 17 (October 1, 1942): 1.

[47] Antionette Kraushaar to Baur, October 6, 1941, Records of the Department of Painting and Sculpture: Objects, Purchases accepted, file 1343, 1940-46, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[48] "Brooklyn Revives Memories of 'The Eight'," Art Digest, 18 (December 1, 1943): 12-13. At the close of the exhibition Baur wrote to Antoinette Kraushaar to thank her for generous contribution of loans, and noted that the exhibition's opening had been postponed for a week to as not to coincide with "another large exhibition of American art". Baur to Kraushaar, December 7, 1943, Records of the Department of Painting and Sculpture, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[49] "Baur Interview," 13, (tape 1, side 1). Baur also mentioned that the Museum was going through a difficult period because many of the old Brooklyn families who had long supported the Museum were dying off or their children moving away.

[50] An influential curator in the field, Sweet made his debut at Chicago in 1939 with an exhibition entitled "Half a Century of American Art," which celebrated the first fifty years of the Museum's annual exhibitions of American art. Sweet's activities are discussed in Judith Barter "American Art in the 'Great Grey City': The Evolution of a Collection at The Art Institute of Chicago," 36.

[51] Memorandum from Baur, March 30, 1949, Records of the Department of Painting and Sculpture, file 1343, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[52] John Baur, "Trends in American Painting, 1815-1865," in M.and M. Karolik Collection of American Paintings (Cambridge: Harvard University Press for the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1949), xv.

[53] "Baur Interview," 38, (tape 1, side 2).

[54] Baur to Charles Nagel, May 22, 1952, Records of the Department of Painting and Sculpture, 1951-52, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

[55] Knoedler Galleries, Inc. American Panorama: An Exhibition of Paintings from the Brooklyn Museum (New York: Knoedler Galleries, Inc., 1954).

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Appendix

Unattributed

Pierre Van Cortlandt, circa 1731
Oil on canvas
56 1/2 x 41 1/8 inches (144.8 x 105.5 cm)
41.151, Dick S. Ramsay Fund

The anonymous author of the portrait Pierre Van Cortlandt employed ambitious scale and formal design to convey his sitter's status as a scion of one of colonial New York's wealthiest families. The fortune of Pierre Van Cortlandt's line was begun by his great-grandfather, Oloff Stevense Van Cortlandt (circa 1600/10-1684), who arrived in America in 1638 as a soldier with the Dutch East India Company.[1] Oloff subsequently established a brewery and married the wealthy Annetje Lookermans; by the last quarter of the century, he had become one of New York's five wealthiest property owners. Pierre's grandfather, Stephanus Van Cortlandt (1643-1700), was awarded the vast grant of Van Cortlandt Manor (north of Manhattan on the east side of the Hudson River) in 1697 and passed it on to his son, the sitter's father, Philip Van Cortlandt (1683-1748).[2]

Pierre Van Cortlandt (1721-1814) was the fifth of six children born to Philip Van Cortlandt and his wife Catherine DePeyster in their mansion on Stone Street in Manhattan. Pierre was trained by his father in business, agriculture, and the affairs of government (Philip Van Cortlandt served as a member of the Governor's Council and as alderman). He married Joanna Livingston in 1748 and, after his father's death later that year, inherited a substantial part of Van Cortlandt Manor. He immediately established a network of flour mills and a manor house on his property, and after the birth of his first

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son, Philip, in Manhattan in 1749, the manor became the family home and source of income.

In addition to tending to his estate and large family, Van Cortlandt entered public service in 1768 with his election to New York's General Assembly and quickly positioned himself as a supporter of colonial freedoms and an opponent of tariffs. After that body was dissolved in 1775 by New York's last royalist governor, William Tryon, he served on a series of Provincial Congresses and in 1776 was chosen as chairman of New York's Committee of Safety. In July of that year he moved his household from the Croton manor to nearby Peekskill, but by the fall his ever-growing responsibilities as vice-president of the Provincial Convention required that he supervise the construction of fortifications at the Hudson Highlands. He was also ordered to take charge of his system of flour mills to supply the colonial militia. Van Cortlandt was chosen as president of the newly organized State Senate in 1774, and he became the state's first lieutenant governor under George Clinton. He launched an unsuccessful gubernatorial run against Clinton in 1789 but held the lieutenant's position until 1795, when he announced his retirement from New York politics.

He continued to live in Peekskill until 1803, in a residence left to him by his aunt, Joanna Van Cortlandt Beekman. Van Cortlandt passed the last decade of his life at the Croton manor and died there on May 1, 1814. He was memorialized in a lengthy obituary by his sons, who praised his great patriotism. The final paragraph stated: "He was a patriot of the first order, zealous to the last for the liberties of his country. In his domestic relations, a man of exemplary practical virtues; kind as a neighbor, fond and indulgent as a parent, and for ever the friend of the poor. . . . The simplicity of his private life was that of an ancient patriarch."[3]

This portrait of Pierre Van Cortlandt undoubtedly was one of the "3 large frame pictures" listed without mention of an artist in the inventory of his property in 1814; the other two were portraits of his brothers John Van Cortlandt (The Brooklyn Museum of

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Art) and Abraham Van Cortlandt (Collection of Van Cortlandt Manor, Croton-on-Hudson, New York).[4] All three works were commissioned by Philip Van Cortlandt and originally hung in his Stone Street mansion in Manhattan. Despite twentieth-century attempts to tie them to a specific hand--including James Flexner's attribution of these and certain other Anglo-Dutch colonial portraits to the artist Pieter Vanderlyn (circa 1687-1778) and Mary Black's more recent attribution of much of the same group to the colonial limner Gerardus Duyckinck (1695-1746)--the Van Cortlandt portraits are more accurately left unattributed.[5] The particularly fine manner and physical characteristics shared to varying degrees by paintings in the group identified by Flexner and Black suggest that some may have a common author, but they fall short of indicating a single hand.[6] The Van Cortlandt portraits are most clearly similar to three De Peyster Family portraits (The New-York Historical Society) in pictorial format, palette, and delicacy of hand. A tie between the six Van Cortlandt and De Peyster portraits is further encouraged by the fact that the children were cousins, related through their parents Catherine De Peyster Van Cortlandt and Abraham De Peyster.[7]

The artists responsible for the Van Cortlandt, Levy-Franks (see n. 6), and De Peyster portraits sought cues for compositional formulas and pictorial details in popular mezzotints after grand British portraits of the period.[8] The painter of Pierre Van Cortlandt used two such models--mezzotints by John Smith after Sir Godfrey Kneller's portraits His Highness the Duke of Gloucester and Richard Lord Clifford and Lady Jane His Sister. He based the figure and most of the background details on the former and freely added his own simplified version of the dog that appears in the latter.[9] Certain elements were simplified in the process, most noticeably the reflections in the pond and the form of the gray urn, which was liberally interpreted in the spirit of hand-painted export porcelain. The figure of Pierre Van Cortlandt conforms to the general pose of the British prototype but is dressed in conventional Anglo-Dutch garb and lacks the Baroque device of a gathered drape. The highly calculated effects of light, for which the medium of mezzotint

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was particularly prized, were perhaps the elements most dramatically simplified in the process of translation to the colonial idiom.

Despite the absence of animated Baroque highlights, the colonial artist achieved a remarkable degree of refinement in the precise, if plain, drawing of forms and careful suggestion of gradually modulated light. The two almost seem at odds in certain passages--for example, where the almost wooden forms of the legs and shoes cast two subtle shadows on the step behind them. Overall, however, the drawing and modeling share a delicacy that distinguishes the Van Cortlandt portraits from a number of works to which they have been customarily linked.[10] Here, the decorative curves of the hair and small features are enhanced by the porcelain-like coloration of the face, modeled to a delicate higher pink in the cheeks. The beautiful description of intricate lace details on the white stock is in keeping with the very controlled modulation of the tones of the red coat, including a careful, vertical shadow of the stock itself. The bright face and coat are the exception to an otherwise somber palette, dominated by the gray tones of the marble floor and step, the column, and the urn. Among the most pleasingly refined passages in the picture are the description of the dog, in which naturalistic details are reformed by the decorative inclination; the sure treatment of the wonderfully varied flowers; and the effectively simple character of the reflections in the pool. The red drape at the right is the most broadly rendered element.

1. Information on the earliest Van Cortlandt family members in America is provided in Roderic H. Blackburn and Ruth Piwonka, Remembrance of Patria: Dutch Arts and Culture in Colonial America (Albany: Albany Institute of History and Art, 1988), 298.

2. Information on Pierre Van Cortlandt's immediate ancestors and his own biography are derived from Jacob Judd, ed. Correspondence of the Van Cortlandt Family of Cortlandt Manor, 1748-1800, 2 vols. (Tarrytown, New York: Sleepy Hollow Restorations, 1977).

3. The obituary, which appeared in four New York newspapers, is reprinted in ibid., 2: 703.

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4. The inventory prepared by Philip Van Cortlandt of belongings not specifically included in his father's will is reprinted in ibid., 2: 715-16. Included were "3 old fruit and bird pictures," presumably meaning Dutch pictures that had descended in the Van Cortlandt Family. Pierre Van Cortlandt II (1762-1848) apparently inherited along with the "Mansion House and Mills" the contents listed therein. (ibid., 2: 709). Of the three portraits, only Abraham Van Cortlandt retains its original frame.

5. Flexner discussed a possible attribution of the Van Cortlandt portraits to Pieter Vanderlyn as early as April 1941, in a letter to Laurance P. Roberts of the Brooklyn Museum of Art (Curatorial File, Department of American Painting and Sculpture, Brooklyn Museum of Art). Six years later he considered related portraits under the rubric of the "De Peyster Manner," so called for three portraits of De Peyster children (The New-York Historical Society), and linked them broadly to Pieter Vanderlyn and he later published what he believed to be a definitive list of some thirty-five works attributable to Pieter Vanderlyn, formerly designated the "De Peyster Limner" (James Thomas Flexner, History of American Painting: First Flowers of Our Wilderness [New York: Dover Publications, 1949]; and James Thomas Flexner, "Pieter Vanderlyn, Come Home," Antiques 75 [June 1959] : 546-49, 580). By 1980 Mary Black had shifted the identity of the De Peyster Limner to Gerardus Duyckinck (1695-1746), son of the very early colonial limner Gerrit Duyckinck and certain author of a small, signed panel painting of The Birth of the Virgin (Collection of Harold Byrd, Jr.); see Black's "Foreword," in Ruth Piwonka and Roderic H. Blackburn, A Remnant in the Wilderness: New York Dutch Scripture Paintings of the Early Eighteenth Century (Albany: Albany Institute of History and Art for the Bard College Center, 1980).

6. The portrait Elsje (Rutgers) Schuyler Vas (Albany Institute of History and Art), for example, which Black gives with relative certainty to Duyckinck, exhibits suggestive rather than conclusive similarities with the Van Cortlandt portraits. See Black's discussion of the Vas portrait in ibid., 215-33. Perhaps more important, a close comparative study of the Van Cortlandt portraits and the substantial group of Levy-Franks Family portraits (Collection of the American Jewish Historical Society, Waltham, Massachusetts), which may have a more substantial tie to Duyckinck's name, served to underscore as many differences as parallels. The author thanks Erica Hirshler of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and Rona MacBeth of its Conservation Department for generously accommodating a close examination of the Levy-Franks Family portraits and sharing their own careful observations. Ms. Hirshler's findings on the subject were published in a pamphlet accompanying the exhibition The Levy-Franks Family Colonial Portraits; see Erica Hirschler, The Levy-Franks Colonial Portraits, pamphlet (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1990).

7. Catherine De Peyster Van Cortlandt, Pierre's mother, was the third child of the Honorable Abraham De Peyster; and her brother, Abraham De Peyster, father of the young sitters in the De Peyster portraits, was the seventh child. His wife was Margaret Van Cortlandt, daughter of Jacobus and Eva Philipse Van Cortlandt. See Albert Welles, American Family Antiquity: Genealogy of the De Peyster Family in Holland and America (New York: n.p., 1881), 29-30.

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8. Study of the frequent reliance of colonial artists on available mezzotint sources during the first half of the eighteenth century was pioneered by the scholar and collector Waldron Phoenix Belknap, Jr. (d. 1949), whose findings were published in John Marshall Phillips, Barbara N. Parker, and Kathryn C. Buhler, eds., The Waldron Phoenix Belknap, Jr. Collection of Portraits and Silver with a Note Concerning the Discoveries of Waldron Phoenix Belknap, Jr. Concerning the Influence of English Mezzotint on Colonial Painting (Cambridge: Harvard University Press for the New-York Historical Society, 1955); and Waldron Phoenix Belknap, Jr., American Colonial Painting: Materials for a History (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959). See also Frederick A. Sweet, "Mezzotint Sources of American Colonial Portraits," The Art Quarterly 14 (1951): 148-57., with an expanded version in 1959; Other paintings in the Brooklyn Museum of Art collection that suggest the use of mezzotint sources are portraits by Joseph Badger, 52.42, 52.43; Robert Feke, 43.229, and John Greenwood, 27.946.

9. The comparison with Richard Lord Clifford and Lady Jane His Sister was illustrated in Belknap, American Colonial Painting.

10. The Levy-Franks Family portraits, for example, display a somewhat heavier delineation of facial features, a more schematized treatment of drapery, and a stronger palette of predominant blues, reds, and browns. The palette may originally have been muted by a series of glazes that are no longer apparent; see Hirshler, The Levy-Franks Family Colonial Portraits.

PROVENANCE: Descended through family of Pierre Van Cortlandt; to Pierre Van Cortlandt II (1762-1848), Peekskill, New York, to 1848; to the Van Cortlandt Manor House, Croton-on-Hudson, New York; Miss Catherine Van Cortlandt Mathews, Croton on-Hudson, New York, to 1941; to The Brooklyn Museum.

EXHIBITED:

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New York World's Fair, 1964, Art in New York State, cat. no. 4.

Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1981, American Portraiture in the Grand Manner: 1720-1920, cat. no. 2. Traveled.

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Ralph Albert Blakelock (October 15, 1847-August 9, 1919)

The Captive, 1879

Oil on board

15 15/16 x 23 13/16 inches (40.5 x 60.5 cm)

Signed lower right (in arrowhead): "R.A. Blakelock 1879"

05.86, Gift of Charles A. Schieren

PROVENANCE: Frederick S. Gibbs, New York, by 1902; to Charles A. Schieren; to The Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences.

EXHIBITED:

National Academy of Design, New York, 1879, Fifty-fourth Annual Exhibition, cat. no. 173.

Lotos Club, New York, 1902, Exhibition of Paintings by Ralph Albert Blakelock from the Collection of the Honorable Frederick S. Gibbs, cat. no. 39.

The American Federation of Arts, Washington, D.C., 1949, Romantic Realism in 19th Century American Painting. Traveled.

National Academy of Design, New York, 1951, American Tradition Exhibition, cat. no. 8.

Embarkation, circa 1880-95

Oil on canvas

12 1/16 x 10 1/16 inches (30.6 x 25.5 cm)

Signed lower right (in arrowhead): "R. A. Blakelock"

15.312, Bequest of Charles A. Schieren

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PROVENANCE: Charles A. Schieren, Brooklyn; to The Brooklyn Museum.

EXHIBITED:

Long Island University, Brooklyn, 1944, Long-term loan.

The Brooklyn Museum, 1975, Vision and Fantasy in American Painting.

Landscape with Indians, circa 1880-95

Oil on canvas

15 15/16 x 24 inches (40.5 x 60.9 cm)

Signed lower right: "R. A. B [illegible]"

15.307, Bequest of Charles A. Schieren

PROVENANCE: Charles A. Schieren, Brooklyn; to The Brooklyn Museum.

Remembered equally for his dense and mysterious moonlight landscapes and the pathetic circumstances of his mature life, the late-nineteenth-century painter Ralph Blakelock produced a large body of undated paintings. Perhaps under the influence of acquaintances who had already painted there, Blakelock set out for an extended tour of the American West in 1869, traveling through Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, and Nevada before exploring the Pacific Coast from northern California to Mexico. He produced more than one hundred drawings in the course of his travels before returning to New York via Panama and Jamaica in 1871.

Blakelock resumed work in a Manhattan studio and turned his attention to western landscape subjects, which often featured vignettes of Native American life. During the decade of the 1870s, his treatments of Indian subjects in western landscapes evolved from

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the literally descriptive--such as The Indian Camp, undated (Private Collection), to the highly imaginative. While the early works often represent plains dotted with teepees and the legible (if small-scale) forms of Native Americans engaged in daily tasks, the later manifestations are scenes fueled by romantic fantasy and rendered with an obscuring tenebrism and breadth. The Captive, a work that is unusual in Blakelock's oeuvre in being precisely dated, demonstrates that the evolution was relatively complete by 1879. It was one of the artist's two entries in the National Academy of Design annual that year.

Set in a dark and indistinct clearing, the subject of The Captive is indeed among the most melodramatic examples of Blakelock's romanticized Indian themes. A group of standing and seated Indians appears in the half-light of a fire at the center of the sheltered space, and the slight and apparently naked figure of a white woman is tied to a tree at its edge. The dark forms of the forest encircle them, with only a small passage of sky visible in the upper center of the image. It remains difficult to identify a precise source of inspiration for Blakelock's work in this mode. He may have been impressed by the increasingly evocative compositions of Albert Pinkham Ryder, or by particularly mannered examples of Barbizon work of Narcisse-Virgile Diaz (1807-1876). The atmospheric breadth and the small scale of the figures in the landscape also may reveal a debt to Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot (1796-1875) or the American George Inness. Blakelock's Indian subjects were, however, distinct in American art in their departure from a literally detailed description of the Native American figures. Works of a similar nature include his The Pipe Dance, 1880-99 (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York).

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The painting attracted notice on the occasion of the 1879 annual exhibition of the National Academy of Design, when a reviewer for The New York Times described it as one of two Blakelocks on view that "would win their way slowly and into the hearts of few." The same writer nevertheless commended the strengths of The Captive, despite its poor placement in the hanging:

> "'The Captive,' too high up, indeed, for any but telescopic eyes to be quite sure of its beauty, but still possessed of sufficient inherent force to suggest something fine is being wasted on the upper spaces of the room. One can descry 'the captive' bound to a tree and a council of capturers ranged behind a campfire. The figures are in keeping with the subdued russet tones of the woodland view, and the whole suggests Diaz or even Monticelli. Perhaps a closer resemblance may be found nearer home, namely, to the poetic idyls in paint of Albert Ryder. What a pity we could not have this picture on the line in the corridor."[1]

According to a newspaper article published in 1916, when Blakelock, decades later, was shown a reproduction of The Captive by his guardian, the so-called Mrs. Adams, it "stirred his memory to an attempt at comment, which rolled off into a series of meaningless phrases."[2] It is important to note that the original, somewhat lighter, tonalities of the picture have darkened over time. The clearing was initially brighter, as were the figures and the forms of the three visible trees. The two figures seated near the captive woman, as well as several additional figures seated farther behind them, have become particularly hard to read. Though the scene is now absorbed into the dominant dark brown tonality, some more colorful touches in red and green, and some rough details, are visible in the area of the figures and the fire.

Other of Blakelock's Indian subjects, including Brooklyn's Embarkation, have more subdued narrative content. In this vertical composition, Blakelock represented the edge of a body of water where a group of Indians are gathered near two canoes. The

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expressive shapes of the trees and the distant mountain form a decorative backdrop. All of the forms are indistinct and have become more so owing to the darkening of the surface over time.

After the 1870s Blakelock also painted numerous landscapes with incidental Indian motifs. Although these works were a more direct legacy of his early Plains landscapes with Indian subjects than his highly dramatic Indian narratives, they nevertheless shared the broad, expressive manner typical of the latter. In his Landscape with Indians, Blakelock used a favorite device in the low horizon, giving much of the image over to a broadly brushed sky. The treetops, comprising delicately calligraphic brown branches and small touches of green leaves, form a network of interesting silhouettes. Much of the foreground is obscured by a deterioration of the surface, though the shape of a tepee is vaguely discernible just left of center. Primarily landscape subjects, works such as this demonstrate clear ties to the broad and evocative landscapes of the French Barbizon school.

1. "The Academy Exhibition," New York Times, May 2, 1879, 5.

2. "Blakelock's Brain Growing Clearer, His Visitors See," New York World, March 27, 1915, 5.

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William Merritt Chase (November 1, 1849-October 25, 1916)

The Antiquary Shop, 1879

Oil on canvas

27 x 34 3/8 inches (67.3 x 86.2 cm)

Signed lower left: "Wm M Chase—1879"

13.53, Gift of Mrs. Carll H. de Silver in memory of her husband

The most successful American practitioner of the painterly realism promoted by the Munich Royal Academy, William Merritt Chase was a leading personality in the late nineteenth-century New York art world and the creator of one of the largest and most opulent studio spaces in the city.

According to his early biographer, Katherine Metcalf Roof, Chase painted The Antiquary Shop during an extended visit to Venice in 1877 in the company of his fellow Munich students Duveneck and Twachtman.[1] The painting bears a date of 1879 (verified under magnification), however, suggesting that Chase completed the canvas after his return to New York, using the sketches that he had compiled in Italy. Although The Antiquary Shop is an unusual subject in his oeuvre, it nevertheless demonstrates the antiquarian interests that Chase developed during his first European sojourn, and it presages the series of interior studio views that occupied him in the years immediately following his return.

The painting's setting of an open courtyard and shadowy passageway is vaguely Venetian in character, as was the practice of vending in such open-air spaces; and the sundry objects represent the type and variety of collectibles that Chase purchased while

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abroad, particularly in Venice, in order to furnish his New York studio in the fashion of cosmopolitan European artists like Hans Makart (1840-1884). Working in his New York studio, Chase probably based the setting on sketches of Venetian architecture, and he employed an arrangement of his own studio props throughout the scene. The vignette is rather odd in one respect: while the array of textiles, metalwork, ceramics, and paintings (particularly the large, Barbizon-like, framed landscape hanging on the wall) represent definitive aspects of late nineteenth-century taste, the figures themselves, dressed in the distinctly Neoclassical costumes of high boots, breeches, waistcoasts, high collars, and Napoleonic hats, constitute an anachronistic element. In attempting a costume piece intended to represent an antiquary of an earlier age, Chase juxtaposed an earlier period costume with the aesthetics of his own time. The Antiquary Shop is perhaps most interesting in its relation to his more famous "bric a brac" subjects set in his Tenth Street studio, in which figures are similarly engrossed in examining paintings or prints amid a rich arrangement of textiles, decorative objects, and bursting portfolios (for example, The Inner Studio, Tenth Street, circa 1880s [Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, San Marino, California]). Chase went so far as to employ a hanging carpet, at the far right, in a manner that resembles the use of decorative screens and textiles in his studio and in his paintings of it. Other "props" that recur in Chase's New York studio pictures include the Renaissance chests, metal shields and salver, German ceramics (on the left end of the chest), Middle Eastern hanging oil lamp, and Middle Eastern ewer and shoes at the lower left.

The Antiquary Shop is rather somber in mood and very different in effect from Chase's works of lively palette and more vigorous execution. The color here is quite dark

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and tonal, and the texture of the surface is deliberately worked and flattened to evoke the rough surface of time- and weather-worn stucco. Color accents appear within the still-life arrangement of bric-a-brac, including the gilt frames and textiles. The hanging carpet atthe right offers a broader area of color, in green and blue tones touched with red. To quote Katherine Roof, the canvas "is an interesting study on tone, a rich and harmonious color composition, that is all."[2]

The painting was purchased, perhaps directly from Chase, by Hugo Reisinger, a highly successful German-American businessman and important turn-of-the-century collector who is perhaps best remembered for his brief tenure as head of Harvard's Germanic Museum (Busch-Reisinger Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts) from 1913 until his death in 1914.[3] Distinctly international in his patronage, Reisinger invested a great deal of money in a wide spectrum of artists and sold his collection in two large auctions in 1907 and 1916. Chase undoubtedly would have approved of Reisinger's efforts to bring together artists of diverse nationalities, including his assistance in organizing an exhibition of German art at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, in 1903 and an exhibition of American art in Berlin in 1910. The Antiquary Shop was among the works in Reisinger's 1907 sale, the bulk of which comprised French Barbizon and Dutch Hague School canvases. The 1916 auction included many works by American Impressionists, among them J. Alden Weir's Willimantic Thread Factory and George Bellows's A Morning Snow--Hudson River, both in Brooklyn's collection. The Antiquary Shop was purchased from the sale the notable collector and important Brooklyn Museum donor Carll H. De Silver.

1. Katherine Metcalf Roof, The Life and Art of William Merritt Chase (New York: Scribner, 1917), 47.

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2. Ibid.

3. "Hugo Reisinger," National Cyclopaedia of American Biography (New York: J.T. White, 1898-1927).

PROVENANCE: Hugo Reisinger, New York; through American Art Association, Valuable Paintings and Watercolors by Distinguished Artists of the Barbizon and Contemporaneous Schools, January 10-11, 1907, cat. no. 83; to Carll H. de Silver; to the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences.

EXHIBITED:

Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences, long-term loan from de Silver, 1907-13.

National Arts Club, New York, and Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, 1910, William M. Chase Retrospective Exhibition, cat. no. 81.

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The Montclair Art Museum, New Jersey, 1946, American Paintings by the Ten, cat. no. 6.

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Lydia Field Emmet, 1892

Oil on canvas

71 7/8 x 36 1/4 inches (182.9 x 91.8 cm)

Signed lower left: "Wm M. Chase."

15.316, Gift of the Artist

Among the most striking portraits painted by William Merritt Chase is this dramatic full-length likeness of his talented student and later the successful portrait painter Lydia Field Emmet (1866-1952).[1] Broad and sure in handling and challenging in expression, the painting was undertaken on Chase's own initiative and constitutes an homage to such artistic exemplars as Velázquez, Whistler, and Manet.

Lydia Field Emmet was not the first of Chase's students to serve as his model for an important work of portraiture. In 1883 he executed a remarkable likeness of his student Dora Wheeler (The Cleveland Museum of Art), a frankly direct and energetically brushed image of the artist seated in her own studio before a brilliant yellow hanging of Chinese embroidered silk. Utterly unconventional in an American context--in terms of composition, palette, and execution--the work drew a highly critical response on the occasion of its exhibition at the Society of American Artists annual in 1884. Four years later, Chase painted a less surprising and more elegant portrait of his student Marietta Benedict Cotton, entitled Lady in Black (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York), which brings to mind the manner of John Singer Sargent's more conservative early portraits. In a second and slightly later likeness of Cotton, of circa 1888-89 (Museum of

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Art, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence), he worked in a Whistlerian mode and began to approach the breadth and painterly virtuosity, as well as the limited palette, that characterize Lydia Field Emmet.

By the time that Chase painted Emmet, she had become a favorite pupil and a trusted teacher in his Shinnecock summer school. She began her artistic training in the early 1880s in Paris at the Académie Julian, and after her return to New York in 1885, she worked as an illustrator and decorative designer. From 1889 to 1895 Emmet continued her studies at the Art Students League, where Chase was among her teachers. He soon enlisted her to teach at Shinnecock, where she was a member of the staff from 1891 to 1893. In 1893 she painted a mural entitled Art, Science, and Literature for the Women's Building at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Her income eventually was derived primarily from portraits in oil and pastel, however, and particularly those of children, for which she was increasingly in demand after 1900.

Chase appears to have chosen this portrait as a vehicle through which he deliberately and effectively synthesized the key sources of his inspiration in portrait work: the Spanish Baroque portraits of Diego Velázquez, Edouard Manet's most self-possessed figure subjects, and the full-length portraits by his contemporary and acquaintance James McNeil Whistler. It is unlikely that he painted the portrait without having Sargent's most artistically daring full-lengths in mind, as well. Velázquez's painterly realism was an essential source for all of these nineteenth-century painters and provided Chase, who was thoroughly familiar with the Spaniard's works, with inspiration for direct and dramatic portrait compositions featuring a controlled palette, sharp contrasts, and passages of painterly brilliance. The latter is particularly apparent in

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Chase's virtuoso description of the lace, and his nearly gestural suggestion of the trailing pink bow at Lydia Emmet's back rendered with impastoed whites and pinks and heavy red accents. The dress itself, a subtly delineated gown of striped black satin trimmed in lace in a deliberate revival style that was called "Van Dyckian," makes reference to the grand era of portraiture from which this work essentially derives.[2]

Regarding more contemporary sources for Chase's lively interest in full-length portraits during the 1890s, Edouard Manet's stark and broadly brushed Young Lady in 1866 (Woman with a Parrot), 1869, given to The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, by the collector Irwin Davis in 1889, may have provided a particularly sympathetic example. The imposing scale and physical presence of the figure, as well as the palpably broad passages of pink set against the dark brown background of the Manet have distinct resonance with Lydia Field Emmet. Among the most surprising features of Chase's portrait, however, is the pose, which observers have linked to Whistler's portrait of Maud Franklin entitled The Fur Jacket: Arrangement in Black and Brown, 1877 (Worcester Art Museum, Worcester, Massachusetts).[3] The poses are indeed similar: in each, the sitter's gaze is directed over her shoulder and her bent elbow pushes illusionistically into the viewer's space in a manner that suggests a certain disregard for formal address. The two works differ significantly in execution, however, with Lydia Field Emmet recalling the more lively Realist examples mentioned above. The unabashedly forward and foreshortened elbow, for example, is brushily modeled to an assertive pink point. The hands, too, are deftly described with sketchy touches of pinks and grays. The flash of pink fingers on the right hand, however, brings to mind such evocatively mannered portraits by Sargent as Madame Pailleron, 1879 (Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington,

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D.C.) and Dr. Pozzi at Home, 1881 (The Armand Hammer Collection, Los Angeles). Chase rendered the face with a brushy softness and slight vagueness typical of his own portraits without diminishing the expression of his young sitter's self-possession and independence.

After debuting at the Society of American Artists exhibition of 1892, Lydia Field Emmet was included in the display of American paintings at the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition of 1893, where it, interestingly, was hung on the same wall of the same gallery as Whistler's Arrangement in Black and Brown: The Fur Jacket.[4] The two portraits were exhibited together again in 1914 at the Worcester Art Museum; the Whistler had been purchased by that Museum in 1910, and the Chase (apparently back in the artist's hands after being lent to the Columbian Exposition by Emmet herself) was on loan to Worcester, through Martin Birnbaum, from March 21 to April 9 of 1914.[5]

Chase painted Emmet's portrait again in 1900 (Private Collection), completing on that occasion a striking bust-length likeness of the artist in a dark, high-collared dress and dramatic hat whose peaked brim casts the upper portion of her face in deep shadow. Using broad strokes and sharp highlights, Chase described the angular profile and strong jaw that suggest the will and determination evoked in the earlier full-length.

1. Emmet's life and career are documented in Martha J. Hoppin, The Emmets: A Family of Women Painters (Pittsfield, Massachusetts: Berkshire Museum, 1992).

2. The author is grateful to Patricia Mears, Assistant Curator of Costumes and Textiles, The Brooklyn Museum of Art, for offering her expertise with regard to Emmet's costume.

3. The comparison is drawn by Kathleen Pyne in Detroit Institute of Arts, The Quest for Unity: American Art Between World's Fairs, 1876-1893 (Detroit Institute of Arts, 1983), 97.

4. World's Columbian Exposition, Official Publications, Revised Catalogue: Department of Fine Arts (Chicago: W.B. Conkey Company, 1893), 56.

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5. Stephen B. Jareckie, Registrar, Worcester Art Museum, to Lenore Sundberg, Assistant Curator, April 8, 1975, Curatorial File, Department of American Art, Brooklyn Museum of Art.

PROVENANCE: The artist; to The Brooklyn Museum.

EXHIBITED:

Society of American Artists, New York, 1892, Fourteenth Annual Exhibition, cat. no. 40.

World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893, cat. no. 764.

Art Association of Indianapolis, John Herron Art Institute, 1909, A Collection of Paintings by William Merritt Chase, N.A., cat. no. 4.

Cincinnati Museum of Art, 1909, Special Exhibition of Oil Paintings by William M. Chase, N.A. of New York, cat. no. 4.

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Panama-Pacific International Exposition, San Francisco, 1915, cat. no. 3741.

The Brooklyn Museum, 1957, Face of America, cat. no. 68.

Akron Art Museum, Ohio, 1982, William Merritt Chase, Portraits, cat. p. 20.

Henry Art Gallery, University of Washington, Seattle, 1983, William Merritt Chase Retrospective, cat. p. 103.

The Detroit Institute of Arts, 1983, The Quest for Unity: American Art between World's Fairs, 1876-1893, cat. no. 35.

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John Singleton Copley (July 3, 1738-September 9, 1815)

Mrs. Alexander Cumming, née Elizabeth Goldthwait, later Mrs. John Bacon, 1770

Oil on canvas

30 3/16 x 25 inches, 76.7 x 63.5 cm.

Signed lower right (initials in monogram): "J S C p. Bost 1770"

22.84, Gift of Walter H. Crittenden

The ambitious John Singleton Copley, who contributed to the "modernization" of history painting at the turn of the eighteenth century, first established his reputation as America's finest colonial painter with a body of portraits executed in Boston before 1774. Copley's portrait Mrs. Alexander Cumming, along with his more ambitious and splendid likeness of her mother, Mrs. Ezekiel Goldthwait (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston), is one of a number of disarmingly direct and factual likenesses painted by the artist about 1770. Here, and in many of the American portraits considered to represent Copley's original stylistic achievement, he employed a sober, graduated light and probing illusionism that subdued the material finery to a state of earnest substantiality.

Elizabeth Cumming (b. 1733) was one of thirteen children of Ezekiel Goldthwait (1710-1782) and Elizabeth Lewis (1713-1794).[1] Her father, a wealthy North Boston merchant and moderate Whig until his espousal of Loyalism about 1774, held a particularly influential position in the economic life of the city as its town clerk and the registrar of deeds for Suffolk County from 1740 to 1776. At the age of thirty, on July 12, 1763, Elizabeth married the Reverend Alexander Cumming (1726-1763), whose tenure as the pastor of the Congregationalist Old South Church was abbreviated by his untimely death the following month.[2] She married for a second time in 1770 to the Reverend John Bacon, a Princeton graduate from Somerset County, Maryland, who in September of the following year assumed the late Mr. Cumming's position at the Old South Church.

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Bacon, too, was destined for a short stay there, however, for in January 1775 he was dismissed after a period of conflict among his parishioners over issues of dogma aggravated by partisan politics. The Bacons then moved to Stockbridge, Massachusetts, where Elizabeth died in 1821, one year after her husband.

According to the Copley scholar Jules Prown, the commission for Mrs. Elizabeth Cumming was part of a boom in patronage from residents of North Boston that Copley experienced during the period from 1768 to 1770.[3] His bill to the sitter in 1770, the year inscribed on the face of the painting, requests payment of £9.16 for each of three works listed under the year 1769--namely, her own portrait and those of her late husband's sister Mary Cumming MacWhorter and her husband, the Reverend Alexander MacWhorter (both in the collection of Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut).[4] The MacWhorters were apparently guests of Mrs. Cumming's in Boston at the time that they sat for Copley, prior to his completion of their hostess's portrait.[5] Throughout the 1760s Copley's depictions of demure, reserved women in conservative dress had provided a counterpoint for his more flamboyant likenesses, but their subjects were mature matrons rather than women the age of the Cumming and MacWhorter wives; the type was probably chosen for these sitters on the basis of their station as the wives of clerics. Both works are indicative of the increasingly restrained, tenebrous style with which the artist was experimenting prior to his period of work in New York in 1771.[6]

Not confined to an oval aperture within the canvas rectangle, Mrs. Alexander Cumming is a more complete half-length than Mrs. Alexander MacWhorter, in which the arms play a more prominent role. As in the MacWhorter portrait, however, the figure emerges from a deeply shadowed space to face the raking light that illuminates a plane of fabrics, lace, and ribbons and the almost lunar form of her turned head. The modeling of the face is delicately gradual, moving from her richly lit features to the nuanced shadow that envelops the left side. Copley relieved the shadow only beneath the line of her chin, where a milky film of paint implies a reflection of the light falling on her lace-covered

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breast and the ropes of small pearls at her neck. His subtle modulation of flesh is especially visible in the colorful transition from the brow to the lid of her left eye. The silvery dress, ribbons, and lace offer a restrained sample of Copley's excellence in the naturalistic description of fabrics. The gathered cuff of the left sleeve, for example, includes a rich variety of accidental folds and their reflections; and the right lace cuff, into which the viewer looks, comprises complex folds whose modeled surfaces and undersides convey the coherent effects of the light. In general, the laces are broadly painted and punctuated with design details in brighter white; and the sheer lace covering the breast is particularly thin and freely painted. This work provides an interesting counterpoint to the more worldly image of the sitter's mother. Copley portrayed Mrs. Goldthwait in an abundant setting of fine furniture, and placed before her a platter heaped with fine ripe fruits, which may function as an emblem of her great prolificness.

1. According to Jules David Prown, (John Singleton Copley, 2 vols. [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966], 75) the Goldthwaits were the only sitters from North Boston to have ordered large portraits.

2. Biographical information on Elizabeth Cumming is drawn from Barbara Neville Parker and Anne Bolling Wheeler, John Singleton Copley: American Portraits in Oil, Pastel, and Miniature with Biographical Sketches (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1938), 66-67.

3. Prown, John Singleton Copley, 74.

4. The original bill (Gratz Collection, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia) reveals that Copley's invoice to Mrs. Cummings included the price of two black frames (£2.8), probably for the MacWhorter portraits. Copley's bill to Elizabeth Cumming's father (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston) issued for the painter on July 1, 1771, by Henry Pelham, listed charges for the portraits of Goldthwait and his wife and "To a Black Frame for Mr. Cummings £1.8.0," for the painting under discussion here. The painting retains the original frame.

5. Both MacWhorter portraits bear a date of 1769; see Prown, John Singleton Copley, 222.

6. Ibid., 73.

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PROVENANCE: Descended through the family to Mrs. Elizabeth G. Colt, Pittsfield, Massachusetts, granddaughter of the sitter by 1873; to Miss Fanny A. Colt; to Walter Crittenden, New York, great-great-grandson of the sitter; to The Brooklyn Museum.

EXHIBITED:

The Brooklyn Museum, 1917, Early American Paintings, cat. no. 10.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1936-37, An Exhibition of Paintings by John Singleton Copley, cat. no. 29.

Palace of Fine Arts, San Francisco, 1940, Golden Gate International Exposition, cat. no. 1202.

Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, Old and New England, cat. no. 17.

The Brooklyn Museum, 1953, American Painting in The Brooklyn Museum Collection, cat. no. 5.

Davis and Long Company, New York, 1976, Masterpieces of American Painting from The Brooklyn Museum Collection, cat. no. 1. Traveled.

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Mrs. Sylvester Gardiner, née Abigail Pickman, formerly Mrs. William Eppes, circa 1772

Oil on canvas

50 7/16 x 40 inches (128.0 x 101.6 cm)

Unsigned

65.60, Dick S. Ramsay Fund

Copley's three-quarter-length portrait of the wealthy Boston matron Abigail Pickman Gardiner is distinguished by a fluid elegance and vernal palette that place it among his finest female portraits executed in America. The painting was probably executed about the time of the sitter's marriage to Boston landowner and London-trained physician Sylvester Gardiner (1708-1786) in 1772 and embodies the grander high-style alternative to more rigorously factual portraits including the artist's Mrs. Richard Skinner of 1772 (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston).

Abigail Pickman was born on October 30, 1733, to the Salem merchant and ship owner Colonel Benjamin Pickman and his wife, Love Rawlins.[1] She married for the first time on April 5, 1750, to William Eppes of Virginia, with whom she had three children. Eppes died on October 1, 1765, and seven years later, on April 30, 1772, she married the wealthy Gardiner (he had married for the first time, to Anne Gibbons, before Abigail Pickman was born), well known in Boston as a surgeon, apothecary, and land developer.[2] He was known as well for extravagant entertainments at his Dorchester home, which would be confiscated and destroyed during the Revolution.[3] Ardent Loyalists, the Gardiners fled Boston for Halifax in Nova Scotia when the conflict erupted in 1776. They eventually moved on to New York, from which point they departed for safe haven in London in 1778, leaving behind substantial property and land interests. On February 2 of that year, "family pictures" from the Gardiner home were seized by the Committee of Sequestration and delivered to their daughter, Abigail Whipple.[4] In May 1780 the

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Gardiners joined Mrs. Gardiner's daughter and her husband Richard Routh, formerly a collector of customs at Salem and Newfoundland, at their home in Poole, Dorsetshire. Before long, however, Mrs. Gardiner was troubled by a severe numbness in her limbs, for which she sought treatment in London and Bath before succumbing to her illness on November 4.[5] Her devoted brother Benjamin Pickman (1740-1819), himself a longtime resident of London, described her passing in a letter to their mother and paid poignant tribute to her virtues. He wrote:

> The many Friends which She had made in England . . . deeply regret the Loss of so amiable a Person, and doubtless, her numerous Friends in New-England will drop a Tear over the Grave of a Lady whose Beauteous Person, chearful [sic] Disposition and lively Understanding have been surpassed by Few who have fallen Victims to the Power of Death. . . . [B]ut few months ago She enjoyed to every outward Appearance the highest Degree of Health, [but] . . . a Disorder secret in its Method of Operation attacks her, and now She is numbered with the silent dead. . . .[6]

Copley was a likely choice for so socially prominent a patron; and previous ties to the artist existed as well, for he had painted Benjamin Pickman about 1758-61 (Collection of Edith Wetmore, Newport, Rhode Island). One of three possible occasions may have supplied the impetus for the commission. The first was the marriage of Mrs. Gardiner's daughter Abigail, who may have held the portrait from that time (or from the time of their departure in 1778) and with whom it remained in England after her mother's death and her father's return to America in the 1780s (see Provenance below). The sitter's own marriage in 1772 was the second likely occasion, and the third was her husband's sale of a parcel of property to Copley about 1773. In either of the last two cases, the commission would be linked to Copley's seated portrait of Sylvester Gardiner of circa 1772 (Private Collection). Gardiner would have wanted no lesser talent than Copley to portray his wife; and having perhaps received his own portrait in payment for an earlier property deal in 1770, he may have decided to arrange a second, similar transaction to acquire a pendant for his likeness.[7] The difference in the formats of the two works poses

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no problem in this regard, for Copley often adopted this exact combination of compositions in executing paired portraits for husbands and wives.[8]

In contrast to his portraits of bibbed and white-capped sitters, Mrs. Sylvester Gardiner is akin to such luxurious likenesses as Mrs. John Greene (Cleveland Museum of Art), who was portrayed in 1769 before a landscape backdrop, and wearing a loose-fitting, Romantic gown and strands of pearls in her hair. Copley continued to utilize this high-styled mode into the 1770s in such works as Mrs. John Stevens (Private Collection) while he contemporaneously employed the more conservative and detailed interior, seated type, which many consider more representative of his American works. Unlike the drapery in the two works just mentioned, however, the specific type of dress seen here resembles the "Turkish" style of robe that appears in a number of his portraits, most notably Mrs. Thomas Gage (Timken Art Gallery, San Diego), circa 1771.[9] As Paul Staiti notes, it is highly unlikely that Mrs. Gardiner or the more elegant Mrs. Gage owned a robe "à la turque," a manner of dress that was highly fashionable at English and French masquerades of the period but would have been considered improper in American society. These costumes were more likely Copley's inventions for sitters who aspired to the height of British fashion and the social status it implied.[10] Copley employed very similar attire in Mrs. Adam Babcock, circa 1774 (National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.), where it is rendered in the same vibrant rose color and bears the broadly painted diamond-shaped jewel that adorns Mrs. Gardiner's bodice. It is also interesting to note that he did not restrict this exotic manner of dress to young women or shapely ones (see also Mrs. Joseph Hooper, circa 1770-71 [The Baltimore Museum of Art]). Copley's record of Mrs. Gardiner's substantial figure would likely have been read as evidence of her social station and material wealth.[11]

Mrs. Sylvester Gardiner does share with some of the less romanticized portraits an attention to the expressive potential of the sitter's hands, which reveal Copley's ability to achieve anatomical illusionism in a completely fluid manner. Traces of white impasto

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highlight the nails and joints and act as a counterpoint to the rich reddish shadows and the underside of the left wrist, which offers a broad reflection of the pink drapery beneath it. Throughout the figure and particularly in the description of the gown, Copley combined intuition and calculated naturalism to a remarkable degree. The white sleeve, for example, is a maze of liquid, transparent folds of blended grays and whites. The fabrics comprise an unexpectedly rich pastel palette; they include the light green under-dress, pink outer robe with its aqua lining, visible only in the folds at the bodice where it captures a reflected light. The fluidity is more controlled in the description of the head (excepting such passages as the ear), where the careful meeting of flesh tones and darker browns and grays conveys palpable weight and shadow. The landscape to the left of the canvas is delineated with great breadth.

1. The sitter's biographical information is drawn from Benjamin Pickman, The Diary and Letters of Benjamin Pickman (1740-1819) of Salem, Massachusetts, with a Biographical Sketch and Genealogy of the of the Pickman Family by George Francis Dow (Newport, Rhode Island: n.p. ,1928), 78.

2. Gardiner was the proprietor of one-half of the large Plymouth Purchase on the Kennebec River in Maine and devoted much of his energy to settling the area. See Lorenzo Sabine, Biographical Sketches of Loyalists of the American Revolution with an Historical Essay 2nd ed. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1864; reprint, Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1979), 459 (page citations are to the reprint edition).

3. "Sylvester Gardiner," Dictionary of American Biography vol. 7/8 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946), 139-40. Among Gardiner's other property that was confiscated by George Washington during the siege of Boston was his stock of medicines, dry goods, paints, and dyes; see Sabine, Biographical Sketches, 460.

4. Gardiner's name appeared in the "Proscription and Banishment Act" in 1778; see ibid., 460. With his financial losses estimated at £43,000, the British government awarded a per annum allowance; see Palmer 1984, 307. The Order of Sequestration (in the Collection of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston) is cited in Carrie Rebora et al., John Singleton Copley in America (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1995), 312.

5. Benjamin Pickman, "Letter from Benjamin Pickman to his Mother," November 10, 1780, Pickman, Diary and Letters, 119.

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6. Ibid., 120. Copley also may have purchased painting supplies at Gardiner's apothecary shop. See Sabine, Biographical Sketches, 460, on the nature of Gardiner's inventory.

7. Prown has suggested that the Gardiner's portrait may have been painted in payment for property; see Prown, John Singleton Copley, 1:63.

8. Ibid., 72.

9. Others include Mrs. Joseph Hooper (Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Blaustein, Pikesville, Maryland).

10. For further discussion of Turkish costume, see Paul Staiti, "Character and Class," in Rebora et al. John Singleton Copley in America, 67-68.

11. Ibid., 56-57.

PROVENANCE: Descended through the family from the sitter to her daughter, Mrs. Richard Routh, Poole, Dorset, England; Lieutenant Colonel A. E. Routh, Crewkerne, Somerset, England; through Sotheby's, Mrs. Elizabeth Norman and Other Properties Sale, May 15, 1963, to Julius A. Weitzner Gallery; M. Knoedler and Company, New York; to The Brooklyn Museum.

EXHIBITED: None.

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William Dunlap (February 19, 1766-September 20, 1839)

Robert Snow, 1831

Oil on panel

33 3/16 x 26 7.16 inches (85.2 x 67.8 cm)

Signed lower right: "P[resident?] R. Snow/ W Dunlap p[t?]

97.9, Gift of The Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences

William Dunlap, whose efforts as a painter were of uneven quality, earned the appellations Father of the American Theater and American Vasari as a result of his skills as a playwright, theatrical manager, diarist, and indispensable historian of American art and theater. The first painting commissioned and purchased by the Apprentice's Library Association, the forerunner of the present-day Brooklyn Museum, was William Dunlap's modest likeness of the association's first president, the Brooklyn philanthropist Robert Snow (d. 1833).

Snow was a benign, benevolent, and highly moralistic character who was known first and foremost for his good work in the service of the Brooklyn Sunday School Union Society, which he helped to found in 1816.[1] His stature in Brooklyn was such that the historian Henry Stiles offered a lengthy profile of Snow prepared by the latter's close friend General Robert Nichols--one of a number of sketches of "'foster-fathers' of the infant village of Brooklyn"--in the first edition of his history of the city.[2] The narrative describes Snow's early life as an Irish immigrant who first kept a shoe shop near the corner of Reed and Elm streets in New York and subsequently, with his wife Susan Meir, ran a small grocery until he could no longer suffer dispensing alcoholic beverages. Snow accepted a job as a clerk for the merchant John Pintard, with whose help he moved on to Kip's potash store, and eventually, about 1788, became a potash inspector.[3] He finally opened his own potash store on Front Street near Broad with John Brower and

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established his residence in one of three houses he erected on property to the rear of A. T. Stewart's (1803-1876) store on lower Broadway.

About 1815 Snow, who enjoyed a thriving business for much of his life, began to turn his profits over to the cause of social uplift in which he believed so strenuously. In addition to his role in the formation of the Sabbath School, for which he gained the affectionate nickname Poppy Snow, in 1823 he helped conceive and establish the Apprentice's Library Association for the education of mechanics and tradesmen.[4] The Library Association was formally organized at a meeting held at Stephenson's Tavern on August 28, when Snow was elected president by 180 member-supporters. By the following November donated books were being lent to apprentices between the hours of four and nine P.M. on Sundays from the premises at 143 Fulton Street.[5] On July 4, 1825, Snow presided over the dramatic placing of a cornerstone by the celebrated General Lafayette (1757-1834) at Cranberry and Henry Streets to mark the location of the Library Association's new home.[6] The Apprentice's Library opened in the building's basement on May 3, 1826, and the following November a free reading room was established, offering services to borrowers Mondays through Saturdays from 9 A.M. to 10 P.M.[7] A savings bank for adult patrons was installed the following year.

In his later years Snow experienced a financial downfall, owing in part to the demands pressed upon him by his adopted children.[8] Coupled with a prolonged illness, his straitened circumstances left him dependent on the charity of others.[9] The welfare of the Library Association was faltering as well by the early thirties, but it was nevertheless at this time that Snow's colleagues chose to honor the absent president with a portrait.[10]

Dunlap apparently was not the first choice of the administration, according to the minutes of the May 21, 1831, meeting, at which it was resolved that "Mr. Fordham be employed to paint the portrait of our President Robert Snow."[11] The change in plans was made rapidly, however, as is indicated by the approval of payment to Dunlap in the amount of forty dollars at a meeting held on the following August 20.[12]

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The portrait reveals Dunlap's artistic weaknesses as much as it achieves an expression of Snow's benignity, and there is indeed some poignancy in their contact at a time when each was in the last decade of his life, troubled by ill health and financial woes.[13] The portrayal conforms to Nichols's description of Snow as "small of stature; always dressing with . . . the costume and the fashions, which prevailed in his earlier manhood"[14] and exhibits the artist's characteristically flawed drawing. The sitter is placed before a reddish brown backdrop on the skewed form of a red upholstered chair in a manner that effectively does away with the lower body. The bulky form of the open book that defines the spatial foreground is equally awkward. The head is relatively more pleasing in the fluidity of the painted surface, on which tans and pinks are loosely mixed, and which is accented with strong pink and white highlights and freely used, broad gray outlines to convey shadow. Perhaps in keeping with Snow's infirmity or the modest price that Dunlap was paid, the portrait appears hastily done and has suffered since from abrasion.

Snow held his position as president of the Apprentice's Library Association until January 1832 and died March 30 the following year. The organization's financial problems worsened, and by 1836 the Association had little choice but to sell the building to the city of Brooklyn, pack the books, and store them away. One must assume that Snow's portrait endured the same fate or perhaps was held in trust by one of his colleagues until the Association was revived, at first temporarily in the Lyceum Building on Washington Street and then permanently, when the building was purchased and given to the Library Association by Augustus Graham in 1842.[15] Ownership of the painting was subsequently transferred to the Brooklyn Institute in 1843.

A portrait that appears to be a relatively faithful, full-size copy of Dunlap's portrait of Snow was included in the important Thomas B. Clarke sale of paintings in 1919 and was purchased by George H. Ainslie; it was owned by Erlich Galleries, New York, in 1930.[16]

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1. The society, established by a group of Methodists on the model of a like organization in New York, provided free religious, moral, and academic education on the Sabbath. Children of color were separated from white children, and teachers belonged to the Dutch Reformed, Episcopal, Methodist, and Presbyterian churches; see Henry R. Stiles, History of the City of Brooklyn: Including the Old Town and Village of Brooklyn, the Town of Bushwick, and the Village and City of Williamsburgh, 3 vols. (Brooklyn: Published by subscription, 1867-70), 2:23. Snow was one of seven members of the Society's board of directors; see Henry Reed Stiles, ed., History of Kings County, Including the City of Brooklyn, N.Y. 2 vols. (Brooklyn: W.W. Munsell & Co., 1884), 2:1092.

2. See Stiles, History of the City of Brooklyn, 2: 20-25. Robert Nichols served for many years as secretary of the Apprentice's Library Association.

3. Snow advertised his services as a potash inspector as late as 1825 in Spooner's Brooklyn Directory. At the time his residence was at 10 Sands Street in Brooklyn and his office was in Manhattan.

4. The Library Association was instigated by William Wood, a philanthropist who had initiated the Mercantile Library Association in New York several years before. See Stiles, History of Kings County, 2: 1301.

5. Ibid.

6. Stiles (History of the City of Brooklyn, 2: 24) includes an anecdote recounting that Snow's few words on the occasion were modest, pious, and directed primarily to the children; and that after the ceremony he conducted the children to the Methodist church rather than joining the boisterous parade that escorted Lafayette to his point of departure.

7. Duncan Littlejohn, "Records of the Brooklyn Institute 1823-1873," 1879, typescript, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives, 7.

8. Snow, whose own seven children had died at early ages, took in numerous foster children. He had also lost his New York house and property to fire; see Stiles, History of the City of Brooklyn, 2: 21-22.

9. In his account Nichols offers several sentimental anecdotes citing Snow's proud resistance to charity; see ibid., 2: 22.

10. Littlejohn quotes records of the meeting held on January 22, 1831: "In the midst of gloomy financial forebodings it was announced that the health of President Snow had entirely failed. . . . The directors resolve at this meeting to have a portrait of their first president." See Littlejohn, "Records of The Brooklyn Institute," 9.

11. Records of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences, minutes, vol. 1, May 21, 1831, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives.

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12. Ibid., vol. 1, August 20, 1831.

13. Each also possessed an assertive morality and reverence for the Bible that could not have escaped the other's notice, though Dunlap was less reverent regarding the practices of organized churches and Snow may not have approved of the artist's link to the theater. Canary discusses Dunlap's religious politics; see Robert H. Canary, William Dunlap (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1970) 21, 37.

14. Stiles, History of the City of Brooklyn, 2: 24.

15. It is possible that the portrait was moved from the Lyceum Building back to the old Library Building twice, as were the books, during the four-year period from 1838 to 1842. See Littlejohn, "Records of the Brooklyn Institute," 11-12.

16. See 50 Early American Portraits Collected by Thomas B. Clarke, (New York: American Art Association, 1919) cat. no. 1. Information on the copy is derived from the Photo Archive, Frick Art Reference Library, New York, photo no. 121-7e.

PROVENANCE: The Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences; to The Brooklyn Museum.

EXHIBITED:

The Brooklyn Institute,1843, Second Annual Exhibition of the Brooklyn Institute, cat. no. 30.

The Brooklyn Institute, 1844, Third Annual Exhibition of the Brooklyn Institute, cat. no. 105.

The Brooklyn Institute, 1845, Fourth Annual Exhibition of the Brooklyn Institute, cat. no. 149.

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Thomas Eakins (July 25, 1844-June 25, 1916)

William Rush Carving His Allegorical Figure of the Schuylkill River, 1908

Oil on canvas

36 x 47 7/8 inches (91.3 x 121.5 cm)

Signed lower center on scroll: "EAKINS 1908"

39.461, Dick S. Ramsay Fund

Viewed as an idiosyncratic and controversial personality during his own lifetime, Thomas Eakins pursued his figure and portrait paintings largely independent of commissions and maintained an intense commitment to a probing Realist aesthetic that was unmatched by his peers.

One of only three finished paintings in which Eakins represented a female nude, William Rush Carving His Allegorical Figure of the Schuylkill River is a reprise of an earlier version of the subject completed in 1876-77 and comprises a culminating visual statement of the artist's passionate advocacy for the academic use of the nude. In this significantly altered treatment, Eakins intensified his personal identification with the early nineteenth-century Philadelphia woodcarver and sculptor William Rush (1756-1833) by casting Rush in a likeness closer to his own.

The primary legacy of Eakins's Parisian training in the atelier of Jean-Léon Gérôme was an intense dedication to sketching and painting from the nude. Throughout the decades following his return to Philadelphia, work from the nude model remained central to his artistic practice and constituted the nearly obsessive focus of his teaching (which by 1876 included an unpaid position as an anatomy demonstrator at the

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Pennsylvania Academy of Design). In 1876 he undertook his first version of William Rush Carving His Allegorical Figure of the Schuylkill River, 1877 (Philadelphia Museum of Art), probably inspired in part by the paintings in which his Parisian teacher Gérôme employed a displayed nude as the primary focus. Eakins deliberately cast his work in a definitively American idiom, however, associating the nude model with an artist whose activities resonated with his own and offering a veristic alternative to the slickly idealized French nudes to which he objected.

Eakins clearly identified with Rush, a prominent Philadelphian who had worked as a carver of ship ornaments and earned accolades for more ambitious wood sculptures that graced a number of sites in the city by the early 1820s.[1] His choice of Rush must be seen in the context of the Colonial Revival, which reached a lively pitch in the year of the Philadelphia Centennial (1876) and inspired Eakins to paint a number of other colonial genre subjects (including The Courtship, circa 1878 [The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco], an image of a young man in eighteenth-century dress courting a young woman at her spinning wheel). More important for Eakins, however, was the fact that Rush was known to have used a live model in creating the standing female figure in his Nymph and Bittern, or Allegorical Figure of the Schuylkill River, circa 1809, now known in an 1872 bronze cast (Commissioners of Fairmont Park, Philadelphia) of the wooden original, a fountain figure commissioned by the Watering Committee of the Philadelphia City Council for installation in Centre Square, near the Neoclassical pumphouse designed along with the new water system by the architect Benjamin Latrobe (1807-1878). Eakins was familiar with the original sculpture, which had been moved to the site of more

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improved waterworks at Fairmont Park in 1825, as well as with the bronze replica that had been installed at another location in the park.

In his first version of the Rush subject, Eakins represented Rush at work on the statue in his studio and chose as his focus the nude figure of the model, flanked by a chair bearing her clothes and her modest chaperone. The model stands facing the artist in a strong raking light and holds a heavy volume on her shoulder to simulate the position of the nymph bearing the large water bird. The paraphernalia of Rush's studio provides a monotone backdrop for the dramatically spotlighted figure and mass of clothing and undergarments on the graceful form of the Chippendale chair. Eakins's execution of the painting followed a lengthy process of preparatory study, including his completion of small-scale wax models of the other works by Rush that appear in the background (the models are in the collection of the Philadelphia Museum of Art) and careful study of aspects of period dress.[2]

While he was determined to achieve historical accuracy in the details of the setting, Eakins nevertheless took great liberty in the depiction of the model as nude; there is no documentation and little likelihood that Louisa Vanuxem, Rush's own model for the statue and the daughter of a prominent Philadelphia merchant, posed undraped.[3] Eakins based his beautifully realistic figure on careful study of his own model Anna W. Williams, a schoolteacher and friend of his sister's, in a deliberate attempt to convey his belief that even the most proper woman--a lady of Philadelphia's Federal period or a contemporary schoolteacher, both types quite the opposite of a professional model--could engage in the academic practice of posing nude without sullying her reputation. Eakins, who felt at liberty to prompt his own acquaintances to pose undraped for him, thus

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invented a historical precedent for his own actions; and in a statement written at the time that the painting was completed, he wrote, "Rush chose for his model, the daughter of his friend and colleague in the water committee, Mr. James Vanuxem, an esteemed merchant."[4] In response to Eakins's work, the critic (and Eakins's friend) Earl Shinn (1837-1886) commented, "The painter of the fountain seemed to have a lesson to deliver--the moral, namely, that good sculpture, even decorative sculpture, can only be produced by the most uncompromising, unconventional study and analysis from life, and to be pleased that he could prove his meaning by an American instance of the Rococo age of 1820."[5] Eakins thus conflated his personal mythology with that of William Rush and simultaneously offered a corrective to his French training in his description of the model in naturalistic detail.

By the time that Eakins returned to the subject in the 1908 Brooklyn version in 1908, he had weathered his scandalous dismissal from the Pennsylvania Academy in 1886 for the use of a nude male model in a mixed class; a similar scandal at the Drexel Institute in 1895; and, in 1897, a favorite niece's suicide, for which his own inappropriate behavior--including her posing nude for him--was blamed. In the course of these devastating events, even loyal students like Alice Barber Stephens (1858-1932), whom he had encouraged to pose nude for art-school colleagues (and for himself), accused Eakins of impropriety in order to defend her own character.[6] He nevertheless remained confirmed in his practice of working from the nude throughout the controversies and in 1908 was compelled to revisit the William Rush subject with renewed zeal and on a notably larger scale. In Brooklyn's 1908 version, however, he created a significantly

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different composition that is at once less historicized and less synthetic in form and narrative.

Perhaps Eakins's most conspicuous alteration in the later version was his omission of the pile of period clothing that dominates the foreground of the earlier painting. This was the very element in the 1876-77 version to which a reviewer for The New York Times had objected at the time: "What ruins the picture is much less the want of beauty in the nude model . . . than the presence in the foreground of the clothes of that young woman, cast carelessly over a chair. This gives the shock which makes one think about the nudity--and at once the picture becomes improper!"[7] That ommission and the absence of the two Chippendale chair allows the 1908 version to appear more up-to-date, as did Eakins's replacement of the genteel and elegantly dressed companion in the early canvas with the seated figure of the African-American woman in the 1908 version. The latter individual might easily have witnessed Eakins's own sessions with nude models in his Chestnut Street studio. The figure of the sculptor is also less emphatically historical in comparison to the more deliberately costumed figure of Rush in the earlier canvas. While Eakins retained the shapes of Rush's sculptures in the background-- on the worktable the allegorical figure Schuylkill Freed, circa 1828, and at the far right, George Washington, 1814 (Commissioners of Fairmont Park, Philadelphia)--which are deliberately anachronistic, given the 1809 date of the figure that Rush is portrayed in the act of carving--they are absorbed into a shallow frieze-like arrangement of vague forms that include the sculptor's tools.

Here the emphatic focus of the painting is the strong, sculptural nude that stands erect and reaches nearly the entire height of the canvas. The figure is indeed somewhat

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out of scale with the rest of the pictorial elements and is the most firmly modeled form in the image; the only other element that approaches its solidity is the carved scroll in the foreground, whose volutes mimic the shape of the model's buttocks. In this regard it is interesting to note that Eakins here described the model in a raking light, which strikes the side facing away from the sculptor, where it would have been of little assistance to him as he carved. He employed particularly heavy and schematic shadows in his description of the back, buttocks, and legs, and treated the shaded side of the neck in a similar manner, allowing the form to be absorbed by the shape of the shadow. The other two figures are more broadly described, and the background elements are so loosely delineated that they take on a sketchlike quality.

Eakins completed at least three preparatory oil sketches for the Brooklyn painting: a small study for the figure of the black chaperone (National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.); a similarly broad sketch of the figure of Rush (Kennedy Galleries, New York) carving in much the same position that he appears in the finished painting; and a study for the entire composition in which he established the strong lighting of the model.[8] While the bandana-clad figure of the black chaperone appears oddly diminutive in the latter study, the carving of the nymph appears more in scale with the model.

Eakins sent the Brooklyn version of the William Rush subject to the jury of the 1908 Carnegie Institute annual exhibition, which rejected the canvas in favor of his accompanying submission, the portrait Reverend James P. Turner (The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri).[9]

Eakins returned to the Rush subject one more time about 1908 in a canvas that was even more dramatically reduced than the Brooklyn painting, and which brought to a

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climax his identification with Rush and his emphatic attachment to the nude model to a climax. In this third version, he reduced the composition to three elements: the female nude, now fully frontal; the sculptor, cast in Eakins's own bulky form and described in the act of assisting the model down from her pedestal; and the carved scroll, a large and prominent form rising in the foreground plane. Here Eakins finally represented the female nude with complete directness (including the pubic hair, which was strictly forbidden in the academic tradition), fulfilling the promise that he made to his father decades earlier in a letter written from Paris after a visit to the Salon: "When a man paints a naked woman he gives her less than poor Nature did. I can conceive of few circumstances wherein I would have to paint a woman naked, but if I did I would not mutilate her for double the money. She is the most beautiful thing there is--except a naked man."[10] In the third version, Eakins turned the model, in all her anatomical correctness, toward the viewer; through Rush's persona he made physical contact with her before the viewer's gaze, and helped her to leave that space set apart for artistic observation and to enter his own. It was his most deliberate expression of his personal and professional preoccupation with nude models, and in a sense it comprised a stubborn retort to the many accusations of impropriety in his dealings with them. His loyal student Charles Bregler once quoted Eakins's direction to his class: "Feel the model. A sculptor when he is finishing has his hand almost continually on the model."[11]

1. Elizabeth Johns provides a detailed historiography of Rush's career in the nineteenth century and emphasizes Eakins's role in reviving interest in Rush's production; see Elizabeth Johns, Thomas Eakins: The Heroism of Modern Life (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983). In each of the William Rush subjects, however, the greater physicality of the sculptor's practice provided Eakins an apt metaphor for his passionate artistic attachment to the nude model.

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2. Eakins also visited the neighborhood of Rush's former studio on Front Street and spoke to several individuals who could still recall it; and he made studies after drawings in a sketchbook by Rush in order to design the scrollwork and schematic working drawings that appear on the walls of the studio. See Lloyd Goodrich, Thomas Eakins, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), 1: 146-47. Kathleen Foster reviews Eakins's preparatory, documentary studies in Thomas Eakins Rediscovered (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997).

3. Quoted in Goodrich, Thomas Eakins, 1: 146. Goodrich has noted that no documentary evidence supports Eakins's portrayal of Louisa Vanuxem posing in the nude. See ibid., 1: 147.

4. Ibid., 2: 146.

5. Shinn 1979, as quoted in Darrel Sewell, Thomas Eakins: Artist of Philadelphia (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1982), 48.

6. Kathleen A. Foster and Cheryl Leibold, Writing About Eakins: The Manuscripts in Charles Bregler's Collection (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989), 75-76.

7. New York Times, March 28, 1878, as cited in Gordon Hendricks, "Eakins's William Rush Carving the Allegorical Statue of the Schuylkill," Art Quarterly 31 (1968): 394.

8. A detailed list of studies for all the versions of the subject is included in Hendricks, "Eakins's William Rush," locations for a number of the works are outdated.

9. Goodrich, Thomas Eakins. 2: 245.

10. Thomas Eakins to Benjamin Eakins, May 9, 1868; as quoted in Lloyd Goodrich, Thomas Eakins. 2 vols. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), vol. 1, p. 28.

11. Charles Bregler, "Thomas Eakins as a Teacher," Arts 17 (March 1931), 384.

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Wyatt Eaton (May 6, 1849-June 7, 1896)

William Cullen Bryant, 1878

Oil on canvas

24 1/8 x 20 1/8 inches (61.2 x 51.2 cm)

Signed upper left: "Wyatt Eaton 1878"

99.1, Gift of William T. Evans

While he was not a prolific artist, Wyatt Eaton gained a substantial reputation in the late nineteenth century as an intimate and follower of the well-known French painter Jean-François Millet. Wyatt Eaton's portrait of the elderly American poet and Evening Post editor William Cullen Bryant was the first in a series of portraits of literary men commissioned from Eaton in 1877 by Richard Watson Gilder for reproduction in his Scribner's Monthly Magazine. While Eaton later recalled that he looked forward to painting such writers as Emerson more than Bryant, whose likeness had been taken so often,[1] the portrait became a well-recognized image of the poet in the last year of his life, and one of the best-known paintings of Eaton's career.

Eaton received Gilder's commission in the winter of 1877-78, at the close of his first year in New York, following his studies in Paris and Barbizon. According to his recollections, the impression of his first meeting with the eighty-five-year-old Bryant on a Sunday afternoon at Gilder's house on Sixteenth Street was the one that informed the portrait: "Bryant came from the back parlor to the front, rather tall and gaunt, high-shouldered, his whole figure somewhat detached from his white, bushy head. The color of his face was fresh, owing perhaps to his having just finished dinner, or having had a nap; for the habitual color of his face was bleached. But I could not free myself from the memory of the ruddy color, and put too much in a painted portrait."[2] Bryant began sitting for Eaton on successive Monday mornings in the latter's studio, despite the inconvenience

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that four flights of stairs posed for the elderly poet. Eaton recalled that he began the likeness with a crayon sketch on rough, warm-toned watercolor paper and photographed the drawing after each sitting in order to preserve the intermediate stages and to have a document on which to rely in Bryant's absence.[3] A drawing owned by The Huntington Library, Pasadena, California, appears to be a final sketch.

Eaton found Bryant to be a difficult sitter in that he was an overpowering presence and very formal, and he relied on Gilder to engage the poet in conversation during the sittings. Interestingly, in a letter to Gilder written some months earlier on September 17, 1877, at the end of a summer visit to Philipsburg, he bemoaned the shortcomings of portrait work and commented, "I find myself working under particular disadvantages in painting the portrait of a person with whom I am not in sympathy . . . [but] the difficulty might be overcome by having a friend of the sitter to do all the entertaining."[4] Eaton noted that on occasion Bryant absentmindedly launched into a recitation of poetry "in a ponderous, sonorous voice, like the rumbling from a deep cave."[5] At the tenth and last sitting, he began the oil, devoting his attention primarily to painting the hair and the beard. His goal was to remain faithful to the original sketch, which he felt was an uncharacteristic view of Bryant but one that "was getting most directly at the man." Eaton wrote, "with the beautifully formed head and face, the long white hair mingling with the flowing beard, there was no lack of the pictorial element."[6]

For critics accustomed to such portraits as Daniel Huntington's highly detailed and conventionally realistic William Cullen Bryant (The Brooklyn Museum of Art, 01.1507) Eaton's portrait must have appeared brusque and heavy-handed in comparison. In his review of the Society of American Artists exhibition in 1878, the New-York Tribune critic, Clarence Cook, described Eaton's silhouette of the head against a "black background" as "surprisingly dark in tone."[7] Clearly revealing Eaton's devotion to the somber tones and vigorous manner of his Barbizon mentors, the portrait is an expressively tenebrous image in which Bryant's ruddy features and white beard emerge

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from shadow in the form of densely impastoed highlights. Despite the breadth of his application and a composition devoid of outlines, Eaton was remarkably successful in suggesting the naturalistic appearance of Bryant's aging features in strong raking light. This is particularly true in his description of Bryant's eyes, which reveal a penetrating gaze though they are just barely formed behind the almost mask-like highlights comprising the brows, nose, and cheeks. The sitter's left side of the face dissolves completely into shadow, and the torso is suggested only through the deeper shadow of the shoulder area and the suggestion of rough, white shirtfront beneath the painterly veil of beard.

In the engraving after the portrait by the highly respected printmaker Timothy Cole--reproduced in the August 1878 issue of Scribner's Monthly Magazine as the frontispiece for an article on Bryant--the effect of the disembodied head was exaggerated. The following year it was nonetheless noted in The Art Journal that the likeness was described by Bryant's closest friends as "the best portrait of him ever produced";[8] and while criticism of the engraving's "indistinctness" was cited in the same journal in 1879, the author (probably George Sheldon) defended the portrait, saying, "[Eaton] is an enthusiastic student of nature, particularly of those choice moods when she does not stare the student in the face; he apprehends the function of art as an interpreter of emotion, and he avails himself of the mechanical means that suit the purpose in hand."[9]

The engraving, subsequently reproduced in the American Art Review in 1880, La Gravure sur bois en Amérique in 1881, and American Art and American Art Collections in 1889, continued to promote the portrait. The painting was purchased by the New York businessman and influential American collector William T. Evans by 1898 and probably before. Evans, who was notable for patronizing the new generation of living American artists, sat for Eaton for a portrait in 1889 (National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.); and he also purchased from Eaton a number of the latter's most important figure subjects, including Ariadne, 1888 (presented by

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Evans to the National Museum of American Art), and Reverie.[10] At the time that Evans presented William Cullen Bryant to the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences in 1899, the Collector and Art Critic noted, "It is painted with that free and individual touch which has been a noticeable point in the several portraits which Mr. Eaton has painted of famous literary men.[11]

1. Wyatt Eaton, "Recollections of American Poets," Century Magazine 42 (October 1902), 843.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., 844.

4. Wyatt Eaton to Richard Watson Gilder, September 17, 1877, Richard Watson Gilder Papers, Manuscript Division, New York Public Library.

5. Eaton, "Recollections of American Poets," 844.

6. Ibid.

7. C.C. [Clarence Cook], "American Art" (Letter to the Editor), New-York Tribune, March 30, 1878, 6.

8. "Jasper F. Cropsey, Horace W. Robbins, and Wyatt Eaton," Art Journal (New York) 5 (1879): 80.

9. "Sketches and Studies VIII: From the Portfolio of Wyatt Eaton, J. G. Brown, A. F. Bellows, A. T. Bricher, and R. M. Shurtleff," Art Journal (New York) 6 (1880): 369.

10. For information on Evans's activities as a patron and a list of many of the works in his collection, see William H. Truettner, "William T. Evans, Collector of American Paintings," American Art Journal 3 (Fall 1971): 50-79.

11. "Art Notes," Collector and Art Critic 1 (July 1, 1899): 71.

PROVENANCE: William T. Evans, Montclair, New Jersey, by 1898; to the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences.

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Francis Guy (1760-August 12, 1820)

Winter Scene in Brooklyn, circa 1819-20

Oil on canvas

57 13/16 x 73 7/8 inches (148.2 x 189.4 cm)

Inscribed on sign on fence: "To be Seen/ A View/ [illegible]/ Brooklyn/ By/ Guy/ [illegible]"

97.13, Gift of The Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences

From the time it was first exhibited in 1820 at the Shakespeare Gallery in New York, with eighty of his other paintings, Guy's topographical "Brooklyn Snow Piece," (so dubbed by the press), a glimpse of the heart of early Brooklyn, was regarded as a marvel of atmospheric effect and engrossing factual detail. The painting was the greatest achievement of the last period of Guy's career, during his residence in Brooklyn from 1817 until his death. The painting is now about two feet narrower than originally, owing to fire damage that occurred in the late nineteenth century. The missing details are known today through period prints and photographs (discussed below).

Though it remains unclear when Guy began the picture, he probably completed much of it during the winter of 1819-20, just months before his last exhibition opened.[1] Where he worked on the painting was clearly established in both the press reports on the exhibition and a handbill on the "Brooklyn Snow Piece" issued shortly after Guy's death on August 12, while the exhibition was still running. One lengthy description published in the Columbian in late May began: "The painting is on a large scale, say eight or nine feet long, and about five feet high. It is a winter snow scene, taken from Guy's paint room window in Front Street, Brooklyn."[2] The report continued: "As to the view in general, as some perhaps would term it, the composition of the picture, seems as if it had been contrived and formed for the pencil; for although the painter has a view upon three

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different streets, not two buildings are to be seen alike, either in size, shape or color. . . ."[3] Guy himself contrived to a certain extent in his arrangement of the scene, greatly accentuating the curve of Front Street in order to bring the houses along its outer edges into view; and he altered the angle of James Street (the second receding street from the left, then a narrow passage) to accommodate a broader wedge of houses. Guy's goal in this process may be suggested by the comments of the Columbian critic, who pointed out that "the stables, barn and old back buildings [including a slaughterhouse] of Mr. Titus stand well contrasted with the handsome buildings of Messrs. Sands, Graham, and Birdsall, &c."[4] Guy indeed may have intended to contrast the fine, new brick residence of Augustus Graham[5] (formerly at the far left) with the "old-fashioned," sprawling Dutch barnyard of Abiel Titus, which occupies much of the scene's center. Despite Guy's adjustments, the "Brooklyn Snow Piece" continued to be touted for its accuracy of detail as the century progressed. Henry R. Stiles, the authoritative historian of nineteenth-century Brooklyn, testified in his History of the City Brooklyn (1864) that "Guy's 'Snow Scene,' representing the most important and compact portion of Brooklyn as it stood in 1820, will forever be invaluable as exhibiting the architectural character of the village at that period; and in some degree for half a century. It was taken from a second story window of the artist's residence, the middle one . . . of the three Fisher houses."[6]

Walt Whitman, no less an authority on early Brooklyn, added to the painting's lore when he quoted "an old residenter" on the subject of Guy's working method--a process that has not been substantiated, "A position and direction were fixed upon, looking out of a window if possible, and when the place to be pictures was well conned and determined, Guy would construct a large rough frame and fix it in the window, or in such a position that it enclosed in its view whatever he wished to portray--and outside of the frame all was shut off or darkened. He would then rapidly sketch his outline . . . ."[7] Although Whitman recommended the painting primarily for its antiquarian interest (he described it as "literal portrait . . . of a thriving semi-cluster of houses in the depth of

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winter, with driving carts, sleighs, travelers, ladies, gossips, negroes [there were slaves here in those days], cattle, dogs, wheelbarrows, poultry, etc. . . . "), he perpetuated the tendency to praise the perspective and rendering of the sky.[8]

The figures themselves appear to have been the particular marvel, comprising individuals readily recognized by many viewers, if contemporaneous reports are to be believed. The Columbian critic wrote, "As to the likenesses introduced, most of them are very striking, and the accuracy with which their faces are painted (the small size of the figure considered) is wonderful."[9] At the center of the scene is Abiel Titus himself, feeding his chickens, and what was described as "a good likeness of his cow."[10] Though the important, conversing pair of Augustus Graham and his neighbor Joshua Sands were lost (along with their houses) with the left edge of the painting, two identified pairs remain at the left side of the canvas: the joiner Benjamin Meeker, holding a carpenter's square (his shop, with an ovoid sign, is on the corner behind him), and Judge John Garrison; and further right, Thomas Birdsall, proprietor of the light-colored home and hardware store at the right, with the merchandise hanging around the door, and Jacob Hicks, proprietor of a woodyard, who holds a plucked goose.[11] According to tradition, the subjects were willing participants in Guy's project. Stiles recounts that according to Thomas Birdsall, "Guy, as he painted, would sometimes call out of the window, to his subjects, as he caught sight of them on their customary ground, to stand still, while he put in the characteristic strokes."[12] Guy included a number of African American Brooklynites, who, Stiles tells us, lived primarily in the small houses on the narrow stretch of James Street. Two were identified by name, Samuel Foster, atop Birdsall's chimney, and Titus's servant Jeff, heading to the well with a pail. Unidentified black figures included the wood sawyer, the coal shoveler, and the man who has slipped on the ice below the well.

Viewers were not immune to Guy's more painterly effects. The Columbian reviewer wrote, "The sky is grand--a bright glow of warmth in the east is finely

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contrasted by a cold, dark towering cloud in the west; under which the snow clad building receive a blaze of light from the morning sun--and from the breakfast cooking fires the smoke ascends from almost every chimney. . . ."[13] When the "Snow Piece" was exhibited the following year, a reviewer who wrote of each of Guy's paintings in a series of pieces for New York Evening Post under the pseudonym Candor praised "the lineal and aerial perspectives" and Guy's ability to treat "so great a body of white in a picture" by offsetting it with "the almost endless variety of colour and tint in the numerous buildings and other objects."[14] In praise of the work's realism, he wrote: "The sky is indescribably fine; the small broken and scattered clouds, and the smoke from the chimnies, appear to be really in motion; . . . The fire wood and coal lying on the foreground pavement, are complete deceptions."[15]

According to Stiles, the "Brooklyn Snow Piece" was the artist's last great effort, on behalf of which he temporarily set aside a serious drinking habit: "[W]hile engaged upon the picture, [Guy] was abstemious and sober, the excitement of his work being enough for him. . . . The picture was, at length, completed and exposed to public view, visited by all, and much admired. . . . With the completion of his work, however, . . . he began to send his wife out for brandy."[16] Despite the popularity of the "Brooklyn Snow Piece," it does not appear to have been sold until about 1823, when James C. Parshall, one of the witnesses to Guy's will, purchased it from the artist's widow.[17] Parshall's son offered the painting for sale by 1846 when it was purchased for the fledgling Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences by a group of Brooklyn residents.[18]

As mentioned above, in 1881 the painting was damaged in a fire at the Institute, then located at the former Lyceum Building on Washington Street, and was "repaired" in 1884 by Thomas Foreman.[19] News of the misfortune revived interest in Guy's various versions of the winter scene and in the process created substantial confusion about them. The Brooklyn Advance of 1882-83 reported that Guy had been dissatisfied with his first efforts and in 1820 made two corrected versions of the original, which the writer believed

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to be in the collection of the Long Island Historical Society. Of the later versions he wrote, "One of [Guy's] copies of 1820 was destroyed in the recent fire at the Brooklyn Institute, and the other is the property of a prominent citizen of Brooklyn."[20] The supposed "original" mentioned above was undoubtedly a smaller (42 3/4 by 66 1/4 inches) figureless version of the view in summer (The Brooklyn Historical Society), presented to the Long Island Historical Society in 1877. The version then assigned to "a prominent citizen of Brooklyn" was the large (48 by 106 inches) and very comparable, peopled snow scene given to The Brooklyn Club by Samuel McLean in 1889 (now in the Manoogian Collection). It differed from The Brooklyn Museum of Art's painting primarily in the inclusion of a decorative balustrade along the lower edge and in the variation of some of the figure groups.[21] Guy probably worked on these two large canvases simultaneously, though his exhibition of the Museum's example in the summer 1820 exhibition may indicate that it was the first to be completed.[22] In addition to the three versions already mentioned, Guy completed two smaller figureless winter versions (respectively The New York Public Library and location unknown). A copy of the Brooklyn Museum of Art's version (Museum of the City of New York), executed in 1853 by Louisa Coleman, the granddaughter of Augustus Graham, added to the confusion regarding multiple versions.[23]

Perhaps because of the attention accorded the "Brooklyn Snow Piece" in Stiles's publication in 1864 (where it was illustrated along with the key seen here), the printer George Hayward (171 Pearl Street) produced a lithograph of the "Brooklyn Snow Piece" in 1865 for illustration in Henry McClosky's Manual (an edition of the lithograph is owned by The Brooklyn Historical Society). Along with the Coleman copy, it remains a helpful indication of the original appearance of the painting.

1. It is unlikely that Guy began the painting the prior winter (1818-19), when he was preparing for his large exhibition in Baltimore. If the "Brooklyn Snow Piece" had been shown there, it doubtless would have attracted the kind of publicity it was to enjoy upon its debut in New York.

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2. The Columbian piece was reprinted with a brief introduction on June 1, 1820, in the Washington Gazette, and the latter piece is quoted in full in Stiles Tuttle Colwill, Francis Guy, 1760-1820 (Baltimore: Museum and Library of Maryland History, and Maryland Historical Society, 1981), 39. Much of the same text appeared, verbatim, in the handbill mentioned above.

3. See ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Stiles points out that Graham, later one of the founders of the Apprentice's Library and the Brooklyn Institute, built the house on the corner of Front and Dock streets in 1814 or 1815 adjacent to the white-lead manufactory he had established several years earlier in the rear of the property. Henry R. Stiles, History of the City of Brooklyn (Brooklyn: Published by Subscription, 1867-70) 2: 99.

6. Ibid., 99-100 n 2. He cautioned: "A confusion of ideas is generally produced in the mind of the modern observer by mistaking the rears of the old buildings directly in the front of the picture, for their fronts. But it should be remembered that their fronts, which are on Fulton Street, are invisible. . . . The high grounds on the right of the picture have been levelled and streets graded, so that nothing of their original conformation is now visible."

7. Walt Whitman untitled and undated article from the Brooklyn Standard, quoted in Emory Holloway, ed., Uncollected Poetry and Prose of Walt Whitman, 2 vols. (Garden City, New York; Toronto: Doubleday, Page, & Co., 1921), 2: 231-232.

8. Ibid., 2: 232.

9. Colwill, Francis Guy, 39.

10. Ibid.

11. Stiles, History of the City of Brooklyn 2:103 n 1. Stiles added, "So also, Jacob Hicks . . . was 'brought to a halt' goose in hand; and after he had been sketched, politely sent the goose as a present to the painter, that he might 'sketch the fowl more deliberately, and eat him afterward.'"

12. Colwill, Francis Guy, 39.

13. Ibid.

14. New York Evening Post, October 19, 1821; as quoted in Colwill, Francis Guy, 68-69.

15. Ibid.

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16. Stiles, 2: 103-4 n 2.

17. Stiles names 1823 as the year of purchase, prior to the large auction sale held in 1824.

18. Ibid. In response to an inquiry regarding Guy, the July 7, 1892, issue of the Brooklyn Daily Eagle reported that according to Gabriel Furman, who had been present at both sales, on June 3, 1823, "Guy's paintings were sold at auction, with the exception of the 'Winter Scene of Brooklyn,' for which Mr. James Pearsall asks $200."; Untitled clipping, July 7, 1892, Falconer's Notebook, Brooklyn Historical Society, Brooklyn, New York.

19. Duncan Littlejohn recorded the final transaction with Thomas Foreman, cleaner and restorer of paintings, on October 8, 1884, "[The Institute officials] inspected the painting of "Old Brooklyn" by Guy, mutilated and injured by the Fire, and now restored, and agreed to pay him $350 Dollars, . . . for his work. The frame will be paid for in addition. It was also agreed to permit the Exhibition of the Painting in the store of Hardenbergh & King when they were in a condition to receive it. . . . Ordered a 'Combination' Frame 7 inches through Mr. Foreman, at a cost of $67 dollars . . . ."; Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Science, Minutes, October 8, 1884, 62-64, Brooklyn Museum of Art Archives. Littlejohn appended clippings recording the transaction, in which the name of the "artist" who worked on the painting was given erroneously as Mr. Fortune.

20. Joel Conklin, "Brooklyn: Something About the Town, Village & City," Brooklyn Advance 7 (1882-83): 11.

21. The legend included in the late nineteenth-century Petri and Pels engraving after the painting (published by E. M. Smith, 114 Livingston Street, New York) identifies the two figures on horseback at the left as Guy and Parshall; yet the foreground figure with a painting under his arm would seem to be the more logical self-portrait of the artist.

22. There is no doubt that the Museum's painting was indeed the work exhibited since it conforms fully to the contemporaneous newspaper descriptions. For example, the figure of Samuel Foster emerging from Birdsall's chimney does not appear in the Manoogian picture.

23. Louisa Graham was the daughter of Elizabeth Rebecca Graham and her husband Chester Coleman, who moved to Brooklyn to be with Graham in the last stages of his illness. The Brooklyn Daily Eagle article cited above testifies to the confusion regarding this copy: "Professor Hooper of the institute says . . . there is a third [version] in Canandaiga which seems to be the original sketch; this was offered to the institute some time ago. General J. B. Woodward, however, says that the last is merely a copy of the original, which was made by a young woman who studied at the institute some years ago, a relative, he believed, of the late Augustus Graham. . . ."

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PROVENANCE: The artist to Mrs. Francis Guy; to James C. Parshall, New York; to T. Parshall, New York, to 1845; to The Brooklyn Institute by 1846; transferred to The Brooklyn Museum in 1897.

EXHIBITED:

Shakespeare Gallery, New York, 1820, cat. no. 81 (as Winter Scene upon a Large Scale, Taken from Guy's Painting Room, Front Street, Brooklyn, with Real Likenesses of the Inhabitants of the Village).

253 Broadway, New York, 1821-22, Guy Exhibition, cat. no. 1, as Brooklyn Snow Piece, with Likenesses and Figures.

The Brooklyn Institute, 1845, Third Annual Exhibition of the Brooklyn Institute (as Snow Scene--Brooklyn in 1818).

The Brooklyn Institute, 1846, cat. no. 57 (as Snow Scene, Brooklyn Thirty Years Ago).

The Brooklyn Museum, 1897, Opening Exhibition, cat. no. 575.

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1935, American Genre: The Social Scene in Paintings and Prints, 1800-1835, cat. no. 39.

The Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, 1936, "American Genre Paintings," cat. no. 39.

The Columbus Museum of Fine Art, Ohio, 1947, The Colonial Americas, cat. no. 6.

The Century Association, New York, 1950, Aspects of New York City Life.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1970, 19th Century America: Paintings and Sculpture, cat. no. 25.

Davis and Long Company, New York, 1976, Masterpieces of American Painting from The Brooklyn Museum, cat. no. 2.

The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1990, Facing History: The Black Image in American Art, 1710-1940, cat. p. 15. Traveled.

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Waring, William H. "Old Brooklyn. A Sketch of Guy's Picture of Front Street." Brooklyn Daily Eagle, March 16, 1884.

Utitled clipping. Falconer's Notebook. Brooklyn Historical Society.

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George Inness (May 1, 1825-August 3, 1894)

Royal Beech in New Forest, Lyndhurst, 1887

Oil on canvas

24 3/4 x 29 1/2 inches (63.5 x 75.8 cm)

Signed lower right: "G. Inness 1887"

13.76, Gift of Mrs. Carll H. de Silver in memory of her husband

PROVENANCE: Mrs. Carll H. de Silver; to The Brooklyn Museum.

EXHIBITED:

The Brooklyn Museum, 1917, Works of American Painters, 1860-1885, cat. no. 34.

The Brooklyn Museum, 1932, Exhibition of Paintings by American Impressionists and Other Artists of the Period, 1880-1900, cat. no. 55.

Sunset over the Sea, 1887

Oil on panel

21 13/16 x 35 13/16 inches (56 x 91.8 cm)

Signed lower left: "G. Inness 1887"

34.488, Gift of the Executors of the Estate of Colonel Michael Friedsam

PROVENANCE: Colonel Michael Friedsam, New York; to The Brooklyn Museum of Art.

EXHIBITED:

Monmouth Museum, Red Bank, New Jersey, 1965, The Spell of the Sea," cat. no. 50.

University Art Museum, University of Texas, Austin, 1966, Paintings by George Inness (1844-94), cat. no. 106.

Sunrise, 1887

Oil on canvas

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29 3/4 x 44 5/8 inches (76.3 x 114.5 cm)

Signed lower left: "G. Inness 1887"

41.775, Bequest of Mrs. William A. Putnam

PROVENANCE: Richard H. Halstead, New York; through American Art Galleries (Sale of Richard H. Halstead's Collections of Master-Works by the Late George Inness, January 9, 1895, cat. no. 14) to William A. Putnam, Brooklyn; to Mrs. William A. Putnam; to The Brooklyn Museum of Art.

EXHIBITED:

The Brooklyn Museum, 1917, Works of American Painters, 1860-1885, cat. no. 30.

The Brooklyn Museum, 1932, Exhibition of Paintings by American Impressionists and Other Artists of the Period, 1880-1900, cat. no. 52.

The American Federation of the Arts, Washington, D.C., 1949, Romantic Realism in 19th Century American Painting. Traveled.

The Staten Island Museum, New York, 1954, Two Hundred Years of American Art, cat. no. 12.

State of New York Executive Mansion, Albany, 1983.

The Brooklyn Museum, 1988, Curator's Choice: Making History at The Brooklyn Museum: John I. H. Baur, checklist no. 14.

The Parrish Art Museum, Southampton, New York, 1990, A Celebration of American Ideals: Paintings from The Brooklyn Museum, cat.

Trained in the conventions of American antebellum landscape painting, George Inness slowly evolved a highly expressive and original manner that by the 1880s constituted the most influential element in American landscape art of the late nineteenth century. These three remarkably different works, all dated to the year 1887, demonstrate how in the late 1880s, after long years of work, Inness achieved a new degree of individuality in his painting and a more effective embodiment of the Swedenborgian

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theories he had long espoused. Though varied in content, they share in their highly expressive, atmospheric tonalism the pictorial "unity" Inness had painstakingly sought in order to convey his own experience of spiritual reality in the natural world.

From the 1860s, when he first came in contact with the teachings of Emanuel Swedenborg through his friend, the fiery Brooklyn preacher Henry Ward Beecher (1813-1887), Inness viewed the primary subject of his art to be "the visible expression of a strongly felt emotion."[1] As his execution gradually evolved into an increasingly expressive manner, his disinterest in the transcription of factual details became more apparent. In their place he offered forms and colors that, while broadly representative of objective reality, more adequately conveyed the spiritual presence of which he believed them to be visible manifestations. By the late 1870s, in his interview with Harper's New Monthly Magazine, Inness explained that spiritual conveyance through art takes place on a completely emotional level and is possible if pictorial color and form comprise a harmonious and unified whole. He stated that for the divinely inspired artist, who "aims truly to represent the ideas and emotions which come to him when he is in the presence of nature . . . we find that in proportion to the perfection of his genius is the unity of his picture."[2]

It was in his late works that Inness most apparently achieved a formal and expressive unity that involved another step away from objective reality. As Nicolai Cikovsky has explained, Inness depicted a "medium" that might be defined as "neither matter, vapor, nor tone of color, but all of them together," and through which solid objects become evanescent and atmospheric effects attain weight.[3] For Inness, a painting thus became an organic conduit of the spiritual. Cikovsky points out that Inness's aesthetic was in keeping with Swedenborg's claim that the spirit world resembled the natural world, with the exception that it is a shifting space filled with colors "that surpass the luster of colors of this world to such a degree that any comparison is impossible."[4]

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In Royal Beech in New Forest, Lyndhurst, Inness achieves this sense of amorphous space and intensified color. The subject is derived from an otherwise undocumented visit to England on which he also based Off the Coast of Cornwall, England, 1887 (Paine Art Center and Arboretum, Oshkosh, Wisconsin). New Forest, just west of Southampton Water, was described by a turn-of-the-century guidebook as "an ancient royal hunting demesne, containing some of the most characteristic woodland scenery in England." The text added that "many of the oak and beech trees are very fine."[5] In this spare and unusually cropped composition, one sees Inness's tendency in the late works to reduce the number of elements in his paintings to essential ones, and to carefully calculate their placement for the maximum visual and expressive effect.

In part under the influence of his early Eagleswood acquaintance and fellow Swendenborgian, William Page, Inness is known to have espoused a number of mathematical pictorial formulas, to which "Henry Eckford" (the critic Charles de Kay) referred in an article on Inness for Century Magazine.[6] In a discussion of his colleague's compositional theories, the painter Elliott Daingerfield noted Inness's recommendation that "trees that find their plane within the [foreground] are too near, and perforce must be cut off at the base to force them away."[7] Such is the case in Royal Beech in New Forest, Lyndhurst, in which the massive trunk fills much of the canvas. Though this central form is also the primary locus of light in the image, the effect is diffused by the successively applied, thin layers of brown color. Only two other trees are clearly formed--the vertical trunk to the left of center and the more massive one at the right. Inness described the dark backdrop of the forest with the type of broad and substantive atmospheric effects mentioned above. In the upper register of the image, he achieved a complex effect with patches of blue embedded in layers of browns and green. Brown, green, and orange tones dominate the foreground with some freer accents on the surface.

Inness completed a very similar work, Sunset in the Woods (The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.), in 1891. In a letter to his patron, Thomas B. Clarke,

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he explained that the "motive" for the painting, begun several year earlier, was taken from a drawing that he had completed in Hastings, New York, twenty years before. He continued, "[U]ntil last winter I had not obtained any idea commensurate with the impression received on the spot. The rocks and general formation are like the place but the trees, especially the beech, are increased in size. The idea is to represent an effect of light in the woods toward sundown but to allow the imagination to predominate."[8]

If Royal Beech is reductive in form, Sunset over the Sea is even more dramatically simplified, in form as well as color. Here the paint and the forms it expresses achieve a remarkable degree of Inness's hard-sought "unity." The image is divided into two registers, sky and sea, that meet at the horizon in a ridge of a diffused color. Using a base of dark brown tones throughout the image, Inness applied layers of mottled orange and green tones to suggest the raking glow of the sunset across the sky. To the vigorously layered browns and greens that form the base of the sea, he added thinly dragged layers of blues and feathery, impastoed touches of white. One almost has the sense that Inness's use of the same colors in infinitely varied combinations on the canvas constitutes pictorial substances in a manner that mimics the actual shifting state of air, water, and light in nature. The surface of Sunset over the Sea seems nearly the equivalent of foam and mist, tinted by the yellow-orange sunlight that emanates from a break in the turbulent sky. Particularly in the water, Inness's seemingly wind-driven hazes of pigment resemble those of Turner. The sea birds that ride the currents of air and paint above the waves in the foreground, bathed in an eerie light, undoubtedly bore Inness's spiritual message as well. The work stands out as one of the most forcefully emotive of Inness's late career.

Sunrise is more typical of Inness's late works, and is also a more conventional landscape composition. It nevertheless exhibits Inness's persistent inclination for refined

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simplification, as well as the high-keyed atmospheric haze that so appealed to his patrons of the period. A single ethereal tree dominates the composition, while in the distance beyond the tiny figure at the right, two unlikely smokestacks emerge from the haze. Formal and conceptual descendants of the smoking locomotives and house chimneys that appear as signs of the human mark on the landscape in so many of Inness's earlier works (see entries above), these stacks were probably based in part on the buildings of a printing factory not far from his home in Montclair, New Jersey. The industrial buildings--including a high tower and smokestack--belonging to the local printer, Samuel Crump, appear in the background of Inness's The Mill Stream, Montclair, New Jersey, circa 1880 (Private Collection). Inness's intention that they be perceived as nonthreatening is confirmed by the presence of an ethereal female figure in the foreground, notably at the side of the brook that flows directly to the factory complex. A smokestack also appears in the distance in his slightly later, Sunset at Montclair (Columbus Museum of Art) in which children are at play in the foreground.

In Sunrise Inness represented the constancy of both rural and industrial human labor, which here are already in progress as the sun rises on the landscape. The narrative focus of the image is at middle ground, where he described the spectral form of a house at the left and a small, glowing pool of water composed of a streak of orange and gray. The diffuse silhouette of the arching tree, thinly scumbled in black and green forms a bridge to the right half of the image, and the figure and smokestacks. In contrast to the foreground, which is very broadly scumbled in tones of green, black, and orange, the upper portion of the canvas is more heavily worked, and it appears to be painted over an area of blue. Strong orange and yellow tones predominate, and are touched with gray at the right and closer to the horizon. Inness used a characteristic dragged brush at the horizon, where darker undertones show through.

Sunrise was one of numerous works by Inness collected as investments by Richard H. Halsted and sold as a group shortly after the artist's death (and notably before

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his own estate sale).[9] On the occasion of the Halsted sale, the painting was described in The Art Amateur as "very rich in color, and, for once, not discordant."[10] The Evening Post cited it as noteworthy, and described the "bloody orb . . . prophetic of extreme heat at midday."[11] Sunrise was purchased by the Brooklyn collector William A. Putnam.

1. "The Sign of Promise." By George Inness. Now on Exhibition at Snedecor's Gallery, 768 Broadway, New York, n.d., as cited in George Inness: Presence of the Unseen (Montclair, New Jersey: Montclair Art Museum, 1994), 19. For an extensive discussion of Inness's involvement with Swedenborgian theory and Beecher, see Nicolai Cikovsky, Jr., The Life and Work of George Inness (New York: Garland Publishing, 1977).

2. See "A Painting on Painting," Harper's New Monthly Magazine 56 (February 1878): 461.

3. Nicolai Cikovsky, Jr., George Inness (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1993), 113.

4. Ibid., 116.

5. Karl Baedeker, Great Britain: Handbook for Travellers, 7th ed. (Leipzig: K. Baedeker, 1910), 86.

6. Henry Eckford [Charles de Kay], "George Inness," Century Magazine 24 (May 1882): 63.

7. Elliott Daingerfield, George Inness: The Man and His Art (New York: Privately printed, 1911), 25-26.

8. Inness to Thomas B. Clarke, July 23, 1891, Massachusetts Historical Society, as cited in Nicolai Cikovsky, Jr. and Michael Quick, George Inness (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1985), 184.

9. For comments on the propriety of the sale, see Alfred Trumble, "The First Inness Sale," Collector 6 (January 15, 1895): 94; for a complete catalogue, see Catalogue of Mr. Richard H. Halsted's Collection of Masterworks by the Late George Inness, N.A. (New York: American Art Galleries, 1895).

10. "The Inness Paintings," Art Amateur 32 (February 1895): 78.

11. "Another Inness Exhibition," New York Evening Post, January 2, 1895, 7.

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Daniel Ridgway Knight (March 15, 1839-March 9, 1924)

The Shepherdess of Rolleboise, 1896

Oil on canvas

67 3/8 x 49 15/16 inches (172.7 x 128.2 cm)

Signed lower right: "Ridgway Knight/ Paris 1896"

98.14, Gift of Abraham Abraham

Trained in Paris, where he lived as an expatriate from 1871, Daniel Ridgway Knight enjoyed substantial success as a painter of idealized peasant subjects. In The Shepherdess of Rolleboise, his entry in the Paris Salon of 1896, Knight achieved the monumental form, elegiac expression, refined surface, and silvery palette that distinguish his mature work. Knight probably began to focus on single figure subjects about 1889 under the strong influence of the highly successful French academic peasant painter Jules Breton (1827-1906), whose own figures were characterized by a lyrical monumentality. In keeping with such examples of Breton's work as The Close of Day, 1865 (Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore), an image of two large, young peasant women standing before an abbreviated landscape backdrop, Knight increasingly designed simpler compositions in which he similarly set pensive rural types before still, atmospheric landscapes. In Evening (location unknown), his Salon entry for 1889, for example, he described a lone shepherdess lost in thought while tending the flock just visible in the open field behind her. Here he placed a similarly graceful and monumental figure in the foreground and framed her with the rough underbrush and more distant, misty forms of the river landscape.

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If Knight looked to Breton for certain aspects of his compositional arrangements, he sought inspiration for his touch and palette elsewhere. In executing the figure, he retained the refined draftsmanship that he had developed at the French Academy and in Gleyre's atelier in particular. This quality is especially visible in the exquisite outline of the head and in the precisely delicate modeling of the head and ruddy hands. The broader touch that he employed in the description of the tattered cloak and patched apron, and in the foreground details, probably derive in part from the more stylistically current work of Jules Bastien-Lepage. An academic who developed a distinct brushy breadth and a palette dominated by silvery greens and browns, Bastien-Lepage was probably the strongest single influence on Knight's late work. Knight employed a similar palette here, from the muted browns, greens, and blues of the drapery to the dull green tones of the foreground. He also adopted the Frenchman's habit of describing the foreground details with particular breadth; the sketchy and heavily brushed grasses, and the tall thistles in particular, appear to derive directly from the Bastien-Lepage's highly influential Joan of Arc, 1879 (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York). In completing the delicately hazy, bluish gray forms of the distant landscape against which the figure stands out with dramatic weight, Knight may have looked to the silvery landscapes of Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot (1796-1875), which he greatly admired.

If Knight portrayed his late figures as more pensive and silently distracted than the subjects of his early canvases, he relieved them of any more disturbing expression of class-bound discontentedness through his emphasis on their delicacy and his almost sentimental attention to the humble details of the costumes in which he clothed his models. They are only distant relations of Breton's figures, whose heavier proportions

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and rougher features convey more readily the strains of rural life. Writing several years earlier of a similar shepherdess subject by Knight, the American Theodore Child commented:

> Mr. Knight is to be congratulated on not having yielded to the recent craze for painting hideous peasants, ugly old women, and embruted men--a craze which has enabled many to pass for artists, whereas in reality they are only vulgar bunglers. It is far easier to paint a snuffy-nosed and characterless old hag than to render a rustic beauty of a shepherdess who may be destined to become one day a princess--de la rampe at least.[1]

Child obviously had not yet reckoned with the burgeoning popularity among American audiences of the works of France's best-known painters of somber peasant subjects, Jean-Francois Millet (1814-1875) and Breton.

The Shepherdess of Rolleboise was singled out for notice in the publication Salon de 1896 and also appeared that year on the cover of a popular Parisian magazine entitled La Famille.[2] A sentimentalized commentary that appeared inside the magazine suggested that though she might appear lonely and forlorn, the young shepherdess in Knight's painting took comfort in having those who loved her not far away; and it contrasted her situation with the more dire plight of young factory workers.[3] The painting was presented to the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences just two years later, after its completion.

A smaller study for The Shepherdess of Rolleboise was included in the 1925 American Art Association sale of Knight's work (cat. no. 140, Bergère de Rolleboise, 21 3/4 by 18 inches).[4] In this regard (see above as well), it is interesting to note that when questioned in 1911 as to whether or not he executed "replicas" of his paintings, Knight replied, "I do not, although in painting . . . a subject small I sometimes make a large

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picture of nearly the same subject. . . . I do not make replicas but in making a sketch for a picture I sometimes sell the sketch."[5]

1. Theodore Child, "American Artists at the Paris Salon," Harper's Weekly Magazine 33 (April 27, 1889) 334.

2. François Thiébault-Sisson, Salon de 1896, (New York: Boussod Valadon & Cie., 1896), 56.

3. La Famille (November 15, 1896), unpaginated clipping, Curatorial File, Department of American Art, The Brooklyn Museum of Art.

4. Paintings by Ridgeway Knight . . . and Other Well Known Artists of the American and Foreign Schools (New York: American Art Association, 1925), n.p.

5. Daniel Ridgway Knight to Mr. Dietz, reel DDU1, Albert Duveen Collection of Artists' Letters and Ephemera, 1808-1910, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

PROVENANCE: Abraham Abraham, Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences trustee; to the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences, in 1898.

EXHIBITED:

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Museum of Art, Science and Industry, Bridgeport, Connecticut, 1986, Americans Abroad: The European Influence, cat. no. 22.

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The Parrish Art Museum, Southampton, New York, 1990, A Celebration of American Ideals: Paintings from The Brooklyn Museum, cat. Traveled.

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George Luks (August 13, 1866-October 29, 1933)

Street Scene (Hester Street), 1905

25 9/16 x 35 ½ inches (65.5 x 91.1 cm)

Signed lower right: "George Luks"

40.339, Dick S. Ramsay Fund

One of the dynamic American realists known as The Eight, George Luks was a rowdy, hard-drinking man who in art and life embraced the gritty character of the turn-of-the-century urban scene. As a fully developed narrative scene with multiple figures rendered as individuals, Street Scene (Hester Street)[1] is a relative rarity in Luks's oeuvre. Although Luks often focused on the street life of immigrant neighborhoods on New York's Lower East Side, he more frequently painted individual characters, or rendered neighborhood scenes in a more depersonalized, schematic manner. This painting also is unusual in that Luks confronted the viewer with the type of immigrant street culture that was repugnant to genteel classes--who rarely, if ever, would venture into such a setting--but deliberately described the setting as benign, and the behavior of the figures as generally polite. Luks participated in cultural typing of Jewish immigrants but refrained from over exaggeration. Street Scene (Hester Street) may have challenged the viewer in presenting a densely overcrowded neighborhood in which poor immigrants were forced to live their lives in a manner that was far from private, but his generalized rendering of the scene and the figures lacked the kind of painfully realistic details or satirical stereotypes typical of his illustrations.

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By 1905 Hester Street--running east-west from East Broadway to Centre Street, one block above Canal Street--was known primarily for its burgeoning population of recently arrived Eastern European Jews, who had followed the earlier Irish and German immigrants. It also was known as the site of a daily open-air market where thousands of these poor urban dwellers bought all their necessities, from food to pots and pans and fabrics, from vendors at makeshift carts and stalls. Hester Street provided the type of unvarnished, chaotic urban subject to which Luks was particularly drawn, and one from which New Yorkers accustomed to proper shops and formal public etiquette would have recoiled. At the same time, subjects like Hester Street held a certain exotic appeal for those intrigued by how the other half lived. In 1892, art critic Mariana Griswold Van Rensselaer (1851-1934) described the locale in a volume entitled Picturesque New York: But we cannot appreciate the picturesqueness which New York wears to both mind and eye unless we go immediately from the stately commercialism of its down-town streets to the adjacent tenement-house districts. Pest-holes to the sanitarian and the moralist . . . many parts of these districts gratify the eye that seeks pictorial pleasure . . . . I have seen Hester street . . . when it was swarmed so thickly with Jews of a dozen lands . . . and all were as little like Americans as though they had never left their outlandish homes . . . Hester street was amazingly like those foreign ghettos which traveling New Yorkers take such pains to visit.[2]

In 1907 Luks described his approach to subject matter: "My object as an artist is to acquaint myself with life and reproduce it. I go about and see everything. Suddenly I see something I want to paint. Then no studio models can help me. I must have the thing."[3] Though no drawings for Street Scene (Hester Street) are known today, Luks very

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likely sketched some aspects of the scene on the spot. He appears to have completed the final canvas with rapid spontaneity, setting the foreground narrative against a backdrop of broadly described, rust-red tenement buildings and an expanse of sketchily suggested heads of the crowd extending as far as the eye can see. The exceedingly sketchy quality of Hester Street reinforces Luks's description of lively, incessant activity. The picture's predominantly dark tonalities--a palette of browns and reds enlivened with occasional brighter accents--evoke a vaguely oppressive mood.

Specific figure types are discernible in the foreground: the pairs of conversing, dark-bearded men at the left; a toy peddler surrounded by children; a woman with a market basket just right of center; and a woman buying a chicken from a voluble poultry vendor at the right. The most conspicuous figure is the solitary smoker at the left of the scene, who introduces the persona of the observer. There is remarkably little atmospheric detail in Luks's portrayal of the scene, aside from the very loosely suggested rack of plucked chickens hanging at the right, and the single pushcart in the immediate right foreground. The latter is described vaguely enough to be relatively illegible; the bin appears to be filled with potatoes, but the cylindrical form and the flowerlike, circular blue objects are difficult to decipher. The spontaneous nature of Luks's execution, wherein he worked out compositional details directly on the canvas, is borne out by an X radiograph of the painting that reveals a number of alterations: the amorphous cart in the right foreground was painted over a more distinct barrel; and the boy in knickers with his back to the viewer was added on top of the figure of a young girl who is barely visible in the finished work. Luks's technique in Street Scene (Hester Street) distinguishes it from his other street subjects, including his Carmine and Bleecker, circa 1905, (Milwaukee Art

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Museum), in which all of the forms are more simply and deliberately defined with controlled touches of color, resulting in a more static effect overall.

Luks does not appear to have exhibited Street Scene (Hester Street) until 1908, when it was included in the Macbeth Galleries exhibition of The Eight. Luks already was known for this type of subject by 1907, when the liberal journalist James Huneker (1857-1921) remarked, "The East Side is his happy hunting ground. . . . In the Second avenue Yiddish restaurants . . . on Houston street when, apparently, the entire East Side is buying fish on Shabbas abend; in vile corners where the refuse of humanity drift, hopeless, helpless; there Luks catches some gleam of humor or pathos. . . . "[4] In 1908, however, critics made only indirect reference to Street Scene (Hester Street), addressing instead the broader issues of Luks's general style and subjects. While recognizing Luks's subjects as current, some drew parallels with historical European styles and in effect questioned the purported modernity of The Eight. One wrote, " It is presumably the intention of these painters to base their art on nature, but they leave an uncomfortable impression of having developed their ideas within ill-lighted studio walls, under the influence of this or that foreign master."[5] Luks's somber palette particularly provoked comparisons with certain strains of European painting. Huneker, in The Sun, noted, "Luks is a realist but paints more like a modern German or Dutchman than a modern Frenchman. . . . He has the 'tone of time' in certain of his canvases . . . ."[6] Other reviewers were more critical of this aspect of Luk's work; a writer for the New York Globe and Commercial Advertiser described the painter's contributions to the 1908 exhibition as "very low in key and of deep gloom", but ultimately allowed, "Mr. Luks is not without dexterity and color feeling."[7]

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The subsequent history of Street Scene (Hester Street) is unknown until 1935, by which time it had passed into the ownership of Kraushaar Galleries, which had handled Luks's work for some time.[8]

1. At the time of its exhibition at Macbeth Galleries in 1908, the painting bore the title Street Scene. One year earlier, when it was illustrated in an issue of Literary Digest, it was entitled Street Scene on the East Side, New York. The precise origins of the title Hester Street, under which the painting entered Brooklyn's collection in 1940, are not known.

2. As quoted within an interesting discussion of Hester Street in H. Barbara Weinberg, Doreen Bolger, and David Park Curry, American Impressionism and Realism: The Painting of Modern Life, 1885-1915 (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1994), 191-92.

3. "Secession and Art," New York Herald, February 2, 1908, 4.

4. [James Huneker], "George Luks," New York Sun, March 21, 1907, 8.

5. "Art Exhibitions. New Pictures by American Artists, and Some Old Prints," New York Tribune, February 5, 1908, 7.

6. [James Huneker], "Eight Painters. First Article," New York Sun, February 9, 1908, 8.

7. "Art and Artists," New York Globe and Commercial Advertiser, February 5, 1908, 9.

8. It should be noted that in 1915, Brooklyn's Street Scene (Hester Street) was published under the title Houston Street, East Side; see John Cournos, "Three Painters of the New York School," Studio 65 (September 1915): 244.

PROVENANCE: Kraushaar Gallery, New York, by 1935; Francis P. Garvan, New Haven, Connecticut; through the estate of Francis P. Garvan to The Brooklyn Museum.

EXHIBITED:

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John Quidor (January 26, 1801-December 13, 1881)

The Money Diggers, 1832

Oil on canvas

15 13/16 x 20 3/4 inches (40.5 x 53.2 cm)

Signed right center: "J. Quidor Pinxt/ N. York June, 1832."

48.171, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Alastair Bradley Martin

PROVENANCE: The artist to Joseph Harrison, Jr., Philadelphia, through 1912; through Philadelphia Art Galleries, 1912, Paintings, Statuary, etc. The Remainder of the Collection of the late Joseph Harrison, Jr. . . . , cat. no. 39, The Fright; Harry Stone, New York; Bernard Cone, Albert Duveen, New York; Mrs. Sheldon Keck; Mr. and Mrs. Alastair Bradley Martin, Bedford, New York; to The Brooklyn Museum.

EXHIBITED:

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Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1983, A New World: American Paintings, 1760-1900, cat. no. 23. Traveled.

The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1990, Facing History: The Black Image in American Art, 1710-1940, cat. p. 24. Traveled.

Wolfert's Will, 1856

Oil on canvas

26 1/2 x 33 9/16 inches (68 x 86 cm)

Signed lower center: "John Quidor./ Painter/ N. York 1856."

Inscribed verso across top: "'Say you so?' cried Wolfert, half thrusting one leg/ out of bed, 'why, then I think I'll not make my Will yet!'"

42.46, Dick S. Ramsay Fund

PROVENANCE: The artist to Joseph Harrison, Jr., Philadelphia, through 1912; The Douthitt Gallery, New York; Albert Duveen, New York; to The Brooklyn Museum.

EXHIBITED:

Erich Newhouse, Inc., New York, n.d., Early American Genre Paintings, no. 28.

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World's Fair, New York, 1964, Art in New York State, cat. no. 40.

The University of Michigan Museum of Art, Ann Arbor, 1972, Art and the Excited Spirit, cat. no. 116.

Wichita Art Museum, Kansas, 1973, John Quidor: Painter of American Legend, cat.

The Brooklyn Museum, 1988, Curators Choice: Making History at The Brooklyn Museum: John I. H. Baur, checklist.

Virtually ignored by art historians until the first retrospective of his work at The Brooklyn Museum in 1942, John Quidor was an unconventional painter who, with Thomas Cole and Henry Inman, pioneered the use of American literary subjects in art. Quidor first attracted serious critical attention in 1828 with his exhibition of a work entitled Ichabod Crane Pursued by the Headless Horseman (Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut) at the National Academy of Design, New York. The canvas is the earliest extant painting based on Washington Irving's (1783-1859) "Legend of Sleepy Hollow." Interest in that work was modest, however, compared to the enthusiastic praise that greeted his highly animated The Return of Rip Van Winkle (location unknown) in 1829.

In The Money Diggers of 1832, a unique work in American art of the period and undoubtedly one of the artist's most remarkable paintings, John Quidor brought to life Washington Irving's satirical tale of a hapless New York Dutchman's pursuit of buried treasure. Nearly twenty-five years later and in the last phase of his career, Quidor returned to the final chapter of Irving's Tales of a Traveller to portray the unwitting triumph of Wolfert Webber in Wolfert's Will.

Quidor often returned to Irving's writings after the critical success of his Rip Van Winkle (location unknown) at the National Academy of Design in 1829. In 1832 he took

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up a collection of stories written abroad and first published as Tales of a Traveller in 1824. Irving had contrived the fourth section of the book, itself titled "The Money Diggers," as a series of tales of buried treasure drawn from the papers of his onetime narrator, the "late" Diedrich Knickerbocker.[1] Each yarn comprised the introduction to the one that followed. Thus, while these two paintings are based on the last chapter, entitled "The Adventure of the Black Fisherman," we first meet its central character, Wolfert Webber, in the preceding "Wolfert Webber, or Golden Dreams"; and the latter sketch is introduced (in the story that precedes it) as a tale told to Knickerbocker during his fishing party's picnic on the shores of Hell Gate, the site of an old Dutch burial vault that inspired his companion John Josse Vandermoere to tell a tale of money digging.

In "Wolfert Webber, or Golden Dreams," Irving set the eighteenth-century stage for Wolfert Webber, a colonial descendant of "Cobus Webber of the Brille in Holland" who carries on the family's historic dedication to the cultivation of cabbages: "The whole family genius, during several generations, was devoted to the study and development of this one noble vegetable; and to this concentration of intellect may doubtless be ascribed the prodigious size and renown to which the Webber cabbages attained."[2] Wolfert has the misfortune of living at a time when his farm is being surrounded by the spreading borders of the city of New York, a development that drives up the price of everything except his cabbages. Increasingly distressed, he seeks comfort at a rural inn near Corlear's Hook ("a favorite resort of the Dutch part of the community . . . and retaining an air and relish of the good old times"[3]), where tales are told of Dutch treasures buried at the time of the British takeover in the 1660s. So inspired, Wolfert begins a long and fevered attempt to find gold in his cabbage fields. By the following year he has unearthed the family's vegetable legacy and driven his once contented wife and daughter into poverty. The story ends at the inn, where Wolfert hears another tale of buried treasure.

That tale is "The Adventure of the Black Fisherman," a story that we are told originated with the well-known "Black Sam, the old negro fisherman . . . who has fished

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about the Sound for the last half century."[4] When Wolfert learns that as a young boy Sam witnessed a group of pirates burying something on a cliff overlooking Long Island Sound, he enlists the old fisherman to take him to the spot. Fearful of her husband's renewed gold fever, Wolfert's wife unwittingly asks for the help of Dr. Knipperhausen ("a little dark mouldy man of medicine famous among the old wives of the Manhattoes . . . more commonly known as the High German doctor . . . which is pretty nearly equivalent to that of necromancer"[5]), not knowing that the doctor himself plans to join in the search.

In The Money Diggers Quidor represented that moment in the tale when the three men--Wolfert, the doctor, and Sam (from left to right)--return to the burial site at night to cast their spell and dig. He chose the climax of the scene when, just as the chest is found, the pirate's ghost appears to the company:

> Tis a chest," said Sam. "Full of gold, I warrant it!" cried Wolfert, clasping his hands with rapture. Scarcely had he uttered the words when a sound from overhead caught his ear. He cast up his eyes and lo! by the expiring light of the fire he beheld, just over the disc of the rock, what appeared to be the grim visage of the buccaneer, grinning hideously down upon him. Wolfert gave a loud cry and let fall the lanthorn. . . . The negro leaped out of the hole, the doctor dropped his book and basket and began to pray in German. All was horror and confusion.[6]

Throughout, Quidor followed Irving's colorful descriptions with remarkably deliberate exactness, including details like the three crosses etched on the stone cliff by the pirates to mark the spot, and Wolfert's "large flapped hat tied under the chin with a handkerchief of his daughter's."[7] He contrived the scene in a tightly composed and highly animated composition that must have taken formal cues in part from the caricatured figures subjects of British painters George Cruikshank (1792-1878) and William Hogarth (1697-1764).[8] The marvelously contorted figures of the three main characters radiate outward from the dark trench at the picture's center. They and the landscape forms that enclose the scene are bathed in the nervous half-light of the roaring fire fed by the doctor's drugs and herbs. Within the limited range of a nocturnal scene, Quidor achieved

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a brilliant colorism through the use of carefully calculated and delicately applied highlights. In the brighter, left side of the painting he employed touches of rich primary colors. The fire, for example, is suggested by a network of fluid brushwork in bright reds, blues, and yellows; and the figure of Wolfert Webber, echoed by the electric form of the tree, is dressed in blue stockings and vest, yellow breeches, and his wife's red cape. In the right side of the scene Quidor used primarily green highlights. One sees the glint of the upturned eyes of the grotesquely caricatured Dr. Knipperhausen through the "pair of green spectacles set in black horn";[9] that tone corresponds to the green of Sam's vest and the moss and grasses beneath his leg and arm.

The play of sinister highlights carries the fevered expression of the figures into all corners of the scene. It illuminates the scattered props carefully inventoried by Quidor: Sam's jacket, ax, and bottle of "Dutch courage" at the right; the doctor's divining rod, basket of potions (one of which spills a yellow liquid at the edge of the trench), and his book of spells, tossed near the fire in his terror; and Wolfert's discarded lantern at the left.

Reviews of the painting at the time of its exhibition at the American Academy of Fine Arts in 1833 were notably mixed. A critic for The American Monthly Magazine, who saw in it a clear improvement over an earlier work (The Bold Dragoon [location unknown]), wrote: "We rejoice to find our prognostics verified--the money diggers many degrees superior to the earlier attempt, and comes very near to being a good picture. The negro . . . is extremely well done; the light is ably managed, and the general effect is got up so skillfully as to give us the most pleasing anticipations for the future . . . ." The writer's only dissatisfaction was in finding the face of the buccaneer "rather grotesque than hideous!"[10] A reviewer for The New-York Mirror (who apparently was already familiar with the painting) was emphatic in his objection to it: "This is an old acquaintance, and we think among the worst of the artist's productions; we remember a Rip Van Winkle of his painting, which was worth a dozen of it. It is too much

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exaggerated both in colouring, action and expression."[11] Quidor indeed does not appear to have attempted again so daring a use of color.

The Money Diggers probably remained unsold until Quidor's return to New York in the 1850s, at which time Joseph Harrison, Jr., began to collect his work. A wealthy Philadelphia-born engineer and owner of the firm of Harrison and Eastwick, Harrison was among that city's most prominent patrons of living artists. The painting was listed as Wolfert Webber; or Golden Dreams--Irving's Tales of a Traveler in an 1870 catalogue of the contents of Harrison's private gallery and was among seven of Quidor's works (see 42.46, below) included in the 1912 sale of Harrison's paintings, where it was listed under the title The Fright.[12]

In 1856, after his return to New York from Illinois, Quidor painted a second version of The Money Diggers (Berry-Hill Galleries, New York). In the later work he simplified the composition and moved away from the exacting attention to Irving's descriptions of details and colors. The space is shallower, owing in part to the vaguer definition of the background, and the fire has been moved to the right side of the scene. The figures are more generally caricatured, and while the figure of Wolfert is still quite colorful, Dr. Knipperhausen is rendered in the duller colors more characteristic of Quidor's late work. In the later The Money Diggers, however, Quidor has not yet turned to the overall thinner application of paint and palette of brown monotones that characterize such works as his Wolfert's Will.

When he returned to the writings of Irving in the 1850s, and more specifically to Tales of a Traveller, Quidor finished the tale of Wolfert Webber in the work now known as Wolfert's Will. Christopher Kent Wilson has suggested that this work was intended as a pendant to the later The Money Diggers, mentioned above, citing their identical sizes and signatures.[13]

In the final pages of "The Adventure of the Black Fisherman," Irving recounts Wolfert's narrow escape from the pirate spirits, his injuries, public humiliation, and abject

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resignation to his squandered existence. Quidor chose to represent the moment when the lawyer called to write Webber's will informs the despondent Dutchman that plans to run a major public thoroughfare through his cabbage fields will make him a wealthy man. Irving writes: "The expiring Wolfert seemed to step back from the threshold of existence: his eyes again lighted up; he raised himself in his bed, shoved back his red worsted nightcap, and stared broadly at the lawyer. 'You don't say so!' exclaimed he. . . . "[14]

Once again, Quidor adhered closely to Irving's setting of the scene, including the disposition of the surrounding figures prior to the moment of revelation: "Poor Amy [Wolfert's daughter] buried her face and her grief in the bed curtain. Dame Webber resumed her knitting to hide her distress, . . . while the cat, the only unconcerned member of the family, played with the good dame's ball of worsted, as it rolled about the floor."[15] He also included such details as "the old patchwork counterpane" on Wolfert's bed. The nearly indistinct male figure at the foot of the bed is his daughter's faithful suitor. If Wolfert's Will shares with The Money Diggers a close reliance on the textual source, it is dramatically different in technique. The painting conforms to the majority of Quidor's works of the 1850s in which he used exceedingly thin paint glazes in a narrow range of golden tonalities. Forms are described with lively, transparent outlines that resemble ink drawing and are tinted in the manner of watercolor washes. This is particularly distinctive in the faces, which are also accented with some opaque white touches. The few areas of varied color include Wolfert's red cap, the green cloth on the table, and the blue ball of yarn. Other details, including the objects hanging on the wall above the hearth, are less distinct.

Quidor probably sold Wolfert's Will to Joseph Harrison, Jr., shortly after it was completed. It was included in the 1870 catalogue of Harrison's gallery under the title Wolfert Webber; or Golden Dreams--Irving's Tales of a Traveler and was in the 1912 sale of his estate as an untitled work referred to parenthetically as Wilford in Bed.[16]

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The majority of Quidor's Irving subjects are indicative of nineteenth-century New York's continued fascination with its own highly romanticized Dutch origins. Thanks largely to Irving, New Yorkers were conscious of the gradual disappearance of the last vestiges of Dutch culture around them.[17] While his work created a ready caricature of this most "old fashioned" of all the ethnic groups that were coming to comprise New York, the descendants of Dutch settlers remained at the very top of the city's increasingly complex social hierarchy, as Irving indeed pointed out in the final paragraphs of Wolfert's tale:

> In fact, Wolfert Webber was one of those many worthy Dutch burghers of the Manhattoes whose fortunes have been made, in a manner, in spite of themselves. Who have tenaciously held on to their hereditary acres, raising turnips and cabbages about the skirt of the city . . . until the corporation has cruelly driven streets through their abodes, and they have suddenly . . . to their astonishment, found themselves rich men.[18]

Some minor interest in Quidor's work was revived at the end of the nineteenth century as collectors became curious about early American art. One writer for The Collector commented clairvoyantly:

> The time will no doubt come when some digger-up of the unconsidered trifles of history will compile a record of our minor painters of fifty years ago. . . . One of these latter, and perhaps the most interesting of them all, was John Quidor. He was a man of great natural talent, a lively imagination and a genuine feeling for color, but his days were not the good days for art in New York. . . .[19]

Among the collectors drawn to Quidor's work at the time was Colonel Henry T. Chapman, whose six works by the artist were on view intermittently at the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences from 1897 to 1912 in its ongoing loan exhibition of paintings.[20]

1. The New York Dutchman, Diedrich Knickerbocker, was the invented author of Irving's first book, A History of New York from the Beginning of the World to the End of the Dutch Dynasty (1809). Included in the last section of Tales of a Traveller were the stories: "Hell Gate," "Kidd the Pirate," The Devil and Tom Walker," "Wolfert Webber, or Golden Dreams," and "The Adventure of the Black Fisherman"; see Washington Irving, Tales of a Traveller, by Geoffry Crayon, Gent., ed. Judith Giblin Haig, (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1987).

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2. Irving, Tales of a Traveller, 227.

3. Ibid., 231.

4. Ibid., 243. Wolfert finds old Sam at his cabin, "which was not much larger than a tolerable dog house. It was rudely constructed of fragments of wrecks and drift wood, and built on the rocky shore, at the foot of the old fort, just about what at present forms the point of the Battery." See ibid., 251.

5. Ibid., 255.

6. Ibid., 259.

7. Ibid., 257.

8. Christopher Kent Wilson has suggested inconclusively that the model for this nocturnal scene was the British artist Joseph Wright of Derby's The Earthstopper on the Banks of the Derwent, 1773 (Derby Museums and Art Gallery), possibly known to Quidor through a copy or print; see Christopher Kent Wilson, "Engraved Sources for Quidor's Early Work," American Art Journal 8 (November 1976): 22-23.

9. Irving, Tales of a Traveller, 255.

10. "Miscellaneous Notices of Literature, Fine Arts, Sciences, the Drama, & c.," American Monthly Magazine (July 1833): 330-31.

11. "American Academy of the Fine Arts: Fifteenth Exhibition," New-York Mirror 10 (June 15, 1833): 398.

12. See Catalogue of Picture, Statuary and Bronzes in the Gallery of Joseph Harrison, Jr., Rittenhouse Square, Philadelphia (Philadelphia: privately printed, 1870), no. 63; and Paintings, Statuary, etc. The Remainder of the Collection of the Late Joseph Harrison, Jr... (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Art Galleries, 1912), no. 39.

13. See Christopher Kent Wilson, "The Life and Work of John Quidor," Ph.D. diss., Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, 1982, 180.

14. Irving, Tales of a Traveller, 263.

15. Ibid., 262-63.

16. See Catalogue of Pictures, Statuary and Bronzes, no. 64; and Paintings, Statuary, etc., no. 37.

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17. Wilson deals creatively with this issue in his article, "John Quidor's The Return of Rip Van Winkle at the National Gallery of Art: The Interpretation of an American Myth," American Art Journal 19 (1987): 23-45.

18. Irving, Tales of a Traveller, 263-64.

19. "Midsummer Drift and Dust," Collector 6 (1 August, 1895): 268.

Christopher Kent Wilson, "Engraved Sources for Quidor's Early Work," American Art Journal 8 (November 1976): 22-23.

20. As noted in John I. H. Baur, John Quidor (Utica, New York: Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute, 1965) 66.

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Theodore Robinson (June 3, 1852-April 2, 1896)

The Watering Pots, 1890

Oil on canvas

21 13/16 x 17 7/8 inches (55.9 x 45.8 cm)

Signed lower right: "Th. Robinson/ 1890"

21.47, Museum Collection Fund

A Paris-trained artist and intimate of the great French Impressionist Claude Monet (1840-1926) from the late 1880s, Theodore Robinson was among the first Americans to practice an Impressionist aesthetic. The Watering Pots, one of several variations by Robinson on the subject of the model Josephine Trognon near an open cistern in a Giverny garden, is fully representative of the features of his personal interpretation of Impressionism. As in most of his figure subjects, Robinson here allowed the woman's form a firmness and solidity that counters his description of evanescent effects of light on the garden backdrop. The stone cistern and carefully drawn watering pots have a similar solidity. Robinson's resistance to the dissolution of such forms into areas of more continuously Impressionistic brushwork has been attributed both to the persistent effects of his academic training and to his regular use of photography as a compositional aid.

In a seminal article on Robinson's engagement with the photographic medium, John I. H. Baur noted that Robinson was using photography by the early 1880s and that he continued to employ it consistently throughout his years of Impressionist work in France.[1] His motivation stemmed in part from financial constraints; he often saved money on models by documenting various poses with photographs in his initial phase of work on

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a painting.[2] Though the exact photograph used by Robinson for Brooklyn's picture is not available today, correspondences between his other photographs and paintings suggest that a photograph exactly matching The Watering Pots did exist. In accordance with his usual method when he followed a photographic model, Robinson here initially transferred the photographed composition to canvas by means of a scored drawing. As Baur again has explained, Robinson customarily returned to the plein-air setting after this preliminary step to complete work on the painting out-of-doors, in keeping with his regard for Impressionist practice.

In comparison to the other known, finished versions of this subject--a horizontal format of the same title (18 x 22 inches; Private Collection); and a vertical, At the Fountain (Josephine in the Garden) (32 x 26 inches; Canajoharie Library and Art Gallery, Canajoharie, New York)--the figure in the Brooklyn version has greater weight and emphasis, and is set in a seemingly more shallow space. The effects of sunlight and shadow in the foreground appear to refer to the photographic model. In both foreground and background, however, where the brushwork is more thoroughly Impressionistic and attains more prominence than the discrete forms, Robinson disregarded the many finer details of form and texture documented by the camera.

Robinson's application of paint is surprisingly thin, given the Impressionist bent he had decided to pursue. He shed light on his own Impressionist aesthetic when he later remarked about his mentor's encrusted Rouen Cathedral series, "I . . . like best the Monets of an earlier date, when he is always thinner, get[s] there with more ease . . . ."[3] The thinness of the paint layer in The Watering Pots is particularly apparent in the foreground, where the scored pencil lines are visible to the eye. The relatively muted

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palette, in which the blues and pinks in the foreground play off of the green and yellows in the background, is typical of Robinson's work.

Robinson enjoyed largely positive reviews of his work in part because of his close personal and aesthetic ties to Monet, the most enthusiastically accepted French Impressionist in turn-of-the century America. One reviewer of the National Academy of Design annual exhibition of 1890, in which The Watering Pots was among Robinson's entries, linked his work to both Monet and Camille Pissarro (1830-1903) and commented further: "Over a more or less careful drawing [Robinson places] a mosaic of small touches of pure color, depending on distance to make them blend and harmonize. When well done, as in Mr. Robinson's pictures, the result is a brilliantly natural effect of out-of-doors light and atmosphere. The impression is what Mr. Robinson gets from nature, and in his 'Watering-Pots' and 'Bird's-Eye View' he succeeds in communicating it to his spectator."[4] The omission of Robinson from the more mainstream reviews of the exhibition in New York newspapers is hardly surprising, given the progressive quality of the work; only The Sun mentioned him in a summation of entries worth noting.[5]

Robinson had the good fortune to find a buyer for the painting in the enlightened philanthropist, art patron, and Brooklyn Institute president Frank L. Babbott. A regular visitor to Robinson's studio from 1891, Babbott appears to have purchased his first work by the artist, The Bridge with Père Trognon watering his horse, in July 1893.[6] Robinson recorded another visit that November: "[Mr. Babbott] liked more some of the French things--sunlight . . . ." When Babbott returned just several days later and took five canvases home for consideration, Robinson wrote excitedly that "he is daft on sunlight effects, and likes some of mine very much."[7] Babbott purchased The Watering Pots on

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December 8, for the sum of $250. The two men maintained a lively friendship throughout the remaining years of Robinson's life, and Babbott continued to value the painter's opinion.[8] While Robinson's work generally appreciated in value in the decades immediately following his death, the rise was neither consistent nor continuous. When The Watering Pots sold again, to John S. Radway, in 1921, the auction price was $210.[9]

1. John I. H. Baur, Theodore Robinson, 1852-1895 (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Museum, 1946), 321-22.

2. Ibid., 330. In 1895, his last year of work, Robinson regretted his earlier, heavy reliance on photography in place of time with live models, and included in his New Year's resolutions: "sparing myself no pains of time or expense (models, etc.). In the past, too many things began well enough, but too much photo, too little model, time, etc." Theodore Robinson, January 1, 1895, Unpublished diaries, (March 1892-March 1896), Frick Art Reference Library, New York.

3. Robinson, diary entry for March 4, 1896.

4. "The Academy of Design," American Art Review 24 (January 1890): 31.

5. "Pictures at the National Academy of Design: Second Notice," New York Sun, April 24, 1890, 6.

6. Robinson, diary entry for July 6, 1893.

7. Ibid., diary entry for November 20 and December 8, 1893.

8. In February of 1895, for example, Robinson accompanied the collector to the Inness estate sale in order to help him select works to bid on; ibid., February 11, 1895.

9. "Combination Picture Sale," Art News 15 (January 27, 1917): 8.

PROVENANCE: The artist to Frank L. Babbott in 1893; Edward G. O'Reilly, to 1917; through American Art Association, January 24, 1917, cat. no. 53; to John S. Radway, to 1921; to Brooklyn Museum of Art

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Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, 1891, Annual Exhibition, cat. no. 251.

Boston Art Club, 1892, Annual Exhibition, cat. no. 111.

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Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service, 1982, American Impressionism, cat. no. 52. Traveled.

The Parrish Art Museum, Southampton, New York, 1990, A Celebration of American Ideals: Paintings from the Brooklyn Museum, cat. Traveled.

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Willows, circa 1892

Oil on canvas

17 ¾ x 21 ½ inches (45.6 x 55.1 cm)

14.550, Gift of George D. Pratt

PROVENANCE: Estate of the artist; through American Art Association, New York, Oil Paintings and Studies by the Late Theodore Robinson, March 24, 1898, cat. no. 17; to George D. Pratt, Brooklyn; to the Brooklyn Museum.

EXHIBITED:

The Brooklyn Museum, 1932, Exhibition of Paintings by American Impressionists and Other Artists of the Period, 1880-1900, cat. no. 94.

Macbeth Galleries, New York, 1943, Theodore Robinson, cat. no. 18.

The of Art, 1946, Theodore Robinson, 1852-1896, cat. no. 259.

Florence Lewison Gallery, New York, 1962, Theodore Robinson, cat. no. 7.

The Baltimore Museum of Art, 1973, Theodore Robinson, 1852-1896, cat. no. 37.

Traveled.

A French Hamlet, circa 1893

Oil on canvas

15 11/16 x 25 7/16 inches (40.2 x 65.3 cm)

14.578, Gift of George D. Pratt

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PROVENANCE: Estate of the artist; through American Art Galleries, Oil Paintings and Studies by the Late Theodore Robinson, March 24, 1898, cat. no. 11, to George D. Pratt, Brooklyn; to the Brooklyn Museum.

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Y.W.C.A., Greenpoint Branch, 1938, Long-term loan.

Hofstra College, Hempstead, 1959, 18th and 19th Century Painting from the Brooklyn Museum Collection.

Office of Deputy Mayor T. Costello, 1970 to 1972, Long-term loan.

The Brooklyn Museum, 1960, Victoriana: An Exhibition of the Arts of the Victorian Era in America, cat. no. 203.

The Brooklyn Museum, 1975, Americans Abroad.

Beginning about 1892, during his last extended sojourn in Giverny, Robinson executed a number of views of an old whitewashed mill that stood not far from the river Epte and the stone bridge that had served as the setting for his La Débacle (Marie at the Little Bridge) that same year (Scripps College, Claremont, California). He recorded work on mill subjects from August through November 1892, and on November 29 he noted that he had taken two photographs of the site in preparation for his impending return to New York, where he clearly intended to continue to work with the theme.[1]

Willows, presumably the earlier of the two Giverny mill subjects in Brooklyn's collection, is among the most freely Impressionist of Robinson's works. The composition is very deliberately asymmetrical, with the cropped forms of the willows and the mill heavily weighting the right side of the canvas. The relatively shallow pictorial space,

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compressed between the foreground and background screens of trees, lends particular emphasis to the two-dimensionality of the image, as does Robinson's very broad and lively broken brushwork. Two-dimensionality holds greater sway in this work in the absence of figures and suppression of architecture--two elements that Robinson habitually defined as substantial volumes. Here the strongest forms are the broadly brushed willows which provide a foil for the more evanescent surfaces of the grasses and greenery, and are described with feathery, directional touches in a limited palette of green and blue tones.

A French Hamlet is a far more conventionally composed view of the scene, with the architectural element occupying the middle ground and the background receding beyond it. When Robinson painted the mill site on at least two other occasions, he employed the curve of the fence-lined dirt road to animate the composition, as in The Old Mill (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York), for example. Here the arrangement is almost statically horizontal and lacking in the more progressive formal arrangement and vigorous execution of Willows. The paint surface has a rough quality overall rather than the breezy animation of the former canvas. An interesting aspect of A French Hamlet is the relatively dark, reddish-toned underpaint that Robinson allowed to remain visible; the character of this underlying paint layer contrasts markedly with the pale, whitish underpaint that Robinson appears to have used regularly in such definitively French canvases as The Watering Pots.

Both of these works remained in Robinson's studio at the time of his death. They were purchased from the 1898 sale of his estate by the Brooklyn collector George B. Pratt.

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1. Robinson recorded his work on the mill subjects in France on August 5, and November 14 and 17. He made the photographs on November 29. He also noted work on a mill picture in New York on January 23, 1893; see Theodore Robinson, unpublished diaries (March 1892-March 1896), Frick Art Reference Library, New York.

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Albert Pinkham Ryder (March 19, 1847-March 28, 1917)

The Shepherdess, early 1880s

Oil on panel

10 1/8 x 6 3/4 inches(25.7 x 17.3 cm)

Signed verso upper center (at time of purchase): "Albert P. Ryder/ Nov 12 1914"

14.553, Frederick Loeser Fund

Regarded as a visionary, an eccentric, and one of the greatest of American painters, Albert Pinkham Ryder created a body of highly distilled and evocative imagery based on artistic precedent, literature, and his own profoundly poetic sensibilities. This very delicately rendered and lyrical early figure subject grew out of the decorative commissions Ryder completed for the dealer Daniel Cottier during the late 1870s and early 1880s. In composing the image he drew heavily on the ethereal pastorals of French painter Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot (1796-1875), whose work was growing immensely popular in America at the time and was regularly imported by Cottier.

Ryder undertook decorative commissions for Cottier by 1876, when he completed a three-panel screen painted on gilded leather (National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution) in which the central subject was the draped nude figure of a woman seated within the decorative forms of a grotto. Such commissions led Ryder to new experiments in his easel work, including this panel in which he applied the paint over a layer of gold leaf. The gold layer, visible in small passages, contributes to the bright effect of the image, an effect Ryder sought in other works of the period, including Dancing Dryads (circa 1880, National Museum of American Art), which his friend Charles De Kay described as "a very blonde picture . . . ."[1]

In addition to palette, Dancing Dryads and The Shepherdess share other important qualities, including the idealized character of the subject and a deliberate and graceful

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refinement of forms. Ryder dressed his shepherdess in a slight costume that is almost Rococo in flavor, and placed a small set of pan-pipes in her hand. This figure would have moved more easily into a pastoral scene by Corot than into one of Ryder's own, earlier rural settings. Corot's influence is visible not only in the tenor of the subject, but in the execution as well. The pale and beautifully drawn figure appears before a broadly suggested, atmospheric landscape to which Ryder added defining linear touches. The trees are particularly Corot-like in character.

Perhaps the most pleasing aspect of the image is Ryder's carefully refined use of a fluid brown outline in defining the figure. While he had employed evocative outlines in earlier works they were usually heavier and more labored in character. Here his line is distinguished by a degree of subtlety especially notable in the playfully decorative description of the sheep and the exquisitely precise silhouette of the head. As in the Dancing Dryads, Ryder combined this linear element with a wonderfully suggestive use of studied but abbreviated modeling in a limited range of pale browns and blues.

Ryder created more emphatically ethereal effects in contemporaneous works like Spring (1879, Toledo Museum of Art), in which a barely legible female figure evanesces in the foreground of a glowing, atmospheric landscape rendered in a similarly blonde palette. Though he returned to the theme of the single female figure in a landscape setting on numerous occasions in later works like his The Little Maid of Arcady (Collection Mr. and Mrs, Daniel W. Dietrich II), The Shepherdess remains unmatched in the light and delicate refinement of its execution. The panel was owned by Ryder's friend, employer and patron Daniel Cottier, and was lent by him to the Third Prize Fund Exhibition mounted at the American Art Galleries, new York, in 1887. It was subsequently one of six works by Ryder sold to The Museum by Walter P. Fearon, of Cottier and Company, London in 1914, at which time Ryder authenticated and signed the work.

1. Henry Eckford [Charles De Kay], "A Modern Colorist: Albert Pinkham Ryder," Century Magazine 40 (June 1890): 259.

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PROVENANCE: The Artist; to Cottier and Company, New York; to Cottier and Company, London; through Mr. Fearon (of Cottier and Company) to The Brooklyn Museum.

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M. Knoedler & Co., New York, 1939, "Two American Romantics of the Nineteenth Century: Robert Loftin Newman and Albert Pinkham Ryder," cat. no. 3.

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Gilbert Stuart (December 3, 1755-July 9, 1828)

George Washington, 1796

Oil on canvas

96 1/16 x 60 3/4 inches (244.5 x 153 cm)

45.179, Dick S. Ramsay and Museum Purchase Funds

The master of an exuberantly fluid style of portraiture, Gilbert Stuart achieved a renown and influence that endured in America from the 1790s well into the nineteenth century. Brooklyn's George Washington by Stuart is one of the three earliest versions of the full-length likeness of the first American president known as Gilbert Stuart's Lansdowne type. This version was commissioned in 1796 by the wealthy, Irish-born New York merchant and landowner William Kerin Constable (1751-1803). Constable's son-in-law, the prominent distillery owner Hezekiah Beers Pierrepont of Brooklyn, purchased the painting in 1812, and it descended through the Pierrepont family until 1945.

The commission for the first version of the Lansdowne portrait (Collection of Lord Rosebery, on loan to the National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.) originated with the wealthy Philadelphian and Washington intimate William Bingham (1752-1804), who wished to present the portrait on behalf of his wife to the British Lord Lansdowne (1737-1805) (the Earl of Shelburne), a great supporter of Washington's Revolutionary cause.[1] According to a letter from Washington to Stuart, sittings for the portrait head, arranged through the persuasive offices of Mrs. Bingham, began on April 12, 1796.[2] The first version was completed by October, when Bingham recorded having shipped it to London; and in a letter dated March 5, 1797, Lord Lansdowne acknowledged his receipt of the work.[3] The painting remained in his possession until his death in 1805. In 1800 the British printmaker James Heath released and sold an engraving after the portrait without Stuart's permission.

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Confusion arose by the early nineteenth century about the number and order of subsequent versions painted by Stuart, and the subject remains an issue of lively debate today. Stuart's biographer William Whitley blamed some of the confusion on the early American art historian and dealer Charles Henry Hart (1847-1918). In 1896--twenty years after seeing Lord Lansdowne's version exhibited at the Philadelphia Centennial alongside the signed and dated version that Bingham had commissioned for himself in 1796 (and which he gave to the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, in 1811), Hart designated Bingham's the original and Lansdowne's the replica. He made this judgment despite his knowledge of a document from 1823 in Stuart's hand stating the opposite.[4]

Another sequence of versions had meanwhile been established in 1879 by George C. Mason in his Life and Works of Gilbert Stuart. Mason designated the Lansdowne and Constable (Brooklyn's) versions the earliest pictures, followed by the Bingham version and a fourth replica for a Mr. Gardner Baker of New York (location unknown). Hardly conclusive, Mason's theory relied in part on the oral tradition of the Constable-Pierrepont family.[5] According to Constable's daughter, Anna Maria Pierrepont, her father visited Stuart in Philadelphia in 1796 to sit for his own portrait (William Kerin Constable [The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York]) and, on seeing the Lansdowne picture in progress, requested that Stuart execute a second version simultaneously, while Washington was still giving sittings: "Stuart who was well acquainted with my father, promised both pictures should be worked on alternately, so that both should be originals."[6] As a former officer in the Continental army and an ardent supporter of Washington, Constable had good reason to want his own monumental portrait of the president. Anna Maria Pierrepont noted that he was so eager to see the piece finished that he subsequently visited Philadelphia twice to watch the painting's progress and, "to encourage the procrastinating artist[,] . . . had him invited to many dinner parties. . . ."[7] Stuart received Constable's payment of $500 for the finished picture on July 13, 1797.[8]

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Evidence in the form of a diary entry by the Baltimorean Robert Gilmor indicates that later in the month the Bingham version mentioned above was still in Stuart's studio.[9] Knowledge of the presumably even later Baker version stems from Baker's advertisement of the picture in February 1798, as he was about to place it on exhibition in New York.[10]

Mason's account of the versions has been supported more recently by technical studies of the Lansdowne-type portraits carried out by Marion F. Mecklenberg and Justine S. Wimsatt. They judged the Constable version to be "less developed" than the original Lansdowne but more developed than the Bingham version in terms of "density and brilliance of color." They note as well that in the Constable version, Stuart continued to develop the composition (in adjustments made to the tabletop and Washington's legs), though to a lesser degree than in the original.[11] They write of the Bingham version: "It belies the artist's tendency to employ increasingly economic methods. The drapery and cloth are suggested rather than fully modeled, and, as is characteristic of the Constable version, the furnishings are much less finished. There are virtually no indications of indecision on the part of the artist, and this painting, in a structural sense, is a complete replica."[12]

While Stuart was called upon to paint far fewer full-length portraits after his return to America than in Britain, works like his John, Lord Fitzgibbon, of 1789, (The Cleveland Museum of Art) had prepared him to undertake portraiture in the grand manner. Intent on demonstrating his superior talents in this representation of Washington as preeminent statesman, Stuart chose an ambitious model for the composition in Pierre Drevet's 1723 engraving after Hyacinthe Rigaud's theatrical Baroque portrait of Bishop Jacob Bossuet. He used a simplified version of the backdrop of paired columns with fluttering drapery and hanging tassels, and placed the President beside an ornate desk and chair, with books at his feet. Washington appears in civilian dress, though he still carries the sword symbolic of his military triumphs. The furniture, the details of which were Stuart's own invention, also bears reference to the President's military past in forms of

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eagles on the table leg; the lower legs of the table and chair, shaped in the form of faces symbolic of the Roman senate, denote Washington's role as a head of state. The volumes leaning against the desk leg are Richard Snowden's American Revolution, a history of the Revolution written in the style of ancient histories and published in Philadelphia in 1793-94, and Constitution and Laws of the United States; The Federalist, a collection of eighty-five essays written in support of the United States Constitution by Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, and James Madison that was published in 1787 to influence New York voters, is standing on the table. Stuart painted a rainbow in the distant sky, visible behind the figure, as a symbol of the peace after the storm of the Revolution. The various symbolic features of the painting were addressed in Gardner Baker's advertisement for the exhibition of his replica of the portrait in New York in 1798: "[Washington] is surrounded with allegorical emblems of his public life in the service of his country, which are highly illustrative of the great and tremendous storms which have frequently prevailed. These storms have abated and the appearance of a rainbow is introduced in the background as a sign."[13]

The rather awkward disposition of the figure, especially in comparison to Stuart's earlier, less rigid full-lengths, gave rise to early speculation regarding the identity of the model. The head, modeled on the 1796 life study known as the Athenaeum Portrait (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston), is built up in Stuart's customary fluid manner from grayish tones to liquid layers of pink with accents in dark red. There is a pronounced summary quality to certain passages in the painting, including the unmodulated surfaces of the gray wall and columns and the black velvet clothes. The folds of red drapery in the background and on the table are very simply described, as is the broadly painted design of the Oriental carpet on the floor. Stuart reserved his most exuberant touches for the description of the gilt furniture, where he added highlights in large, lively touches of red and yellow. Other details including the books and papers are broadly described.

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Anna Maria Constable Pierrepont recorded that, after her father's death in 1803, the portrait was willed to her brother William Constable of Schenectady but was transferred from the Constable house on Broadway (which was sold to John Jacob Astor) to her own home in Brooklyn Heights.[14] She and her husband purchased the picture from her brother for $600 in 1812 and at that time bought a new frame that "was so arranged that in case of fire the canvass could be easily slipped out of the case and saved."[15] She noted as well that Washington's great ally, General Lafayette, had the opportunity to study the picture during his visit to Brooklyn in 1824.[16]

The Constable version assumed a public life of its own during the nineteenth century. It was the object of criticism at the time of its exhibition in 1817 at New York's American Academy of Fine Arts when a reviewer for the American Monthly Magazine and Critical Review commented:

> This is either the copy or the original of the picture painted for Lord Lansdown [sic]. . . . We have seen a full length portrait of Washington, by Stewart [sic] . . . in the possession of Peter Jay Munroe, Esq. It is not only a better picture, but it is much more like the person and face of Washington. . . . In [the Constable version], a disagreeable protuberance of the under lip may be observed, and a deficiency of chin very unfavorable to the physiognomy.[17]

The remarks prompted a response in the Boston Intelligencer, in which the writer argued at length that the Constable version indeed was not by Stuart.[18] The author of the original exhibition review in turn offered a correction to the Intelligencer stating the particulars of the Constable commission and suggesting that the Boston correspondent might easily have contacted Stuart to discuss the matter.[19] The Constable version thereafter remained above suspicion and was further vindicated in 1824, when it was included in Colonel John Trumbull's (1756-1843) publication of a list of "Original Busts and Portraits of Washington" in the Atlantic Magazine.[20]

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Stuart's rendering of Washington's mouth and lower jaw in the Lansdowne-type portraits remained an issue into mid-century, in part because of the comments of Rembrandt Peale in his frequent lectures on Washington portraits.[21] The subject also arose in a piece reprinted from the Boston Post in 1857 under the title "Washington's Artificial Teeth." Addressing "the peculiarity of the Stuart picture . . . the wide, unexpressive, grand-motherly mouth," the writer stated that the false teeth were indeed the cause of the distortion and added: "The fault was not Stuart's, who painted his illustrious sitter as he found him; but he had the misfortune to attempt the hero's likeness 'in spite of his teeth,' and the result was such as might be expected."[22]

The painting was hung in a series of subsequent exhibitions of note, including an exhibition of Washington portraits held at the American Art-Union to raise funds for the New York Gallery of the Fine Arts in 1853 (see further exhibition listings below). It was relined and cleaned in 1855 by S. M. McDermott of New York.[23] Henry E. Pierrepont had the portrait reframed in 1856 at the cost of $700.[24] Nearly a hundred years later, in 1945, The Brooklyn Museum began a short-lived subscription drive to purchase the painting for the permanent collection. It was purchased with Museum funds later that year and was unveiled with great ceremony on February 21, 1947.

Recorded copies after the Constable version of Stuart's Washington include a half-length portrait executed in 1841 by H. F. Prime for the Common Counsel Room of the city of Hudson, New York; and a full-length copy painted in the Pierrepont home by James Frothingham in 1845.[25] Anna Maria Pierrepont arranged for an engraving after the picture to be executed by H. B. Hall in 1856.[26]

1. William Whitley's 1932 discussion of the Landsdowne portraits remains the most helpful account of the commission, though Whitley erroneously ascribed the original commission to Lord Lansdowne himself; see William T. Whitley, Gilbert Stuart (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1932), 96-101. This assertion is difficult to substantiate, especially in light of a draft of Stuart's letter to Lansdowne in which he delicately protested the liberty the latter had taken in allowing an unapproved engraving of the work to be made a number of years later. Stuart began: "It was, therefore, with

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peculiar pleasure, that I found myself invited by Mr. Bingham to take the portrait of president Washington. . . . "; quoted in George C. Mason, The Life and Works of Gilbert Stuart (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1879), 95.

2. See Washington's letter of April 11, 1796, quoted in full in Whitley, Gilbert Stuart, 197: "I am under a promise to Mrs. Bingham to sit to you tomorrow at nine o'clock, and wishing to know if it be convenient to you that I should do so, and whether it should be at your own house (as she talked of the State House). I send this note to ask you information."

3. Both letters are quoted in ibid., as is the description of the picture that appeared in London's Oracle and Public Advertiser on May 15, 1797. Bingham described the picture as a gift from his wife to Lord Lansdowne; see ibid., 99-100.

4. Whitley notes that Hart earlier had described the Lansdowne version as the original but in 1896 published a revised opinion, in which he stated, "Too much stress cannot be placed upon the fact that the Pennsylvania Academy canvas is signed and dated"; See Charles Henry Hart, "Stuart's Lansdowne Portrait of Washington," Harper's New Monthly Magazine 93 (August 1896): 378. Hart's opinion was accepted by Lawrence Park in his 1926 catalogue of Stuart's work. The document in Stuart's hand was a letter in which he stated that Samuel Williams, the owner of the Lansdowne version by 1823, "owns the only original painting I ever made of Washington, except one I own myself"; see Whitley, Gilbert Stuart, 196-98.

5. See George C. Mason, The Life and Works of Gilbert Stuart (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1879), 97-98. Mason's correspondence with Henry E. Pierrepont during his preparation of the manuscript is included in Pierrepont Papers.

6. "Memorandums and recollections in relation to the full-length picture of General Washington, Painted by Gilbert Stuart in 1796, for my father William Constable. Mrs. Pierrepont's Memorandum. Dated 1849," 2, Pierrepont Family, Papers Related to Gilbert Stuart's Portrait of George Washington, Library, Brooklyn Museum of Art (hereafter cited as Pierrepont Papers).

7. Ibid.

8. The invoice made out by Constable listed the portrait of himself with the date November 1796 and both the full-length and a half-length of Washington with the date July 4, 1797. The prices for the latter were written in Stuart's hand. Both the invoice and Stuart's receipt are included in the Pierrepont Papers.

9. See John Hill Morgan and Mantle Fielding, The Life Portraits of Washington and Their Replicas (Lancaster, Pennsylvania: Lancaster Press, 1931).

10. Whitley, Gilbert Stuart, 107-8.

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11. See Marion F. Mecklenburg and Justine S. Wimsatt, "The White House Full Length Portrait of George Washington by Gilbert Stuart: Conservation Treatment Report and Commentary" (Kensington, Maryland: Washington Conservation Studio, 1978), 15. This study was initiated in order to determine the status of the White House version. Their examinations failed to corroborate Marvin Sadik's assertion that only the head of the Constable version was in Stuart's hand; see Sadik, quoted in Milton Esterow, "Who Painted the George Washington Portrait in the White House?" Art News 14 (February 1975): 27.

12. Mecklenburg and Wimsatt, "White House Full Length Portrait," 16.

13. Baker's advertisement published in The Time Piece, February 7, 1798; quoted in Whitley, Gilbert Stuart, 108.

14. "Memorandums and recollections," 3, Pierrepont Papers. According to Moffat 1913, Hezekiah B. Pierrepont purchased the Benson farm and mansion (on Montague Street) in 1804 and subsequently added adjacent properties amounting to 60 acres with 800 feet of frontage on the East River. See Moffat 1913, 161.

15. "Memorandums and recollections," 3, Pierrepont Papers.

16. Ibid., 4. Another subject of conversation at the time was Washington's use of the Pierrepont home as his headquarters after the battle of Long Island.

17. See W., "Article 7: Review and Register of the Fine Arts," American Monthly Magazine and Critical Review 1 (July 1817): 200. The author is grateful to Carrie Rebora of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, for sharing her research on the exhibitions held by the American Academy.

18. Reprinted in "Stuart's Picture of Washington," New-York Evening Post, August 7, 1817, 2.

19. "Mr. Coleman," New-York Evening Post, August 16, 1817, 2.

20. First printed in pamphlet form, Trumbull's list also was reprinted in the 1853 catalogue for The Washington Exhibition, in Aid of the New-York Gallery of the Fine Arts (New York: American Art-Union, 1853), 10.

21. Peale was delivering his lecture on Washington and his portraits regularly by the 1850s. The denture issue was most notably the object of discussion in Isaac J. Greenwood, "Remarks on the Portraiture of Washington," Magazine of American History 2 (January 1878). Greenwood includes quotes from Henry T. Tuckerman and an article published in the Philadelphia Bulletin in 1850.

22. "Gleanings and Items: Washington's Artificial Teeth," Crayon 4 (March 1857): 93.

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23. Bill from S. M. McDermott to Henry E. Pierrepont, December 24, 1855, Pierrepont Papers.

24. Bill from Williams, Stevens, and Williams & Co., New York, to Henry E. Pierrepont, November 11, 1856, Pierrepont Papers.

25. According to Anna Marie Pierrepont, Frothingham subsequently gave his copy to A. A. Low, of Brooklyn; and a copy of his own copy to the city of Brooklyn; see "Memorandums and Recollections," 5, Pierrepont Papers.

26. H. B. Hall to Henry E. Pierrepont, February 12, 1856, Pierrepont Papers.

PROVENANCE: Purchased from the artist in 1797 by William Kerin Constable, New York;, to his son William Constable, New York, in 1803; sold to his brother-in-law, Hezekiah Beers Pierrepont (1768-1838), Brooklyn, in 1812; to his widow, Anna Maria Pierrepont, Brooklyn, in 1848; to her son, Henry Evelyn Pierrepont, Brooklyn, in 1902; to his son Robert Low Pierrepont, New York, in 1911; to Mrs. Robert Low Pierrepont and John Jay Pierrepont; sold through M. Knoedler and Co., New York, to The Brooklyn Museum.

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American Academy of Fine Arts, New York, 1817, The Second Exhibition, cat. no. 52.

The Brooklyn Institute, 1843, Annual Exhibition of the Brooklyn Institute, cat. no. 45.

American Art-Union, New York, 1853, The Washington Exhibition, in Aid of The New-York Gallery of the Fine Arts, cat. no. 90.

Brooklyn Art Association, 1864, Brooklyn and Long Island Fair in Aid of the United States Sanitary Commission, cat. no. 1.

Brooklyn Art Association, 1872, First Chronological Exhibition of American Art, cat. no. 98.

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Metropolitan Opera House, New York, 1889, Loan Exhibition of Historical Portraits, Centennial of Washington's Inauguration, cat. no. 32.

The Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences, 1897, Opening Exhibition, cat. no. 308.

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The Brooklyn Museum, 1917, Exhibition of Early American Paintings, cat. no. 103.

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M. Knoedler and Co., New York, 1938, Masterpieces of American Historical Portraiture, cat. no. 9.

M. Knoedler and Co., New York, 1939, Loan Exhibition of Portraits of George Washington and Other Eighteenth-Century Americans, cat. no. 2.

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Louis Comfort Tiffany (February 18, 1848-January 17, 1933)

On the Way between Old and New Cairo, Citadel Mosque of Mohammed Ali, and Tombs of the Mamelukes, 1872

Oil on canvas

41 x 67 7/16 inches (105.1 x 172.9 cm)

Signed lower left: "Louis C. Tiffany."

06.329, Gift of George Foster Peabody

Undoubtedly inspired by the plethora of exotic subjects on view in the mid-century Paris Salons, On the Way between Old and New Cairo is one of a handful of large-scale orientalist subjects completed by Tiffany in the early 1870s, shortly after his return from a tour of the Middle East with his colleague Samuel Colman.[1] His frieze-like orchestration of the subject and the prominence of the carefully designed architectural backdrop reveal both the influence of Colman's compositional habits and Tiffany's own reliance on the panoramic photographic views he compiled during his travels abroad.

Tiffany may have developed an enthusiasm for drawing architecture in landscape settings as a result of his travels with Colman, who often used finely drawn architectural forms (or boats, in the case of his Hudson River views of the mid-sixties) as the focus of broad and more generally described landscape views. Both Tiffany and Colman were undoubtedly influenced in their choice of subjects by such French orientalists as Adolphe August Bélly (1827-1877) and Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824-1904), whose works they would have seen in Paris. Tiffany's particular choice of subject in the work was rather unusual, however, given that the site and its relatively "modern" monuments were not among the period's most highly touted touristic attractions. Desert vistas and Nile views, often studded with the monuments of ancient Egypt, and mosque interiors were by far the more popular subjects of the period. Here, the primary architectural focus is the vast

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nineteenth-century mosque of Mohammed Ali (also known as the Alabaster Mosque), atop the Citadel, a medieval walled town just outside of Cairo. Mohammed Ali (1769-1849) wrested control of the Citadel from the Turkish pasha in 1805. Established as the viceroy of Egypt in 1811, he initiated the building of the mosque on the site in 1824. It became his burial place in 1848 and was finally completed in 1857, just fifteen years before Tiffany documented the scene.

Nineteenth-century guidebooks make only passing mention of the Citadel and Alabaster Mosque. Baedecker briefly described it as a Cairo landmark;[2] and the Frenchman Gabriel Charmes added it at the end of a summary list of interesting mosques in his popular Five Months at Cairo and in Lower Egypt, noting that its "aspect" was "as magnificent as it is heavy and vulgar."[3] The same sources devoted comparatively more attention to the nearby Mameluke Tombs (the structures at the left of Tiffany's painting). The burial places of the Sultans of the Baharide Mameluke dynasty in Egypt (A.D. 1250-1376), they were considered to be of greater architectural significance. The Mameluke Tombs do figure in a number of European works of the period, including David Roberts's significantly earlier A Procession Passing the Tombs of the Caliphs in Cairo, 1846 (Private Collection); and in Jean-Léon Gérôme's Napoléon in Cairo, 1867-68 (The Art Museum, Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey), in which they serve as an eerie, deserted backdrop for a highly romanticized full-length portrait of the conqueror.[4] Contemporaneous guidebooks noted, however, that the Tombs endured in poor condition--inhabited by droves, quarried for valuable stone, and employed as modern graves. Charmes described the tomb precinct as "the most melancholy and the finest [sight] that I have ever met with," and added, "[T]he citadel, more gloomy, lifts its great walls into the azure of the sky."[5] Deeply affected by the dramatic contrast of the strong colors of earth and sky, the Frenchman described his impressions as dreamlike and illusory, and identified the Mameluke tombs as the most exquisite of Arab monuments; he

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nevertheless closed the chapter with the more customary touristic vista from the citadel, looking toward Cairo, the Nile, and the Pyramids.

Tiffany composed this work under the combined influence of Colman's aesthetic and photographic views of the period, probably relying on one of his own photographs of the site for the elements of the scene. His direct reliance on photography is documented in the case of his Market Day outside the Walls of Tangier, Morocco, 1873 (Private Collection), the work most comparable to On the Way between Old and New Cairo. He based the former on the right-hand portion of his photograph of the view, and reproduced the architectural backdrop with little alteration; he deepened the foreground and recomposed the crowd of figures entirely but based their schematic forms on the robed figures in the photograph. On the Way between Old and New Cairo suggests the same process, given the detailed character of the architectural backdrop and its relation to the figure group in the foreground. The formal relationship of foreground to background, and especially the high level of contrast between the dark mass of the figure group and the pale forms of the mosque and tombs, may also derive from the photographic image. It is interesting to note, however, that the artist made significant adjustments in the architectural forms of the tombs.

Tiffany employed the contrasting tones that had captivated Charmes during his tour of the tombs. Beneath a blue sky that turns to lavender at the horizon, the carefully drawn, terracotta-colored tombs dissolve into lavender-blue shadows. The more sharply outlined mosque shares the same palette, with the exception of the brighter white walls around its base. Basing them on numerous, small-scale oil sketches, Tiffany defined the figures--including the mounted caravan in the center--as broadly modeled masses silhouetted against the bright landscape. They are also set off by a band of roughly scumbled, pale tones that suggest rising clouds of windblown sand.

Tiffany exhibited On the Way between Old and New Cairo at the National Academy of Design annual exhibition of 1872. Reviews of the picture indicate greater

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enthusiasm for the subject matter than for Tiffany's treatment of it, a response that remained consistent throughout the decade.[6]

Tiffany apparently completed a similar view in watercolor, The Old and New Mosques, Cairo, which was exhibited at the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition of 1876.[7]

1. While Gary Reynolds (in Louis Comfort Tiffany: The Paintings [New York: Grey Art Gallery and Study Center, New York University, 1979], 15) has suggested that Tiffany first traveled to North Africa in the summer of 1870, Colman began his four-year tour of Europe and the Middle East in 1871. It is possible that Tiffany joined Colman in Egypt during the first half of that year, given that Tiffany exhibited his first North African subjects (only small studies and watercolors) in the fall of 1871.

2. Karl Baedeker, ed., Egypt: Handbook for Travellers, 4th ed. (Leipzig: K. Baedeker, 1898), 51. Baedeker treated the location similarly in an earlier, German version of his guidebook. See also Karl Baedeker, ed., Egypt: Handbook for Travellers, 2 vols. (Leipzig: K. Baedeker, 1878).

3. Gabriel Charmes, Five Months at Cairo and in Lower Egypt, trans. William Conn. (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1883), 127.

4. Gérôme occasionally used the dense rooftops and mosques of New Cairo as the backdrop for a number of orientalist genre subjects, as well.

5. Charmes, Five Months, 104-5.

6. "Fine Arts. Second Notice of the Academy Exhibition--The Studies." New York Times, April 28, 1872, 4.

7. United States Centennial Commission, International Exhibition, 1876. Official Catalogue: Department of Art (Philadelphia: John R. Nagle and Company, 1876), catalogue number 20.

PROVENANCE: George Foster Peabody, New York, to 1906; to The Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences.

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Julian Alden Weir (August 30, 1852-December 8, 1919)

The Flower Seller, circa 1879

Oil on canvas

40 x 21 15/16 inches (102.5 x 56.2 cm)

Signed upper left: "J. Alden Weir"

11.522, Gift of George A. Hearn

PROVENANCE: The artist to Francis Lathrop, New York; through The Anderson Art Galleries, New York, April 4-6, 1911, cat. no. 71, Blind Flower Seller, to George B. Wheeler, New York; George A. Hearn; to the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences.

EXHIBITED:

Society of American Artists, New York, 1879, Second Annual Exhibition, cat. no. 63.

Carnegie Institute, 1910, Sixteenth Annual Exhibition, as Flower Girl.

Carnegie Institute, 1911, Seventeenth Annual Exhibition, as Flower Girl.

Rehn Galleries, New York, 1926, An Epoch of American Art.

The Saginaw Museum, Michigan, 1948, An Exhibition of American Painting from Colonial Times to Today, cat. no. 65.

Dayton Art Institute, Ohio, 1951, America and Impressionism, cat. Traveled.

American Academy of Fine Arts, New York, 1952, J. Alden Weir: 1852-1919: Centennial Exhibition, cat. no. 28.

Cadet Fine Arts Forum of the U.S. Corps of Cadets, West Point, New York, 1976, cat. no. 90.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1983, J. Alden Weir, An American Impressionist, cat. p. 90.

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Union Square, circa 1879

Oil on canvas

29 5/8 x 24 ¾ inches (75.9 x 63.4 cm)

Signed lower right: "J Alden Weir"

26.410, Museum Collection Fund

PROVENANCE: The artist to Francis Lathrop, New York; Rehn Gallery, New York, by 1926; to the Brooklyn Museum.

EXHIBITED:

Society of American Artists, New York, 1879, Second Annual Exhibition, cat. no. 63.

Rehn Galleries, New York, 1926, An Epoch of American Art.

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1935, American Genre: The Social Scene in Painting and Prints, cat. no. 101.

Palace of Fine Arts, San Diego, 1936, California-Pacific International Exposition, cat. no. 341.

Brooklyn Museum of Art, 1937, Leaders of American Impressionism, cat. no. 73.

Lyman Allen Museum, New London, Connecticut, 1945, Thirteenth Anniversary Exhibition: Members of the Tile Club, cat. no. 172.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1951, The 75th Anniversary Exhibition of Painting and Sculpture by 75 Artists Associated with the Art Students League of New York, cat. no. 9.

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The American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York, 1952, J. Alden Weir: 1852-1919: Centennial Exhibition, cat. no. 40.

District 1199, National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees, New York, 1979, The Working American, cat. no. 41.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1983, J. Alden Weir, American Impressionist, cat. p. 90. Traveled.

The son of a successful mid-nineteenth-century American history painter, Julian Alden Weir was trained in the rigors of French academicism but established his reputation with a unique brand of American Impressionism applied to domestic subjects and the views of the Connecticut landscape. The Flower Seller and Union Square constitute two of three fragments of an ambitious and innovative early work by J. Alden Weir originally titled In the Park and exhibited by the artist in the second and particularly progressive exhibition of the Society of American Artists in 1879. Known in its complete state through an illustration published to accompany a review of the Society exhibition in The Daily Graphic,[1] In the Park demonstrated Weir's fascination with the representation of "modern life" as exemplified in works by his avant-garde French contemporaries and also confirmed his espousal and advocacy of the progressive attitudes of the young New York artists and writers who organized the Society of American Artists in 1877.

Representations of urban street life were exceedingly rare in mid-nineteenth-century American painting, and indeed only became numerous in the works of the American Impressionists during the 1890s. Weir thus had very few native examples on which to rely in composing his scene of a corner of New York's bustling Union Square,

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the location indicated by the titling (presumably his) of one of the Brooklyn fragments. His choice of this particular urban site is not entirely surprising, however, given his association with the artists and writers in the orbit of a new salon established in the East Fifteenth Street studio of the young watercolorist Helena de Kay Gilder (1846-1916) and her husband (from 1874), the poet and managing art editor of Scribner's Monthly Magazine, Richard Watson Gilder (1844-1909). From the mid-1870s, the de Kay-Gilder circle, which included Helena's brother Charles de Kay (1848-1935), a forward-thinking art critic, promoted a progressive aesthetic in fine and decorative arts; their taste was shaped in part by the French-influenced and japoniste work of William Morris Hunt and John La Farge, and their French Barbizon counterparts, whose works were regularly exhibited at Daniel Cottier's decorative-arts gallery in New York. It was indeed in the de Kay-Gilder salon that the Society of American Artists was organized in June 1877 in response to increasingly conservative tendencies of exhibition juries at the National Academy of Design. The first founders included the sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens (1848-1907) and the painters Walter Shirlaw and Wyatt Eaton. Other artists were invited to join in the months that followed, with Weir accepting membership that October.[2] Jennifer Bienenstock has suggested in her study of the Society's early years that Weir, along with William Merritt Chase, may have been enticed to return from Europe in part by the opportunities that the new organization could offer young artists.[3]

It is not surprising that Wyatt Eaton, one of the most vocal founding members and Academy opponents,[4] is present at the left of Weir's In the Park (the fragment bearing Eaton's portrait is in the collection of the National Museum of American Art, Washington, D.C.); in his comments on the painting, the writer for The Daily Graphic

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noted that the very large canvas included "an excellent portrait of Wyatt Eaton."[5] Seated and reading a newspaper on a busy urban sidewalk in or along Union Square, Eaton exudes the bohemianism that the Gilder circle championed. In 1878, for example, Charles de Kay published a novel titled The Bohemian: A Tragedy of Modern Life, whose subject was a group of young writers, the "Expressionists" who gathered in a house on Washington Square. To represent a figure at ease outdoors amid a decidedly mixed urban crowd was highly unusual in American art, and it suggests Weir's contact with such French examples as Manet's Music in the Tuileries, 1862 (The Trustees of the National Gallery, London). There and in other similarly avant-garde French paintings, urban park and cafe life were demonstrative of the freedom of modern mores.

As interesting as the portrait of Eaton is the figure that anchored the right half of Weir's original composition and that is the focus of Brooklyn's Union Square--a well-dressed young woman of graceful mien who is surrounded by rougher street types. The Brooklyn fragment shows the figure only down to the waist rather than in her former three-quarter length; among the missing details is the fancy purse that formerly hung from her left arm. Given the figure's prominence as a counterpart to Eaton and its individualized likeness, Weir may have intended the figure as a portrait of the red-headed Helena de Kay, who undoubtedly passed along the square frequently, and often in Eaton's company.

In the original canvas, Weir chose an assortment of urban types to form a dense backdrop in the compressed space just behind the primary figures: a blind beggar and young seller of violets are preserved in the Brooklyn fragment known as The Flower Seller, while the two street toughs at the right in the original are partially visible behind

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the woman in Union Square. Doreen Bolger has convincingly suggested that for this feature of the composition Weir drew on the work of the Dutch Baroque master Frans Hals (circa 1582/82-1666), including the latter's Merrymakers at Shrovetide, undated (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York), which he had seen during his student years in Paris.[6] In that famous canvas, two revelers appear before the very broadly painted figures and heads of the crowd described in the shallow space behind them. Weir also may have been familiar with any number of early Impressionist paintings in which artists including Manet and Renoir described individuals before a friezelike mass of more nebulously defined figures and heads suggestive of the crush of modern urban life.

In the Park was accorded the most prominent position in the 1879 Society of American Artists exhibition; Jennifer Bienenstock has noted additionally that the inclusion of Weir's preparatory sketch in the installation demonstrated the progressiveness of the exhibition.[7] If Society members were liberal that year, the press was relatively less so. The critic for the New-York Daily Tribune reacted negatively to the exhibition overall, citing a gratuitous lack of finish apparent particularly in the large canvases. Singling out Thomas Eakins's The Gross Clinic, 1875 (Jefferson Medical College, Thomas Jefferson University, Philadelphia) and Weir's In the Park for criticism, the writer described the latter as "a pretty subject," though unsuited for Weir's powers;[8] he characterized the Eaton figure as "a rather effeminate and self-conscious man," and the figures behind the woman as "dirty and disreputable characters." Notably, the reviewer did not find the assortment of types inappropriate for artistic representation, but rather found Weir's mode of representation lacking:

> Now a group like this, made up of so many human characters, might be an interesting picture, but Mr. Weir has not known how to arrange them so

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> that we can enjoy looking at them. The young man is not looking at the young lady, though we know he is meant to be doing so; the young lady is neither looking at the young man nor at anything, not even at the little flower girl, to accept or refuse her flowers. Part of the unseemly crowding of this composition may be charged to the want of aerial perspective, but the chief defect is a want of thought in the arrangement. . . . This might have been made a picture to please everybody.[9]

The writer for The Art Journal (who incidentally described the Eakins painting as "one of the most disgusting of modern works of Art") was somewhat more sympathetic to Weir, commenting that with the exception of the little girl there was "a good deal of fine study in the heads . . . painted with force and care." The review continued:

> The critics in the papers found much fault with the composition of this painting, but it appeared to us to lack not so much good arrangement and grouping as proper gradations of light from one face to another. . . . The young lady's face and her bonnet and blue dress were so high-keyed as to form the only real bright spot in the big, grey-hued canvas; and immediately from this unsupported mass of light the eye travelled to dim, clasped hands, and faces which formed monotonous spots in the canvas, but did not lead gradually from the darkness into the light.[10]

At some point after the exhibition, In the Park was purchased by the artist Francis Lathrop (1849-1909), a Gilder circle intimate and a founding member of the Society of American Artists who in 1876 was hired by La Farge to assist in the mural and decorative painting of Boston's Trinity Church. Prior to Lathrop's death in 1909, the painting was cut apart, apparently by Weir and, according to one anonymous source in 1926, at the suggestion of Wyatt Eaton.[11] Two of the fragments, the portrait of Eaton and The Flower Seller, were included in the 1911 sale of Lathrop's estates (along with a variety of his own work, paintings by an array of European and American artists including Eugene Delacroix and Robert Loftin Newman, and a large selection of photographic reproductions of Old Master paintings).[12] Both works were purchased from the sale by the collector George B. Wheeler;[13] The Flower Seller rapidly passed into the hands of the

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Barbizon connoisseur George A. Hearn, while the Eaton portrait was subsequently acquired by the influential collector William T. Evans, who presented it to the National Collection of Fine Arts in 1915.

In a second anonymous article from 1926 published in the Brooklyn Museum Quarterly, the writer noted that it was upon the Museum's purchase of Union Square that year that its link to The Flower Seller was rediscovered. The author of this brief piece noted that Weir had divided the original canvas "after various consultations" and "also made an affadavit of the circumstances of its division."[14] When John Baur applied his research skills to the problem for a 1938 article in the Brooklyn Museum Quarterly, he could neither identify the earlier author nor vouch for the lost affadavit; but he credited the artist's daughter, Dorothy Weir Young, for having found the Daily Graphic engraving and thus proving the common origin of the fragments. Baur felt certain that the division was carried out by Weir or under his supervision, given that all three fragments were signed characteristically (evidence suggests that the signature on the pieced version of Union Square was not original). He also remarked that, based on the evidence of the engraving, one could understand the nineteenth-century criticism of the crowded composition and thus the possibility of Weir's sensitivity to it.[15]

The cutting, piecing, and repainting of the works have indeed vastly altered their original appearance. As a result of the process, it remains difficult to read the surface of the pictures for an idea of their original appearances. To cite just one example, the woman's dress today appears black, whereas in 1879 the writer for The Art Journal clearly described it as a high-keyed blue.

1. "Fine Arts: The Society of American Artists," New York Daily Graphic, March 8, 1879, 56-57.

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2. The Society's early history is traced in detail in Jennifer A. Martin Bienenstock, "The Formation and Early Years of the Society of American Atrists: 1877-1844," (Ph.D. diss., City University of New York, 1983).

3. Ibid., 32.

4. He declared that the institution was an obstacle "to art culture, growth and education"; Wyatt Eaton to Richard Watson Gilder, June 21, 1877, Richard Watson Gilder Papers, New York Public Library; as quoted in ibid., 38.

5. "Fine Arts: The Society of American Artists," 58.

6. Doreen Bolger Burke, J. Alden Weir: An American Impressionist (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1983), 100.

7. "The Formation and early Years of the Society of American Artists," 78-79

8. "Fine Arts: The Society of American Artists," 5.

9. Ibid.

10. S. N. Carter, "Exhibition of the Society of American Artists," Art Journal (New York) n.s. 5 (1879), 157.

11. "Union Square by J. Alden Weir," International Studio 84 (August 1926): 79.

12. Paintings and Studio Property of the Late Francis Lathrop (New York: Anderson Art Galleries, 1911), unpag.

13. American Art Annual 9 (1911): 96.

14. "Two Paintings by J. Alden Weir," Brooklyn Museum Quarterly 13 (October 1926): 124.

15. John I. H. Baur, "J. Alden Weir's Partition of 'In the Park,'" Brooklyn Museum Quarterly 25 (October 1938): 128.

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Robert Walter Weir (June 18, 1803 - May 1, 1889)

Embarkation of the Pilgrims, 1857

Oil on canvas

47 5/8 x 71 9/16 inches (122.2 x 183.5 cm)

Signed lower left: "Rob.^{t} W. Weir./ 1857."

75.188, A. Augustus Healy Fund and A. Augustus Healy Fund B

In 1857 Robert Walter Weir, one of antebellum America's most important proponents of historical and religious art, executed this reduced version of his grand Embarkation of the Pilgrims, painted in 1843 in fulfillment of one of four highly coveted government commissions for the decoration of the Capitol Rotunda in Washington, D.C. Weir's original commission was issued in 1836, ten years after the installation of an earlier set of Rotunda murals on the history of the Revolution by the eminent American painter John Trumbull (1756-1843), and in a climate of renewed enthusiasm for the creation of a visual record of American history. In a letter dated the fourth of July 1836, the four artists chosen for the commission--Weir, John Vanderlyn (1775-1852), Henry Inman (later replaced by William H. Powell [1823-1879]), and John Gadsby Chapman (1808-1889)--were instructed to choose for themselves subjects from the realm of "important events, civil or military, connected with the discovery and settlement of the colonies which now compose the United States of America, the separation of those colonies from Great Britain, or with the history of the United States up to the time of the adoption of the federal constitution."[1]

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Within a year Weir chose to depict the signing of the Mayflower Compact, but he ran into difficulty when his influential colleague, Samuel F. B. Morse, who was passed over for one of the commissions, invoked his prior claim to the subject.[2] In a letter to William C. Preston, chairman of the Senate Committee on the commissions, on April 19, 1837, Weir explained that when Morse begged him to abandon the subject, he "could not refuse"; and that when he rethought his decision, Morse would not relent. The result was his entreaty to Preston, "[R]ather than forfeit my word to [Morse], [I] beg you will allow me to choose another subject, and adopt in the place of the one I sent you, the separation of the Pilgrims for the New World, as described in Mather's Magnolia [sic]."[3] The following September, the New York Mirror announced that Weir's subject was "the departure of the pilgrims."[4]

As he mentioned to Preston, Weir initially intended to base the painting on the Magnalia Christi Americana (1702), an early religious history of New England written by the prolific Puritan intellectual and Congregational minister Cotton Mather (1663-1728). A subsequent letter to Preston indicates that within the year Weir had turned to a new source, Marten's [sic] Memorial.[5] Nathaniel Morton's New England's Memoriall (subtitled A brief relation of the most memorable and remarkable passage of the providence of God, manifested to the planters of New-England, in America; with special reference to the first colony thereof, called, New Plimouth), published in 1669 and reprinted in 1826 (both unillustrated). Weir drew from it the story of the group of English Puritans who, after ten years of asylum in Leyden, were compelled to seek a new homeland in America. They secured property and a ship called the Speedwell from the British crown and in 1620 sailed from Delft-haven for Southampton, England, where

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they joined the Mayflower for the voyage to America. After several false starts, they abandoned the faulty Speedwell and boarded the Mayflower.

Weir's choice of a subject that was primarily religious in content is not surprising, given his own spirituality and his very early and continuing interest in wedding his faith to his art. The overriding religious goals of this band of Puritans is made plain in Morton's text, portions of which were reprinted in a pamphlet issued at the time that Weir completed the first version of his painting in 1843. The last but "not the least" of the reasons for their departure from Holland was "the propagating and advancement of the gospel of Christ in those remote parts of the world."[6] Paired with John Gadsby Chapman's Baptism of Pocahontas at Jamestown, Virginia, 1613, 1837-40 (United States Capitol Art Collection), Weir's painting reiterated the primary role played by religion in the founding of the nation and its government. While William H. Truettner suggests that such discovery and settlement scenes provided historical precedent, and hence justification, for mid-nineteenth-century expansionist activities,[7] it is interesting to note other regional biases at play in Weir's choice of subject. Ann Uhry Abrams has discussed the sectional strife--between southern Jacksonians and northeastern supporters of John Quincy Adams --that emerged during the late 1820s in congressional debates over the prospective subjects for the remaining Rotunda panels; and she has even suggested that Chapman's Baptism of Pocahontas challenged the assumption that Protestantism first took hold in the New England colonies.[8] Weir himself remarked in the pamphlet, "It was also desirable that there should be at least one picture in our National Hall whose subject should commemorate an event connected with the history of our eastern states. . . ."[9]

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Another nuance borne in Weir's choice of subject and its execution is a bias against the Dutch. In Morton's text, the first reasons given for the group's departure from Holland included the hardships they had endured there, caused in part by the Puritans' unwillingness to assimilate into Dutch society and "the great licentiousness of youth in that country, and the manifold temptations of the place."[10] Weir represented the pernicious effect of the Dutch environment on the Puritan children in the form of the sick child of Elder Brewster and his wife, seated just left of center in the painting. The American poet William Cullen Bryant (1794-1878), who viewed the Rotunda panel before it was completed, noted that the figure "finely introduced by the painter, has the authority of history; for the pilgrims gave as one of the reasons for leaving Holland the fact that their children, in consequence of the labours to which they were subjected, became sickly and fell into an early decline."[11] Independent of Morton's text, Weir noted in his 1843 pamphlet: "The difficulties which the Speedwell encountered, were owing to the treachery of Captain Reynolds, who was hired by the Dutch merchants either to frustrate the voyage, or to carry them to some place remote from their own settlements . . . the destination of the colony having been Hudson's River."[12] These implications surely were not lost on an audience well aware of the eventual triumph of the English over the original Dutch colonies in New York.

In two preliminary sketches for the 1843 version (Sketch for the Embarkation of the Pilgrims, undated, pen and ink [The Library, United States Military Academy, West Point, New York]), and Sketch for the Embarkation of the Pilgrims, undated, gray wash with pencil [Museum of Fine Arts, Boston]), Weir experimented with compositions in which he represented the departing party preparing to board their vessel; while in a third (Embarkation Sketch, 1837, pen and ink [The Library, United States Military Academy, West Point, New York]), they formed a dramatic pyramidal composition aboard a smaller vessel carrying them toward the Speedwell. Weir established his final composition in a preparatory oil sketch, undated (Pilgrim Society, Plymouth, Massachusetts). He chose the

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moment of high drama in Morton's text when, once aboard the Speedwell, the pilgrims were called upon to part with those remaining in Holland: "But the tide . . . calling them away, that were thus loth to depart, their reverend pastor falling down on his knees, and they all with him, with watery cheeks commended them with most fervent prayers unto the Lord and his blessing; and then with mutual embraces, and many tears, they took leave of one another, which proved to be the last leave to many of them."[13]

To compose the scene, Weir borrowed liberally from the pictorial structure of Rembrandt's (1606-1669) famous "Hundred Guilder Print" or Christ with the Sick around Him, Receiving the Children, circa 1649, in which a dramatic pyramidal composition of seated and kneeling figures is set within an enclosed space and lit from the left by a strong raking light.[14] Weir obviously sought to establish conceptual as well as formal parallels with his source, with the figure of Elder William Brewster (albeit kneeling), assuming the central, Christ-like position of the leader of his flock with the New Testament in hand; and among those gathered around Brewster is his own sick child. Most of the figures were identified by a key included in the 1843 pamphlet: from right to left, the soldier Miles Standish and his wife, Rose, kneeling; standing in the shadows behind them, Captain Reynolds and a sailor; Mrs. Carver and a child kneeling beneath them; kneeling in prayer, with his arms outstretched, their pastor, Mr. Robinson, who stayed behind in Holland; Governor Carver, with his hat in hand; William Bradford and his wife, just visible behind him; the ruling elder, Brewster with his wife and child; Mr. and Mrs. Fuller in the shadows behind them; Mr. and Mrs. Winslow, standing at the left; and Mr. and Mrs. White, kneeling beneath them.[15]

Adhering to the methods of nineteenth-century French academic history painting, Weir was fastidious in collecting "documentary" details to lend the painting greater accuracy. He wrote in the pamphlet, "In depicting a scene so momentous in our early history, it has been my endeavor to preserve the truth; . . . the costume and accessaries [sic] are in keeping with the time and place; and among the latter is the screw, which was

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afterwards transferred to the Mayflower, and was the probable means of preserving the ship."[16] In compiling details, Weir was aided by his friend and patron, Gulian Verplanck, who suggested that the artist consult with the former President John Quincy Adams (1767-1848) regarding the latter's familiarity with the Dutch city of Leyden: "He could communicate his recollections to you and in directing you to such engravings xc [et cetera] as might be useful."[17] In 1844 Weir also corresponded with a John Davis, of Boston, regarding the origin of the gold chain worn by Elder Brewster.[18] Among those who commented on the accurate details featured in the scene was William Cullen Bryant, who wrote in advance of the picture's completion, "The costumes are carefully conformed to those of the beginning of the sixteenth century, and are managed so as to produce an agreeable variety."[19]

Weir's 1843 panel attracted far more enthusiastic criticism than the other three Rotunda paintings commissioned at the same time.[20] He was also spared some of the harsh retrospective criticism of the Rotunda paintings from American art critics who by the 1850s had begun to call for heroic subjects drawn from contemporary life, and he was excused from the company of the other Rotunda artists by a correspondent to The Crayon in 1855: " . . . Weir's Departure of the Pilgrims I have always liked, and it is a sorry compliment to call it the best work of Art in the Rotunda. It is solemn and full of feeling. . . ."[21] While Weir had maintained a personal interest in the history of the pilgrims,[22] he probably undertook this reduced version early in 1857 at least in part at the behest of the art dealers Williams, Stevens, Williams, and Company. According to a belated announcement in the June issue of The Crayon, it had planned an engraving of the painting that year and reported, "Mr. Weir has almost completed a copy of the picture. . . ."[23] The smaller Embarkation had actually gone on exhibition at the firm's New York galleries in May,[24] previewed for "an invited circle" on May 27, 1857, and subsequently opened to the public for viewing.[25] Williams, Stevens, Williams had purchased the

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copyright of the engraving for $3,000, indicating its anticipation of the print's substantial appeal to the public.

In the 1857 version, Weir followed his earlier composition closely. He repeated the cleverly conceived device of the unfurled sail to define the areas of light and filtered shadow. All of the figures are precisely drawn and detailed in warm, sober tones dominated by yellows and grays, with such balanced touches of richer color as the red of Mrs. Winslow's bodice at the left and Miles Standish's red leggings on the right. A colorful rainbow breaks the gray sky at the left, and the carefully highlighted armor in the foreground comprises a sober still life. Weir's greatest modification of the earlier work appears to have been his lightening and softening of the colors. Finding it an overall improvement on the 1843 version, the critic Henry T. Tuckerman wrote: "[T]he artist executed an elaborate cabinet-sized copy of the work, which, in color and some of the details of execution, is an improvement on the original. [Horatio] Greenough rigorously criticized this picture; had he seen the small copy by the artist, he would have found his objections modified, if not removed, and his praise confirmed. . . ."[26] Both works nevertheless reveal Weir's continuing regard for the historical method and technical care practiced by such French painters of history as Paul Delaroche (1797-1856), whose popularity remained high in America throughout the mid-nineteenth century.

It is equally interesting to note that by the time of Tuckerman's writing (ten years after Weir completed the reduced version), the critic felt free to mention the regional bias of the subject and commented as well on the shortcomings of the Puritan sect: "As an element of civilization and national growth, the inflexible qualities of the Puritan character possess high claims to admiration; yet that such a form of human development lacks much that is essential of grace, beauty, comprehensiveness, and the generous sympathies, cannot and ought not to be denied." While he admitted to finding Puritan history generally unsuited to artistic treatment, he grudgingly acknowledged that Weir's

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historical approach was in keeping with the subject: "[D]oes not this canvas breathe the correct and firm, and at the same time frigid spirit of the Puritans?"[27]

Weir appears to have exhibited the reduced version again in 1869. In a letter to his son, John Ferguson Weir, dated January 7, 1869, he requested elaborate preparations for the display of the painting: "Get the boxing for the Embarkation picture leaving about two inches all around, and have it lined with green velvet--silk, and if you have green drapery put it up something in this way, or better if you can."[28]

The painting was exhibited once again, in 1870, at the Yale School of Fine Arts (no. 13), on loan from its owner, Marshall O. Roberts.[29] In 1876 it was also a part of the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia, in which setting the subject was particularly resonant. The painting was sold nearly thirty years later with the contents of Roberts's large and important collection.

1. United States Government to Robert Walter Weir, July 4, 1836, Robert Walter Weir, Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C. (hereafter cited as Weir Papers), reel 531, frame 795.

2. See Paul J. Staiti, Samuel F. B. Morse (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 208.

3. Robert Weir to William C. Preston, Chairman of the Senate Committee, April 19, 1837, Weir Papers, reel 531, frame 804.

4. "Fine Arts: The Four Great National Pictures," New York Mirror, September 2, 1837, 80.

5. Robert Weir to William C. Preston, April 14, 1838, Weir Papers, reel 531, frames 807-9.

6. The Picture of the Embarkation of the Pilgrims from Delft-Haven, in Holland, Painted by Robert W. Weir (Philadelphia: Piercy and Reed, 1843), 10.

7. William H. Truettner, "Prelude to Expansion: Repainting the Past," in The West as America: Reinterpreting Images of the Frontier, ed. William H. Truettner (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991), 73.

8. Picture of the Embarkation, 6.

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9. See Ann Uhry Abrams, "National Paintings and American Character," in Picturing History: American History Painting, 1770-1930, ed. William Ayres (New York: Rizzoli, 1993), 75. Among such points not lost on contemporaneous viewers was the "variety" of religions included in the Rotunda panels, from Protestantism to the Episcopal Church represented in the Chapman, to Roman Catholicism in John Vanderlyn's The Landing of Columbus, 1837-47 (United States Capitol Art Collection); see remarks in S. G. Bulfinch, A Discourse Suggested by Weir's Picture of the Embarkation of the Pilgrims (Washington: Gales and Seaton, 1844), 6.

10. Nathaniel Morton, quoted in Picture of the Embarkation, 10.

11. "Weir's Great National Painting," New-York Mirror, August 21, 1841, 271.

12. Picture of the Embarkation of the Pilgrims, 4.

13. Nathaniel Morton, The New England's Memorial (Cambridge: S. G[reen] and M. J[ohnson] for J. Usher of Boston, 1669, Reprint, Plymouth, Massachusetts: Allen Danforth, 1826), 18. It is interesting to note that the title of Weir's 1843 version was expanded to include the date of the group's departure as July 22, 1620, although Morton recounts that they reached Southampton on July 2, 1620; see ibid., 19.

14. As described in Jacob Edward Kent Ahrens, "Robert Walter Weir (1803-1889)," Ph.D. diss., University of Delaware, Newark, 1972, 82-83.

15. Picture of the Embarkation of the Pilgrims, 7.

16. Ibid., 6.

17. G. C. Verplanck, New York, to Rbt. W. Weir, Weir Papers, December 26, [n.d.], reel 531, frame 738.

18. John Davis to Robert Weir, September 2, 1844, Weir Papers, reel 531, frames 816-19.

19. "Weir's Great National Painting," 271.

20. Critical accolades are cited in Mark Thistlethwaite, "The Most Important Themes: History Painting and Its Place in American Art," in Grand Illusions: History Painting in America, ed. William H. Gerdts and Mark Thistlethwaite (Fort Worth: Amon Carter Museum, 1988), 32; and in Irene Weir, Robert W. Weir, Artist (New York: Field-Doubleday, 1947), 79-91.

21. "Correspondence," Crayon, (January 1855): 88.

22. In addition to collecting Jacobean furniture and "mayflower pieces," Weir in 1853 provided illustrations, including one entitled Rock of the Pilgrims, for a book, Poems (1853), by George Pope Morris, poet and editor of The New Mirror.

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23. Crayon 1857.

24. "The Fine Arts," New York Herald, May 31, 1857, 1.

25. "Advertisements," New York Tribune, May 28, 1857, 1.

26. Henry T. Tuckerman, Book of the Artists; American Artist Life (New York: G. P. Putnam and Son, 1867), 209.

27. Ibid., 208, 209.

28. Robert Weir to John Ferguson Weir, January 7, 1869, Weir Papers, reel 531, frames 906-8.

29. James L. Yarnall and William H. Gerdts, comps. The National Museum of American Art's Index to American Art Exhibition Catalogues: From the Beginning Through the 1876 Centennial Year, 6 vols. (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1986), 5: 3847.

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Thomas Waterman Wood (November 12,1823-April 14,1903)

New Cider, 1868

Oil on canvas

16 7/16 x 12 1/2 inches (42.2 x 32 inches)

Signed right center (on wooden planks): "T.W. WOOD./ 1868."

06.311, Bequest of Caroline H. Polhemus

A self-taught artist, Thomas Waterman Wood established his reputation as one of New York's most popular and highly regarded figure painters based on his Reconstruction-period images of African Americans and anecdotal narratives set in his native Vermont.[1] New Cider, executed at the outset of the most successful period of his career, is typical of the type of post-Civil War narrative subjects with which he introduced his largely urban audience to a set of stock characters from his native Vermont and simultaneously offered clever commentaries on the state of the nation. Here he juxtaposed figures emblematic of a time-worn older generation and a more recently tested young one in a vignette emblematic of the survival of the Union into peaceful times. In addition to celebrating the fruits of the younger man's return to his peacetime chore of cider making (for he undoubtedly was intended to be read as a veteran), New Cider appears to embody the optimism that swept much of the country after the election of Ulysses S. Grant (1822-1885) as president in the fall of 1868--an event that reassured Union veterans that their sacrifices would reap the "harvest" of Reconstruction.

Wood undoubtedly was swept up by the political turmoil into which the country was thrown in the spring of 1868, when Abraham Lincoln's successor, Andrew Johnson (1808-1875), was impeached as a result of the corrupt practices of his Democratic administration. Grant, who was already the administrator of the Acts of Reconstruction (which had passed through Congress over Johnson's veto), was drafted by the Republican

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Party and nominated in June on a pro-Reconstructionist platform championing the primacy of the Constitution and citizen's rights, as well as such practical matters as the government's binding obligation to pay the pensions of soldiers. After Grant's election in November, the country, and especially northerners, experienced a sense of relief and euphoria at the prospect of their future under the guidance of the Civil War hero. Accordingly, in Wood's New Cider, the two men gaze approvingly at the product of that fall's activities: the cider, which may be read as an emblem of the election results.

The figural vignette stands out in sharp focus against the background rendered sketchily in brown tones. Wood set the scene in the corner of an old barn, with the brick-and-wood cider press behind the figure on the right, the old man seated on a cider barrel, and apples strewn with straw on the barn floor. Wood routinely compiled the figure sketches for his studio work during his summers in Montpelier, using friends and acquaintances as his models. The younger man here bears a striking resemblance to the central figure in Wood's Return of the Flag, of 1867-91 (West Point Military Academy), whom the Wood scholar Paul Worman has suggested was based on Franklin Hoyt, the builder of Wood's Athenwood. Though no independent, preliminary sketches for this work have been identified, Wood executed a carefully scored and beautifully detailed drawing on the canvas itself. Wood devoted equally extraordinary attention to the delineation of the figures and the details of costume in paint. The figure on the left is described with particular care, especially such passages as the shirt, which is modeled with rich white highlights, and the illusionistic surface of the straw hat, touched in with numerous small points of bright color. The old man's face is also finely illusionistic, with the flesh brushed in a nearly miniaturistic manner, though more fluidly, and the piercing irises of the eyes described with a clear gray tone outlined in red and dotted with sharp white highlights. Wood also achieved a rich sense of textures, like those of the beard and the wool pants. Throughout the image, areas of shadow are painted much more thinly in reddish brown tonalities. These are particularly prominent in the figure at the right, which

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despite such fine details as the thin lines of dirt under the fingernails, is more roughly described overall.

The Museum received New Cider as a gift from the Brooklyn collector Caroline Polhemus. The painting was probably purchased by her husband, the prominent Brooklynite Henry D. Polhemus, who also owned Wood's Calculation (location unknown) at the time that it was exhibited at the Brooklyn Art Association in March 1871.

1.The most complete biographical sketch on Wood is that written by William C. Lipke in Thomas Waterman Wood; PNA, 1823-1903 (Montpelier, Vermont: Wood Art Gallery, 1972). Much additional documentary information comprising correspondence, records, and sketches is available in the Thomas Waterman Wood Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C. The T. W. Wood scholar Paul Worman is currently completing a more exhaustive monograph. The author is grateful to him for sharing unpublished material on the artist.

PROVENANCE: Probably the artist to Henry D. Polhemus, Brooklyn; to his wife, Caroline H Polhemus; to the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences.

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Fig. 1. Unattributed, Pierre Van Cortlandt, circa 1731

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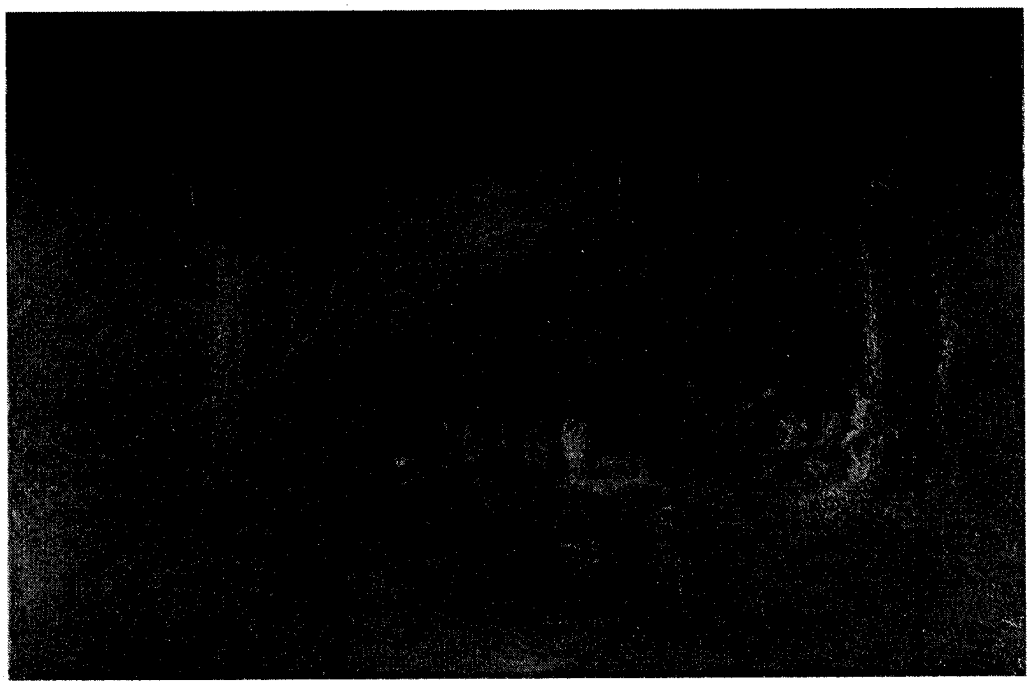


Fig. 2. Ralph Albert Blakelock, The Captive, 1879

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Fig. 3. Ralph Albert Blakelock, Embarkation, circa 1880-95

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Fig. 4. Ralph Albert Blakelock, Landscape with Indians, circa 1880-95

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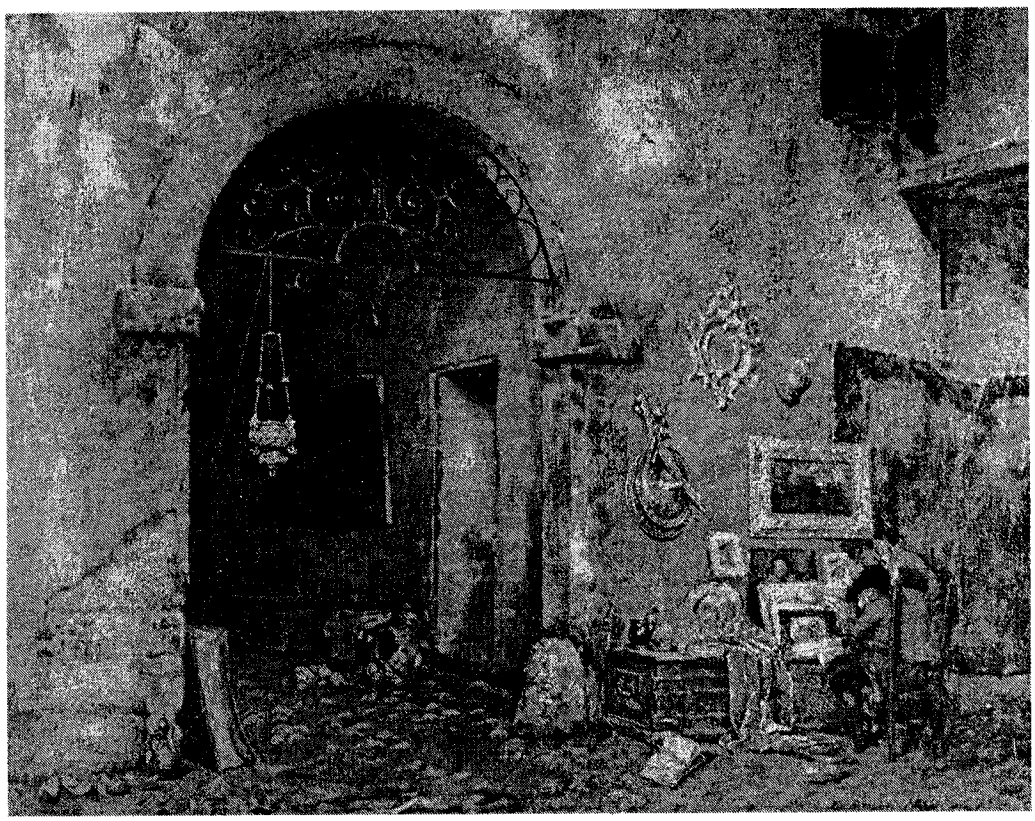


Fig. 5. William Merritt Chase, The Antiquary Shop, 1879

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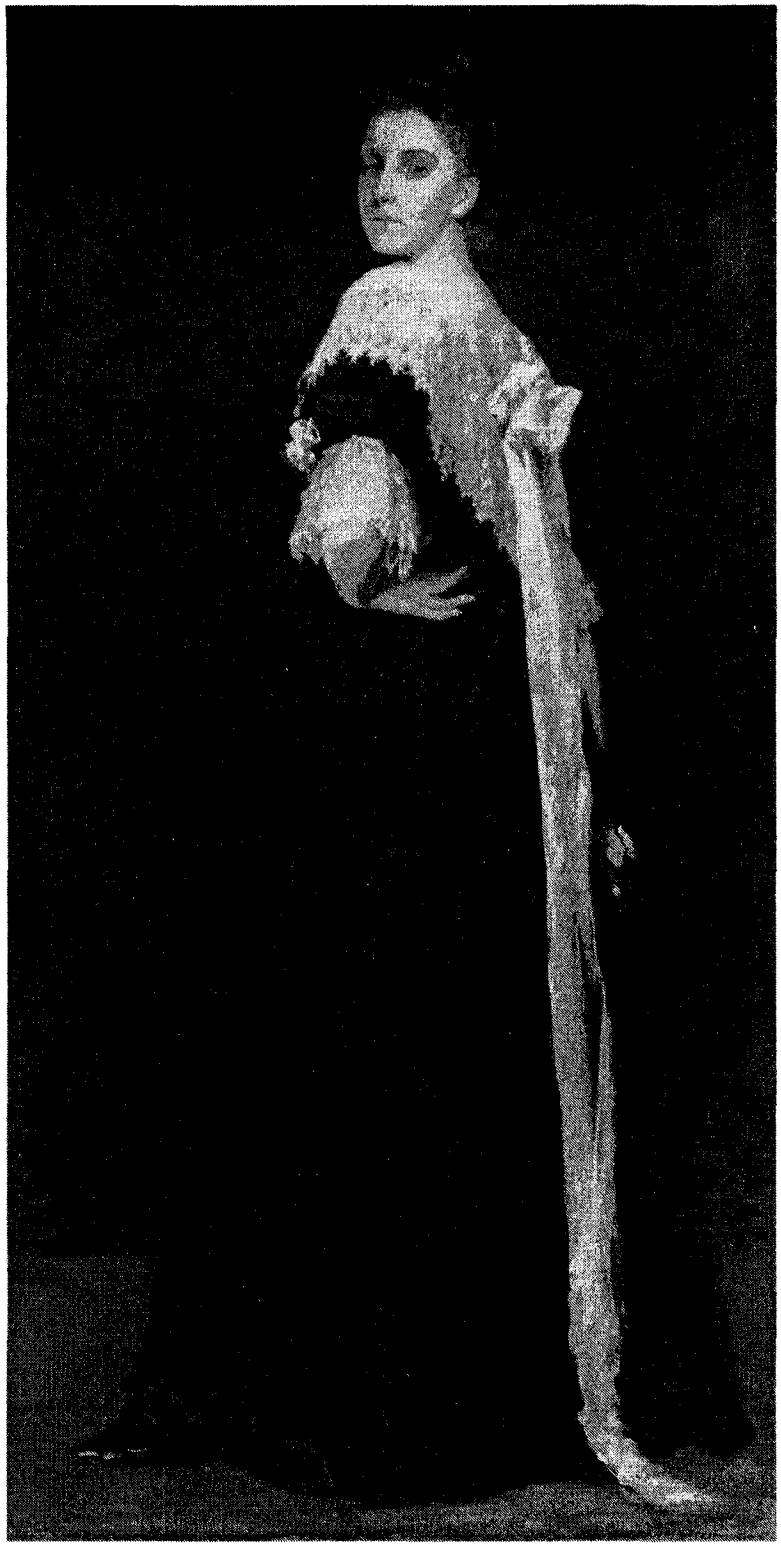


Fig. 6. William Merritt Chase, Lydia Field Emmet, 1892

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Fig. 7. John Singleton Copley, Mrs. Alexander Cumming, 1770

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Fig. 8. John Singleton Copley, Mrs. Sylvester Gardiner, circa 1772

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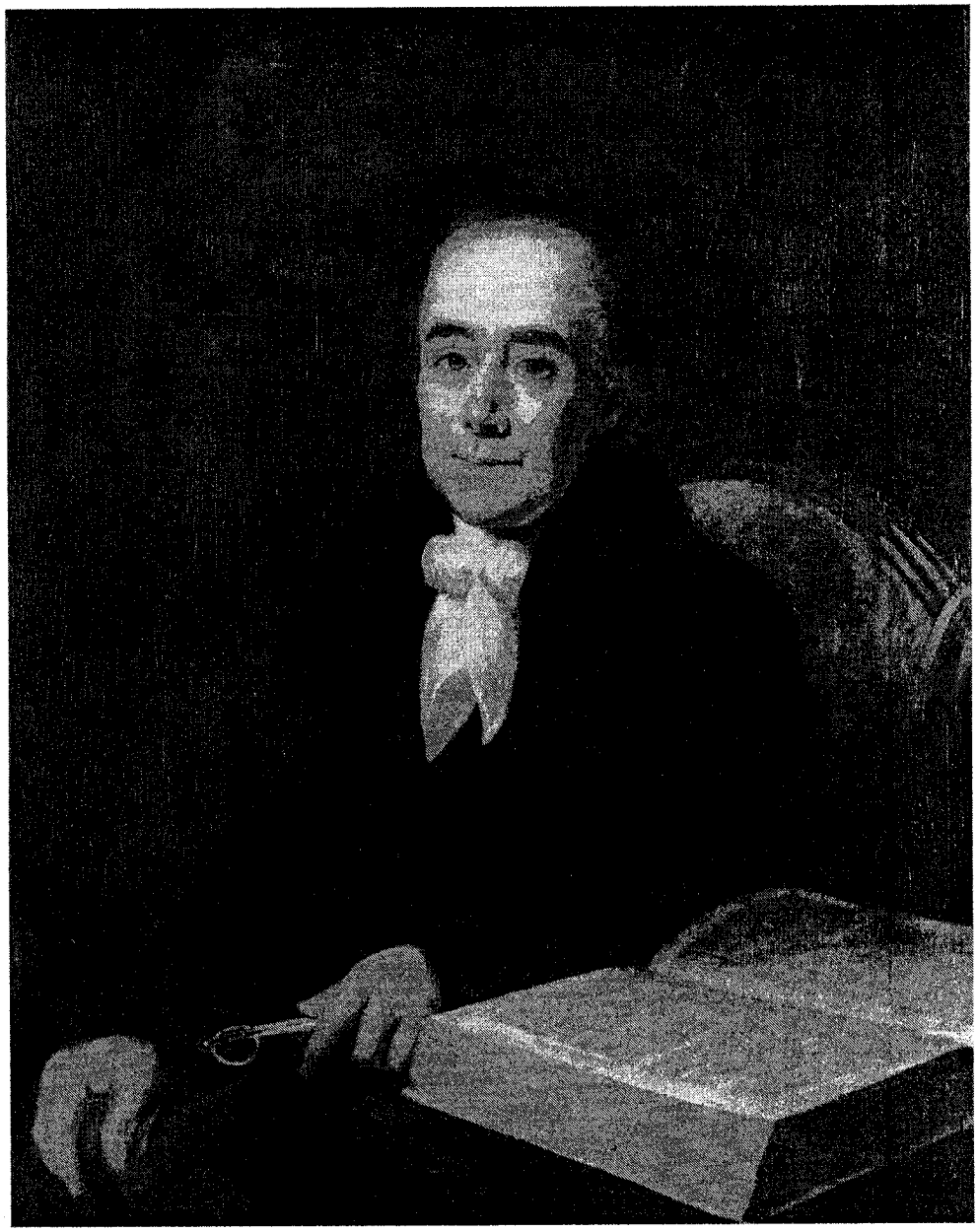


Fig. 9. William Dunlap, Robert Snow, 1831

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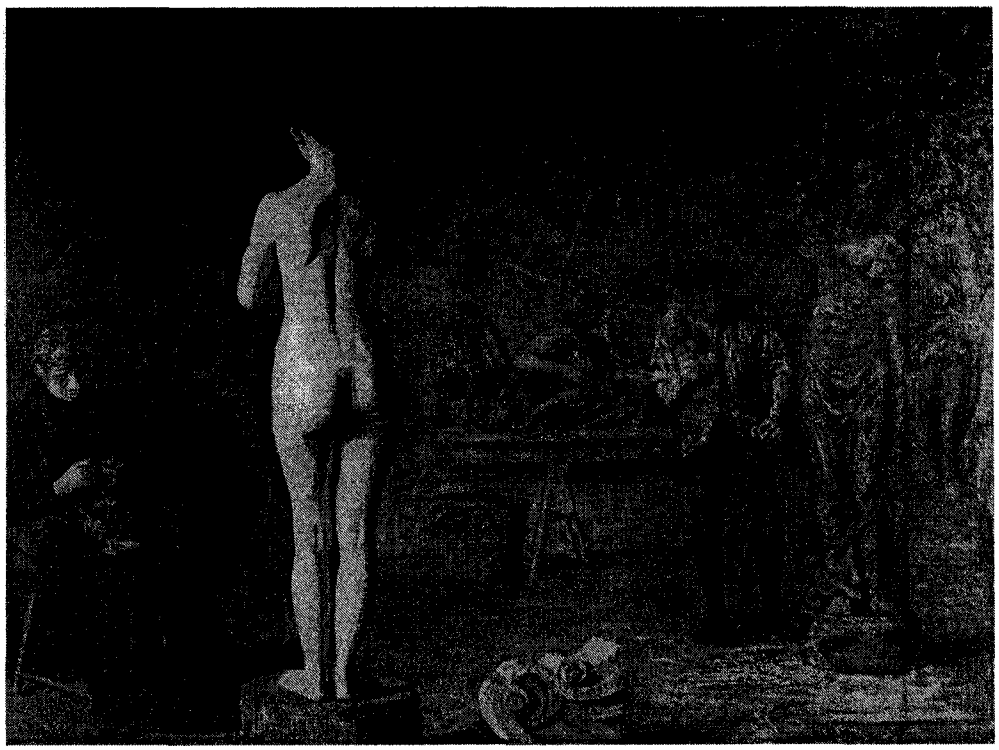


Fig. 10. Thomas Eakins, William Rush Carving His Allegorical Figure of the Schuykill River, 1908

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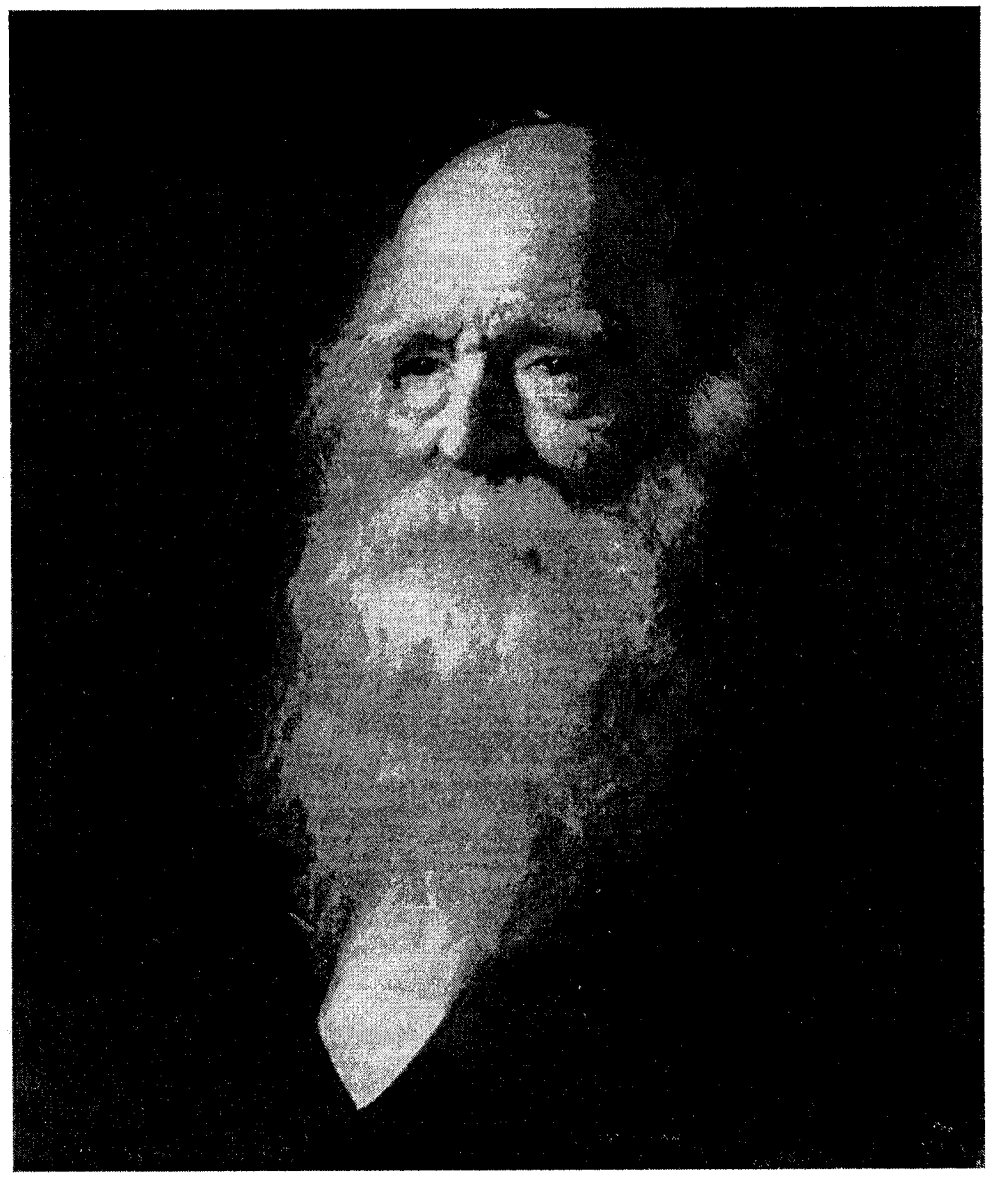


Fig. 11. Wyatt Eaton, William Cullen Bryant, 1878

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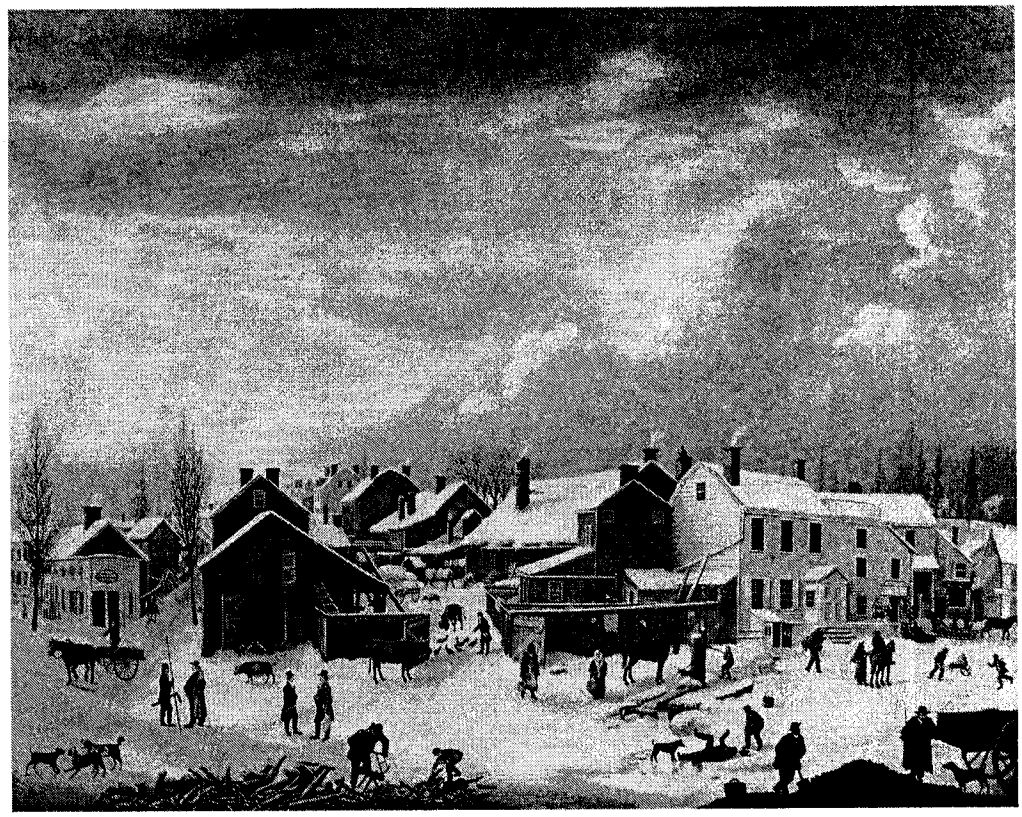


Fig. 12. Francis Guy, Winter Scene in Brooklyn, circa 1819-20

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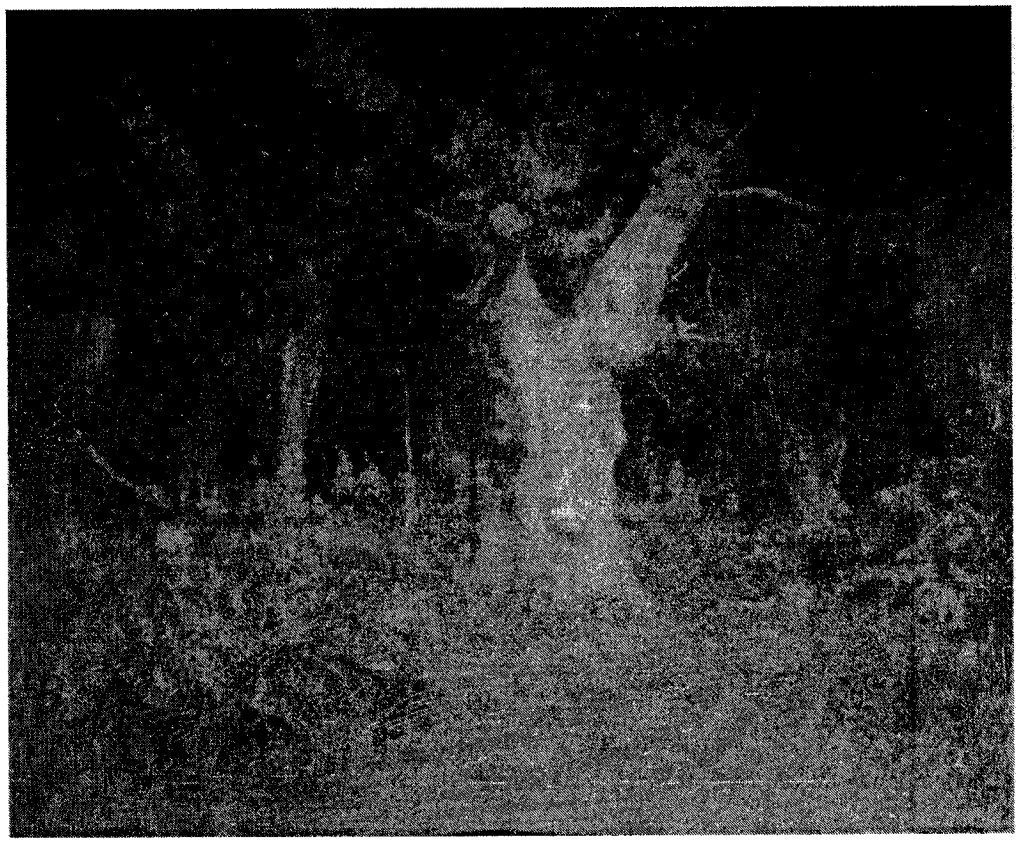


Fig. 13. George Inness, Royal Beech in New Forest, Lyndhurst, 1887

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Fig. 14. George Inness, Sunset over the Sea, 1887

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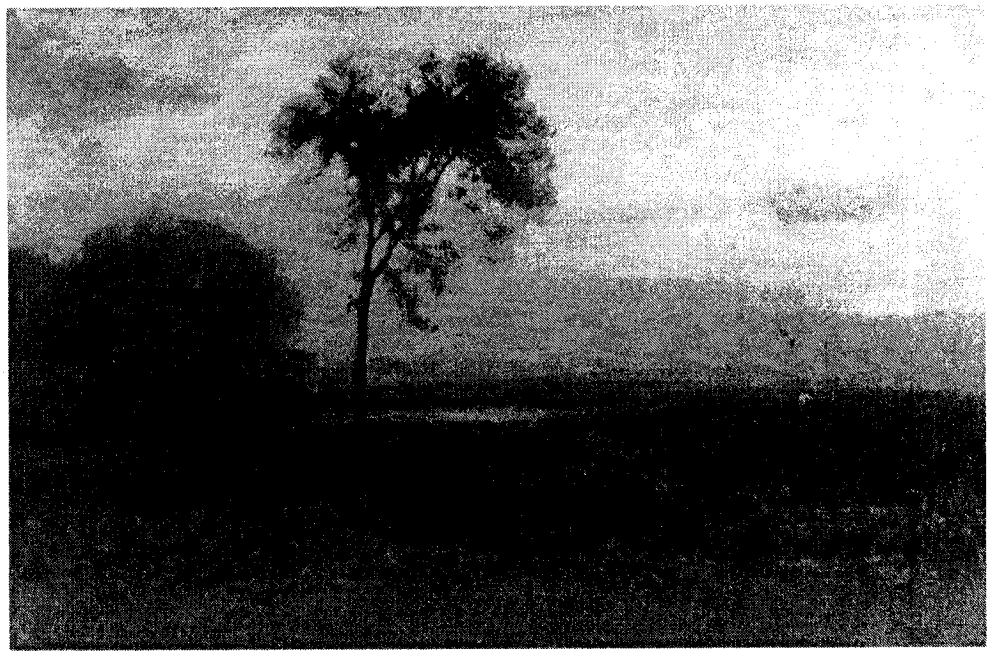


Fig. 15. George Inness, Sunrise, 1887

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Fig. 16. Daniel Ridgway Knight, The Shepherdess of Rolleboise, 1896

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Fig. 17. George Luks, Street Scene (Hester Street), 1905

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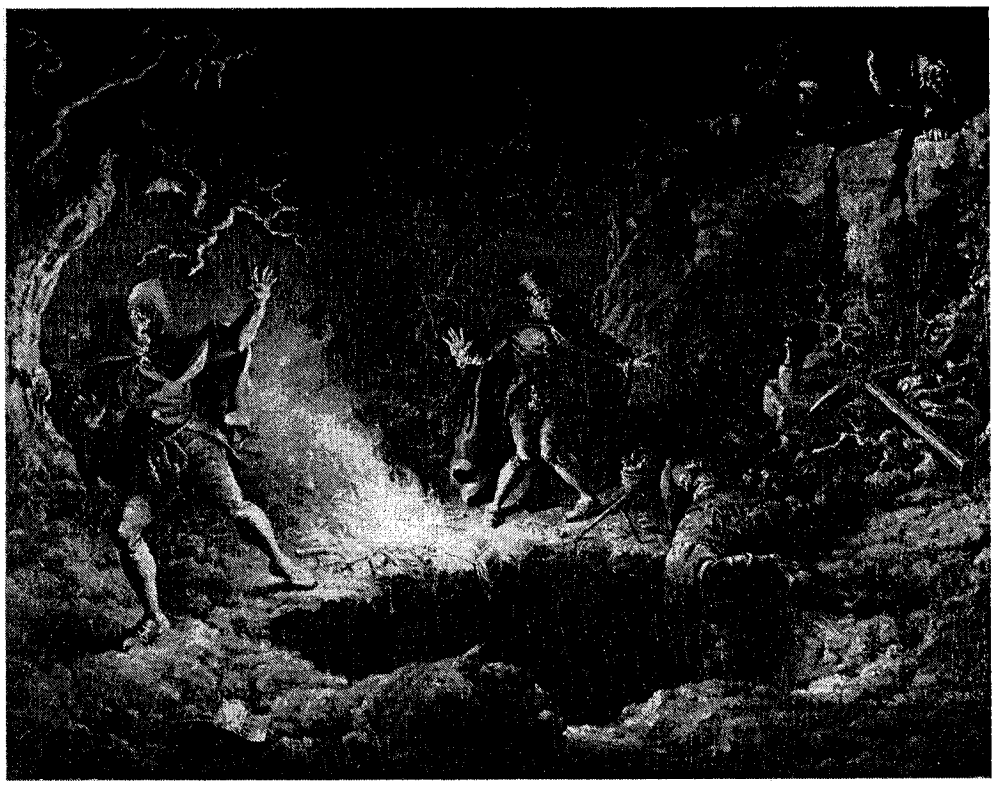


Fig. 18. John Quidor, The Money Diggers, 1832

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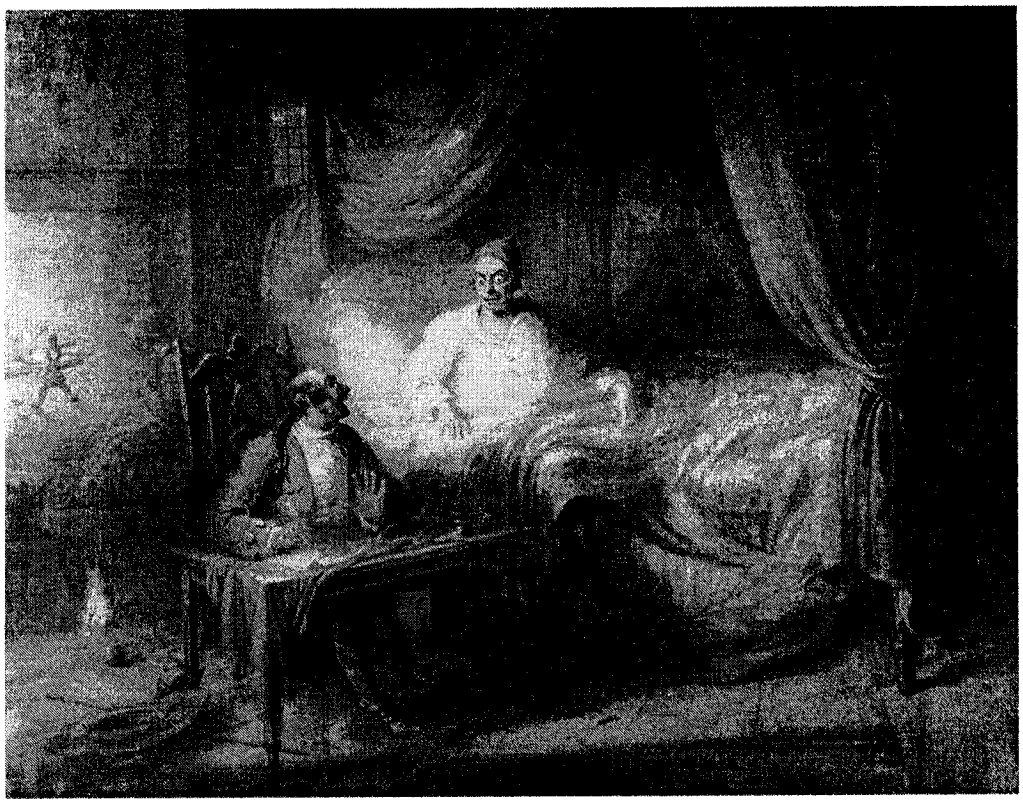


Fig. 19. John Quidor, Wolfert's Will, 1856

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Fig. 20. Theodore Robinson, The Watering Pots, 1890

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Fig. 21. Theodore Robinson, Willows, circa 1892

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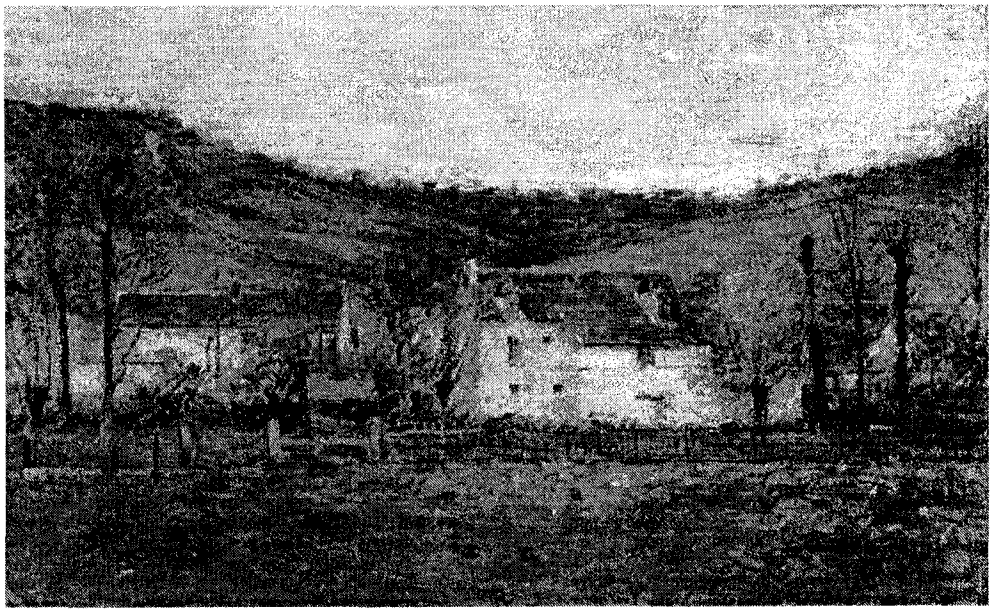


Fig. 22. Theodore Robinson, A French Hamlet, 1893

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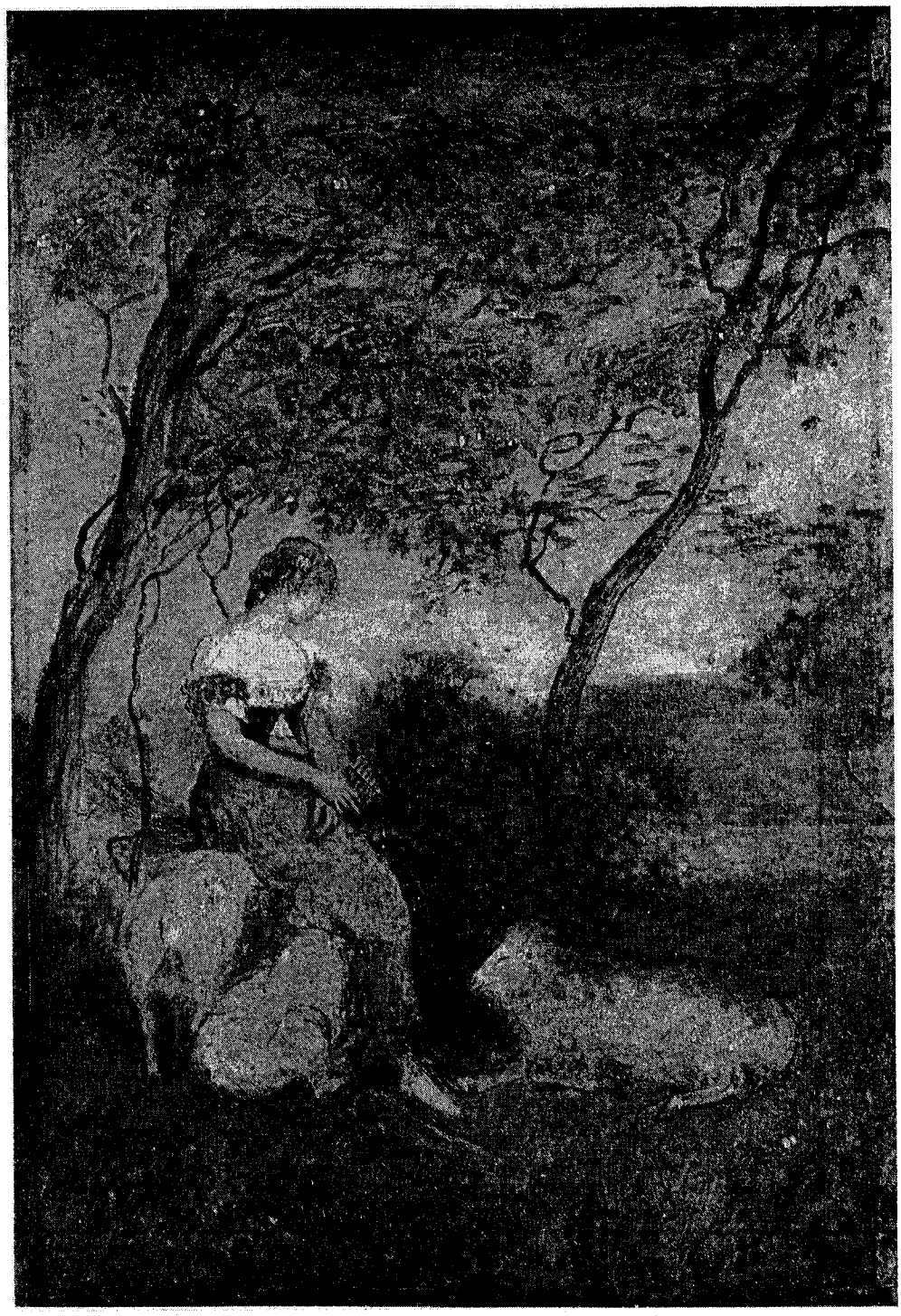


Fig. 23. Albert Pinkham Ryder, The Shepherdess, early 1880s

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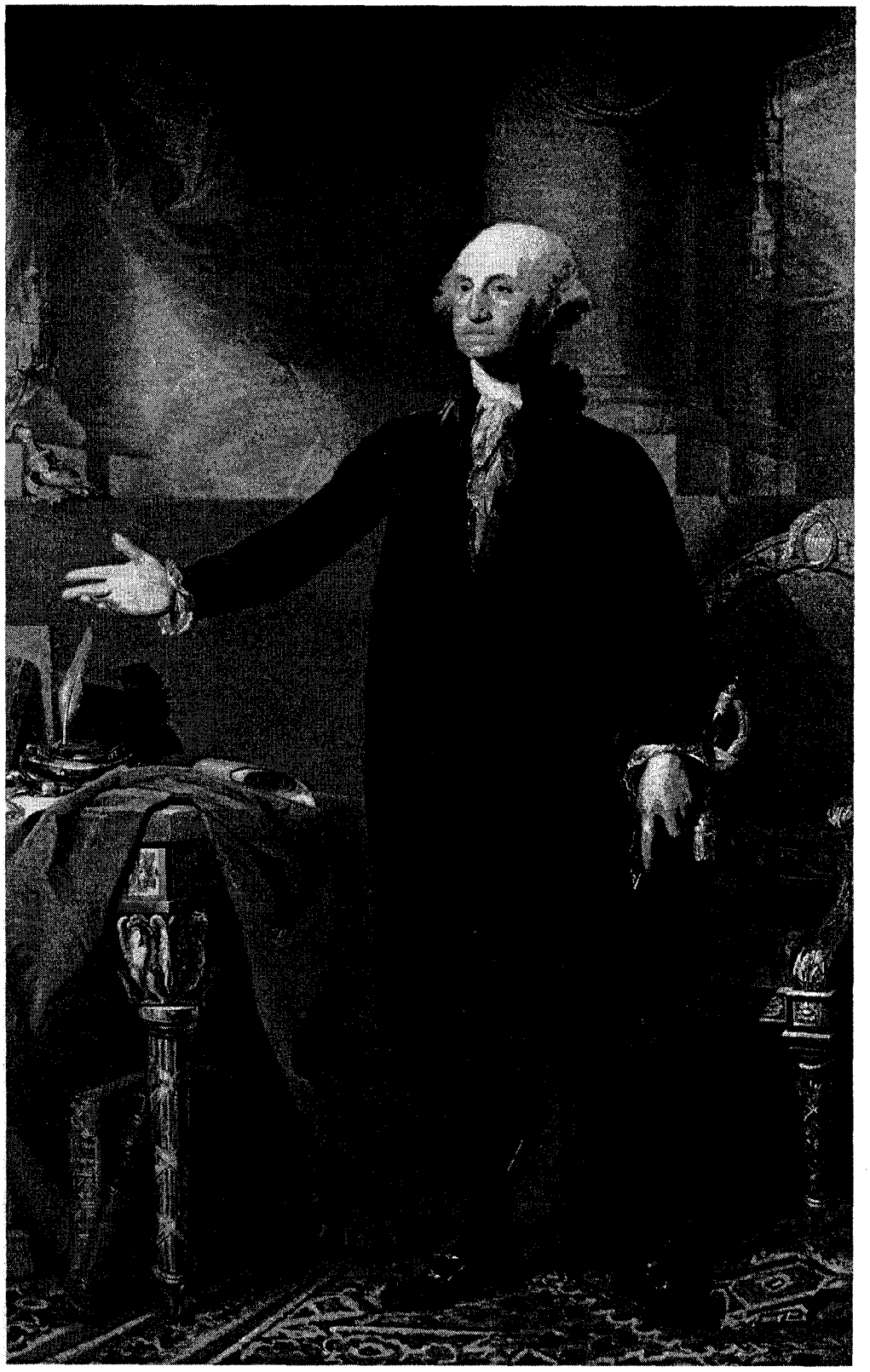


Fig. 24. Gilbert Stuart, George Washington, 1796

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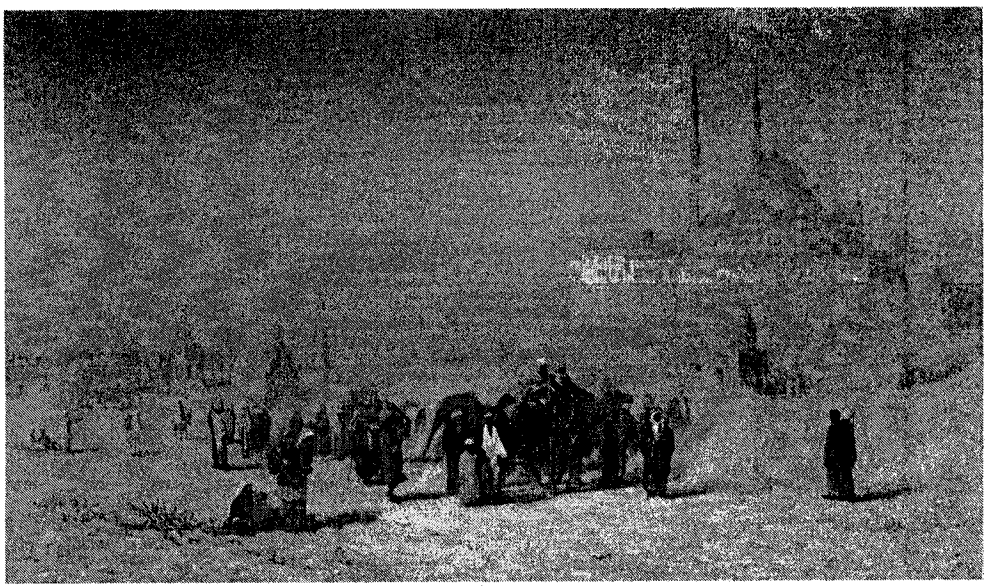


Fig. 25. Louis Comfort Tiffany, On the Way between Old and New Cairo, 1872

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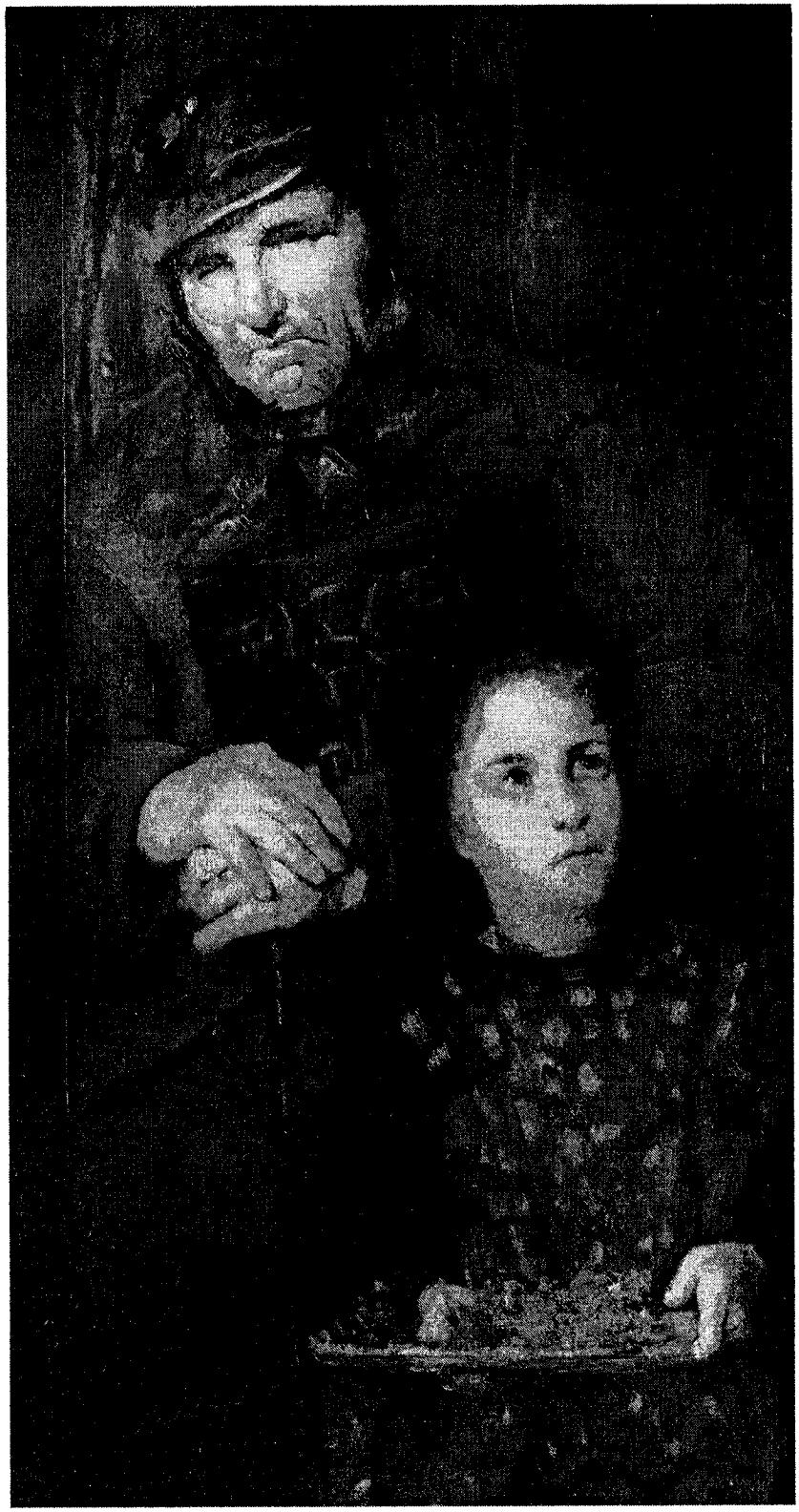


Fig. 26. Julian Alden Weir, The Flower Seller, circa 1879

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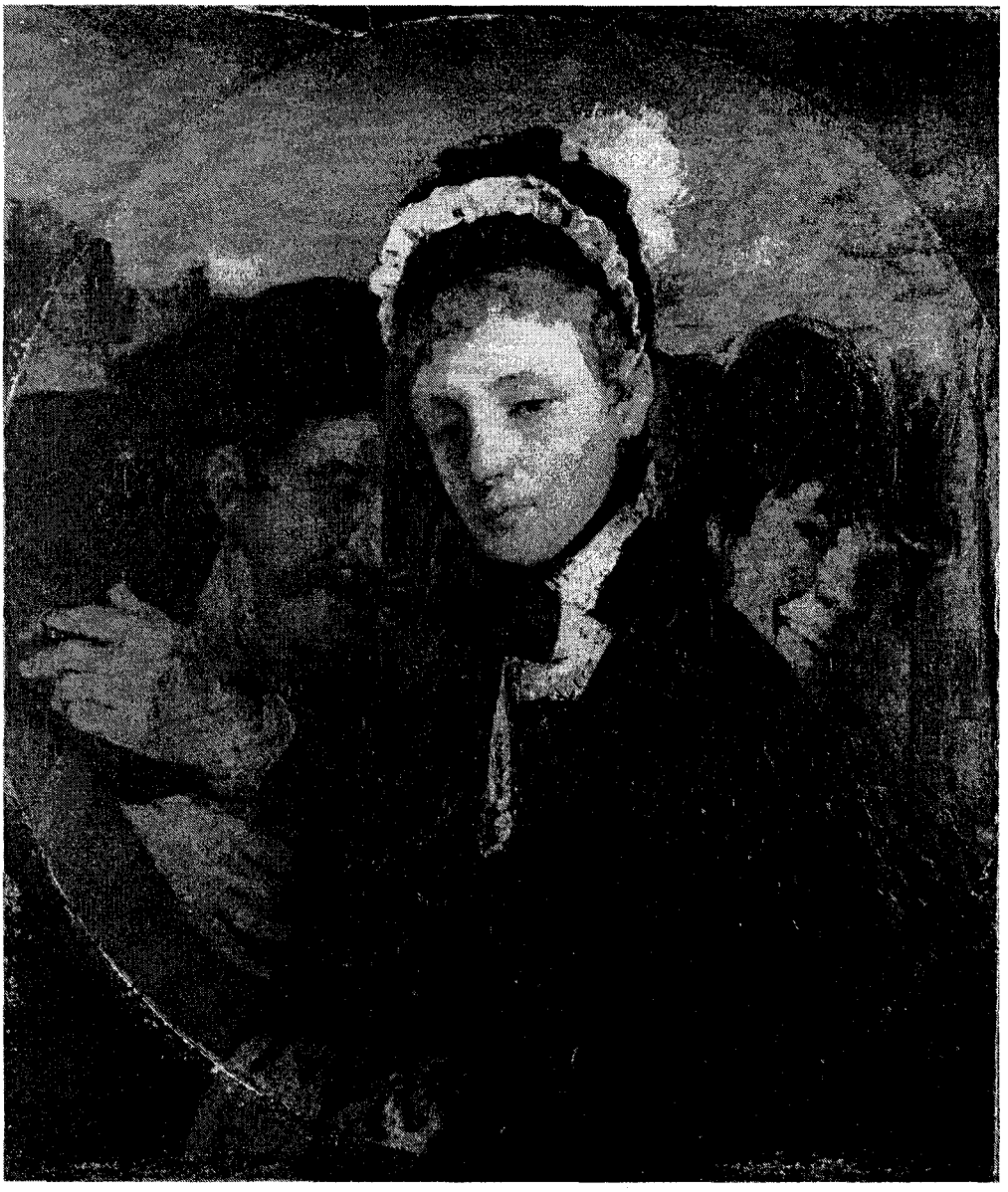


Fig. 27. Julian Alden Weir, Union Square, circa 1879

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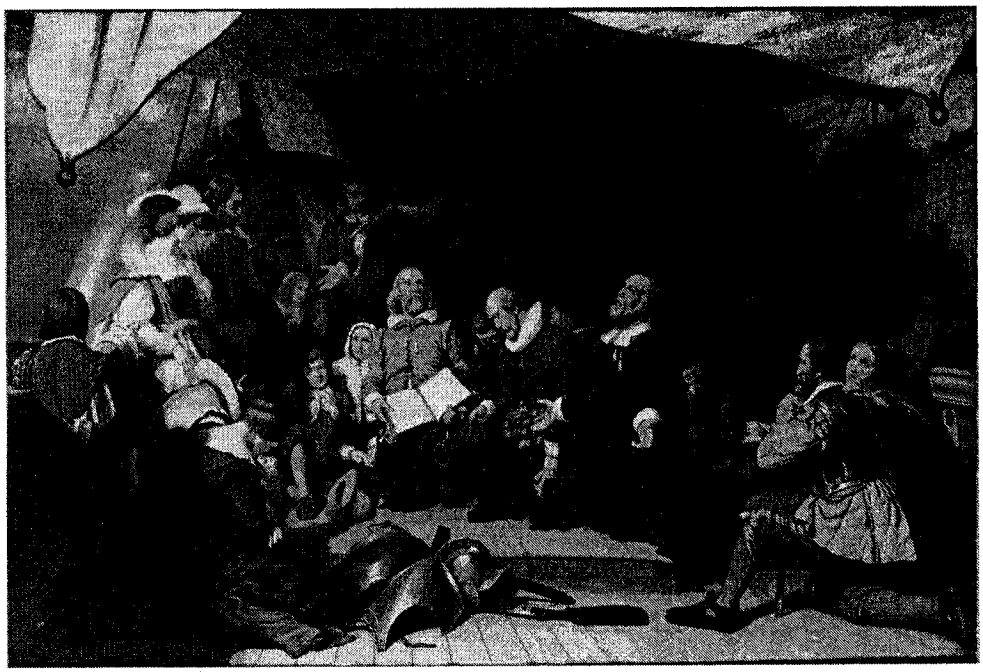


Fig. 28. Robert Walter Weir, Embarkation of the Pilgrims, 1857

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Fig. 29. Thomas Waterman Wood, New Cider, 1868

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