



# ARCHIVED PRESS RELEASE

from

## THE FRICK COLLECTION

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### **FRICK ART REFERENCE LIBRARY PHOTOARCHIVE RECORDS NOW ACCESSIBLE ONLINE**



The Frick Art Reference Library Small Reading Room; photo: Michael Bodycomb

Scholars in multiple disciplines around the world have long heralded the Photoarchive of the Frick Art Reference Library as uniquely valuable to research that relates to object-oriented study of works of art. Without this repository of an estimated 1.2 million images of works created by more than 40,000 artists, curators, art dealers, and authors of monographic catalogues would be hard pressed to find visual documentation of unpublished art and the preparatory studies, versions, copies, or forgeries that relate to those and even to more famous works. In recent years, the Frick's Photoarchive has also played a key role in helping researchers compile provenance information about art looted during World War II. Lynn Nicholas, the highly respected author of *The Rape of Europa: The Fate of Europe's Treasures in the Third Reich and the Second World War* (New York, 1994), recently noted that "to do provenance research, of course, one of the very first places to go is the Frick..." Until now, online access to these valuable resources has been limited to searches for the artists' files, the results of which indicate the amount of material the Photoarchive has for a given artist, but no specific information about individual works of art. For that, researchers had to visit the Library premises, and manually browse the photographs stored on file.

The Frick Art Reference Library and its partners in the New York Art Resources Consortium (NYARC)—the libraries of The Museum of Modern Art and the Brooklyn Museum—are pleased to announce that through a complex process of data migration, all of the Photoarchive’s research database records created since 1996 (and all future records created both for the existing collection and for new acquisitions) may now be accessed via NYARC’s online catalog Arcade (<http://arcade.nyarc.org/search~S7>). These online records in Arcade offer detailed historical documentation for the works of art, including basic information about the artist, title, medium, dimensions, date, and owner of the work, as well as former attributions, provenance, variant titles, records of exhibition and condition history, and biographical information about portrait subjects. Andrew W. Mellon Chief Librarian Stephen Bury comments, “For us the incorporation of the Photoarchive records in Arcade means that the richness of all of the Frick’s research collections will be available to scholars everywhere and the image collection will be discoverable as easily as our other special collections of auction catalogues and exhibition ephemera through a single search in Arcade. We know that the road that will take us to full digitization of the archive is long (currently online access is possible to only 125,000 items in the archive, but the Frick is committed to the digital future of this exceptional resource).” To cite a typical example of the advantages users will gain from the seamless searchability across text and image collections that the Frick now makes possible: locating the catalog of the Stroganoff sale at Lepke in 1931 now yields not only the publication, itself, but also the works of art listed documented as sold there by the Photoarchive, one of which was part of the Goudstikker collection that was recently restituted to the heirs. <http://tinyurl.com/3spng5v>

In addition to global access to the historical documentation for works of art recorded in the Photoarchive, a new interface, the *Frick Digital Image Archive* (<http://images.frick.org>) has been created to link the images of 15,000 works of art captured during the Frick’s photography expeditions throughout the United States from 1922 to 1967 to the documentation in Arcade. Researchers can retrieve images by keyword or field searching, display large preview images, download small jpeg image files, and link to the matching Arcade records. This image archive, which may be accessed via the Web site of The Frick Collection ([www.frick.org](http://www.frick.org)), was made possible by funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the Henry Luce Foundation. The NEH also designated the project as part of its “We the People” initiative to encourage and strengthen the teaching study and understanding of American history and culture. Through this two-year project, the Frick digitized 15,000 endangered negatives within the larger collection of 60,000 Library negatives and developed the interface to make the images freely available online. The negatives were the products of photography expeditions during the first half

of the twentieth century to Alabama, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Vermont, Virginia, and Washington, D.C. In many cases the images record early states of the works of art, prior to restoration or deterioration, and in some instances, they remain the only record of a work that has been subsequently lost or destroyed. Much of the documentation for these works is also uniquely recorded at the Frick because it was obtained from the owners (particularly true of the provenance and portrait subject information) or from scholars who consulted the images years after they were captured by the Library's photography team. During the course of the NEH project, Library staff updated the ownership and attribution information for nearly 1,500 works, relying on notations by researchers of the past and on the *Inventories of American Paintings and Sculpture* online database. Access to these images will complement the collection of 25,000 Frick Library negatives earlier digitized with the support of ARTstor and the Carl and Lily Pforzheimer Foundation and available through subscription to ARTstor.

With this new online access to the Frick Photoarchive research database records and the digital image archive, the Frick is now poised to incorporate a growing number of documented images from its visual resource holdings. These images complement other visual resources contributed by the NYARC partners, thereby ensuring that a broader community of researchers will have access to these unique collections.

## **ABOUT THE FRICK ART REFERENCE LIBRARY**

The Frick Art Reference Library was founded in 1920 by Helen Clay Frick as a memorial to her father, Henry Clay Frick (whose art and mansion were bequeathed to the public, later becoming The Frick Collection, one of the world's most treasured house museums). In founding the Library, she vowed to provide a curious and growing public of art researchers with resources as valuable to them as her father's art collection came to be to the world's art lovers. The mission of the Library was, and remains, to make available to a broad community of researchers materials for the study of art in the Western tradition from the fourth to the mid-twentieth century. With its emphasis on object-oriented research, the Library amassed a photoarchive that now boasts images of more than one million works of art, many of which are unpublished. The Library owns over 350,000 books, periodicals, online resources, and annotated auction and exhibition catalogues. The



Frick Art Reference Library entrance at 10 East 71<sup>st</sup> Street; photo: Michael Bodvcomb

collection is unrivaled in the United States, and is one of the world's most valued art research centers and the most comprehensive resource on the history of collecting and patronage.

## BASIC INFORMATION

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

**General Information Phone (Library):** (212) 288 8700

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

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

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

**Where (Library):** 10 East 71<sup>st</sup> 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

<b>PLEASE NOTE TO YOUR READERS: Children under ten are not admitted to the Collection</b>
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**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 70<sup>th</sup> Street or westbound on Fifth Avenue at 72<sup>nd</sup> Street or 69<sup>th</sup> Street

**Collection Tour Information:** included in the price of admission is an Acoustiguide Audio Tour of the permanent collection, provided by Acoustiguide. 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 to the Collection:** 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, Head of Media Relations & Marketing, or Alexis Light, Manager of Media Relations & Marketing

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