



# ARCHIVED PRESS RELEASE

*from*

# THE FRICK COLLECTION

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## FRICK COLLECTION GALLERIES NOW FEATURE AN IMPORTANT NEW ACQUISITION AND THREE EXTENDED LOANS



Gabriel de Saint-Aubin (1724–1780), *The Private Academy*, c.1755, oil on panel, 13 1/2 x 15 in. (34.29 x 38.1 cm), The Frick Collection, gift of Irene Roosevelt Aitken, photo: Michael Bodycomb

Fall at The Frick Collection brings new exhibitions and catalogues (this October being no exception with the long-awaited Riccio show). However, visitors are already finding fresh enticement to visit the celebrated permanent collection galleries, where four additional works are now on view. The acquisition by gift of the museum's first painting by Gabriel de Saint-Aubin was approved at a meeting of the Board of Trustees in September, and now this jewel-like canvas, *The Private Academy*, hangs in the North Hall. On view in the West

Gallery are two long-term loans: Nicholas Poussin's *Hannibal Crossing the Alps* and Francesco Guardi's *View of the Giudecca Canal and the Zattere, Venice*, and in the Garden Court, visitors will find a dramatic, large-scale Meissen figure designed in the 1730s by the porcelain manufactory's celebrated modeler Johann Gottlieb Kirchner. Comments Director Anne Poulet, "We are pleased to offer our visitors the opportunity to enjoy four masterpieces by artists who are, for the most part, not otherwise represented in the permanent collection galleries of the Frick, works that are very much at home among the Old Master paintings and decorative arts gathered by Henry Clay Frick."

### FIRST SAINT-AUBIN PAINTING TO ENTER A NYC MUSEUM COLLECTION

With exceptional holdings in French eighteenth-century paintings from Watteau to David, the Frick is pleased to introduce into its permanent collection galleries a stunning canvas by Gabriel de Saint-Aubin (above). This genre painting complements the Frick's holdings by paying homage to two other artists represented in the permanent

collection, Boucher and Chardin. Adds Colin B. Bailey, Associate Director and Peter Jay Sharp Chief Curator, “We are thrilled to see this wonderful work take its place alongside acquisitions of the past two decades—among them paintings by Watteau and Liotard—that extend the representation at The Frick Collection of the major artists of the Ancien Régime. Saint-Aubin is known primarily as a draftsman, and his paintings are relatively rare. Until now, none belonged to any museums in New York City. Saint-Aubin was the subject of a critically acclaimed special exhibition in 2007, organized by the Frick in collaboration with the Louvre. This work, *The Private Academy*, was one of the highlights of the exhibition and now returns permanently to the Frick as the gift of Irene Roosevelt Aitken, a longtime supporter of the institution.”

Saint-Aubin was an unsurpassed chronicler of daily life in Paris, and, with *The Private Academy*, he presents an engaging and extremely detailed window into the world of an artist’s studio. He places in the foreground a young draftsman—elegantly dressed in a red jacket with wide cuffs and silver buckles on his shoes—who sits with his drawing board against his knees. The apprentice artist is absorbed in copying a languorously posed model, whose slipper peeks out from under the canapé and whose robes lie discarded to the side. He is studying from the life—the head of the model appears at the upper right of his sheet—and his crayon confirms the fundamental role of drawing in the training of a history painter. The tools of his future profession, out of his reach for the present, are posed somewhat precariously on the mantelpiece. The student is surrounded by paintings of various sizes, in various states of completion. The studio is full of work, from the framed pictures on the wall, to the decorative canvas, to the large vertical canvas, glimpsed behind the chair at left. Although the room is small, the rococo furnishings are elegant, and the proprietor is a man of taste and learning, as well as of some means. Reflected in the pier glass above the fireplace is a bookcase filled with bound volumes; at right is a cord and tassel, attached to the bell that summons his servant.

## POUSSIN ON LOAN TO THE FRICK FILLS A COLLECTING GAP

Nicolas Poussin’s *Hannibal Crossing the Alps*, ca. 1626–27, now hanging in the West Gallery, is on extended loan from an anonymous collection, remaining on view through much of the summer of 2010. The presence of this work fills a noted gap in the Frick’s holdings, in which the French School of the seventeenth century is represented principally by one magnificent landscape by Claude Lorrain. Furthermore, this canvas has never before been on public view in New York, making it a special opportunity. Nicolas Poussin (1594–1665) spent most of his active years in Italy, absorbing the riches of classical art and architecture, while developing his own idiom. His approach to history painting—wherein



Nicolas Poussin (1594–1665), *Hannibal Crossing the Alps*, ca. 1626–27, oil on canvas, 39 x 52 in. (100 x 133 cm), Anonymous Loan, photo: Michael Bodycomb

the challenge rests in depicting multiple-figure compositions in an exciting and legible fashion—was so striking and successful that he set the standard against which other artists' works in this genre have been judged. This early history painting depicts the Carthaginian general's invasion of Italy on war elephants—a rarely illustrated episode of Ancient Roman history—and reflects Poussin's and his friend and patron Cassiano dal Pozzo's interests in antiquity and the natural sciences.

## GRAND-SCALE SCENE OF VENICE JOINS WEST GALLERY LANDSCAPES



Francesco Guardi (1712–1793), *View of the Giudecca and the Zattere*, c. 1765, oil on canvas, 47 1/4 x 80 3/4 in. (120 x 205 cm), Private Collection, photo: Michael Bodycomb

*View of the Giudecca Canal and the Zattere, Venice*, c. 1765, by Francesco Guardi (1712–1793) is on long-term loan from a private collection and can also be seen in the West Gallery, once the private picture gallery of Henry Clay Frick. Measuring over 47 by 80 inches, this painting is notable in Guardi's oeuvre for its ample dimensions, matched only by two other *vedute* of Venice at Waddesdon Manor (Waddesdon, Aylesbury, England). The work, which was until 1959 one of the

jewels of the De Ganay collection, appeared at the exhibitions *Le Cabinet de l'Amateur* in 1956 and *Venise au dix-huitième siècle* in 1971, both held at the Orangerie, Paris.

In this painting, the Fondamenta delle Zattere, located on the south bank of Venice, is depicted at right, while the island of Giudecca can be glimpsed at left. Such views of Venice were popular souvenirs of the Grand Tour during the latter half of the eighteenth century and have remained in favor with collectors ever since. Interestingly, although Henry Clay Frick's collection is celebrated for its focus on portraits and landscapes—among them dramatic harbor views by Turner of Dieppe and Cologne—he did not include any such paintings of Venice in the provisions to create the museum of his collection. Henry Clay Frick enjoyed the work of Guardi and purchased three smaller paintings by the artist: two in 1913, which were only given to the institution in 1984 by his daughter, Helen Clay Frick (they are now installed in the Reading Room of the Frick Art Reference Library, on East 71<sup>st</sup> Street, and are mostly known to art historians using that research facility), and another in 1918, which now hangs in the Frick Art & Historical Center in Pittsburgh and has not traveled to the New York institution. The grand-scale Guardi currently on loan, therefore returns a sense of Henry Clay Frick's taste for the artist to the mansion's permanent collection galleries, where it will remain on view into the summer of 2010.

## MEISSEN COMPLEMENTS A COLLECTION NOTED FOR RARE SÈVRES

Recently returned to view is an object that was highlighted in the special exhibition galleries of the Frick this spring, a remarkable Meissen porcelain figure of a *Great Bustard*, nearly three feet in height. Placed in the museum's contemplative Garden Court, adjacent to rooms featuring examples of Henry Clay Frick's taste for eighteenth-century French porcelain from the Sèvres manufactory, this extended loan from The Arnhold Collection finds a fresh setting. It also offers visitors a reminder of one of the most ambitious projects undertaken at Meissen: a porcelain menagerie of lifesize animals and birds conceived as interior decoration for the king's Japanese Palace. Several hundred such figures were commissioned, though less than 300 were successfully fired before the project was abandoned. This superb example was a gift to Heinrich Arnhold in 1935, and is today part of one of the greatest intact surviving collections of early Meissen assembled in the twentieth century.



*Great Bustard*, Meissen porcelain, 1732, modeled by Johann Gottlieb Kirchner, 1935, H: 33 in. (83.8 cm), The Arnhold Collection, photo: Maggie Nimkin

The bird stands with its head gracefully bent back over its wing and is supported by a tree trunk covered with oak branches, leaves, and acorns. To mold and fire a figure of this size was a technical tour de force. Most of the sculptures, as with this one, have a number of firing cracks produced in the kiln. The surface has a clear glaze over which unfired oil colors were applied. The colors on most of the sculptures, including the *Great Bustard*, were later removed. Today, it appears as a large-scale white sculptural figure, and in the daylight of the Garden Court, its masterful modeling is beautifully apparent.

## SPECIAL EXHIBITION ON VIEW THIS FALL:

*Andrea Riccio: Renaissance Master of Bronze* (October 15, 2008, through January 18, 2009)

## BASIC INFORMATION

**General Information Phone:** (212) 288-0700

**Website:** [www.frick.org](http://www.frick.org)

**E-mail:** [info@frick.org](mailto:info@frick.org)

**Where:** 1 East 70th Street, near Fifth Avenue.

**Hours: 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.

**Admission:** \$15; senior citizens \$10; students \$5; "pay as you wish" on Sundays from 11am to 1pm

**PLEASE NOTE TO YOUR READERS: Children under ten are not admitted to the Collection, and those under sixteen must be accompanied by an adult.**

**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

**Tour Information:** included in the price of admission is an Acoustiguide Audio Tour of the permanent collection. The tour is offered in six languages: English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish.

**Museum Shop:** the shop is open the same days as the Museum, closing fifteen minutes before the institution.

**Group Visits:** Please call (212) 288-0700 for details and to make reservations.

**Public Programs:** A calendar of events is published regularly and is available upon request.

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