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Elvehjem Museum of Art

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The Elvehjem Museum of Art artscene

University of
Wisconsin-Madison
Volume 3, Number 1

The purchase of a marvelously complex early seventeenth-century engraving was one of the highlights of the acquisition program this past fall. Executed in 1604 by the Netherlandish printmaker Nicolaes de Bruyn (1570-1656), the print depicts the *Ecce Homo* or *Christ Presented to the People*. De Bruyn employed a highly mannerist compositional device, relegating the main event to the smallish figures in the left middle-ground. There we see Christ with his crown of thorns being shown to the people by his captors, while the half-nude criminal Barabbas is being led in for the people to choose which of the two to set free. This "action" takes place within a wonderful pastiche of varied visual elements—far-distant, imaginary landscape; an equally imaginary city-scape comprised of diverse architectural styles and motifs; and the throngs of figures in the fore- and middle-grounds. Some of the latter, such as the men on prancing horses in the right middle-ground, are oblivious to the unfolding drama, while others participate in the action through intense discussions with neighbors or animated gesturing. The foreground group offers a fascinating study in figure types and costume styles, many of which seem to depend on models taken from earlier printmakers like Dürer, Marcantonio Raimondi, and Lucas van Leyden. Indeed, the overall compositional effect owes much to van Leyden. What contributes most to the pastiche quality of the *Ecce Homo* is the juxtaposition of the tragic group of the weeping Virgin Mary and Mary Magdalene in the right foreground, seemingly plucked out of a crucifixion or lamentation scene, and the comical swaying horse and rider in the left foreground. The horse is the only creature in the entire throng to look back and establish direct eye contact with the viewer.

This large and multi-faceted print, purchased through the Malcolm K. Whyte Endowment Fund, adds a significant new dimension to the Old Master print collection.

Other important additions to the print collection are a drypoint portrait of James McNeill Whistler by Mortimer Menpes, a woodcut by Lionel Feininger (1871-1956) depicting *Old Gables in Lüneburg*, and a woodcut by Maurice Vlaminck (1876-1958) entitled *Saint Michel*. Menpes (1860-1938) was



Nicolaes de Bruyn, *Christ Presented to the People* (detail), ca. 1612, engraving with etching,
Malcolm K. Whyte Endowment Fund purchase

one of the principal protégés of Whistler, particularly in the medium of drypoint, and his *Whistler with White Lock* of ca. 1890 is one of the most famous portraits of the great master. Vlaminck was closely associated with the Fauvist movement and, although executed in black and white, *Saint Michel* of 1914 is a fine example of work in that French expressionistic style. Like the de Bruyn, the Vlaminck print was acquired through the Malcolm K. Whyte Endowment Fund. The print

JANUARY/FEBRUARY

Exhibitions

Tōkaidō: Nineteenth-Century Japanese Landscape Prints
Photographs by David Hockney
Badlands Photographs by J. P. Atterberry
Russian Paintings from the Joseph E. Davies Collection
Popov, Vilner and Utenkov:
Contemporary Russian Printmakers

Concerts

Kenneth Kletzien, piano
Cary Michaels, tenor
Beverly Hassell, piano
Mimmi Fulmer, soprano, and Mark Fink, oboe
Vocal Quartet: Marcia Roberts, Joanne and Kenneth Bozeman,
and Douglas Morris
Pro Arte Quartet
Gretchen D'Armand, soprano and Michael Keller, piano

Artworks of the Month

Meditating Buddha
Undetermined Line, by Bernar Venet

Lectures

Beth Irwin Lewis, "Lustmord: Violence Against Women in Early Twentieth-Century German Art"
Van Deren Coke, "Photography into Art"
Michael Petrovich,
"Russian Culture and the Joseph E. Davies Collection"
Elena Kornetchuk, "Themes of Old Russia in Contemporary Printmaking from the U.S.S.R."
Sue Coe on her Art

NEW AT THE ELVEHJEM

Artwork of the Month

The Artwork of the Month for January is a stone sculpture from Northern Thailand on extended loan from Dr. Sarah Bekker. It represents the Buddha sheltered by the Naga King, a favorite theme during the Lopburi period when Thai art was influenced by the Khmer of Cambodia. The sculpture dates from the late twelfth or early thirteenth century.

Its iconography relates to the story of how the Buddha, while meditating, was in danger of being disturbed by an oncoming storm. The Naga King, who rules the serpents and is a symbol of the life-giving waters of the earth, raised the Buddha above the flood waters by putting his many coils underneath the Buddha's body. With his multiple Naga heads (missing in this image), he also protected the Buddha from the rain. The hands folded in the lap are in the characteristic "mudra" position used throughout Asia to indicate meditation.

In February, the Artwork of the Month will be a very large charcoal



Meditating Buddha, 12th or early 13th century stone sculpture from Northern Thailand, on loan from Dr. Sarah Bekker

drawing (62×74 inches) entitled *Undetermined Line* by the French conceptual artist Bernar Venet. In the late 1960s and 1970s Venet worked on large photographic blow-ups of the table of contents of books, weather reports, the pages of pronouns from grammar books and scientific equations. Since then he has used the "look of science" in a more painterly manner often creating large canvases with such titles as *Tracing of Two Complementary Angles* and *Random Deployment of Points*. He has, in recent years, also created monumental reliefs and sculptures all reminiscent of huge but often twisted geometric notations which resolve themselves into dynamic gestures. *Undetermined Line* is a study for one of these sculptures and actually has its own three-dimensional quality, since Venet cut out the form and pasted it onto another sheet of paper before making his final additions in charcoal. (See p. 8.)

(continued from page 1)

by Menpes was purchased through the Hagstrom Memorial and the Elvehjem General Endowment Funds. Feininger's *Old Gables in Lüneburg* (Cyril W. Nave Endowment Fund purchase), dated 1924, is a fine example of the sort of late German Expressionist printmaking that evolved at the Bauhaus. The American-born Feininger studied and worked in Germany much of his life, teaching at the Bauhaus for a number of years before returning to America in the wake of Hitler's rise to power.

Two other recent acquisitions of note are a Hellenistic terracotta figurine of a standing woman (ca. third century, B.C.) and a small painting by Theodore Robinson. Although terracotta figurines of this type, produced for the most part



Nicolaes de Bruyn, *Christ Presented to the People*, ca. 1612, engraving with etching, Malcolm K. Whyte Endowment Fund purchase

in southern Italy in the area around Tanagra, are fairly common, the Elvehjem's example, acquired through a gift from Otilia Buerger

and the Elvehjem General Endowment Fund, is remarkable for its fine state of preservation and its polychromy.

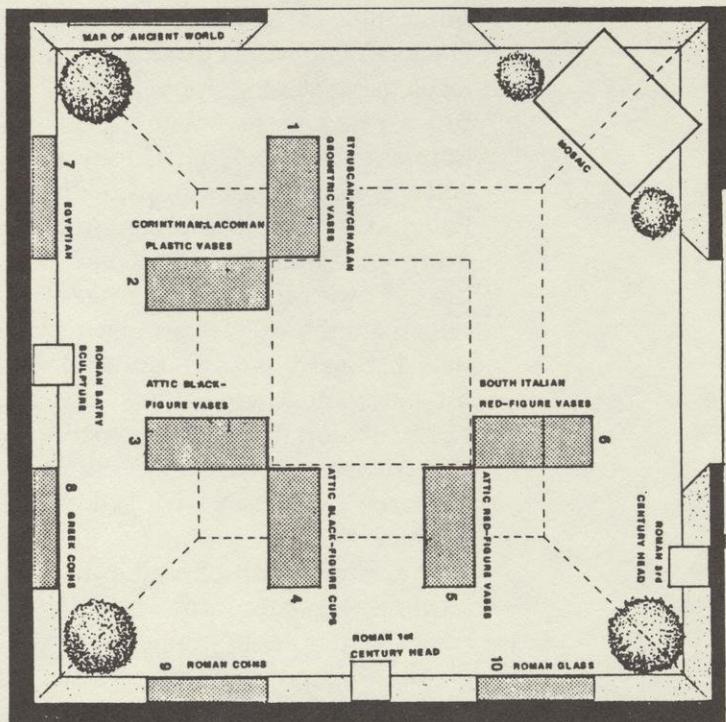
The Elvehjem

From the Director

Brittingham Gallery IV, in which the David Hockney exhibition opened on December 20, has a new look. As in the Whyte Gallery and the Oscar Mayer Gallery which were similarly remodeled last year, the carpets have been removed from the walls and replaced with a painted drywall surface. This renovation of Brittingham Gallery IV completes the plan first introduced in the May/June 1985 *Artscene* to remodel the three galleries designated for temporary exhibitions. Each of these galleries now has enhanced spot-lighting capabilities and a wall surface that can be painted or otherwise modified in accordance with the special needs of a given exhibition. The use of various wall colors to complement the art being displayed has been used successfully in the Mayer Gallery during the past year. From the deep blue of the exhibition of American Sheet Music, to the pale gray for the display of contemporary prints and photographs, to purple for the monumental classicism of Dianne Blell

and finally to the cool gray-green of the School of Paris prints from the turn of the century, these color changes are only the beginning of creative display techniques that can be used to attract visitors into a gallery and entice them to look more closely at the art. Brittingham Gallery IV now has similar capabilities. In the spring of 1985, changes were proposed not only for the temporary exhibitions galleries but also for the permanent installation of the Elvehjem's very important collection of ancient art. This collection was moved from the Mayer Gallery and temporarily installed in Brittingham Gallery VIII. I am now happy to report that, thanks to the generous assistance of architects from Marshall Erdman and Associates, an exciting plan for the permanent installation of the ancient collection has been devised.

Our plans for the gallery include the removal of the carpeted wall surfaces, the introduction of descriptive labels, maps, and explanatory graph-



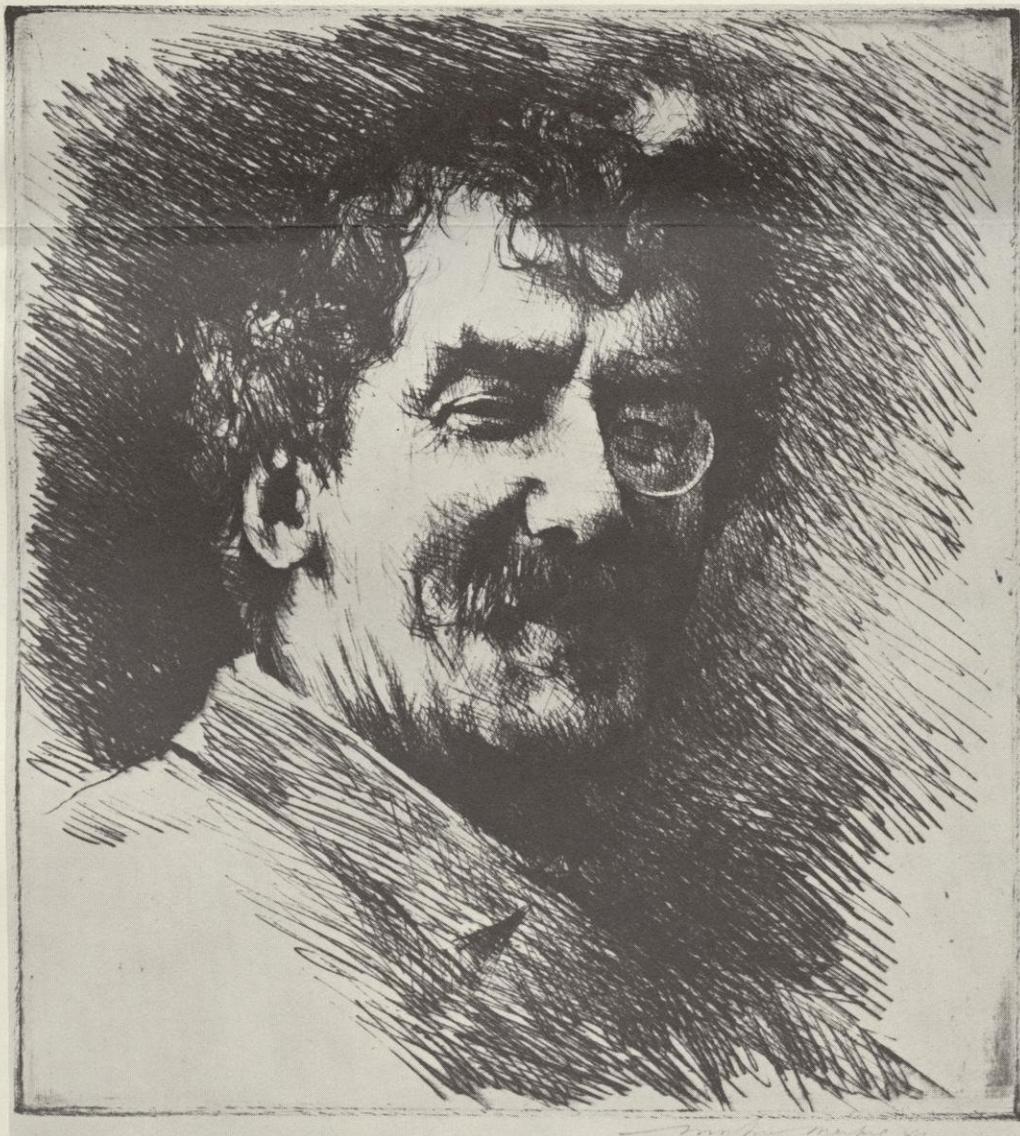
Architectural floor plan for the reinstallation of the Ancient Gallery

ics, and a printed gallery guide. A very significant part of the project, however, will be new high-security cases to display and protect the fragile Greek vases which are the heart of the collection. The selection and placement of the cases was a very complex matter. Since, if the vases are to be examined by students and researchers, they must be visible from all sides, wall-cases are inappropriate. On the other hand, it was thought important to preserve the openness of the gallery space itself and not create a warren of nooks and crannies. The cases which were finally selected will be made entirely of glass and, according to the architect's plan they will be arranged in such a way that they do not create a room within a room but rather open up the space assuring that the wall itself is the outer perimeter. The design of the room, although not meant to compete with the art or to separate itself from the other gallery spaces of the Museum, will subtly reinforce the impression that the ancient holdings are unique and different from the Elvehjem's other specialized collections.

In June of 1986, the Elvehjem applied to the Museum Program of the National Endowment for the Arts for partial funding for this project. Now we are waiting with baited breath for the results of that application.

Russell Panczenko

Mortimer Menpes, *Whistler with the White Lock*, ca. 1890, drypoint, Hagstrom Memorial and Elvehjem General Endowment Funds purchase

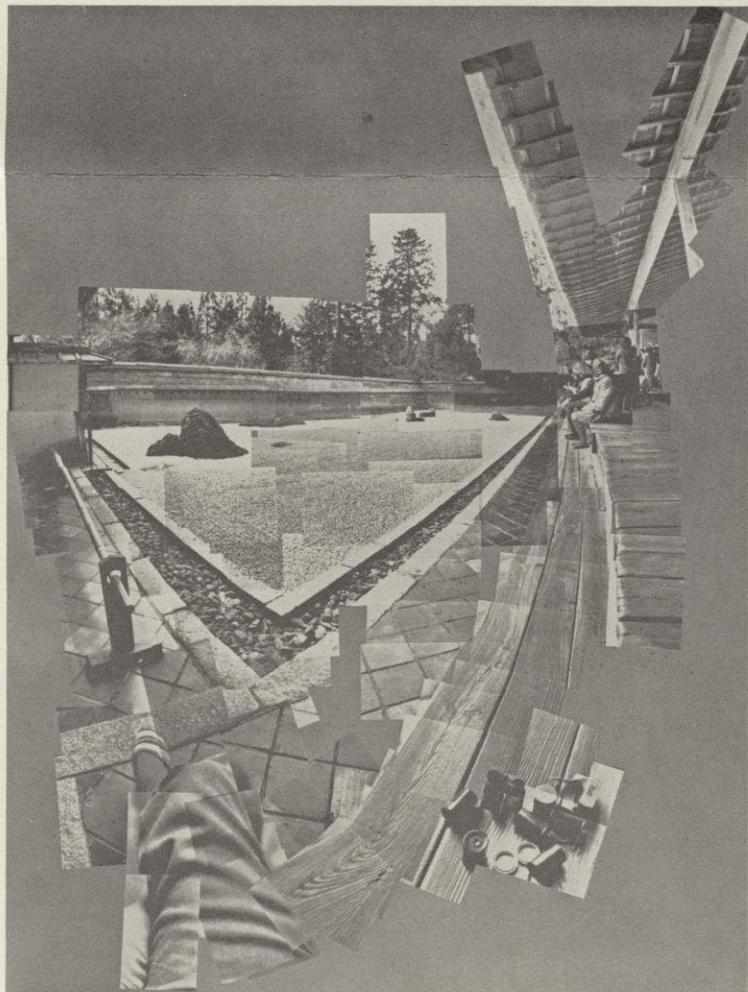


The Elvehjem

EXHIBITIONS

Since the early 1980s British artist David Hockney has produced collages using photographs. In the process he has created an especially intimate way of seeing. The early collages range from groups of eight Polaroid snapshots arranged in a grid, while the later works may involve over one hundred images which are themselves arranged in a distinctive pattern. Some of the latter are as large as 109" x 58". An exhibition of eighty photographs and collages will be on view through February 1, in *Photographs by David Hockney*.

In working with photography, Hockney has been concerned that the frozen moment implied by a single photograph limits true seeing. He has tried to eliminate the void in space which usually separates the photographer from the scene which is photographed. To address these concerns he has chosen a position from which the subject is to be regarded as seen, and then he moved around that space taking close-ups of details. Each detail had to be more or less coherently related to the position from which it is supposed to be seen and to relate as well to the adjoining photographs.



David Hockney, *Sitting in the Zen Garden at the Ryoanji Temple, Kyoto, February 1983*, photo-collage (from the exhibition *Photographs by David Hockney*)

In many of the collages, he has clearly indicated the vantage point by placing photographs of his feet at the bottom of the picture. Part of Hockney's intention was to imitate the way we see—the glance from detail to detail which is integrated into our vision of a scene. In fact, as he has pointed out, constructing the image of details allows him to load the picture with areas of obvious interest, where our eye might jump, while downplaying the interstices. It also gets away from the frozen moment, by calling to mind the time necessary to glance from one detail to the next when we actually look at a scene. This temporal reference is underscored as well by the fact that changes in light intensity over short periods of time show up from one frame to the next.

The collages succeed both as representations of the scene portrayed and as objects. The pattern of the overlaying, or tiling, of the individual photographs often adds visual interest, as does the outline of the collage itself. By laying them out on the floor, the large-scale compositions could be assembled through trial and error. In this, Hockney worked much like the painter adding or removing brush strokes in different areas of the canvas until the picture is completed.

By way of contrast, from January 10 through March 1, Elvehjem visitors also will be able to view some fifty excellent examples of traditional black-and-white photography by Milwaukee artist J. P. Atterberry in the exhibition, *Badlands Photographs by J. P. Atterberry*. Using a large format (8" x 10") camera, Atterberry makes the stark grandeur of the badlands of South Dakota and other areas of the American West the subject matter for these studies of light, shadow, composition, and texture. Since the photographs are contact-printed using the platinum process, they are rich in tonality and detail.

On the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the death of Russia's greatest poet, Alexander Pushkin (1799-1837), the University of Wisconsin-Madison is organizing a multi-faceted festival to take place

from February through April 1987 to explore Pushkin's influence on Russian culture and to examine Pushkin scholarship in the United States today. As part of the festival, the Elvehjem will present two exhibitions, *Russian Paintings from the Joseph E. Davies Collection*, and *Popov, Vilner and Utenkov: Contemporary Russian Printmakers*.

Russian Paintings from the Joseph E. Davies Collection, opening February 7 and running through March 8, is drawn entirely from the Elvehjem's Davies Collection. The selection includes twenty-five paintings, including original nineteenth-century works and copies of nineteenth-century paintings which were done in the Soviet Union in the 1930s. The intention is to include the paintings which best reflect Russian life and history as it might have been seen by Pushkin. Among them are such subjects as Vasilievich Lebedev's *The Fall of Novgorod*, 1891, Ivan Aivazovsky's *The Last Refuge*, ca. 1875, and Nikanova's copy of Repin's *Zaporozhetsy's Reply* (original 1886-91). There are also a number of romantic scenes which celebrate the Russian landscape.

Popov, Vilner and Utenkov: Contemporary Russian Printmakers presents the works of three artists whose prints deal with the Russian experience. Nikolai Popov, Viktor Vilner, and Demian Utenkov draw upon Russian history, literary references, and folk tales. Utenkov's meticulously executed etchings illustrate a wide range of novels illuminated by personal fantasies that are sometimes mysterious and hint at a darker aspect of the scene portrayed. Nikolai Popov, a talented illustrator, takes a much more light-hearted approach, as may be seen in his series, *Buffoons*. Viktor Vilner's work has two major themes: literary and historical aspects of Leningrad and the everyday activities in an industrial city. Among his most successful works are his illustrations for the 1983 publication of Gogol's *The Petersburg Tales*. *Popov, Vilner and Utenkov* will be on view from February 21 through April 5. It is organized by International Images, Ltd.

The Elvehjem

JANUARY

1 Thursday

The Museum is closed in observance of New Year's Day.

4 Sunday

Exhibition, *American Works on Paper: 100 Years of Art History*, closes.

Concert, Kenneth Kletzien, piano, Gallery V, 1:30 p.m.

A ten-minute talk on the Artwork of the Month by Docent Irmgard Carpenter, Paige Court, 3 p.m.

10 Saturday

Exhibition, *Badlands Photographs by J. P. Atterberry*, opens in the Whyte Gallery and runs through March 1.

11 Sunday

Concert, Cary Michaels, tenor, Gallery V, 1:30 p.m.

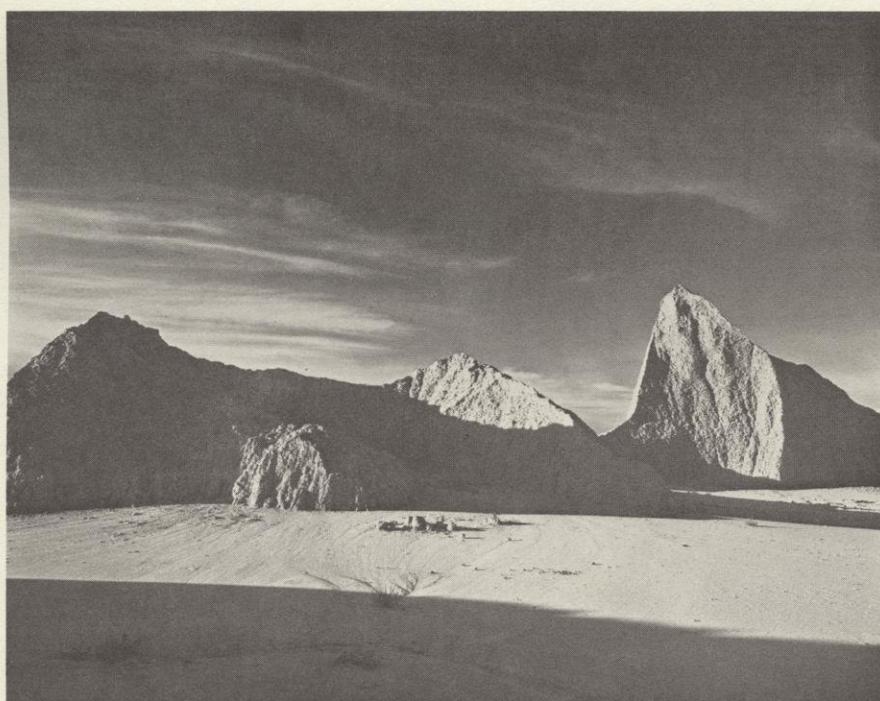
A ten-minute talk on the Artwork of the Month by Docent DeEtte Beilfuss, Paige Court, 3 p.m.

13 Tuesday

Elvehjem League Meeting, Room 166, 9 a.m., Mary Berthold will give a Gallery Talk on *Photographs by David Hockney*, 10 a.m.

18 Sunday

Concert, Beverly Hassell, piano, Gallery V, 1:30 p.m.



J. P. Atterberry, *Shadow Rock, South Dakota*, 1983, black and white photograph (from the exhibition *Badlands Photographs*)

FEBRUARY

1 Sunday

Exhibition, *Photographs by David Hockney*, closes.

Concert, Vocal Quartet: Marcia Roberts, Joanne and Kenneth Bozeman, and Douglas Morris, Gallery V, 1:30 p.m.

A ten-minute talk on the Artwork of the Month by Docent DeEtte Beilfuss, Paige Court, 3 p.m.

7 Saturday

Exhibition, *Russian Paintings from the Joseph E. Davies Collection*, opens in Gallery IV and runs through March 8.

8 Sunday

Concert, Pro Arte Quartet, Gallery V, 1:30 p.m.

A ten-minute talk on the Artwork of the Month by Docent DeEtte Beilfuss, Paige Court, 3 p.m.

10 Tuesday

Lecture, Sue Coe, Visiting Artist Program, Department of Art, Room 160, 7:30 p.m. (262-1662).

Elvehjem League Meeting, Room 166, 9 a.m., Susan Latton, Elvehjem Membership Drive, 10 a.m.

15 Sunday

Exhibition, *Tōkaidō: Nineteenth-Century Japanese Landscape Prints*, closes.

Concert, Gretchen D'Armand, soprano, and Michael Keller, piano, Gallery V, 1:30 p.m.

Lecture, *Russian Culture and the Joseph E. Davies Collection*, by Michael Petrovich, Professor of History, Room 140, 3:30 p.m. (263-4421).

A ten-minute talk on the Artwork of the Month by Docent Barbara Klokner, Paige Court, 3 p.m.

21 Saturday

Exhibition, *Popov, Vilner and Utenkov: Contemporary Russian Printmakers*, opens in the Mayer Gallery and runs through April 5.

22 Sunday

Concert, Wisconsin Brass Quintet, Gallery V, 1:30 p.m.

Lecture, *Themes of Old Russia in Contemporary Printmaking from the U.S.S.R.*, by Elena Kornetchuk, Director, International Images, Ltd., Mayer Gallery, 3:30 p.m. (263-4421). A reception follows in Paige Court.

A ten-minute talk on the Artwork of the Month by Docent Barbara Klokner, Paige Court, 3 p.m.

26 Thursday

Lecture, *The Art of Book Painting*, by Frank R. Horlbeck, Professor of Art History, for Liberal Studies, Room 150, 7:30 p.m. (262-1417).

On selected Thursdays Docents will lead drop-in tours on the collections and exhibitions. These tours will begin at 11 a.m. in Paige Court and will be given by Docents Jane Pizer (Jan. 8), Susan Stanek (Jan. 15), Diane Pett (Jan. 22), Jean McKenzie (Jan. 29), and Marion Stemmler (Feb. 5).

Platunov, *Pushkin*, oil on canvas, Gift of Joseph E. Davies



The Elvehjem

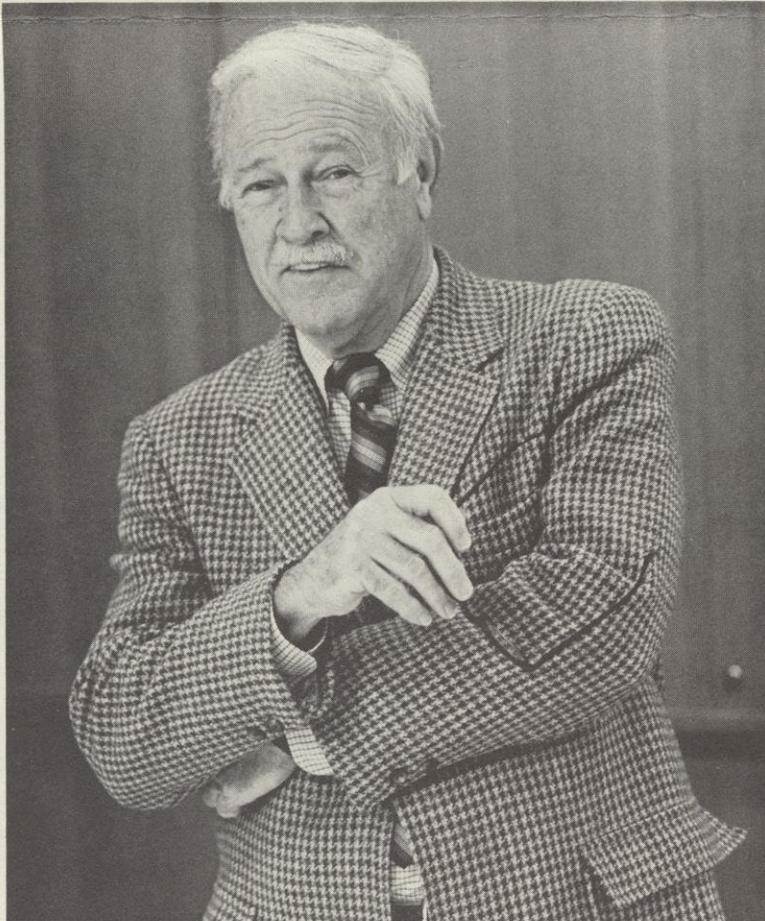
EDUCATION

Lectures

"Photography into Art," a lecture by Van Deren Coke, Director of the Department of Photography, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, initiates the spring lecture series at the Museum. Speaking on the topic of photography, Van Deren Coke will discuss the work of David Hockney and other modern artists who have used that medium as a tool of expression. The lecture will be given on Wednesday, January 28 at 8 p.m. in Room 160. A reception follows in Paige Court.

Mr. Coke, a well-known photo-historian, art historian, photographer, and curator, is the author of the landmark study *The Painter and the Photograph: From Delacroix to Warhol*. In that book he links photographic and art historical criticism. As professor of Art History and Creative Photography at the University of New Mexico from 1962-79, he was mentor to a generation of photographers. While director of the University Art Museum there, and most recently as head of photography at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, he has organized significant exhibitions refocusing the attitudes toward photography of curators, artists, and the public.

Van Deren Coke



Viktor Vilner, *The Overcoat and the Iron*, lithograph (from the exhibition *Popov, Vilner and Utenkov: Contemporary Russian Printmakers*)

"Photography into Art" will be offered by the Elvehjem with the support of the University Lectures Committee. It is co-sponsored by the Departments of Art and Art History.

The exhibitions *Russian Paintings from the Joseph E. Davies Collection* and *Popov, Vilner and Utenkov: Contemporary Russian Printmakers* will be the subjects of two other guest lecturers. Michael Petrovich, UW-Madison Professor of History, will discuss the significance of the Elvehjem's Russian paintings in "Russian Culture and the Joseph E. Davies Collection," a slide lecture given on Sunday, February 15 at 3:30 p.m. in Room 140.

Elena Kornetchuk, Gallery Director of International Images, Ltd. of Sewickley, Pennsylvania, will come to Madison to present a gallery talk on the prints in the exhibition of contemporary Russian printmakers.

Her lecture "Themes of Old Russia in Contemporary Printmaking in

the U.S.S.R." will be given on Sunday, February 22 at 3:30 p.m. in the Mayer Gallery. A reception follows in Paige Court.

Film on David Hockney

"David Hockney's Diaries," a film produced in 1973, shows how important Hockney's snapshot albums were to the entire body of the work he produced in the late 1960s and early 1970s. More than mere chronicles of friendships and travels, the albums provide the compositional elements on which his paintings and graphic works are based. Produced during the same period as many of the photographs exhibited in *Photographs by David Hockney*, the film gives viewers a sense of the artist's evolution. It lasts 28 minutes and will be shown on Sunday, January 18 at 3:30 p.m. in Room 140.

The Elvehjem

Staff Notes

The security officers at the Elvehjem are always in evidence, but their presence is all too often taken for granted. In addition to providing extraordinary security for the Museum's collections, they make sure all rules are observed, and they do it with a great deal of grace. The constant stream of questions from the general public, the help they must give the disabled and the required alertness makes theirs a stressful task. The Museum is fortunate to have a dedicated group of officers assigned to it by the Department of Police and Security.

Carol DePagter is the present Security Officer-Lead. She joined the Department in 1977 and her first assignment was the University Hospital. In March 1984, she transferred to the east campus where she was promoted to Security Officer-Lead in October 1985. Hers was the first such promotion for a woman in the security division. Originally from Madison, Carol now lives in Sun Prairie with her husband and two children. In college she majored in Criminal Justice with an administration emphasis. Carol finds the Elvehjem "a challenging and excit-



Carol DePagter, Talanta Moss and Michael Prissel

ing experience—a place where there is always something new to see and learn."

Talanta Moss, Security Officer II, joined Police and Security in May 1985. She is married and lives in Madison. Talanta, who is also a part-time member of the Wisconsin Army National Guard, finds work at the Elvehjem an interesting experience and particularly enjoys the "one-to-one contact with the variety of people who come to the Museum."

Michael Prissel joined Police and Security in 1980 and started to work at the Elvehjem this past September.

His varied career includes working on his grandfather's dairy farm, serving in the U.S. Army (he was stationed in Germany for sixteen months), and being first a salesman and then a construction worker. Michael, who graduated from UW-Oshkosh in 1979 with a B.S. in History is married and lives in Madison.

Both Talanta Moss and Michael Prissel are welcome additions to the security force at the Elvehjem and the staff is especially grateful to Carol DePagter for her cheerful and competent leadership.

Staff Notes

In November, Curator Carlton Overland travelled to Chicago to check the progress on the Defendante Ferrari painting *Madonna and Child with Saints*, which is undergoing extensive conservation treatment at the Chicago Conservation Center. As reported earlier in the May/June issue of *Artscene*, this project in-

volves removing the wooden panel support and transferring the painting onto a new, stable honeycomb backing. At the time of his visit to the laboratory, most of the panel had been removed by a process of shaving and picking off the wood from behind. The project is going along very smoothly and on schedule.

Curator Carlton Overland with Conservator Barry Bauman



Join the Elvehjem

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Membership Categories

Please charge to my:

Associate \$250 Visa Mastercard
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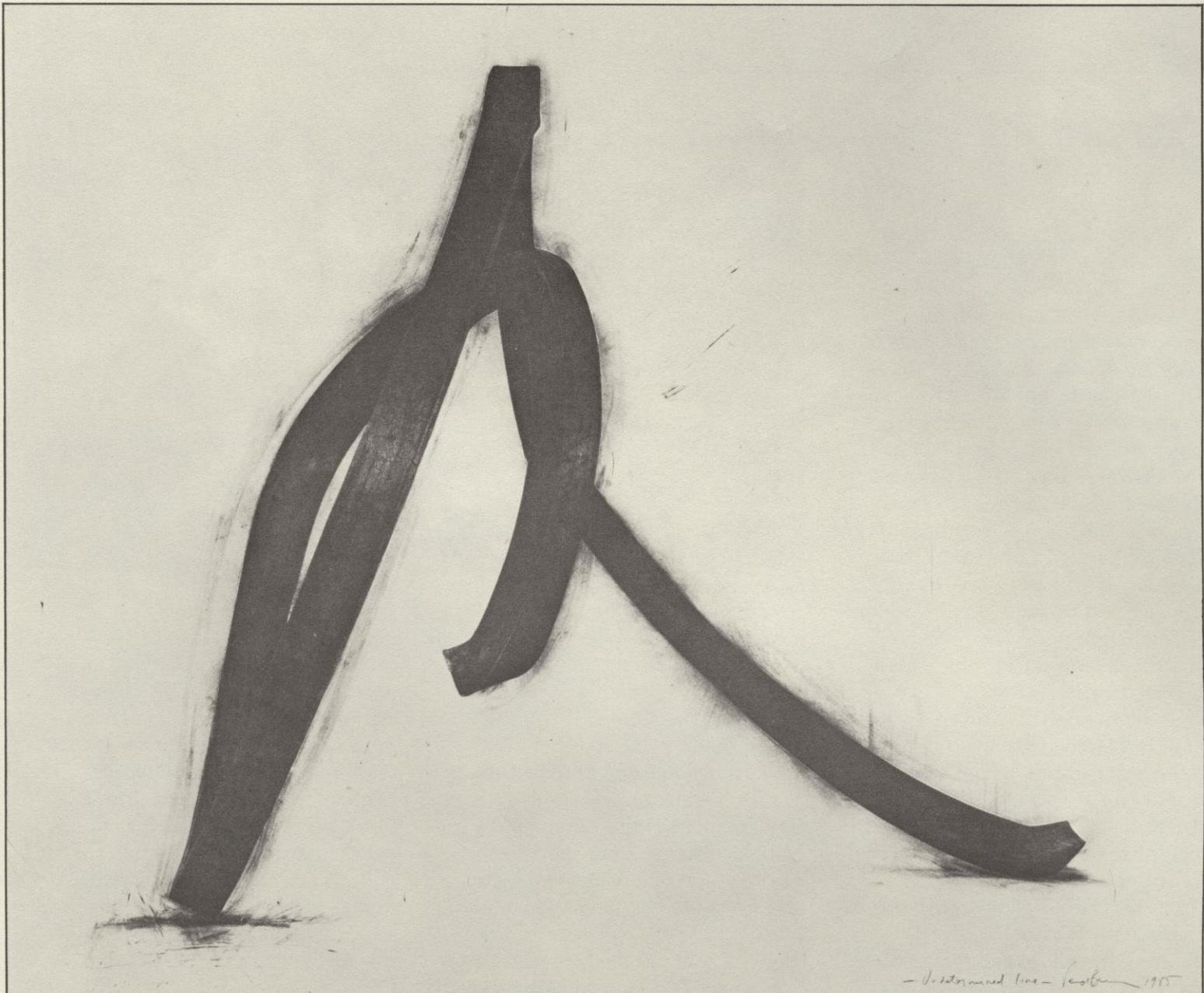
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Signature _____

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____
(Made payable to the Elvehjem Museum of Art.)

Return this form to:
Elvehjem Museum of Art
Membership Program
800 University Avenue
Madison, WI 53706
(608)263-2495

The Elvehjem



Bernar Venet, *Undetermined Line*, 1985, charcoal on paper, Art Collections Fund purchase (Artwork of the Month for February)

Elvehjem Museum of Art
800 University Avenue
Madison, Wisconsin 53706



Nonprofit
Organization
PAID
Permit No. 658

Gallery Hours:
Monday-Saturday 9 a.m.-4:45 p.m.
Sunday 11 a.m.-4:45 p.m.

Museum Shop Hours:
Monday-Saturday 9 a.m.-4:45 p.m.
Sunday 11 a.m.-4:45 p.m.

Kohler Art Library Hours:
Monday-Thursday 8 a.m.-9:45 p.m.
Friday 8 a.m.-4:45 p.m.
Saturday-Sunday 1-4:45 p.m.

For library hours during UW
holiday periods call (608) 263-2258

Information: (608) 263-2246

Admission is free

artscene
January/February 1987

Important Dated Information!