



PRESS RELEASE

from

THE FRICK COLLECTION

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NYARC ANNOUNCES A NEW DIGITAL COLLECTION, *DOCUMENTING THE GILDED AGE: NEW YORK CITY* *EXHIBITIONS AT THE TURN OF THE 20TH CENTURY*



The art exhibitions of small galleries, society clubs, and associations in the late 19th and early 20th centuries chronicle the emergence of New York City as a metropolis destined to be a global center for the international art market. Ephemeral exhibition catalogs, checklists, and pamphlets from this period document artistic movements, artists of the period, economic markets, and social and cultural history. The materials from eleven galleries, clubs, and associations that have played a pivotal role in the history of art and New York City have been digitized from the collections of the Frick Art Reference Library

and the Brooklyn Museum Libraries and Archives and are [now available](#) to researchers worldwide. Spanning the period from 1875 to 1922, this initial collection serves as the foundation for a more comprehensive project to document the New York City art scene at the turn of the 20th century.

The collaborative project to digitize holdings of exhibition catalogs held at the Frick Art Reference Library and the Brooklyn Museum Libraries and Archives has just been completed, and funding for a next phase secured. Entitled *Documenting the Gilded Age: New York City Exhibitions at the Turn of the 20th Century*, the collection offers 172 catalogs from eleven art galleries, clubs, and associations that were active during the late 19th and early 20th centuries in full-text digital facsimiles to researchers worldwide through [Arcade](#), the catalog of the New York Art Resources Consortium ([NYARC](#)).

From the time when they were established, both libraries have documented the rich artistic climate in New York City, acquiring exhibition catalogs, checklists, invitations, and promotional material from societies, clubs, galleries, dealers, and collectors. Art historians as well as scholars in other disciplines consult these materials to document taste, trade, popular culture, economic indicators, and social structures during the Gilded Age. Dr. Virginia Brilliant, Assistant Curator of European Art at The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, and author of *Gothic Art in the Gilded Age: Medieval and Renaissance Treasures in the Gavet-Vanderbilt-Ringling Collection* (Sarasota, FL., Ringling Museum of Art, 2009) comments, “The circumstances in which art was displayed at any given time often sheds light on the esteem in which it was then held. This significant group of digitized exhibition catalogues offers scholars an unprecedented opportunity to reconstruct and meander through the “ephemeral museums” of Gilded Age New York, seeking new understandings of the ways in which works of art were presented and received in this fundamental moment in the history of collecting and taste in America. While it is wonderful to be able to access this material remotely, this offering should also pique interest in the rich collections of the Frick and the Brooklyn Museum, bringing in new users and illuminating new paths for exploration for established ones.”

An accompanying [online exhibition](#) curated by library staff members adds historical context to the body



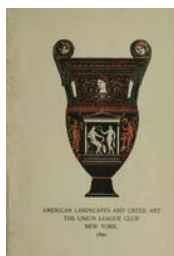
of material, featuring images highlighting the Brummer Gallery, Century Association, Colony Club, Cottier Gallery, Grand Central Art Galleries, Lotos Club, Montross Gallery, National Association of Portrait Painters, New York Water Color Club, Salmagundi Club, and Union League Club. The exhibition may be viewed at <http://gildedage.omeka.net>. Profiles of the featured eleven associations offer brief histories and a sample of images from the catalogs. Selected highlights follow the subsequent provenance of exhibited works. The digital collection and online exhibition illuminate the role these institutions played

in cultivating artistic movements, track the emergence of notable European and American artists, and detail the rich cultural history of New York City and the nation. “Due to their ephemeral nature, these materials were often not collected, cataloged or preserved by libraries. By digitizing this collection, researchers unable to travel to New York to consult the collection in our reading rooms now have the opportunity to use these materials to create new scholarship from their desktop,” comments Stephen Bury, the Andrew W. Mellon Chief Librarian of The Frick Art Reference Library. Deirdre Lawrence, Principal Librarian at the Brooklyn Museum adds, “these materials, which complement existing collections such as those for the Salmagundi Club in the Smithsonian Archives of American Art, have significance to scholars from a number of disciplines, ranging from art and cultural historians to economists.”

The next phase of the project, to be carried out during 2012, will add digital copies from the Frick and Brooklyn Museum library holdings of nearly 500 catalogs from exhibitions held at art galleries in New York City during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Funding for the collection and a second expansion to take place during 2012 is provided by the New York State Regional Bibliographic Databases Program, as part of its support of [Digital Metro New York](#), a collaborative effort to support digitization projects involving significant collections held by [METRO](#) member libraries in New York City and Westchester County.

ABOUT THE NEW YORK ART RESOURCES CONSORTIUM



The [New York Art Resources Consortium](#) (NYARC) consists of the research libraries of three leading art museums in New York City: The Brooklyn Museum, The Frick Collection, and The Museum of Modern Art. With funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, NYARC was formed in 2006 to facilitate collaboration that results in enhanced resources to research communities.

ABOUT THE FRICK ART REFERENCE LIBRARY

The [Frick Art Reference Library](#) was established in 1920 by Helen Clay Frick, daughter of Henry Clay Frick, founder of the adjacent museum. Each year the Library serves over six thousand individuals with a serious interest in art, including scholars, museum and art market professionals, collectors, and graduate students. One of the world's most valued art research centers for the study of art in the Western tradition, it is also one of the most complete resources for the study of collecting and patronage. Known internationally for its rich holdings of auction and exhibition catalogs, the Frick is a leading site for provenance research. Its renowned Photoarchive of more than one million photographs documents the work of more than 36,000 artists. Archival and special collections supplement over 350,000 volumes of textual materials. The Center for the History of Collecting in America was established in 2007 to stimulate awareness and study of the formation of fine and decorative arts collections from Colonial times to the present. The Library maintains an active program of lectures, exhibitions, academic affiliations, and fellowships.

ABOUT THE BROOKLYN MUSEUM LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES

The [Brooklyn Museum Libraries and Archives](#) comprise one of the largest and oldest art museum libraries in the country. The collection, established in 1823, has been developed to encourage understanding of the Museum's collections and history, serving the curatorial staff and general public. Paralleling the Museum's encyclopedic collections, the Museum Libraries and Archives are particularly

strong in the arts of the Americas (North and South), Africa, Asia, Ancient Egypt and Islam. The Wilbour Library of Egyptology is one of the world's most comprehensive research libraries for the study of ancient Egypt. Special collections include costume and fashion sketches, documentary photographs, rare books, and artists' books. The Museum Archives contains institutional records, curatorial correspondence, expedition reports, and other related textual and visual records dating to the founding of the institution.

MARC records for the collection are [available](#) to libraries from our [About page](#), which provides more technical details about this project.

BASIC INFORMATION

General Information Phone (Collection): 212.288.0700

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Web site: www.frick.org

E-mail: info@frick.org (general public inquires, press address given below)

Where (Collection): 1 East 70th Street, near Fifth Avenue.

Where (Library): 10 East 71st Street, between Fifth and Madison Avenues

Hours (Collection) open six days a week: 10am to 6pm on Tuesdays through Saturdays; 11am to 5pm on Sundays. Closed Mondays, New Year's Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day. Limited hours (11am to 5pm) on Lincoln's Birthday, Election Day, and Veterans Day.

Hours (Library): 10:00am to 5:00pm, Monday to Friday, and 9:30am to 1:00pm Saturdays. Closed Sundays, Holiday weekends, Saturdays in June and July, the month of August. Following its August closing, the Library will re-open to the public the day after Labor Day.

Admission (Collection): \$18; senior citizens \$15; students \$10; "pay as you wish" on Sundays from 11am to 1pm.

Admission (Library): use of the Library is free

PLEASE NOTE TO YOUR READERS: Children under ten are not admitted to the Collection

Subway: #6 local (on Lexington Avenue) to 68th Street station; **Bus:** M1, M2, M3, and M4 southbound on Fifth Avenue to 72nd Street and northbound on Madison Avenue to 70th Street; crosstown M72 stopping eastbound on Madison at 70th Street or westbound on Fifth Avenue at 72nd Street or 69th Street

#192, December 20, 2011

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