



# ARCHIVED PRESS RELEASE

from

# THE FRICK COLLECTION

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## ***EDGAR MUNHALL, THE FIRST CURATOR OF THE FRICK COLLECTION RETIRES***

### ***EDGAR MUNHALL ORGANIZES A TOURING EXHIBITION OF DRAWINGS BY GREUZE TO OPEN AT THE FRICK COLLECTION IN 2002***

In the sixty-five year history of The Frick Collection, only one person -- Edgar Munhall -- has held the title of *Curator*. Since 1965, the internationally-known art historian held the post from which he recently retired, while continuing to organize a touring exhibition of drawings by Jean-Baptiste Greuze to debut at The Frick Collection in the spring of 2002. During his thirty-five year tenure, the Collection published the first multi-volume catalogue of the museum's holdings in all fields. Munhall also participated in the major acquisitions made by institution in the 1960s, paintings by Bruegel, Gentile da Fabriano, Drouais, and Memling. From 1978 on, The Frick Collection began presenting special exhibitions on a regular basis, all organized or secured for the museum by Munhall, shows such as *Severo Calzetta Called Severo da Ravenna, Vincennes and Sèvres Porcelain, Jean-Antoine Houdon: Eight Portrait Busts*, and *French Clocks in North American Collections*. There followed his major exhibitions *Ingres and the Comtesse d'Haussonville* (1985), *François-Marius Granet: Watercolors from the Granet at Aix-en-Provence* (1988), and *The Butterfly and The Bat: Whistler and Montesquiou* (1995).

Comments Director, Samuel Sachs II, "It has been my immense pleasure and honor to work with Edgar Munhall since my arrival at The Frick Collection just over two years ago. He is very much a part of the soul of this remarkable institution, and we are so pleased that his continuing projects will keep him among us regularly -- with his astute wisdom, devotion to the Collection, and wry wit. There are many great names in the field of art history who have fondly referred to him as "colleague" and "friend", among them Marcelle Brunet, Terence Hodgkinson, John Pope-Hennessy, Neil MacGregor, Pierre Rosenberg, Philippe

Verdier, and my predecessors, Directors Harry D. M. Grier, Everett Fahy, and Charles Ryskamp. I know I speak for all in expressing our gratitude to Edgar for his profound contributions not just to The Frick Collection but to the field of art history."

Trustee Helen Clay Chace adds, "Henry Clay Frick, my great grand-father, would have undoubtedly felt an enormous debt to Edgar Munhall for the wisdom and vision he has shown over the past thirty-five years as the first Curator of this institution. Indeed, the cultural legacy offered to the public by Henry Clay Frick is today very much informed by Edgar's care and scholarly contributions."

Edgar Munhall was born in 1933 in Pittsburgh -- Frick territory -- and developed a passionate interest in The Frick Collection by his mid-teens. An aspiring artist, he settled briefly in New York at seventeen, with a scholarship to the Art Students League, but within a few years, Munhall broke his own brushes and embraced the field of art history. He attended Yale University and graduated Phi Beta Kappa with High Honors in 1955 from the elite program "History, the Arts, and Letters" and completed his Masters two years later at the Institute of Fine Arts in New York with a thesis on *The Statues in Watteau's Paintings*, written under the brilliant supervision of Walter Friedlaender. In 1959, Munhall earned his Ph.D. from Yale with the dissertation *Jean-Baptiste Greuze and His Critics*, working with George Heard Hamilton. This launched his lasting association with Greuze, on whose work he is recognized internationally as the preeminent authority.

After teaching at Yale for five years, followed by a year in Paris, Munhall joined The Frick Collection as its first Curator in June 1965. Curatorial responsibilities had previously been handled by the Director and, at times, his assistant. In addition to Munhall's stewardship of the Collection and development of its special exhibitions, he organized the first show ever devoted to Jean-Baptiste Greuze for the Wadsworth Atheneum, the San Francisco Palace of the Legion of Honor, and the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Dijon. In 1989, he was named Chevalier in the French Ordre des Arts et des Lettres for his services to French culture.

He lectures frequently and his articles have appeared in *Apollo*, *Arts Quarterly*, *Burlington Magazine*, *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, and *L'Oeil*. He has written many publications dealing with The Frick Collection and was the prime author of the current "ArtPhone" INFORM tour by Acoustiguide, introduced in the

summer of 1998, and the related book *The Frick Collection: A Tour*, published in November 1999. The tour and book represent the first comprehensive educational materials about the institution available in several languages.

## **GREUZE THE DRAFTSMAN**

Munhall continues to develop and organize the exhibition *Greuze The Draftsman*. This unprecedented presentation is the first devoted exclusively to the drawings of the remarkable French eighteenth-century painter and draftsman Jean-Baptiste Greuze (1725 - 1805). It brings together at each of its two venues approximately sixty works on paper culled from international collections such as the Musée du Louvre, Paris; Musée des Beaux-Arts, Dijon; Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lyon; the Historisch Museum, Amsterdam; the Albertina, Vienna; the Staatliche Kunsthalle, Karlsruhe; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the National Gallery of Art, Washington; The Art Institute of Chicago; and other institutions and private collectors.

Catherine the Great was among Greuze's many admirers, and her agent purchased a number of works directly from the artist, which are now in the State Hermitage Museum. Munhall has selected for inclusion in the exhibition twenty of these drawings, which have seldom left St. Petersburg.

A fully illustrated catalogue by Merrell Publishers, London, will feature a historical overview of the artist's work, and the exhibition itself will convey to viewers what a unique and remarkably modern artist Greuze was. *Greuze The Draftsman* will be on view at The Frick Collection from May 14 through August 4, 2002 and travels to the J. Paul Getty Museum, where it will be shown from September 10 through December 1, 2002. *The exhibition is made possible, in part, through the generous support of the Fellows of The Frick Collection.*

## **ABOUT THE FRICK COLLECTION**

The Frick Collection features masterpieces of Western art from the early Renaissance through the late nineteenth century. Important works by Bellini, El Greco, Rembrandt, Titian, Turner, Vermeer, Whistler, and many others are housed in one of the great mansions remaining from the Gilded Age. These

paintings are complemented by one of the world's finest collections of Renaissance bronzes and by French sculpture of the eighteenth century, in addition to outstanding furniture and decorative art works from the ateliers of Riesener, Lacroix, Boulle, Carlin, Gouthière, and Sèvres. Each year more than 250,000 visitors from New York, across America, and around the world come to the Collection at 1 East 70th Street, once the residence of Henry Clay Frick (1849-1919). Designed by Thomas Hastings of Carrère and Hastings and constructed in 1913-1914, the building was changed after Mrs. Frick's death in 1931, with alterations and additions made by the architect John Russell Pope. In 1935 the Collection opened to the public. A new Reception Hall, built in 1977, was designed by John Barrington Bayley, Harry van Dyke, and G. Frederick Poehler, as well as two temporary exhibition galleries. The Frick Collection also operates the Frick Art Reference Library at 10 East 71st Street, both a research library and a photoarchive. The Library is one of the world's great repositories for the documentation and study of Western art and has served the international art world for more than seventy-five years.

## **BASIC INFORMATION**

### **General Information Phones:**

Collection (212) 288-0700

Library (212) 288-8700

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

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

**Where:** The Collection is located at 1 East 70<sup>th</sup> Street, near Fifth Avenue.

The Library is around the corner at 10 East 71<sup>st</sup> Street.

**Museum Hours:** 10am to 6pm Tuesdays through Saturdays, and from 1pm to 6pm Sundays. Closed Mondays, New Year's Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving, December 24, and December 25. Limited hours (1:00 to 6:00pm) on Lincoln's Birthday, Election Day, and Veterans Day.

**Library Hours:** 10am to 5pm, Monday through Friday; 9:30am to 1pm on Saturday.

Closed August and on Saturdays in June and July. Please call for holiday closure schedule.

**Museum Admission:** \$7, general public; \$5, students & senior citizens. See updated "Tour Information."

<p><b>PLEASE NOTE TO YOUR READERS: Children under ten are not admitted to the Collection, and those under sixteen must be accompanied by an adult.</b></p>
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**Library Admission:** free.

**Subway:** #6 local (on Lexington Avenue) to 68<sup>th</sup> Street station

**Bus:** M1, M2, M3, and M4 southbound on Fifth Avenue to 72<sup>nd</sup> Street and northbound on Madison Avenue to 70<sup>th</sup> Street

**Tour Information:** now included in the price of admission is an Acoustiguide INFORM® Audio Tour of the permanent collection, provided by Acoustiguide. The tour is offered in five languages: English, French, German, Japanese, and Spanish. An Italian version will be introduced this summer.

**Museum Shop:** the shop closes at 5:45pm, and is open otherwise the same days and hours as the Museum.

**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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**For further press information,** please contact Heidi Rosenau, Communications Officer

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