

Art at Vassar

Fall / Winter 2018/19



Bidding Adieu

On 30 June 2019 I will retire from my post as Anne Hendricks Bass Director of the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, a position I will have held for twenty-eight years. At that point I will have served longer than any other Vassar museum director by a length of ten years. I will leave knowing that the Art Center has grown quite secure in its finances and that its collection has improved greatly during a period of consistent growth, two areas that have been my core effort. I am taking this opportunity to relay the news a little early because those of you who are members will have received the Art Center's new exhibition calendar and might have noticed that the spring 2019 exhibition, entitled *An Era of Opportunity: Three Decades of Acquisitions*, is being organized in conjunction with my retirement.

The Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center opened in 1993. I was on the scene two years prior during its construction. The building, its exhibition, acquisition, and public programs were for me perfect blank canvases. There was little to compare it with and, thus, it was a very liberating environment in which to create a program. We were able to experiment with various formulae for the program's success but, all the while, I held the strong belief that what is lasting about art museums is their collections. Building the collection was always a priority for me. Enlarging the collection over such a span of time acquainted me with knowledgeable collectors, museum colleagues, and art dealers. It took me to fascinating places such as Japan where regular visits over twenty years enabled me to leave a lasting impression on our Asian holdings and to encourage cultural exchange with Japanese institutions. I benefitted from being able to take the long view regarding collection building and to wait for the key opportunity to present itself. After the exhibitions closed and the various public programs had been enjoyed, it was the collections that remained, and by developing them we provided the resources to feed all other aspects of our mission.



I have served three Vassar College presidents, five deans, and five development directors, and have seen tens of thousands of students arrive through Vassar's Main Gate as freshmen and depart with diplomas four years later. Over these years, I have been fortunate to have near at hand many fine colleagues, whose intelligence, expertise, and goodwill have made the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center a place where one was regularly challenged to excel and rise to the next level of quality, while enjoying this pursuit with talented co-workers. The Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center staff are seasoned professionals with high standards and I have been fortunate to have had the chance to work with and learn from them.

Vassar and the greater Mid-Hudson Valley community have been at the heart of our mission of education. A key motivator for doing a good job at making the art museum the best it can be is to help instill pride in the graduates of Vassar College by knowing that their *alma mater* is contributing to the cultural life of the region and that its collections and programs have enhanced people's lives around the world. Our purpose over these many years has been simple—to be an edifying and life-enhancing agent in the lives of our visitors and, in short, have people leave our environs feeling better than when they arrived.

As the College searches for my successor, I am confident that a pool of excellent candidates will emerge and that what we have developed as the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center since 1991 will prove an exemplary place for the next director to work. I am also confident that those of you whom I have been privileged to know over the years and who have been our greatest source of support will rally behind the new vision and leadership with all the enthusiasm you have for so long shown me.

As a graduate of Vassar myself, I know that it is impossible to ever really leave this institution of learning, or to have it leave you. Also, closure is not my strong suit, so I will leave you with the promise that the Art Center and its supporters will always be in my heart. I also leave you with a request—to be kind and patient with that dapper, old geezer you might encounter shuffling around in some museum gallery you visit as he might be

Yours truly,
James Mundy
The Anne Hendricks Bass Director

A Golden Age of Art and Science

Past Time: Geology in European and American Art

ON VIEW

September 21–December 9, 2018

Organized by the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, *Past Time: Geology in European and American Art* is an interdisciplinary exhibition that weaves and blends the distinctive interests of art and science. This broad display of watercolors, drawings, oil sketches, and sketchbooks looks at studies made by European and American artists from the 1770s to the 1890s who were engaged with a new scientific investigation of the earth's crust. The inquiry came to be known as geology, and it emerged from a mix of interests in minerals and their applications in industry, curiosity about rocks and land features and how they were formed, and theories about how the earth began. Mineralogists, natural philosophers, mapmakers, clockmakers, ministers, and others with an avid interest in the earth helped to establish and develop the modern science.

Artists, especially landscapists, also became interested in this new, more intense way of looking at the land, and they tended to focus on particular motifs when they went out on their fact-finding trips to observe and sketch. They were artistic explorers, attracted to earth's prominent and dramatic features, including its caves, natural arches, rocks and boulders, mountains, volcanoes, glaciers, and cliffs. Western artistic interest in these prominent land features rose to great heights in the late eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries as modern geology developed and became very popular among wide audiences in Europe and America. In this golden age of art and science, artists investigated the land internationally, taking keen note of these landforms in their watercolors, drawings, and oil sketches.

From a topographical, often strata-focused interest to a later mode that evoked nature's great transformational powers over time, European and American artists pursued their cross-cultural travels in seeking geological wonders. Their searching and connecting to this new study of the earth became a passion. For both artists and geologists, the search also encompassed hypothetical theories about the mysteries of time and nature that lay beneath. Indeed, the broad sweep of new interest in geology originated in the empirical age of the Enlightenment when natural historians, geologists, and artists carefully recorded geological phenomena through their texts, drawings, or geological illustrations translated into published prints.

William Day, for example, a London linen draper and amateur geologist, made a sketching trip with artist John Webber in summer 1789 to Derbyshire. Both drew on the spot, working in a topographical approach and often rendering the same motif. In Dovedale they recorded Reynard's Hole, a limestone attraction carved in 325 million-year-old Carboniferous Period rocks that had formed from bits of fossilized shells and other marine organisms. Both works picturing the site are in the exhibition. A geologist, Day's more scientific eye emphasizes the clashing of strata, or sequential layers of rocks.



William Day (British, 1764–1807)
Renard's Hole, Dovedale, Derbyshire, 1789
Watercolor, pen and brown ink, black ink,
gray ink and graphite on cream laid paper
Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon
Collection
B1975.4.1495

Many works in the exhibition are ultimately rooted within the topographical tradition, exemplified by a vast body of worldwide travel account illustrations dependent on describing the topography of the land accurately. Prominent land features abound in these popular travel prints and coincide with the rise of geological field drawings and a new, more focused, scientific way of looking at the land during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Popular interest in geology grew quickly. By 1834 in the United States, it was seen as “the fashionable science of the day,” according to a writer in the *Knickerbocker* magazine. By the 1850s the number of watercolors, drawings, and oil studies showing an awareness of geology surged. Geology in the Victorian Age remained popular as a pastime, offering the pleasures of making direct, discriminating observations out in the field to generations of those social classes who had the means and the time.

With the gradual and widening appeal of geology, more artists became engaged with geological motifs as the new discipline grew to its height and was accessible through popular literature and printed illustrations. The geology fad was an example of the common knowledge then more widely shared among educated audiences. Not since the mid-nineteenth century have artists and scientists shared such closely overlapping mindsets.

A custom in Europe of intimate, open-air landscape oil sketches also became a vehicle for closer looking at geological motifs, and the exhibition features several of these fresh, jewel-like works. Some oil sketches on view rose from a strong tradition of open-air painting around Rome and Naples in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, while others in the exhibition are rooted in open-air landscape practices of the Düsseldorf and Hudson River Schools of painting.

Frederic Church, for instance, had a deep interest in geology and traveled the Alps on his journeys through Europe. In the nineteenth century, these monumental ranges attracted waves of artists and scientists interested in documenting the magnificent, otherworldly peaks and glaciers and tracking their history. The steep mountains and deep, jade-colored lake of the popular tourist site Königssee and nearby lake Obersee

attracted Church immensely, enticing him to visit almost every day for six weeks when he journeyed through the Alps in 1868. The Königssee entranced him, and he would stay there “12 to 15 hours daily—sketching furiously,” he noted in a letter.

His student, Jervis McEntee, made open-air sketching trips as well. Throughout his life, this Hudson River School painter rendered dramatically formed outcrops, boulders, and cliffs in his paintings, oil studies, and drawings. The artist hiked and painted and drew in the open air in the Catskills, Maine, the Adirondacks, and near his home in Rondout, New York (now a part of Kingston), inspired by Church and Asher B. Durand, who were both keenly

interested in geology. His *Rocks at the Corner*, a naturalistic oil study from 1859 of a rugged, overhanging outcrop, bears the mark of McEntee’s great interest in painting *en plein air* in the autumn and in delineating the rigid surfaces of the earth, especially its stratified and jumbled rocks.



Frederic Church (American, 1826–1900)
Königssee, Bavaria, 1868
Brush and oil paint, and graphite on thin cream paperboard
Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, Gift of Louis P. Church
1917-4-562-b



Jervis McEntee (American, 1828–1891)
Rocks at the Corner, 1859
Oil on canvas
Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, Vassar College, Gift of Ellen G. Milberg, class of 1960, on the occasion of her 50th reunion
2010.3.3

Past Time is accompanied by a catalogue that explores artists' connections with geology through traditions of topographical drawing and plein-air sketching, popular literature, and friendships. The book includes a guest essay by Jill S. Schneiderman, earth science professor at Vassar College and a consultant on the exhibition. Professor Schneiderman discusses several outstanding works in the exhibition through the eyes, insight, and knowledge of a working geologist. The ability to draw, and often color, field sketches with some competence was and still is an important factor in geology, she notes in her essay.

The exhibition features forty-nine works of art by leading artists of the period and numerous samples of natural specimens, including red sandstone from Petra, Jordan, and basalt from the Palisades of New Jersey. Both Olana—the home of Frederic Church—and the Warthin Geological Museum at Vassar are represented with a variety of rocks and fossils. Other works on view are by John Ruskin, J. M. W. Turner, Claude Bonnefond, Jacob Philipp Hackert, Asher B. Durand, and William Trost Richards, among several others. The show draws on Vassar's rich collection of Hudson River School paintings and drawings. Many works from the permanent collection are joined by generous loans from numerous major art museums.

The exhibition and catalogue benefit from the generous support of the Art Dealers Association of America Foundation, the Evelyn Metzger Exhibition Fund, and the Lucy Maynard Salmon Research Fund, awarded by the Vassar College Research Committee. When the exhibition concludes at Vassar, it will travel to the Herbert F. Johnson Museum at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, where it will be on view from February 16 to May 12, 2019.

Patricia Phagan
The Philip and Lynn Straus Curator of Prints and Drawings



Henry Moore (British, 1831–1895)
Mer de Glace, 1856
Watercolor and gouache over graphite
on cream wove paper
Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon
Collection
B1975.4.1344



Isaac Weld (Irish, 1774–1856)
Vesuvius in Eruption
Watercolor, gouache, graphite,
and wash on cream wove paper
Yale Center for British Art,
Paul Mellon Collection
B1981.25.2910

Tim Youd: *The Hudson Valley Retyped*

August 30–October 14, 2018

If you were on campus in April or May, you might have seen a portion of Los Angeles-based artist Tim Youd's three-week-long performance. The artist, who relocated multiple times during his time at Vassar, could be found in the galleries or in front of Matthew Vassar's oversized portrait at the Art Center, in the Students Building, in the Rose Parlor, in front of Main Gate, on the library lawn, and even outside the Crafted Kup, the popular coffee shop on Raymond Avenue. Youd's performance was part of an ongoing project, *100 Novels*, in which he retypes novels from beginning to end on the same make and model typewriter that the author used, in locations that are charged with significance in the author's biography. He retypes every word onto a single sheet of paper (backed by a support sheet) that is reinserted into the typewriter each time he reaches the bottom of the page. The artist explains that his retyping is a way of "crushing the words of the book into a formal image." The formal qualities of the finished artwork remind him of what he sees when he reads a book—two rectangles of black ink centered on two larger rectangles of white paper. He says, "We don't remember every word no matter how prodigious our memory—rather, we are left with some kind of layered impression." In essence, *100 Novels* is an investigation of memory, attention, and the devotional act of reading.

At Vassar, Youd retyped *The Group*, a fictional account of the post-graduation life of eight Vassar women by distinguished novelist, essayist, and critic Mary McCarthy. McCarthy, who graduated from Vassar in 1933, purportedly based her characters on her group of college

friends. In the novel, the young women strive for autonomy and independence in a period when a woman's role was still highly restricted by societal norms. McCarthy's characters struggle with numerous women's issues of the time including sexism in the workplace, financial difficulties, motherhood, family crises, and sexual relationships. Published in 1963, with a first printing of 75,000 copies, *The Group* was a sensation, appearing on the *New York Times* best-seller list. However, few college students today have heard of the book, much less read it. During his visit, Youd engaged with curious students and other passersby about the novel and his project, exposing them not just to a living artist at work, but to the rewards of reading a book that is relevant to a place one knows well. Youd describes his endeavor as a chance to truly engage with classic literature of the twentieth century. The *100 Novels* project



Tim Youd retyping *The Group* by Mary McCarthy on the library lawn, photo by Mariana Vincenti

is a long-term commitment—this year marks the 5-year point with a little more than half of the novels complete.

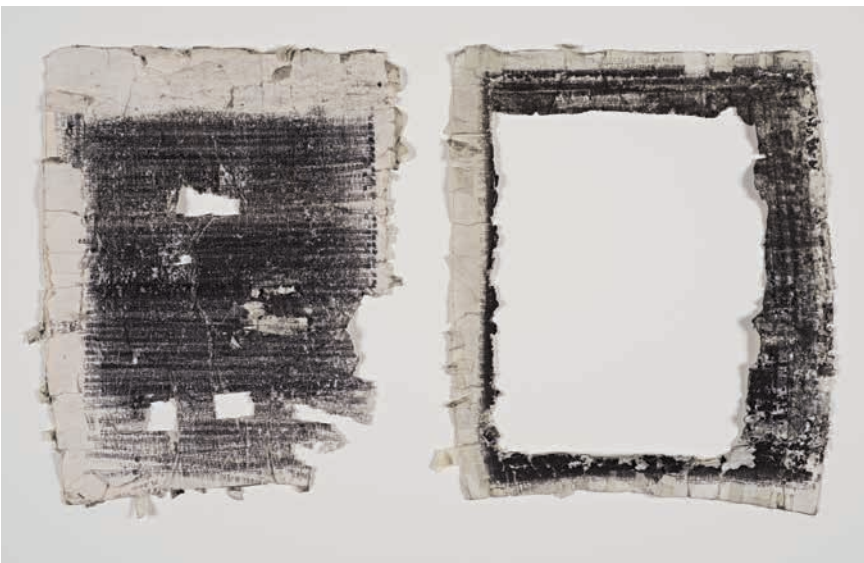
After retyping *The Group*, Youd spent all of June and July in the Hudson Valley retyping novels with a relationship to the region. He sat in a decommissioned guard tower at Sing Sing Correctional Facility in Ossining typing *Falconer* by John Cheever, who gathered information for the novel about prison life while teaching inmates there in the 1970s. Youd then spent a week in Nyack, the home of author Carson McCullers, retyping her novel *The Member of the Wedding* before setting up on the campus of Sarah Lawrence College in Yonkers to retype *Jack, A.M.* Homes's first novel which she wrote while she was a student there. During the first two weeks in July, Youd could be found on the grounds of the Thomas Cole National Historic Site in Catskill retyping *Light Years*, James Salter's work in which a couple moves from New York City to the idyllic Hudson Valley. Youd spent the remainder of July retyping the novel *Ironweed* by William Kennedy (as well as the screenplay which Kennedy also wrote) at the Albany Institute of History and Art, the streets of Hudson (where the movie adaptation was filmed), and in the Fields of Art Omi in Ghent. For the last of the Hudson Valley performances, Youd returned to Vassar to retype *The Complete Poems: 1927–1979* by Elizabeth Bishop, Vassar class of 1934. With poetry and screenplays Youd deviates a bit from his own strict rules for retyping novels; he symbolizes these transgressions by using red ink for poems and pressure-sensitive film instead of paper for screenplays. In these works color functions not only as a formal element but as a way to code these categories as separate from but related to the novels.

The results of Youd's summer performances are on view in the Focus Gallery exhibition *Tim Youd: The Hudson Valley Retyped*. Ultimately, Youd's project creates alternative narrative frameworks for questioning how we relate to seeing, reading, and even typing text and how these experiences can shift the meaning of literature for us. His work blurs the boundaries of performance and visual art and, in doing so, encourages the viewer to bear witness to the act of creation, calling attention to the tedious and sometimes grueling aspects of art making, whether producing a work of fiction or an art object to be encountered visually. Youd reminds us that art is not all passion, inspiration, and flare; rather, creating can be a slow, painstaking process that deserves attention and contemplation over a sustained period.

The exhibition was funded by the Helen Forster Novy 1928 Fund.

Mary-Kay Lombino

The Emily Hargroves '57 and Richard B. Fisher Curator and
Director for Strategic Planning



Tim Youd, *Mary McCarthy's The Group*,
487 pages retyped on a Remington 3
typewriter; Vassar College, Poughkeepsie,
NY, April 19– May 9, 2018, 2018
Black typewriter ribbon ink and paper

Raquel Rabinovich: The Reading Room

Thompson Memorial Library
October 25–December 20, 2018

In collaboration with the Vassar College Libraries and to complement the concurrent exhibition *Past Time: Geology in European and American Art*, the Art Center presents a solo exhibition of works by the artist Raquel Rabinovich. Born in Argentina in 1929, Rabinovich moved to the United States in 1967 and now lives and works in the Hudson Valley. Throughout her extensive career, she has investigated how that which has been concealed emerges into view—how to make the invisible visible. As a result, her works are defined by their durations: they are created over long periods and they are best experienced over a prolonged period and/or repeated viewings. The exhibition features mixed-media works on paper that span from 1978 to 2017.

The exhibition title *The Reading Room* refers to the location where the works are installed (an intervention of sorts into the south reading room of Vassar's main library) but also serves as a metaphor for a possible approach to the work. The selections on view each represent an attempt to transcend the routine of every day, inviting viewers to enter into a place of contemplation in

which many layers of meaning can be read in, or into, the individual artworks. Rabinovich describes this approach as a language of metaphors. In a recent interview she said, "Beyond the language of the novel or the poem or the story, there is always an element that is beyond the words, in between the lines, which is not literal. And that world is, for me, a wonderful world. I love that world. I resonate with that world."¹

For instance, in her ongoing series *River Library*, the artist uses the mud from rivers around the world as a drawing medium. The layers of mud function as texts that carry latent histories of the rivers and the civilizations that have lived along their banks

for millennia. About these histories the artist writes, "These drawings are for me like manuscripts, like pages of unwritten texts of those histories, at once literal and metaphorical."²

Also on view are works from three other series, *Temples of the Blind Windows*, *Enfolded Darkness*, and *Thresholds*, which all use language or numerical systems as a foundation. By layering symbols and materials on top of one another, Rabinovich often deliberately obscures hidden meanings and messages that unfold slowly before the viewer with time. Much like the books found on the shelves that surround the exhibition, the more one examines them closely, the more they reveal.

The exhibition is a collaboration with the Vassar College Libraries and is funded by the Virginia Herrick Deknatel Fund.

Mary-Kay Lombino

¹ "In Conversation: Raquel Rabinovich with Ann McCoy," *The Brooklyn Rail*, November 5, 2014.

² Ibid.



Raquel Rabinovich (American
b. 1929, Argentina)
River Library Scrolls, 2016, detail
Mississippi River and Nile River
mud and glue on Essindia paper
Courtesy of the artist

Raquel Rabinovich (American
b. 1929, Argentina)
*River Library 431 with Punctuation
Marks*, 2016-17
Nile River mud, pencil and glue
on Essindia paper
Courtesy of the artist



From January 17 to February 24, 2019, the Focus Gallery will feature *The Silver in the Attic: Historical Archaeology* at Vassar College, a display of decorative arts found in the attic of a Vassar building constructed in 1896. The exhibition is the result of a collaboration among the Art Center, Associate Professor of Anthropology April M. Beisaw, and students Kelly Bernatzky '19 and Emma Wiley '20. This project is somewhat unusual for the museum, as American decorative arts have not been a traditional area of collecting or display for the Art Center. Additionally, the silver objects shown here—primarily hollowware related to table service—are presented as artifacts rather than fine art, in contrast to the Art Center's more customary art historical approach in its exhibition program. This departure arose from the Art Center's commitment to interdisciplinary projects undertaken with departments from across campus and, in this instance, it aids in revealing more about the enigmatic history of the silver.

The provenance of these items, most of which date from 1900–1950, is largely unknown. This mystery motivated their study as well as the present exhibition: how did this collection come to be? To learn the life-story of each object's use and discard, the techniques of historical archaeology were employed. Analysis was conducted by the students, who had received training in Hudson Valley history and archaeology through coursework and participation in excavations at the national historic site, Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt, in Hyde Park, New York. The objects chosen for closer study were selected based on the presence of identifying characteristics such as makers' marks and monograms that in some instances disclosed the items' manufacturers and owners. Meanwhile, the presence of use wear, breaks, and repairs provided information on if, and how, the items were handled. In order to explore further the context in which the silver was used, the students also examined historic photographs and archival records, examples of which are on view. The methods of historical archaeology illuminated the web of connections that the college forged in the early twentieth century—exemplified by one group of items on display that commemorate the marriage between a Vassar student and a cadet from nearby West Point. Finally, some of the silver is shown alongside objects from the Art Center's collection in order to demonstrate how the methods of historical archaeology can be applied to items from across time and geography.

As luxury artifacts, these silver objects are manifestations of past peoples' aspirations. Together they tell stories about the people who owned, used, and donated them to Vassar. While the decorative arts in *Silver in the Attic* may not be exceptionally old or even rare, to an anthropologist they are proxies for people whose lives brought their prized possessions to rest in a Vassar attic. This valuable approach to objects can find a home in the art museum as well.

Elizabeth Nogrady

Andrew W. Mellon Curator of Academic Programs

(with text adapted from April M. Beisaw, Associate Professor of Anthropology)



American, 20th Century
Gorham Manufacturing Company
Tea Pot (Plymouth design
featuring monogram ALT-WWW
[Almira L. Troy, Vassar College,
Class of 1920, and Walter W.
Warner West Point Class of 1917])
Collection of Vassar College

“I just draw by my own mission.”

Freehand: Drawings by Inez Nathaniel Walker

February 1–April 14, 2019

Inez Nathaniel Walker made her first works of art while she was serving a sentence at a maximum-security prison for killing a man who had abused her. The events of Walker's life are difficult to ascertain yet are nonetheless relevant to the story behind her artwork coming to Vassar's galleries this spring semester. She was born into poverty as Inez Steadman in 1907 in Sumter, South Carolina, where she received very little formal education. Orphaned at a young age, she was taken in by a cousin and married in her early teens to a man with the surname Nathaniel with whom she had four children. During the Great Migration when millions of African Americans relocated from the rural South to the urban North, Walker moved to Pennsylvania to escape the drudgery of farm labor. After working for a time in a pickle factory in Philadelphia, she moved to Port Byron, New York, to work in an apple processing plant. In the early 1970s she was convicted of criminally negligent homicide and served approximately two years at the

Bedford Hills Correctional Facility in New York State. While incarcerated, she began to draw, using whatever materials she could find—usually pencil or pen on prison newsletters, training leaflets, scrap paper—creating remarkable portraits of her fellow inmates as a refuge from the daily adversity and hardship of prison existence. Like many other self-taught artists, Walker's motivations for making art stemmed from her own instinctive survival skills to help her cope with the various anxieties of her situation including fear, loss, loneliness, and regret. Referring to that period in her life, she remarked, “A woman got to keep her head around her! There were all those bad girls talking dirty all the time, so I just sit down at a table and draw.”¹

An English teacher in the prison named Elizabeth Bayley noticed Walker's drawings after class one day and decided to show them to her friend Pat O'Brien Parsons, Vassar class of 1951, who ran a nearby gallery at the time. Parsons quickly took an interest in Walker and the two became good friends. She encouraged Walker's drawing and provided her with art supplies including colored pencils, crayons, felt markers, poster board, and other types of durable paper. Parsons found a market for Walker's work and collected many of her drawings for her own collection. This led Parsons to a life of collecting and showing the work of self-taught artists. Her gallery, Webb and Parsons, which was located



Inez Nathaniel Walker (American, 1907-1990)
Man with Goatee, 1974
 Colored pencil and pencil on paper
 Bequest of Pat O'Brien Parsons, class of 1951
 2014.16.15

in Bedford Village, New Canaan, CT, and later Burlington, VT, featured Walker's work in exhibitions yearly between 1973 and 1984. Parsons later donated and bequeathed more than one hundred works by various artists (including Walker) to the Art Center and other museums including the American Folk Art Museum in New York City which now holds the largest number of works by Walker with over 400 drawings and sketchbooks.

In 1972, when Walker was released from prison, she returned to her life as a migrant worker and continued to draw. She remarried, gaining the name Walker; she later dropped her first husband's name and began signing her works simply Inez Walker. Her drawings have been included in numerous group exhibitions including *Common Ground/Uncommon Vision* in 1993 at the Milwaukee Art Museum, which showcased work from the collection of scholars and collectors Michael and Julie Hall. In addition, Walker's drawings have been featured in the *New York Times* as well as in several encyclopedic publications of American folk art in the twentieth century. During her lifetime she is known to have completed more than 1000 drawings. She spent the last years of her life in a psychiatric hospital in Willard, New York, where she died in 1990.

The exhibition *Freehand* gathers fifteen works by Walker from the permanent collection, most of which were donated by Parsons, along with a number of key loans from private and public collections to form the artist's first one-person museum exhibition. Seen together, these drawings offer a window into the worldview of the artist who had an unmistakable fervor for drawing repetitive lines and curvilinear forms to describe the features of the people around her. Even though she never drew from life, each portrait is an individual with distinctive features. She once confided, "I can't look at nobody and draw. Now that's one thing I wished I could do, but I can't. I just draw by my own mission."²

Walker's richly patterned works combine meticulous detail and playful simplicity, forming expressive depictions of her subjects' personalities and physical attributes. Her compositions recall those of other self-taught artists in their flattened perspective and all-over design. Many of her drawings have a compulsive, accumulative quality to them, often referred to as *horror vacui*, the Latin term used for the need to fill blank space on a surface. Her drawings are painstakingly detailed in the areas that depict hair, patterned clothing fabric, and wall and room decorations. Such characteristics are often noted in the work of self-taught artists. Walker, therefore, can be considered among such better-known artists as Madge Gill, Johann Garber, and Martín Ramírez. In comparison, however, Walker's patterns are looser and more buoyant and her figures' ballooning heads display an array of rich colors ranging from soft peach to reddish orange to the occasional pure black. The stubby, rounded hands that cap the ends of u-shaped arms look almost embryonic. Her focus on the soft curves of the human form and her particular concentration on facial features, especially evident in her precise treatment of each curved eyelash carefully drawn around the edges of her signature



Inez Nathaniel Walker (American, 1907-1990)
Seated Girl (in profile), 1975
Colored pencil and pencil on paper
Bequest of Pat O'Brien Parsons, class of 1951
2014.16.10

large, frontal eyes, recalls the work of self-taught artists such as Lee Godie, Dwight MacIntosh, Minnie Evans, and Edward Deeds. Taken on their own, Walker's expressive portraits draw the viewer in with their distinct style, exemplified by her unusual sense of proportion, placement, and graphic sensibility. While her life circumstances are an interesting back-story to the works, more important are the visual characteristics that permeate her drawings, the simple directness of her art, and the eloquent act of expression through portraiture.

Freehand is supported by the Friends of the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center Exhibition Fund.

Mary-Kay Lombino

¹ Elinor Lander Horwitz, *Contemporary American Folk Artists* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1975), 58.

² *Ibid.*, 60.



Inez Nathaniel Walker (American, 1907-1990)
Double Portrait, 1975
Graphite and colored pencil on paper
Gift from the collection of Pat O'Brien Parsons,
class of 1951
1996.21.6

Membership

July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018

The following list represents members who joined the Art Center or renewed their membership between July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018.

Directors Circle (\$5000+)

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Amy Parker Litzenberger '77 P '10
Arthur Loeb
Lynn Gross Straus '46
Mary Humphreys Waite '64

Benefactor (\$2500-\$4999)

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Sotheby's

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Terry DeRoy Gruber '75
Stephanie S. Guyot-Sionnest '15
Nancy Gail Harrison '74
Ann Snyder Harrod '60
James K. Kloppenburg '77 P '11 P '14
Judith Haft Levick '53
Linda Carr Milne-Tyte '62
Belle Krasne Ribicoff '45 P '78
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David Smiley '80
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Joan Hirschhorn Bright '83
Eliza Childs '71 P '07
Mary Lloyd Estrin '66 P '01 P '06
Sheila ffolliott '67
Pamela Miller Gerard '56
Lucy Mayer Harrop '74 &
Mark Delavan Harrop '76
Ann Rasmussen Kinney '53 &
Mr. Gilbert H. Kinney
Mary W. Lunt
Elizabeth Cabot Lyman '64
Cebert S. J. Noonan '84
Marian Phelps Pawlick '47
Sally Lyman Rheinfank '63
Ferdinand & Lois Vetare
Sue Gotshal Weinberg '51
Hope Henneke Wismar '57

Sustaining (\$250-\$499)

Jane Callomon Arkus '50
Sally Thackston Butler '52 P '77
Robin Rowan Clarke '60
Jeanne Del Casino '74

Michael J. Deutsch '76
Stephen Dewhurst '75
Karen Domino '73
Tania Goss Evans '59
Margot Hirsh Feely '52
Kathy Mae Kelsey Foley '74
Fay Gambee '62
Enid Fessenden Gifford '45*
Diana Stern Goldin '63
Gloria Shaw Hamilton '41 P '68
Margaret Venecek Johnson '84
Ellen Lehman '66
Candace Jenks Lewis '66 P '01
Jean Humason McCullough '51
Peter McGinnis
Florence K. Millar '44
Caroline Morris '65
Sylvia Allen Nelson '53
Nikki Poulos '89 P '17
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**CURRENT AND UPCOMING
EXHIBITIONS**

*Past Time: Geology in European and
American Art*

September 21–December 9, 2018

*Freehand: Drawings by Inez Nathaniel
Walker*

February 1–April 14, 2019

*An Era of Opportunity: Three Decades
of Acquisitions*

April 26–September 8, 2019

SELECTED OUTGOING LOANS

Fernand Leger, *Cubistic Still Life*, **Max Beckmann**,
Circus Horse, and **Max Ernst**, *Untitled* to Hofstra
University Museum (Sep 4–Dec 14, 2018)

Kay Sage, *Small Portrait* to Williams College
Museum of Art (Sep 20, 2018–Jan 27, 2019)

André Masson, *Les Cometes* to UC Berkeley Art
Museum and Pacific Film Archive
(Nov 7, 2018–Feb 28, 2019) and Mead Museum
of Art (Mar 22–Jun 2, 2019)

John Marin, *Thirty Fifth Street and Fifth Avenue
at Noon* and **Henry Ossawa Tanner**, *A View of
Palestine* to Wallraf-Richartz Museum, Köln
(Nov 23, 2018–Mar 24, 2019)

Art at Vassar

A publication for the members of
The Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center

Fall/Winter 2018/19



The Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center
Vassar College
124 Raymond Avenue
Poughkeepsie, New York 12604

<http://fllac.vassar.edu>



John Marin (American, 1872-1953)
Thirty Fifth Street and Fifth Avenue at Noon
Watercolor on cream wove paper mounted on paperboard
Bequest of Mrs. Arthur Schwab (Edna Bryner, class of 1907)
1967.31.5

On the cover:
William Trost Richards (American, 1833-1905)
Lands End, Cornwall
Pen and ink on cardstock
Gift of Ellen G. Milberg, class of 1960, in honor of Patricia Phagan
2017.45.4

