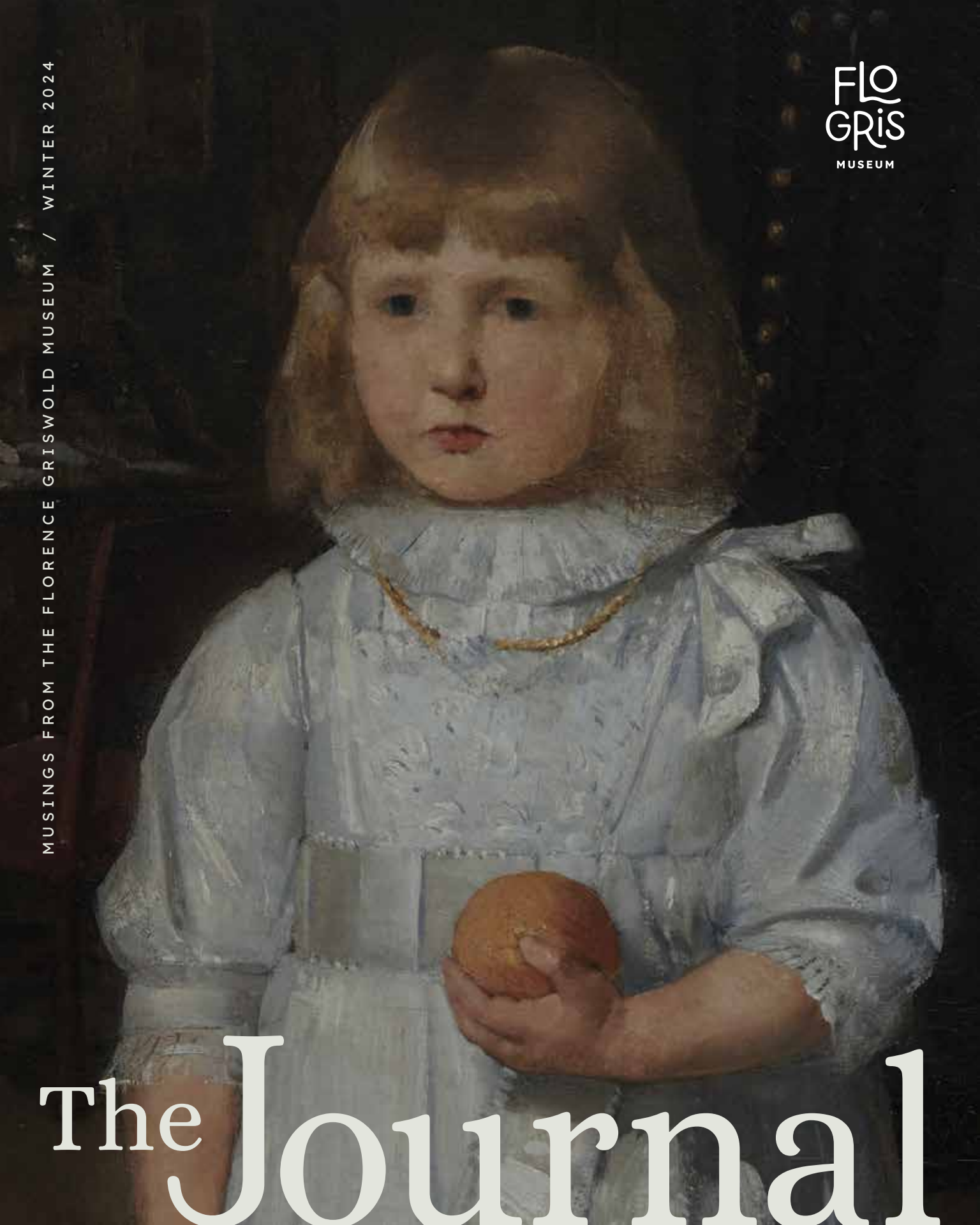


MUSINGS FROM THE FLORENCE GRISWOLD MUSEUM / WINTER 2024

FLO GRIS MUSEUM

The Journal

Beatrice Pope Hoffman (1885-1957), Toleware Tray (detail). Gold leaf and paint on tin, 21½ x 28 in. Florence Griswold Museum, Gift of Mrs. John Hoffman, 2004.13.4

Joshua Campbell Torrance

Executive Director
FloGris Museum

Dear Friends and Fellow Art Lovers,

Introspection. The staff, board, and I have done a lot of that this past year. We dove deep into our past and looked with open minds into our future. We were guided through this process by our friends at CO:LAB. More than a design firm, they help human-centered and purpose-driven institutions and businesses put into motion their core beliefs and goals. The result was revised vision and mission statements and ultimately a new brand identity. Through this process we spoke at length about Miss Florence and wanted to honor her optimistic, can-do nature. She wasn't afraid to adapt and change: in fact she had to in order to survive. We discussed how we as an institution can be more resilient and what we want to see more of in the world. Putting these values into writing is only the first step. Over this next year you will see us turn these words into actions.

As a Member of this institution, you most likely share the beliefs expressed in our vision and mission statements. You believe that art and community matter and that the Museum can use one to transform the other. We take our role as a place of education seriously. It is our responsibility to not only present scholarship but to make space for different voices and encourage critical thinking and dialogue. You'll continue to see these ideas play out through our exhibitions, programs, and communications. I welcome your thoughts and reactions as we move forward.

This publication, *The Journal*, is one such project. I look forward to sharing with you twice a year stories and articles about art, history, and creativity from across our community and state. *The Journal* is more than just a collection of pages; it is a window into the rich history and vibrant present of the FloGris Museum. Within its covers, you will find captivating stories, insightful essays, and stunning visuals that celebrate our mission to preserve and promote Connecticut art and culture.

Thank you for your support and for joining us on this journey where art, community, and purpose converge. Together, we'll continue to celebrate creativity, spark discussions, and make a difference.

Scan to see the latest exhibits

ART COLLECTING ADVICE

from Harriet Beecher Stowe

BY HALL W. ROCKEFELLER

Every corner of Connecticut has a historic house—its center, Hartford, has many: there's Mark Twain's rambling Victorian, the colonial simplicity of Noah Webster's birthplace, and the modestly proportioned white stone building of novelist Harriet Beecher Stowe.

Of the three, Stowe and her work were the most unfamiliar to me (between the dictionary and my 10th grade English syllabus, the other two were more or less required reading), but having just moved to the area, I felt that I ought to explore the lives and works of each, starting with the person of whom I knew the least—though soon I would find that it was with Stowe that I had the most in common.

Born in 1811 in Litchfield, Harriet Beecher Stowe, I don't need to tell any Connecticut resident, was the author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, the highly influential, best-selling novel that brought the horrors of slavery to the parlors of Northern white readers. Viewed through the lens of time, it is simplistic in its depiction of the experience of slavery, but its galvanizing success guaranteed its author a permanent place in the lines of American history textbooks.

But Stowe was responsible for another text, which has also fallen out of fashion since its writing (though it was very popular in its day): *The American Woman's Home*, published in 1869, co-authored with her sister Catharine Beecher. The text is a manual for the nineteenth-century American housewife and is a fascinating document— that is, if you're into exploring the minute details behind the smooth functioning of a home without electricity, central heat, and, of course, Wi-Fi. In that it concerns the home, the book also offers advice on how a housewife might purchase and display art.

As the founder of Less Than Half, which encourages women to enter the art market as supporters and collectors of women artists, I was immediately intrigued by this book. Much to my surprise, I found in it the same art collecting advice I give my students, albeit couched in a nineteenth-century lady's voice.

The tone of *The American Woman's Home* is instructive, moralizing, and occasionally a tad condescending. Among anatomical drawings of blood vessels and the nervous system, instructions on basic medicine, and descriptions of virtuous Christian exercise is a chapter on home decoration that centers on a hypothetical situation: a woman has been convinced by a shopkeeper to buy an inexpensive but ugly carpet for the price of eighty dollars.

The chapter that ensues is a light chastisement on the part of the authors, explaining how, for the same price as the carpet, plus a little American ingenuity and a dash of Protestant work ethic, one could have a beautiful parlor — complete with prints or statuettes by "our best American artists."

← Collection of Harriet Beecher Stowe Center, Hartford, CT
↑ *The American Woman's Home*, C. E. Beecher and H. B. Stowe, 1869, Collection of Harriet Beecher Stowe Center, Hartford, CT

While I would never shame a client on her choice of home décor, I did recognize in the story's protagonist many of the same qualms I find in a modern audience when it comes to art collecting, things like: "I don't have enough money," "art is an extra, a nice thing to have," "I don't have the taste to buy the right things," or, in nineteenth-century parlance, "I have no money to spare for anything of this sort. I am condemned to an absolute bareness, and beauty in my case is not to be thought of."

"Nonsense!" I can hear Stowe, Beecher, and myself say in unison: "Art is an essential piece of life."

Nineteenth-century American art collecting practices were very different from those we have today, in an era of phone cameras and intellectual property laws. It was not uncommon to have copies of famous works in your home, and it was especially fashionable to have works based on paintings you saw in your travels to Europe. (Stowe had Titian's *Three Ages of Man* copied because the youth reminded her of her son. She was also very fond of images of the Virgin and Child and owned a copy of Raphael's *Madonna del Cardellino*.)

Today I wouldn't suggest having a work copied, but prints and drawings remain excellent entry points for starting an art collection. "Sending to any leading picture-dealer," as the Beecher sisters suggest, who will forward to you "lists of pictures and prices" is not so easy, but a quick Internet search is. I suggest seeking out auction houses and galleries that specialize in prints or asking for the flat files at almost any gallery, where they store much less expensive works on paper for sale.

Often, the sisters' solutions to the housewife's problems rely on her own hand. While the commercial abundance of design objects makes constructing your own picture frames (as the Beechers instruct) impractical, the impulse towards making should not be ignored. While using your hands is no longer strictly necessary, making things is more essential than ever. As another Connecticut resident, Anni Albers, wrote in 1965: "We touch things to assure ourselves of reality.... Our tactile experiences are elemental. If we reduce their range, as we do when we reduce the necessity to form things ourselves, we grow lopsided." Craft, long denounced as a lesser art due to its feminine nature, is making a resurgence. Whether making something yourself, or purchasing it from local makers, filling your home with textiles, ceramics, and the like is another piece of advice I often relay to the cash-strapped art enthusiast intent on engaging with her physical world.

As the author of the nineteenth-century's best-selling novel, Harriet Beecher Stowe would have been wealthier than many of the women she and her sister were writing for, but she practiced what she preached, filling her home with art of her own making.

Stowe was a painter with a particular fondness for flowers, which she often depicted in exuberant groupings on a dark background. The ones which were not given as gifts or donated to raise funds for Christian causes were hung in her homes in Connecticut and Florida.

The world-famous author, her sister, and I would not have seen eye to eye on all things, with their insistence on a woman's moral obligation within the home as a mother and a wife. It is in this essential way that we diverge.

The book is "affectionately inscribed" to "the women of America, in whose hands rest the real destinies of the Republic." When the sisters wrote that the fate of the country lies in the cleanliness and order of a woman's house, they no doubt meant it as a place where the future (male) leaders of the country were molded into citizens. Art was a part of that equation, offering moral instruction: "The educating influence of these works of art can hardly be overestimated," the sisters wrote, "Surrounded by such suggestions of the beautiful, and such reminders of history and art, children are constantly trained to correctness of taste and refinement of thought."

I inscribe my work, too, to women, with similar sentiment, but intent on different ends: living with art is essential, it ignites in us a sympathy with others, and a deep, ineffable sense of calm. I don't wish for women to live with art for the sake of their children, but for the sake of themselves and their own spiritual fulfillment. (Should their children benefit from their mother's passions, all the better!)

I would argue, too, that art is instructive and reflects the values of our society. For this reason, collecting the works of women artists is essential. When we don't collect and support their work, we make a statement about our cultural values as human beings.

So, women of the Republic collect the art of women, and through it, model the nation you wish to see: one which celebrates the creative lives of all its citizens, and respects their agency inside and outside of the home. *

Florida Oranges, Harriet Beecher Stowe, c. 1881, Collection of Harriet Beecher Stowe Center, Hartford, CT
Portrait of Harriet Beecher Stowe, Alanson Fisher, 1853, Collection of Harriet Beecher Stowe Center, Hartford, CT

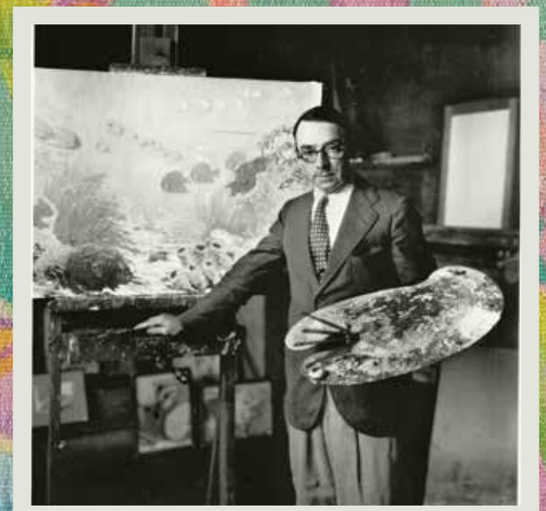
Beecher, Catharine Esther, and Harriet Beecher Stowe. Katherine Golden Bitting Collection on Gastronomy (Library of Congress). *The American woman's home: or, Principles of domestic science: being a guide to the formation and maintenance of economical, healthful, beautiful, and Christian homes.* New York: J.B. Ford and company; Boston: H.A. Brown & co.; [etc., etc.], 1869. www.loc.gov/item/07035680/.

MEMORIES

of Bea and Harry Hoffman

BY DAVID HOFFMAN

My artist grandparents, Bea and Harry Hoffman, were more like a second set of parents than grandparents. For the first five years of my life in the 1940s, I lived in their house with my parents and then in the former gardener's cottage next door. We were on a hilltop estate of twenty acres on Sill Lane in Old Lyme, named Chuluota, the Creek Nation word for beautiful view.



When we moved to a suburb of Boston, our summers, vacations, and weekend trips always brought us back to Bea and Harry and the cottage. They insisted on being addressed as Bea and Harry, not Harry and Bea, or heaven forbid Grandpa and Grandma. And Harry always referred to them both as "Bea and me."

HARRY'S STUDIO

Bea and Harry provided a life full of fun and surprises for me and my two younger brothers, Stephen and Tommy. Several steps down from the main floor of their house led to Harry's spacious art studio with paintings of New England, the American South, Europe, the Bahamas, the Galapagos Islands, and vividly colored undersea paintings. The studio had a set of large drawers and cupboards full of assorted musical instruments and other entertaining items. Harry would open a drawer and take out three or four white juggling balls that he juggled flawlessly. Then he would take out his flute. He was a flutist of professional skill. Next, he often fetched his banjo, singing while he played. After that, the instruments became less conventional. He'd play tunes like the "Camptown Races" and "Oh Susanna" on a harmonica. Then out would come the Jew's harp placed against his jaw making a most unusual twangy sound, often provoking laughter. And finally, castanets, a kazoo, and a funny long brass whistle/flute with a sliding bar to vary the pitch. Occasionally, he'd pull out a deck of cards and, with sleight of hand, make them disappear and reappear. Harry could imitate a wide variety of bird calls. Years later, I learned he had composed music, and his brother had been a New York opera singer.

OUTDOORS

Bea and Harry both loved flower gardens. One plot included Bea's prized peonies; I once got chastised by my father for picking them. Next to the peonies was a plot of 20 blueberry bushes. Harry prepared us for picking with large tin cans and strings to hang around our necks. He sprayed our clothing liberally with DDT, the insect repellent of the 1950s. My youngest brother, Tom, age five, ate more blueberries than went into his can. One day when we were picking, Harry pointed to a bald eagle soaring high in the sky—my first sighting! Many years later, as a wildlife toxicologist, I often wondered whether that eagle had been exposed to as much DDT as we had.

Having grown up in rural Pennsylvania, Harry had an excellent knowledge of birds, mammals, reptiles, and woodland plants. He loved hiking in the woods as much as painting en plein air. I remember being startled by a ruffed grouse taking off and later by a puffed-up hog-nosed snake. Whippoorwills could still be heard in the evening along Whippoorwill Road. He introduced us to many outdoor activities. These included throwing boomerangs, and having target practice with laurel-branch slingshots and hand-crafted wooden crossbows. When I was ten, he taught me how to shoot tin cans off the top of an old incinerator with an ancient long-barrel single-shot target pistol. Good thing my parents never knew about that. Harry delighted in painting mermaid "tattoos" on my arm, similar to those in his undersea fantasy paintings. The tattoos were the envy of my friends at the Old Lyme Beach Club. Not a smoker himself, Harry kept a large box of choice Cuban cigars for guests. He permitted me to try one at age ten, and I soon decided it was far better to blow on it than to inhale. He taught us how to pitch and hit baseballs. He had once been offered a position as a pitcher for a major professional team and had played on a local Old Lyme team with Woody Griswold.

BEA'S GENEROSITY

Bea (Beatrice Pope Hoffman), the daughter of affluent parents, had resources Harry didn't have. She was incredibly generous to those around her, including family members, friends, and local merchants, never entering a store without purchasing at least one item. She was friendly but an incessant

Article cover: Will Howe Foote (1874-1965), *Portrait of Beatrice Pope [Later Beatrice Hoffman]* (detail), 1907-08. Oil on canvas mounted on wood panel, 20 x 16 in. Florence Griswold Museum, Gift of the John L. Hoffman Trust, 2014.8 | **Opposite page:** Harry Hoffman conducting the "Stars and Stripes Forever" at a "Fakirs" Auction held by the Art Students League, ca. 1901, Lyme Historical Society Archives at the Florence Griswold Museum.

Beatrice Pope Hoffman (1885-1957), *No. 7: Golden Morays* (detail), 1934. Wool, 38 x 25 in. Florence Griswold Museum, Gift of John Hoffman, 2004.13.3

photograph: Harry Hoffman in his studio, ca. 1920. Lyme Historical Society Archives at the Florence Griswold Museum.

talker. She was the boss when it came to household decisions. Harry was non-confrontational and accepted all she dictated good-naturedly. Whenever dinner guests offered to help with the dishes, Bea's stock reply was, "Leave the dishes! Harry will do them." With his sense of humor, Harry would sign his letters to me and others "D. Swasher." Yet Bea's financial resources provided Harry with the freedom to pursue his career as an American impressionist painter. Her resources also supported the construction of their hilltop Italian villa-styled house, and later helped Miss Florence Griswold keep her house, becoming the Florence Griswold Museum.

Bea called me "Precious" as a small boy. No one has ever called me Precious since. She had the habit of gifting us with items she considered better than what we already had. At least once a year, it was new shoes for the three of us boys. After my father had refurbished an older bicycle for me, Bea purchased me a new red Raleigh English bike. Sometimes I preferred the old bike to avoid feeling pretentious around the local boys. Our aunt and uncle gave us an army surplus pup tent. Bea quickly provided us with a new tent twice the size with a screened entry. A family dentist had given each of us boys some plastic ornamental rings. Two days later Bea provided us with silver rings. One day my mother came home from shopping to find Bea in our cottage with material of her own color choice, making a new cover for our sofa because she either didn't like the existing color or thought it was too old.

BEA, CRAFTSWOMAN & ARTIST

Bea was a skilled craftswoman and artist. She created beautiful tapestries with a loom, sometimes recreating Harry's vivid undersea paintings. She fashioned stencils to decorate furniture and wallpaper. She crafted hooked rugs of different hues and designs. When I was nine or ten, Bea insisted that I try hooking a rug the size of a doormat. My fingers became sore, and I was glad upon completion. That was the first and last rug I ever hooked. A skilled seamstress, she made me long-sleeved shirts of sturdy fabric with unique colors and designs never found in retail stores. My favorite one was red with small gold geometrical designs and a wide collar that Elvis would have envied. Classmates and teachers were awed. Bea hand-crafted me a stuffed woolen portrait of the dog, "Tramp," from the iconic Disney movie, *Lady and the Tramp*. Tramp now has a forever home in the Florence Griswold Museum. She also crafted a three-foot-tall Pinocchio with pivoting arms and legs. Bea entertained us by reading Grimms' Fairy Tales, some of which were creepy enough to limit us from venturing too deep into the woods or up to the lonely third floor of the house. She played a piano that was once part of Woodrow Wilson's summer residence in Old Lyme. Woodrow Wilson's wife, Ellen Axson Wilson, Bea, and her sister, Florence Pope Beardsley, had all been summer art students at the Lyme Art Colony. Ellen became an accomplished painter of Connecticut landscapes. When Bea played the piano, she often sang. My favorite song was "Comin Thro' the Rye." Bea hosted elaborate birthday parties for us kids with party hats, horns, blow-outs, and pull-apart snappers. Gifts were provided for all the attendees as well as the party boy. Harry remembered us on birthdays with hand-drawn mythical "Kukululu Birds" of his creation, "found only on the upper Zambezi River beneath the Victoria Falls," according to him, with humorous greetings offered by the birds.

↗ Beatrice Pope Hoffman (1885-1957), *Tramp*, 1955. Wool, 12 x 12 ½ x 6 in. Florence Griswold Museum, Gift of David Hoffman, 2021.4
← Harry Hoffman, *Tapestry Loom*, ca. 1930s. Image provided by David Hoffman
← Photo of Bea Hoffman at her loom. Image provided by David Hoffman

Bea's Sister, Florence Beardsley, her son Austin, and her two grandsons, Peter and Tim from East Orange, New Jersey, would arrive in Old Lyme for the summer in an elegant but aging 1930s Packard sedan. Their summer home was at the foot of Sill Lane in the house that had been the historic Peck Tavern. When I was five or six, they gave me a ride in the Packard to see the house, claiming we were now in East Orange, New Jersey. Every time I pass the house, I still think of East Orange.

SNOWBOUND

When we were snowbound, I felt cozy sitting with Harry in his studio next to a warm potbellied stove. Harry would be working on a painting of a covered bridge or a waterfall, sometimes a winter scene. He enjoyed regaling me with stories about his boyhood in rural Pennsylvania, including funny characters. Other times he talked about his early days boarding in Miss Florence Griswold's house with the other artists. Miss Florence's serving maid at breakfast would ask, "Would you like one good egg or two not so good ones?" Another time, the artists were passing a bowl of peas around the dinner table. When it got to Henry Ward Ranger, a large man who enjoyed his meals, he proclaimed, "There really aren't enough peas to go around for all, so I'll just take the remaining ones for myself." Another story was about a ham found hanging from a tree in the woods with a curious comb-like device under it. The artist Eddie Rook admitted to placing a stale ham there since "hairs from foxes' tails make the

best paint brushes of all for artists." He had hung the ham at a height where foxes would have to leap in the air to try to reach it. As they jumped, hopefully their tails would brush against the comb device, leaving the valuable hairs behind.

I was a curious young teen and asked Harry if he had any paintings of nudes in his studio. He responded by bringing two paintings from the back. He had only painted several pictures of nudes. His nudes were modest, basking in the woods like nymphs. I viewed more pictures of his mermaids who appeared half nude, if a mermaid can be half nude. He then provided me with several art textbooks that focused on human anatomy, and finally a stack of *National Geographic* magazines, some of which featured bare-breasted island women. I had a crush on a girl who was two years older than me and asked Harry if men ever married women who were older than them.

Harry diplomatically replied, "Yes, but some men like women who are younger." Bea was twelve years younger than Harry.

OLD LYME ARTIST FRIENDS

I had the pleasure of meeting some of Bea and Harry's contemporary artist friends. Gregory Smith and Will Chadwick were frequent dinner guests. Will Howe Foote was another long-standing friend who had painted a portrait of Bea. Three generations of the White family artists, including Henry Cooke White, Nelson Cooke White, and Nelson H. White, were good friends. I remember visiting Everett Warner in his retirement home in Westmoreland, New Hampshire. Bessie Potter Vonnoh, a distinguished sculptor, was a good friend of Bea's. As a small boy, I felt comfortable around her, given her diminutive size and gentle disposition. Bea and Harry had several castings of her iconic sculptures of children. Charles Bittinger, another close friend, had painted a portrait of Harry. Arthur Spear had presented us with a painting of three cherubs. I met Bertram Bruestle, who painted North American songbirds and landscapes. We visited Charles Ebert on Lyme Street, and his daughter Betty became a close friend of my mother's, as did Betty Chadwick, the daughter-in-law of Will Chadwick. When Harry and I were driving around Rogers Lake in his wood-paneled station wagon, we encountered Louis Paul Dessar walking along the road carrying a small bag. Harry offered him a ride. He reached into the bag and handed me a Valencia orange, which was a treat in 1951.

Bea died in 1957 of congestive heart failure. After Bea's death, Harry no longer actively painted, but continued penciling creative birthday greetings to the family. I fondly remember receiving his amusing letters while in college; his advice was, "Don't hurry, don't worry, be merry!" Harry maintained an active social life in the company of a few remaining artists and close friends, attending lectures and dinners. Harry died in 1964. I still feel his presence when I enter his former studio. Yes, Bea and Harry were both much loved grandparents and "parents" to me. ⁎

↑ Photo of Stephen, Tommy, and David Hoffman with Frowsy Belle, a rescued cat. Image provided by David Hoffman

↗ Harry Hoffman, *Undersea Fantasy*. Image provided by David Hoffman

↗ Photo of Harry Hoffman. Image provided by David Hoffman

THE LEGACY OF THE ART RECOVERY COMMITTEE OF 1973-1974

BY JEFFREY W. ANDERSEN
DIRECTOR EMERITUS, FLORENCE GRISWOLD MUSEUM

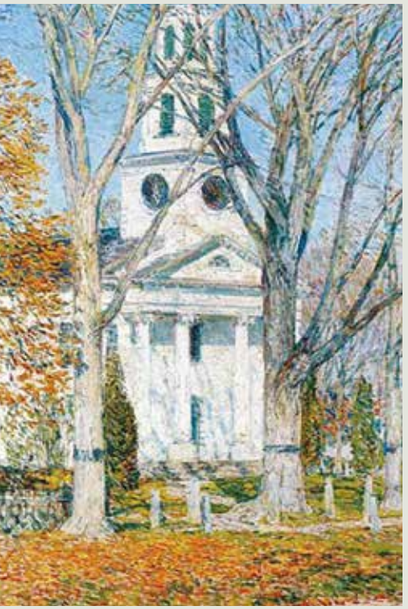
It might surprise you to learn that visitors to the Florence Griswold House during the 1950s and 1960s hardly saw any paintings by the Lyme Art Colony artists beyond the painted wall and door panels. Led by volunteers and operating on a shoestring, the organization didn't have resources to acquire an art collection and, besides, Impressionist and representational American art wasn't particularly valued then. So, when did the Museum begin collecting the works of the Lyme Art Colony artists who had once stayed there? In April 1973, an "Art Recovery Committee" (ARC) was formed by the Society's President, Margaret Brown, and led by Nathan and Patricia Shippee, art patrons and residents of Old Lyme. Together, over the next year or so, the three of them succeeded in attracting many gifts of art, both planned and outright, to the Lyme Historical Society-Florence Griswold House. This article takes a fresh look at this little-known chapter and assesses its impact on the Florence Griswold Museum of today.

The origins of ARC go back to 1968, when Margaret Courtwright Brown (1904-1994)[1] was elected President of the Lyme Historical Society, a role she held until May of 1974. Almost single-handedly, Mrs. Brown changed the trajectory of the organization from that of a struggling, financially impoverished society to a fledging professional museum. Prior to this, she had been a $5 member but had never taken a tour of the Florence Griswold House. Recruited by trustee Gertrude Barney to assume leadership, Margaret was soon shocked at what she had gotten herself into. After examining the house and its financial affairs, she recalled that "I was so appalled at what I had taken on."[2] Chimneys were crumbling, shutters were falling off, there were infestations of bees and wasps in the attic, and everything—attic, closets, and cellar—needed a cleaning out that hadn't been done in decades. The grounds had similarly suffered from neglect. A take-charge person of irresistible force, Mrs. Brown recruited friends like the Shippees (Patricia recalls helping Margaret dry just washed curtains from the house out on the front lawn) and skilled carpenters like James Noyes to initiate a major restoration of the house, both exterior and interior. A life-long preservationist of old houses, she raised desperately needed funds from individuals as well as from government grants, including the newly established National Endowment for the Arts. Never averse to hard work, Mrs. Brown was legendary for mowing fields with her tractor while wearing elegant pearls around her neck. She later recalled: "Knowing nothing about museum operations, my first years were spent in restoration of the plant, where my experience stood in good stead."[3]

[1]For an excellent introduction to this remarkable woman, see "Profiles: Margaret Courtwright Brown (1904-1994)" by George Willauer, History Blog, FloGris.org. Before moving back to her native California, Mrs. Brown wrote an unpublished memoir called "Memories" (1991) that details her work on behalf of historic preservation, the Florence Griswold House, and the celebration of the American Bicentennial. This manuscript was an invaluable source of information for this article. Margaret Brown Papers, LHS Archives (LHSA).
[2]Brown, "Memories," 13. Margaret Brown Papers, LHSA.
[3]Brown, "Memories," 26-27. Margaret Brown Papers, LHSA.

Peter A. Juley & Sons, William O. Goodman and Erna Sawyer Goodman receiving presentation case of small artworks from artists in front of the Lyme Art Association, 1929. Photograph, 9 3/8 x 7 ¼ in. Florence Griswold Museum, Gift of Mrs. Robert D. Graff, 1975.6.1

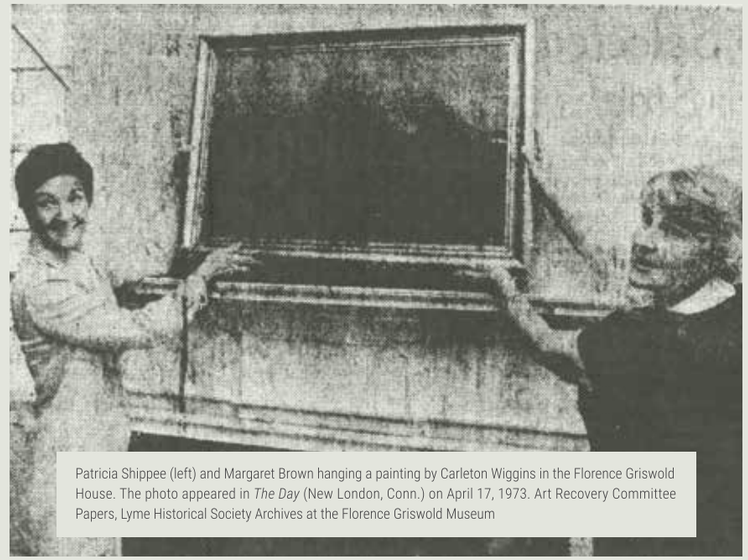
Florence Griswold House, after 1938. Photograph. Florence Griswold House Exteriors, 109.23. Lyme Historical Society Archives at the Florence Griswold Museum



It was during that first clean out of the house's attic that Margaret found a manuscript copy of Arthur Heming's charming reminiscences about life among the artists at Miss Florence's. Understanding the importance of scholarship and publishing to a museum's reputation, she was determined to get it published. With the help of publisher Chester DuClos and *New Yorker* illustrator James Stevenson, *Miss Florence and the Artists of Old Lyme* was published in 1971, thanks to a timely gift of $5,000 from the artist Caro Weir Ely, the daughter of the American Impressionist Julian Alden Weir.[4] In May 1971, Nathan and Patricia Shippee hosted a festive book launch party in their home on Sandpiper Point Road overlooking the Lieutenant River estuary in Old Lyme.

That July, Margaret offered Nathan a seat on the board of the Lyme Historical Society-Florence Griswold House, which he declined, citing other commitments.[5] Undaunted, Mrs. Brown continued to call on her new friends. In the spring of 1973, she learned that one of the most famous Old Lyme paintings – the first *Church at Old Lyme* (1903) by Childe Hassam – was on the market for $125,000. She met the Shippees in New York to look at it together at Wildenstein Gallery[6]. They marveled at the beauty of the painting, which was displayed on a velvet easel in a private room. Right there, they hatched a plan to raise the funds to bring it back to Old Lyme. It was an audacious goal, considering that the Florence Griswold House hadn't yet completed the process of installing fire alarm and security systems. But, as Patricia Shippee recently said, "why not try?"[7] Calling themselves the "Art Recovery Committee," they began a grass-roots campaign to acquire the *Church at Old Lyme* by Childe Hassam and other paintings by Lyme Colony artists for the Florence Griswold House. In mid-May, a letter went out to members announcing a new effort "to preserve the Old Lyme School of Art," and, by doing so, "recover an important part of our heritage."[8] Members responded positively. Freeborn G. Jewett wrote to Nathan: "I am delighted that you and Margaret Brown are starting this program."[9] Several family members of the Lyme artists offered to help. John L. Hoffman, the son of artists Harry and Beatrice Hoffman, was particularly encouraging, sharing resources and detailed information on the families of the Lyme Colony artists.

That summer, the art historian Donald R. McClelland of the National Collection of Fine Arts (now the Smithsonian American Art Museum) came up from Washington, D.C. to give a lecture on the front steps of the Griswold House about the work of Childe Hassam, highlighting his significance to Old Lyme in order to "in some way spur on your concern for acquiring the Hassam[10]." Despite this and other efforts, the cost of the painting was simply too much for the modest resources of the Lyme Historical Society. With a perspective gained from a lifetime of entrepreneurial ventures[11], Nathan Shippee quickly pivoted ARC to a broader effort of collecting Old Lyme paintings. As he put it in a letter, "as you can see, we are just beginning to move, and we are allowing ourselves until July 1976 to complete a campaign to locate and acquire a representative collection of the works of the Old Lyme School of Art."[12] Before almost anyone else in Old Lyme, Margaret Brown was keenly aware of the forthcoming American Bicentennial in 1976. It is not surprising, then, that she conceived of ARC as one of many initiatives to mark this occasion. Leading by example, the Shippees gave paintings by Carleton Wiggins and Henry Rankin Poore to the nascent collection. A press release announced that ARC's purpose was



Patricia Shippee (left) and Margaret Brown hanging a painting by Carleton Wiggins in the Florence Griswold House. The photo appeared in *The Day* (New London, Conn.) on April 17, 1973. Art Recovery Committee Papers, Lyme Historical Society Archives at the Florence Griswold Museum

[4]Caro Weir Ely (1884-1974) was a talented artist, etcher, bookbinder and author who was married to George Page Ely (1879-1967). They lived in Old Lyme just down the street from the Florence Griswold House and were both active in its affairs during those early years. Margaret regarded Caro as a "loving friend" whose support was instrumental to her efforts to develop the Florence Griswold House into a professional museum. A Portrait of Caro, 1887 by her father appears on the front cover of this issue.

[5]At the time, Nathan Shippee (1919-2012) was a trustee of the Museum of the American Indian in New York when it was under the directorship of Frederick Dockstader. Shippee collected Native American art, including Hopi ceremonial artifacts, several of which they returned to the Hopi Nation. After the Shippees moved to Old Lyme in 1967, Nathan designed and built a house with a central lodge-like structure surrounded by a series of outbuildings that drew inspiration from round Hopi kivas.

[6]Ironically, at the same time, there was a second painting by Childe Hassam at the gallery—*Apple Trees in Bloom, Old Lyme* (1904) that was available for $65,000 and eventually purchased by Dr. Arthur Miller of New York. In 2017, the Florence Griswold Museum succeeded in acquiring this painting at auction, thanks to its purchase by trustee Vincent J. Dowling, who gave it to the Museum in honor of the author's tenure as director from 1976 to 2018.

[7]Personal interview with Patricia M. Shippee, February 3, 2024, in Old Lyme, Connecticut. An art history major at Fordham University, Patricia and her husband founded both the Old Lyme Art Works in Old Lyme and the Shippee Gallery in New York City before the latter closed in the early 1990s. Today, she works as an accredited fine art appraiser.

[8]Letter Mailing from Nathan M. Shippee on his personal letterhead, May 15, 1973. Art Recovery Committee (ARC) Files, LHSA.

[9]Letter from Freeborn G. Jewett to Nathan Shippee, June 4, 1973. ARC Files, LHSA.

[10]Letter from Donald R. McClelland to Nathan and Patricia Shippee, July 9, 1973. ARC Files, LHSA.

[11]A graduate of Rhode Island College, Nathan Shippee had an enterprising 65-year career that encompassed everything from owning a resort in Jamaica, a coal mine in Kentucky, publishing houses, and the Prudential Oil Corp, later called Prudential Funds. His unlikely survival of a plane crash in 1963 changed his philosophy of life, which he wrote about in several books on human potential. One of his books, *The Human Being*, led him on a quixotic quest to have Human Being capitalized in dictionaries and print media.

[12]Letter from Nathan Shippee to Ms. Jo Darmstadt, June 18, 1973. ARC Files, LHSA.

↑ Childe Hassam (1859-1935), *Church at Old Lyme* (detail), 1903. Oil on canvas, 36 ½ x 28 ½ in. Private Collection
Edmund Greacen (1876-1949), *The Old Garden* (detail), ca. 1912. Oil on canvas, 30 ¼ x 30 ¼ in. Florence Griswold Museum, Gift of Mrs. Edmund Greacen, Jr., 1974.1
Frank Vincent DuMond (1865-1951), *Grassy Hill* (detail), 1920. Oil on canvas, 23 5/8 x 29 ½ in. Florence Griswold Museum, Gift of Elisabeth DuMond Perry, 1974.9

"to seek out and bring back to Old Lyme paintings and other forms of art which flourished here at the turn of the century."[13] Furthermore, it explained, "although the Florence Griswold House is the center for the ARC Group, the committee's plans include a broad scale development which eventually may bring back to Old Lyme a resurgence of its earlier status in the art world."[14] An article about the committee's work appeared in *The Day* (New London, CT) with a photo of Margaret Brown and Patricia Shippee hanging the new Carleton Wiggins over a mantel in the Florence Griswold House.[15]

On August 14, 1973, ARC members gathered for a meeting at the Shippees' home to consider their purpose and objectives looking ahead. The list of those on the committee[16] was an impressive roster of leading figures from Lower Connecticut River communities. In addition to the business at hand, President Margaret Brown adroitly used the meeting to talk about the availability of the Marvin-Huntley House, an eighteenth-century cape that had been moved and reconstructed in the 1950s on land adjacent to the Florence Griswold House. With her expansive outlook for the Lyme Historical Society, she saw this property as crucial for its future and successfully led an allied campaign to purchase it for $76,000.[17] This is a prime example of how Mrs. Brown worked indefatigably on multiple fronts, capitalizing on every opportunity. "She had tremendous vision," her friend George Willauer emphasized recently.[18]

Despite the appearance of a blue ribbon committee, there is little doubt that the actual work was largely carried out by Margaret Brown and the Shippees. As Margaret herself acknowledged, "Patricia and Nathan Shippee not only prepared the mailings, but visited prospective donors, and brought paintings 'home.'"[19] Over the next year, the ARC sent out letters and progress reports on gifts and pledges of works of art to the Florence Griswold House. Several artists' families responded. Mrs. Edward Greacen, Jr. donated *The Old Garden*, ca. 1912, an Impressionist painting of Miss Florence's garden by artist Edmund Greacen. Elisabeth DuMond Perry, the daughter of the artist Frank Vincent DuMond, gave *Grassy Hill*, ca. 1920, a colorful view of autumn near their family home in Lyme. Ethelinda Griswold Free of Belmont, Massachusetts, made a bequest of several items as part of her estate, including an etching of the Florence Griswold House by Everett Longley Warner and a miniature bell melted down and fashioned from the Congregational Church bell that burned in 1907. Mrs. George Townsend of New York donated a Guy Wiggins painting of *Fifth Avenue Storm*, 1943. The effort even caught the attention of Charles B. Tyler, an art dealer in Los Angeles, California. He sent a small but lovely oil by Frank Bicknell of *Ogunquit, Maine* in response to ARC's Progress Report Number Two.

But, unquestionably, the most important gift came from Marjorie Sawyer Goodman Graff, the granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Owen Goodman[20], formerly of Chicago, Illinois. The Goodmans summered in Westbrook, Connecticut, for many years, collected works by Lyme artists, and became closely involved with the Lyme Art Association, where Mr. Goodman served as President from 1922 until 1932, arguably the most consequential president in the organization's history.[21] In 1928, the Lyme artists presented the Goodmans with a portfolio of thirty-five small original paintings in a wooden box as a

[13]Lyme Historical Society Press Release announcing ARC, April 15, 1973. ARC Files, LHSA.
[14]Press Release, April 15, 1973. ARC Files, LHSA.
[15]"Work by Early Artists Sought by New Group," *The Day* (New London, CT), April 17, 1973, 8.
[16]Committee members included: Hugh DeHaven; Mr. and Mrs. Roger Dennis; Mr. and Mrs. J. R. LaCourciere; Mr. and Mrs. John Lohmann; Mr. and Mrs. Tom McKay; Mr. and Mrs. Roderick MacKenzie; Mrs. Jessie Mayer; Mr. and Mrs. Halsted Myers; Mr. and Mrs. William Steeves; Mr. and Mrs. Nelson C. White; Mr. and Mrs. Grafton Wiggins; and Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Woodhead. Margaret Brown, "Memories," 24. LHSA.

[17]Acquired in 1974, the house was later renamed the Huntley-Brown House in recognition of Margaret Brown's tenure as President.
[18]Personal interview with George J. Willauer, Professor of English Emeritus, Connecticut College, January 31, 2024.
[19]Brown, "Memories," 25. Margaret Brown Papers, LHSA.
[20]Mr. Goodman (1848-1936) was a self-made lumber baron who lost his parents at a young age. Moving to Chicago as a young man in 1868, he is remembered today for having founded the Goodman Theater with a gift of $250,000 to the Art Institute of Chicago in memory of his son, the playwright Kenneth Sawyer Goodman, who died at the age of 35 to the 1918 influenza pandemic.
[21]After Mr. Goodman died in 1936, his wife, Erna Sawyer Goodman (1859-1943) paid for an additional gallery to be built at the LAA, where it is known today as the Goodman Gallery.

↑ Bruce Crane (1857-1937), *French Village* (detail). Colored pencil on paper. 5 15/16 x 8 1/8 in. Part of the Goodman Presentation Case shown on p. 14. Florence Griswold Museum, Gift of Mrs. Robert D. Graff, 1975.6.32
Harry L. Hoffman (1871-1964), *Fan Coral and Fish* (detail), 1916. Watercolor and graphite on paper, 7 x 10 in. Part of the Goodman Presentation Case shown on p. 14. Florence Griswold Museum, Gift of Mrs. Robert D. Graff, 1975.6.33

↑ William S. Robinson (1861-1945), *Sailboat* (detail). Etching on paper, 4 ½ x 6 ¾ in. Part of the Goodman Presentation Case shown on p. 14. Florence Griswold Museum, Gift of Mrs. Robert D. Graff, 1975.6.5
Robert Vonnoh (1858-1933), *Portrait of Bessie Potter Vonnoh* (detail), June 29, 1929. Colored pencil on paper, 7 ½ x 10 in. Part of the Goodman Presentation Case shown on p. 14. Florence Griswold Museum, Gift of Mrs. Robert D. Graff, 1975.6.31

gesture of thanks for their Beneficence to the LAA. After the Goodmans' deaths, no one in Lyme knew where the portfolio was, that is, until Mrs. Graff received a general letter from the ARC. She replied to Nathan Shippee, lamenting that "I wish I had known of your organization sooner" for she had already disbursed many of the Lyme paintings her grandparents collected, save a few. In the same letter, however, she told Nathan that she still had a box of small oils, drawings, and watercolors that the artists had given her grandparents in 1928. "You are welcome to see the box if you wish," she wrote.[22] Patricia Shippee vividly remembers going with Nathan to Mrs. Graff's Park Avenue apartment to see the collection. Stored in its original wooden box, each work was pristine.

Mrs. Graff calmly invited the Shippees to bring the collection back to Old Lyme. Offered initially as a loan, they were ecstatic at this discovery.[23] Over the next couple of years, as Marjorie Graff realized the significance of the collection to the Florence Griswold House, she gave the collection outright to the Society. Almost overnight, ARC's goal of forming a collection representing each of the Lyme colony artists was dramatically enhanced. Mrs. Brown's tenure as President of the Lyme Historical Society ended in May 1974, when she agreed to chair the local Bicentennial Commission. She was followed by her hand-picked successor, Daniel Woodhead, Jr., a retired president of an electrical manufacturing company in Illinois, who had deep family roots in Old Lyme. Margaret stayed on briefly as a trustee, "hoping to help with the Endowment Funds, but soon found the organization would progress more smoothly without me."[24] Similarly, the Shippees felt they no longer had the freedom to exercise their leadership of ARC. Mr. Woodhead, in his new role, believed that all official communications should come through the President. The Art Recovery Committee ended abruptly with its goals not fully realized. Daniel Woodhead, for his part, is remembered today by the Museum for establishing its first Endowment Fund with a major gift only days before he unexpectedly died in 1978.

How do we assess the legacy of ARC today? First and foremost, ARC provided a model and precedent for the Florence Griswold Museum to begin collecting, in depth, the work of the Lyme artists who were so integral to American art history in the early years of the twentieth century. This allowed the Museum to inextricably link the collection to the property and to the broader story of its use as a boardinghouse for artists. Even if it ultimately fell short of its ambitious goals, ARC was not afraid to dream big. "If you don't ask, you don't get," trustee and lawyer John Barclay advised Margaret Brown on more than one occasion.[25] Under the leadership of Nathan and Patricia Shippee, ARC asked for the community's support, fostering the resumption of a close allegiance between the families of the artists and the organization itself. ARC planted seeds that would bear fruit over time, with far-reaching consequences for the exhibition, collection, and interpretive programs of the Museum.[26]

Formed in the context of the American Bicentennial, when communities were assessing what to highlight from their local history, it is useful to view the ARC as a part of Margaret Brown's exceptionally powerful vision for the Florence Griswold Museum, one that can be seen today as the birth of the modern era of the organization. She established ARC as part of her overall effort to bring vitality and renewal to the organization through a committed board of volunteer leaders, a physical plant that all could admire, financial solvency, exhibitions and publications, educational access for local school children and, ultimately, a professional staff, which she initiated with the hiring of its first director, Tom Mackay, in 1972. One of her most cherished goals—accreditation by the American Alliance of Museums—would eventually come in 1978, four years after she stepped down at the Society's annual meeting in May 1974. At that meeting, in her closing remarks, she quoted from an unlikely source—the Bauhaus Modernist Walter Gropius: "Act as if you were going to live forever, and cast your plans way ahead.... If your contribution has been vital there will always be someone to pick up where you left off, and that will be your claim to immortality."[27] Margaret Brown lived by these words. By doing so, she fashioned a legacy to guide those who followed, which still guides the Museum today. ❋

"Act as if you were going to live forever, and cast your plans way ahead... If your contribution has been vital there will always be someone to pick up where you left off, and that will be your claim to immortality."

[22]Mrs. Robert D. Graff of Far Hills, New Jersey, to Nathan M. Shippee, August 7, 1973. ARC Files, LHSA.
[23]Interview with Patricia Shippee, February 3, 2024.
[24]Brown, "Memories," 32. Margaret Brown Papers, LHSA.

↑ Margaret Miller Cooper (1874-1965), *Port Isaac, July, 17-27* (detail), 1927. Watercolor on paper, 6 7/8 x 10 in. Part of the Goodman Presentation Case shown on p. 14. Florence Griswold Museum, Gift of Mrs. Robert D. Graff, 1975.6.18

[25]Brown, "Memories," 17. Margaret Brown Papers, LHSA.
[26]The close relationships between the families of the Lyme Artists and the Museum would continue for decades to follow, and still exists today. Retrospective exhibitions devoted to such artists as Ivan Olinsky, Harry Hoffman, Frank Vincent DuMond, to name just a few, relied upon the cooperation and support of the artists' extended family. Many gifts to the collection resulted from such collaborations. Willard Metcalf's widow, Henriette, of Newtown, Connecticut, first saw a front-page review of *Miss Florence and the Artists of Old Lyme* in The Newtown Bee in 1971, which led her to reach out to the Florence Griswold House and offer Willard Metcalf's naturalist collection and a silverpoint drawing by her husband. Eventually, over time, she gave the Museum most of what she owned of her husband's art. This, in turn, set the Museum on a long-term course to build the largest public collection of Willard Metcalf's art, including his diary, sketchbooks, drawings, and oils from all phases of his lengthy career. *May Night: Willard Metcalf in Old Lyme*, an exhibition and book published in 2005, showcased the importance of Old Lyme to this celebrated American landscape painter.
[27]Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Lyme Historical Society, May 11, 1974, LHSA.

↑ Margaret C. Brown, from *The Pictorial* (Old Saybrook, Conn.), February 8, 1977. Lyme Historical Society Archives at the Florence Griswold Museum

The Art of Conservation

INTRO BY CURATOR AMY KURTZ LANSING

In 2023, Eleanor Tennyson Smullen generously donated Willard Metcalf's *Spring Study à Grez*, an 1885 painting of the French landscape that had been in her family for generations. The artist gave the picture to the legendary anthropologist Frank Hamilton Cushing (1857–1900), whom he met in New Mexico while preparing illustrations for an article about Cushing's work with the Zuni people, and with whom he remained friends.

Last seen publicly in 1917, *Spring Study à Grez* arrived at the Museum in need of cleaning by the skilled independent conservators we rely upon to care for the works in the collection. I hope that you will enjoy going behind the scenes as you read how the conservators assessed and treated both the canvas and the original frame chosen by the artist, improving their physical condition and bringing them back to exhibitable appearance for the painting's debut in *Impressionism 150: From Paris to Connecticut and Beyond.*

Conserving the Painting

PATRICIA GARLAND, Painting Conservator

Spring Study à Grez, from 1885, is a quiet yet dynamic composition executed in a free, brisk manner directly from nature. The composition is centered on a spot along the river Loing, near a country road, with the northern French town of Grez off in the distance. Barren, winter trees stand on the riverbank, reflected in the clear waters.

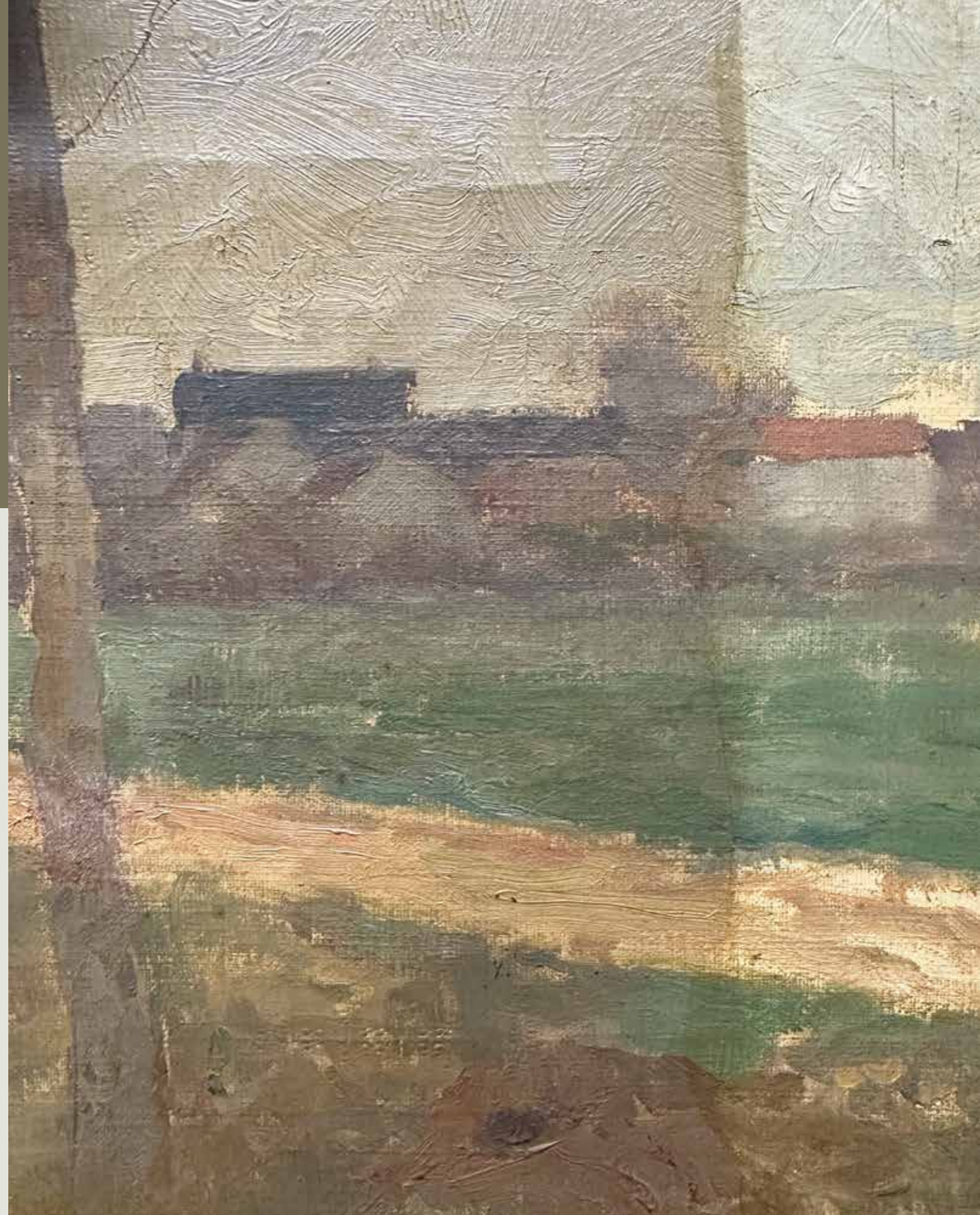
The muted, soft palette echoes the mood of the composition. Willard Metcalf applied his paint onto the off-white, factory-primed, linen substrate in quick, economical but brushy strokes and scumbles, leaving windows of the priming layer visible. The painting was never varnished. He gave it to a close colleague/friend, whose family recently donated it to the Museum.

Natural aging of the materials was the only factor contributing to the need for conservation intervention now. There had been no other treatment over the years, so the painting remains in a near pristine state. Aside from a heavy grime layer that obscured the subtle palette and deep, implied space, stresses of the priming and paint layers on the aged, desiccated linen substrate led to unsurprising structural damage. Tacking margins that were attached with steel tacks to the five-member, wooden, mortise and tenon, keyed stretcher had torn free in a number of locations. The weight of the canvas relaxed against the stretcher bar, causing insignificant but visible cracking all around.

In order to proceed with structural work, the painting first required cleaning—a light vacuuming of the verso of the linen to remove dust that had accumulated within the interstices of the canvas fibers, followed by the removal of the heavy grime layer, with a mild aqueous solution.

Tacking margins that were torn were next mended with a flexible tissue that was impregnated with a conservation, reversible adhesive. Tack holes were resecured with tiny blotter cushions to prevent further tearing, and the painting was restretched onto the original stretcher. Paint craquelure along the stretcher bars, which was not a structural problem but was visually disturbing, was relaxed with light moisture and weights. The canvas was expanded slightly by keying, reducing any slack and distortion.

Little in the way of further cosmetic work was required beyond the cleaning. Metcalf's wish was to leave his paintings



Willard Metcalf's *Spring Study à Grez* (1885) after partial cleaning. Oil on canvas, 24 x 20 in. Florence Griswold Museum, Gift of the family of Anne Earle (Babcock) Sullen, gifted by Eleanor Tennyson Smullen, 2023.6

unvarnished to showcase, to the greatest effect, the subtle softness and natural three-dimensionality of the composition. There were, however, a few insignificant pinpoint losses, discolorations, and scattered small areas of blanching that required attention to quiet them and restore the overall cohesiveness of the composition.

Conservation choices are thoughtfully determined in order to remain sensitive, as much as possible, to an artist's intention. For *Spring Study à Grez*, judgment and restraint were key factors in the treatment, accepting natural aging, yet endeavoring to return the painting to the way it left the artist's hands.

Conserving the Frame

TAD D. FALLON, Frame Conservator

Background: During preparations for the *Impressionism 150: From Paris to Connecticut & Beyond* show, the Florence Griswold Museum asked me to examine for conservation a gilded frame for the Willard Metcalf painting *Spring Study à Grez*, ca. 1855. As a professional conservator, my first step always begins with a thorough examination and a discussion with the curator and other stakeholders to better determine their goals for the treatment of the object in question. After these discussions, it was decided that the goal for the treatment would be to gently clean the frame and, most importantly, to stabilize the gilded surface so that the frame could be placed on exhibition with no concerns.

Initial Condition Assessment: The frame was in good overall condition for its age, showing typical age-related surface issues within the gilded surface decoration. The outer oak frame was in good condition, with some minor surface blemishes, but it retained an original old varnish that had good clarity and was well-adhered to the surface.

The gilded inner slip frame was largely sound and intact, with the gilded surface having only minor surface dirt accumulations and small losses. The gilt surface was stable and well-adhered.

The composition ornament perimeter molding was oil gilded and had losses and delamination of the surface from the substrate. This condition was prevalent uniformly throughout the entire perimeter. In most of the areas, it seemed like the failure was in the size layer, as the gold leaf was peeling away in very small areas from the substrate, which presented in a flaky and discontinuous gilded surface. The miter joints were slightly gappy in some corners, but the corners were solid, and the gaps were not a large concern.

Treatment: Treatment began with careful dusting and cleaning using distilled water and Triton XL-80N detergent to remove superficial grime while preserving the gilded surface's integrity and patina.

The composition ornament was consolidated using Lascuax Medium for Consolidation, a thin, injectable adhesive suitable for museum conservation that flows into cracks, and any remaining lifting can be set using special silicone release mylar and a heated spatula. It is a great technique for consolidating and lifting gilding. Once the surface was consolidated, the white losses were then meticulously inpainted using blonde dewaxed shellac and stable mica powders, chosen for their longevity, tonal range, and color stability.

Following consolidation and inpainting, the frame received a coat of clear paste wax on the wood and microcrystalline wax on the gilded surfaces for added protection.

The successful treatment allowed the recently conserved painting to be reinstalled in the frame on-site, ready for exhibition and enjoyment by present and future audiences. ❋

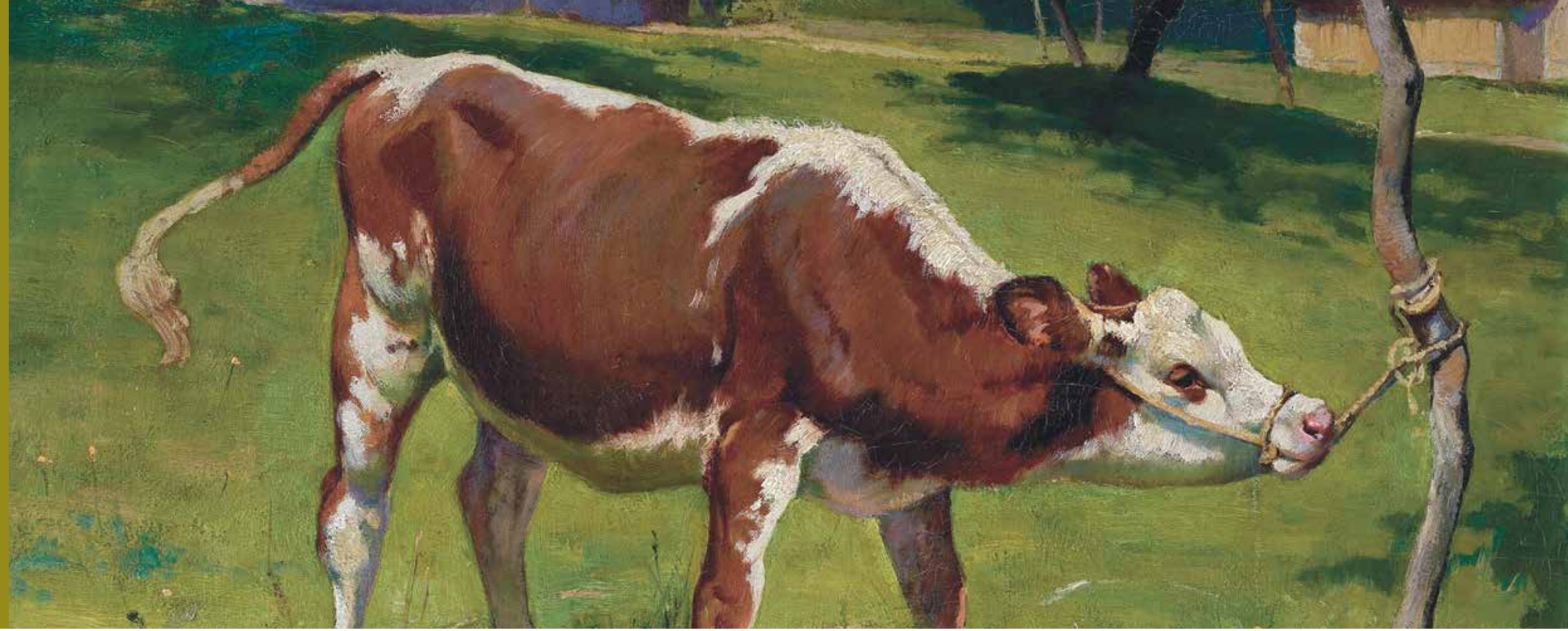
↑ Willard Metcalf's *Spring Study à Grez* (1885) after partial cleaning. Oil on canvas, 24 x 20 in. Florence Griswold Museum, Gift of the family of Anne Earle (Babcock) Sullen, gifted by Eleanor Tennyson Smullen, 2023.6

↗ Willard Metcalf's *Spring Study à Grez* (1885). Oil on canvas, 24 x 20 in. Florence Griswold Museum, Gift of the family of Anne Earle (Babcock) Sullen, gifted by Eleanor Tennyson Smullen, 2023.6

↑ Conservation of the original oak and gilded frame for *Spring Study à Grez*, performed by Tad Fallon.

Recent Acquisition

BY AMY KURTZ LANSING



Matilda Browne (1869–1947)
An Unwilling Model (detail), ca. 1892
Oil on canvas, 15 ¼ x 18 ¼ in.
Purchase, Dorothy Clark Archibald Fund, 2023.12

The Florence Griswold Museum holds the largest public collection of works by Matilda Browne (1869–1947), one of the few women artists of her day to have achieved professional recognition in her lifetime. A member of the Lyme Art Colony, Browne was the subject of the exhibition *Idylls of Farm and Garden* in 2017, guest curated by Susan G. Larkin, Ph.D. Building on the foundation of research for that exhibition and its publication, our curators continue to flesh out the still-incomplete record of Browne's career and to seek out additional works for the collection.

Browne's works, like many works by women artists in the nineteenth- and twentieth-centuries, went into private hands rather than to museums. Some have re-emerged over time, identifiable by Browne's signature, with titles forgotten. Recently, Rago Auctions advertised a Browne painting with the generic title *Cow*. Museum staff recognized it as *An Unwilling Model*, a long-unlocated and historically significant work by the artist.

Growing up in Newark, New Jersey, and nurtured as an artistic prodigy, Browne benefitted from the teaching of artists like Carleton Wiggins, and in 1889, studied in Europe under William-Adolphe Bouguereau. Returning to Paris in 1890, she enrolled at the Académie Julian and had a floral still life accepted at the Salon. She traveled from France to Holland, where she studied with the American cattle painter Henry Bisbing. In February of 1892, she returned to the United States and set her sights on producing work for prestigious exhibitions.

Browne aspired to become America's version of the renowned French animal painter Rosa Bonheur (1822–1899), best known for compositions such as *The Horse Fair* (1855, Metropolitan Museum of Art). As she progressed in her career, Browne appears to have given consideration to how to make her mark. She exhibited *An Unwilling Model* at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. The fair's displays were a triumphant declaration of American artists' accomplishments on the global stage. Female artists declared their excellence through the Women's Building, which was devoted to art and decoration by women. *An Unwilling Model* represents Browne's perception of what work from her oeuvre best illustrated her skills and promoted her potential. She had tested the work's appeal when she exhibited a watercolor version of it at the Society of American Artists in 1892. At the World's Columbian Exposition, she was awarded an Honorable Mention for *An Unwilling Model.*

At such prominent exhibitions as the World's Columbian Exposition, artists received not only career-boosting media attention but also found buyers for current pieces and customers for future art commissions. Following the Chicago display of *An Unwilling Model*, the painting appeared as the lead illustration in the 1895 *Monthly Illustrator* article, "Women as Admirers of Cattle," which was devoted largely to Browne. The artist clipped the article and pasted a copy into her scrapbook, now in the Museum's archive after resurfacing around Cleveland, Ohio, where Browne's sister had once lived. She used a watercolor version of the composition on a card advertising an exhibition of her paintings in Newark in 1895 (also in the scrapbook). And in 1901, she applied for copyright on a small version of *An Unwilling Model* in bronze, a medium she experimented with in the early twentieth century. Thus far, any extant bronzes of *An Unwilling Model* remain unlocated.

Critics praised both the execution and the unconventional subject of *An Unwilling Model*—no placid bovine but rather one straining to escape being treated as an object of the artist's gaze. Like her idol Bonheur, Browne worked directly from nature, tramping into muddy farmyards to record her often hulking animal subjects from life. Professional women in the 1890s walked a fine line between being assertive, necessary for financial security, and conforming to society's expectations for feminine modesty and delicacy. Browne's deft navigation of these gender norms earned her accolades. Critics saw "masculine vigor" on her canvases yet applauded her femininity. To appeal to the clientele that sought "feminine" subjects from women artists' brushes, Browne built a repertoire that included floral still lifes and garden views (such as *Peonies*, on view in our collections highlights gallery) in addition to sheep, horses, oxen, and cattle.

The privilege of continuing to acquire works by Browne has enabled the Museum to more fully understand and portray her career and her central role in the Museum's core story about the Lyme Art Colony. ⁎

Anne Czepiel
DEDICATED VOLUNTEER

After nearly 20 years as a curatorial assistant, Anne Czepiel retired in February. Although she served in many volunteer capacities over the years, Anne found her true calling working with the Curatorial department. All of us here at the Museum greatly appreciate her dedication to, and passion for, the Museum and the stories of our artists. She has been so generous with her time and talents. We'll miss you, Anne!

What was your job description?
I followed art auctions online and read *Antiques and The Arts Weekly,* noting articles relating to the FloGris and any auction dates that might interest our curators. I compiled about 300 artist biographies. I loved doing those. They were such fun. I worked Wednesday and Friday afternoons for four hours at a time. I started in 2005. Before that I was a docent and member of the Garden Gang since the 1990s. In between, I cleaned the basement of Huntley Brown House (Museum offices) and reorganized the docent library! (laughs)

What artist file did you most enjoy working on?
Childe Hassam. I'll tell you, that was a labor of love. He's such an icon, and he represents this place. He had such a fascinating life. He left high school without graduating and passed up his uncle's offer of a Harvard invitation to start working on his art. In 1920 he was making, by today's equivalent, what was well over a million dollars. Upon his death in 1935, it was announced that Hassam had bequeathed the contents of his studio – consisting of 326 oil paintings, 89 watercolors, and 33 pastels – to the American Academy of Arts and Letters with the recommendation that the proceeds from their sale be used to purchase works by American and Canadian artists for museums in North America. There was so much information to pull from. His file is huge!

What is your favorite find or discovery?
At auction, I found an etching by Harry Hoffman of the Bow Bridge. No one knew he had done one. The Museum was able to purchase it! Oh, that was fantastic. Another one that I found at auction was an oil painting portrait by Charles Ethan Porter. The Museum purchased that one too.

What did you like best about the work?
Learning about art. I learned so much by working on the biographies and from Amy, Mell, and Jenny (the Curatorial department). I also learned so much by being a docent. I've always been interested in art because of my grandfather. I thought he was just my grandfather who painted. We had his stuff all over the house. I mentioned his name, Sears Gallagher, to Jeff Andersen (Florence Griswold Museum Director Emeritus). I told him I didn't know much about him, just that he was a member of the Boston School and painted on Monhegan Island. Jeff knew who he was, and that's what got me interested in researching my own grandfather. There is no record of my grandfather coming to paint in Old Lyme, but he was friends with Lyme Art Colony artists Mary and Charles Ebert, who would often paint on Monhegan Island. It's these connections and stories that I find so fascinating and love to share! *

As we were going to print: *Anne graciously offered to continue her work at the Museum once a week. We gratefully accepted.*

↑ Amy Kurtz Lansing, Curator; Mell Scalzi, former Registrar; Anne Czepiel, Jenny Parsons; Curator of Exhibitions

Jeffrey Andersen is the Director Emeritus of the Florence Griswold Museum, where he served for 41 years from 1976 to 2018. Andersen was honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award from the New England Museum Association in 2016. In 2019, he received an Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts from the University of New Haven in recognition for his contributions to the arts. He is currently working with Curator Amy Kurtz Lansing on a history of the Lyme Art Colony.

David Hoffman is an emeritus USGS [U.S. Geological Survey] wildlife biologist/ecotoxicologist and retired adjunct professor. He is an author and editor of books, book chapters, reviews, and many technical papers. He also writes short fiction. He is on the Board of Trustees of the Florence Griswold Museum. He enjoys distance swimming, birding, cooking, homebrewing, walks with his dog, and feeding nine feral cats.

Hall W. Rockefeller is the founder of Less Than Half, an advisory and education platform dedicated to helping culturally curious women find meaning in art by teaching them how to collect and support women artists. She holds a BA from Yale and an MA from the Courtauld Institute and regularly brings her feminist perspective on art to essays and articles for Hyperallergic.

Tad Fallon grew up around antiques, working in the family business, Copake Auction Inc., prior to college. He holds a BFA in Restoration from the Fashion Institute of Technology, completed an MA at the Smithsonian Institution's Furniture Conservation Training Program, and served a graduate fellowship at the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Conservation Center. In 2000, he formed the conservation firm Fallon & Wilkinson LLC with Smithsonian classmate Randy Wilkinson. Tad resides in Old Lyme with his wife, Jennifer, and their two sons.

Patricia Sherwin Garland is a painting conservator in private practice. Her clients include museums, galleries, foundations, and collectors. She retired as Senior Conservator of Paintings at the Yale Art Gallery in 2013. Prior to her work at Yale, she was Senior Conservator of Paintings at the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art. Patricia studied the history of art and fine arts at Connecticut College and Harvard University, receiving her BA from Connecticut College in 1973. She obtained her conservation training through apprenticeships, workshops, and post-graduate coursework. In addition, she had two fellowships at the J. Paul Getty Museum.

Amy Kurtz Lansing has been Curator at the Florence Griswold Museum since 2006. A specialist in nineteenth- and twentieth-century American art, she has organized and co-organized exhibitions on paintings, sculpture, and photography. She is currently collaborating with members of Connecticut's five recognized Native American tribes on the exhibition *naqutiwowok / nontinuance: Connecticut's Tribal Communities Create*, on view November 16, 2024 through February 9, 2025.

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Cover image: J. Alden Weir (1852-1919), *Portrait of Caro*, 1887. Oil on canvas, 49 3/8 x 36 1/8 in. Florence Griswold Museum, Purchase, David W. Dangremond Acquisitions Fund, 2022.20

William Chadwick (1879-1962), *Beach Scene*. Watercolor on paper, 6 x 8 1/8 in. Part of the Goodman Presentation Case shown on p. 14. Florence Griswold Museum, Gift of Mrs. Robert Graff, 1975.6.7

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