

???????? MYSTERY IN ART



A MAN AND A MYSTERY: GIORGIO VASARI

The Man

Architect, painter, and author of the most famous, and probably the most engaging collection of biographies of artists, Giorgio Vasari began life in 1511 in Arezzo, Italy. When he traveled to Florence as a young man, he studied in the workshop of Andrea del Sarto, with other pupils such as Rosso and Pontorno. And it was in Florence, where he was befriended by the Medici family, that he became an enthusiast, in fact an idolater, of Michelangelo, whose work he attempted to emulate.

He soon was spending a busy and productive life between Florence, Rome, and Arezzo painting uninspired frescoes and portraits in palaces and churches. (Frescoes by Vasari survive in the Sala Regia and the Cancelleria—the so-called 100 days fresco—of the Vatican, and in the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence. A portrait of Lorenzo Medici hangs in the Uffizi, and other paintings remain in his house, a museum, in Arezzo.) He found his true métier in architecture: his most celebrated and most inspired work, begun in 1560, was the magnificent Uffizi, designed by him for use as offices (*uffizi*) by the Florentine state. It is surely one of Italy's most beautiful Renaissance structures. Other well known buildings showing the influence of Michelangelo in the Tuscan Mannerist style are the church, monastery, and palace created for the Cavalieri di San Stefano in Pisa.

Above all these accomplishments, however, is his chef d'oeuvre and the primary source of his fame, his book *Le Vite de' più eccellenti architetti, pittori, et scultori italiani...* (1550; 2nd ed., 1568; translation, *Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*, 1850-54). Dedicated to Cosimo de' Medici, the original edition is a compendium of prefaces that offer a critical history of Western art and artist biographies from the three periods of artistic development in Vasari's lexicon: the perfection of classical antiquity; the decline during the Dark Ages; and the renaissance of the arts in Tuscany in

the 14th century that culminated in the works of Michelangelo. The second edition (the one which has been most often translated) added biographies of contemporary living artists and his autobiography.

In this, his most famous work, Vasari wrote in a style that was anecdotal and engaging. Missing facts were easily replaced through his flair for the "story." And his bias toward Tuscan art is clearly evident when ultimate perfection in art, as expressed in the final pages of the first edition, is embodied in the Tuscan Michelangelo (his is the only biography of a living artist).

Vasari died in Florence in 1574, six years after the publication of the second edition of *Lives*.

The Mystery

[As described by Konstantin Akinsha in *ArtNews magazine*]

In October of 2009, the mayor of Arezzo was informed that the archives of native son Vasari were being sold to a Russian company that offered to pay some \$225 million to the seller, a descendant of the Spinelli family, once prominent in Florence.

According to law, the mayor had 90 days to block the sale by making a counteroffer. However, the offered price being five times the annual budget of the city, a counteroffer was out of the question.

Appeals were made to the prime ministers of Italy and Russia; to allow the archives to leave Italy was an abomination, and especially when the town was preparing to celebrate the 500th anniversary of Vasari's birth in Arezzo.

The press was rife with the scandal. Citizens were outraged. Some claimed that the papers were worth far less than the figures mentioned and charged that the claim of purchase was a scam aimed at persuading the state to buy the archive.

The Vasari house and archives had been transferred to a charitable foundation in 1678 following the death of his last descendant. A Spinelli, the executor of the estate, deposited the papers in his palazzo in Florence where they remained for the next several centuries. In 1908, a

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THE ATTENDANCE MYSTERY: Increases Despite Recession

Why has attendance risen at many museums despite the tanking of the economy? Speculation gives rise to a multitude of theories. But no one really knows for sure. Is it because a museum ticket is a relative bargain compared with other diversions? Is it because of the ever growing interest in and taste for contemporary art? Is it the result of inclement weather—rain, snow, wind? Is it because of particular blockbuster shows; rotating exhibition schedules, or perhaps loan exhibitions?

Whatever the root causes, a majority of art museums in the United States have shown levels

of attendance that were equal to or higher than the years before the recession. A survey by *The Art Newspaper* of 20 museums across the country showed that two-thirds of those included recorded increases in visitor numbers over the past three years. Surprisingly, there was no difference in numbers for institutions that charge admission fees and those that do not. In addition, institutions that show contemporary art indicated the most marked increases.

The Museum of Modern Art (NY), for example, with its high (\$20) admission fee reported 2008-09 to be its best year in its 80-year history, with an equivalent rise in membership. The Guggenheim Museum's (NY) Frank Lloyd Wright retrospective helped to break previous attendance records. The Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago's Olafur Eliasson retrospective also boosted attendance records

higher than usual. Dia: Beacon (NY) recorded higher attendance as did the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art.

In Chicago, Director Madeleine Grynsztejn's take on the attendance phenomenon includes the usual factors as well as a few new ones: An increase in "staycations"; a heightened interest in the city due to President Obama; the draw of the newly opened modern wing at the Art Institute of Chicago.

Some expansion projects boosted attendance. At other museums, which undertook expansions in the boom years, there was no gain in numbers of visitors. Some even had steep drop-offs.

The blockbuster still proves to be a reliable booster of attendance: the High Museum (GA), for example, recorded its highest attendance to date with the inception of its three-year revolving loan agreement with the

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A VOICE OF EXPERIENCE



Training Volunteers: Educational Outreach on the Gulf Coast

by Howard McPhail

The Mobile Museum of Art (AL) participates in a variety of outreach education programs each year, some of which are weekly and monthly events in off-site locations. As outreach coordinator, I oversee, plan, and implement each of these events. Attendance can range anywhere from 15 participants in a seated group art activity, to over 1,500 visitors streaming in to complete “make & take” projects in an all-day festival setting.

The Mobile Museum of Art is fortunate to have on staff a volunteer coordinator who is able to develop a body of volunteers for the museum’s ongoing activities, including those initiated by the Outreach Education department. As outreach coordinator working with the volunteer coordinator, my duties lie in the interaction with the volunteers after they are recruited—a complex task. For example: outdoor events are ...outdoors—the weather may be hot, cold, windy, or stagnant. Volunteers are sometimes asked to stand for long periods of time. Often they are asked to assist participants who may range in age from 3 to 93 and who are invited to unleash their inner artistic creativity. All these responsibilities require skill sets that are typically not found in the average volunteer.

Currently, the museum utilizes a few part-time art educators whose high level of skill, talent, energy, and organization in the development and instruction of the art activities is essential to the success of each outreach program. There is no way that this small group, however willing, can be available to lead and attend each event, nor would they be able to handle the large numbers of participants over an extended period of time without significant support from the museum’s outreach volunteers.

Our outreach programs are designed with specific and unifying goals in mind—a Mobile Museum of Art “branded outreach experience” if you will. There are interactive goals: to get all participants involved, to encourage them to be creative and to complete one significant art activity/project. There are broad educational goals: each outreach should deliver a creative and artistic challenge, have clear and sequential instructions, expectations, models/examples, guidance, etc., and be tailored to audiences’ attention span (and sometimes challenge the audience’s attention span when possible). There are just in case goals: outreaches should contain an extra and/or an alternate art activity. And there are results goals: these programs should deliver measurable skills or units of knowledge. In addition, they should attract new audiences and broaden the learning experience to cultivate potential sponsors, members, and patrons.

None of the above is easily accomplished, especially during the brief interaction between museum personnel and a participant on a warm afternoon (remember, we’re in Alabama). It would be wonderful for each volunteer to have a formal education, be a practicing art historian and an experienced artist in addition to being humorous, engaging, dependable, patient,

prompt, and financially stable enough to donate loads of time to the museum. But when swamped by hundreds of festival-goers, there are times when I would settle for a few warm bodies; due to careful planning that situation hasn’t arisen as yet. Although volunteers are invited to take part in almost all outreach programs, there is generally more of a need at outdoor events. In the past, the museum has had members of the Docent Council take part in outreach events. Ideally, with their training and knowledge of the museum’s collections, docents are better utilized for in-house events.

But, who are the volunteers? Where do they come from? Why are they here? What do they do? Anyone who works with volunteers ultimately asks these questions in hopes that the answers can help them successfully recruit an effective group of workers in the future. Consequently, our efforts this past year have been focused on developing a younger group of teen- and college-age volunteers who can specifically work the weekend outdoor events. Members of our staff have attended local volunteer and college festivals, career expos, and have met with high school service groups in an effort to bolster our number of young volunteers. Understandably, this particular demographic, especially those who have the desirable set of skills, the motivation, the maturity, and their own transportation is in high demand with other non-profit groups as well as potential employers. Fortunately many schools have service requirements for their students, and this is very helpful in enticing them to participate in volunteer activities.

Requirements for volunteers

Volunteers are required to attend at least one orientation before attending an outreach event and representing the museum. Certain skill sets—disseminating information, social interaction, educational advocacy, and general problem solving—have been identified as being more important and influential than others in getting volunteers to be genuine contributors to outreach goals.

General knowledge

- Having basic museum information: the location of the museum, operating hours, general admission prices. Volunteers should also be able to guide participants toward museum resources, and to offer in-depth information about museum exhibits, staff, upcoming programs, etc.
- Encouraging participants to visit the museum’s website—know the web address.
- Soliciting sign-ups for the monthly email update newsletter.
- Handing out promotional flyers for specific education programs and museum events.

Social interaction

- Inviting participation and providing feedback by way of verbal encouragement during the activity/program.
- Standing. Sitting can be seen as passive and can communicate a lack of energy. Volunteers are encouraged to stand unless they are actively involved in art-making with the participant while he/she is seated. Without interaction, a seated volunteer is simply keeping the table neat.

Although this too is useful, it is not engaging, an important element of the outreach effort.

Educational advocacy

- Answering questions about the art activity/activities.
- Handing out informational resource sheets about the art activity to participants or their parents.
- Being familiar with any relationship between the activity and the museum’s exhibits or other programs.

General problem solving/Logistics

- Knowing what to do when a wall of people is waiting; knowing ways to maintain the flow of activity.
- Knowing what to do when there are no people waiting; knowing ways to invite participation.
- Having flexibility in adapting physical settings during the event: avoiding or limiting “bottlenecks,” maintaining art materials, preparing for impending rain, etc.

Developing volunteers’ recall of information about the museum is an important skill to address in orientation training: reviewing information handouts is a quick and straightforward method of teaching. Included in the orientation training is a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) sheet that discusses general issues and concerns a volunteer may have during an event. Addressing social skills is a little trickier. An opening introductory script has been developed to give volunteers a starting point in the process of introducing themselves and the activities/projects they may be working on with their participants.

Similar in format to the FAQ sheet is the “What If” document, which is designed to guide group discussions on possible problems that a volunteer may encounter during the course of an event. These discussions are wide ranging, from how to assist a participant in generating creative ideas for starting an art activity to what steps to follow when running late or when not able to attend a scheduled event.

Finally, volunteers are given an opportunity to complete art activities for upcoming outreaches. Depending on the number of activities planned, the amount of materials in stock, and time constraints for the training, they may be asked to limit their choices or pair up into teams. This not only gives them first hand experience, but also affords the opportunity to

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discuss the educational value of the activities in context.

Future volunteer training

Volunteer orientations are offered the week before the larger outreach festivals. However, volunteers are encouraged to attend as many orientations as they are able, and those who have attended as “alumni” are able to offer good advice and encouragement to “newbies.” We are preparing a comparative video of “Effective vs. Ineffective Interaction (Good vs. Bad)” volunteering using clips from past events and in some cases staged encounters. Prospective volunteers will be able to watch these short video clips while completing a brief checklist followed by a group discussion.

Training Around the Gulf Coast

The Gulf Coast is a culturally vibrant and diverse geographical area. For local museums, the need for volunteers to assist in implementing educational programs is constant. Like the Mobile Museum of Art, each of the following organizations occupies a unique educational niche in the Lower Alabama (the East Coast “LA”) Gulf Coast community. There are many similarities around the region in the way that volunteers are prepared and utilized. There are also significant differences. The following are responses to a series of questions that were posed to shed light on those similarities and differences.

Eastern Shore Art Center (ESAC)—Fairhope, Alabama

Nancy Raia—Community Outreach Coordinator

What are the skill sets for volunteers in your educational programs?

Valuable skill sets in volunteers we seek: prior experience teaching, or with children, outgoing, and art interested. Current members of ESAC who have some knowledge of previous shows are helpful, but not mandatory. Sometimes a new trainee brings in great new eyes and voice. Having someone who is social and entertaining holds the audience better than someone full of knowledge, but flat. If they personally enjoy the exhibit themselves, they will seek out more information to make their presentation better. My current outstanding volunteers have a background in drama and/or theater or even storytelling. They absorb the information and then find a way to spin it with their own unique style/personality.

What is the outline of your volunteer training prior to an event?

Outreach training involves volunteers working a project through. They assist the lead teacher on a variety of field trips before they can “be on their own.” When the art teacher has a chance to engage with a lesson that involves a volunteer’s own natural interests, it always flows better and produces better results

What ideas or plans do you have to enhance the training of your educational volunteers in the future?

Bringing in various volunteers from all age groups, and immersing them in my many projects. Having senior citizens working alongside a

middle-school-age art club; they learn from each other. Confidence is gained from many sessions, doing the work. The more you create with a group, the easier it gets.

Dauphin Island Sea Lab and the Estuarium—Dauphin Island, Alabama

Denise Keaton—Scheduling Coordinator

...skill sets for volunteers in educational programs?

Environmental Education outreach. Other use of volunteer skills: butterfly garden maintenance and upkeep, clerical office assistance.

...volunteer training prior to an event?

One full day of training is required. We do some on the job training but ask that volunteers make a commitment to attend the annual training session normally held in September. They are issued a training manual and encouraged to participate in our field activities (beach walk, marsh trip, boat trip, touch lab, plankton lab, oceanography, what’s in the water activities). Many solutions on how to deal with difficult situations are covered in our training manual. OJT volunteers are paired with an experienced docent for a minimum of three days or until the new docent is comfortable. Before an event, it is most important for the teacher to share with each volunteer as much information as possible, and his/her expertise on what to expect. I have worked to improve on the information I am able to share by participating in the events myself to see what is needed and to be on hand.

...plans for training educational volunteers in the future?

Monthly discussions on what’s new at the Dauphin Island Sea Lab.

Museum of Mobile—Mobile, Alabama

Jennifer Fondren—Curator of Education

...skill sets for volunteers in educational programs?

Outgoing personality, good communication skills, good knowledge of museum programs and exhibits and the historical information that correlates to each, attention to detail.

...volunteer training prior to an event?

We provide a training manual as well as the historical information that corresponds to our exhibits. We provide a suggested tour script for the regular guided tour experience. Behind the scenes volunteers receive individualized hands-on training.

...plans for training educational volunteers in the future?

We will use peer training opportunities to supplement what we are already doing—getting volunteers to interact with each other and try out tour techniques by using their fellow volunteers as the people on the tour. □

Howard McPhail is Curator of Education—Outreach at Mobile Museum of Art. AL

REVIEWS:

Beauty Rears its Head—Twice

Professor, philosopher, and public commentator Roger Scruton has produced a short treatise on an elusive subject, *Beauty* (Oxford University Press, 2009). In it he discusses and analyzes our perceptions of human, natural, everyday, and artistic beauty with the understanding that the phenomenon of beauty exists as an integral and life-sustaining force in the Platonic sense.

“...the experience of beauty implies that it is rationally founded [as through the measurements of Vitruvian man]. It challenges us to find meaning in its object, to make critical comparisons, and to examine our own lives and emotions in the light of what we find. Art, nature, and the human form all invite us to place this experience in the centre [sic] of our lives....”

And in a chapter on “The Flight from Beauty,” the comments are sharp: Art, he notes, has taken a turn away from beauty. “...recent art cultivates a posture of transgression, matching the ugliness of the things it portrays with an ugliness of its own. Beauty is downgraded as something too sweet, too escapist and too far from realities....”

For those who long for the sustaining quality of beauty in art, this book is a healing balm.

In his essay, “Beauty as Symmetry” (*American Arts Quarterly*, Winter 2010), professor of Italian and author Robert E. Proctor expounds on the classical views of beauty: “For Cicero, the affirmation that symmetry, proportion and harmony—beauty, in short—exists in the cosmos establishes the hope that it can exist also in human society....” Vitruvius, who measured the symmetry of the human form (the Vitruvian man)—“The unity of this man’s body and its members is thus not an organic, but rather a mathematical and geometrical one. As such, it links the body to something outside of itself: the cosmos....”—declared that “Nature’s truth is the beauty of symmetry,” a quantity that can be measured mathematically. But, he believed, like Plato, that it is also a quality: the “graceful appearance and agreeable aspect in the composition of the members.” Plato had asked if, in order to produce the illusion of beauty, “craftsmen say goodbye to truth and produce in their images the proportions that seem to be beautiful instead of the real ones.” Plato’s pupil Aristotle went further.

According to him, we first know a thing through sense perception. Beauty, for Aristotle, is a form that can be perceived as a completed and unified whole by the eye.

“Platonic theory of transcendental beauty,” says Proctor, “points to a fundamental truth about art: in every experience of beauty, whether in Nature or art, there arises a haunting sense of an even greater beauty somewhere else.... □



Man Ray, Simone Kahn (with Vanuatu male figure, Eastern Malekula, c. 1927. In “Man Ray,” University of New Mexico Art Museum, NM

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Louvre in Paris. Director Michael Shapiro explained about the Louvre collaboration: “We were able to raise over \$16 million in sponsorship for [the Louvre show], our membership increased, our attendance increased, and our visibility around the world was enhanced dramatically. That’s priceless.”

At the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, attendance rose steadily for the two years since the opening of the Broad Contemporary Art Museum. Says a LACMA representative: “What we find from surveys we’ve done of our audience is that dollar for dollar, people still find museums a greatly affordable bang for their buck.”

In fact, the phenomenon is not new. Looking back to pre-recession days, museums were doing just fine. A survey of some 138 nonprofit cultural institutions in New York City commissioned by the Alliance for the Arts found that in 2004, 25.6 million people attended nonprofit cultural institutions (museums, performances, zoos, and botanical gardens)—more than the combined total attendance at Broadway theaters and sporting events, the very attractions that make New York a destination city.



TWO PAINTINGS AND A MYSTERY: Are They Both Van Dycks?

The Paintings

One is in the Nationalmuseum in Stockholm; the other is on long-term loan to the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen in

A MAN AND A MYSTERY:

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researcher of the Spinelli archives came upon the Vasari papers by chance, a happenstance that refueled interest in the artist’s legacy. In 1915, the Italian government bought Vasari’s house and turned it into a museum. Ten years later, another Spinelli “permanently loaned” the young museum 29 volumes of Vasari documents, which included drawings, sonnets, letters written by Michelangelo, and correspondence between Vasari and Cosimo de’ Medici, Amerigo Vespucci, and Pietro Aretino, among others. And 60 years after that, in 1985, another Spinelli transferred his property to a grandson who did not bear the family name. He in his turn, tried to overturn the “permanent loan” status of the archive, unsuccessfully.

News of a potential buyer of the archive came to the mayor of Arezzo after several illegally framed documents were submitted to the Superintendent of Tuscan Archives. He affirmed

Rotterdam. They are both called *St. Jerome with an Angel*; they were both produced in van Dyck’s Antwerp studio. They are almost identical.

The Stockholm painting was purchased by King Adolf Frederick in 1746-47. It has been on view to the public since 1792.

The Rotterdam painting, originally owned by Rubens, who mentored van Dyck, remained in private collections, out of sight of the public through the 19th and much of the 20th centuries. It reappeared in 1972, when the Willem van der Vorm Foundation loaned it to the Boijmans, immediately setting off a debate on which was the original.

Conservation work began on both paintings during the first decade of this century. Brought together in Stockholm in early February 2009, conservators took paint samples from both, and examined them with x-radiography and infrared imaging. They concluded that the Rotterdam painting was in better condition; the Stockholm one was damaged as a result of restorations that had worn away features of the face and the robe of St. Jerome.

X-radiography revealed changes in the Rotterdam work not found in the other version: The Saint’s cloak was originally floor length; only his feet were visible. Later, van Dyck painted the lower leg over the cloak. The angel was also changed significantly.

The evidence, and the free brushstroke of the Rotterdam painting, led to the conclusion that it, not the Stockholm version, is the original. The Stockholm work appears to be a copy. But the pigments in both works were identical, leading to another conclusion: that they both came from the same studio.

The Mystery

[As discussed by Emily Sharpe in The Art Newspaper]

“What remains to be seen is how much of the Stockholm piece can be attributed to van Dyck versus how much was painted by his studio using the Rotterdam work as a model. According to Boijmans curator Friso Lammertse, more research and comparisons of van Dyck’s early work is needed before this question can be answered. The fact that van Dyck employed several assistants, and that there

that the buyer was a Russian company—Ross Engineering, a division of a construction conglomerate called the Ross Group. The deal was signed and guaranteed with the backing of one of Russia’s largest banks. But it remained in limbo for the 90 days grace while the town of Arezzo, in order to prevent the sale, looked for ways to come up with a counteroffer.

A month later, two months before the 90-day grace period ended, the named seller, the Spinelli grandson Giovanni Festari, died, leaving four sons. But the Italian government, by then, had clarified the legal status of the archive—no matter who the owner of the Vasari archive, it would stay in Arezzo.

Meanwhile the Festari sons found their sale to be in question: the Russian representative of Ross Engineering announced that his client was in reality a friend, an “oligarch of Armenian descent living in Siberia.” But his friend had been killed in a traffic accident; therefore the purchase was null and void.

are at least two versions of his major early works, makes it difficult to assign a work’s complete authorship to the master.

“If you buy an early van Dyck, you should be aware that there is likely to be a second or third version,” says Lammertse, adding, “It’s more about the quality of the piece rather than simply a matter of which was first.”

The two *St. Jeromes* were on view together at the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen early this year. They are now being shown in Stockholm at the Nationalmuseum (through May 23).

WHY DID HE DO IT? Van Gogh’s Mystery

Why did Van Gogh mutilate his ear? *Still Life: Drawing Board with Onions*, painted in 1889, provides an answer, according to Martin Bailey of *The Art Newspaper*. Among the various objects on the board is an envelope addressed to Vincent from his brother Theo. Until now, the envelope has held no interest, nor has it been considered as illustrating a specific letter.

Mr. Bailey, however, opines that the letter in the painting probably arrived in Arles on December 23, 1888, the very day that Vincent cut his ear. “It almost certainly contained news that Theo had fallen in love with Johanna (Jo) Bongers,” says Bailey, “and Vincent was fearful that he might lose his brother’s emotional and financial support.”

Although the handwriting on the envelope is Theo’s, the postmarks are not so clear. Only one contains the number “67,” the number that was used by the post office in Place des Abbesses, close to Theo’s Montmartre apartment. Another postmark reads “*Jour de l’An*,” New Year’s Day, say specialists working on the new edition of Vincent’s letters. They reached the conclusion that the letter had been mailed during the busy period around New Year and had arrived on December 23, the same date that Vincent had received his stipend from Theo, sent by post from Paris.

The new theory up-ends the established assumption that Vincent was unaware of his brother’s engagement until after the mutilation. Instead, it puts the letter in his hands on December 23. Theo had written to his mother about the engagement on

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Festari lawyers jumped into action, traveling to Russia to try to negotiate what they called an irrevocable contract. In addition, Italian investigators found no recording of a fatal accident in all of the Russian Federation on that day.

Multiple questions arose: Why would a wealthy Armenian “oligarch” want to own an archive that could not leave Italy? Did the “oligarch” really exist? If so, why would he not arrange such a major purchase through the major representatives of sales and purchases such as Christie’s or Sotheby’s, rather than an obscure Russian firm?

More questions about the whereabouts of selected papers from the archive have been raised by the Festari clan. Some, they say, have made their way mysteriously to a distinguished American institution—the Beinecke library at Yale University. The plan, they say, is for yet another investigation, and a lawsuit. □

Arizona

Museum of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff □ “Gunnar Widforss—Painter of the American West” (June 1) Yosemite, the Grand Canyon, and other national parks on canvas.

California

Irvine Museum □ “El Camino de Oro: A Journey Through Early California” (June 5) Landscapes of the region before its growth and development following WWII.

San Jose Museum of Quilts & Textiles □ “Navajo Weaving in the Present Tense: The Art of Lucy and Ellen Begay” (May 2) Contemporary textile art by mother-and-daughter team. □ “Poetic License: The Art of Joan Schulze” (May 9) Retrospective of fiber artist’s 40-year career.

de Saisset Museum, Santa Clara University □ “More than Meets the Eye: What Makes a Picture a Portrait?” (June 4) Various ways of creating likenesses—from the collection.

Cantor Arts Center, Stanford University, Stanford □ “The Eye of the Beholder: Honoring Ruth and Robert Halperin” (May 30) A woven baby-carrier from Cameroon and a Japanese wood-block print are among the works on display. □ “Tracing the Past,

Lichtenstein have created multiples in sculpture and other media; “A Legacy in Teaching: Henry Varnum Poor” Paintings by former Stanford art teacher.



Alice Coultts, *Indian Girl with Cat and Dog*, c. 1915. Oil on canvas. In “El Camino de Oro,” Irvine Museum, CA

Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento □ “Treasures, Curiosities and Secrets: The Crockers and the Gilded Age” (May 9) Jewelry, gowns, china, furniture, personal letters, and photographs offer a glimpse into the lifestyle of the museum’s founders.

Connecticut

Yale Center for British Art, New Haven □ “Compass & Rule: Architecture as Mathematical Practice in England, 1500-1750” (May 30) Drawings, paintings, rare books and manuscripts, prints, maps, models, and scientific instruments that explore the role of mathematics in transforming architectural design.

Griswold Museum, Old Lyme □ “Tula Telfair: Landscapes in Counterpoint” (June 27). Large-scale landscapes shown alongside 19th- and early 20th-century paintings by Cole, Church, and others.

Florida

Boca Raton Museum of Art □ “African, Oceanic and Meso-American Treasures from the Permanent Collection” (June 13) Sculptural figures, masks, ritual artifacts, architectural elements, adornments, and performance items. □ “Late Twentieth-Century Abstraction: Works from the Permanent Collection” (May 2) Motherwell, Johns, and others.

Museum of Arts and Sciences, Daytona Beach □ “Reflections:

Paintings of Florida 1865-1965” (May 17) Images of the state as it was before the post-WWII building boom: Benton, Remington, Kuhn, and others.

Vero Beach Museum of Art

□ “Ships and Shorelines: William Bradford and Nineteenth-Century American Marine Painting” (May 30) Ships, harbors, and storms. □ “Food for Thought: Sculpture by Luis Montoya and Leslie Ortiz” (May 16) Large-scale sculptures of tomatoes, citrus, watermelons, leeks, and asparagus cast in bronze and patinated in realistic color. □ “A Secret Language: Sculpture by John Bisbee” (June 27) □ “Watercolors from the Permanent Collection” (July 25)

Illinois

Smart Museum of Art, Chicago □ “The Darker Side of Light: Arts of Privacy” (June 13) Prints, drawings, illustrated books, and small sculptures by artists such as Kollwitz and Whistler.

Krannert Art Museum, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign □ “Intersections: Art in Postwar New York (May 2) Works by European artists who sought refuge in the U.S. on the eve of WWII and by those who were drawn to New York’s burgeoning art scene in the postwar period, 1945-51. □ Through May 23: “William Kentridge: Ambivalent Affinities” Six animated films on political and social themes; “Baggage Allowance” Multi-layered installation that examines connections between people and their worldly possessions; “Tracing Proust” Original manuscripts, correspondence, and prints.

Indiana

Indiana University Art Museum, Bloomington □ “Kandinsky: The Father of Abstract Art” (through May) Seminal abstract prints from his Bauhaus period of the early 1920s. □ “Youth, Dancing, and Joy: Photographs by Malick Sidibé” (May 17) B&W images by Malian photographer. □ “Thomas Chambers (1808-1869): American Marine and Landscape Painter” (May 30) An untrained artist whose folk aesthetic pioneered the way for landscape and maritime painting.

Kansas

Dane G. Hansen Museum, Logan □ “Dichroic Glass Light Sculpture by Ray Howlett” (May 2) Sculptures created with a technique involving optically-controlled wavelengths of light.

Mulvane Art Museum, Washburn University, Topeka □ “Ms. Homeland Security: Illegal Entry Tent Dress” (May 2) Interactive installation linked to social and cultural themes.

Wichita Art Museum “Docent Selections” (May 2) Works from the collection. □ “American Chronicles: The Art of Norman Rockwell” (May 30) Original artworks and *Saturday Evening Post* covers.

Kentucky

Speed Art Museum, Louisville □ “The Most Famous People in the World: Karsch100” (June 27) Portraits of Churchill, Mother Teresa, Picasso, and other well-known figures in an exhibit marking the 100th anniversary of the birth of photographer Yousef Karsch.

Louisiana

Newcomb Art Gallery, New Orleans □ “Joan Mitchell: Works on Paper” (June 27) Comprehensive survey exploring the artist’s evolution as an abstract expressionist.

Maine

Portland Museum of Art □ “Objects of Wonder: Four Centuries of Still Life from the Norton Museum of Art” (June 6) Paintings, sculptures, and photo-



Ben Shahn, *Unemployed*, 1938. Tempera on paper mounted on honeycomb board. In “Concerning the 1930s in Art,” Westmoreland Museum of American Art, PA

Drawing the Future: Master Ink Painters in 20th-Century China” (July 4) Portraits, bird-and-flower paintings, and landscapes. □ “Longing for Sea-Change” (June 26) Video installations by contemporary artists living and working in Africa and its diaspora. □ Through May 1: “Contemporary Multiples” Unconventional ways in which artists like Oldenburg and



Karla-Lonavla, *Ravi Varma Press, Sri Shanmukha Subramania Swami*, c. 1900-1920. Lithograph. In “Painted Songs and Stories,” Davis Museum, MA

graphs from the 17th through the 20th centuries: Hartley, Matisse, Mapplethorpe, Picasso, Chagall, and others. □ “Modernism and Masquerade: Max Beckmann (1884-1950)” (May 23) German print master. □ “Division and Discovery: Recent Work by Frederick Lynch” (July 11) Abstract paintings by Maine artist.

Maryland

Mitchell Gallery, St. John’s College, Annapolis □ “St. John’s College Community Art Exhibition 2010” (May 2–16) Ceramics, paintings, drawings, prints, sculpture, textiles, and photographs.

Walters Art Museum, Baltimore □ “Japanese Cloisonné Enamels from the Stephen W. Fisher Collection” (June 13) Intricately adorned vases, boxes, and trays worked in gold, silver, and colored enamels. □ “Expanding Horizons: Recent Additions to the Drawings Collection: (July 3) Delacroix, Meissonier, Doré, Gérôme, and others □ “Poetry and Prayer: Islamic Manuscripts at the Walters Art Museum” (June 13) Religious and non-religious works spanning the 9th to 19th centuries..

Washington County Museum of Fine Arts, Hagerstown □ “Valley Art Association Exhibition” (May 9) Works of art ranging from watercolor and oil paintings to sculptures created by members in Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia.

Massachusetts

McMullen Museum of Art, Boston College □ “Asian Journeys: Collecting Art in Post-war America” (June 6) Sculpture and ceramic works spanning Asian cultures from the late 6th to early 19th centuries, all from the Rockefeller Collection at the Asia Society Museum in New York.

Cape Cod Museum of Art, Dennis □ “On Common Ground: Still Life from the Collection” (Apr. 25) Paintings; visitors are invited to create a still life of their own by arranging objects set out for them.

Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, □ “The Art of Devotion:

Panel Painting in Early Renaissance Italy” (May 30) The museum’s collection of early Renaissance paintings and medieval sculpture comprise this focus exhibition around Middlebury College Museum of Art’s newly acquired altarpiece by Lippo d’ Andrea.

Davis Museum, Wellesley College □ Through June 6: “Painted Songs & Stories: Contemporary Pardhan Gond Art from India” Bardic priests from a tribal clan of central India transform ritual performing arts into something new: figurative and narrative visual art that depicts the natural and mythological worlds; “Seeing God in Prints: Indian Lithographs from the Collection of Mark Baron and Elise Boisanté” Late 19th- and early 20th-century color prints of Hindu gods and goddesses; “Stephen Vitiello” Sound and light installation; “Reconnaissance; Three Wall Drawings; “Ritual Series: Retelling”

Kniznick Gallery, Brandeis University, Waltham □ “Tear/Repair (Kriah/Ichool)” (Apr. 26) Mixed-media tribute to Jewish women by Israeli artist Andi Arnovitz: painting, sewing, and assemblage.

Clark Art Institute, Williamstown □ “Giovanni Boldini in Impressionist Paris” (Apr. 25) Impressionist paintings made after his move from Italy to Paris in 1871 and before he became a much sought after painter of stylish portraits. □ “Constable and After: Sir Edwin Manton and the British Landscape.” (June 23) Constable and Constable look-alikes.

Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham □ “The Rose at Brandeis: Works from the Collection” (May 23) Modern and contemporary works including everyone—used as a teaching

resource and available for scholarly use by appointment, but also free and open to the public.

Michigan University of Art, Ann Arbor □ “An Economy of Means: The Dorothy and Herbert Vogel Collection” (May

2) Contemporary drawings, paintings, sculpture, and photographs drawn from the Vogels’ recent gift of 50 works, part of their Fifty Works for Fifty States initiative. □ “Art, Anti-Art, Non-Art: Experiments in the Public Sphere in Postwar Japan, 1950-1970” (June 6) The avant-garde art produced by innovative groups that produced objects and ephemera combining traditional and new media.

Jacob Gallery, Wayne State University, Detroit □ “William Gropper & New Social Commentary Art” (June 25) Social realism of the 1930s.

Minnesota

Tweed Museum of Art, University of Minnesota, Duluth □ “Is He Dead?—Mark Twain and Jean-François Millet at the Tweed Museum of Art” (May 2) One in an ongoing series of Collection Features, which explore selected works from the collection in detail, often placing them in the context of other events, like the concurrently running play *Is He Dead?*

College of Design, University of Minnesota, St. Paul □ “Native Viewpoints: Paintings and Drawings by John Koepke” (May 14) □ “How Secretaries Changed the 20th-Century Office: Design, Image and Culture” (May 23) Office equipment, furniture, fashions, magazines, and more.

Mississippi

Rogers Museum of Art, Laurel □ “NASA Art: 50 Years of Exploration” (June 27) Drawings, photographs, sculptures, and mixed media that track the space effort: Leibovitz, Paik, Rockwell, Warhol, and others.

Montana

Missoula Art Museum □ “Variations in Portraiture” (May 26) Three contemporary artists’ takes on portrait painting. □ “Griff Williams: It is Not Down in Any Map; True Places Never Are” (Apr. 28) Enamel and resin paintings inspired by Montana’s landscape. □ “Tom Foolery: The Vendorama Series” (May 9) Miniatures of streetscapes in small Western towns. □ “Marilyn Lysohir: Good Girls 1968” (May 30) Over 160 ceramic portraits of young women with whom the



Sam Hernandez, *I'm Listening*, 2009. Mixed woods, chair. In “The 185th Annual,” National Academy Museum, NY

artist graduated from high school.

New Hampshire

Thorne-Sagendorph Art Gallery, Keene State College □ “Passionate Pursuits: Keene State College Alumni, Faculty, Staff, and Our Community Partner, the Friends of the Thorne, Share Their Creations and Collectibles” (June 4-July 25) Non-juried exhibit of work that people create and collect, or a visual expression of what they are passionate about.

New Jersey

Zimmerli Art Museum, New Brunswick □ “Seva’s Blue Horizon: The Poet Seva Nekrasov and Artists of Unofficial Moscow” (May 30) Poetry and art in commemoration of a generation of Soviet underground culture.

New Mexico

University of New Mexico Art Museum, Albuquerque □ “Man Ray: African Art and the Modernist Lens” (May 30) Images by Ray and his contemporaries (Beaton, Evans, Stieglitz) appear side-by-side with African objects that appear in them; an exploration of African art in the context of American modernism and the Harlem Renaissance, surrealism, and the worlds of high fashion and popular culture.

New York

Hofstra University Museum, Hempstead □ “Settling into Nature: La Bassée, a Contemporary Landscape in France, Photographs by Makael Levin” (July 30) Photos of rural France are accompanied by



Jean-François Millet, *Le Depart Pour le Travail* (Going to Work), 1863. Etching on paper. In “Is He Dead?” Tweed Museum of Art, MN

texts that suggest broader readings of the images.

Katonah Museum of Art □ “The Art of Contemporary Puppet Theater” (June 13) A fusion of visual and performing arts.

Americas Society, New York City □ “Marta Minujin: Minucodes” (Apr. 30) Film footage and documents review a 1968 “happening” in which the artist explored social codes in New York through a series of cocktail parties/happenings.

Derfner Judaica Museum, New York City □ “Rachel Leibman—Illuminations” (Apr. 25) Collage.

Drawing Center, New York City □ “Dorothea Tanning: Early Designs for the Stage” (July 23) Hand-drawn ballet costume designs created in collaboration with the choreographer George Balanchine.

Godwin-Ternbach Museum, Queens College, New York City □ “Dali Today: Dance and Beyond” (June 13) Photographs, films, recordings, and documents tracing Dali’s collaboration with ballet luminaries Balanchine, Massine, and Béjart.

Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York City □ “Lil Picard and Counterculture New York” (July 10) Paintings, collages, and assemblages by German-born artist who immigrated to New York City in 1937. □ “John Storrs: Machine-Age Modernist” (July 9) Abstract sculptures of New York City skyscrapers.

Guggenheim Museum, New York City □ “Paris and the Avant-Garde: Modern Masters from the Guggenheim” (May 12) Braque, Chagall, Gris, Léger, Miró, Picasso, Brancusi, Calder, and more. □ “Contemplating the Void: Interventions in the Guggenheim Museum Rotunda” (May 16) Artists’, architects’, and designers’ two-dimensional renderings of how they would fill the central void of the museum’s spiraling rotunda.

Leubsdorf Art Gallery, Hunter College, New York City □ “Beyond Participation: Hélio Oiticica and Neville D’Almeida in New York” (May 1) Photography, installation,

film, and performance art by two Brazilians.

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City (May 9) “Playing with Pictures: The Art of Victorian



Jamie Wyeth, *Anger, Lust, Pride*, 2005-2008. Combined mediums on hand-woven, toned paper mounted on archival board. In “Jamie Wyeth: Seven Deadly Sins,” Salt Lake Art Center, UT.

Photocollage” (May 9) Creations by aristocratic Victorian ladies using photographs and watercolors. □ “Lamentation for a Prince: Masterpieces of Medieval Tomb Sculpture from the Court of Burgundy” (May 23) 15th-century alabaster mourner figures loaned by the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Dijon during renovations there.

National Academy Museum, New York City □ “The 185th Annual: An Invitational Exhibition of Contemporary American Art” (June 8) Painting, sculpture, mixed media, and installation art in juried show.

Museum at FIT, Fashion Institute of Technology, New York City □ “Night & Day” (May 11) Evolving concepts of appropriate dress.

Museum of Modern Art, New York City □ “Ernesto Neto: Navedenga” (Apr. 26) Brazilian sculptor’s room-size installation constructed of Lycra fabric, Styrofoam, and sand, and embedded with aromatic cloves. □ “Marina Abramovic: The Artist is Present” (May 31) Video works, installations, photographs, solo performances, and collaborative performances. □ “Henri Cartier-Bresson: A Retrospective” (June 21) Photojournalism and portraits □ “William Kentridge: Five Themes” (May 17) Films based on charcoal drawings, prints, books, collage, sculpture, and stage design.

Hudson Valley Center for Contemporary Art, Peekskill □ Through July 26: “in.flec.tion” Works by a salon of emerging painters, sculptors, and video artists

who offer each other analysis and feedback; “Double Dutch” Contemporary installations by artists either born or trained in Holland to mark the quadricentennial of the Dutch discovery and set-

tlement of the Hudson River and its environs.

Loeb Art Center, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie □ “Harry Roseman: Hole in the Wall” (May 18) Site-specific wall painting in the atrium gallery by Vassar art professor.

George Eastman House, Rochester □ “Roger Ballen: Photographs, 1982-2009” (June 6) B&W images.

Nassau County Museum of Art, Roslyn Harbor □ Through May 24: “Metamorphosis: Rona Pondick” Sculpture; “Fernando Botero” Paintings, sculpture, and drawings. □ “Miró/Dubuffet/Basquiat” (May 24) An exhibition of the raw, bold qualities shared by artists separated by generations and cultures.

Staten Island Museum □ “Growing a Collection: Recent Art Acquisitions” (June 4) Paintings, sculpture, drawings, prints, fine art photography, and decorative arts.

North Carolina
Nasher Museum of Art, Duke University, Durham □ “Lines of Attack: Conflicts in Caricature” (May 16) Political cartoonists from Daumier during the reign of Louis-Philippe (1830–1848) to Trudeau (“Doonesbury”) and others during the administrations of Bill Clinton and George W. Bush.

Ohio
Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati □ “Shilpa Gupta: A Bit Closer” (May 2) Photography, video, and sound installation.

Taft Museum of Art, Cincinnati □ “Dutch Utopia: American Artists in Holland, 1880-1914” (May 2) Paintings and works on paper by American artists who reacted to growing urbanization at home by frequenting or settling in small, pre-industrial communities in Holland: Henri, Chase, Twachtman, Sargent, and many others.

Oklahoma
Price Tower Arts Center, Bartlesville □ “Lights! Camera! Fashion!: The Film Costumes of Edith Head” (May 16) Paramount and Universal Pictures designer among whose wardrobe credits are *All About Eve*, *Notorious*, and

Roman Holiday.

Oregon
Schnitzer Museum of Art, Eugene □ “Media Alchemy of Nam June Paik” (June 27) Discarded televisions, radios, and a sundry of electronic gadgetry fashioned into bodily forms. □ “Amazonia” (May 2) The flora and fauna of the headwaters of the Amazon River in Peru captured by National Geographic photographer Sam Abell and Danish wildlife photographer Torben Ulrik Nissen.

Museum of Contemporary Craft, Portland □ “Gestures of Resistance” (June 26) Individual craftsmanship presented as contrast to consumer culture.

Pennsylvania
Lehigh University Art Galleries, Bethlehem □ Through June 19: “Outsider Art”; “Photography” Margaret Bourke-White: insect studies; Lewis Baltz: San Quentin Point portfolio.

Michener Art Museum, Doylestown □ “Contemporary Folklore” (June 13) Four regional artists tap into personal histories as



William Wegman, *Chip and Batty Explore Space* (Detail). 2001. Triptych. In “NASA Art,” Rogers Museum of Art, MS

well as mythology, religion, and the decorative arts to create ceramic and *papier-mâché* tableaux.

Westmoreland Museum of American Art, Greensburg □ Through May 16: “Concerning the 1930s in Art: Paintings from the Schoen Collection” Post-stock market crash, Great Depression, Dust Bowl, and war in Europe: Burchfield, Shahn, and Lee, among others; “Paul Binai: Pulp Nation” Paintings that reflect the emotional tone and the harsh aspects of contemporary life. □ “Andy Warhol: Pop and Polaroid” (May 16) Iconic photographs.

Philadelphia Art Alliance □ Through May 3: “Convergence: Pottery from Studio and Factory” Ceramics as both functional and creative; “Darla Jackson” and “Brooke Hine” Two solo exhibitions that explore the use of ceramics as a sculptural medium.

Print Center, Philadelphia □ “84th Annual International Competition: Photography” (July 24)

Everhart Museum, Scranton □ “The Art of the Brick®: Sculptures by Nathan Sawaya (May 2) LEGO® building blocks as an art medium.

Palmer Museum of Art, Pennsylvania State University, University Park □ “I Heard a Voice: The Art of Lesley Dill” (Apr. 25) Sculptural installations incorporating bronze, photography, text, thread, wire, and paper. □ “‘Licenc’d to Bark’: James Gillray



Lil Picard, *Lady Woolworth*, 1963. Assemblage on cardboard. In “Lil Picard and CounterCulture New York,” Grey Art Gallery, NY

and the Art of Satire” (May 16) Socially biting prints by British artist (1756-1815). □ “Italian Old Master Prints: Selections from the Permanent Collection” (May 23) Etchings and engravings from the 16th to 18th centuries.

Tennessee

Knoxville Museum of Art □ “Wind/Rewind/Weave”(Apr. 25) An installation of glass bobbins evokes the craft of textile production.

Frist Center for the Visual Arts, Nashville □ Through May 16: “Masterpieces of European Painting from Museo de Arte de Ponce” Works span 14th through early 20th centuries: from the collection of the Puerto Rican museum; “U-Ram Choe: New Urban Species” Korean artist’s kinetic sculptures: movable parts driven by motors suggest breathing or swimming by primitive life forms.

Vanderbilt University Fine Arts Gallery, Nashville □ “Eye & Mind: A Legacy of Art Collecting at Vanderbilt University”(May 13) From Baroque sculpture to Pop Art.

Texas

Brownsville Museum of Fine Art □ “39th International Art Show” (May 1)

McNay Art Museum, San Antonio □ “TruthBeauty: Pictorialism and the Photograph as Art, 1845-1945” (May 9) Steichen, Stieglitz, and Adams, among others. □ “Impressionist Graphics at the McNay” (May 16) Cassatt, Hassam, Prendergast, Sargent, Degas, Manet, and more □ “Jasper Johns at the McNay” (June 13) Prints.

Utah

Brigham Young University Museum of Art, Provo □ “Mirror Mirror: Contemporary Portraits and the Fugitive Self” (May 8) A look at the impact of social networking websites such as

Facebook on the traditional art of portraiture.

Salt Lake Art Center □ “Jamie Wyeth: Seven Deadly Sins” (May 22) Jamie’s take on a topic long associated with the history of Christian art.

Utah Museum of Fine Arts, Salt Lake City □ “The Continuing



William Bradford, *The Kennebec River, Waiting for Wind and Tide*, c. 1860. Oil on canvas. In “Shipe and Shorelines,” Vero Beach Museum of Art, FL

Allure: Painters of Utah’s Red Rock” (June 27) Iconic Utah landscapes from Zion National, Monument Valley, and Bryce National Parks.

Virginia

Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk □ “Women of the Chrysler: A 400-Year Celebration of the Arts” (July 18) Works by women painters, sculptors, photographers, silversmiths, glass artists, and printmakers: Cassatt, Kollwitz, Lange, Arbus, Nevelson, Quick-to-See Smith, and many more, all from the museum’s collection. □ “Cameo Performances: Masterpieces of Cameo Glass from the Chrysler’s Collection” (July 1) Objects from ancient Rome shown together with examples from the 19th-century resurgence of the technique in England.

University of Richmond Museums □ At the **Harnett Museum of Art**: “Surface Tension: Pattern, Texture, and Rhythm in Art from the Collection” (May 14) Paintings, drawings, prints, photographs, and textiles that focus on these three elements, generating energy and visual movement as well as emotional and aesthetic content. □ At the **Robins Gallery**: Through June 20: “Transformations: Inuit Sculptures from the Collection”; “Traces of Time:

Fossils from the Collection” Prehistoric environments explored through fossil plants and animals.

Washington

Henry Art Gallery, University of Washington, Seattle □ “Isabelle Pauwels: Incredibly, Unbelievably/The Complete Ordered Field” (May 5) Video installations and photographs.

Jundt Art Museum, Gonzaga University, Spokane □ “Timothy C. Ely: Secret Order” (July 31) Single-copy hand-made books which draw on Western and Eastern religious traditions, astronomy, particle physics, and cartography.

Wisconsin

Charles Allis Art Museum, Milwaukee □ “Forward: A Survey of Wisconsin Art Now” (May 19) Juried exhibition.

Woodson Art Museum, Wausau □ Through June 20: “William Steig: The Man Who Never Grew Up” Watercolors from the cartoonist’s books for children; “Elliott Erwitt: Dog Dogs” Photographs explore quirky relationships between dogs and people. □



Magdalene Anyango N. Odundo, *Vessel Series III, no. 2*, 2005-2006. Carbonized and multi-fired red clay. In “The Eye of the Beholder,” Cantor Arts Center, CA

December 21; his brother was logically the next to receive word.

Theo rushed to his brother's side at the hospital on Christmas day after the incident and wrote to Jo about the hospital visit: "When I mentioned you to him he evidently knew who and what I meant and when I asked whether he approved of our plans, he said yes, but that marriage ought not to be regarded as the main object in life."

So, says Bailey, Vincent, having found out about the impending marriage from Theo's letter of the 23rd, feared the loss of his brother's support, both emotional and financial, and as a result lapsed into a state of madness severe enough to maim himself.

Only days after returning home from the hospital, he painted the still life, thus indicating that after the first frenzy of fright, he had become reconciled to the new couple. The very image of the letter among the other items on the board suggests hope and reconciliation. In addition, Bailey suggests that the enlarged "Jour de l'An" postmark (it was usually very small and Van Gogh's was quite the opposite) "may have been Vincent's way of stressing to Theo that the letter depicted was a very particular one—and that he wished his brother well for the new year."



Vincent Van Gogh *Still Life: Drawing Board with Onions, 1889*. Oil on canvas.

provided by claimants with research in archives, in libraries, and in other resources.

The documentation that emerges as a result substantiates the claimant's information and is instrumental in bringing about a final resolution.

The HCPO has helped to restore their rightful property to thousands of Holocaust victims and their heirs. The only office of its kind in the United States, in 2009 alone, it helped to restore more than \$16 million in bank, insurance, and other asset claims, bringing the total of claimant successes to more than \$153 million. This figure translates to a total of 1,725 individual cases successfully closed since the program's inception in 1997; more than 13,000 inquiries and 4,809 claims have been received from individuals from 45 states, the District of Columbia, and 38 countries.

WHERE? WHEN? WHO? Theft Mysteries

Degas is a favorite. Twenty years ago, five sketches by Edgar Degas were stolen from the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum (MA). In 2008, four 19th-century artworks, including a Degas, were stolen from the Emil Georg Buehrle Museum in Zurich; two have been recovered; the Degas is still missing. In early January 2010, a small work by Degas was stolen from a museum in Marseille. Today some 15 works by Degas, including two bronze horses, are listed on Interpol's Stolen Art Database.

A good year for art thievery was 2009: early in the year, a Picasso, a Matisse, and a Braque were lifted from a Berlin art gallery. A Degas, unceremoniously removed from the Cantini Museum in Marseille, was on loan from Paris's Musée d'Orsay. Its whereabouts remains a mystery: *Artinfo* (a Web art journal) reports that the public prosecutor suspects a museum staff member or visitor of inside chicanery. Investigations have shut down the museum. Says the prosecutor: "If it was an inside job, then the museum's security team should reexamine its procedures and guidelines for staff access and admittance. The implementation and enforcement of museum security's best practices can help deter insider art theft."

The implications for loaning museums are serious: Will other museums that have loaned work for specific exhibitions ask for their return? Will museums be hesitant to loan works of art unless the risks at the receiving museum have been carefully assessed?

The Association for Research into Crimes against Art (ARCA) reports that "Art crime represents the third highest grossing criminal enterprise worldwide, behind only drugs and arms trafficking. It brings in \$2-6 billion per year, most of which goes to fund international organized crime syndicates.

"Most art crime since the 1960s

is perpetrated either by, or on behalf of, international organized crime syndicates. They either use stolen art for resale, or to barter on a closed black market for an equivalent value of goods or services. Individually instigated art crimes are rare, and art crimes perpetrated for private collectors are rarest of all."

THE MYSTERY OF THE PLASTER CASTS

Last year, a cache of plaster casts of all of Degas' known sculptures was unveiled in Athens by dealer and sculpture specialist Walter Maibaum of the New York-based Modernism Fine Arts. Until now, the discovery has been largely in limbo; experts are divided: some believe they are previously unknown lifetime casts, other say they were made recently. A mystery compounded by experts.

Yet, when a new set of bronzes, cast from these newly discovered lifetime plasters that were made from the original waxes sculpted by Degas (before they were modified and repaired), is shown at the Tel Aviv Museum of Art (through June 26) the debate will burst forth in full force. Mordechai Omer, curator of the exhibition and director of the Tel Aviv Museum, after careful study of the plasters, says he is "firmly convinced that they and the resulting bronzes are authentic."

Another set of bronzes will tour North American museums, starting in November 2011 at the New Orleans Museum of Art (Degas visited there in 1872-73). John Bullard, director of the museum and curator of the exhibition is, like Omer, convinced of the plasters' authenticity.

Degas scholars, however, remain silent—either prohibited from comment by the rules of their institutions, concerned over possible legal action, or simply reluctant to enter disagreement with colleagues. One specialist is convinced that the plasters are modern, made recently by reassembling moulds from the Hèbrard castings.

Authentication is still up in the air. Maibaum found them, he states, in a storeroom at the Valsuani Foundry in Chevreuse on the southwestern outskirts of Paris. He bought them and had them shipped back to New York in 2007. Twenty-two remain in his possession; forty-nine were sold to another owner, three to yet another. Up until Maibaum made his find,

Degas' sculptures survived in three forms according to Marin Bailey in *The Art Newspaper*: "wax originals, which he probably later reworked, and which were repaired shortly after his death in 1917 (now mostly in the National Gallery of Art, DC); a master (*modèle*) set of bronzes made in 1919 from the modified waxes by the Hèbrard foundry (now in the Norton Simon Museum, CA); and a series of Hèbrard bronze casts made from the master bronzes in 1919-36 and again in 1955-64 (dispersed among museums and private collections). □



Edgar Degas, *Little Dancer Aged Fourteen*, model 1879-1881, cast c. 1922 National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC .

THE MYSTERY OF LOST PAINTINGS: Solved in NYS Office

The Holocaust Claims Processing Office (HCPO), a division of the New York State Banking Department, has been recently instrumental in the return by the Upper Austrian Provincial Museum of a painting that was lost during the throes of Nazi persecution of the Jews, to a descendant of its original owner. The mystery of its provenance was probed and prodded until the artwork could be successfully restored.

Ignatz Pick was an avid art collector, a successful antiquarian, and a gallery owner in Vienna before World War II. After the Anschluss, Pick's antique business was Aryanized, and control over his personal art collection was turned over to a Nazi-approved administrator. The administrator sold art from the collection to raise funds necessary to pay the punitive taxes imposed by the Nazi regime as well as to pay the immigration taxes for Pick's wife and daughters who had fled to New York. Pick, unable to join his family in the United States, died alone in Vienna in 1941. His sole surviving heir and granddaughter, Monique Goss, due to the efforts of the HCPO, now is in possession of her ancestor's prize painting by Johann Baptist Reiler.

Members of the HCPO work with claimants to collect detailed and accurate information using a combination of investigative skills, research expertise, and a command of foreign languages. They thus corroborate information

Dia Returns

The **Dia Art Foundation** (NY), five years after leaving New York and three years after discarding plans to build a museum on the High Line on Manhattan's west side, has announced its return to its old location on West 22nd Street. A new building is planned on the same site to replace the present one, which is presently occupied by the Pace Wildenstein gallery.

The Deitch Phenomenon

The clatter over the move made by Jeffrey Deitch from the commercial sector of the art scene to the non-profit **Museum of Contemporary Art**, Los Angeles, has pretty much subsided. Frenzied speculation led to interviews, articles, blogs, and more. For example: "...scolds will imagine immoral scenarios of a wolf in the fold and tut-tut over the possibility of an uncouth, craven commercial dealer trading museum treasures for market share, making back room deals and violating ethics..."—Jerry Saltz in *New York Magazine*

"...virtually every planning move its new director makes will raise questions about its relationship to Deitch's veiled commercial entanglements, which are long-standing and international in scope..."—Christopher Knight in the *Los Angeles Times*

And in answer to questions put by arts journalist Tyler Green, Deitch set his own agenda: *Will you close your gallery?* Yes, on June 1. *Will you ever return to dealing?* No. *What will happen to your existing program and artists?* I'm still working that out. *What becomes of your private collection that you have built over the years?* Ah, that is a murky one and seems to be more ethically difficult than anyone involved in the appointment seemed to have understood. Stay tuned.

Green Initiative on Cape

Having taken its first baby steps toward going green in 2004 by replacing incandescent with energy efficient compact fluorescent bulbs, the **Cape Cod Museum of Art** (MA) has made larger strides toward its objective. In 2009, the museum's redesigned education catalogue and its tri-annual newsletter were both published using 100 percent recycled paper. In addition, recycled paper towels and bathroom tissue became mandatory.

The newest green initiative is a change in trash disposal. The new system provides a Zero-sort service—museum personnel need only separate non-recyclable trash from recyclable; the removal company does the rest.

Crocker to Open New Facility

As part of its expansion project, which will be completed in October, the **Crocker Art Museum** (CA) will open a new Ann and Malcolm McHenry Works on Paper Study Center and exhibition space. The center was planned to increase public access to the museum's considerable collection of master drawings. The inaugural exhibition, "A Pioneering Collection; Master Drawings from the Crocker Art Museum" (Oct. 10-Feb. 6, 2011) will include rarely seen works

by Dürer, Fra Bartolommeo, van Dyck, Boucher, and Ingres. Regular special exhibitions and programs focusing on works on paper will follow.

Spring in St. Petersburg

One of the area's most popular traditions and exhibitions—the **Museum of Fine Arts'** (FL) "Art in Bloom"—springs up every year since it began in 1997. The 2010 version (March 13-17) featured 50 floral designs created in response to works in the collection as well as to the building itself. Many of the designers were affiliated with the local Ikebana chapter and garden clubs. During the customary "Conversation with the Designers," the designers were available to discuss their creations.

Expansion in Santa Fe

The **Institute of American Indian Arts** (NM) opened two new buildings on its college grounds:

one dedicated to science and technology, the other to sculpture and foundry works. The new buildings, both Silver LEED certified, represent \$8.65 million in construction, with \$7.65 million acquired through grants from the Department of Education's Title III programs and about \$1 million in state funding.

The sculpture and foundry building enables students to study woodworking, welding, forging, casting, ceramics, and large scale metal, stone, and glass sculpture. The science technology facility houses a multi-media digital dome, a museum collections center for the National Collection of Contemporary Native American art, a conservation teaching lab, and a science lab. In addition, a gallery/viewing room allows visitors to see the collection that is in storage as well as exhibits taken from the collection.

NY Taxis Display Art

For the entire month of January, in a project called "Art Adds," small works of art replaced the advertisements atop New York City taxis. Show Media, a Las Vegas company that owns about half the cones that top New York's cabs, decided to give commerce a rest. Instead, some 500 cabs rolled out displaying small artworks by three artists who agreed to participate, Shirin Neshat, Alex Katz, and Yoko Ono.

Show Media owner John Amato asked the Art Production Fund, a nonprofit New York organization that presents art around the city, to choose the artists. All had to be able to do work for a confined space (the ad space measures 14 by 48 inches); each artists' work appeared on some 160 cabs; each responded in his/her own unique style.

John Amato, a Show Media owner and a fan of contemporary art reflected: "I thought it was time to take a step back. January's a slow month.

I could have cut my rates, but instead I decided to hit the mute button and give something back to the city."

And he did.

Museum to Attract Wii Generation

In a bid to make history more vivid, alluring, and accessible for the Wii generation, an interactive "museum within a museum," focusing on the lives of young New Yorkers, will open in November 2011 on the lower level of the **New-**

York Historical

Society. The

DiMenna

Children's History

Museum is part of

the \$60 million

renovation of the

society building on

Central Park West.

It will focus on

stories of children

in history who

became famous

and those who did

not. On, for exam-

ple, Alexander

Hamilton, who

came to New York as a

teenage orphan to attend college, as well as boys and girls who hawked newspapers on city streets a century ago. "If we want history to become alive for children, what better way to teach them than showing them children from other periods? Aimed at roughly a fourth-grade level, the information in the exhibits [all drawn from the society's collections] will nevertheless be intended to appeal to all ages," says Louise Mirrer, president and chief executive officer of the museum. "We want to be on the permanent agenda of children and families in New York."

Tarble AC Wins Design Awards

The **Tarble Arts Center** (IL) publication, created to document an exhibition of the work of Ruth Duckworth, received two national awards from the University and College Designers Association—the Judges' Choice award and the Award of Excellence. Entries were judged for excellence in concept, design, illustration, typography, printing, effectiveness, quality, and creativity. The judges of this 29th annual competition, having evaluated some 1,300 print, green and electronic media entries announced 291 awards: 16 Gold, 17 Silver, and 258 Awards of Excellence.

Museum Reopens with New Agenda

The **Oakland Museum of California** reopens in May with a different presentation of its collection. Renovated and expanded, the museum invites visitors to discover the many stories of California and to explore their own contributions to the state's social, artistic, and environmental heritage. "We are moving toward a more partici-



patory museum experience that encourages visitor contributions and feedback,” says Executive Director Lori Fogarty.

The new Gallery of California Art showcases works from the world’s largest collection of California art, installed with the overarching theme, “Coming to California,” with three subsidiary themes: “Land (Exploring California),” “People (Defining Identity),” and “Ideas (Creative California).” Other new galleries to open later will explore the state’s ecosystems and habitats, biological and geological features, and more.

During its inaugural year several exhibitions pay tribute to the many facets of California culture and creativity: “Pixar: 15 Years of Animation” (July 3-Jan. 9, 2011); “The Marvelous Museum: A Project by Mark Dion” (Sept. 11-March 6, 2011); “Days of the Dead” (Oct. 5-Dec. 5); “The Arts of the Missions of Northern New Spain: 1600-1821” (Feb. 12-May 15, 2011); “Michael McMillen: A Retrospective Survey” (Spring 2011).

University Initiative Attracts “Masses”

Finding that few students were attending arts programs, and convinced that exposure to the arts is important to the college experience, officials at **Ohio University** instituted the Arts for OHIO Initiative, with goals that include accessibility, increasing the number of arts experiences, and raising the arts programming profile. Students play a major role in the Initiative: programming is determined by a student-led advisory board that decides what should be funded through the Initiative.

For a start, all art events were declared free to all students. Attendance at programs and galleries doubled in the first year. In addition, the Initiative became the vehicle for integrating classroom and artistic activities. Faculty and program directors from all branches of the university began to use arts programming for educational study, to facilitate discussion, and to promote social and interactive activities.

Miami Museum Prepares for Move

The **Miami Art Museum’s** (FL) history has been one of a small institution housed in a space designed as an exhibition hall. It became a collecting institution in 1996. The rapid growth of a permanent collection has dictated big changes. In about three years the museum will move to a new location and an enlarged facility. Already

curators are experimenting with how the new MAM will display its permanent collection. In preparation for the move, the museum is presenting its first, long-term installation of the ever growing collection: “Between Here and There: Modern and Contemporary Art from the Permanent Collection.” Curators are using the opportunity to test how different works interact, changing the display from time to time. Under these conditions, visitors are literally watching a permanent exhibition evolve.

G. Washington Auctioned

One of Gilbert Stuart’s 100 portraits of George Washington, which hung untouched and unseen by the public for generations in a private home in upstate New York, went up for sale at the end of March this year.

Arts / Writers / Environments

In furthering its mission to be a global leader in supporting the practice, study, and awareness of creative interactions between people and their environments, the Center for Art + Environment at the **Nevada Museum of Art** instituted a grant program it calls Artists / Writers / Environments (A / W / E Grant). Grant recipients who wrote letters of interest (by April 16), or with invited applications (due June 22), will be announced on or before July 6.

The program, in its pilot first year, is specifically for visual artists and writers working together in the field. The intent is for the writer(s) to document, report upon, and/or analyze the work of the artist(s) and its environmental context, not to provide creative responses. The aim is to encourage the creation

of new art + environment projects that seek to address environmental challenges rather than simply comment on them, to foster deeper and more immediate public awareness of art + environment projects, and to encourage unique field reports of lasting value to scholars and other artists.

[For more information go to Art + Environment at the Nevada Museum of Art website, www.NevadaArt.org.]



George Hitchcock, *Early Spring in Holland, c. 1887-1905*, oil on canvas. In “Dutch Utopia,” Taft Museum of Art, OH

Artists among Museum Guards

Among the (almost invisible) guards at the **Metropolitan Museum of Art** (NY) are artists *manqué*, artists who have to work to support themselves, artists who wait for recognition, artists who only want to absorb the skill and talent displayed on the surrounding walls. This group of artists, all MMoA guards, have provided their own spotlight with a new art journal called *Sw!pe Magazine: Guards’ Matter*, a reference to clocking in and out for work, and an accompanying art exhibit, which took place at a gallery on the west side of Manhattan.

The drawings, paintings, comics, prints, poetry, and photography shown in the exhibit and reproduced in *Sw!pe* were all created by 35 guards, many of whom have undergraduate or graduate degrees in fine arts. Some had no formal training, but were inspired the art surrounding them. Many describe an intimate bond with specific works; some work in sketchbooks during their breaks. Some will become successes. Artists Jackson Pollock, Sol LeWitt, Dan Flavin, and Brice Marden all spent part of their early years as guards.

High Partners with NGS

The National Galleries of Scotland (NGS) and the **High Museum of Art** (GA) have entered into a four-year partnership during which paintings from Scotland will tour in America. The first exhibition, to open at the High in October, “Venetian Masterpieces from the National Galleries of Scotland,” will include Titian’s *Deana and Actaeon* and *Diana and Callisto*. After its Atlanta run, the show will travel to the Minneapolis Institute of Arts and the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston in 2011. Other exhibitions are planned for 2012, 13, and 14.

The purpose, for the Scottish museum, is to raise money in America for the purchase of the two Titians and renovation of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery. □



Lippo d'Andrea, *Virgin and Child Enthroned with Saints John the Baptist and Nicholas of Bari (detail)*, c. 1410. In “The Art of Devotion,” Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, MA



N.C. Wyeth, *Dance of the Whooping Cranes*, c. 1938. In "Reflections," Museum of Arts and Sciences, FL

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GRAFFITI: From Outlaw to Mainstream

The graffiti writers that covered the outside of subway cars in Manhattan are gone; the teenagers who slipped through fences, jumped over rails, climbed walls, stole through dark streets looking for bare walls to express themselves in spray paint are no more. Where are they? Where did they go? Many, now middle-aged, middle Americans, have mainstream jobs, mostly in the arts. Some still write graffiti part time, unhindered by legal restraints, uninterrupted by stealthy over-the-shoulder looks and fear of discovery. It's legal now. Landlords ask for their work. Corporations hire them.

Gone but not forgotten is one of graffiti's most famous spots, the "writers' bench" at the 149th Street and Grand Concourse stop on the No. 2 line. This was where the fraternity of writers gathered to talk and to watch their work rolling by, a moveable feast in the 1970s.

Then, photographs were the only evidence that a work really existed. Today, still, only photographs perpetuate the works, but the photos appear on the Internet, in magazines, in newspapers, all through the media, reaching audiences undreamed of in the days of the "writers' bench."

Henry Chalfant, photographer and filmmaker, was among the first to document the golden years of graffiti in New York. Now, Eric Felisbret, a one-time graffiti writer who called himself DEAL and became a member of the Crazy Inside Artists of Brooklyn (NY), has

taken up the challenge of documenting this evanescent artwork with his camera. He and his brother Luke, also a graffiti writer, have amassed a photographic archive of New York City graffiti equal to none, much of which appears in *Graffiti New York*, a glossy new volume that surveys the movement from "outlaw origins to mainstream respectability," according to David Gonzalez who reported on the book for the *The New York Times*.

Says Gonzalez: "What started in the 70s as a visual assault on commuters has attained a certain acceptability, if not cachet, thanks in part to the city's crackdown on subway graffiti in the late 80s. Today, ambitious aerosol canvases hang in galleries, while corporations like Nike, Coca-Cola, and Sony hire graffiti muralists to paint storefront advertisements.

Vintage photographs plucked from archives have inspired a small industry of coffee table books.

"Old-school graffiti—with intricate tangles of kinetic letters and cartoonish characters—is just about everywhere except the place that was once its sole domain: the metal skins of subway cars.

"While the city seems far removed from the days of entire trains slathered in spray paint, Mr. Felisbret believes there is probably just as much illicit graffiti in town, only more scattered—on trucks, rooftops, or the upper floors of buildings. His book shows examples of all sorts." □

CHILDREN'S HOUR

The Freeport Art Museum (IL) held the "Aspiring Artists Student Exhibition: Earth 3000" at the beginning of 2010. The theme prompted students to visually explain their interpretation of how the earth might be different in the year 3000. Teachers were permitted to submit up to 40 pieces; their choices came from children of all ages ranging from kindergarten to 12th grade. Hundreds of works by as many students from some ten schools in the five-county area of Freeport were finally included in the exhibition.

From three age groups (K-4, 5-8, and 9-12), first, second and third prizes were awarded. First place winners in each group received a cash prize (sponsored by a local company): \$10 for the youngest, \$15 for the middle group, and \$20 for the oldest.

At Isaiah's Corner In the Everhart Museum of Natural History, Science & Art (PA), children can experience an interactive exhibit space designed especially for them. The themes of the gallery change with and complement the museum's temporary exhibits throughout the year.

During the current exhibits, "The Art of Brick" and "Brick Creations: Student Art at the Everhart" (May 2), Isaiah's Corner provides a place where children can create their own buildings with box materials, LEGOs, and magnetic bricks, after which they can pore over the books in the book nook. □