

CRSA Forum

The Newsletter of the Catalogue Raisonne Scholars Association

An Affiliated Society of the College Art Association

Autumn 2004

No. 15

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR. UPCOMING EVENTS:

CRSA Session at the CAA Annual
February 17, 2005, 5:30-7:30 pm

Publish OnLine or Perish the Thought: The Future of the CR,
organized by Jeffrey Coven and
Steven Manford (see page 11 for more
details).

Also: The CR returns to New York
University, April 16-17, 2005.

Organized by Lisa Koenigsberg

*The following is the transcript
of a talk Gail Levin delivered at The
Catalogue Raisonne: A Seminar in
New York, on 17 April 2004. It is
printed here with the permission of the
author.*

Problems in Dating: Putting the Catalogue Raisonné in Order

Gail Levin

City University of New York

Working at the Whitney Museum as the first curator of the Hopper Collection, I not only had to locate all of his art, I had to figure out when he produced all of the undated, often untitled paintings, watercolors, commercial illustrations, drawings, and prints of his formative years. And before his marriage in 1924 at age 42, when his wife, the artist Josephine Verstelle Nivison, began keeping his records, he did very little to document his work.

My catalogue raisonné appeared in three volumes and a CD-Rom in 1995. It includes all of Hopper's oil paintings, watercolors, commercial illustrations, and a selection of the several thousand drawings that exist. Since then, no one has challenged my decisions about either authenticity or dating. And no omitted paintings have yet come to light, although forgeries appear in the marketplace with some frequency.

In addition to the catalogue raisonné, I wrote a critical biography of Hopper that was also published in 1995. Few art historians have tackled both a catalogue raisonné and a biography; fewer still have completed both studies for the same artist.¹ Drawing upon my perspective as author of both a catalogue raisonné and a biography of Edward Hopper, I hope to show in the present paper how each of these two studies affects the other, especially in the dating of previously unrecorded works. Neither the catalogue raisonné nor the biography is a currently fa-

shionable genre for art historians in the academy. They have long scorned biography as too personal, even irrelevant. As a result, biographies of artists are too often written by journalists or scholars from other fields, only perpetuating their low status among art historians.

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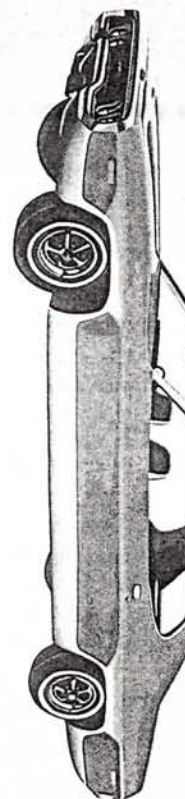


fig. 1. Peter Cain. *Satellite*, 1988, oil on linen, 90"x34".

Collection of John Silberman

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BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION

Catalogue Raisonné Scholars Association

Nancy Mowll Mathews, President
Steven Manford, Program Director
Scott R. Ferris, Editor, CRSA Forum
Heidi J. Hornik, CRSA Listserv
Tina Dickey, CRSA Webmaster

Submitting Manuscripts/Notices

Please send manuscripts—via e-mail (include within e-mail text, not as attachments), fax, or snail mail—and notices—via fax or snail mail (if you do not use a computer) to Scott R. Ferris at kentiana@twcny.rr.com or 315 942-4299, or 8867 Jackson Hill Road, Boonville, NY 13309. When sending manuscripts via e-mail please send either as AppleWorks, most MS Word, or RTF Mac or PC Rich Text formats. Deadline dates are: 15 Dec. for the Jan. issue, 15 May for the June issue, and 15 Sept. for the Autumn issue.

Membership

To become a member and maintain membership, please fill out the application form at the end of this newsletter and return it to Nancy Mowll Mathews. Please enclose an annual membership donation

In the last issue of the CRSA Forum we were graced with Part I of David Silcox's detailed and often humorous account of developing the David B. Milne Catalogue Raisonné of the Paintings. At the end of Part I, which I repeat below, it appears as though David and Company have thrown the CR into the ice box and pulled out several Bradors (Canadian for Aaaahh). In Part II the company has regrouped for a sober view toward the finish line.

The Milne Catalogue Chronicles (Part II)

David P. Silcox
©1999

Despite our best efforts in the early 1980s, we barely got half way through the Catalogue, before I took a job as assistant deputy minister of culture in

Ottawa at the beginning of 1983 and David Jr closed the Queen Street headquarters. At that point, the whole enterprise went pretty much into the deep-freeze for nearly eight years. I had already devoted some time to my book on Christopher Pratt, which came out in 1982. I returned to work in Toronto in 1985, just in time to wave farewell to David Jr, who then moved to the country outside Ottawa.

PART II

In 1991, after this eight-year hiatus, the Milne project was rescued unexpectedly, when the New Democratic Party won the provincial election and decided to run the province without me as the deputy minister of culture and communications. Luckily, I was taken in by Massey College, at the University of Toronto, where I could now finish the great undertaking. David Jr and I fired up our faxes, set new schedules, and in the summer of 1991 I moved in for one year, and promised my wife that the project, realistically, would probably take two or three years, but not more, if I could raise the money and spend most of my time on it. I drew up a budget of \$1.1 million, then scaled it back to \$800,000, thinking that the larger amount would frighten off sponsors, and started in. I hired Liz Wylie, a former student of mine at York University, who is a curator, a whiz at computers and a Milne aficionado. A year later I hired Elizabeth Driver at the suggestion of Bill Harnum at the University of Toronto Press to do the bibliography: she turned out to be an invaluable right hand – a meticulous researcher, well-organized, and a superb editor. And then I hired photographer Nancy Rahija, because someone had to be totally focussed on the slides, photographs and transparencies. We needed a lot of new photography, and although I had spent a lot on outside photographers, we clearly needed someone inside, who could also deal with the complicated issues of computer-scanned images, which we were now committed to. Half my time and more was spent doing the fund-raising or the work related to it. After three years I revised the budget to \$1.1 million.

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Note from the author: The following is a transcript of a talk entitled, Working with a Living Artist: The Jacob Lawrence Catalogue Raisonné, given by the author at the The Catalogue Raisonné: A Seminar in New York on 18 April 2004. It was written for oral presentation which will account for the style of writing and the degree of redundancy that exists throughout.

PREPARING A CATALOGUE RAISONNÉ ON A LIVING ARTIST: A PERSONAL ACCOUNT

Peter Nesbett

I wish to address the opportunities and challenges of preparing a catalogue raisonné on a living artist. I will approach the subject from my particular experience, rather than in general terms, as I think that this will be more helpful to you, the reader. In the process, I hope to make clear the reasons why I decided to undertake such a project on Jacob Lawrence's work, despite a number of unusual circumstances. I also wish to interject another topic, the scholar-artist relationship. Preparing a catalogue raisonné is as much about managing information as it is about managing relationships, which I believe is a topic that is too often left out of these discussions.

Between 1992 and 2000 I researched and edited two catalogues raisonné on Jacob Lawrence's work: a catalogue raisonné of his prints, which was published first in 1993 and then updated and republished in 2000; and a catalogue raisonné of the artist's paintings, drawings, and murals, which was published in 2000 as well. I also co-edited a multi-author monograph on the artist's work, which became the exhibition catalogue for the retrospective that traveled from 2001-2003. Finally, I developed a comprehensive educational website with a visual archive of more than 800 works, a full bibliography, detailed biographical information, lesson plans, and information on the artist's use of materials and techniques,

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BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION

In another installment in our series on lesser known artists, Eileen Costello introduces us to a young artist whose candle flickered out long before his potential ever did.

The Peter Cain Catalogue Raisonné Project

Eileen Elizabeth Costello

A catalogue raisonné ordinarily calls to mind the documentation of the work of an artist long dead, or perhaps from at least a generation or two earlier. More recently, catalogue raisonné scholars have begun to focus their attention upon living artists, yet often (and for obvious reasons) one who has enjoyed a long and productive life and who has reached the later stage of his or her career. Two years ago Matthew Marks Gallery, New York, invited me to initiate a project somewhat atypical of these more conventional situations. The Peter Cain Catalogue Raisonné involves researching and documenting the work of a contemporary artist, yet one who died prematurely at the age of 37 in 1997. Cain's entire production of paintings, drawings, photographs, and collages totals over two hundred works completed within a period of barely ten years. His creative output had a great impact upon artists, critics, curators, and collectors of his own generation, and the catalogue raisonné will serve as a valuable tool, historical reference, and, hopefully, source of enjoyment not only for those already familiar with his work, but also for future artists, historians, and, in fact, anyone with an interest in late twentieth-century American art.

If you ask any habitué of New York City's art galleries during the late 1980s and 1990s whether or not they know the work of Peter Cain (fig. 2), they will most likely reply, "Oh, yes, the car painter." This is a fair assessment given the fact that of the 61 paintings Cain completed before his death, 54 of them are of cars. But they are also unforgettable paintings and Cain's

often surreal images of automobiles painted in a manner reminiscent of the Photo-Realists made a lasting impression upon viewers. Over sixty drawings accompany the paintings, many of which preceded the painted works. The artist frequently produced two drawings of the same image — a line drawing that he termed "fast," and a more intense, highly finished rendering that he referred to as a "slow" drawing. Cain also created collages from automobile advertisements selected from an assortment of magazines and these, along with the drawings, function as studies for the paintings. They also provide great insight into the artist's creative process.

Cain's depictions of rare and vintage models, late 1960s convertibles or "muscle" cars, luxury sports vehicles such as Mazda Miatas, Honda Preludes, Porsche Carreras, and Mercedes sedans suggest the product of a West Coast artist, a natural assumption given that locale's affinity for car culture. Even his first "mature" painting, thus the initial entry in the catalogue raisonné and dating from 1987, suggests a Californian sensibility. Using a photo from a 1960s magazine advertisement and copying it with exactitude, Cain portrays a hip young man in sunglasses behind the wheel of his white convertible as he cruises along the incline of a shore road to approach the viewer head-on. With the beach behind him and a brilliant blue sky above, one imagines a Beach Boys tune blasting from the AM radio. *Untitled* would prove to be an anomaly among Cain's paintings featuring automobiles since it is the only one that includes a figure as well as a landscape. But Cain would return to such subject matter, albeit minus the car.

Cain hails not from California, but was born and raised in suburban Orange, New Jersey. He began drawing incessantly at an early age and after winning a scholarship for a summer drawing program in fourth grade, he had no doubt that he wanted to be an artist. He cultivated his innate talent at Parsons School of Design from 1977 to 1980, then spent two years at the School of Visual Arts. At first living in Brooklyn, he later moved into an apartment on Manhattan's Lower East Side and eventually took up residence on the Bowery where he would remain until the mid-1990s. Carroll Dunham, who met the artist in 1990, describes

Cain's tenement apartment as void of anything other than a bed and the studio materials with which to do his work: "There wasn't enough stuff around to call it 'squalid.' The atmosphere was intense and focused, all business." Indeed, Cain was a serious artist and both dealers and critics quickly recognized his abilities. At the time of his death Cain had had six one-person exhibitions in New York and California since 1989, participated in over forty-eight museum and gallery group exhibitions within the United States, Europe, Japan, and Korea, and had participated in two successive Whitney Biennials in 1993 and 1995. His diligence and devotion to his art yielded prodigious results, and the critical response to his work was largely positive.

Cain's first one-person show took place at Pat Hearn's Chelsea gallery in 1989. In retrospect, one sees how this collection of thirteen paintings anticipated his later work, save for a series of six sepia-toned paintings based on photographs he found in *Collectible Automobile*, a magazine that advertises rare and vintage cars for sale. Dating from 1988-89, they are darkly ominous, even spooky. Much in the spirit of Photo-Realism, they recall gangster automobiles from 1950s film noir. With the exception of a 1992-1994 series of later model cars based on images from a newspaper, thus rendered in grisaille, Cain would not repeat such direct representations. He moved on to what were considered classic "muscle" cars in the late 1960s and although he rendered *Untitled (Barracuda)* and *Satellite* (fig. 1), both from 1988 and both included in his debut exhibition, with great attention to the original photographs, here the forms have been stretched, the color flattened, and the composition simplified. The effect is disconcerting, and further heightened by the fact that Cain suspended the automobile bodies vertically so that they hang in an empty space against a neutral background. No longer straightforward depictions of cars, these works represent a transition in Cain's creative development as he began to reassess his source material, negate any likeness to earlier Photo-Realists, and edge more towards an abstracted imagery, a tendency that the artist would pursue in his subsequent works.

In 1990, Daniel Weinberg Gallery presented a show of five paint-



fig 2. Peter Cain, 1995. Photograph by Clayton Anderson

ings and four drawings that represent this turning point. In these works Cain transformed his subject matter entirely by cutting up the source photos, dissecting the object, and rearranging the pieces. The artist completely eliminated the automobile's body by splicing together the front and rear ends of the car to result in an aberrant, surreal type of vehicle. He mutated sports cars such as Miatas, Preludes, and Carreras and depicted them in profile, reducing two sets of wheels to one. A single symmetrical image fills the entire canvas as the truncated vehicles hover, sometimes upside down, sideways, or, as in the later *Pathfinder* (1992-93), with their nose in the air. The large canvases are painted with a slick brushstroke that mimics the flattening effects of the photograph. He often painted them in bright reds, yellows, or soft grays, and occasionally against a striped background to suggest velocity. These entirely new entities recall the original object, but now they force the viewer to rethink the object of inquiry.

Critics often refer to Ralph Goings, Robert Bechtle, or Richard Estes in describing Cain's work, but in some ways his approach is more akin to Chuck Close's or Gerhard Richter's who also base their paintings on photographs. For these artists the photograph serves as a point of departure that enables them to express their ideas about painting, to work through the problems it imposes, and allows them ultimately to push the medium into a new direction. Oddly enough, Cain often expressed an affinity to Robert Ryman. I say oddly simply because the work of the two artists bears no resemblance to each other whatsoever in subject matter - in one case, automobiles, and in the second, white paint - yet one discerns a similarity in their profound interest in and ability to elaborate upon the theme of abstraction, and this they do within their self-imposed confines of a single motif.

CRSA Forum

While Cain typically scoured magazines featuring automobiles for his source material and often relied upon car advertisements, the artist also produced his own photographs. Although related to vehicles, they are not straightforward presentations of cars. In *Bonneville* (1993), Cain's Cibachrome print offers a vaguely sexual section of puckered black leather upholstery taken at such close range that it insistently resembles one orifice or another. *Untitled* (1995) is a photo of an aluminum door located on the back of what is most likely a refrigeration truck. The door's highly polished surface reflects mesmerizing whorls of bright daylight, blue sky, and black asphalt, calling to mind the swirls of a polished agate geode. Similar to his paintings, Cain used photography to turn the original object into an abstract image.

By the early 1990s Cain's work had attracted a substantial amount of attention and the artist was becoming firmly ensconced within the contemporary art world. He had successively presented four one-person shows, participated in over a dozen group exhibitions, and, during a period that enjoyed a popular trend of guest curators, was asked by Christian Leigh, Simon Watson, and Dan Cameron to contribute work to their themed-based shows - invitations coveted by both established as well as up and coming artists. Cain had received enthusiastic reviews in the *New York Times*, *Art News*, *Arts Magazine*, *Art in America*, and *Flash Art*, but perhaps the most solid confirmation of his critical achievement came when Elisabeth Sussman invited him to participate in the Whitney Museum of American Art's 1993 Biennial Exhibition. That same year Cain contributed a number of works to two different venues held at the 45th Venice Biennale, one of which was held at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection. It was an extremely successful period for Cain, but one that continued with additional museum group shows in Athens, London, Barcelona, Bonn, and Japan. In 1995 the Whitney Museum presented a second invitation to take part in their Biennial exhibition: an extraordinary request that few artists can claim, and one that further attested to Cain's status as an extraordinary artist.

Despite the best of medical efforts and the love of friends and family who surrounded him, on January 5, 1997, Peter Cain died at the age of 37, having suffered a cerebral hemorrhage in his sleep a few nights earlier. With such talent, ambition, and promise, the loss of Peter Cain feels especially untimely. In a 1991 *New York Times* review of his second New York show, Roberta Smith wondered what would happen once the artist's obsession with cars ran its course. A posthumous exhibition at Matthew Marks Gallery in February, barely a month after the artist's death, would answer her question. Organized in close concert with the artist (who obviously never knew he would not live to see the show), Marks presented a new body of work unlike anything that Cain had done before. Instead of cars, the artist rendered with loving detail three monumental portraits (as well as numerous drawings) of his companion, Sean. In each painting Sean lies on his back on a blanket at a beach and we see the young man's head in close-up viewed from the level of the sand. In *Sean Number One* and *Sean Number Three* Cain orients the image vertically so that his subject hangs down in profile, similar to the automotive paintings and causing the same unsettling effect. Sean's face has been cropped and

with his slightly sunburned skin – freckled and painted an orangish-pink – the image recalls a side of beef hanging in a butcher's shop, yet they are highly intimate portrayals of someone he loved. *Sean Two* (fig. 3) presents him from behind with his head and shoulders raised as he looks away from us and beyond. A twirled and blond-streaked ponytail dangles down and we wonder just what it is from afar that has captured his attention.

In addition to the portraits, Cain produced four paintings based on his photographs of Mini-Marts and gas stations in Los Angeles. These landscapes are void of any human presence, he even erased logos and type from the signs, thus instilling them with a haunting emptiness and anonymity – like waking up to find some weird "Twilight Zone" episode come true. These works indicate that Cain was shedding his "car painter" label, expanding the vocabulary of his imagery, and had fully mastered his painterly technique. Indeed, Smith later mused in Cain's obituary that these last works made one think about the kind of painting that the artist might have moved on to had he lived longer. Fortunately, the catalogue raisonné will allow us to productively ponder the work he left behind and the direction it may have taken.

©Eileen Elizabeth Costello 2004



fig. 3. Sean Number Two, 1996. Oil on linen, 60"x84"

DATING ARTWORK continued from page 1

When, for example, the art critic Hilton Kramer enthusiastically praised James E. B. Breslin's 1994 biography of Mark Rothko, he could not resist gloating that its author, a professor of English, "came to his subject from outside the art world," noting "that an academic career in art history—especially as the discipline of art history has lately evolved—may not be the best preparation for achieving distinction in the writing of artists' lives."² In his own lengthy review of this same book, art historian Jack Flam

made negative comments, such as "a lack of familiarity with other works of art." This elicited an angry response from Breslin; in their published dispute, the two alluded to their separate disciplines, as if each thought the other not truly capable.³ I have heard journalists claim that scholars cannot write good biographies and scholars find fault with biographies because they are too journalistic.

On the other hand, other art historians in the academy have attacked the catalogue raisonné. Stephen Eisenman, who teaches art history at Northwestern University, has written that the catalogue raisonné is "accurately described as the proper domain of commercial art dealers and auction houses rather than of independent scholars."⁴ Other theorists have argued that there are no facts. Obviously, these scholars are not concerned with publishing newly discovered works for the first time, a case where authenticity would have to be demonstrated. The catalogue raisonné, while still respected and considered indispensable as a research tool, is regarded by many, often unfairly, as a tedious collection of data, lacking theoretical perspective. With all of its reference lists, it may seem rather dry to the layman.

Yet the catalogue raisonné has been defined rather differently by its many practitioners. It is true that connoisseurship is still central to producing a catalogue raisonné; the author must determine which works are authentic so that all of them can be arranged and presented in a chronological sequence from the earliest date of execution. Today, however, in addition to mastering all the documentation, the catalogue raisonné scholar must also be prepared (where necessary) to call upon scientific tests of artistic materials such as pigment analysis, radiographs, and infrared reflectography. This is enough for some cataloguers, who intentionally refrain from critical analysis and commentary; others (myself among them) acknowledge and include interpretation, making use of the research behind such understanding to make informed decisions on issues such as the dates of specific art works. Such interpretive discussion often makes the thinking behind the assigning of a date more transparent for the reader.

In my experience, writing a first critical biography and compiling a catalogue raisonné are both arduous, exacting tasks. Still, those who write biographies and catalogues raisonné do not often agree on either the value or the content of the two genres. In recent memory, Eugene Victor Thaw, an art dealer and one of the co-authors of the Jackson Pollock catalogue raisonné, argued against the notion that an artist's private life illuminates his work, asserting that while he was "not opposed to investigating the lives and psychology of creative artists," he found that "this material... is seldom central to the content of art itself."⁵ B. H. Friedman, the author of the first biography of Jackson Pollock, took issue with Thaw: "An artist's work takes precedence over biographical detail. However, the work can often be elucidated by such detail; the life can only be understood through the work: the two are inseparably connected. Suppression of detail and exaggeration of the 'dramatic' create myths about artists."⁶

A deliberate distortion of facts to manufacture myth

was how most art world professionals—from historians to critics to artists—viewed a later Pollock biography co-authored by Steven Naifeh and Gregory White Smith (the first of whom actually did some graduate work in art history).⁷ More than one critic has denounced its claims as "psycho-babble."⁸ Hilton Kramer asserted that this book, which won a Pulitzer Prize in 1991, "bears a closer resemblance to a television series like 'Dallas' with its unremitting focus on glamorized malevolence, than it does to a serious account of an artist's life and work."⁹ There were, of course, no art historians, art critics, or artists on the committee.

In contrast to biography, where the narrative form is expected to offer critical assessment, the place of interpretation in a catalogue raisonné has provoked much discussion. Pollock's widow, the artist Lee Krasner, who initiated the Pollock catalogue raisonné, repeatedly told me that she had insisted upon only a collection of images, documents, and facts.¹¹ In his review of the Pollock catalogue raisonné, Hilton Kramer insisted "Originality of interpretation has no place in a catalogue raisonné," while in another review, art critic Lawrence Alloway correctly criticized the same work for "avoiding interpretation as if it were mere contestable opinion.... They even refrain from iconographical comment though, after all their labors, who should be better placed to discuss meanings;... The mastery of data is admirable, but the refusal to interpret it disappoints modern expectations of holistic scholarship."¹²

Despite such different opinions about the wisdom of simply reporting facts or trying to interpret them, the focus of a biography and of a catalogue raisonné of the same artist share some major concerns, especially chronology. For a biography, we want to know the precise dates of the artist's birth, education, marriage, journeys, and major accomplishments including art works and exhibitions. We also want to know the significance of these particular moments in time and that is, in itself, interpretive. In the catalogue raisonné, when we assign a date to a previously undated work, we are also making an interpretive decision. Even when the work has an exhibition history, but the

artist failed to record the work's precise date, we are forced to make an interpretive judgment about when the work was actually made.

Such judgments preoccupied me from 1976, when I began my study of Edward Hopper for a catalogue raisonné at the Whitney Museum of American Art. The Hopper Collection there resulted from a bequest of the couples' artistic estate in 1968 by the artist's widow Josephine Nivison Hopper, who was also a painter. The Whitney Studio Club, the museum's precursor, gave Edward his first one-man exhibition in 1920 and the Whitney Museum organized retrospectives of his work in 1950 and 1964. Jo, who also showed her paintings at the Whitney on occasion, left the museum almost all of her own work, in addition to what remained unsold of her husband's art.¹³ Although Jo's paintings would certainly have assisted in the documentation of Edward's life and work, almost all of them were discarded by the museum.¹⁴

Beginning my project at the museum, I expected to find Hopper's personal papers, including the letters he kept, the photographs, books, and phonograph records that he and his wife owned: in short the evidence of his intellectual and cultural scope. I searched in vain. Soon I learned that no one from the museum had sought to obtain this material, either directly from Jo after Edward's death, or, later, from the executor of her estate. The opportunity had been missed to conserve basic materials for a history of the artist and his production. This, despite the fact that in 1964, at the time the museum was producing the catalogue for the last retrospective exhibition held during Hopper's lifetime, Jo wrote to Margaret McKellar of the Whitney telling her that she and Edward were "pack rats," and had saved everything. Faced with this lack, I attempted to collect copies of all of the correspondence of the artist and his wife as well as copies of all interviews with them. I conducted my own interviews with everyone I could find who had known the Hoppers: other artists, his neighbors, his dealer, even the handyman for his building.

Still in my twenties and possessing an excess of energy when I

began work on the catalogue raisonné in 1976, I conceived of the project in the broadest possible terms. A newly received doctorate gave me confidence. I would employ methodical scholarship to gather and digest in systematic form all that could be known of Hopper's work. No detail was too arcane, no publication too obscure for my ambitious venture. My catalogue raisonné would be the definitive work on Hopper: in addition to reproductions of each work of art, I would document every owner (past and present), all exhibitions in which each picture was included, and every publication that ever mentioned or reproduced it. I included all specific discussions of a particular work by the artist or his wife in the entries for each object. I also compiled a comprehensive bibliography that listed any article, exhibition catalogue, or book that even cited the artist or reproduced his work. Additionally, I constructed a detailed chronology of his life and a complete exhibition history which listed all of the reviews. Everything was done by hand, without computers, which were not yet available to me.

By 1984, I had completed all of this for Hopper's oils, watercolors, illustrations, and prints. I had nearly finished dating the thousands of drawings that he produced and I had identified all of the sketches which led to paintings. For individual works of art of particular interest, I had written extensive essays explaining sources of inspiration, related works, and other significant information. I had also produced several introductory essays: the first analyzed Hopper's critical fortunes; the second was a brief biographical sketch; the third traced his artistic development; and the final essay identified and examined the recurrent themes of his work.

At this time, the museum declared the Hopper catalogue raisonné complete. I returned to the teaching career which I had interrupted for this project, but my life as a scholar had changed forever. I was spoiled by the opportunity to study so many original art works closely. In the process of producing the catalogue raisonné, I had organized two major Hopper exhibitions which drew on many other collections: the first, in 1979, presented all

of the artist's prints and his commercial illustrations; then a major retrospective of his watercolors, oils, and preparatory drawings took place the next year. The planning of these exhibitions and the shows themselves provided unparalleled opportunities for studying Hopper's art. My intimate acquaintance with these works grew as I accompanied both exhibitions on extensive itineraries to other museums, monitoring the condition of each object and arranging the presentation of this material in each venue. Working on Hopper at the time when the Whitney stored its collection in the same building as the curatorial offices, I had easy access to examine works of art in the museum's collection, even on a daily basis.

Towards the end of the eight years that I worked on the catalogue raisonné, I realized that a biography of Hopper was needed. Stimulated by the research that I had already done, I was curious to know more. Having turned up in a private collection Jo's voluminous, nearly illegible diaries that offered an intimate eye-witness report on her husband's life, I eagerly sought out their documentation not only of Hopper's process in making a painting, but what also he did with the rest of his time. Under the pressure of the deadline for the catalogue raisonné set by the museum, I had focused on locating comments about Hopper's paintings. But the more I read, the more I knew that important clues to Hopper's work were buried there amid the tedious recording of shopping lists and other trivial details. I felt compelled to decipher and interpret this new evidence. I knew that I had to write a biography of Hopper.

Today I would like to share with you some of the processes that I employed for determining the dates of works that arrived unidentified in the bequest in 1968 to the Whitney Museum. One notable example is a monumental canvas, measuring 36 x 72 inches, that had arrived rolled up, having long ago been removed from its stretchers. In 1970, Lloyd Goodrich had exhibited and published it as an undated work that he called *Cafe Scene*. As I began to sort out Hopper's development, I sensed that this painting was significant. I had it called back from a so-called "friend" of the museum who had been able to borrow it for the

modest payment of \$250 a year. I found that the work was covered by a dark coating of smoke, so I arranged to have it cleaned and then hung in my office so that I could contemplate it daily; its mysteries and its importance for Hopper's career unfolded over time.

I began my search for this picture's history by combing through archives to locate exhibition checklists at places where Hopper might have been exhibiting during his formative years. These were New York institutions that held non-juried group shows organized by artists, including the MacDowell Club and the Whitney Studio Club. Both had issued small brochure-type catalogues that generally lacked illustrations and did not provide identifying dimensions.

In one of the early group exhibitions held at the MacDowell Club in New York, in February 1915, I found a work called *Soir Bleu* listed without dimensions or a reproduction. I tracked down reviews for this show (as well as all the other early shows) published in several of the many newspapers that New York then supported. I found that Hopper had shown two canvases in this show: *New York Corner*, a lively urban street scene, and *Soir Bleu*, which prompted one critic to comment: "Edward Hopper is not quite successful with his *Soir Bleu*, a group of hardened Parisian absinthe drinkers, but he is entirely so with his *New York Corner*." Another critic wrote: "in Edward Hopper's *New York Corner* there is a completeness of expression that is scarcely discoverable in his ambitious fantasy, *Soir Bleu*."¹⁵

I was familiar with *New York Corner*, also known as *Corner Saloon*, which was then in the "permanent" collection of the Museum of Modern Art, having been acquired from Hopper's dealer Frank Rehn, when he exhibited the previously unsold work in 1941.¹⁶ A much smaller canvas than *Soir Bleu*, *New York Corner*, measuring just 24 x 29 inches, would certainly have seemed less ambitious to a critic than the much larger *Soir Bleu*.

Eventually, I was able to satisfy myself that this scene of a heavily-made-up woman looming over a Paris cafe at twilight must be the painting recorded as *Soir Bleu*, first shown in

1915 and not again until the painting arrived in Jo Hopper's bequest to the Whitney Museum. It expresses fascination with the forbidden Paris discovered by a rather innocent, timid young man during his first and longest trip there from October 1906 through July 1907.

I also found in Jo's bequest to the Whitney Museum the only surviving drawing related to this work, a sketch for the man on the far left, which is captioned "un Maquereau," literally, "a mackerel," exactly the same French slang for a pimp that Picasso used for a sketch he made in 1903. In the first edition of the catalogue for *Edward Hopper: The Art and the Artist*, the exhibition of Hopper that I organized for the Whitney in 1980, I had incorrectly referred to the French title that Hopper wrote on this drawing as "le Maquereau," using the definite rather than the indefinite article. This was noteworthy, because very soon after publication, another sketch for "le maquereau" appeared for sale in England. For me, this was an early wake-up call to the fact that forgers will not only read books, but they might even repeat your mistakes.

After studying the sketch for "un Maquereau," I had concluded that the erect woman with the heavily painted face in *Soir Bleu* depicts a prostitute who seeks clientele in the soldier, the clown, and beret-clad artist in the outdoor tables. But how, you may wonder, was I convinced that this canvas was painted in New York and not in Paris, where Hopper had produced numerous watercolor caricatures of various types of prostitutes?

From the years that Hopper spent painting in Paris, there are only a couple of canvases that feature images of figures. There is one much smaller canvas of a couple seated at a cafe table, which Hopper titled both *Le Bistro* and *The Wine Shop* and recorded as having been painted in New York in 1909. One other figurative oil, called *Summer Interior*, depicts a lone female figure seated on the floor. Hopper also recorded it as having been painted in 1909. But rather than link *Soir Bleu* to these canvases of 1909, I paid attention to the admission Hopper made near the end of his life: "It seemed awfully crude and raw here when I got back. It

took me ten years to get over Europe."¹⁷

Thus, I would argue that Hopper painted *Soir Bleu* some years later, when he experimented with the large scale of the figures in relationship to their setting, accidentally finding a new direction that would represent a major departure in his work. This close focus on the figure only becomes important during the 1920s, after his new wife becomes his regularly available model. Furthermore, the motifs of urban sexuality in *Soir Bleu* reveal not only Hopper's personal fascination with Paris, but also his awareness of contemporary public controversy in New York.

The term "French maquereaux" was notorious. In New York alone, the French were said to be operating in force: one report claimed four hundred "French maquereaux" who were "known to have women in houses" of prostitution, explained that many of the houses were "run under the guise of massage parlors," and declared that "many of the women in these houses are French."¹⁸

My research uncovered warnings that appeared in the popular muck-raking magazines and in books such as Reverend Ernest A. Bell's *Fighting the Traffic in Young Girls* or *War on the White Slave Trade* published in 1911;¹⁹ the theme also engaged the theater, where *Little Lost Sister* attracted crowds in 1913. The caption on the frontispiece to Bell's book states: "The Lure of the Stage—Answering a Want Ad: Disreputable Theatrical Agents sometimes act as white slave traders, alluring positions on the stage being the net to catch young girls." Movies such as *Traffic in Souls* also capitalized on the scandal. Between 1908 and 1914, there was a panic over "white slavery," the discussion of which itself produced a *frisson* even while fueling public discourse on sexuality.²⁰

As a result, movies, restaurants, and even ice-cream parlors were declared to be "dangerous places for young girls to attend unescorted."²¹ This illustration depicts what Bell called "The First Step: Ice cream parlors of the city...largely run by foreign-

ners, are the places where scores of girls have taken their first step downward. Does mother know the character of the place and the man she is with?" Hopper may still have imagined such danger for the solitary young women he depicted in *Automat* of 1927. But for the popular American mind in the years leading up to the First World War, the Paris depicted in *Soir Bleu* was "The Modern Babylon," the capital of "debauchery," and the "headquarters of the world-wide white slave trade of the present time."²²

The panic was symptomatic of the deeper social change, which was about to transform the sexual values of the American middle class. There was at best an uneasy balance between the old and new, causing strife between the last of the proper Victorians and the proponents of radically new social behavior. Even the critics who disliked *Soir Bleu* when it was first shown in 1915 sensed the import of the theme of illicit seduction and threatening sexuality. The critic who presumed that the figures in the café were "hardened Parisian absinthe drinkers" was projecting a cultural stereotype that linked prostitution with compulsive drinking, a theme then current in the preaching of reformers such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union, as well as in the 1909 United States Senate report that made foreigners the scapegoats for sexual anxieties, claiming "the vilest practices are brought here from continental Europe."²³ Another illustration in Bell's book shows a vulnerable "Emigrant girl at the Dock," where "foreign girls are more helplessly at the mercy of the white slave traders." In short, it is not surprising that the motifs of *Soir Bleu* could shock the conservative audience and provoke the critics, impelling them to sit up and take notice of Hopper at last.

Yet another reason to date *Soir Bleu* to 1914 instead of 1909 or 1910 suggests itself based on a knowledge of his later habits. If Hopper had finished *Soir Bleu* much earlier than 1914, he certainly waited a long time before showing such an ambitious picture, passing up both the 1910 Independents exhibition and the Armory Show in which he participated. He typically took no more than a month or two to

complete work on a large painting. And years later, he routinely sent works to his dealer to show as soon as they were finished, even before the paint was dry.

But it was not until Hopper's marriage in 1924 that Jo began to keep records of his paintings whenever they left the studio for exhibition or sale. Although her visual legacy was almost entirely destroyed by the Whitney, which threw out almost all of her oil paintings that she included in her bequest, she also left a substantial written legacy in the form of letters and her diaries, enabling me to redate a number of Hopper's paintings, often even correcting by several months the record books that she kept. In a few cases, evidence that I missed in a cursory reading of the diaries for the catalogue raisonné proved that an atypical painting was not produced when I had originally estimated based upon its subject, style, and materials.

For example, I was able to identify the subject of an untitled painting on a small wood panel of a stairway. It was clearly a depiction of the interior of the artist's boyhood home in Nyack. Because it was painted on panel and represented a scene from his boyhood, I assumed an early date of 1925, just several years after he had painted other wood panels of Monhegan Island (Maine) landscapes. What a surprise, then to find in Jo's diary for April 4, 1949 that Edward, recovering from prostate surgery, had begun to paint "a little picture on a wood panel—a staircase going down to open door & hall lamp suspended. Said memory of a repeated drawing of levitation, sailing downstairs & out thru door."²⁴ Two days later, Jo noted that Edward heard from his doctor that he required additional surgery. He continued to work on the panel while he waited for a hospital room to become available, but Jo noted that he had "so little heart to [give] the work [while] facing such uncertainty."²⁵ Five days after he had begun this picture, he checked into the hospital. Recuperation and summer on Cape Cod intervened; Hopper never finished or signed this work, nor did he have Jo record it in the record books she kept.

The dates and exhibition history

of other atypical paintings in the bequest were not changed, but explained by the focus on historical events (rather than works of art) occasioned by the biography. The initial context for some works had been long forgotten. Hopper did not exhibit *Railroad Sunset* until the spring of 1937, over seven years after he painted it in the fall of 1929. He and Jo had returned to New York from their summer travels in New England at the end of September, in time to witness the panic associated with the stock market crash on October 24. Both the theme and the unusual palette, with its extreme hyperbolic colors, must reflect the dramatic events taking place in the city. Technology, symbolized by the railroad signal tower and tracks, has failed; the wisdom of its intrusion into the countryside is questioned. No wonder the painting found no buyer and ended up in the bequest; with the stock market collapse, the art market stumbled as well.

Thus, I hope that I have shown the benefits, even a kind of scholarly symbiosis, of writing both a catalogue raisonné and biography. From my point of view, each genre adds to the strength of the other. The best catalogue raisonné will provide at least a summary of the artist's biography in which to place the work; any worthwhile biography of an artist must feature the creation of the work. In order to understand an artist well, one must become familiar with the full scope of the creative work. To avoid drawing conclusions based upon a work of art which turns out to be atypical, or, worse, a forgery, the art historian and the biographer both need the expertise of the catalogue raisonné.

Only fatigue and lack of time for other projects would dissuade me from producing another such duo. I have a nearly completed catalogue raisonné of the painter Marsden Hartley, who was also a poet and essayist. Fortunately, a biography of the artist already exists, written by a literary scholar, as well as several recent monographs, a number from the perspective of gay studies. None duplicates the biography that I would have written, but their existence makes such a task at once less arduous and less necessary.

Notes

1. For a notable exception among

American scholars, see John Rewald's work on Cézanne, including a biography and a catalogue raisonné of Cézanne's watercolors.

2. Hilton Kramer, *The New York Times Book Review*, December 26, 1993, 21. James E. B. Breslin, *Mark Rothko: A Biography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

3. Jack Flam, "The Agonies of Success," *The New York Review of Books*, December 2, 1993, pp. 36-40 and a letter from James E. B. Breslin with a reply from Jack Flam, February 17, 1994, pp. 40-41.

4. Stephen Eisenman, *Nineteenth Century Art: A Critical History* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1994), p. 13.

5. Eugene Victor Thaw, "An Exchange on Art and Biography," *The New York Review of Books*, XXVII, December 18, 1980, p. 65.

6. B. H. Friedman, "An Exchange on Art and Biography," *The New York Review of Books*, XXVII, December 18, 1980, p. 65.

7. Steven Naifeh and Gregory White Smith, *Jackson Pollock: An American Saga* (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, 1989).

8. Francis V. O'Connor quoted in Mark Schapiro, "Jackson Pollock: Drip or Genius?," *Art News*, p. 62. W. D. Bannard, Letter to the Editor, *The New York Times*, June 2, 1991, p. 4.

9. Hilton Kramer, "Pulitzer for Pollock Book a Joke," *The New York Observer*, April 29, 1991.

10. See Francis V. O'Connor, "An Undeserved Pulitzer for a Pop Biography?," *The New York Times*, May 12, 1991, p. 37. Grace Glueck, "Inner Workings of a Committee," *The New York Times*, May 12, 1991, p. 37.

11. Author's frequent discussions about this issue with Lee Krasner, 1977-1980.

12. Hilton Kramer, "1,096 Works," *The New York Times Book Review*, December 3, 1978, p. 11. Lawrence Alloway, *The Nation*, 228, March 17, 1979, p. 281.

13. See Gail Levin, *Edward Hopper: An Intimate Biography* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995); Gail Levin, "Josephine Verstelle Nivison Hopper," *Woman's Art Journal*, vol. 1, no. 1, spring/summer 1980; and Gail Levin, "Writing about Forgotten Women Artists: The Rediscovery of Jo Nivison Hopper," in K. Frederickson and S. E. Webb, *Singular Women Writing the Artist* (Berkeley: University of California Press,

2003), pp. 130-145.

14. From the Josephine Hopper Bequest of 1968, the Whitney gave for small oils to New York University and at least 91 framed works to hospitals, which keep no records of art donations. A cache of her unframed watercolors and four tiny oils on panel escaped being discarded or destroyed along with other works. Since then, the museum has received a group of pochades from the bequest of Felicia Meyer Marsh. I acquired for the museum Jo's portrait of Edward as a gift from his dealer John Clancy of the Frank K. M. Rehn Gallery; a second oil followed from Clancy's estate. None of Jo Hopper's work has yet been accessioned by the museum for its permanent collection. Some examples have been recently published (one with an incorrect provenance provided by the Whitney) in Elizabeth Thompson Colclery, "Josephine Nivison Hopper: Some Newly Discovered Work," *Woman's Art Journal*, vol. 25, no. 1, spring/summer 2004, pp. 3-11.

15. "Strong men at the Mac Dowell," *Evening Mail*, February 18, 1915, p. 10. "Art Notes," *The Evening Post*, February 20, 1915, p. 12.

16. The Museum of Modern Art has since sold *Corner Saloon*, which is now in a private collection.

17. Edward Hopper quoted in Brian O'Doherty, "Portrait: Edward Hopper," *Art in America*, 52, December 1964, p. 73.

18. Ernest A. Bell, *Fighting the Traffic in Young Girls or War on the White Slave Trade* (Chicago: L. H. Walter, 1911), pp. 183-184.

19. Bell, *Fighting the Traffic in Young Girls*, p. 182.

20. John D'Emilio and Estelle B. Freeman, *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), pp. 201 and 208-209.

21. D'Emilio and Freeman, *Intimate Matters*, p. 208.

22. Bell, *Fighting the Traffic*, p. 25.

23. D'Emilio and Freeman, *Intimate Matters*, p. 209.

24. Jo Hopper diary of April 4, 1949.

25. Jo Hopper diary of April 7, 1949.

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The Milne Catalogue Chronicles

continued from page 2

Fundraising was something that I had not thought much about in my career, except as a responsibility of other people. I was fortunate that the University of Toronto provided an account through which the funds required to prepare the Catalogue and the biography for publication by the University of Toronto Press could be channelled. The Press was most helpful in this, and set a good example by making a sizable investment in the Project, both in the time of its editors and production staff, and toward the costs related to manufacture and marketing.

Yet the money had to be found and finding it was almost as strange a chase as finding the pictures was. Most of it was just hard work: preparing the promotional material and the budget, making appointments, sending out letters, and making phone calls by the score. Psychologically it was an unnerving business because being turned down frequently is difficult not to take personally. Yet there were uplifting moments. Right at the outset I approached my friend Gerry Sheff of Gluskin Sheff + Associates Inc., and asked for an unspecified amount. He saw me a couple of days later and said that he and his partner Ira Gluskin and their associates had decided to help and that I had to guess by how much. I thought they might give \$5,000, but secretly hoped for \$10,000. I tried not to answer the question, but he persisted. I guessed \$10,000. He said: 'We decided on \$20,000. But I could have told you 10! You never ask for enough.' They subsequently more than doubled that initial contribution and also sponsored the launch parties for both the biography and the catalogue. Their support was early, and generous, and encouraging, and without strings. The McLean Foundation was also extremely generous, took a personal interest in our progress, helped with other donations and assisted at the highest level. An equally generous and encouraging friend wishes to be anonymous, but her help was timely and crucial.

And I will never forget the kindness of Fred Mendel, our first donor. After I had catalogued his Milne paintings in Saskatoon in 1970, he slid a hundred dollar bill into my hand as he shook mine goodbye, and said: 'This is a good thing you are doing. I support you.'

Money, like information for the Catalogue, also came from unexpected sources. A friend of my wife's made a suggestion that turned into a \$50,000 donation from a foundation that was not listed in the big fat foundation book. A lady from Hamilton wrote a letter out of the blue offering to help. She wrote a substantial cheque on her eightieth birthday and later added more. I always thought I came from a poor family, at least a family without much money – and I did. But one of my aunts surprised me one day after I had mentioned fundraising woes, by phoning up to ask if she could help and she did most generously. Henry Luce III, of the Time-Life family, was someone I got to know when he was a member of a group called the American Friends of Canada. He was persuaded to assist the project by the fact that half of Milne's career was in the States, and gave me \$20,000 US. Later I took him the published biography and asked him for another contribution. He was uncomfortable, since he hadn't expected another request and his staff had

already told me that no more could be expected. I mentioned that the McLean Foundation had doubled their contribution. 'Our mortal enemy,' he said, his face darkening. I could see my chances rapidly turning to smoke. Luckily, I realized that he was confusing the magazine *Macleans*, which helped to get Time magazine 'kicked out of Canada,' as folks at Time remember it, with the *McLeans* of Canada Packers. When he was convinced I was referring to meat, not magazines, he said, 'What the hell,' and gave me another \$20,000 US, which turned out to be even more in Canadian dollars.

In the end, we raised all the money we needed, but it's a strange thing that the hardest part of writing a book of this kind is the fundraising; I am glad to have that challenge behind me, and I am sure that the people I pestered for support are glad too.

David Jr and I decided, as we bore down on getting the Catalogue done once and for all in 1991, that every entry should be illustrated, and also that every entry should be self-explanatory – that is, no codes, unintelligible short-forms, or ellipses; each entry had to stand alone. Furthermore, we agreed that all letter or diary comments that refer to specific paintings must be cited in the appropriate entries, and that all treatments of the same subject (Milne did many series of paintings) must be cross-referenced. The proper abbreviated forms for each of hundreds of letters, diary entries, and painting notes, had to be created and checked for consistency – a task most ably done by Elizabeth Driver among her many other duties.

These decisions, of course, had enormous cost implications, both in the time needed to create the text and in the increase of the total number of characters to be checked many times over, typeset, and finally printed. The final character count is nearly 4.4 million.

The bibliography had to be expanded to include every item – even some ephemeral material and sources, such as films and pamphlets. The exhibition list is also unusual in that, unlike any other, it gives all the paintings by Milne in each exhibition. Finally, of course, after a hiatus of nearly a decade, the ownership of the works had to be reconfirmed. Many of the paintings had changed hands, owners had moved, died, or disappeared. Our telephone bills showed how much effort we made in trying to catch up with our subjects, but the number of 'whereabouts unknown' in the Catalogue is an indication that time won many of the struggles in this regard.

The actual process of recording a finite number of facts or pieces of information in a determined order sounds simple enough but, like many seemingly simple things, is infinitely complicated. A slight change in a title, for example, required changes to: the main heading, all cross-references (and there might be none, or fifteen, or more), the title index, the exhibition list, the verso entry (if any), any references in the introductions, the photography credits, the owners database, and, potentially, changes to many photos, slides, and transparencies. Changing a catalogue number, which we had to do several times: was like an earthquake: the aftershocks reverberated for days, and involved adjusting all entries that would be affected, reorganizing the order of the work sheets, and relabelling all our photographic records: black-and-white prints, slides, and transparencies. There are several million pieces of information in the catalogue, and

they all have to be accurate and in the right place. Just checking that all the information from the work sheets and from the earlier versions of the catalogue had been correctly transcribed and put with the correct image into the final manuscript took days and days of my wife, Linda Intaschi, reading from one version, while each of the rest of us checked images, the computer, and the work sheets.

At great length we considered page layout, whether a left or left/right orientation. And we struggled with maps, finally turning to expert help in the Geography Department at the University at a cost of more than \$10,000. The form of the entries began to look promising, and we typeset a section or two and printed them in order to try out the computer processes and to see how the design worked with real text on real pages. Type sizes were changed a little. Setting the specifications for the gray tones in the black and white illustrations was another delicate and subtle issue, and checking that each of the 3000+ met the specs took time and care. As the manuscript moved through the production process, each and every page presented its own problems of balance and arrangement.

The colour separating and the printing of the Catalogue, superbly done by the U of T Press at its own plant in Downsview, was another time-consuming task to which David Jr and I committed days and days. The colour plates went through up to six proofs, and of course we had to be there when they were printed. Adjusting the colour as the plates go on press, if one cares about it, takes more time than the printing itself.

ing painting we have seen, plus some drawings or ancillary sketches; 193 colour plates on 48 pages in each volume; in large 9.25" X 12.25" format, with a version of Milne's 1945 cover for *Studio*, now *Studio International*, beautifully embossed in gold on the box and on the cloth covers. The exhaustive bibliography covers more than 100 years of books, exhibition and auction catalogues, magazines, newspapers, and films. The exhibition list gives all the works in more than 500 exhibitions. Milne's lists are all included, along with the full quotations from his letters, diaries and painting notes – some of them are short and some run for several columns. Only 971 copies have been printed.

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Dear CSRA scholars,

My name is Amy King, I am the manager of a new initiative instigated by Artnet.com termed the Artist Works Catalogue Project (hereafter: AWC). Recognizing the need to bring the depth of the fine arts world into digital format, Artnet's web library will create the first quality source of artists' monographs online. Artnet has created a website, with cataloguing tool, that services the public by clearly presenting a broad sampling of an artist's career in both chronological and thematic fashion.

I have spoken with several of you over the past couple months concerning our project and Scott Ferris suggested I submit a description of the project to the **CRSA Forum** with the hope of explaining my goals and clarifying any misconceptions concerning the project itself.

Before discussing the benefits and merits of the AWCs, I wanted to mention that in agreeing to manage this project, my chief concern is to maintain the respectability and integrity of each site. I would like you to know that my credentials include a masters degree in Art History as well as four years cataloguing experience for Sotheby's in the European Art department. Please be aware that I am not attempting to create or recreate entire catalogues raisonn  online; I do, however, wish to bring your artists into the online world in a responsible, educational manner and act as a gateway to many of your larger endeavors.

what is the artist works catalogue project?

The AWC is an online library that hosts artists monographs consisting of an artist's statement, biography, exhibition history, publications, reviews, interviews, public collections and images of works of art. Each artist's site currently contains between 150 and 300 images with basic cataloguing and optional provenance, exhibition and literature fields. I encourage you to visit the nine artist monographs we have completed through direct collaboration with artists such as Benny Andrews, Nancy Spero and Donald Sultan at:

http://www.artnet.com/usernet/awc/awc_artistworksindex.asp

In order to bring the proper weight and significance to each site, I am contacting the foundations and scholars considered the experts on each artist as well as living artists themselves. The foundation, scholar or artist will be responsible for deciding what visual and textual material to include in the monograph. Artnet will then enter the material into our cataloguing tool and give editing control only to the foundation, scholar or artist (catalogues will not be able to be changed by outside parties). Because of the unique, organic nature of online media, sites may grow and change over time as you deem necessary, expanding to accommodate the addition of new images as well as written updates on works.

We expect the sites to function as a supplement to

printed materials and other websites. Each monograph will clearly state that it is a *sampling* of an artist's career edited and curated by each individual scholar or institution.

what the awc is not

The AWC project does not attempt to replace, circumvent or in any other way deflect the art community's attention from your expertise or catalogue raisonn  project. In fact, we believe the interest generated from the digital monographs will do just the opposite.

The AWC project will not be an advertising or gallery focused revenue branch for Artnet. Each catalogue will remain an educational forum designed to accommodate researchers utilizing artnet and the online world for more respectable collections of artists' images and background.

what we offer

The sites provide an excellent gateway to your catalogue raisonn  project while publically identifying you as the acknowledged expert on your artist.

also increasing the public's association of expertise to the artist. The books and articles categories on each site will link to your publications on the artist as well as to other important bibliographical resources.

In a digital environment, where websites devoted to specific artists launched by unqualified individuals are increasingly common, the monographs give you an opportunity to create an official face for your artist online. Artists' oeuvres need quality representation on the Internet, information best provided by a true expert on each artist.

The monographs can be expanded or edited over time without any fear of other parties having content control over your monograph. Each digital monograph may be reproduced as a CD-ROM, which would be yours to distribute.

cost

Revenue for the hosting and creating of each monograph will come from living artists directly. Through my respect for your educational endeavors, I am able to offer you the opportunity to create a monograph free of charge.

Our web-based cataloguing tool is very easy to use and Artnet is willing to enter any images and data on your behalf that you do not want to enter yourselves. The text for each site is quite standard and, most likely, it is the type of back matter you have already compiled.

In summary, we hope this library becomes a vast resource and starting point for any potential scholars interested in discovering more about their favored artists. We believe that the dissemination of your information online will lead to a broader awareness of your scholarly endeavors and to the acquisition of your completed literary works. Thank you very much for your interest. I invite anyone with questions or who is interested in building a monograph with us to please give me a call at (212) 497 9700 x373 or email at aking@artnet.com.

Sincerely yours,

Amy C. King
Manager, Artist Works Catalogue, Artnet

CR on Living Artist continued from page 2

including the results of a material analysis conducted by the Getty Conservation Institute on our behalf.

With the help of a small board and staff, I raised the money for these projects—\$1.2M. More than eighty-five percent of this money came in \$1,000–\$7,500 donations from people with no material investment in Lawrence's work. The artist's agent donated about 2% of the funds, the National Endowment for the Humanities gave us another 4%, the Getty Grant program helped us out with another 2%, and collectors helped with about 4%, but most of the money came from doctors, lawyers, university professors, and former students, who did not own an original Jacob Lawrence artwork.

When I first met Jacob Lawrence in 1991 he was 74 years old and in moderately decent health. In 1995, I helped him and Mrs. Lawrence move from the house they had lived in for 25 years into an assisted living complex in downtown Seattle. In the summer of 1998, Mr. Lawrence was diagnosed with lung cancer. That fall he successfully underwent radiation and chemotherapy treatments but he was too frail to undergo surgery. By early 2000, the cancer had spread. He was hospitalized that spring and died in the summer. On June 9th, at the age of 82, he passed away, while the catalogue raisonné was on the press in Hong Kong.

Assessing The Situation

Before I get into my discussion about my relationship to the artist and his involvement with the project, I should begin with a few admissions:

- I never intended to do a catalogue raisonné. When I worked in the Impressionist painting department at Christie's after graduating from college, I regularly came in contact with various "experts" who were brought in to authenticate works we had hoped to sell. But the backgrounds of these "experts"—many of whom were from old European families or were descendants or relatives of the artists—made the job seem esoteric to me.

- I didn't have the standard background of a catalogue raisonné scholar.

I did not come from a family of artists, nor a family that collected art. I was not a professor at a university, the director of an artist's foundation, or full-time curator at a major museum, though I did work, once the project was underway, as a curator of contemporary art at the Seattle Art Museum for almost a year.

- I did not have a PhD; in fact, at the time I started the project, I didn't even have my masters degree.

- I had never been published, let alone publish a book.

Furthermore, the artist was an unlikely candidate to be the subject of a catalogue raisonné, especially by me:

- My masters thesis, when I did get it, was on the work of Robert Smithson—an American artist whose work played a pivotal role in defining the post-minimalist era—not African American modernism, or even American modernism for that matter.

- Jacob Lawrence was still alive. The majority of catalogues raisonnés have been produced on artists who are not alive, whose artistic production has been arrested by the final curtain. This meant, of course, that there was no foundation already in place with either the mandate or resources.

- Lawrence's paintings, at the time, fetched upwards of only \$150,000, not the *One Million \$ Plus* market levels attained by the work of many other catalogue raisonné subjects. I bring this up because at the lower levels of the market there is less pressure to prepare a catalogue raisonné, but also because it is unlikely that those that are invested in the artist's work have the same level of resources to pour into such a project. Lawrence's works were owned primarily by museums—an enormous number of works entered museum collections in the 1940s—middle-class professionals, musicians, and former students. It is true that Nelson Rockefeller and Roy Neuberger had both owned works, but they had given them away shortly after purchasing them. Rockefeller, apparently, gave his one Jacob Lawrence painting to a friend as a wedding present.

- Jacob Lawrence never kept an inventory of his works, and by the time I met him, had very little of his work still in his possession. I say this because detailed inventory lists, cardfiles or notebooks—I'm thinking of the one's prepared by O'Keeffe, Dove, Hopper,

and others—can often serve as the initial bedrock upon which a catalogue raisonné is built. Alternately, a substantial collection of work, such as the rich holdings often inherited by artist's estates or foundations, can serve a similar purpose.

So how did I come to this rather esoteric line of work? I guess you could say I ended up in the wrong place at the right time.

In the late 1980s, I worked as a cataloguer in the Impressionist Painting department of Christies. It was, as you will all remember, a heady time for that market and it was during that time that we sold van Gogh's *Portrait of Dr. Gachet* for over \$80-million. By 1990/1991, the art market had taken a nose-dive and I left Christies to go back to graduate school, choosing to leave New York for the Pacific Northwest, where I enrolled at the University of Washington in Seattle.

When I arrived in Seattle, I didn't know who Jacob Lawrence was. I had seen only one painting of his in my lifetime and that was only two weeks before I left for the West Coast. Out of financial need and psychological necessity, I got a part-time job with a small, but well-respected art gallery that specialized in work by Northwest artists. The gallery was run by a French woman in her late 50s and showed mostly the work of University of Washington faculty and artists known as the "Northwest Masters," people like Mark Tobey and Morris Graves. The gallery was located in a converted one-story house in a residential section about ten miles north of downtown Seattle, far from the gallery district. I worked at the gallery several afternoons per week.

I didn't know that the gallery represented Jacob Lawrence's work when I was hired. I also didn't know that it had exclusive representation at that time. Lawrence, who had spent more than forty years in New York—from the 1930s to the early 1970s—left to teach at the University of Washington. In the late 1980s, after a long legal dispute, he ended his relationship with his New York gallery of 25 years.

I sensed quickly that Lawrence was a significant artist, but I just didn't realize to what extent until probably six months later. The gallery inventory consisted mostly of recent paintings and limited edition prints. Occasionally

an older work would pass through, but infrequently. Rummaging through the one monograph on his work—which had been published only five years earlier—I learned that Lawrence was one of the first successful black artists in America to have been raised and trained in a black community; that he was the first American artist of African descent to be represented by a commercial gallery; that he exhibited regularly in small group exhibitions with such established artists as Stuart Davis and John Marin; and that he had exhibited in nearly all the U.S. annuals between 1941 and 1960. I learned that by the age of 24—in 1941—he had already produced his five epic narrative series—including the "Migration" series—and that by the time he was in his late twenties his work was already in the collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Metropolitan Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, the Brooklyn Museum, the Phillips Collection, the Philadelphia Museum, and many others. No black artist in the United States was to receive the same degree of recognition until the late 1960s. He held two dozen honorary degrees, and was a recipient of the National Medal of Arts. As I learned more, I also realized that there was an enormous disparity between the accolades that had been bestowed upon him and the amount of serious scholarly inquiry into his work. I think there were a number of reasons for this:

- First, a lot of white scholars didn't know how to write about his work and how to categorize it: The artist's use of modern idioms for social ends created a style and sensibility that was uniquely his own; many also felt that his work was naïve and perhaps not worth serious critical attention; and finally, he emerged as an artist of significance in the 1940s, when the critical attention to modern art was transitioning from the figurative to the abstract. For these reasons his work was not regularly hung as part of a permanent collection or included in the standard histories of 20th century American art.
 - Second, many black scholars, with the exception of Alain Locke or James Porter earlier in the century, decided to concentrate on the work of black artists who did not have the same degree of visibility that Lawrence had.
 - Third, there existed little public documentation of his work,
- CRSA Forum

subsequently, there was too little raw data for the scholars to work with.

The dealer for whom I was working agreed to fund a preliminary effort to locate and document Lawrence's work. We started with his prints—of which there turned out to be about 80. I spent a year researching the subject, and in 1993 the CR of prints was published. I put together a traveling retrospective of the prints that eventually went to about 14 venues nationwide. The catalogue raisonné served as the CR for that show. The revenues from exhibition fees and catalogue sales were reserved expressly for future Lawrence research. We had no idea how much there was left to document but we knew that compared to what existed, it was a significant amount. The 1986 monograph documented about 200 works. We predicted there could be around 1,000.

I graduated with my Master's the following year and, flat broke, began exploring the idea of launching a CR on Jacob Lawrence's paintings and drawings. My intention was to set the ball in motion immediately. Given the lack of material to work with, I thought it was critical to start the project while Mr. Lawrence, who was in his mid-70s, was still alive and could be a valuable resource. While still on payroll at the gallery, I conducted a study on the feasibility of the project. After discussions with many museum curators around the country, I was convinced that my instincts were right and I dove in. I set up an independent not-for profit corporation with a small board of directors and a larger board of advisers.

What I Learned In The Process About Managing Relationships

Catalogue raisonné scholars spend an enormous amount of their time collecting and analyzing large amounts of data. Not surprisingly, much of our emphasis in talking about these projects is devoted to these issues.

CRs are about managing relationships as much as they are about managing and interpreting information. This can be particularly challenging for scholars who tend to be introverts—more comfortable with a book in a library than with colleagues at a cocktail

party.

For the scholar, there are roughly five constituencies that you need to manage on an ongoing basis.

- Scholar – Estate/Foundation
- Scholar – Private Collectors
- Scholar – Museums
- Scholar – Dealers (primary & secondary market)
- Scholar – Funders

Sometimes there is overlap between these constituencies or they may be the same. I don't want to dwell much on the various forms these many relationships can take because the subject is too great, and because much of the discussion concerns all catalogues raisonné projects, regardless of whether the artist is alive or dead.

I wish to address the scholar-dealer relationship, which in my experience, was so critical in the beginning. I will then discuss, specifically, the relationship between the scholar and the artist, which is what really distinguishes this project from many others.

The dealer wants to give the appearance of being supportive of a CR project because it can be a valuable tool for getting access to artwork. And yet often s/he wants to keep the pace of the project slow so that valuable information in her/his possession is not made public. This became an enormously challenging, if not exhausting, landscape of on-going negotiation.

Nonetheless, it was because of the role of a dealer—specifically, the dealer I had worked for in Seattle—that the project got rolling. In fact, she funded the print catalogue and provided seed money for the CR of the paintings, drawings, and murals. She received great benefit from this investment. For the print project, she became the owner of the information and she ended up with an 80-page catalogue that became an excellent marketing device for her. But I ended up with an important benefit myself, that became very useful in gaining access to collectors and in raising money in the future. It also allowed me the opportunity to establish a relationship with Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence and to develop their trust in my professional capacity.

Establishing a trusting relationship with the artist is by far the most important aspect of preparing a catalogue raisonné on a living artist. Without trust, it is impossible to acquire

authority. And the establishment of authority over the project and its content is critical for the catalogue raisonné scholar. Authority can be a vehicle for abuses, but lack of authority can allow for the manipulation of the project in ways that compromises the project's integrity.

A well known case-in-point: In 1999, *Balthus: Catalogue of the Complete Works* was published. Its title page notes authorship as "by Virginie Monnier and Jean Clair, with the authorization of Balthus". In the notes introducing the catalogue itself, the following statement: "The catalogue in its entirety has been submitted to the artist, who has passed it for publication. A small number of drawings recognized *in fine* as fakes have been withdrawn from the catalogue."

What is the role of a scholar in a project and what is her/his relationship to the artist? Does one act as an employee of the artist or of others with a financial interest in the artist's work (e.g. a foundation, a gallery), or does one attempt to function independently in an effort to maintain objective distance? Of course, the more independence you have—and I mean an independence that is sanctioned by the artist, and that is important—then the less compromised the project will be. Ideally, the artist needs to transfer to you her/his authority to authenticate the artwork. This is very difficult, if nearly impossible.

In the case of the Jacob Lawrence project, my authority to serve as the expert on Lawrence's work was never conferred to me in writing by the artist. I assumed this position of authority slowly, over time. First, I obtained permission from the artist to do the catalogue raisonné, with the understanding that he would not serve on the board of directors for the project, that he would not be responsible for funding it, and that I would be sensitive about the time I would ask of him. At the time, I think he was relieved to not feel full responsibility for the project. Several years later, when it was time to set up the authentication committee, I asked his permission to set up a committee of three independent scholars. I explained my reasoning for not including either himself or Mrs. Lawrence on the committee—noting that I didn't want there to be an appearance of any conflict of

interest in the catalogue raisonné scholars community. About a year prior to publication, I asked the artist for permission to determine the criteria used for including authentic works—determining where to draw the line with regard to very incomplete sketches or ephemera, and he granted me (orally) that authority.

I must note that while I did not work for Mr. Lawrence at any time, I spent an enormous amount of time with him throughout the project. We got together at least weekly, either so I could interview him, or for lunch or a cocktail. He often called me over to his studio if he needed help with something, and on occasion, I took him to the store, or to a doctors appointment, etc.

Establishing trust with Lawrence was critical. There are a number of reasons for this but one transcended all the others: the fact that I was a white man.

- First, I had to prove to Mr. Lawrence that my motives were sincere, that I didn't have some hidden agenda. People are often suspect of a white scholar who takes a sudden and profound interest in the work of black artists. Museums and galleries compound—within the artworld—a problem that exists in the society at large. In the artworld it manifests itself when museums (and galleries) use the work of black artists to meet certain institutional objectives—many of which are mandated by funders. So, you see the work of black artists shown during February ("Black History Month") or in exhibitions that are used by museums for community outreach or children's education.

- Second, I had to prove myself to African American historians and potential black funders particularly since this was to be the first CR on an American artist of African descent. Despite all my best efforts, there were a number of people—including several prominent art historians—who either did not help me or tried to thwart my progress.

Lawrence's support and belief in my abilities were important to me sustaining my research and bringing the project to conclusion. As long as I was able to maintain his support, I knew that anyone else who was not thrilled about the project would eventually fall in line. In maintaining Lawrence's sup-

port, in fostering his trust in me, and acquiring the authority I needed to effectively do the job, I had be sensitive to a number of potentially hot topics:

- My desire for complete access. Artists who have not documented their work, often haven't dealt with issues of legacy. Lawrence hadn't considered this, and then suddenly he was faced with someone going through his personal effects—old file boxes, correspondence. In addition, Lawrence had lots of drawings stashed away that he'd forgotten about or that he didn't feel ready to reveal. It wasn't until four years into the project that I had access to this material.

- My sensitivity to the artist's time. Even after the artist commits to seeing the project through, becomes comfortable with a sense of legacy, and the work parameters are defined, be sensitive to the amount of time the artist invests.

- My respect for the artist's most recent work. One of the reasons for pursuing the CR of a living artist is because that artist has already produced a large body of historically significant work. It is possible that the artist is still producing work at the same level, but perhaps unlikely. Thus, one is faced with balancing their interest in the past with an unconditional support of current work; this can be difficult. One way of addressing this is by writing on the new work, even if you feel that it you are compromising your standards by doing so.

- My need to maintain a professional distance. It is important to maintain a degree of professional distance, and to regularly reconfirm your value as an arts professional outside of the CR project. Consider managing other projects during the course of the CR—writing on other artist's work, for instance.

- My need to maintain my authority as the expert on the artist's work. The role of artist in this process wasn't actually critical, but the balance of authority did become an issue nonetheless. The artist was not a member of the authentication committee, though we did ask his opinion on all artworks for which there was some question or deliberation.

I decided to establish an authentication committee of three peo-

ple to review all the artworks for inclusion in the catalogue raisonné. The committee included myself, Michelle DuBois—who ultimately became co-editor of the project—and Elizabeth Steele—a conservator at the Phillips Collection who had written on Lawrence's use of materials and techniques in the past. I also solicited the involvement of the Getty Conservation Institute to assist us with pigment analysis. Neither Jacob Lawrence nor Gwendolyn Lawrence, his wife, were involved in committee decisions. For works that were questionable, we would seek their opinion, but I can't think of any cases where their opinion actually changed the opinion of the committee. There were three cases, in fact, where the committee decided that the work in question was by the artist, when either Mr. or Mrs. Lawrence did not support that assessment. I'll address this later.

The committee format was very important—not just for legal reasons. With regards to authentication issues, it was essential to establishing the authority of the Jacob Lawrence Catalogue Raisonné Project in the eyes of the artist, his wife, other scholars, collectors, dealers, and the general public.

One major advantage of working with a living artist is that their very presence on this earth is a primary deterrent to forgers, and often, the number of fakes in the market is significantly less as a result. This was the case with Lawrence. Almost all of the fakes we saw were very poorly executed. There were less than a dozen works that required serious scrutiny.

Given all that I have said so far, it might sound as though the involvement of the artist was negligible and perhaps, not even necessary to the completion of the project. People often assume that an artist's involvement will be a valuable research tool. The reality, at least in my situation, was unlike what I had expected.

- Lawrence could not remember much of his early work, nor could he remember who had bought it or where it is.

- As I mentioned earlier, he did not have his own record-keeping system.

- He had not maintained relationships with a lot of people.

- He felt uncomfortable reaching out to those who did have work.

On the other hand, Lawrence's involvement was important with CRSA Forum

regards to:

- Providing an endorsement of the project.

- Providing us with fundraising options. The artist allowed us to create limited edition prints that we could sell. He also attended a series of fundraising dinners, at which he was the guest of honor. The combination of these strategies generated close to one million of our 1.2 million dollar budget.

- He inspired me when I better understood him. Over time I came to know a true humanitarian who had a different perspective on the definition of "beauty" in his art.

- Feeling of commitment to him. Our mutual respect encouraged me to conclude the project, so as not to let him down after I had gained his enormous trust.

Other issues

Completeness. The very notion of preparing a catalogue raisonné on a living artist is incongruous with the conventional notion of the catalogue raisonné itself, which is meant to be the authoritative record of the artist's life achievement. With the life itself not complete, such a task is, obviously, impossible. As a consequence, the scholar is forced to think of the catalogue raisonné in different terms, not as a static monument to artistic achievement but as a comprehensive document of an artist's oeuvre at a moment in time. It's a conception that applies to all catalogue raisonné projects, regardless of the life status of its subject.

If one accepts this, then one can accept that fact that a catalogue raisonné is never a definitive object. I believe that it is—in certain cases—more important for the scholarship to be made public, than for the scholar to wait until every last artwork is located.

This was certainly the case with the Jacob Lawrence catalogue raisonné. Given the paucity of information on his work prior to the commencement of the project, it was my goal to establish an acceptable threshold of completion—to ensure that the material was shared with the public in a timely way. That threshold was 90%. If I believed that we had located and documented 90% or more of the artworks thought to have existed,

then I considered that sufficient for publication. It's a matter of striking a balance between completeness and accessibility.

Interpretive issues. There has been a long-standing dispute among catalogue raisonné scholars as to whether or not it is appropriate to include an interpretive essay or group of essays in the catalogue raisonné.

This is how we handled the issue. Due to a lack of serious scholarship on Lawrence's work (three retrospectives but only one of them had a catalogue that was more than two-dozen pages in length), I felt it was important to jump start the process by using the raw data to begin a new, critical interpretation of the work. Nonetheless, I realized the importance of keeping these efforts separate. I decided that neither I nor my co-editor would be contributors to the catalogue. Instead, we would maintain our neutrality and hire a team of scholars, give them free access to our research, and then commission them to explore the subject. The monograph, containing essays by eight historians, was published in a separate companion volume to the CR. That volume, titled *Over the Line: The Art and Life of Jacob Lawrence*, was also distributed independently and became the exhibition catalogue for the recent traveling retrospective of Lawrence's work.

In Conclusion

I leave you with the following thoughts.

I am still undecided as to whether or not the recent increase in CRs on living artists—many of them gallery funded—is good or bad. One criticism I've heard suggests that the recent spurt in CR production is making a mockery of traditional CR standards, which I happen to disagree with.

Who decides which artists deserve a CR? I weathered the criticism, particularly from prominent art collectors in the Pacific Northwest, that Lawrence's work was undeserving of a catalogue raisonné. Personally, I believe that if someone can pull together the resources, and maintain the highest professional standards, then the CR should be developed.

One of the criticisms I frequently heard about preparing a catalogue rais-

sonne on a living artist was that it provides the artist an opportunity to re-edit or re-define her/his legacy by influencing the CR process. This may be equally true with CRs on dead artists—a surviving spouse/partner may be even more protective of the artist's legacy and more zealous in designing her/his historical record.

The real question is whether or not there is a need to develop a CR. Why go through the research and make it public when the expense is so great? In many cases, especially when an artist is well published, I don't think there should be a rush to publish a CR. One argument against producing a CR on an artist whose work is underpublished is that it would benefit the art, and therefore the artist, more by the careful release of smart, focused monographs over a long period of time. This is a market based argument. Frankly, I'm not interested that much in the market implications of a CR.

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Editors Note/s

As you may have gathered, I have been tapping the well of the NYU/CR event of last April. There are still a few papers out there – from individual speakers and panelists alike – that have not been published here. If those of you whom I have contacted would take a moment to send your papers in, this would carry us through the January issue and on to the new topics that will surface in the upcoming CRSA and NYU/CR events.

Though the majority of our articles have been virtual mini-CR autobiographies, I have found within them numerous "helpful hints" – noting pit falls to avoid, potential research and funding resources, networking possibilities. Nevertheless, I will encourage you all to think outside the *full length essay box* and consider sharing squibs that generally sail across your desks. The memos that you usually take for granted – professional program

announcements, grant application deadlines – could be the information one of our fellow members is looking for. Instead of tossing out those memos, recycle them here, in the Forum.

We can expect to hear from Michael Reed about Sally Farnham, in our next installment of BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION. I have been working on a review of the revised edition of Dan Burne Jones's, *The Prints of Rockwell Kent: A Catalogue Raisonné*, that I could have available for the January issue. Think about what you can bring to these pages. SRF

Membership List

Members, please check your personal data and make sure all information is correct. **LET ME KNOW DIRECTLY** (as well as updating Nancy Mathews) if changes need to be made! Thank you for your assistance with this matter.

As usual there are a number of additions and updates in this list.

Artists and CRSA related services included in this list.

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