



Research and Scholars Center

N e w s l e t t e r



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Thanks to everyone who has enthusiastically supported the first two issues of the Research and Scholars Center newsletter. In this issue we've been thinking about how artists become known. One article in this issue highlights three artists who have made unusual choices about how to shape their careers. We're also printing here a bibliography that we send to artists who contact Ask Joan of Art looking for information on how to gain recognition ("How to be an Artist 101," pp. 4–6). We are proud to announce a new addition to the Photograph Archives: the Bernie Cleff Collection (page 2). This acquisition adds to our already significant

collection of photographs of works of art. You can read about our photograph study collections on our website at <http://americanart.si.edu/research/programs/archive/>. And be sure to read my new column, Cataloger's Choice, where I hope to illuminate some of the great finds I come across in my daily work (page 3).

This past year was a busy one in the Research and Scholars Center. The Inventories of American Painting & Sculpture continue to grow by leaps and bounds, reaching a milestone of over 400,000 records. By enlisting the help of interns this year, we've been able to digitize more and more photographs from our study files and add them to the online records. In the Photograph Archives, all 2,612 photographs from the American Sculpture Photograph Study Collection are now in SIRIS with digital images. The Rosenblum Collection negatives have been digitized and are waiting to be migrated to SIRIS, where they will be researched and cataloged. A number of Taos artists from the Peter A. Juley & Son Collection are now researched, cataloged and digitized, and available on SIRIS.

This past September 12 was the very successful and well-attended Words Matter symposium, which celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Eldredge Prize. This event brought together fourteen winners of the museum's Charles C. Eldredge Prize, awarded annually to the author of the best book in the field of American art. Each speaker chose a word to muse upon — a word that is a critical term for the field, represents an especially compelling approach for the study of American art, or has galvanized his or her own scholarship. At the end of the day, JoAnne Mancini, winner of this year's Eldredge Prize presented her lecture on "Art Worlds: World Arts."

Congratulations to Cynthia Mills and Amelia Goerlitz for organizing this gathering of American art scholars.

Ask Joan of Art (aka Kathleen Adrian and Alida Pask, our femme fatales of art research) answered 3,416 queries this year, always exceeding our expectations of what two sleuthing librarians can accomplish. Their consistently expansive and thoughtful responses continue to inform and delight the public. We are very proud of them!

Thank you to everyone who helps make our Research and Scholars Center a success. We look forward to working with you in the upcoming year.

As always, I appreciate your comments and suggestions. You can always read more about all of our resources online at <http://americanart.si.edu/research/>.

~Nicole Semenchuk (SemenchukN@si.edu)

Pictured: J. Francis Murphy, *The Path to the Village* (1882), Smithsonian American Art Museum, Gift of William T. Evans, 1909.7.50

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Announcing the Bernie Cleff Collection: Photographs of Monuments by Daniel Chester French

The Smithsonian American Art Museum's Photograph Archives are pleased to announce a new collection of photographs of Daniel Chester French's outdoor sculptures. The photographer, Bernie Cleff of Philadelphia, has donated a collection of approximately 1,300 negatives, slides, enlargements, and Ektachrome color transparencies to the Photograph Archives. Bernie Cleff was hired in 1975 to photograph French's monuments and models for a major retrospective exhibition of the sculptor's works. The images in this collection document sixteen of those outdoor monuments, including several from the D.C. area: the First Division Memorial, the Lincoln Memorial, the Samuel F. Dupont Memorial, and the Thomas Gallaudet Memorial. The Bernie Cleff Collection will be available online as part of SAAM's Photograph Archives on SIRIS by late-fall.



Bernie Cleff, a Philadelphia native, was born in 1927. Following his service in the U.S. Navy, he graduated from the Philadelphia College of Art in 1950. Now retired, Cleff has more than fifty three years of experience as a professional photographer. A life member of ASMP (American Society of Media Photographers), Cleff specialized in aerial, editorial, corporate, advertising and architectural photography. His work has appeared in such publications as: *AIA Journal*, *Business Week*, *Forbes*, *Fortune*, *National Sculpture Review*, *New York Times Sunday Magazine*, *Smithsonian*, and *Venture*.

Among Cleff's major works is *Sculpture of a City: Philadelphia's Treasures in Bronze and Stone*, photographed for the Fairmount Park Art Association (1974).

Pictured top: Daniel Chester French, *Asia* (detail), photographed by Bernie Cleff, Bernie Cleff Collection, Photograph Archives, Smithsonian American Art Museum.

Pictured bottom: Bernie Cleff pictured with *Asia* by Daniel Chester French, Bernie Cleff Collection, Photograph Archives, Smithsonian American Art Museum.

Read about SAAM's Fellowship and Intern programs online at
<http://americanart.si.edu/research/opportunity/>

Cataloger's Choice

Cataloging Historical Photographs

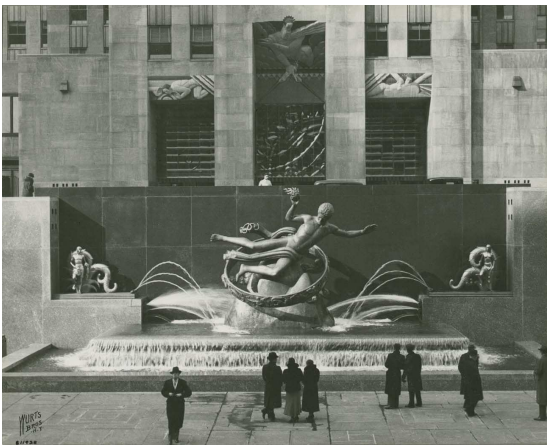
By Nicole Semenchuk



Cataloging the American Sculpture Photograph Study Collection (featured in RSC Newsletter Issue 2) was a unique and rewarding experience. I was enthralled with many of the historic photographs contained in the collection. Charles d'Emery's photographs of the carving of Mount Rushmore were particularly striking. The views of the scaffolding hanging precariously around Teddy Roosevelt's forehead and nose took my breath away. As a bonus, some of the photographs are even signed by Gutzon Borglum, the sculptor responsible for this massive feat of nature.

Some of the photographs are notable, not only for depicting an outdoor monument at a given time in its history, but also for showing the historical surrounding: men in their long black coats and hats standing around

the Prometheus at Rockefeller Center; or Frederic Ruckstull's *Monument to Confederate Soldiers* standing tall as the Arkansas State Capitol is being built behind it.



For a cataloger, it is sometimes sad when a project is completed, knowing there won't be any more surprises waiting to be found in the next unopened box. However, I hope that these photographs, which are all digitized on SIRIS, will continue to inspire others and prove to be useful to many researchers in the fields of art and history. Do you have a favorite photograph from this collection? Share your thoughts with me at SemenchukN@si.edu

Hint: To search all 2,612 photographs in the collection, click here: <http://tinyurl.com/4aypch>, or go to SAAM's Photograph Archives catalog on SIRIS www.siris.si.edu and do a General Keyword Search for "SSC".

I have posted some of my favorite photography resources in the Bibliographies section (page 6).

Pictured at top: Gutzon Borglum, *Mount Rushmore (detail)*, photographed by Charles d'Emery, American Sculpture Photograph Study Collection, S0000286. Bottom left: Paul Manship, *Prometheus*, photographed by Wurts Brothers, American Sculpture Photograph Study Collection, S0001646. Bottom right: Frederic Ruckstull, *Monument to Confederate Soldiers*, American Sculpture Photograph Study Collection, S0002115.

In This Issue *Ask Joan of Art*[®] Spotlights the Unconventional Artist

How to Be an Artist 101

By Kathleen Adrian

The art world is competitive and challenging. Frequently, the Ask Joan of Art reference service receives questions from new and emerging artists asking about opportunities to exhibit their work in museums such as the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

A list of helpful publications for artists trying to get their work “out there” is at the end of this newsletter. There are many resources and publications available for artists on marketing, writing an artist’s statement, developing a portfolio, networking, and identifying exhibition opportunities. However, sometimes artists follow a less conventional path.

Three artists in SAAM’s collection who worked in obscurity, were found by chance, or created art outside the established gallery system are James Hampton, Jasper Johns, and Keith Haring.



James Hampton

The Throne of the Third Heaven of the Nations' Millennium General Assembly (about 1950-1964)

In 1950, James Hampton was working as a janitor for the General Services Administration. He approached a merchant in Washington, D.C., about renting an unheated, poorly lit garage in a deteriorating residential neighborhood. Hampton explained that he was "working on something" and needed a larger space than that available in his room in a nearby boarding house. By November 4, 1964, when he died of cancer, he had built 180 glittering objects in the garage. That "something" became *The Throne of the*

Third Heaven of the Nations' Millennium General Assembly.

When Hampton died, his sister was unable to transport or preserve the work. Fortunately, the garage owner, hoping to rent the garage without destroying his tenant's project, sought to bring it to public attention. He contacted a reporter who wrote an article for a local newspaper.

Harry Lowe, an exhibition designer (and later deputy director) at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, read the unusual newspaper story about James Hampton. Lowe’s knowledge of folk art gave him an appreciation for self-taught artists who applied themselves to their art with a resolute and independent spirit. He was an eager advocate for Hampton’s work. Shortly after the artist’s death, his life work was purchased and donated to the Smithsonian American Art Museum in 1970. A year later, all 180 foil-covered objects were installed in the museum. The art critic Robert Hughes would later say that Hampton's *Throne of the Third Heaven* "may well be the finest work of visionary religious art by an American."

Jasper Johns
Souvenir (1970)



In 1954, Jasper Johns left his job at Marboro Books to devote himself to painting. In the fall, he began working in encaustic using a book on artist's techniques published by Marboro. By summer of 1955, Johns was renting a studio on Pearl Street in New York, where Robert Rauschenberg worked, and the two artists exchanged ideas daily about their paintings. During this time, Johns painted a variety of works featuring the alphabet and numbers, and began to incorporate objects into his paintings. He invited the art dealer Betty Parsons to visit his studio, but she declined, saying she already worked with more artists than she could show.

Jasper Johns continued painting through the spring of 1957; his work *Green Target* (1955) was exhibited in *Artists of the New York School: Second Generation* at the Jewish Museum. The art dealer Leo Castelli, who had recently opened a gallery, attended the preview of this exhibit on March 7. The next evening, Castelli, his wife Ileana Sonnabend, and a gallery employee went to Robert Rauschenberg's studio to look at recent work. Rauschenberg mentioned that he had to go downstairs to the refrigerator he shared with Jasper Johns to get ice for drinks, and Castelli recognized the artist's name from the work he had seen on exhibit the day before. Asking to meet Johns, the Castellis saw some of the artist's works, such as *Flag* (1954-55) and *Target with Four Faces* (1955). That night, Jasper Johns was offered a solo exhibition at the Castelli Gallery.

Jasper Johns went on to become one of the leading figures in American art, particularly well known for his imagery of targets, flags, maps, and other instantly recognizable subjects.

Keith Haring
Untitled, from the portfolio Andy Mouse (1986)

In 1978, Keith Haring moved to New York City and enrolled in the School of Visual Arts. At this time, there were a handful of prestigious commercial galleries with exhibition schedules booked years in advance, yet Haring discovered a thriving alternative art community developing among musicians, performance artists, and graffiti writers outside the gallery and museum system. Determined to devote his career to creating a truly public art, Haring found a highly effective medium that allowed him to communicate with a wide audience when he noticed the unused advertising panels covered with matte black paper in a subway station. He began to create drawings in white chalk on these black paper panels throughout the subway system.



Between 1980 and 1985, Haring produced hundreds of these public drawings in rapid rhythmic lines, sometimes creating as many as forty "subway drawings" in one day. This seamless flow of images became familiar to New York commuters, who often would stop to engage the artist when they encountered him at work. The subway became, as Haring said, a "laboratory" for working out his ideas and experimenting with his simple lines. Haring's artwork had a universal appeal that carried over into a recognized logo or brand for accessible objects such as magnets, watches and shirts sold in the artist's Pop Shop store. His achievement was not only to take art "to the streets," but to create a body of work which permitted popular culture to find its way into fine art galleries.

The Smithsonian American Art Museum's Ask Joan of Art® reference librarians help track down answers to questions about American art, artists, techniques, and themes. Do you have a question about American art and don't know how to find the answer? Post a question to Ask Joan of Art® <http://americanart.si.edu/research/tools/ask/>

Bibliographies

How to be an Artist 101:

Barnes, Molly. *How to Get Hung: A Practical Guide for Emerging Artists*. Boston: Journey Editions, 1994.

Grant, Daniel. *The Business of Being an Artist*. 3rd ed. New York: Allworth Press, 2000.

Lang, Cay. *Taking the Leap: Building a Career as a Visual Artist*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1998.

Michels, Caroll. *How to Survive and Prosper as an Artist: Selling Yourself Without Selling Your Soul*. 5th ed. New York: Holt, 2001.

Smith, Constance. *Art Marketing 101: A Handbook for the Fine Artist*. Nevada City, Calif.: ArtNetwork, 2000.

Talbot, Jonathan. *The Artist's Marketing and Action Plan Workbook*. Rev. 5th ed. Warwick, N.Y.: Jonathan Talbot, 2005.

Vitali, Julius. *The Fine Artist's Guide to Marketing and Self-Promotion: Innovative Techniques to Build Your Career as an Artist*. New York: Allworth Press, 2003

Online resources:

The Artist's Magazine <http://www.artistsnetwork.com/artistsmagazine/>

Arts Opportunities <http://www.artsopportunities.org/>

Artist Help Network <http://www.artisthelpnetwork.com>

Art Deadline <http://www.artdeadlines.com/>

The Art List <http://www.theartlist.com/>

Cataloger's Choice—Favorite Resource for Cataloging Photographs:

Ritzenthaler, Mary Lynn, and Diane Vogt-O'Connor. *Photographs: Archival Care and Management*. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2006.

Great online photograph resources:

Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Catalog <http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/catalog.html>

New York Public Library Digital Gallery <http://digitalgallery.nypl.org/nypldigital/index.cfm>

WEBCAST: Words Matter: The 20th Anniversary of the Eldredge Prize was held on September 12, 2008 and was a great success. You can view the webcast online at <http://americanart.si.edu/research/symposia/2008/>