

CRSA FORUM

The Newsletter of the Catalogue Raisonné Scholars Association

an Affiliated Society of the College Art Association

Spring 2003

No. 11

FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Nancy Mowll Mathews

Call for nominations

It has been a great pleasure for me to serve as CRSA's president for the last five years. While we have never established a specific length for a president's term, I would like to follow the precedent set by our first president, Gail Levin, and limit my term to the time I have served so far. I will happily continue to be active in the organization, and, if appropriate, will continue to keep the CRSA membership and financial records that I established at the beginning of my term.

Thus, I open this call for nominations. At this point in our organizational history, many of the structures seem to be in place. Thanks to Scott Ferris, we have a rich and regular newsletter. Thanks to members like Steven Manford, we have compelling programs at the annual CRSA meeting during CAA. Many others, too numerous to be named, have contributed their time to CRSA programming in the first ten years of our history. What we need now is someone to take the helm and, without worrying about the mechanics, propel the organization into a new decade of creativity and service.

If you would like to take on the challenge, or if you know someone who would, please contact me or Scott with your nominations by September 1, 2003 (you will find our addresses in the list of members). We will present the candidates in the next news-

letter, conduct the voting, and install the new president at our next annual meeting in conjunction with CAA in February 2004 in Seattle. Nominations should be in the form of a letter stating the nominee's interest in and qualifications for this post. Nominees must be members of CRSA.

We look forward to receiving the nominations and continuing into the future under new leadership. I heartily recommend the experience!

"The Picabia Affair": A Public Debate Over Authentication

Excerpts from Alain Tarica and the Comité Picabia, edited by Scott R. Ferris

The mechanics of the catalogue raisonné project is generally thought of as a *closed door* process. A scholar or group of scholars, artist's family members, curators, and/or art dealers, meet to discuss the factual details that identify individual works of art; we then endeavor, of course, to compile this information into the physical catalogue. As members of the CRSA we share some aspects of our research and work progress via this format, the *CRSA Forum*. We may also share a finite amount of data with those from whom we seek information--artists' families, collectors, museums, art dealers--and on occasion we publish excerpts of this information in auction and exhibition catalogues. Nevertheless, we generally tend to keep our research findings close to our desk until we publish

the full CR.

Rarely do the mechanics--the authentication process--of our CRs become as public as the ongoing debate between Alain Tarica and the Comité Picabia has become.

As we well know CRs are compiled by individuals (or groups) with or without the blessings of the artist, the artist's family, entities founded by the heirs to promote the legacy of the artist, or other related associates. Therefore our research and conclusions are equal to that of our neighbor's, in the eyes of intense scholarly scrutiny.

(continued on page 2)

Revisiting Photographic Historians Authoring Catalogues Raisonné

Part One: Sarah Greenough's *Alfred Stieglitz: The Key Set*
by Steven Manford

At the 2003 College Art Association annual conference the Catalogue Raisonné Scholars Association presented a panel entitled *Why it is Important to Reinvent the Wheel: Photographic Historians Authoring Catalogues Raisonné*. Since photo historians are just beginning to publish catalogues raisonné we thought now was an ideal occasion to profile four such projects. Larry Schaaf spoke on William Henry Fox Talbot and his circle, as well as efforts to compile both a catalogue raisonné and an inventory of the correspondence. Julian Cox spoke on Julia Margaret Cameron and the just

(continued on page 7)

"The Picabia Affair"

(continued from page 1)

For the record, and despite how this article will or could be read, neither this editor nor the Catalogue Raisonné Scholars Association has an opinion on who might be right in this conflict between Alain Tarica and the Comité Picabia--I have made this quite clear to both parties. I have stated to Mr. Tarica, and to Mr. William Camfield of the Comité Picabia, that our interest is purely to share public information that may give all of us some insight into the procedures we utilize in developing our own CRs and how we may avoid similar pitfalls. Furthermore, this article is not a defense of any of the evidence that will be presented.

What I am offering below is excerpts from the documents now known as "The Picabia Affair" and "The Picabia Affair II." These excerpts are laid out in a comparative fashion--initial statement followed by a rebuke--much the same way the two parties have presented their arguments.

The specific arguments, herein published, have been selected based upon the variety of their content. An attempt has been made to keep the length of the material within reason, so as to allow for the inclusion of other interesting topics in this issue of *CRSA Forum*.

I am hopeful that these excerpts will encourage dialog--in the *Forum*--among our membership. Questions that may arise include: Do their presentations offer suggestions about research techniques that we should apply to (or avoid in) our own work? If we are working independently, have we come to a point in our research where we

could benefit from the insights of others; if so, who might these "others" be? If we are working within a group (a committee or foundation), can we come to a consensus on questionable works of art, and if we can't, what happens to the work being debated? Are our findings any more protected from intellectual or legal challenges if we work independently or within a group? Do competing CRs, or opposing specific object studies (as in this case) negate the validity of either document, or both?

It is not my intent to answer these questions but instead seek responses from our readership for thoughts on these and other related issues.

It should be noted that Mr. Tarica has written follow up comments to the Comité Picabia's response. I did not reprint any of this additional material here simply because I could not balance this data with an equal return from the Comité--they declined the opportunity to continue this public debate.

My thanks to Barbara Buhler Lynes for bringing this controversy to our attention, and to Walter Robinson, at artnet.com, for elaborating on the public exposure this issue has received.

I am grateful to both Mr. Tarica and Mr. Camfield for offering their insights into this matter. Ed.

"The Picabia Affair"

September 2002

"Introduction"

Alain Tarica:

"The purpose of this short essay, which is strictly for private consumption [Ed. see above.], is to try and shed a little light on the hotch-potch of attributions (continued on page 3)

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No. 11

Contents

- 1** From the President
by Nancy Mowll Mathews

"The Picabia Affair"
by Alain Tarica and
Comité Picabia, ed.

Revisiting Photographic
Historians Authoring
Catalogues Raisonné
by **Steven Manford**

- 8** Alfred Stieglitz: The Key
Set by Sarah Greenough

- 10** Announcements/Papers

- 12** Feedback
Recent Publications
Editor's Notes
by Scott R. Ferris

- 13** Membership List

CRSA Forum

The Newsletter of the
Catalogue Raisonné Scholars
Association.

Nancy Mowll Mathews,
President
Scott R. Ferris, Editor, *CRSA*
Forum.

Submitting Manuscripts

Please send manuscripts and
letters typewritten, via e-mail
or snail mail, to: Scott R.
Ferris, 23 Furnace Street,
Franklin Springs, NY 13341 or
kentiana@dreamscape.com.

Membership

To become a member, and main-
tain membership, please fill
out the membership form at
the end of this issue and return
it to: Nancy Mowll Mathews,
Williams College Museum of
Art, 15 Lawrence Hall Drive,
Suite 2, Williamstown, MA
01267--please submit annually.

of works to Picabia, and their respective dating (when fakes are not involved).

It is not possible to list all the problems which have today become part and parcel of the corpus of Picabia's oeuvre without mentioning the attitude of the members of the Picabia Committee. The main members of the Picabia Committee, since its foundation, have been: Mrs. Olga Picabia, the artist's last wife, Mr. Pierre Calté, picture dealer, Mrs. Beverly Goldberg, his wife, Mr. William Camfield, Professor of Art History at Houston University, Texas, Mrs. Maria Lluïsa Borràs, Member of the Miro Foundation, Barcelona, and more recently, Mr. Arnauld Pierre, Professor of Art History at Bordeaux University.

As we shall see, there have been many fakes over the years, along with unforgivable dating and attribution errors, and even worse: genuine works have been declared fakes!

Yet the aim of this Picabia Committee is, *inter alia*, to classify, authenticate and publish a Catalogue Raisonné or Complete Annotated Catalogue of Picabia's works."

**"The Picabia Affair,
Part II
The Picabia Committee in
response to Alain Tarica"**
September 2002
"Introduction"

Comite Picabia:

"For several weeks, M. Tarica, a collector and art dealer based in Geneva and Paris, has been circulating a typed account of about 30 pages intended to undermine the reputation of the members of the Picabia Committee. It is the last episode to date of a controversy concerning a series of col-

lages owned by Mr. Tarica. He is trying to convince the Committee to attribute these works to the artist Francis Picabia. The Picabia Committee, after having considered the arguments M. Tarica has presented at length, let him know that to the best of its present knowledge the series of collages in question certainly could not be included in the catalogue raisonné of the artist, currently in preparation.

The Picabia Committee was created in 1990 at the initiative of Olga Picabia, the artist's widow, as an 'association loi 1901' (a nonprofit organization), and began to function the following year. Its purpose, as defined in its statutes, is to collect archives, documents and all other information concerning the work of Francis Picabia in order to produce a catalogue raisonné of his work. Its present members include: Laure Montet (granddaughter of the artist), Pierre and Beverly Calté (art dealers), Maria-Lluïsa Borràs (former professor at the University of Barcelona), William A. Camfield (Emeritus Professor at Rice University, Houston), Virginia Camfield, and Arnauld Pierre (Maître de conférences at the University of Paris-Sorbonne) [Note: Olga Picabia, who was holder of the 'droit moral' and a member of the committee, died on Sept. 23, 2002]. The art historians on the Committee are all authors of books and articles which have advanced our knowledge by documenting and commenting on every aspect of Picabia's work. Each has been called upon to serve as authors, expert advisors or organizers of exhibitions by numerous and often prestigious institutions that recognize the quality of the work they have accomplished over the years.

The Picabia Committee employs methods of historical research, based in part on knowledge of the works themselves, for which a considerable amount of factual information has been collected from direct observation for decades. It is also based on the sources which document these works (the library and archives of the artist, photographic records from the artist's studio, catalogues of old exhibitions, press clippings etc.), and, when necessary, on scientific analysis of the materials used in the artwork. The Committee's objective is to reconstruct as precisely as possible the pedigree of the works and their often chaotic and eventful history. The decision to include or exclude a work in the catalogue raisonné depends on all of these factors. The task of the Picabia Committee is enormous and difficult, and the possibility of inadvertent error cannot be excluded. For this reason the Committee has always been open to suggestions, comments, and new information which may advance its work.

Disagreements and controversies concerning attribution are frequent in our discipline and sometimes result in conflicting positions. The members of the Picabia Committee believe that all viewpoints are legitimate as long as they are expressed openly, and not in the way Mr. Tarica distributed his 'text.' In fact, the Committee would not have had direct knowledge of that text if one of the recipients of this pamphlet had not suggested to its author that he would be at fault by not sending it to those personally (and grossly) targeted. His method of circulating accusations in the form of rumor eliminates any possibility for opposing views. For

this reason the Picabia Committee presents below its response to Mr. Tarica, following step by step the development of his 'demonstration.'

First, the Committee requests that M. Tarica guarantee the same distribution for our response as for his own account--and with the same rapidity and efficiency. Second, the Committee suggests that these two documents be submitted to a professional magazine, which may or may not choose to publish them (this would necessarily imply the exclusion of all abuses, malevolent insinuations and defamatory accusations from which Mr. Tarica's writings are unfortunately not exempt). All this, in order that everyone may have access to *all* the documents constituting what Mr. Tarica calls 'The Picabia Affair,' and not only those that serve one personal interpretation."

"Other obviously fake works" (RE: article "c" in the documentation.)

Alain Tarica:

"In the Picabia retrospective at Lisbon, at the Belém Cultural Centre, from 6 June to 31 August 1997, there were many other works which are, in my view, fakes, including: no. 47, *Colombe* (circa 1924-1926), coloured pencil and gouache on paper; no. 59, *Masque en transparence*, gouache and diluted oil on paper, claimed to be from 1925-1928; no. 86, *Composition abstraite*, claimed circa 1938, etc.

I have known all these works and other forged Picabias, which have been included in various Picabia retrospectives, organized in museums by the Picabia Committee.

I warned Mr. Camfield and

Mrs. Borràs that the above mentioned works were fakes; the Verona museum which wrote to both the above persons to ask each one of them for their opinion about some of these works (letter to myself of 29 July 1997, letter from the Galeria d'Arte Moderna, Palazzo Forti, Verona, of 7 August 1997, of 20 August 1997, of 28 August 1997) has never received any response."

"Other obviously fake works" (RE: article "c.")

Comité Picabia:

"Mr. Tarica points out in the Picabia retrospective at the Belém Cultural Centre, in Portugal, the presence of three works 'which are, in (his) view, fakes.' Once again, this is a subjective point of view which he never takes the trouble to support.

It so happens that two of the works denounced by Mr. Tarica are examples of the simplest possible authentication, because *they come directly from Picabia's atelier* which they had never left before this exhibition:

--*Colombe* (circa 1924-25, colored pencil and gouache on paper). This work is certainly not the most representative of Picabia's artwork from the mid-'20s. It could have been excluded from a retrospective considering its minor importance, but this does not mean it is a 'fake.'

--*Composition abstraite* (circa 1938, gouache on paper). Mr. Tarica's short-sightedness in this case is less understandable because, unlike the previous work which is a *unicum* and difficult to relate to the known production of the artist, this one belongs to a series of abstract works associated with the

movement of Dimensionism. There are several known examples, including one, very similar, owned by Olga Picabia, consisting of interlacings which define color fields. They were most likely made at the request of Picabia's art dealer for an exhibition that never took place, as confirmed in recent research by Christian Derouet (In: Francis Picabia, *Lettres à Léonce Rosenberg 1929-1940*. N° Hors-série/ Archives des Cahiers du Musée National d'Art Moderne, avril 2000, p. 10).

Concerning the third work, *Masque en transparence* (1925-1928, gouache and diluted oil paint on paper), it was known to Mr. Camfield well before it reappeared on the market via the Waddington Gallery in London and the Drouot-Montaigne auction house, Paris (1994). Mr. Camfield examined the work in the 1970s at the home of Mr. Robert Valette. Mr. Valette had acquired it from Angèle Lévesque, the wife of Jacques-Henri Lévesque, one of Picabia's closest friends since the late '20s, and an editor of *Orbes*, a review wholly supportive of Picabia, with several texts by and about the artist. There is an inscription on the back of the drawing, most likely in Picabia's handwriting: 'Francis Picabia 1925,' and, in another hand, the name 'A. Lévesque.' There is no cause to doubt the authenticity of this work, in its provenance, in the context of its first known appearance, nor its style, typical of the first *Transparences* which include elements of Catalanian romanescque painting.

Certainly, Mr. Tarica is not expected to be in possession of all of this information, which is the result of a long, assiduous study of Picabia's oeuvre and a

systemic search for new data. The Picabia Committee would gladly have shared this information if it could have prevented him from making such quick and hazardous judgments."

"Fake, presumed of 1929-1930" (RE: article "d" in the documentation. Mr. Tarica's title.)

Alain Tarica:

"Another example of a fake is an oil on board signed Picabia and titled *Josias*, measuring 80.7 x 100 cm, claimed to be dated 1929-1930, no. 263 in the Sotheby's sale in New York on 13 November 1996. When various dealers, myself included, had suggested to the auction house that it was a fake, and although this work was shown as a full-page reproduction in the Sotheby's sale catalogue, which, in addition, mentioned that it was accompanied by a certificate of authenticity issued by the artist's widow, Olga Picabia, an eminent member of the Picabia Committee, it was withdrawn from the sale.

It has come to my notice that it was part of a series of four works, all fakes, but nevertheless certified authentic. I have not personally seen the other three works."

"The case of Josias" (RE: article "d." Comité Picabia's title.)

Comité Picabia:

"The Picabia Committee does not object to Mr. Tarica's point of view in regard to this so-called *Transparence* of 1929-1930, for it was after having consulted the Committee that Sotheby's removed the painting from the sale, not on the advice of Mr.

Tarica. Usually Sotheby's and Christie's systematically consult the Picabia Committee when works of this artist come into their sales. Time constraints in the organization of auctions and the existence of certificates issued before the creation of the Committee have sometimes produced cases like *Josias*. Such instances have led the Committee to notify the auction houses concerned that it does not systematically recognize certificates of authenticity issued by the wives of the artist. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Picabia's wives for the precious aid all three have contributed to our research, but we understand that the criteria of historical research was often--and quite naturally--foreign to their judgments.

The following statement is simply false and slanderous: 'It has come to my notice that it (*Josias*) was part of a series of four works, all fakes, but nevertheless certified authentic by the widow (in the French version only). [Ed. One of the printings of this document was written in French. Other documents, with slight variations--specifically typos or variant spellings--can also be found in circulation.] The works in question are fake 'Transparences,' three of which (*Jezebel*, *Sukkot*, and *Golaad*) appeared in the Picabia retrospective in Madrid in 1985 (prior to the existence of the Picabia Committee). Afterwards, Olga Picabia had them seized and destroyed with police intervention, at her own expense.

Regarding this subject, we note that for reasons essentially of cost, the Picabia Committee does not foresee police action of this kind, as is practiced by

some title holders of the 'droit morale' for other artists."

"1929-1930 fake, cropping up here, there and everywhere" (RE: article "e." Mr. Tarica's title.)

Alain Tarica:

"The last example we shall deal with is even more astonishing on account of the attitude of the Picabia Committee, rather than on account of the crudeness of the execution made out for this fake. On 9 April 1995 there appeared for sale by public auction at Maîtres Perrin, Royère and Lajeunesse in Versailles, lot no. 61, attributed to Picabia, claimed to be from 1929-1930, and title *Femme aux oiseaux*.

This work cropped up again on sale at Christie's of London, lot no. 259, on 2 July 1998, complete with provenance and bibliography.

During a discussion with the director of the Department of Modern Paintings at Christie's, I warned him that this work was a fake, and that he would be well-advised to tell Mr. Camfield that I was of the opinion that this work was a fake, and I urged him (in no uncertain terms) to obtain a written opinion from him. Mr. Camfield must have corroborated my opinion because Christie's withdrew that work from the sale. I would remind you that Mr. Camfield is an eminent member of the Picabia Committee. And yet immediately thereafter, on October 1998, the work resurfaced for sale in Paris, at Maître Cornette of Saint-Cyr, reproduced in the catalogue under no. 5. There is cause to wonder about the fact that the Committee let this work reappear on the market, for public sale by auction in

Paris, without opposing the sale in any way--a work reproduced in the catalogue, that had been withdrawn from a major auction sale at Christie's London, three months earlier, for reasons of authenticity.

We shall conclude this chapter on fakes declared genuine, or accepted as genuine by the Picabia Committee, at this juncture--fakes, incidentally, sold on the market, at times by members of the Committee. But let me say again that this list of fakes is not exhaustive--far from it."

"The case of *Femme aux oiseaux*" (RE: article "e." Comité Picabia's title.)

Comité Picabia:

"The members of the Picabia Committee do not need Mr. Tarica's revelations to recognize that the drawing *Femme aux oiseaux* is an obvious fake. Once again, it is not Mr. Tarica's opinion but that of the Committee that Christie's took into account when the auction house removed the work from its sale. The Committee regrets that the work found its way to the market again but it does not always have the means by which to exercise constant vigilance. This is precisely the case of *Femme aux oiseaux*, which reappeared in an auction of Maître Cornette de Saint-Cyr without notice to the Committee. In any case, the Committee's opinions are of an advisory nature, and a negative statement does not force the seller to cancel the sale. But of course the statement 'this work will appear in the Catalogue Raisonné of the artist' cannot be mentioned in the sale catalogue.

Finally, as opposed to Mr. Tarica's slanderous insinuation

in the last paragraph of this section, *Femme aux oiseaux* is not and was never owned by any member of the Picabia Committee."

"Remakes not seen, whence glaring dating errors" (RE: article "II." Mr. Tarica's title.)

Alain Tarica:

"This chapter will deal with some of the glaring dating errors of Picabia works made by the Picabia Committee, and its incompetence at making any distinction between early works and remakes made by the artist towards the end of his life."

"The painting: 'Sails'" (RE: article "II a." Mr. Tarica's title.)

Alain Tarica:

"On 15 June 1991, a canvas measuring 81 x 100 cm, signed but not dated by Picabia, titled: *Le Voilier/The Sailing boat*, and dated 1939-1940 in the catalogue was put up for auction with Maître Francis Briest. I received the sale catalogue in Geneva, and thanks to the reproduction, I realized that the painting was from 1911 and not from 1939-1940. To find out where this wrong dating stemmed from, I called Maître Briest who explained to me that the 1939-1940 dating was due to Olga Picabia, because, as this picture was not reproduced anywhere, Maître Briest had shown it to Olga Picabia to be sure of its authenticity. Olga Picabia told him that she could accurately date the painting, because she recognized the boat featuring in the work and she and her husband had gone on a cruise on that same boat in 1939, whence the

dating appearing in the sale catalogue: 1939-1940. I didn't tell Maître Briest what my own opinion was about the date and I bought the picture unseen, in Geneva, with a telephone bid. When the painting arrived, I saw on the back the label that is reproduced herewith [Ed. See the original Tarica documentation for this illustration.]; I recognized that label, because I had earlier had another Picabia work bearing the same label on the back. It corresponds to the sale of Picabia works belonging to Marcel Duchamp, on Monday 8 March 1926, at the Hotel Drouot auction house, room no. 10. The catalogue for that sale shows that number 6 of this sale (as indicated on the label) was a canvas measuring 82 x 100 cm (dimensions of the Briest painting), titled *Voiles/Sails* (as on the label), and dated 1911 in this catalogue. I called Mr. Camfield, showed him the painting, and after some discussion, he agreed that the painting was indeed from 1911, and not from 1939-1940.

Before coming to a much more conspicuous dating error, because of its implications (namely, genuine works declared as fakes), let me reproduce the following document (cf. reproduction no. 18 in the Appendix) [Ed. All related illustrations submitted by these two parties can be found in their respective documents.], in which Mrs. Olga Picabia admits her poor knowledge of Picabia's oeuvre in the 1920-1924 period. But as the facts above-mentioned, and those that will now follow, demonstrate, it is not only the 1920-1924 period about which Mrs. Olga Picabia and other members of the Picabia Committee have shown themselves to be incompetent."

"The So-Called 'Remakes' of Picabia" (RE: article "II." Comité Picabia's title.)

Comité Picabia:

"All of the previous slanderous accusations and ill-founded or gratuitous statements in Mr. Tarica's 'demonstration' have no other purpose than to discredit the members of the Picabia Committee, and allow Mr. Tarica to arrive well-armed on the most sensitive terrain--the series of collages he owns. These collages have been the object of an unrelenting controversy with the Picabia Committee. The objective of Mr. Tarica's preliminary statements has been to condition the reader to believe in the newest theory of all Picabia studies in the last 50 years: according to his theory, Picabia fabricated so-called 'remakes' in the style of his earlier works (precisely two decades before).

"The case of Voiles (Sails) (1911)" (RE: article "II a." Comité Picabia's title.)

Comité Picabia:

"His 'demonstration' needed one more proof of the incompetence

of the Picabia Committee on questions of dating works. Therefore Mr. Tarica brings up the case of *Voiles* (Sails), a superb painting from the transitional period which preceded Picabia's evolution towards abstraction, and which was erroneously dated from the late 1930s by Olga Picabia. As stated above, the Picabia Committee has already taken a position regarding certain personal judgments made by the wives or people close to the artist when they are not based on an historical approach. The art historians among the members of the Committee never had a problem with the authenticity of this painting, close in subject and treatment to a work like *Les Régates*, also from 1911. *Violes* is indeed a very beautiful work whose owner must be proud and happy. Without question, it will figure in the catalogue raisonné of the artist. There is no reason whatsoever to engage in polemics over this work."

Thus ends our review of the debate between Alain Tarica and the Comité Picabia. The docu-

mentation provided by these two parties is extensive and is by no means fully represented here (after all, this was not our intent).

Should you wish to contact Alain Tarica, he can be reached at, 8, Rue Chausse Coq, Geneve 1204 Switzerland; Tel: 022 - 310 40 01; Fax: 022 - 310 40 22, or 138, Rue Du Faubourg Saint-Honoré 75008 Paris; Fax: 01 49 53 94 36. The Comité Picabia can be reached at 26, Rue Danielle Casanova, 75002 Paris; Tel: 01 42 60 23 78; Fax: 01 42 60 23 78; or via William Camfield at, 1117 Milford, Houston, TX 77006.

STIEGLITZ: The Key Set
(continued from page 1)

published catalogue raisonné, *Julia Margaret Cameron: The Complete Photographs*, which Julian co-authored with Colin Ford. Sarah Greenough spoke on her recently published two volume catalogue on Alfred Stieglitz entitled, *Alfred*

(l. to r. Larry Schaaf, Julian Cox, Nancy Moroll Mathews, Sarah Greenough, and Steven Manfred)



Stieglitz: The Key Set. And lastly, I spoke about the Man Ray Rayographs Catalogue Raisonné Project.

Of the presenters, Sarah Greenough and Julian Cox are the first to have published their volumes. Some in the field consider these efforts the first catalogues raisonnés to be published on photographers. Certainly there are no volumes in existence which provide such a thorough insight into the life work of Stieglitz and Cameron. As pioneering efforts these two volumes are likely to become models for photo historians wishing to undertake a catalogue raisonné. Given the importance of these two volumes we are publishing, here, the papers given by Sarah Greenough and Julian Cox. In this issue of the *CRSA Forum* we present Sarah Greenough's paper. In the next issue of the *Forum* we will publish Julian Cox's paper on Julia Margaret Cameron.

The paper by Sarah Greenough provides stimulating insights into some of the issues specific to preparing a catalogue raisonné of a photographer's work. The most basic question posed by Greenough's paper is "What constitutes a photographer's oeuvre?" And while the author does not consider *Alfred Stieglitz: The Key Set* a catalogue raisonné, readers will be hard pressed to find a better example of what the catalogue raisonné is about.

ALFRED STIEGLITZ:

The Key Set

by Sarah Greenough

In the coming years as more basic scholarship has been completed we will undoubtedly find that

no one template can be imposed on all catalogues raisonnés of photographers' work. Just as the connoisseurship of photography requires a specific body of knowledge peculiar to each photographer's art, so too each photographer's working methods dictate a hierarchy of questions, issues, and problems that inevitably will mold the construction and content of each photographer's catalogue raisonné.

For Alfred Stieglitz and the publication I have just completed, the clarification of what constituted his oeuvre was a critical issue. Although he did not name it, Stieglitz himself would have emphatically said that "The Key Set" defined his corpus. But what is "The Key Set"? Who constructed it? What, generally, does it include and exclude? And does it truly define Stieglitz's corpus? These are some of the questions I want to address in this paper.

When Stieglitz died in 1946 he had in his possession more than 2500 of his own photographs. His wife, Georgia O'Keeffe, selected at least one print of every mounted photograph to form what she called the "Key Set." She determined that a work had to be mounted to be considered for the Key Set because she knew that this was his indication that the photograph was finished and that he was fully satisfied with the meaning and significance of the image, the print quality and its presentation. Because she understood the conceptual evolution of his art and working methods, she recognized that different crops, different kinds of prints from any one negative—platinum, photogravure, carbon, palladium, or gelatin silver—even different orientations of a print on the mount

board represented different interpretations of the negative—not duplicate prints—and she included examples of each in the Key Set. She donated the Key Set to the National Gallery in 1949.

Numbering 1642 photographs, "The Key Set" is the largest and most cohesive collection of Stieglitz's work, and the only one in existence. O'Keeffe gave smaller collections of duplicate prints to thirteen other institutions, but none contains more than 180 works. The Key Set ranges from juvenilia made in 1886 to Stieglitz's last photographs from the summer of 1937. While more than 470 photographs in the Key Set were made before 1917, Stieglitz's fully mature work—including 331 portraits of O'Keeffe made between 1917 and 1937, 337 photographs of clouds from 1922 to 1934, and 80 studies of New York from 1927 to 1937—is represented with greatest strength.

The ratio of early to late work is not coincidental, nor did O'Keeffe decide it. While she named the Key Set and selected the prints that comprise it, Stieglitz determined its contents. Throughout his career he repeatedly scrutinized the meaning and import of his entire collection of photographs, editing and deleting, revising and reprinting as his ideas and perspectives changed. With a modest—if fluctuating—personal income that freed him from the necessity of selling his work, Stieglitz could have preserved many more photographs than he did. But he was scrupulous about what he chose to save, unsentimental in selecting which negatives to print and which to destroy, and relentless in weeding out his less successful work.

While he made many critically acclaimed photographs in the 1890s and early 1900s, he did not fully clarify what the art of photography entailed and what its relationship to the other arts was until the 1910s and only then did he become a more modern artist—more synthetic, at times intuitive, and often highly original. When Stieglitz edited his collection after that, he wanted it to embody his new and lately won understanding of photography as a modern art. As he reported in his correspondence, he repeatedly purged his collection from the 1910s up through the early 1940s. Thus, the Key Set is by no means a complete representation of his work. (The survey we have just completed discovered more than 400 additional photographs not in the Key Set—some extant and some known only through reproductions.) Stieglitz eliminated from the Key Set almost all traces of his more contrived photographs of the 1880s and early 1890s; he obliterated his manipulated prints from the turn of the century; he deleted work from his 291 period, retaining only his most successful results; and he destroyed countless snapshots from throughout his life, keeping only those that expressed something less quotidian, more universal. Yet, with very few exceptions, the Key Set does include almost every known major 8 x 10 inch photograph Stieglitz made after 1917, including almost all of his portraits of O'Keeffe and his later studies of New York, as well as almost all of his smaller, 4 x 5 inch studies of clouds. Thus the Key Set is, to a very great extent, Stieglitz's statement of who he was as a modernist photographer.

Our publication repro-

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duces all 1642 photographs in the Key Set sequenced chronologically by year, and, if known, by month of the negative, and it establishes for the first time a chronology of Stieglitz's art. Because he did not keep any detailed records of the creation of his art and his negatives no longer exist, we constructed this chronology by researching a variety of sources: we surveyed all European and American photographic periodicals, as well as many art journals and newspapers from the 1880s to 1946 for reproductions and critiques of his art; we compiled exhibition histories; we examined all of Stieglitz's correspondence as well as that of many of his colleagues; we amassed information on all of Stieglitz's prints in public and private collections around the world; and we researched the people and objects depicted in his photographs. Because Stieglitz was such a critical force in the art and culture of his time, because he engaged in such a wide-ranging dialogue with so many of the most influential painters, sculptors, photographers, writers, and theoreticians of his time, this chronology is of great importance. With it we can, for the first time, begin to accurately assess both the development of his art and his relationships to his contemporaries. To cite but two among numerous insights that can be gleaned: we can see, for instance, that his views taken out of the back window of 291 were not made—as has been

suggested—in response to Paul Strand's photographs of the city, but were instead inspired by Picasso for they were made at exactly the same time that he exhibited Picasso's work at 291, and only a few months after he had reproduced this painting by Picasso in his periodical *Camera Work*. Or, on a more personal level, we can note that Stieglitz photographed O'Keeffe holding the bones she had shipped to Lake George from New Mexico before she had a chance to paint them, thus, to a great extent, pre-empting her subject for his own.

In those instances where the Key Set includes more than one print from a negative, we sequenced those chronologically by print date, so that it is possible to see Stieglitz's repeated re-interpretations of the negative. Our titles are also object-specific: that is, if Stieglitz contemporaneously inscribed the print in "The Key Set," we used that title. This, too, produced insights. For example, the first print Stieglitz made from this 1894 negative was titled *The Hour of Prayer*, and his cropping emphasizes the relationship between the woman and the church. A few years later when he returned to the negative, he recropped it, now stressing the path of the women along the beach, and he retitled it *Scurrying Home*.

Our exhibition and reproduction histories also yield much new information. For example, we can note that although later in his life Stieglitz heralded *The Terminal*, a negative made in 1893, as one of his groundbreaking photographs, in fact he rarely exhibited it before 1910 and did not reproduce it until 1911. Indeed, only in the 1920s when he began to photo-

graph clouds—another fluid, dense subject with an open and over-all composition—only then did he come to recognize the importance of this earlier work.

We also listed duplicate prints made from the same negative, along with their inscriptions, in other public and private collections around the world. With these listings we can begin to assess how rare or common any one image is.

Should we—could we—have expanded our publication into a catalogue raisonné? To a great extent, O'Keeffe precluded us from doing so. She clearly understood that the Key Set represented Stieglitz's understanding of his artistic accomplishment, and she did not want it diluted. Her deed of gift stipulates that the Key Set remain a distinct entity—if the National Gallery acquires more prints by Stieglitz they cannot be considered part of it. Further, knowing the importance of reproduction to Stieglitz, she insisted that the photographs could only be reproduced if the highest standards were maintained. Because many of the photographs from the 1880s and 1890s that are not in the Key Set are known only through poor reproductions in periodicals, we knew it would be impossible to achieve uniformly high-quality reproductions.

...who defines [an] oeuvre --the artist or the historian?

Funding—a critical element in any project like this—was yet one more reason we did not expand our publication into a catalogue raisonné. I have been trying to publish this catalogue for 25 years, yet because of our design and reproduction require-

ments, it was prohibitively expensive. In 1997 we received a grant from Kodak that coupled the publication of the catalogue with an exhibition. The looming and firm deadline of the exhibition made this project far less open-ended than a catalogue raisonné needs to be. Finally, another scholar, Doris Bry, has been working on a catalogue raisonné for many years. All of those reasons propelled us to limit our publication to the Gallery's collection.

Stieglitz's editing of his collection, though, raises many interesting questions. Who defines the photographer's oeuvre—the artist or the historian? Should we consider everything that flows from a photographer's camera, or darkroom, part of his corpus or is it something more limited? While many would consider Stieglitz's editing in the 1920s or 1930s of his work made in the 1880s and 1890s a bold—even bald—attempt to re-write history, shouldn't a photographer—like any artist—be able to edit and destroy work as she or he proceeds? Twentieth-century photographers pose particular problems to authors of catalogue raisonné. What do we do about snapshots? Twentieth-century photographers, like the rest of us, make snapshots—images that they themselves consider of little importance, mere records of mundane events. Are they really comparable to a painter's sketches? Should the photographer be the judge of which snapshots should be considered part of his or her corpus, or should all be included? With Stieglitz—and many others I suspect—this can raise knotty issues, for his heirs and those of his friends and colleagues have often attributed all snapshots of

the Stieglitz circle made between 1886 and the 1930s to him: some obviously are while many others are far less clear.

In the early 1930s when he was intensively editing his collection, Stieglitz told O'Keeffe that he had filled one room of his gallery with boxes of photographs and was "looking at every print." With a feeling that many catalogue raisonné authors can sympathize with, he described the process as "self-torture." "It's an awful order," he lamented, "So many should be torn up." But he persisted and told O'Keeffe, "Some day when I'm through you can go through all of them and see what you think of my job." Now, with the publication of *The Key Set*, you, too, can go through the volumes and see what you think of Stieglitz's job—and ours.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS and Call for Papers

IFAR Evenings

The following is from Sharon Flescher of IFAR: CRSA members may be interested in a special IFAR EVENING organized by the International Foundation for Art Research (IFAR). CRSA members are welcome to attend at the same rate as IFAR Journal subscribers. The program, in New York, is followed by a wine and cheese reception.

Tuesday, June 24, 2003; 6:30-8:30 p.m. "Art, Gold, and Slave Labor: The U.S. Government's Efforts on Behalf of Holocaust Victims" Speaker: Stuart E. Eizenstat, Under Secretary of

State and Deputy Secretary of the Treasury in the Clinton Administration; Head, U.S. Delegation to the Washington Conference on Holocaust-Era Assets, 1998. Mr. Eizenstat will discuss the U.S. Government's behind-the-scenes efforts at negotiating settlements for Holocaust victims. Q&A and reception follows the talk.

Programs are open to the public. Reservations with prepayment to IFAR required. Admission is free for IFAR Members/Supporters, \$25 for the general public, and reduced for IFAR Journal subscribers (\$15) and full-time students (\$10). See IFAR website (<http://www.ifar.org>) for more information and reservation form or call IFAR at (212) 391-6234. Edited versions of the programs will be published in a subsequent issue of IFAR Journal. For those not familiar with IFAR, it is a not-for-profit educational and research organization dedicated to integrity in the visual arts. We are concerned primarily with issues of art authenticity, connoisseurship, ownership, law and ethics.

Resourceful Women

The Library of Congress will sponsor a free, two-day symposium titled "Resourceful Women: Researching and Interpreting American Women's History," on Thursday and Friday, June 19-20, 2003. A copy of the full program, biographies of the speakers, online registration form, and details about a related film series and research orientation may be found at: <http://www.loc.gov/rr/women/>.

The symposium will highlight current research in the field of American women's history, showcase the Library's

magnificent multiformat holdings, and explore in particular the sources and methodologies being used by academic scholars, filmmakers, journalists, theatrical performers, museum curators, children's book authors, and others who are uncovering and presenting the story of American women's experiences to a variety of audiences.

The symposium is free and open to the public, and seating is on a first-come basis. Those planning to attend are asked to complete the registration form to assist symposium organizers in determining space and refreshment needs. Online registration does not guarantee seating.

The symposium caps a multi-year effort to identify and publicize the Library's holdings in American women's history. In December 2001, the Library of Congress, in cooperation with the University Press of New England, published the 456-page book titled, *American Women: A Library of Congress Guide for the Study of Women's History and Culture in the United States*. In June 2003, a companion American Women Web site will be released on the Library's American Memory site at <http://memory.loc.gov>.

The Library of Congress American Women's History Symposium Committee is comprised of Barbara Bair, Manuscript Division, Sheridan Harvey, Humanities and Social Sciences Division, Barbara Orbach Natanson, Prints and Photographs Division, and Janice E. Ruth, Manuscript Division.

"Object Relations in Early North America"

Apprehending the Material World in Early Modern Britain

and America. The following was provided by Wendy Bellion at WendyBellion@AOL.COM.

The Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture invites proposals for participation in a workshop, "Object Relations in Early North America," on the material world in early North America (to 1820). This workshop will be held at the Huntington Library, May 20-21, 2004 in conjunction with a symposium, "Gender, Taste, and Material Culture in Britain and America in the Long Eighteenth Century," sponsored by the Centre for the Study of the Domestic Interior.

Workshop participants will be asked to think about how object-driven studies can address important historical questions. Moving through the analyzed object to larger arguments about life in the past, workshop sessions might address such topics as:

- * Aesthetic apprehension
- * The experience of the perceiving individual, and the collective construction of meaning
- * How objects structure experience
- * The production, circulation, consumption, representativeness, and symbolic character of objects
- * How recovering the context of an object can change our understanding of the historical moment
- * The methodological interdependency of data-, text-, and object-based analyses

Pre-circulated papers by the convener of each session will focus on an intensive discussion of an object or an image (or the representation of either in a text) and invite alternative explanations for its larger significance.

Proposals should include:

* a description of the object or image (or collection of related objects or images)

* an explanation of how the analysis will speak to important historical issues

* curricula vitae for the session convener (or conveners) and 3-4 discussants.

Discussants will be expected not only to respond to the pre-circulated paper but also to include in their comments questions and insights about the object and its broader contexts.

We welcome alternatives to the standard conference paper, including an organized discussion based on questions, observations, and revelations made possible by object analysis.

The deadline for workshop proposals is Oct. 1, 2003. Proposals should be addressed to the Workshop Co-Chairs, Christopher Grasso and Karin Wulf, OIEAHC, P.O. Box 8781, Williamsburg, VA, 23187-8781.

The Arts and Humanities Research Board Centre for the Study of the Domestic Interior is sponsored by the Royal College of Art, Victoria and Albert Museum, and Bedford Centre, Royal Holloway, University of London. The Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture is sponsored by the College of William and Mary and the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

General CRSA request

There are a number of issues that have come to the for, recently, that I believe warrant further consideration. I welcome members to submit articles on the following topics.

--This past winter the U. S. Supreme Court ruled on an intellectual property case which resulted in a 20-year extension of

existing copyrights. I invite member lawyers or copyright specialists to contact Nancy Mathews or me about writing a layman's interpretation of how this ruling will effect our work on catalogues raisonné.

--I seek comments or an article on the looting of national/cultural artifacts that has occurred in post-war Iraq. This occurrence creates another chapter in the ongoing saga of war-time looting and desecration of cultural treasures.

--Politics and museums, again. Earlier this spring we learned of a political storm that set down upon photographer Subhankar Banerjee and the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History. Mr. Subhankar's book--*Seasons of Life and Land, A Photographic Journey*--and a related NMNH exhibition, is now in the middle of legislative tactics effecting the fate of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. I seek comments or an article on political intervention in exhibition development.

Feedback

It was brought to my attention by Gail Levin that she did not appreciate the comments Francis O'Connor made--regarding her--in his essay, published in the last newsletter. For the record Francis submitted his paper with the condition that no alterations were to be made to the content of his essay. Therefore, I accept responsibility for publishing these remarks. It was not my intention to offend Gail or anyone else mentioned in this paper.

Recent Publications

Two periodicals have crossed my desk this spring that contain articles pertinent to our studies:

--The May issue of **ARTnews** (Vol. 102, No. 5) includes Nicholas Powell's, "Protecting Picasso" (How the artist's heirs do, and don't, safeguard his legacy), and Kelly Devine Thomas's, "Steering the Calder Estate" (How Sandy Rower has made the Calder Foundation the final authority on the authenticity of his grandfather's artwork).

--The June issue of **The Atlantic** (Vol. 291, No. 5) hosts Richard B. Woodward's, "Too Much of a Good Thing" (Photography and Forgery: The Lewis Hine scandal).

Francis O'Connor has recently published, *Charles Seliger: Redefining Abstract Expressionism* (New York: Hudson Hills Press).

Editor's Notes

by Scott R. Ferris

As Nancy Mathews informs us in her "From the President" commentary, she is stepping down as president of the CRSA. I have enjoyed working with Nancy": she has shown herself to be thoroughly engaged and readily available to address any issue concerning the **CRSA Forum**. My personal thanks and appreciation to her for keeping the CRSA alive and well.

Onward...as Nancy suggests, it is time to nominate individuals who are willing and able to assume the responsibilities of president. Per Nancy's instructions please give her or me (at your earliest convenience!) your

nominations. I will post these nominations in the next **CRSA Forum**, which should be out in August or October. We will select a new president by the next annual meeting.

Regarding the annual meeting...as you all know, the CAA will host this gathering in Seattle, Washington. Nancy, Steven Manford, and I have discussed this upcoming event and we are curious to know how many CRSA members plan to attend. We seek proposals for a program session topic, and we encourage someone to chair the program.

Also, we recognize the need to hold more than one CRSA meeting per year. Steven suggested that we approach a New York City auction house or gallery to sponsor or host such a meeting, or meetings, at their facility. The reason for suggesting New York is that a good number of members live there and the northeast, or frequent the City. These proposed meetings certainly are not limited to New York. It was also suggested that we welcome the staffs of these institutions as well as museum personnel and related professional associates; afterall (I believe), it would be a great opportunity to meet these colleagues and enhance our networking opportunities.

During our annual meeting Nancy conveyed my suggestion that we consider compensating the editor for some of the time (he) puts in to create the newsletter. As past editors can attest, the work related to producing this publication is extremely time consuming. Nancy later tabled the question, should CRSA officers and the annual meeting events programmer be compensated as well? Please give these ideas some thought and if you are involved with

other organizations, and organizational newsletters, and can give our membership some insight to what is policy elsewhere, we would appreciate hearing from you.

And on a related topic. Each time I produce the **CRSA Forum** I am virtually reinventing the wheel. I am able to maintain the integrity of the logo but everything else gets jumbled when inserted or newly laid out, and page numbers never stick. It has been suggested to me by my *computer doctor* that if I used Page-maker I would avoid these pitfalls and be able to save the newsletter as a PDF file which is also online ready. I am certainly ready for some helpful feedback on this one.

Thanks to Michael MacPhee for submitting our first illustration!

Please submit manuscripts on the topics mentioned in "Announcements" and/or other CRSA related issues, for the next newsletter. I will set a due date of 31 July...perhaps another newsletter in August? We can publish as much as you wish to submit. Many thanks. Scott

Membership List

Members, please check your personal data and make sure all information is correct. Please note, there are a number of additions, corrections, and updates.

Henry Adams, Chair
Department of Art History
Case Western Reserve University
Rm. 103, Mather House
11201 Euclid Ave.
Cleveland, OH 44106
hxa28@po.cwru.edu
THOMAS HART BENTON

Anne Adriaens-Pannier,
Adjunct Curator, XXth Century Drawings
Museum of Modern Art
Museumstraat, 9
B-1000 Brussels
adriaens@fine-arts-museum.be
LEON SPILLIAERT

Dr. David Anfam
Flat 9, Marina 1, 10 New Wharf Road
London N1 9RT England
1@artex-ltd.co.uk
danfam@phaidon.com
MARK ROTHKO

James B. Atkinson
117 Town House Road
Cornish, NH 03745
atholm@valley.net
CHARLES A. PLATT, graphic work

Helen Dickinson Baldwin
3711 Whitland Avenue
Nashville, TN 37205
robertbaldwinrab@aol.com
EDWIN DICKINSON

Vivian Endicott Barnett
140 Riverside Drive
New York, NY 10024
vbarnett@worldnet.att.net
VASILY KANDINSKY,
drawings

Elizabeth A. Barry
P. O. Box 7907
Portland, ME 04112
Artgirl5@aol.com
ROBERT INDIANA

Adrienne Baxter Bell,
Project Director
C. C. Coleman Catalogue Raisonné
594 Highland Avenue
Upper Montclair, NJ 07043
BaxterBell@worldnet.att.net
CHARLES CARYL COLEMAN

Patrick Bertrand
P. O. Box 10993
Oakland, CA 94610
giverny@u.s.a.net
THEODORE EARL BUTLER

Sarah Boehme,
The John S. Bugas Curator of
Western Art, Whitney Gallery
Buffalo Bill Historical Center
720 Sheridan Avenue
Cody, WY 82414
sarahb@BBHC.ORG
FREDERIC REMINGTON and
WILLIAM RANNEY

Phyllis Braff
333 East 55th Street
New York, NY 10022
pbraff@rcn.com
THOMAS MORAN

Richard H. W. Brauer
Brauer Museum of Art
Valpariso University Center for
the Arts
Valpariso, IN 46383
Richard.Brauer@Valpo.edu
JUNIUS R. SLOAN

Doris Bry
11 East 73rd Street
New York, NY 10021
dbry@earthlink.net
STIEGLITZ/O'KEEFFE

Pierre Calté, President
Comité Picabia
26, Rue Danielle Casanova
Paris, France
archives@comite-picabia.com
FRANCIS PICABIA

William A. Camfield,
Prof. Emeritus,
Dept. of Art & Art History
Rice University
1117 Milford
Houston, TX 77006
billc@rice.edu
FRANCIS PICABIA

Dr. Joseph Carlton
Two Sutton Place South
New York, NY 10022
Jycrltn@aol.com
EDWARD MORAN

Gerald L. Carr
608 Apple Road
Newark, DE 19711
gcarr@dpnet.net
FREDERIC EDWIN CHURCH

Claudia Carson
29 Park Hill Avenue
Norwalk, CT 06851
cloeja@yahoo.com
Computer data bases

Julie Coleman, Curatorial Asst.
Whitney Gallery, Western Art
Buffalo Bill Historical Center
720 Sheridan Avenue
Cody, WY 82414
juliec@bbhc.org
FREDERIC REMINGTON and
WILLIAM RANNEY

Heidi Colman-Freyberger
The Barnett Newman
Foundation
654 Madison Avenue, Suite 1900
New York, NY 10021
hcf@barnettnewman.org
BARNETT NEWMAN

Jack Cowart, Exec. Director
Roy Lichtenstein Foundation
745 Washington Street
New York, NY 10014
ROY LICHTENSTEIN

Elizabeth A. Dear, Curator
C. M. Russell Museum
400 Thirteenth Street, North
Great Falls, MT 59401
edear@cmrussell.org
CHARLES M. RUSSELL

Tina Dickey
300 Whims Road
P. O. Box 706
Salt Spring Island, British
Columbia V8K 2W3
pajarita@bigfoot.com
HANS HOFMANN

Michelle DuBois
236 Marlborough Street, Apt. 4
Boston, MA 01226
Mdubois608@aol.com
JACOB LAWRENCE

Dr. Lee M. Edwards
1130 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10128
ledwa1234@aol.com
HUBERT VON HERKOMER

Sarah Faunce, Project Director
Courbet Catalogue Raisonné
Project
432 East 75th Street
New York, NY 10021
[Ed. E-mail address?]
GUSTAVE COURBET, paintings

Scott R. Ferris
P. O. Box 73
Franklin Springs, NY 13341
kentiana@dreamscape.com
ROCKWELL KENT

Ruth Fine, Curator,
Modern Prints and Drawings
National Gallery of Art
Washington, DC 20565
[Ed. E-mail address?]
GEORGIA O'KEEFFE/Gemini
G.E.C.

Jack Flam,
Professor of Art History
City University of New York
35 West 81st Street, Apt. 11 D
New York, NY 10024
Jackflam@aol.com
Recent American Art

Sharon Flescher, Executive
Director
International Foundation for Art
Research
500 Fifth Avenue, Suite 1234
New York, NY 10110
Authentication issues

Abigail Booth Gerds
CUNY Graduate Center
365 Fifth Avenue, Room 3406
New York, NY 10016
WINSLOW HOMER

Clive F. Getty
Miami University
Department of Art
Oxford, OH 45056
gettycf@muohio.edu
J.J. GRANDVILLE

Joy L. Glass
24 Fifth Avenue, No. 224
New York, NY 10011
jlglass@mindspring.com
SAINT CLAIR CEMIN, Vol. 1:
1984-1986

Steve R. Golan
359 Warren Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45220
sgolan40@hotmail.com

Charles B. Goldstein
8 Hardwicke Place
Rockville, MD 20850
chadeg@erols.com

E. Adina Gordon, Ph.D
155 Elm Road
Englewood, NJ 07631
Yadina@earthlink.net
WILLIAM MACMONNIES,
sculpture

Nancy Green, Chief Curator
Johnson Museum
Cornell University
Ithaca, NY 14853
neg4@cornell.edu
ARTHUR WESLEY DOW

Julia Gruen, Executive Director
The Estate of Keith Haring
676 Broadway, 5th floor
New York, NY 10012
haringest@aol.com
KEITH HARING

Margaret D. Hausberg
P. O. Box 744
Lake Forest, IL 60045
mhausberg@aol.com
THEODORE ROUSSEL; KERR
EBY, prints

Josef Helfenstein, Director
Krannert Art Museum
500 Peabody Drive
Champaign, IL 61820
helfenst@uiuc.edu
PAUL KLEE

Susan A. Hobbs, Ph.D
2807 Cameron Mills Road
Alexandria, VA 22302
susanhobbs@worldnet.att.net
THOMAS W. DEWING,
MARIA OAKLEY DEWING

Barbara Hoffman
The Penthouse, 330 W. 72nd St.
New York, NY 10023
artlaw@mindspring.com

Heidi J. Hornik, Associate
Professor of Art History
Baylor University
P. O. Box 97263
Waco, TX 76798
Heidi_Hornik@baylor.edu
MICHELE TOSINI

Sharon Coplan Hurowitz,
President
Coplan Hurowitz Art Advisory
880 Fifth Avenue, 7C
New York, NY 10021
sharon@printgirl.com
JOHN BALDESSARI, prints

Sona K. Johnston,
Curator, Painting and Sculpture
The Baltimore Museum of Art
Art Museum Drive
Baltimore, MD 21210
sonakjohnson@artbma.org
THEODORE ROBINSON

Alexandra Keiser,
Research Coordinator
The Archipenko Foundation
P. O. Box 247
Bearsville, NY 12409
archipenko@aol.com
ALEXANDER ARCHIPENKO,
sculpture

Roger Keyes, PhD, Director,
Center for the Study of Japanese
Prints
1463 Narragansett Blvd.
Cranston, RI 02905
rkusa@earthlink.net
KATSUSHIKA HOKUSAI,
Single sheet prints

Melvin P. Lader
Professor of Art History
George Washington University
801 22nd Street, NW
Smith Hall, A 110
Washington, DC 20052
Lader@gwis2.cir.gwu.edu
ASHILLE GORKY, drawings

Robert G. LaFrance
151 East 83rd Street, 4H
New York, NY 10028
rgl6996@nyu.edu
FRANCESCO D'UBERTINO
VERDI, Called BACHIACCA

Ellen G. Landau
Professor of Art History
Case Western Reserve
University
Mather House, 11201 Euclid Ave
Cleveland, OH 44106
ex13@po.cwru.edu
LEE KRASNER

Touran K. Latham
AAHA
411 Branway Drive
Richmond, VA 23229
lathamd@worldnet.att.net
JOHN CARROLL

Magda Le Donne, Cur. Asst,
European Art
37 Braemar Street
Ottawa, Ontario [Ed. number?]
mledonne@ngc.ca
HENRI GABRIEL IBELS

Valerie Ann Leeds, Adj. Cur.
Flint Institute of Arts
728 Sergeantsville Road
Stockton, NJ 08559
valeeds22@hotmail.com
ROBERT HENRI, ERNEST
LAWSON

Alan Hyman Lektor
Alan Wofsy Fine Arts
1109 Geary Blvd.
San Francisco, CA 94109
editeur@earthlink.net
Old Master and Modern

Gail Levin, Professor
Baruch College, CUNY
249 East 32nd Street
New York, NY 10016
Gail_Levin@baruch.cuny.edu
EDWARD HOPPER,
MARSDEN HARTLEY

Dr. Anne Marie Logan
25 Reilly Road
Easton, CT 06612
annemlogan@msn.com
RUBENS, drawings

Joan Ludman
74 Hunters Lane
Westbury, NY 11590
Hludman@aol.com
FAIRFIELD PORTER

Barbara Buhler Lynes
1067 Bishop's Lodge Road
Sante Fe, NM 87501
lynes@okeeffemuseum.org
GEORGIA O'KEEFFE

Steven Manford
P. O. Box 81, Station B
119 Spadina Avenue
Toronto, Ontario M5T 2T2
s.manford@utoronto.ca
MAN RAY RAYOGRAPHS

Dr. Joan M. Marter
220 Madison Avenue, 2A
New York, NY 10016
joanmarter@aol.com
DOROTHY DEHNER

Nancy Mowll Mathews,
Eugenie Prendergast Curator
Williams College Museum of Art
Williamstown, MA 01267
nmathews@williams.edu
PRENDERGAST, CASSATT

Renee Maurer,
Research Assistant
National Gallery of Art
Washington, DC 20565
r-maurer@nga.gov
MARK ROTHKO

Jeremy Melius
The Dedalus Foundation, Inc.
555 West 57th Street, Suite 1222
New York, NY 10019
jmelius@dedalusfoundation.org
ROBERT MOTHERWELL
(With Joachim Pissarro.)

Achim Moeller
167 East 73rd Street
New York, NY 10021
achim@moellerart.com
LYONEL FEININGER; MARK
TOBEY Archive

Pamela Moffat
4341 Forest Lane, NW
Washington, DC 20007
JayMoffat@aol.com
LILLA CABOT PERRY

Dr. Hattula Moholy-Nagy
1204 Gardner
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
hattula@sprynet.com
LASZLO MOHOLY-NAGY

Valerie Mendelson Moylan
39-73 48 Street
Long Island City, NY 11104
cmoynihn@sprynet.com
FRANCIS CUNNINGHAM

Jane Myers, Chief Curator
Amon Carter Museum
3501 Camp Bowie Boulevard
Fort Worth, TX 76107
jane.myers@cartermuseum.org

Milo M. Naeve,
24 Ingleton Circle
Kennett Square, PA 19348
JOHN LEWIS KRIMMEL

Laili Nasr
7907 Jensen Place
Bethesda, MD 20817
L-NASR@nga.gov
MARK ROTHKO

Peter T. Nesbett, Exec. Director
The Jacob and Gwendolyn
Lawrence Foundation
P. O. Box 5533
New York, NY 10027
jlcrp@aol.com
JACOB LAWRENCE

Dr. Francis V. O'Connor
250 East 73rd Street
New York, NY 10021
fvoc@aol.com
JACKSON POLLOCK

Elizabeth Oustinoff, Director
Adelson Galleries
The Mark Hotel
25 East 77th Street
New York, NY 10021
eo@adelsongalleries.com
JOHN SINGER SARGENT

April Paul, PhD, Director
The Chaim Gross Studio Museum
526 La Guardia Place
New York, NY 10012
grossmuseum@earthlink.net
CHAIM GROSS

Meg J. Perlman
490 West End Avenue, Apt. 5E
New York, NY 10024
MegerP@aol.com
[Ed. Check e-mail address.]
JAMES BROOKS

Caterina Y. Pierre
73 Jackson Street
Brooklyn, NY 11211
caterina@erols.com
MARCELLO

Joachim Pissarro
The Dedalus Foundation, Inc.
151 East 80th Street
New York, NY 10021
joachim.pissarro@verizon.net
ROBERT MOTHERWELL (with
Jeremy Melius), CAMILLE
PISSARRO

Christine B. Podmaniczky,
Associate Curator
Brandywine River Museum
P. O. Box 141
Chadds Ford, PA 19317
cpodmaniczky@brandywine.org
NEWELL CONVERS WYETH

Aimee Brown Price
225 West 86th Street, Apt. 1010
New York, NY 10024
abrpr@juno.com
PIERRE PUVIS DE
CHAVANNES

Justine Price
1136 Garden Street
Hoboken, NJ 07030
justineprice@mail.utexas.edu
ROY LICHTENSTEIN

Neil Printz, Editor
The Isamu Noguchi Foundation
32-37 Vecnor Boulevard
Long Island City, NY 11106
catalogue@noguchi.org
ISAMU NOGUCHI (With
Bonnie Rychlak.)

Michael Quick, Director
George Inness Catalogue
Raisonne
1223 Wilshire Boulevard, #401
Santa Monica, CA 90403
[Ed. E-mail address?]
GEORGE INNESS

Mary Ran
3668 Erie Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45208
mrangallery@aol.com
EDWARD POTTHAST

Susan Barnes Robinson,
Professor, Art History
Loyola Marymount University
7900 Loyola Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90045
srobinso@lmu.edu
MABEL DWIGHT

Peter Rooney
Magnetic Reports
332 Bleeker Street, #X6
New York, NY 10014
magnetix@ix.netcom.com
Catalogue Raisonné Software

Alexander S. C. Rower, Director
Alexander & Louisa Calder
Foundation
40 Wooster Street, 5th floor
New York, NY 10013
[Ed. E-mail address?]
ALEXANDER CALDER

Louisa Wood Ruby
433 4th Street
Brooklyn, NY 11215
lwruby@aol.com
[Ed. Please check e-mail
address.]
PAUL BRIL

Ellen Rusotto
P. O. Box 385
New York, NY 10013
vicente@gis.net
ESTEBAN VINCENTE

Bonnie Rychlak,
Director of Collections
The Isamu Noguchi Foundation
32-37 Vernon Boulevard
Long Island City, NY 11106
catalogue@noguchi.org
ISAMU NOGUCHI (With Neil
Printz.)

Jerome H. Saltzer, Professor
M.I.T.
Room NE 43-513
545 Technology Square
Cambridge, MA 02139
Saltzer@MIT.EDU
FREDERICK FERDINAND
SCHAFFER

Amy Baker Sandback,
Project Director
The Dia Center for the Arts
561 Broadway, 8A
New York, NY 10012
sandbackaf@earthlink.net
ROBERT RYMAN

Deborah Browning Schimek,
Asst. Adjunct Professor
New York University
60 East 8th Street, Apt. 30P
New York, NY 10003
dbrownin@berkshireschool.org
HANS REICHEL

Rona Schneider
12 Monroe Place
Brooklyn Heights, NY 11201
rona@ronaschneiderprints.com
STEPHEN PARRISH, etchings

John R. Schoonover, President
Schoonover Studios, Ltd.
1616 North Rodney Street
Wilmington, DE 19806
studios@dca.net
FRANK E. SCHOONOVER

Charlotte Sholod, Curator
Glicenstein Estate
1520 York Avenue, Apt. 3J
New York, NY 10028
csholod@earthlink.net
GLICENSTEIN

David P. Silcox
Massey College
402-70 Montclair Avenue
Toronto, Ontario, M5P 1P7
david.silcox@utoronto.ca
DAVID B. MILNE

Patricia Siska,
Associate Cataloguer
Frick Art Reference Library
10 East 71st Street
New York, NY 10021
siska@frick.org

Wendy Snyder
88 Lexington Avenue, #9E
New York, NY 10016
wendysnyder@earthlink.net
SAM GLANKOFF

Regina Soria
78 via P. A. Micheli
Rome, Italy 00197
reg.soria@tiscalinet.it
ELIHU VEDDER

Ronald D. Spencer
Carter, Ledyard & Milburn
Two Wall Street
New York, NY 10005
spencer@clm.com
Attorney

Peter R. Stern
Berger, Stern & Webb, LLP
900 Third Avenue, 17th floor
New York, NY 10022
pster@bswny.com
Attorney

Roberta K. Tarbell
1810 Rittenhouse Sq., Apt. 901
Philadelphia, PA 19103
Tarbell@Camden.rutgers.edu
WILLIAM and MARGUERITE
ZORACH

Mary Thorp
Thorp Design
1810 Rittenhouse Square
Philadelphia, PA 19103
thorpdesigns@juno.com
HARRY BERTOIA, sculptures
and monotypes

James Francis Trezza
515 East 72nd Street, Suite 14G
New York, NY 10021
jamestrezza@trezza.com
19th and 20th century
authenticators

Dr. Yolande Trincere
Roy Lichtenstein Foundation
55 West 11th Street, Apt. 1F
New York, NY 10011
ytrincere@molloy.edu
ROY LICHTENSTEIN

Patricia Trutty-Coohill, PhD
Professor of Art History
Creative Arts Dept., Foy 306
Siena College
515 Loudonville Road
Loudonville, NY 12211
ptrutty@siena.edu
LEONARDO DA VINCI in
America

Jayne Warman
11 Normandy Road
Bronxville, NY 10708
JSWarman51@aol.com
CEZANNE'S paintings and
sculpture

Melissa J. Webster, Curator
Thomas Moran Catalogue
Raisonné Project
1031 West Yosemite Avenue, #3
Merced, CA 95348
melissa@cyberlink.com
THOMAS MORAN, oil
paintings

Deborah White
1968 Arbor Court
Charlottesville, VA 22911
millerproject@earthlink.net
ALFRED JACOB MILLER,
WILLIAM ROBINSON LEIGH

Gertrude Wilmers,
Special Research Associate
International Foundation for Art
Research
14 East 90th Street
New York, NY 10128
gwilmers@sprintmail.com
FREDERICK
CROWNINSHIELD

Barbara A. Wolanin,
7807 Hamilton Spring Road
Bethesda, MD 20817
bwolanin@earthlink.net
ARTHUR B. CARLES,
CONSTANTINO BRUMIDI

Gerd Woll, Senior Curator
Munch-Museet
Tøyengaten 53
P. O. Box 2812 Tøyen
N-0608 Oslo, Norway
gerd.woll@munch.museum.no
[Ed. Check e-mail address.]
EDVARD MUNCH, The
Complete Graphic Works.