

PRESS RELEASE

from

THE FRICK COLLECTION

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FRICK ART REFERENCE LIBRARY'S CENTER FOR THE HISTORY OF COLLECTING REACHES A MILESTONE AND CELEBRATES TENTH ANNIVERSARY



Inge Reist, Director of the Center for the History of Collecting, with colleagues Esmée Quodbach and Samantha Deutsch; photo: Michael Bodycomb

The Center for the History of Collecting was launched in 2007 in response to growing recognition that the study of the history of art collecting helps both scholars and the public better understand and appreciate any given cultural moment. Traditional art history has placed scant emphasis on the role collectors and patrons play in shaping our knowledge and experience of works of art in museums and private homes. Without collectors, however, museum walls would be all but bare, and without patrons, few artists could have pursued their passions. Ten years after its founding, the Center is

internationally recognized as an institutional leader for the study of collecting history, and its diverse programming has brought much-deserved attention to the discipline in both academic and museum circles. Its varied initiatives—fellowships, symposia, publications, recorded oral histories, and the creation of research tools—provide scholars with in-depth information about collectors' tastes and activities. To mark the anniversary throughout this, its tenth year, the Center has planned a range of programs aimed at scholars as well as the general public. Most significantly, in April, it hosted a free public evening and lecture, a video of which is posted on the Frick Web site. A booklet about the Center's achievements is available upon request. In keeping with tradition, education offerings include symposia, publications, and dialogues with distinguished collectors.

The Center is ideally located in the Frick Art Reference Library, which has provided services and resources to scholars since its founding in 1920. Historically, the library has focused on amassing material that support object-oriented research and the chronicling of provenance information. Its Photoarchive and collection of more than 100,000 auction catalogues are invaluable to all research relating to collecting history, and thus the Center attracts scholars from around the world. Since its founding, the Center has awarded more than fifty short- and long-term fellowships—generously underwritten by the Leon Levy Foundation and the Samuel H. Kress Foundation—to individuals from numerous European countries, Canada, and Australia, as well as the United States. Often, the fellows’ research goes well beyond the traditional parameters of The Frick Collection and Frick Art Reference Library, as demonstrated by topics as varied as collecting East Indian art in the United States and the collecting practices of Max Ernst.



Main Reading Room of the Frick Art Reference Library, The Frick Collection, New York Photo: Michael Bodycomb



Sir David Cannadine, Lord Jacob Rothschild, and Peregrine Cavendish, Duke of Devonshire, in conversation during a 2014 program *Chatsworth and Waddesdon: Collecting Then and Now*; photo: Christine A. Butler

Comments Inge Reist, the Center’s Director, “As we build on the achievements of the past decade, our staff expects to engage even more scholars, collectors, and curious non-specialists in this fascinating area of cultural history, which can also richly inform our understanding of the art world of our own time.” Adds Max Marmor, President, Samuel H. Kress Foundation, “The Frick’s Center for the History of Collecting is among the most important and promising initiatives to emerge from the art museum community in this millennium. Its impressive accomplishments

include a series of scholarly symposia addressed to a wide audience, a steady stream of books that are now essential reference sources for historians of collecting, a distinguished array of fellowship alumni/ae who are already making their imprint on the field, not to mention the ongoing work of developing archival resources and rendering them more readily discoverable and accessible to scholars, teachers, and students alike.”

A CATALYST

The Center also has served as a catalyst for new initiatives at the Frick Art Reference Library, most notably the establishment in 2014 of a Digital Art History Lab (DAHL). The Center’s collaboration with DAHL is focused primarily on the creation of tools that support research on collecting. These tools include ARIES (Art Image Exploration Space), a digital image workspace that can, for example, create a scaled virtual display of a dispersed collection or visualize the provenance histories of works of art using maps and timelines. Additionally, the Center has inspired other similar initiatives elsewhere. Currently, Reist serves on the boards of the recently established

Society for the History of Collections, based in London, and The International Art Market Studies Association advisory board.

AN AWARD-WINNING DIRECTORY FOR RESEARCHERS

The Center not only provides essential access to primary documents held at the Frick, but also facilitates online access to documents held elsewhere through its Archives Directory for the History of Collecting in America, first published on the Frick Web site in 2010. This resource—which is continuously updated and augmented—has become an indispensable tool, consulted last year by 131,364 researchers in 156 countries. In addition to locating archival materials, it includes more than 2,000 biographical entries for American collectors, art dealers, advisers, and galleries, referencing nearly 8,000 archive collections held in 500 individual repositories. In 2011, the directory was recognized as an outstanding electronic publication by the Art Libraries Society of North America.

SYMPOSIA AND PUBLICATIONS

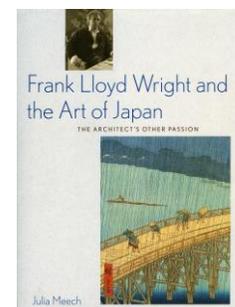


Each year, the Center hosts two symposia that make new scholarship accessible to general audiences as well as to professionals actively engaged in the field. Each symposium focuses on a single category of art or an aspect of collecting activity, and presenters and panelists have included eminent historians, curators, arts administrators, professors, and active collectors. Many symposia have resulted in publications, some as volumes in the series *The Frick Collection Studies in the History of Art Collecting in America* (Penn State University Press). Like the symposia that inspire them, the publications are scholarly, yet intended to be accessible to non-specialists as well as specialists. The Center has published books on American women art collectors, the collecting of Spanish art, British models of collecting and the American response, the art of Holland's

Golden Age, Italian Renaissance paintings, and Italian seventeenth-century paintings. Three additional volumes focusing on collecting Spanish colonial and Latin American art, American collectors of El Greco's paintings, and collecting Flemish art are expected to be published within the next two years. The most recent book is shown at left. There are plans to expand the Center's publications program with a series of pocket books detailing the histories of tastemakers over the centuries, men and women who have effected major changes in the preferences and methodologies of collectors, leaving indelible marks on the history of collecting and the art market.

REWARDING SCHOLARSHIP WITH A BOOK PRIZE

Just as the Center's own publications expand the literature in this burgeoning field, so does the biennial book prize it awards to an outstanding publication in this area of inquiry. Since 2009, the Center has given four prizes, with a fifth to be announced later this year. Past titles that



have been honored are *Frank Lloyd Wright and the Art of Japan* (shown at right); *Hearst the Collector*; *Get There First, Decide Promptly*; and *The Steins Collect*. Sotheby's and The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation have generously supported the prize for the past eight years.

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

In collaboration with the Archives of American Art, the Center is actively building a library of oral histories, documenting for future researchers the recollections and opinions of leading collectors of today. More than a dozen histories have been recorded to date, including conversations with Eli and Edythe Broad, Alfred Taubman, Alice Walton, Virginia Wright, Helen Zell, and Steve Martin.

BASIC INFORMATION

General Information Phone: 212.288.0700

Web site: www.frick.org

Building project: www.frickfuture.org

E-mail: info@frick.org

App: frick.org/app

Museum entrance: 1 East 70th Street, near Fifth Avenue

Library entrance: 10 East 71st Street

Museum Hours: Open six days a week: 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Tuesdays through Saturdays; 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sundays. Closed Mondays, New Year's Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day. Limited hours (11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) on Lincoln's Birthday, Election Day, and Veterans Day

Library Hours: www.frick.org/visit/library/hours

Museum Admission: \$22; senior citizens \$17; students \$12; starting in July, pay what you wish on Wednesdays from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

First Fridays: Museum admission and gallery programs are free from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on the first Friday evening of the month (except January and September)

Library: Open to the public and free of charge

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

Subway: #6 local to 68th Street station; #Q to 72nd 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 museum admission is an Acoustiguide Audio Tour of the permanent collection. The tour is offered in six languages: English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish.

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

Group Museum 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, Associate Director of Media Relations & Marketing; Phone: 212.547.0710; E-mail: mediarelations@frick.org