



# Art at Vassar



A publication for the members of  
The Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center  
Fall 2010



## Finding the Time to Look

The content of this issue of *Art at Vassar* revolves around looking—how contemporary photographers have recently studied life on Vassar’s campus; the very intimate experience of a student looking at a print; how students react to the interactive experience of looking at Duchamp’s roto-reliefs. The reality of living in the year 2010 encompasses the fragmenting of one’s attention as it becomes distracted by technology and various media. The ability and time to focus and concentrate have become increasingly difficult for people to acquire. This can be particularly true of a visit to an art collection where one feels the need to somehow “consume” all the visual data that is being presented, plus absorb the edifying experiences of reading interpretive texts, listening to voice-over audio guides, manipulating the computer terminals in galleries, etc. All this while you field text messages, tweet your own reactions to the works at hand, and snap photos on your smart phone. In a recent newspaper article on the reality television program *Work of Art: The Next Great Artist*, the resident expert/advisor to the emerging artists, himself a successful auction house executive, seemed to reflect this culture of nano-slices when quoted that he can evaluate a work “within the first split second.” Such a skill is surely a “must have” in the kaleidoscopic variety present in today’s art world. To the outside observer, however, this claim came might seem an impossible-to-prove hubris or some kind of inbred visual perfect pitch, bestowed on the rare individual. His ability, however, is actually arrived at via decades of looking more leisurely at the “best of breed” artists from different periods and their works, production and making comparative judgments based on this now hardwired visual context. Malcolm Gladwell surveys talents such as these in his influential book, *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking* where individuals from art connoisseurs to tennis professionals share a common ability to “know” things faster than any seeming analysis might take place.

Yet, in another story in the *New York Times*, a well-known, successful Old Master dealer lamented that the skills of connoisseurship, that ability to discern from looking at a work of art, its time and point of origin, its condition, quality and even the hand of the individual artist responsible for it, is not being taught successfully in the college and university art history programs of today in favor of more interpretive study. The paradox at play here is that the ability to discern in a “blink” the identity or quality of a work of art takes quite a long period of exposure on behalf of the student.

To be able to judge quality, of an idea or a work of art, should be the *sine qua non* of any substantial level of education. In a seminar I teach here at Vassar, we study all the physical, non-narrative qualities of works of art, including several sessions on connoisseurship. I instruct the students that before you put your formidable powers of interpretation to work, make sure that the object is really what it is presented to be. How foolish one could look when discoursing at length about the meaning of something that turns out to be a forgery, or completely repainted, or a copy! Our Old Master dealer friend mentioned above should take some measure of comfort that, at Vassar, we are aware that being able to tell the difference among “good”, “better,” and “best” applies not just to art but to all fields of scholarship. The Vassar teaching philosophy of “going to the source” is particularly suited to the exercise of looking at original works of art and judging them first-hand with the proper guidance and instruction. But this fact does not just apply to art. I can think of no more accomplished connoisseurs than my colleagues in the sciences who must look at cells through a microscope and make judgments based on their powers of observation. Is there a more expert connoisseur than the physician who can interpret the messages held in an ex-ray or a CT scan? Connoisseurship should not be viewed as some elitist relic from the rarified world of Henry James novels, where it exists as an end in itself, but rather as a formidable tool that can make the passage to the end goal more secure. But to forge this skill one needs the time and opportunity to look hard and long and while looking to ask questions of the object under examination. “Are your colors true?” “Has your canvas been cut off at the top?” “Was your artist left or right-handed?” I tell my students to interrogate the object and today they can even do this aloud in museums without fear of embarrassment. People will just think they’re talking on the wireless headset of their smart phone.

James Mundy  
The Anne Hendricks Bass Director



# A Bright Jewel that Still Shines

## UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

The cover of the February 1, 1937 issue of LIFE magazine featured a black-and-white photograph of a brick wall and at the lower left corner stands a female figure dressed in tennis whites, holding a racket at the ready next to a small caption reading “Indoor Tennis at Vassar”. Inside, a seven-page feature entitled “Vassar: A Bright Jewel in U.S. Educational Diadem” was generously illustrated with twenty-five delightfully compelling photographs by Albert Eisenstaedt. While much has changed on campus since 1937 when tuition was \$1,200, breakfast was at 7:30am and curfew at 10:30pm, Vassar still remains a fascinating subject for fine art photographers. Evidence of this fact will be on view this spring in an exhibition entitled *150 Years Later: New Photography by Tina Barney, Tim Davis, and Katherine Newbegin*. The exhibition opens in January with the reopening of the Art Center and the kick-off for sesquicentennial events across campus and beyond.



Life Magazine  
February 1, 1937 cover

As part of the campus-wide celebration of Vassar College’s 150th anniversary, the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center commissioned three photographers to come to campus and create a new body of work inspired by what they saw here. These three artists, Tina Barney, Tim Davis, and Katherine Newbegin, were selected because each of them has particular style and a unique set of interests to bring to the project. Tina Barney, who is known for photographing private moments among the elite, achieves intimate access to her subjects. Her work explores relationships between individuals, focusing on personal connection and disconnection, heritage, class, and self-presentation. Tim



Albert Eisenstaedt  
(German, 1898- 1995)  
*Rear view of students walking  
on the Quad,  
Vassar College, 1936*  
Gelatin silverprint  
8 x 9 ¾ inches  
Gift from the Michael and  
Joyce Axelrod Collection  
(Joyce Jacobson, class of 1961)  
2008.26.3



Paul Strand (American, 1890-1976)  
*Vassar College Library, c. 1912*  
 Platinum print with hand coloring  
 22 ½ x 19 inches  
 Gift of Howard Greenberg  
 1988.7



Rosalie (Rollie) McKenna  
 (American, 1918-2003)  
*Agnes Claflin, ca.1950*  
 Gelatin silverprint  
 10 x 8 inches  
 Gift of Philip Claflin  
 1983.14.1



Davis explores the everyday absurdities that make up our day-to-day experience of the world. His photographs delve into formal aspects of photography such as light, transparency, and abstraction as well as socially engaged documentary. Katherine Newbegin explores hidden, often mysterious spaces such as basements, abandoned buildings, and neglected old hotels and theaters that are devoid of human presence yet full of vague evidence of use and inhabitation. After numerous visits to Poughkeepsie and many hours clocked in dorm rooms, classrooms, basements, townhouses, and athletic facilities the photographs have all been shot. A selection of approximately forty works will be featured in the exhibition and accompanying catalogue.

This new commission follows a strong photographic legacy that dates back to the early part of the twentieth century. Throughout the history of the college photographers have come to campus to capture the architecture, people, and lifestyle. In addition to Eisenstaedt's project for LIFE, Paul Strand photographed several Vassar buildings in 1915, some of which are in the Art Center collection, including two stunning platinum prints with hand coloring of the library and the chapel. In the 1950s Rosalie (Rollie) McKenna produced remarkable gelatin silver prints of Skinner Hall and Ferry House as well as several other celebrated sites around campus. While photographing Vassar is not a new idea, however, the works created for this exhibition promise to give new life to the notion of seeing Vassar through the eyes of artists. The resulting exhibition will present surprisingly diverse images that together capture the character of what Vassar is today.

Mary-Kay Lombino  
*The Emily Hargroves Fisher '57 and Richard B. Fisher*  
 Curator and Assistant Director of Strategic Planning

## History in the Making: The Early Development of the Print Collection at Vassar College

FROM THE COLLECTION



Rembrandt van Rijn (Dutch, 1606-1669)  
*Jan Six*, 1647  
Etching, drypoint and burin in black ink on  
cream laid paper with a foolscap watermark  
9 7/9 x 7 7/8 inches  
Gift of Dr. Henry M. Sanders  
1920.1.13

Now numbering almost 6,000 works, the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center print collection began with Matthew Vassar's gift to the college in 1864 of over 1,400 original engravings and etchings, reproductive prints after the Old Masters, and eighteenth- and nineteenth-century prints documenting mostly British landscape, ancient ruins, and Gothic architecture. Part of a founding gift that included small, intimate Hudson River School paintings and hundreds of appealing English and continental topographical drawings, these works were purchased from Reverend Dr. Elias Lyman Magoon, chairman of the committee on the Art Gallery, founding trustee, and Baptist minister.

Most of the first prints accessioned into the permanent collection were pasted along with drawings and photographs in albums kept on the drawer-shelves of the Art Gallery, first located in Main Building. The Magoon albums amounted to an encyclopedic visual survey of Western culture and history by a minister, collector, and antiquarian working from his homes first in New York City and then Albany, New York (from 1857). The collection was augmented with his own purchasing trip in Europe in 1854 and through agents thereafter.

Matthew Vassar's founding gift included original Northern European prints, many of them modest impressions, by Albrecht Dürer, Lucas van Leyden, Adriaen van Ostade,





Albrecht Dürer (German, 1471-1528)  
*The Virgin with the Infant Christ  
 and St. Anne*, ca. 1501  
 Engraving on paper  
 5 5/8 x 2 13/16 inches  
 Gift of Matthew Vassar  
 1864.1.320

the German Little Masters, and others. At the time of this first gift, however, prints were chiefly known in America for reproducing famous paintings, drawings, or etchings, for illustrating books and periodicals, and for making popular, inexpensive designs available to a large public. For Magoon, they largely served as tools in educating one about great art and architecture. In a letter to Matthew Vassar, he acknowledged his albums' "vast number of engravings, beginning with the revival of art, and showing the progress to the present times." Magoon also focused on moments within the Christian religious narrative and the history of Christian architectural monuments, the latter central to the study of the fine arts because of their "enduring" quality.

Magoon had collected the prints in his albums roughly from 1854 to 1860, a time when reproductive prints proliferated and when picturesque book illustrations documenting inspirational architectural subjects had reached their zenith. It was also a time when reproductive etchings after Rembrandt, Claude Lorraine, and others, were popular. Indeed, Magoon acquired for his albums several examples by Louis Marvy, Charles François Daubigny, and others of copies and reproductive prints after the Old Masters.

In 1864, the first report of the committee for the Art Gallery noted the need to have "choice impressions" of original prints. After Matthew Vassar's initial gift, however, the well-printed reproductive engraving characterized the next prints acquired for the gallery. In 1916 fine reproductive wood engravings by the Englishman and onetime Poughkeepsie resident Timothy Cole came into the collection, as did exquisitely rendered prints from longwearing steel plates by James Smillie of his own and others' Hudson River School landscape designs.

In 1920 there was a change in focus for print collecting at Vassar, when the Reverend Dr. Henry M. Sanders, print collector, trustee from 1895 to 1921, and member of the Art Committee, donated over a dozen prints, including beautiful impressions by Rembrandt (including *Jan Six*), Claude, and Rembrandt enthusiast Francis Seymour Haden, emphatically bringing the collection into the realm of the fashionable etching revival.

During this same decade many American artists used prints to look at the world in sometimes stark, more expressive terms, and in 1928 current Vassar students and their parents were instrumental in giving or purchasing works for the gallery, including lithographs by George Bellows and Yasuo Kuniyoshi. The Art Club that year donated the quintessential etching of urban American isolation—*Night Shadows*—by Edward Hopper, close friend of Vassar's professor of painting, Clarence K. Chatterton. In the meantime, new faculty with modernist interests arrived at the Art Department, including Agnes Rindge (she later became chairman and gallery director) and Alfred Barr, Jr. (he later became founding director of the Museum of Modern Art).

Donations of prints expanded in the 1930s. The growing number of print gifts and their importance to teaching led to the first print gallery being created in Taylor Hall in the fall of 1933. Vassar received bequests from Mary S. Bedell, class of 1873, and Margaret S. Bedell, class of 1880, of several evanescent, sketch-like lithographs and drypoints of London and Venice by James McNeill Whistler and Cadwallader Washburn. Evelyn Borchard Metzger, class of 1932, gave a woodcut by Dürer and an impressive engraving by his contemporary Heinrich Aldegrever, the purchases made by Vassar professor Oliver S. Tonks with Knoedler and Co. in New York. Another student of the class of 1932, Mildred Akin Lynes, donated Dürer's *Madonna with the Pear*, of 1511. Mary Thaw Thompson, class of 1877, gave over one hundred mostly English and French portrait engravings, with dozens of images of writers, politicians, royals, and aristocrats, many of the Georgian period.

Mary Conover Mellon, class of 1926, gave a suite of lithographs by Boston painter William Horace Littlefield, heralding gifts of contemporary prints during the Depression decade, and Caroline Bush Emeny, class of 1931, through her mother provided funds for Ernest Fiene's Woodstock scene *Spring Landscape*. Agnes Rindge gave prints by modernists Arthur B. Davies, Marie Laurencin, and Henri Matisse.

In 1941, the Warburg collection of 170 mostly German and Dutch Old Master prints entered the collection, a gift from Mrs. Felix Warburg and her children in recognition of the great role that the appreciation of art played at the college, the gift inspired by

the Warburgs' granddaughter Carol Rothschild Noyes, class of 1939. A grand gift, the Warburg legacy added unparalleled heft to the print resources already begun at Vassar College.

Invaluable in teaching, the print collection at Vassar can throw sparks in students' eyes. Over the years students have viewed prints from the Warburg family and other generous donors in sessions in the print room and the Project Gallery. Indeed, the presence of such a deep resource of original master prints means that generations of students can study these works in-depth at Vassar rather than commuting frequently to museums in New York City. For example, for the past several years, Professor Susan Kuretsky has directed a seminar at the Art Center on master printmakers Dürer and Rembrandt. It has been my pleasure to watch students' eyes light up at seeing our impression of Rembrandt's *Jan Six*, for example, marveling at its smoky blankets of delicate black lines. Why did Rembrandt make such a virtuosic portrait? The seminar is centered round the art of looking, or rather, the art and craft of learning to look, and asking questions of everything one sees in a work of art. It is a workshop approach, with students offering their own views and insights, honed by well-analyzed readings, close looking, and lively class discussion.

Classes in diverse departments across campus visit the print room, and this process of looking and discovering repeats itself. This also happens in displays of prints in the Project Gallery, the space dedicated to exhibiting works of art for specific classes. Here, groups of Art 105 students confront Dürer and Rembrandt as well. As in the seminar, students compare and probe, ponder and dissect, and learn about an important resource at Vassar that is theirs to view.

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



Edward Hopper, (American, 1882-1967)  
*Night Shadows*, 1921  
Etching on paper  
13 7/16 x 16 1/8 inches  
Gift of the Art Club  
1928.2

Marcel Duchamp (French, 1887-1968)  
 Sixth disk front: No. 11 Eclipse Totale (Total Eclipse)  
 / back: No. 12 Spirale Blanche (White Spiral), from  
 Rotoreliefs (Optical Disks), 1935, 2nd edition (1953)  
 Offset lithography on cardboard disks  
 7 7/8 inches in diameter  
 Gift of Jane C. and Leon A. Arkus (Jane L. Calloman,  
 class of 1950), 1991.19.1.6l&k



This past spring in Art 106, when it came time to study original works of modern art using the Art Center collection, we began by playing Marcel Duchamp's rotoreliefs, works that Duchamp had printed up in 1935 as part of his ongoing interest in making works that were not works of art. He had just finished making the *Green Box*, which contained fine printed facsimiles of his notes for the *Large Glass* (Vassar has a *Green Box*, given by Katharine Kuh (169/300)). Were the rotoreliefs also something like notes, this time looking forward to something not yet known? They fell outside the usual categories, that much was sure; they were two-sided circular prints designed to be placed on a turntable, just like a record, and spun. They would, therefore, strike one immediately as soundless, but as they rotated, fanned and bore down, the designs acquired volume and objects became visible, ballooning up and out: a Chinese lantern, a soft-boiled egg, a table lamp, a Bohemian glass, a Japanese fish circling in a bowl, a hot-air balloon, hoops, corollas, a cage, a snail, a white spiral and a total eclipse.

They did not comprise a set of anything. They are meant to be seen with one eye. It is possible, because of their motion, to perceive these things in three-dimensional depth using only one eye, something not normally possible. Scientists attuned to physiological optics grew interested in the rotoreliefs but it had not been Duchamp's intention to make a scientific object. He would also have smiled at the idea of the Art 106ers comparing his disks to the advances of Alberti six centuries before. He himself by then had absolutely no ambition to inscribe himself in the great tradition. He outlined the project to Katherine Dreier, the pioneer whose great collection of modern art would go to Yale, and called it a playtoy.<sup>1</sup> He hoped to market it. Therefore he took the rotoreliefs to the Concours Lepine, the trade fair where inventors brought their prototypes and new products, and set up a booth. No one there saw any commercial or other possibility and Duchamp concluded that, at least in that way, the project had flopped. When in March 1937, the magazine *Orbes* and the Hot-Club of France organized an exhibition and an evening of jazz at La Cachette, a Parisian jazz club, the rotoreliefs turned patiently, it was said, in a corner, part of a good time that no one wanted to classify or leave.<sup>2</sup>

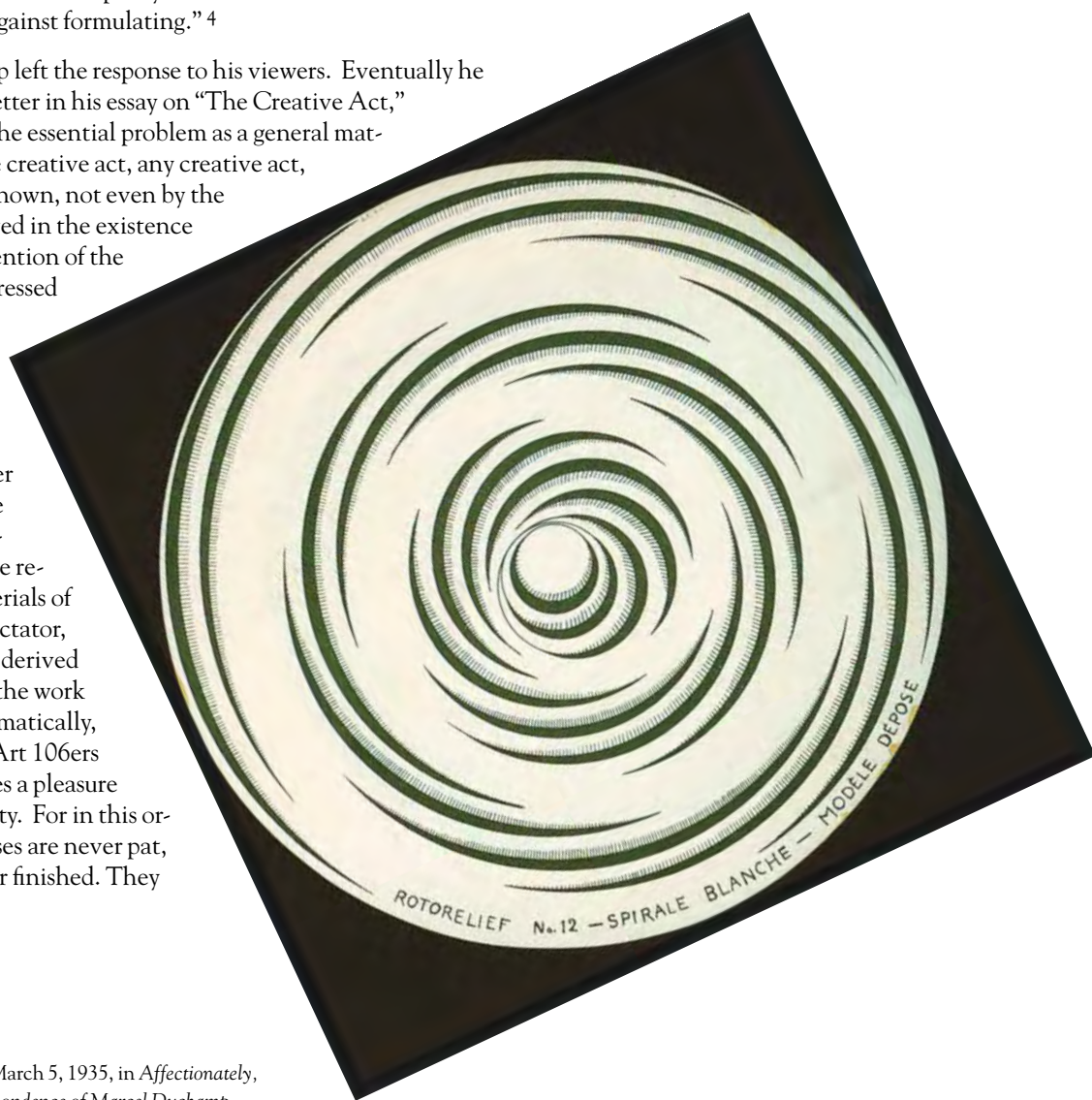
Still, the rotoreliefs turned in his own mind as well and Duchamp worked privately with the directions his odd, vicious circles had suggested. They seemed to remain extremely fertile. In 1943 he told Man Ray that he was working on a technicolor film,



never finished, that showed them turning (one imagines that it would have been like *Anemic Cinema*, the film of rotating abstract geometries alternating with turning disks of impossible, and dirty puns, made in 1926, the work from which the rotoreliefs had been derived).<sup>3</sup> For the rest of his life, periodically, he would issue new editions of the rotoreliefs—in 1953, 1959, 1963 and 1965. Vassar owns two copies of the 1953 edition, organized for the occasion of a small exhibition at Rose Fried Gallery of his and Francis Picabia's works. One should not make too much of this. Belle Krasne (Ribicoff) in her capacity as editor of *Art Digest* had interviewed Duchamp the year before and he had told her, "I still have a decided antipathy for estheticians. I'm anti-artistic. I'm anti-nothing. I'm revolting against formulating."<sup>4</sup>

In other words, Duchamp left the response to his viewers. Eventually he would explain himself better in his essay on "The Creative Act," where he would lay out the essential problem as a general matter: the real extent of the creative act, any creative act, could not be unified or known, not even by the artist.<sup>5</sup> Duchamp believed in the existence of a gap between the intention of the artist that never was expressed and the unintentionally expressed elements in the final work. He called this gap the "art coefficient" and noted that the artist could never hope to surmount it. The work's weight on the aesthetic scale could only be refined from the inert materials of the work itself by the spectator, much as sugar, he said, is derived from molasses. And yet the work of art would not be, automatically, sweet at all. It is, as the Art 106ers would tell you, sometimes a pleasure and always a responsibility. For in this order of things, the responses are never pat, never closed down, never finished. They keep turning too.

Molly Nesbit  
Professor of Art



1 Letter to Katherine Dreier, March 5, 1935, in *Affectionately, Marcel: the Selected Correspondence of Marcel Duchamp*, edited by Francis Naumann and Hector Obalk (Ghent: Ludion, 2000), p. 197. The most complete account of the project is to be found in Bernard Marcadé, *Marcel Duchamp: la vie à crédit* (Paris: Flammarion, 2007) for a good account of the project 1935-36, p. 331 ff.

2 Madeleine Gautier, "La Soirée du 12 Mars à La Cachette," *Hot Jazz*, v. 3 (mars 1937), pp. 17-18.

3 Letter to Man Ray, July 20, 1943, *Affectionately, Marcel*, p. 236.

4 Belle Krasne, "A Marcel Duchamp Profile," *Art Digest*, v. 26 (January 15, 1952), p. 24.

5 "The Creative Act" was first given at a session of the Convention of the American Federation of Arts, in Houston, April 1957. The text first appeared in *Art News*, v. 56 (summer 1957), pp. 28-29 and has been reprinted in *Salt Seller: the writings of Marcel Duchamp* (Marchand du Sel), ed. Michel Sanouillet and Elmer Peterson (New York: Oxford, 1973), pp. 138-140.



Kara Walker (American, b. 1969)  
*Testimony* (Woman holding a lantern),  
 2005  
 1 of 5 photogravures on Hahnemuhle  
 paper; edition 15/20  
 Purchase, Horace W. Goldsmith  
 Foundation Fund, 2009.25.1

The Art Center's first acquisition of work by internationally recognized artist Kara Walker, *Testimony*, has proved to be of great interest to students, faculty, and our general audience.

*Testimony* is a suite of five images that Walker captured and digitally altered from her 2004 film *Testimony: Narrative of a Negress Burdened by Good Intentions*. This work is rich in social content and like much of Walker's work, explores issues of race, gender, sexuality, violence, and the politics of power. Walker uses images from various historical sources to show how Europeans and Americans often depicted enslaved Africans antebellum South. Some of her images verge on the grotesque as she depicts subjects that have long been considered taboo. Her work uses perverse echoes of "historical" and stereotypical figures, such as the master and the mistress and the pickaninny and the Mammy, to confront contemporary perceptions of race in America.

In *Testimony*, Walker is inspired by popular entertainments like shadow theatre and marionette shows. Here the artist's hands are often seen carefully arranging the fragile puppets through the twists and turns of the narrative. By showing the manipulation of the paper figures, Walker points to the ways in which her characters control one another on a larger stage of labor economics, slavery, racism, and patriarchal control. The images are printed as photogravures, a process developed in the 1850s, whereby photographic images are used to produce etched plates, from which rich, velvety prints are made. The photogravure, like her well-known paper cutouts and her use of sixteen-millimeter film, is an antiquated technique and further evidence of Walker's interest in mining the past.

During the spring semester this new acquisition was on view on the second-floor landing. Students in African American Art, African American History, Gender Studies, Literature, and Drama and Film studied the work as part of their curriculum. To enhance the presentation of the photogravures, Walker's sixteen-millimeter, black-and-white, silent film, borrowed from the artist's gallery Sikkema Jenkins & Co., was also on view. The film, approximately nine minutes long, is a slightly grainy, black-and-white stop animation reminiscent of early film. The film and prints together promote a deeper understanding of the work by giving viewers an opportunity to see the narrative first hand.

English professor Eve Dunbar presented *Testimony* to her students in a class entitled, "Literature, Gender and Sexuality". She felt that the students found the narrative told by images very difficult to digest because Walker's account differed greatly from the traditional narrative, which emphasizes a total lack of agency among the enslaved. Kara Walker's work continued to come up throughout the term as the students tried to make sense of power, race, and gender in other texts assigned for the class. According to Dunbar, "Walker's inclusion in [this] literature course illustrated the impossibility for easy consumption, translation, and processing of plantation life by contemporary audiences."

Mary-Kay Lombino

*The Emily Hargroves Fisher '57 and Richard B. Fisher Curator  
 and Assistant Director of Strategic Planning*



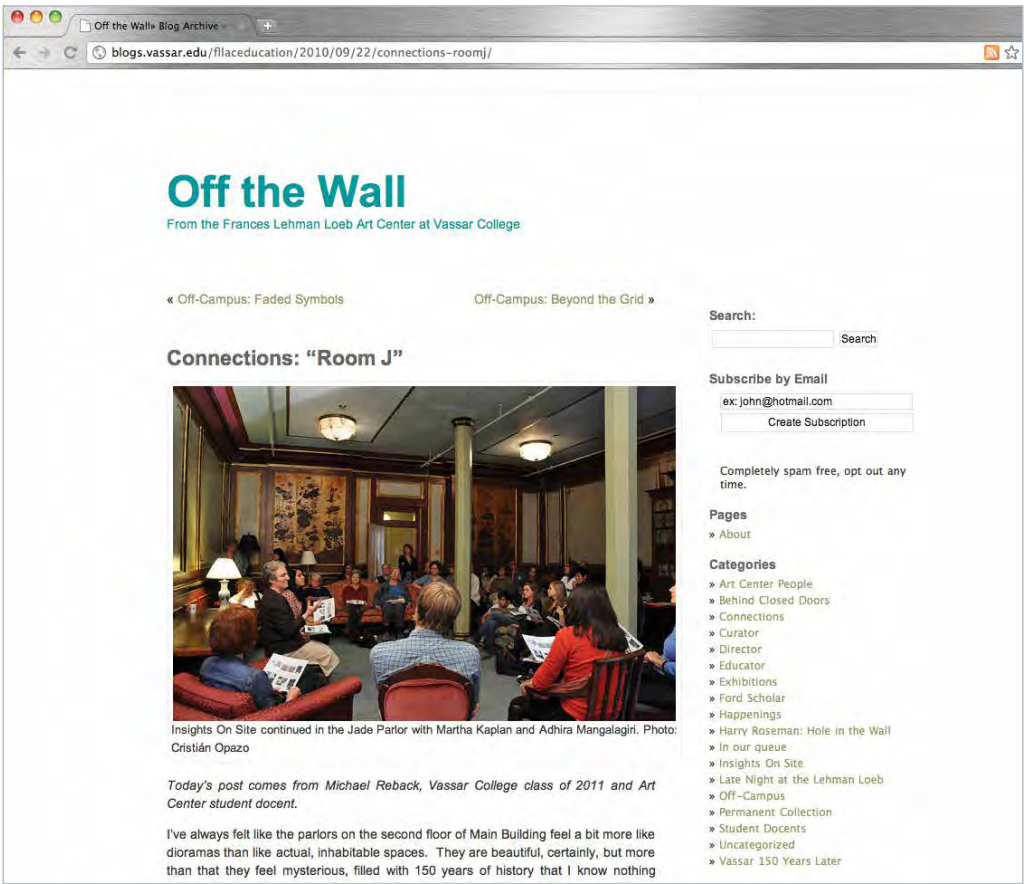
Click. Tap. Learn. Twenty-first century museum visitors are accessing works of art in new ways. Stand, look, and consider are still the essential parts of the viewing experience but contemporary museum guests often crave more information before and after their visit. Museums have been sharing their collections and expanding their audience with the aid of digital media in an effort to satiate the desire to know more. Websites, podcasts, blogs, and apps enable institutions to encourage and continue the museum experience outside of the physical gallery space.

The Art Center has been exploring how digital media can support our educational mission. Most recently, the Art Center launched a new blog, *Off the Wall*. This online journal chronicles our seven months “off the wall” while the museum is closed for roof renovations. Members of the Art Center staff post about what they are doing, what they are seeing, and what they are thinking considering this temporary change to our daily routines. For example, registrar Joann Potter wrote about the process of moving the collection out of the main galleries and into storage. Curator Mary-Kay Lombino discussed planning an upcoming exhibition on polaroids. Diane Butler, the Andrew W. Mellon Coordinator of Academic Affairs, posted about how she works with Vassar faculty to draw connections between the permanent collection and courses across the curriculum. The blog has opened a window into the day-to-day happenings of the museum and keeps visitors informed about upcoming projects.

The blog also enables the Art Center to share additional information about the collection. It would be impossible and a distraction to stop every visitor to mention the documentary or newspaper article that relates to the work of art they are viewing. Instead, the blog becomes the ideal space to recommend a book or YouTube clip about an artist, a movement, or a collector. When the Art Center’s mummy, Shep-en-min, travelled to the Berkshire Museum as part of the exhibition, *Wrapped!: The Search for the Essential Mummy*, a blog post included images from CT-scans and links to explain terms from the 2008 report from the Akhmim Mummy Studies Consortium. An entry about drawings by Jim Dine in the permanent collection was accompanied with an online video clip of the artist discussing his career.

Two thousand readers from around the globe visited the blog in its first weeks online and the readership is steadily growing. *Off the Wall* provides another opportunity to encourage looking. It is another opportunity to tell the story of the work of art. We hope these connections enhance the visitor experience of the Art Center collection.

Nicole M. Roylance  
Coordinator of Public Education and Information



Visit *Off the Wall*, the Art Center blog, online at <http://blogs.vassar.edu/flaceducation>. This fall you can enjoy posts from Art Center staff and the student docent team about works in the permanent collection and updates on the reinstallation process.

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 Stephen Motika '99  
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 Ceibert S. J. Noonan '84  
 Mary Holl Oldshue '73  
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Mara Gerson '13  
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Anna Nichole Gorman '10  
Alice B. Grossman '10  
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# A Special Saturday in New York

## MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Members spent a Saturday together this September, enjoying a private tour of two important New York collections: those of Leonard and Ellen Milberg, Vassar College class of 1960, and The Century Association.

The Milberg’s collection of American prints, maps, drawings and watercolors from the seventeenth century through the end of the nineteenth century exemplifies private collecting at its best. They have worked with experts and rely on their own research as they seek art of the highest historical and artistic quality, and enjoy sharing the fruits of their labor with other art enthusiasts.

Mr. Milberg spoke with passion and a clear dedication to their collection, with special insights offered by Robert Neuman, owner of The Old Print Shop in New York City. While the focus of the collection was works of art associated with New York, it also included subcollections on other areas of the country including Philadelphia, Boston, San Francisco, and areas of the Deep South.

Later in the afternoon, Century Association curator, Jonathan Harding explained the history of the Century Association as a “middle ground” for artists and art lovers to gather in a shared space. The Century Association, officially chartered in 1857, but formed ten years earlier as an offshoot of the Sketch Club, showcases works of its members, including William Cullen Bryant, Asher B. Durand, Winslow Homer, Augustus Saint-Gaudens, John Singer Sargent, Robert Motherwell, and Philip Pearlstein.



Above: Leonard Milberg discusses his impressive collection with Art Center Members.

Left: Robert Neuman highlights an artist's detail in the Milberg's collection.

Below: Curator, John Harding introduces the Century Association's vast collection.



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above:  
Weegee [Arthur H. Felling]  
(American b. Poland, 1899-1968)  
*Hollywood Premier*, 1953  
Gelatin silver print  
8 1/8 x 10 in.  
Gift of Janet Lehr  
1995.22.5

on the cover:  
Clarence Kerr Chatterton  
(American, 1880-1973)  
*Taylor Hall, Vassar College* (detail), 1915  
Oil on canvas  
27 3/4 x 34 3/4 inches  
Anonymous gift, in honor of  
Louise Boyd Lichtenstein Dale and  
Margaret Pollard Smith

# Art at Vassar

A publication for the members of  
The Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center  
Fall 2010



The Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center  
Vassar College  
124 Raymond Avenue  
Poughkeepsie, New York 12604  
<http://fllac.vassar.edu>

The Art Center is open Tuesday to  
Saturday from 10am to 5pm,  
Thursday from 10Am to 9PM, and  
Sunday from 1pm to 5pm.

## AT THE ART CENTER:

**150 Years Later: New Photography by  
Tina Barney, Tim Davis, Katherine Newbegin**  
January 28 – March 27, 2011

**Thomas Rowlandson: Pleasures  
and Pursuits in Georgian England**  
April 8 – June 12, 2011

**A Taste for the Modern: Gifts from  
Blanchette Hooker Rockefeller, Edna  
Bryner Schwab and Virginia Herrick  
Deknatel**  
June 24 – September 4, 2011

## TRAVELLING EXHIBITIONS:

**Naked City: Photographs from  
Vassar College's Frances Lehman  
Loeb Art Center**  
Nov 18, 2010– Jan 22, 2011  
Florida Museum of Photographic Arts,  
Tampa, Florida

**Thomas Rowlandson: Pleasures and  
Pursuits in Georgian England**  
January 14 – March 13, 2011  
The Mary & Leigh Block Museum of  
Art at Northwestern University,  
Evanston, Illinois