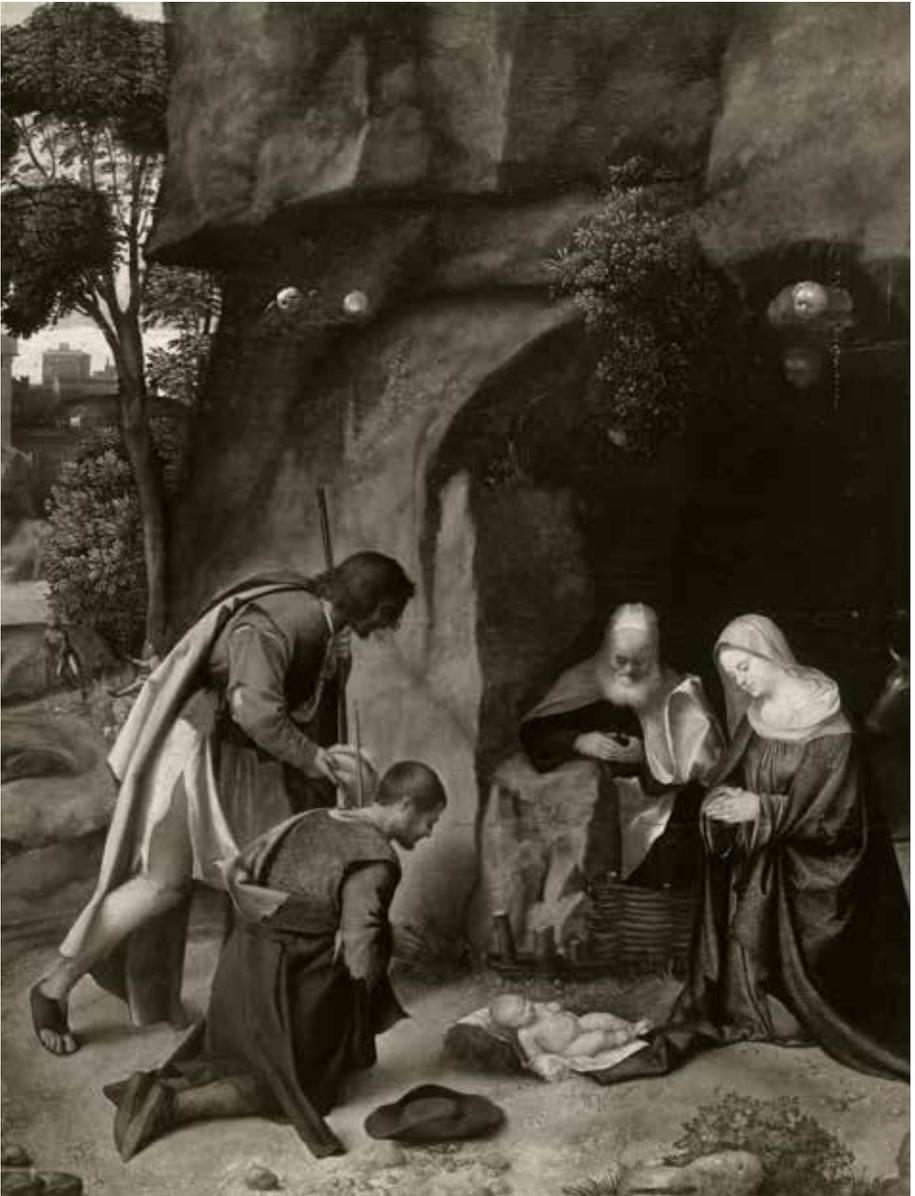


# In the Library

The Richter Archive at 75

May 7 – August 24, 2018

National Gallery of Art





Some material from the Richter Archive devoted to costume history remains in the original boxes and folders. The contents of this box depict costumes from 1821 to the mid-twentieth century, including J. A. D. Ingres's portrait *Madame Moitessier* in the Samuel H. Kress Collection of the National Gallery of Art.

# The Richter Archive at 75

In 1943 the National Gallery of Art announced with great fanfare the donation of the George M. Richter Archive of Illustrations on Art. The importance of the Richter Archive and its anticipated role in authenticating works of art and their provenance following the unprecedented upheaval of the Second World War was touted in newspapers across the country. Little was mentioned in the press about the man who assembled the archive and the journey of these photographs to Washington. This year the National Gallery of Art Library celebrates the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Richter Archive in Washington and how its donation initiated the development of one of the world's largest image collections dedicated to art and architecture.

George Martin Richter was born on March 27, 1875 in San Francisco, California, the son of noted surgeon Dr. Clemens Max Richter (1848–1936) and his wife, Emma Sophia Bierwirth (1853–1929). Following a decade of study at various universities in Europe and the United States, including a stint teaching German literature at the University of Pennsylvania in 1899 and a foray into publishing in Germany, Richter moved to Munich in 1905 to complete his studies at the Ludwig Maximilian University. Having chosen to focus on art history, his advisor was Berthold Riehl, professor of the newly formed chair in art history and noted scholar of Bavarian art history from the Middle Ages to the early modern era. Under his tutelage Richter wrote his dissertation on the sixteenth-century German painter Melchior Feselen. His degree was conferred in 1907.

From about 1910 to around 1912 Richter worked at the gallery and auction house Galerie Helbing in Munich, where he cataloged collections and wrote essays for Hugo Helbing's publishing unit. He later joined the firm Galerie Georg Caspari. It is not entirely clear what Richter did upon the American entry into World War I in 1917, but there is no mention of him in Munich. Galerie Helbing continued to operate during the war, although it did move some of its operations to Switzerland. Richter's cousin Jean-Paul lived in Lugano and it is possible that Richter, as an American citizen, relocated there. Jean-Paul Richter (1847–1937), also an art historian and scholar of the works of Leonardo da Vinci, is remembered for his extensive correspondence and friendship with the art historian and connoisseur Giovanni Morelli, whom he famously introduced to noted connoisseur and scholar Bernard Berenson. In 1918 George Richter returned to Munich and established his own art dealership. He also founded the luxury publishing company Phantassus-Verlag in July 1919 with H. H. Schlieper. The firm published eleven books before the company was sold in 1922.

In 1919, with a loan of ten thousand marks from his friend, the author Thomas Mann, Richter purchased a home in the town of Feldafing on Lake Starnberg, south of Munich. He married Amalie, the Baroness Zündt von Kenzingen, on November 25, 1920, and they made their home at what he called "the Villino." It was here that their daughter, Irmingard Emma Antonia, known as Gigi, was born in April 1922. George maintained his art business, but in December 1923 he sold the Villino at the height of

the German economy's inflation and repaid the loan from Thomas Mann with two five-thousand-mark bills that Richter called "worthless museum pieces." Despite this, their friendship remained strong. Richter moved his family first to Munich for a few months and then to Florence in March 1924, where they lived at the Villa Piazza.

Over the years his scholarly focus had shifted to Italian Renaissance art, particularly that of the Venetian master Giorgione and he began writing about Florentine and Venetian artists at this time. On March 24, 1925, the Richters were invited to have tea with Bernard and Mary Berenson at the Villa I Tatti. While it is highly likely that Berenson showed his library and photo collection to Richter during this visit and another one month later, it is not known whether this remarkable collection of photographs influenced the younger scholar to continue amassing his own images of Italian art. The Richter Archive does, however, contain a substantial number of photographs from different Italian photography sources that date from this period.

While there is no documentation recording when Richter began compiling his photo archive, it seems logical to conclude that Richter started collecting photographs sometime after he completed his dissertation and while working at the Galerie Helbing. It is odd that the Richter Archive contains only one photograph of a work by Melchior Feselen, the subject of his dissertation, and is strangely lacking in works by German artists but has great strength in the Italian schools that date from his years in Florence. Information on Richter's time in Florence is scant at best. Without any letters one must speculate that Richter's work in the archives of the Kunsthistorisches Institut and knowledge of Berenson's *fototeca* at I Tatti, both with rich collections of photographic material, increased his desire to form a picture library of his own. Most art historians collected photographs as part of their research, but few amassed them on the scale of Richter.

With the rise of fascism in Italy, Richter relocated his family and archive from Florence to England in 1929, continuing to write, lecture, and advise clients on Italian paintings and renting a house on the Lido in Venice to continue his research on Giorgione. In 1937 the University of Chicago published his book on Giorgione that was widely praised for its insightful assessment of the artist's work. Then, at the encouragement of Thomas Mann (who had relocated to Princeton, New Jersey while lecturing at the university), Richter once again uprooted his family at the outbreak of the war in 1939. He moved them and his archive to New York. In their apartment on the Upper East Side he uncrated his archive and began adding new photographs and clippings to the green buckram covered boxes. "He was always at it," recalled his daughter, Gigi. His wife's cousin, the Baroness Hilla von Rebay, helped introduce them to the New York art world and encouraged Richter to begin writing and advising again. Richter picked up the threads of his research on the Florentine painter Andrea dal Castagno for a book that was eventually published after his death. He also began work on a book linking Giorgione to the modernist painting movements of the early twentieth century.

Finding it difficult to establish himself as an art dealer in New York and discovering that remuneration for his writing and lecturing was limited, Richter realized that his library and archive were his most valuable commodities. In February 1940, Richter began approaching David Finley, director of the National Gallery of Art, about purchasing his library and archive for the yet-to-be-opened museum. He undoubtedly made his

case again when he visited Washington on April 30, 1940, when he was taken to see the Mellon Collection, then housed at the Corcoran Gallery of Art. He offered his library and archive of sixty thousand photographs and an unspecified number of clippings to the Gallery for fifty thousand dollars. In February 1942, in failing health, Richter presented his last paper at Johns Hopkins University at a talk that accompanied an exhibition on Giorgione. It was not until after Richter's death in June 1942 that Solomon Guggenheim, at the urging of Hilla von Rebay, stepped in and provided the funds to allow the Gallery to purchase the archive from Mrs. Richter while the books were sold at auction.

The archive was delivered to the National Gallery of Art on August 1, 1943. The donation was announced in the press a few days later. In addition to citing the importance of the photographs forming a research center similar to the Frick, it was thought that the archive, due to the Second World War, would be "an invaluable record of many works of art from the great European museums now either destroyed or dispersed."

The Richter Archive, in its hundreds of green slip-case boxes, was arranged like a connoisseur's archive: numbered in Richter's scheme by school, then by attribution to an artist, and finally chronology. Richter recorded his system in a small leather-bound notebook and sometimes made notations on the reverse of a photo. The archive was located in the Gallery's Library briefly, until a room was found to house it among the administrative offices. This collection was used by the curatorial and education departments, and, to facilitate refileing, at some point each photo was stamped and noted with the Richter box number, folder number, and sheet number.

The acquisition of photographs for research did not end with the purchase of the Richter Archive. The Library had a rather small collection of photos and reproductions that it had begun amassing for curatorial use, although it was not intended to become a significant research tool. In a prescient move the Library purchased photographs from the New York branch of the French art dealers Durand-Ruel at the Parke-Bernet Galleries in 1950. The group of approximately fourteen thousand photographs, mostly mounted on stiff, gilt-edged boards, illustrates all the works of art sold by the firm in Paris, primarily impressionist paintings. The boards had some sale information on their versos and in rare instances identified sitters, most notably the people depicted in *Luncheon of the Boating Party* by Pierre-Auguste Renoir, now at the Phillips Collection in Washington, DC. The Richter Archive, despite its obvious affinity to the Library's mission, was considered a curatorial function of the Gallery. By 1973 the Library photo collection was interfiled with the Richter Archive, and subsequent photographic acquisitions by the Library helped build the archive.

The history of the photographic archives, the addition of significant collections of photographs amassed by scholars, photographers, museums, and art dealers is beyond the scope of this brief exhibition brochure and checklist. A complete history of the department of image collections and its growth to one of the largest art and architecture image repositories can be found under "History" at [library.nga.gov/imagecollections](http://library.nga.gov/imagecollections).

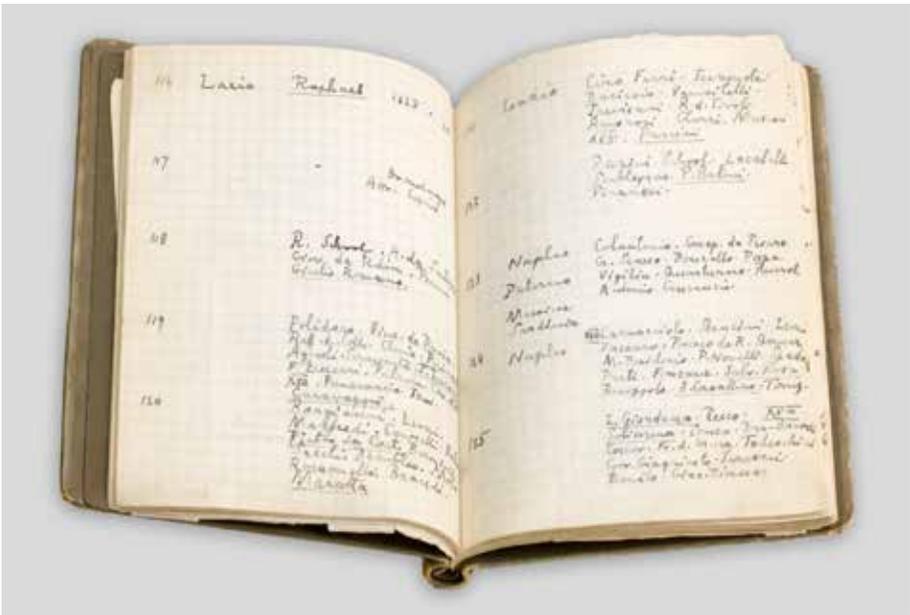
Unless otherwise noted, all material is drawn from the holdings of the department of image collections.



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1 Conway Studios, New York, *George Martin Richter*, January 1942, silver gelatin print, Gigi Crompton Richter Collection, England

Richter sat for this portrait prior to an exhibition on Giorgione at Johns Hopkins University, where he was the keynote speaker for a lecture series.

2 Sophia N. I. Goudstikker (Hof Atelier Elvira, Munich), 1865 – 1924, *George Martin Richter*, 1907, matte collodion print

This cabinet card size photo was taken of Richter upon completion of his doctoral degree in 1907 at the Ludwig Maximilian University.

3 Gigi Richter Crompton, b. 1922, Rendering of *Cardinal Georges d'Armagnac and His Secretary Guillaume Philandrier* by Titian in the collection of the Duke of Northumberland, Alnwick Castle, c. 1937, pencil on tracing paper

This painting, now considered to be by Titian, once hung in Albury Park, Surrey, home of the Dowager Duchess of Northumberland. Richter went to see the painting and took his daughter Gigi with him. She had previously been sent to Berlin to study drawing. She produced a handful of sketches that are part of the Richter Archive, along with George's more crudely drawn sketches of various works of art.

4 Anonymous, United Kingdom, *Cardinal Georges d'Armagnac and His Secretary Guillaume Philandrier* by Titian, in the collection of the Duke of Northumberland, Alnwick Castle, 1931, carbon print

5 George Martin Richter, 1875 – 1942, Handwritten Key to the Richter Classification System, c. 1920 – 1924, ink and pencil in a leather-bound Baschaga notebook

Richter devised his own system for keeping order amongst his growing photo archive, arranging them first by school, then by artist and theme.

**6** Anonymous, *Adoration of the Shepherds* by Giorgione (Allendale Nativity) in the Samuel H. Kress Collection, National Gallery of Art, 1935, gelatin silver print, George M. Richter Archive

This photo dates from the time that the painting was still in the Allendale collection and before it was acquired by Samuel H. Kress in 1938.

**7** George Martin Richter, 1875–1942, *Giorgio da Castelfranco, called Giorgione* (Chicago, 1937). Loaned by Dorothy Straight, Newbury, MA

This is Richter's annotated and corrected copy that was presented to Michael Straight by Gigi Richter Crompton, his cousin-in-law. The book is "Grangerized"—that is, blank sheets were bound into the copy for the annotations.

**8** Anonymous, New York, *Hilla von Rebay*, 1947, gelatin silver print, Hilla von Rebay Archive

Rebay, cousin to Mrs. Richter, was crucial in bringing the archive to the Gallery.

**9** Anonymous, United States, *Martha Washington and George Washington*, 1852–1858, daguerreotype in thermoplastic case

This assembled pair of daguerreotypes shows works of art depicting George and Martha Washington. James Sharples executed the pastel of President Washington in 1796 or 1797. George Washington Parke Custis, the president's step-grandson, recalled that the artist had used a mechanical instrument, a physiognotrace, to ensure the accuracy of his subject's profile. The miniature of Martha by Walter Robinson was painted on ivory and dates to 1794. It descended in ownership to the Custis-Lee family and is presumed to have been lost during the Civil War, when a barge containing the contents of the family's Arlington House capsized on the Potomac.

**10** Anonymous, France, *Carte-de-Visite Viewer*, c. 1865, mahogany with ebonized border, crystal lens with carte-de-visite of Zytglogge, Bern, Switzerland

This viewer, which holds around twenty-five cards, simplified transporting favorite carte-de-visite photos to view with friends. The small format photograph could be more easily viewed with the crystal lens. The popularity of this format waned around 1879, when larger format cabinet cards came into fashion.

**11** J. W. Husher, 1827–1879, *J. W. Cole's House, 511 East Washington Street, Greencastle, Indiana*, c. 1873, albumen stereograph

Stereographs, an early form of 3-D photography, provided a depth to the depicted scene when the image was seen through a special viewer. Mass-produced images of landscapes, artworks, or architecture, like the Cole residence in Indiana, were popular in the nineteenth century and commonly found in even modest homes as a source of entertainment.



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**12** Brassai, 1899 – 1984, *Madeleine* by J. B. Lemoyne, Church of Saint-Roch from the Sainte-Sulpice Series, July 1945, gelatin silver print, René Huyghe Archive

René Huyghe, curator at the Musée du Louvre from 1930, is celebrated for safeguarding French national patrimony during the Second World War. After the liberation of Paris Huyghe returned from the south of France to prepare for the return of national collections to their museums. Sculpture, mostly from Parisian churches, had been stored in the crypt of Saint-Sulpice for safekeeping. Huyghe asked his friend the photographer Brassai to photograph the work for a journal he had started.

**13** Léo Marchutz, 1903 – 1976, *Mont Sainte Victoire Seen from Les Lauves*, 1932, gelatin silver print, John Rewald Archive

**14** Léo Marchutz, 1903 – 1976, *The Interior of Cézanne's Studio at Les Lauves*, 1932, gelatin silver print, John Rewald Archive

John Rewald, author of the catalogue raisonné of Paul Cézanne's work, travelled with his friend Leo Marchutz around France in 1932 and 1933 to document the landscape motifs employed by Cézanne in his painting, as he feared that time would ruin the views that Cézanne depicted. The pair also documented Cézanne's studio, where Rewald recreated vignettes using the props left in the studio after the artist's death.





Léo Marchutz, *The Interior of Cézanne's Studio at Les Lauves*, 1932, gelatin silver print, John Rewald Archive



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15 Anonymous, United States, *Totila before Saint Benedict* by Benozzo Gozzoli in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1930, gelatin silver print, Richard Offner Archive, Gift of the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University



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16 Anonymous, United States, *The Conversion of Saul* by Benozzo Gozzoli in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1930, gelatin silver print, Richard Offner Archive, Gift of the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University

Art historian Richard Offner assembled a remarkable photographic archive of Florentine Renaissance paintings that he deposited at the Institute of Fine Arts at New York University. When the Institute could no longer house them they were donated to the Gallery, where they are an invaluable tool to researchers of Italian painting. These two examples are panel paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art that were photographed in 1930.

17 Juan Laurent, 1816 – 1886, *General View of the New Bullring, Madrid*, c. 1874, albumen silver print

The Library has an unusually large collection of prints by this Spanish photographer and his firm — the subject of a library exhibition in 2011. This view of the new Bullring in Madrid was taken just after construction was completed and shows Laurent's eye for composition.

18 Sir Francis Bedford, 1816 – 1894, *Guys Cliff from the River*, albumen print, Francis Bedford Archive



México. — 753. — Vista general interior de la nueva plaza de Armas. — Agosto 1796.

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**19** Sir Francis Bedford, 1816 – 1894, Index, Volume 2, handwritten and typeset text on boards in modern binding, Francis Bedford Archive

The Gallery acquired the archive of the important nineteenth-century British photographer Francis Bedford in 2016. It contains approximately 4,400 photographs and two index volumes that survey British and Welsh architecture and landscape.

**20** Clarence Kennedy, 1892 – 1972, *Portrait of a Woman: Back of Head Facing One Third to the Left* by Francesco Laurana, from *Studies in the History and Criticism of Sculpture*, vol. 3. (Northampton, MA, 1928), gelatin silver print

Many of the photographs by Kennedy, an art historian and photographer, have been in the Library's collection for years as part of the library of Gallery founder Joseph Widener. The original group has been augmented by additional gifts and purchases of Kennedy's work. Kennedy became interested in creating photographs as a means of expressing "in the most sympathetic way, the character of the forms as the sculptor left them, complete and valid in their own right." He began photographing sculpture in the 1920s and was close friends with photographer Ansel Adams.

**21** William Craft Brumfield, b. 1944, South and West Façade of Saint Andrew, Kiev, by Bartolomeo Francesco Rastrelli, 1983, gelatin silver print, William Craft Brumfield Archive

Brumfield, a professor of Slavic languages at Tulane University, began documenting Russian architecture in the 1970s and has published extensively in this area. His many photographic campaigns preserve in film the many structures that have now been lost and provide extensive documentation of well-known structures, like Rastrelli's Saint Andrew in Kiev.



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**22** Theophile Silvestre, 1823–1876, *Histoire des artistes vivants français et étrangers: études d'après nature* (Paris, 1856), National Gallery of Art Library, David K. E. Bruce Fund. Open to stipple engraving of Laisné portrait of Delacroix



23

**23** Victor Laisné, 1825–1897, *Eugène Delacroix*, 1852, salted paper print from waxed paper negative on original trimmed lithographed mount, purchased with funds from Earle and Ellen McVicker Layman

This photo of Eugène Delacroix by the painter Victor Laisné, who experimented briefly with the new medium of photography in the mid-nineteenth century, was the model for the subsequent stipple engraving of Delacroix's visage used in *Histoire des artistes vivants français et étrangers: études d'après nature* by Theophile Silvestre, published in various editions from 1853 on. Photos by Laisné are scarce.

**24** William A. Smith, 1918–1989, *Andrew Wyeth at His Home, Chadds Ford, PA*, 1957, printed May 28, 1957, gelatin silver print of an enlarged contact sheet with six frames and wax pencil notations, William A. Smith Archive

In 2014 the family of the artist William A. Smith donated his collection of artists' portraits, some created as part of a UNESCO cultural exchange between the United States and the Soviet Union. He continued his study of artists, many of whom became his friends, both at home and in his travels in Asia. This unusual enlarged contact sheet, with frames marked in wax pencil, shows his neighbor Andrew Wyeth.



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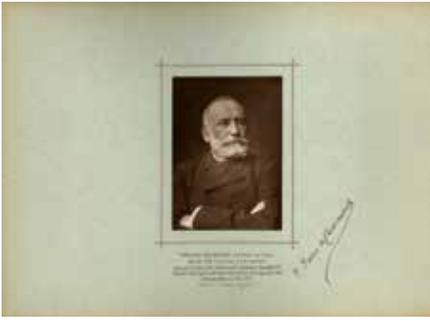
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**25** Fred W. McDarrah, 1926–2007, *Eva Hesse in Her Bowery Loft, September 14, 1968*, with *Untitled or Not Yet, Vacuous Forms [i.e. “Constant”]*, and *Repetition Nineteen*, 1968, gelatin silver print

McDarrah was a photographer in New York who captured life in Greenwich Village and documented the Beat Generation. He was a staff photographer for the *Village Voice*, for which he often photographed young, up-and-coming artists, like Eve Hesse, in their studios.

**26** Paul Katz, b. 1942, *Jasper Johns with Periscope (Hart Crane), Front Street Studio, New York*, 1963, gelatin silver print, Paul Katz Archive

Artist Paul Katz had a day job as photographer for the Solomon Guggenheim Museum. He would visit his friends in their studios and snap pictures of them at work, like this view of Jasper Johns working on *Periscope (Hart Crane)* (1962).



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**27** Jules-Michel Godet, active 1860s – c. 1886, View of the *Exposition Manet* in the Salle de Melpomène at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, albumen print  
After the death of Édouard Manet in 1883, his friends arranged a memorial exhibition of his work at the École des Beaux-Arts in February 1884 that was photographed by Jules-Michel Godet. The paintings, hung in tiers against a draped background, are now in museum collections around the world. In this example, two paintings now in the Gallery's collection can be seen coincidentally hanging side by side: *Plum Brandy* (1971.85.1) and *The Melon* (2014.18.29). Until *The Melon* was donated to the Gallery by Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon following Mrs. Mellon's death in 2014 and the work was spotted in this photograph it was not known to have been included in this exhibition.

**28** Société des artistes français, *Album artistique et biographique: Salon 1886* (Paris, 1886)  
The National Gallery of Art Library has extensive holdings related to the Paris salons. This illustrated volume is open to a portrait of Pierre Puvis de Chavannes and his 1886 salon entry, *Vision Antique*, now in the Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh.

**29** Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company, *Panorama of the Louisiana Purchase International Exposition: Grand Basin from Art Hill*, 1904, albumen print

**30** Anonymous, *Great Exhibition of 1851: The Crystal Palace, Interior of the Atrium Court, as reconstructed at Sydenham*, 1854, daguerreotype in leather case

**31** Centennial Photographic Company, *View of Italian Section in the Memorial Hall Annex with the Madonna of the Harpies by Andrea del Sarto, from the Galleria degli Uffizi*, 1876, albumen stereo card

The department of image collections has built extensive holdings of photographic material documenting world's fairs, dating from Prince Albert's Great Exhibition at the Crystal Palace in 1851 to Montreal's Expo '67. These expositions often had elaborate parks filled with temporary structures showcasing the latest technological innovations or exhibitions of art that attracted visitors from across the globe. The 1904 St. Louis World's Fair, officially the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, filled what was then the suburban Forest Park with halls for the exhibiting countries that surrounded a vast lagoon. The Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia marked the one-hundredth anniversary of the founding of the United States.



32

**32** Roger Fenton, 1819 – 1869, *Journey to Emmaus* by Claude Lorrain, 1858, salted paper print

Fenton, known for his fine art photography and his eloquent images of the Crimean War, was also a photographer for the British Museum from 1854 to 1859. In his specially designed rooftop studio he photographed a wide variety of museum objects, including works on paper like this 1660 drawing by Claude Lorrain. The prints of Fenton's photograph were produced in large quantities and retailed by the London print dealer P. & D. Colnaghi & Co.

**33** Alfred-Louis Brunet-Debaines, 1845 – 1939, *The Mill* by Rembrandt van Rijn, 1880, etching, Calcographic Print Collection

**34** Jonas Suyderhoff, c. 1636 – c. 1686, *Eleazar Swalmius* by Rembrandt van Rijn, state i/iii, after 1637, engraving Peter and Evelyn Kraus Collection

While the vast majority of the Gallery's image collections comprise photographic material, the department also has a small but impressive collection of reproductive prints. Reproductive prints first appear in the sixteenth century as a way to document princely art collections and those of other noble families and to disseminate knowledge of art to a wider audience. A significant set of calcographic prints — prints made from the original plates but in the early twentieth century — were transferred from the Library of Congress to the Gallery in 1986. In 2005 Peter and Evelyn Kraus donated their collection of almost five hundred primarily Dutch portrait prints to the department. The Kraus Collection contains etchings, engravings, and mezzotints, and in some cases multiple copies and states of the same sitter. This collection has been fully cataloged and digitized.



Checklist of the exhibition *In the Library: The Richter Archive at 75*, May 7–August 24, 2018.  
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For more information please visit [nga.gov/exhibitions/special/in-the-library-the-richter-archive-at-75.html](https://www.nga.gov/exhibitions/special/in-the-library-the-richter-archive-at-75.html).

**front cover** Anonymous, *Adoration of the Shepherds* (detail) by Giorgione (Allendale Nativity) in the Samuel H. Kress Collection, National Gallery of Art, 1935, gelatin silver print, George M. Richter Archive. **back cover** Conway Studios, New York, *George Martin Richter*, January 1942, silver gelatin print, Gigi Crompton Richter Collection, England

