

## Artscene. Vol. 8, No. 2 April/May 1992

Elvehjem Museum of Art

Madison, Wisconsin: Elvehjem Museum of Art, University of  
Wisconsin-Madison, April/May 1992

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# The Elvehjem Museum of Art *artscene*

University of Wisconsin–Madison  
Volume 8, Number 2  
April/May 1992

## 1991 Gifts Remarkable for Quality

From fiscal years 1980 to 1986, works of art donated to the Elvehjem averaged 800 items per year. However, in fiscal years 1987 to 1990, as a result of the revisions made in the tax code in 1986, donations of works of art dropped to approximately fifty items a year. This dramatic reduction in donations was not confined to the Elvehjem but affected museums around the country. Important works of art, elements of the American heritage, were being sold to private collections, many of them abroad, rather than finding their way into our public institutions where everyone would have ready access to them. In 1990, Congress suspended the earlier ruling for one year and created what has been called in museum parlance "the window of opportunity." During this period (later extended through June, 1992) gifts of tangible property to museums, such as art and collectibles, are fully deductible. The budget reconciliation package that passed Congress removes these gifts as a preference item from the alternative minimum tax. In fact, this change in the tax code has stimulated a renewal of giving to the museum: during fiscal year 1991, the Elvehjem received 191 donations of individual works of art. Although this is still not at the levels preceding 1987, it is a positive trend which we hope will continue. However, people should understand that even after June, it is possible to donate works of art and be able to deduct the full value. For more information about this issue please call Director Russell Panczenko, (608) 263-2842, or Russell Howes at the UW-Foundation, (608) 263-0371.

The year 1991 was most remarkable for the high quality of gifts received in all areas of the collections. Signal works were added to our holdings in old-master and modern paintings, American drawings and watercolors, Asian sculpture, and English porcelains.

The Elvehjem has been presented with a great number of outstanding prints in the last year. The best known of these is by Henri Matisse: his *Grande Odalisque* given by Rosemary Johnson. This magnificent print, one of the earliest and largest lithographs the artist created, complements wonderfully the Elvehjem's other Matisse prints which are of later dates.

Important lithographs by American regionalists came to the Elvehjem from two generous donations. Margaret and Paul Bender donated Thomas Hart Benton's charming *Goin' Home*, a print based on a painting Benton had done eight years earlier. It is modeled on a family Benton happened upon when he was driving in North Carolina. He writes that he and a friend followed the family in a car until he completed the sketch.

A group of lithographs by John Steuart Curry was given by Dr. Daniel Schuster in memory of his wife Ellen. Like Benton, Curry looked to American life for the inspiration for his lithographs, taking the life of his times in *Elephants* a work from his circus series, and *Holy Rollers*, which depicts a revival meeting. Curry also looked to American nature for meaningful, stirring subject matter, as in *Coyotes Stealing Pig* and *Hounds and Coyote*. The arrival of all of these prints has special meaning to the University of Wisconsin because Curry lived here as artist-in-residence from 1936 until his death in 1946.

Contemporary American lithographs were also represented in gifts of 1991. One is Raphael Soyer's color lithograph *Mother and*



Henri Matisse (French, 1869–1954), *Grande Odalisque*, 1925. Lithograph, gift of Rosemary Johnson, 1991.40

*Child*. Soyer's fifty-year presence in American art not only carried on the tradition of printmaking of artists like Benton and Curry, but also continued their interest in social themes. This print, for example, was created to benefit the Spanish Refugee Committee, New York. This work and a drawing by Carl Rose and an etching by Peter Milton were donated to the Elvehjem by Stuart Applebaum.

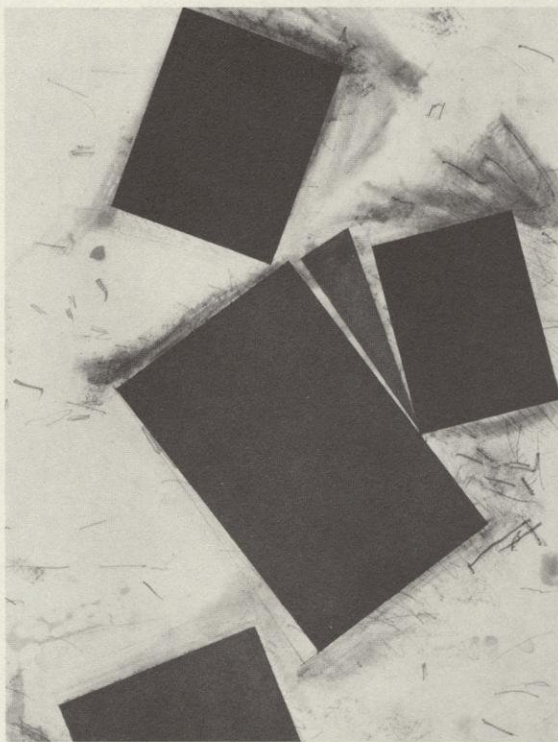
Two color lithographs by Gene Davis, *Carousel* and *Green Giant* were part of a group of seventeen works on paper given by Richard Brock. Stuart Davis's rigorous exploration of the nuances of color are quite unlike the tenderness of Soyer, and as such his work represents some of the basic changes in art in the last four decades.

Contemporary artist Joel Shapiro continues the exploration of abstract color in works, like the subtly colored and exquisitely crafted color aquatint given by Joe Wilfer, himself a master printer. Mr. Wilfer also presented the museum with two color woodcut prints by Richard Bosman and a monumental work by Julian Schnaubel.

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Joel Shapiro (American, b. 1941), *Untitled*, 1990, color aquatint, gift of Joe Wilfer, 1991.62

In addition to these Western prints, gifts also bolstered the Elvehjem's important collection of Japanese prints. Dr. David Goe Welton and Ruth Welton Ellison presented the Elvehjem with two prints by Kiyoshi Saito in memory of their sister, Hariette Welton, who came to know the artist and his work in Japan.

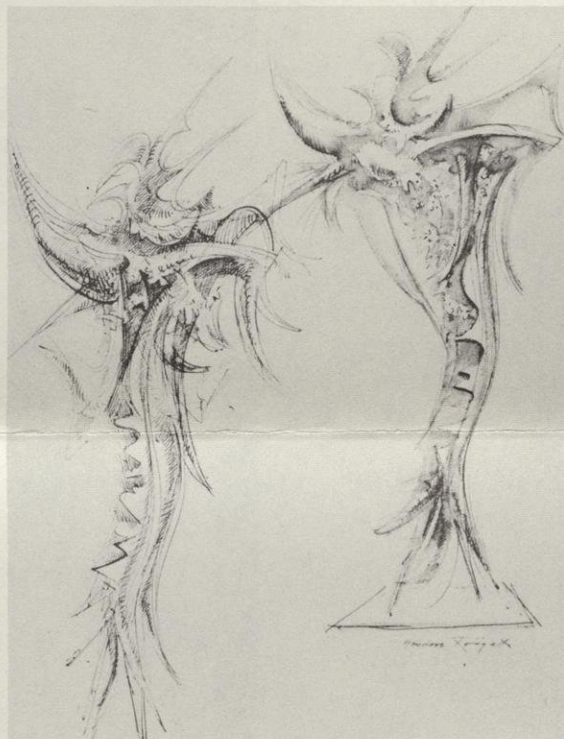
Masami Teraoka, a contemporary Japanese-born artist, who draws upon the style of nineteenth century woodblock print-making, created the print *31 Flavors Invading Japan: Chocolate Chip*. Donated by James Jensen, this playful print consciously addresses the question of the Americanization of Japan.

More traditional Japanese prints were donated to the Elvehjem by Barbara Mackey Kaerwer. Several of these nineteenth century prints are examples of painting books, reproduced in woodcut, to give students of painting models upon which to base their own compositions. Accompanying these Japanese prints were several by such twentieth-century artists as Gabor Preterdi and Johnny Friedlaender, as well as a drawing by Theodore Roszak.

An unusual work on paper was presented to the Elvehjem by Newman and Virginia Halvorson. The watercolor can only be viewed when the pages of the book are correctly fanned, because it is painted on a small strip of the outside edge of each page. This unusual technique, called "fore-edge painting," was popular in Britain in the nineteenth century, and although we do not know the artist of this work, it seems typical of the English style. This is the first example of fore-edge painting in the museum's collection.

Two gifts made significant contributions to the Elvehjem's photography collection in 1991. Kristaps J. Keggi donated a portfolio of fifteen photographs by Harold Feinstein, whose photo-journalistic images chronicle forty years of life in New York City. Dr. Keggi has been a long-time supporter of the Elvehjem's photography collection, having contributed a substantial portion of that collection.

Another name well known for generosity to the Elvehjem is Van Vleck, and 1991 saw a new generation of the Van Vleck family donating to the museum. David Van Vleck gave two photographs by Aaron Siskind, one of the great, influential figures in American art photography. The two Siskind photographs, *New York*, 78, and *Louise*, 25, are fine examples of the artist's ability to use the camera to abstract formally elegant, often mysterious patterns from the world.



Theodore Roszak (American, b. Poland, 1907–1981), *Firebird Variation*, 1949, ink and wash drawing, gift of Barbara Mackey Kaerwer, 1991.86

Not all additions to the Elvehjem's print collection come directly from donors; people often set up endowments which allow the museum to purchase works of art. One such endowment set up by John Hasbrouck Van Vleck allowed the purchase of a set of six prints by Hiroshi Yoshida in 1991. These prints depict sailing vessels at six different times of day, from just before sunrise to after sunset, and may reflect the artist's interest in the ideas of impressionism as well as his consummate skill in printing with wood blocks.

Another endowment at the Elvehjem, the James Watrous fund, was used to purchase a number of American color woodcuts in 1991, including Seong Moy's *Classical Horse and Rider*. The works pur-

chased with this fund, along with others from the Elvehjem's collection and from the collections of other institutions will appear in an exhibition scheduled for 1993, *Bounty from the Block: American Color Woodcuts 1890–1990*.



Jacob de Backer (Flemish, 1560–1590/91), *The Last Judgment*, oil on wood panel, 17 3/4 x 17 7/8 in., gift of Lorin A. Uffenbeck, 1991.641

Gifts of paintings include a rare sixteenth-century panel from a larger depiction of *The Last Judgment* by the Flemish artist Jacob de Baker, a gift of Professor Lorin A. Uffenbeck. An important nineteenth-century Scandinavian painting, Adelsteen Normann's light-filled canvas *Hardanger Fjord*, was donated by Professor and Mrs. R. Keith Chapman. Dr. and Mrs. Chapman's gift included substantial funds for the conservation of this striking painting as well, to permit an early installation of the work. We are especially grateful to the Chapmans for helping with this little-noticed but critical Elvehjem need. We received also from the nineteenth century a fine example of French academic portraiture, heretofore unrepresented in the collection, with Pierre Desiré Guillemet's 1877 *Portrait of a Child*, a gift of Louis G. and Kathleen H. Seaton.

In the area of American art, two banner works have been added to the growing collection. The first of these is Frank Benson's important autobiographical painting, *The Benson Family at Wooster Farm, North Haven, Maine*, painted at his family home, probably sometime in the 1890s. It is a supreme example of American impressionism, and one of the most beautiful works in Benson's large body of Maine landscape and figure paintings. The picture was a gift of Katherine T. Bradley, a descendent of the artist. Mrs. Bradley also donated to the print collection a group of Benson's well known wild fowl etchings. A second important gift to our American paintings collection is Homer

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Boss's *Portrait of Mary*, from the 1920s, a complement to our other examples of this realist painter's work. *Portrait of Mary* is the most recent gift of the Dr. and Mrs. Jon Udell, who have done so much to reconstruct the painting career of Homer Boss, Mrs. Udell's great-uncle.



Homer Boss (American, 1882–1956), *Portrait of Mary*, ca. 1925, oil on canvas, 36 1/8 x 30 1/8 in., gift of Dr. and Mrs. Jon Udell, 1991.133

Important additions to our holdings in American drawings and watercolors complement our additions in American paintings. A drawing by historical genre painter Edward Lamson Henry was received from William Stiefel, who also donated a small panel painting by Ralph Blakelock. From the Baker/Pisano collection, we once again received two important American watercolors: a marine study by nineteenth-century painter Frank Knox Morton Rehn, *The Golden Bar at Evening*, and a light-filled watercolor sketch by twentieth-century landscape painter John Heliker. Both were gifts of alumnus Frederick Baker.

The importance of drawing for the development of works in three dimensions is little appreciated or understood in the history of art, primarily because so few documentary examples of sculptors' drawings survive. The Elvehjem's collection of drawings has now been greatly enhanced with the addition of twelve pen and pencil studies by expressionist sculptor Seymour Lipton. The drawings, gifts of the artist's sons Alan and Michael Lipton, span the whole of the sculptor's career, from the 1950s through the 1980s, and they relate to major sculptures.

In contemporary paintings, three recent gifts stand out. Ora Roehl, a friend of the

Elvehjem since its founding, this year donated two canvases by French painter Gaston Sebire, who works in a modern impressionist style. Michael and Stephanie Smerling donated what is the museum's first example of Chicago imagist-school painting, Linda Lee's startling *Fraternity: Henry T. Moore, 54, is charged in Friday's slaying of Judge Henry Gentile*, painted in 1984. Abstract expressionist painting as it developed on the West Coast was likewise unrepresented in the collection until Mr. and Mrs. Franklin Ferratta made their gift this year of John Saccaro's 1952 canvas, *Geranium Deep*.

The university's active South Asian and Southeast Asian Studies programs draw attention to the museum's holdings of Indian, Thai, and Cambodian sculpture, and the important teaching function of that collection continues to attract significant gifts. The past year saw three important additions. Mr. and Mrs. William F. Spengler, long-time supporters of the museum, gave nine examples of Indian sculpture, primarily Gandharan works. The Woodmansee family donated an especially large group of South and Southeast Asian objects, with sixteen examples of Indian, Tibetan, Thai, and Cambodian bronze and stone sculpture coming as the gift of Mr. and Mrs.



Indian, Gandharan period, 1st–2nd century, Buddha head and torso, schist, height 10 in., gift of Mr. and Mrs. William F. Spengler, 1991.139



South Indian, possibly 11th century A.D., *Dancing Krishna*, bronze, height 13 1/2 in., gift of Mr. and Mrs. Webster Woodmansee, 1991.532

Webster Woodmansee, while an Indian stone torso fragment was given by their son, John R. Woodmansee.

Visitors to the Elvehjem may be surprised to learn that the museum now holds more than one thousand examples of English and Continental porcelains. The collection has grown to such size and importance that exhibition and publication of this valuable resource is one of our highest collection priorities. This year we added a particularly significant gift: a group of one-hundred-twenty Wedgwood pieces, from the earliest eighteenth century neo-classical blackware and the well-known blue-and-white Jasper ware, to the colorful patterns and glazes of the late nineteenth century. The collection was donated by Otto V. Pawlisch, M.D., who built this representative group over more than fifty years.

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## EXHIBITIONS

### April Artwork of the Month

Throughout April we feature the collection's sole example of American genre painting, Thomas Satterwhite Noble's, *80th Birthday, or Grandfather's Story*, painted in 1895. Its many narrative elements make it a fascinating historical document which can make vivid to modern viewers some elusive cultural values held by late nineteenth century Americans.

Noble, a versatile painter whose subjects included portraits, landscapes, and marine views, was nevertheless foremost a history painter. Like other artists of his age, he drew didactic themes from history or literature, which both reinforced and reflected Victorian taste for moralizing in the fine and popular arts. A follower of French history painter Thomas Couture and a man greatly affected by the momentous political and social changes of his day, Noble combined his belief in the socializing role of art with a command of the expressive conventions of narrative painting. He understood that descriptive details make good stories and that through these details his pictorial themes are rendered both accessible and enduring.

In *80th Birthday or Grandfather's Story*, we find specific references which elevate Noble's subject from a simple, anecdotal portrayal of youth and old age to a more profound statement about American history and character, about the legacy of one generation of Americans to another. At the center of the composition, the peg-legged grandfather points to a carefully rendered ship's model of a war ship as if recalling to his granddaughter stories of his naval service, probably during the Civil War, and the personal sacrifice he made for his country. Behind them hangs the large map of the United States, a visual metaphor for the resolution of that great conflict and the achievement of those who fought in it. Although Noble, a Kentuckian, himself fought for the Confederacy, he eventually rejected a political and social enterprise founded upon the keeping of slaves. Upon repatriation in 1865, Noble painted a series deploring the Southern cause of slavery, and these paintings were a sensational popular and critical success for the artist through the 1870s. Though he thereafter struggled to find themes equally satisfying to critics and a broad public, and though he never again created works so emotionally charged, he did not abandon his use of



Thomas Satterwhite Noble (American, 1835–1907), *80th Birthday, or Grandfather's Story*, 1895, oil on canvas, 47 x 56 1/8 in., gift of Dr. and Mrs. Mark Noble Mueller, 1972.59

the historical genre painting for didactic means, as this late example attests. By 1895, when *80th Birthday* was painted, Noble's work had lost much of its moral indignation and political edge, and references to the social and political questions raised by the Civil War are oblique or general if extant at all in other examples of his late work. But this painting suggests the degree to which Noble struggled to come to terms with that defining moment in American history and in his own life, and it suggests as well the depth of his understanding of it.

#### Old-Master Prints from the Spencer Albums Through May 17

A current exhibition in the Mayer Gallery displays the most rare and beautiful prints from nine grand-folio volumes assembled in the early 1700s for a member of the Spencer-Churchill family in England. The

original albums, containing 3,400 mostly Italian, French, and Netherlandish prints, were passed down through the Spencer family until sold by the present earl in the early 1980s. They were acquired by the Fogg Art Museum at Harvard University in 1987.

On display is one complete album to show the original presentation of the prints together with selected prints from the other albums. Curator Marjorie Cohn, Carl A. Weyerhaeuser Curator of Prints at the Fogg, selected the individual prints on the basis of beauty, rarity, and as representatives of salient aspects of the albums. The exhibition brings together a marvelous selection of prints from the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, including traditional Christian subjects, scenes from classical sources, and domestic scenes. The range of works in the collection illustrates the notion of the album as a kind of mirror of the world of artistic images, as a library is a miniature world of ideas.



# CALENDAR

## APRIL

### 2 Thursday

Scholars of Italian literature Silvano Garofalo and Albert Rossi narrate “Vasari: *In Situ*,” a program written by docents Mary Harshaw and Henryka Schutta (40 minutes), 12:20 p.m., Renaissance Gallery II

### 2 Thursday

Lecture, “New Approaches to Pattern: Emerging Trends in Contemporary Textiles,” by Milton Sunday, curator of textiles at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum, New York, 5:30 p.m., room 140. Sponsored by the Helen Allen Textile Collection

### 3 Friday

Film series: The German Avant-garde Film of the 1920s, with short films by Walter Ruttmann, 7:30 p.m., room 160

### 5 Sunday

Docent Henryka Schutta gives the temporary exhibitions tour (40 minutes), 1:30 p.m., Paige Court

### 5 Sunday

Sunday Afternoon Live: The Elvehjem Concert Series. Whitewater Brass Quintet, soprano, 2:30 p.m., Gallery III

### 7 Tuesday

Docent Nancy Webster gives the Artwork of the Month talk (ten minutes), 12:20 p.m., Paige Court

### 8 Wednesday

Lecture by visiting artist Gregory Gillespie, 5:30 p.m., room 160. Sponsored by the Department of Art

### 9 Thursday

Docent Ann Sauthoff gives the collections overview tour (40 minutes), 12:20 p.m., Paige Court

### 9 Thursday

Lecture on his prints by visiting artist at Tandem Press, Robert Cottingham, 5:30 p.m., room 140

### 10 Friday

Lecture, “New Issues in Contemporary Art,” by Amada Cruz, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden. A Smithsonian Institution Associates program which requires a \$5.00 ticket sold at door, 7:30 p.m., room 140. For more information call 263-2246

### 10 Friday

Film series: The German Avant-garde Film of the 1920s, with short films by Walter Ruttmann and Guido Seeber, 7:30 p.m., room 160

### 12 Sunday

A docent gives the temporary exhibitions tour (40 minutes), 1:30 p.m., Paige Court

### 12 Sunday

Sunday Afternoon Live: The Elvehjem Concert Series. Wingra Woodwind Quintet, 2:30 p.m., Gallery III

### 12 Sunday

Last day to view *The Integrative Art of Modern Thailand*, Galleries VII, VIII

### 14 Tuesday

Docent Cathy Bertucci gives the Artwork of the Month talk (ten minutes), 12:20 p.m., Paige Court

### 16 Thursday

Docents Bea Lindberg and Sybil Robinson present a tour and poetry reading, “Poetry in Art,” (40 minutes), 12:20 p.m., Paige Court

### 19 Sunday

A docent gives the temporary exhibitions tour (40 minutes), 1:30 p.m., Paige Court

### 19 Sunday

No Sunday afternoon concert

### 21 Tuesday

Docent Marjorie Nestingen gives the Artwork of the Month talk (ten minutes), 12:20 p.m., Paige Court

### 22 Wednesday

Lecture by Professor W.J.H. Willems, “The Gallo-Roman Countryside: Romans and Natives in Low Countries and Germany,” 4 p.m., room 130. Sponsored by the Archaeological Institute of America-Madison Society

### 23 Thursday

Docent Karen Zilavy gives the collections overview tour (40 minutes), 12:20 p.m., Paige Court

### 23 Thursday

Department of Art visiting artist/critic program, Kate Erickson and Mel Ziegler, 4:40 p.m., room 130

### 26 Sunday

A docent gives the temporary exhibitions tour (40 minutes), 1:30 p.m., Paige Court

### 26 Sunday

Sunday Afternoon Live: The Elvehjem Concert Series. Les Favorites, 2:30 p.m., Gallery III

### 28 Tuesday

Docent Henryka Schutta gives the Artwork of the Month talk (ten minutes), 12:20 p.m., Paige Court

### 30 Thursday

Docent Sylvia Hultkrans gives the collections overview tour (40 minutes), 12:20 p.m., Paige Court

## MAY

### 1 Friday

Downtown Gallery Night. The Elvehjem and other museums and galleries near State Street will be open from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m.

### 3 Sunday

A docent gives the temporary exhibitions tour (40 minutes), 1:30 p.m., Paige Court

### 3 Sunday

Sunday Afternoon Live: The Elvehjem Concert Series. Pro Arte String Quartet, 2:30 p.m., Gallery III

### 5 Tuesday

A docent gives the Artwork of the Month talk (ten minutes), 12:20 p.m., Paige Court

### 6 Wednesday

Lecture, “Rediscovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls,” by Philip Davies, senior lecturer, Department of Biblical Studies, University of Sheffield, 7:30 p.m., room 140. Sponsored by the Department of Hebrew and Semitic Studies

### 7 Thursday

Docents Bea Lindberg and Sybil Robinson present a tour and poetry reading, “Poetry in Art,” (40 minutes), 12:20 p.m., Paige Court

### 10 Sunday

A docent gives the temporary exhibitions tour (40 minutes), 1:30 p.m., Paige Court

### 10 Sunday

Sunday Afternoon Live: The Elvehjem Concert Series. Vartan Manoogian, violin; Uri Vardi, cello, 2:30 p.m., Gallery III

### 12 Tuesday

Docent Cathy Bertucci gives the Artwork of the Month talk (ten minutes), 12:20 p.m., Paige Court

### 14 Thursday

A docent gives the collections overview tour (40 minutes), 12:20 p.m., Paige Court

### 16 Saturday

Trip to Chicago International Art Exposition. Coach departs Nakoma Plaza at 8:30 a.m. and returns there at 8:00 p.m. Preregistration is required. For more information call 263-2495

### 17 Sunday

A docent gives the temporary exhibitions tour (40 minutes), 1:30 p.m., Paige Court

### 17 Sunday

No concert; Sunday Afternoon Live concerts resume in September

### 17 Sunday

Last day to view *A Noble Collection: Old-Master Prints from the Spencer Albums*, Mayer Gallery

### 19 Tuesday

A docent gives the Artwork of the Month talk (ten minutes), 12:20 p.m., Paige Court

### 21 Thursday

A docent gives the collections overview tour (40 minutes), 12:20 p.m., Paige Court

### 24 Sunday

Docent Peg Stiles gives the temporary exhibitions tour (40 minutes), 1:30 p.m., Paige Court

### 26 Tuesday

A docent gives the Artwork of the Month talk (ten minutes), 12:20 p.m., Paige Court

### 28 Thursday

A docent gives the collections overview tour (40 minutes), 12:20 p.m., Paige Court

### 31 Sunday

A docent gives the temporary exhibitions tour (40 minutes), 1:30 p.m., Paige Court

## JUNE

### 13 Saturday

*Presswork: The Art of Women Printmakers* opens and is on view until August 16, 1992

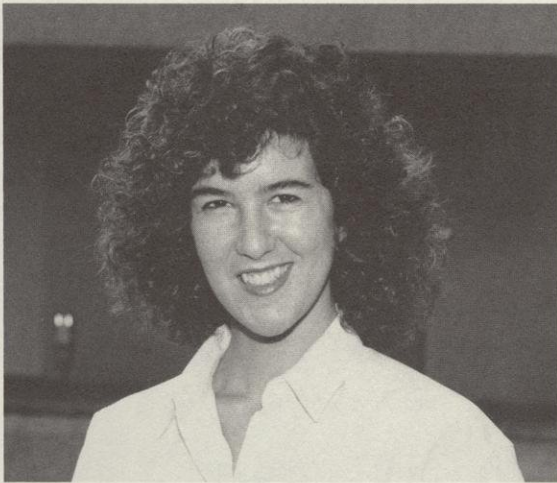


## Smithsonian National Associates Feature Contemporary Art at the Elvehjem

The Smithsonian National Associates are planning four days of events at Madison museums and the University of Wisconsin. From April 8–12 the Smithsonian's distinguished staff—scholars, educators, and enthusiasts—will share their work on a dazzling range of the Institution's research and activities.

As part of this program the Elvehjem will host a lecture on "New Issues in Contemporary Art," by Amada Cruz, assistant curator of painting and sculpture at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden. In a slide lecture, Amada Cruz will highlight contemporary artists—including Dennis Adams, Mike Kelley, and Jac Leirner—whose works fall outside the traditional realms of painting and sculpture. She will emphasize installation works by younger artists and will explore current issues such as the relationship of sculpture to its site and the influence of popular culture on recent art.

The lecture will be Friday, April 10, at 7:30 p.m. in room 140 of the Elvehjem. There is a charge for Smithsonian events: tickets are \$5.00 at the door. To request a brochure listing all the Smithsonian events or for more information, please call (608) 263-2246.



Amada Cruz will speak on April 10 as part of Smithsonian National Associates program

### Giorgio Vasari: In Situ

The docents continue to plan new approaches to their drop-in tours of the permanent collection. Mary Harshaw and Henryka Schutta have developed and written a program about one of the most important artists of the Italian Renaissance, Giorgio Vasari. They begin by locating the Elvehjem's Vasari, *Adoration of the Shepherds*, in situ, in a church in Florence in the sixteenth century, and then they explore the path that art historians have taken through the centuries to prove that the painting is in fact a work by Vasari.

The program will be presented by two scholars of Italian literature from the university. Silvano Garofalo, professor of Italian literature and languages, will narrate the text, and Albert Rossi, assistant professor of French, Italian, and comparative literature at Dartmouth College and a visiting fellow at the Institute for Research in the Humanities, will provide the voices of Vasari and his contemporaries.

The program will be Thursday, April 2, at 12:20 in the Renaissance Gallery II and will last about 40 minutes.

### German Avant-garde Films

The series "German Avant-garde Films of the 1920s" sponsored by the Elvehjem and the Wisconsin Center for Film and Theater Research, continues in April. Friday, April 3 features the films of Walther Ruttmann. Ruttmann was the earliest practitioner during the first period of the avant-garde to complete an abstract film, *Film Opus I*, which was shown in Frankfurt at the beginning of April, 1921. Ruttmann believed that an avant-garde creator of films should work with the medium "as if it were a brush and a palette."

Films by Walther Ruttmann and Guido Seeber will be shown on Friday, April 10. As the master of a thousand-and-one tricks, Seeber is known for his numerous inventions of cinematic equipment such as the "Seeberophone" and the "Seeberograph." He also had a reputation as one of Germany's best cameramen. The films are shown in room 160 of the Elvehjem at 7:30 p.m. This series was made possible through the support of the Goethe Institute of Chicago and the Humanistic Foundation of the University of Wisconsin.

### Staff Notes

Kristine Hastreiter has joined the museum staff as half-time preparator. She also works half time as exhibition specialist/curatorial assistant at the Helen Allen Textile Collection in the Home Economics Building. Kristine received a B.S. in studio art from James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia. She came to Madison to work on a master's degree in textiles and clothing, which she received in May 1991. Kristine's own art, weavings and hand-painted silks, has been in abeyance while she completed her graduate degree, but she hopes in the near future to return to it.

While an undergraduate, Kristine taught art to elementary and junior high age children in the university's art department summer camp. She enjoyed the experience and hopes to have an opportunity to teach art to children again in the future.



Kristine Hastreiter



Giorgio Vasari (Italian, 1511–1574), *Adoration of the Shepherds*, 1570–71, oil on panel, 131 1/2 x 69 in., gift of Alumni and Heirs of Henry Reinhardt, 23.1.1



## EXHIBITIONS

### May Artworks of the Month

In May we unveil a recent acquisition, John Steuart Curry's lithograph, *The Plainsman*, and bring it together with the Elvehjem's well-known drawing of the same subject as our featured Artworks of the Month.

In the spring of 1937, influential Kansas newspaper editors began a campaign to bring home to their state an example of the widely acclaimed mural art of native son John Steuart Curry. "Kansas has a story that should be told in murals on the walls of the state house in Topeka," wrote Jack Harris of the *Hutchinson News* to the artist, then living and working in Madison as artist-in-residence in the university's College of Agriculture. Curry had wanted to "paint the Kansas scene on the walls of some state institution," as friend and fellow Midwesterner Thomas Hart Benton had done in the Missouri state capitol in 1935, but Curry's fellow Kansans gave little encouragement to his overtures.

Although the history of the Kansas mural project is especially ugly, and the work ended prematurely with Curry's resignation in anger and disgust, the idea for the murals spawned some of the artist's best, most expressive work. Of the panels completed, *The Tragic Prelude*, on two walls fronting on the governor's office, was his most potent image, and it remains one of the artist's great masterworks. The Elvehjem's drawing, *The Plainsman*, is a boldly drawn detailed study for one element of that tripartite work—the buffalo hunter and Indian fighter, one symbol of Kansas's bloody past, a figure whose story forms part of the tragic prelude to the history of Kansas's statehood. *The Plainsman* occupied a full wall between other gigantic figures: one of Coronado, representing the Spanish conquistadors, and another of the Civil War martyr, John Brown.

Curry's belief in the power of these particular images to move and instruct all Americans is reflected in his adaptation of *The Plainsman* and *John Brown* to popular prints. The Elvehjem's newly acquired lithograph of *The Plainsman* (completed in Madison) is, like the mural study that preceded it, an iconic image, a monumental figure whose palpable strength and arrogance are redolent of the great and terrifying epic for which he stands.



*The Plainsman*, 1945, lithograph, 18 x 14 in., purchase, 1992.10



John Steuart Curry (American, 1897–1946), *Study for The Plainsman*, from *The Tragic Prelude*, Kansas Statehouse, 1940, charcoal and red chalk on paper, 30 1/2 x 22 1/2 in. University purchase, 1948.1.1

### Modern Art from Thailand Closes April 12

*The Integrative Art of Modern Thailand* examines contemporary Thai art, a synthesis of its culture's thousand-year-old classical tradition, even older folk traditions, and a response to recent international influence. This ground-breaking exhibition was developed and organized by the Lowie Museum of Anthropology of the University of California at Berkeley. The Elvehjem is the second stop on the exhibition's national tour.

Herbert Phillips, professor of anthropology at the University of California at Berkeley and organizer of the exhibition, has selected fifty-seven works in various media by twenty-eight of Thailand's most distinguished living artists. Several of the works are considered contemporary masterpieces within Thailand, but most have never before been displayed outside of that country.

The exhibition is organized around four themes: celebrations of Buddhism,

impressions of daily life, symbiosis with nature, and the search for artistic and cultural identity. These themes cover the broad range of modern Thai life and permit an exploration into the question of how a nation can contend with the conflicting standards of indigenous aesthetic traditions and those of an encroaching international culture.

A videotape, "Five Perspectives on Thai Art," is available in Paige Court. Produced to augment the exhibition, it features five artists discussing their work and runs for nineteen minutes.

*The Integrative Art of Modern Thailand* has been underwritten by the National Endowment for the Humanities, a federal agency; American President Companies Foundation; Northwest Airlines; Esso Standard of Thailand; and Mr. William Alexander. The exhibition can be seen at the Elvehjem through April 12, 1992.

## The Elvehjem



Elvehjem Museum of Art  
800 University Avenue  
Madison, Wisconsin 53706-1479



**Gallery and Museum Shop Hours:**  
Sunday-Saturday 9 a.m.-5 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-Madison  
holiday periods call (608) 263-2258

**Information:** (608) 263-2246

*Admission is free*

## artscene

April/May 1992

**Important Dated Information!**

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## MEMBERSHIP

### Downtown Gallery Night in May

On Friday, May 1, the Elvehjem will be open late for Downtown Gallery Night planned in conjunction with the Art Partners of the Madison Art Center. The Elvehjem and other State Street area galleries, museums, and businesses will remain open from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m. Gallery night activities, programs, and promotions vary, but all participating organizations invite Elvehjem members to come out and enjoy the cultural resources of downtown Madison. For more information and a Downtown Gallery Night brochure and map, please call (608) 263-2495. This program is free and open to the public.

### Two Museums Plan Art Trip

The Elvehjem Museum and the Madison Art Center are planning a trip to the Chicago International Art Exposition (CIAE) at the Donnelley International Hall for Saturday, May 16. Since 1980, the Chicago International Art Exposition has been the largest and most important exposition of twentieth-century art in the United States. The 1992 CIAE will feature 175 galleries from 18 countries representing the achievements of over 2,500 artists. These galleries, selected by committee, are recognized internationally as leaders in their fields. The exposition has become an annual gathering point for museum profes-

sionals, independent curators, dealers, collectors, art devotees, and students, all using this unique opportunity to measure trends and to experience some of the finest art objects available today.

This trip offers participants the opportunity to explore the intriguing world of art and gain an insider's perspective on collecting. Elvehjem Director Russell Panczenko, whose discoveries at the exposition have resulted in acquisitions for the Elvehjem's own collections, will join a CIAE representative in orienting participants to the exposition and discussing the dynamics of collecting contemporary art. Afterwards participants will begin their own excursions through the exhibitions of prestigious art galleries representing London, Paris, Milan, Tokyo, Toronto, New York, and others.

The trip is available to members for \$50 and to nonmembers for \$60. The fee includes coach transportation to and from Chicago (from Nakoma Plaza); pastries and juice en route; exposition admission; and a luncheon and lecture at Donnelley International Hall. Also, participants will be eligible to purchase a CIAE catalogue at the reduced rate of \$5.00. Our group will leave Madison at 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, May 16 and return at approximately 8:00 p.m. Registration and payment must be submitted by April 15. Call (608) 263-2495 for registration forms and more information.

### Poster Drawing

Guests at the Elvehjem's preview reception for *The Integrative Art of Modern Thailand* on February 7 were invited to enter a drawing for a free poster portraying a work from the exhibition. Two names were drawn and winners Priscilla Thain and Nancy Abraham were each sent a poster. The winners, both of whom are members of the Elvehjem, enjoyed the diverse art from Thailand featured in the exhibition and, therefore, delighted in their prize.

### Bulletin Available to Members

Later this spring the *Bulletin* will be made available to all members of the museum. This issue will cover three years of Elvehjem activities—1988-89, 1989-90, and 1990-91. All who were members of the museum during these periods will receive a postcard in the mail which can be used to acquire the publication in the Elvehjem's Museum Shop. Those who cannot come to the museum may call (608) 263-2246 to request their *Bulletin* be mailed.