Director's Letter

The Yale University Art Gallery is grateful to its supporters for helping to make our exhibitions and programs possible. In addition to specific grants noted herein, the Gallery’s educational offerings are supported in part by: anonymous; Mr. and Mrs. Wilson Nolen, B.A. 1948; Ms. Eliot Nolen, B.A. 1984; and Mr. Timothy P. Bradley, B.A. 1983; Christian Nolen, B.A. 1982; Malcolm Nolen, B.A. 1983; Banco SANTANDER; Director’s Resource Endowment Fund; William Bernhard Class of ’54 Education Fund; Cogger Family Fund for Education; Education and Outreach Fund; Alva Gimbel-Greenberg Family Fund; Allan S. Kaplan Memorial Fund for Undergraduate Programs; Jane and Gerald Katcher Fund for Education; Kemper Family Endowment Fund; David Krulenberg, B.A. 1944, Fund; Carol and Sol LeWitt Fund for Education; Manton Foundation Public Education Fund; Frederick and Jan Mayer Education Curatorship Fund; Rosalee and David McCullough Family Fund; New Haven School Children Education Fund; Katharine Ordway Exhibition and Publication Fund; Vincent Scully Fund for Education; Seedlings Foundation Public Education Fund; Shamos Family Fund in Support of Student Outreach Programs; Robert E. Steele, M.P.H. 1971, Ph.D. 1975, and Jean E. Steele Endowment Fund; Amor and Margaret Towles Education Fund; Wolfe Family Exhibition and Publication Fund; Margaret and Angus Wurtele, B.A. 1956, Fund for Education; and Yale University Art Gallery Fund for Education.

For information on how to support the Gallery’s programs, please contact Jill Westgard, Deputy Director for Advancement, at 203.432.0624 or jill.westgard@yale.edu.

If you visit the Yale University Art Gallery regularly, you already know that there is great delight to be had in discovering new works of art on view and in finding familiar works installed in new places and juxtaposed with different objects. Since the 2012 opening of the renovated three-building museum complex, our collection has been quietly growing with outstanding gifts and purchases. Some recent acquisitions have gone on view as soon as they have arrived, and others will be rotated into the galleries in the coming months or brought to one of the object-study classrooms for close examination by students, faculty members, and visiting scholars and artists.

While the 2014 issue of the Yale University Art Gallery Bulletin focused on notable acquisitions from the past three years, I am eager to highlight new additions to the collection made during the 2014-15 academic year. In the Charles B. Benenson Galleries, for example, you will find an extraordinary recent acquisition: Jasper Johns’s Untitled (1984). Johns had long kept this work—one of his seminal white encaustic paintings—in his personal collection but felt it would be an important representation of his oeuvre at the Gallery. Nearby in the Benenson Galleries is Portrait II (1962), an outstanding example of Richard Artschwager’s early work, which was generously given to the museum by Anna Marie and Robert F. Shapiro, B.A. 1956, chairman of the Governing Board Collections Committee. Gallery visitors may recognize this piece from its loan to the 2007-8 exhibition Art for Yale: Collecting for a New Century. On page seven of this magazine, you will learn more about N. C. Wyeth’s Over Yonder (1909)—the first work by the artist to enter our collection—donated by Edward P. Bass, B.A. 1968, M.Arch. 1972, Hon. 2001, through the Fourth Century Trust. All of these works are already being used frequently by those who teach from our collection: Yale professors, community teachers, Gallery Guides, and the Wurtele Gallery Teachers.


One of the most exciting recent additions to the collection was the donation by members of the William Platt family of four bronze sketch models by Augustus Saint-Gaudens of the soldiers’ heads for the Robert Gould Shaw and Massachusetts 54th Regiment Memorial (ca. 1897) in Boston. Because of my involvement with the Augustus Saint-Gaudens Memorial board of directors in the 1990s, and former Dean of Yale School of Art Richard Benson’s contribution to Lay This Laurel (Eakins Press, 1973, reprinted 2001)—a photography book about the memorial—the Platt family felt that Yale would be a fitting home for this gift. Commemorating the first documented African American regiment that formed
in the North to fight in the Civil War, Saint-Gaudens's sketch models are certain to become the focus of art, history, and African American studies classes for generations to come.

Following the success of the recent exhibitions Jazz Lives: The Photographs of Lee Friedlander and Milt Hinton, Odd Volumes: Book Art from the Allan Chasanoff Collection, and Vida y Drama de México: Prints from the Monroe E. Price and Aimée Brown Price Collection, many related works have joined the collection. These include photographs by Milt Hinton; works from the Allan Chasanoff, B.A. 1961, Book Art Collection; and works from the Taller de Gráfica Popular given by Monroe E. Price, B.A. 1960, LL.B. 1964, and Aimée Brown Price, M.A. 1963, Ph.D. 1972. Inspired by the photography books recently published by the Gallery, Katherine and Stephen C. Sherrill, B.A. 1975, donated works by New Orleans photographer E. J. Bellocq that were printed by Friedlander. We now have one of the strongest museum collections of photography thanks in part to the dedicated support of such donors as Margaret and Neale M. Albert, J.D. 1961, who added more than 60 works to an extensive list of gifts to the Gallery, and Nancy and Robinson A. Grover, B.A. 1958, M.S.L. 1975. We note with sadness the recent passing of Rob Grover, who was a longtime friend and generous benefactor to the Gallery.

Other generous donors continue to transform our collection with regular gifts. John Axelrod, B.A. 1968, recently donated a number of works to the Department of American Decorative Arts, one of which is highlighted in depth on page six. The art of the ancient Americas collection has grown over the years with gifts from Peter David Joralemon, B.A. 1969, M.Phil. 1974, who donated 34 additional objects this year, from which Mary Miller, M.A. 1978, Ph.D. 1981, the Sterling Professor of History of Art and former Dean of Yale College, and others will regularly teach.

More than 1,000 works have been added to our collection during the last year, and the Gallery still maintains the highest standards in expanding its holdings. Our curators and educators judge each piece for its artistic merit and consider the ways in which it will enhance our ability to teach from the finest examples of art across time, media, and cultures. We are grateful to all those who donate works of art and funds for strategic purchases.

It is only with a discerning eye in building our collection that we can inspire our visitors and teach others to be future connoisseurs and collectors. I encourage you to visit the Gallery often to see these new acquisitions alongside old favorites. We promise to keep surprising you with opportunities to look, linger, and learn.

Jock Reynolds
The Henry J. Heinz II Director