

RINGLING MUSEUMS NEWSLETTER

MUSEUM OF ART ASOLO THEATER CA' D' ZAN CIRCUS MUSEUM



SEPTEMBER 1977



John P. Daniels, head, Education Division

EDUCATION DIVISION APPOINTMENT

John P. Daniels has been named head of the Ringling Museums' Education Division.

"John Daniels is a multi-talented person whose presence will be a major asset at the Ringling," stated Director Richard S. Carroll. "As Director of Education and Public Services at the Maine State Museum, as a regional representative to the National Professional Standing Committee on Museum Education, and as a member of the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, John has demonstrated the kind of imaginative leadership needed to run our state-wide education programs."

Mr. Daniels' activities also include the producing of educational television shows. He holds an M.S. from the University of Maine.

CURATORIAL APPOINTMENT

William H. Wilson, newly appointed curator of European art, comes to us from the William Benton Museum of Art, where he was consultant and guest curator, and from the University of Connecticut, where he was associate professor of art history.

"Scholarship and research are two of the most important areas of activity for an art museum," said Ringling Museums Director Richard S. Carroll. "And in William Wilson we're extremely fortunate in finding someone whose background includes illustrious scholarship, solid museum experience, and an extensive knowledge and interest in Baroque and Renaissance art." Mr. Wilson earned his Ph.D. from Harvard.

A catalogue of the Museums' Dutch and Flemish collections will be among Mr. Wilson's earliest projects.



William H. Wilson, curator of European art

JOHN RINGLING'S COLLECTION

The following essay is the initial response of William H. Wilson, curator of European art, to the Ringling Collection:

There are few public collections housed in an environment where the personal touch of the original donor is so pervasive and delightful.

Among his contemporaries John Ringling had few peers as a collector in that he amassed about 500 paintings of quality during a brief ten-year period from 1925 until his death in 1936.

No doubt his genius for organization and entrepreneurship was a great asset—his photographic memory helped him to mentally catalogue every picture he saw at sales and dealer's showrooms (curators obviously envy such ability).

I have been asked to express my personal favorites within the collection, which has been augmented by a series of talented directors and curators in the forty years since Ringling's death.

I suppose that if the Gulf of Mexico were rising and a hurricane were imminent (the Ringling is actually rather safe, being 21 feet above the waterline), I would rush to the Frans Hals **Portrait of the Burgomaster Pieter Jacobsz Olycan**, that powerful evocation of Dutch stability, wealth, and domineering personality now in our gallery 20.

If there was time, I would probably attempt to save the Rubens **Pausias and Glycera**, an allegory of a Greek painter and his beloved that is actually Rubens and his first wife, Isabella Brandt, seated in a bower of brightly glowing flowers. There are, of course, the other eight Rubens in the collection,

including the stupendous (14' x 14½') tapestry modelli commissioned by the Archduchess Isabella Clara Eugenia in 1625-27. Rubens' **Archduke Ferdinand**, the first major purchase of the Museum after the reopening in 1948, is currently one of the important paintings in the Antwerp exhibition commemorating the four hundredth anniversary of the Flemish Baroque master. The Rubens collection at the Ringling is undoubtedly one of the finest in America.

It is difficult to single out one of the many glorious Italian pictures in the collection, since there are many that are outstanding. I am drawn to Veronese's **The Rest on the Flight into Egypt**, a symphony of sensuous color brushwork and movement, the series of Bassanos, a high point in Venetian painting, the Piero di Cosimo, with its sharp focus and Renaissance perspective contrasting with the painterly qualities of the Venetian works. It is however, the sense of grandeur one feels in the nine Italian galleries, rather than individual pictures, that is most exciting for me, one after the other, most of them pictures on a large scale, rarely seen outside their original environment of great churches and palaces in Italy—annunciations, crucifixions, nativities, martyrdoms, the acts of the saints—the power and glory of the Roman church made visible. The experience is unequalled in America.

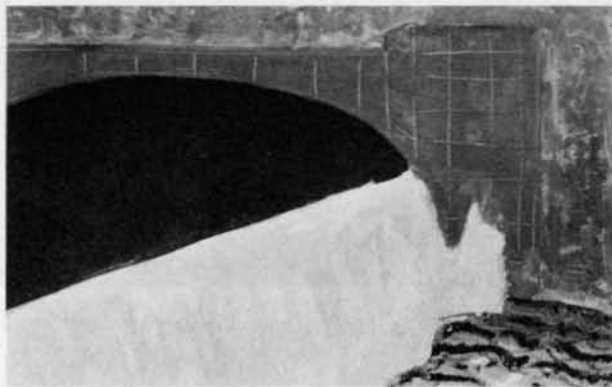
Far less known than the painting collection at the Ringling is a large group of sculptures and pottery from ancient Cyprus. Some of the life-size sculpture pieces are on display around the loggia, but most of the material is in storage. Ringling purchased the Cypriot collection from General Cesnola, who was the first director of the Metropolitan Museum. Cesnola's collection is now divided between the Met, Stanford University, and the Ringling. We hope to begin research on our share of the Cypriot material with the aim of producing a catalogue and reuniting our collection with fine examples from the Met and Stanford in a major exhibition.

The Museum also has a small but choice collection of Northern and Italian decorative arts from the famous Gavet collection, Russian icons, plus African, pre-Columbian, and Indian sculpture.

Most important is the fact that the Museum has received funds from the State of Florida to refurbish all 20 of the galleries. Even though the galleries have been maintained and upgraded, there has not been a major renovation in almost 40 years. Together with a regrouping of the painting collection, there are plans to install new lighting and wall surfaces. More extensive explanatory labels (to augment our excellent docent program) and the physical improvement of the galleries should make the visitors' museum experience even more pleasurable and thought provoking than it is now.

LOAN

Nicholas Poussin's **The Holy Family with the Infant St. John** will travel to the Academie de France in Rome and the Stadtische Kunsthalle in Dusseldorf as a part of the "Poussin" Exhibition, returning to us in March.



Country Dam, 1954, watercolor by Milton Avery, lent by the Grace Borgenicht Gallery

MILTON AVERY RETROSPECTIVE

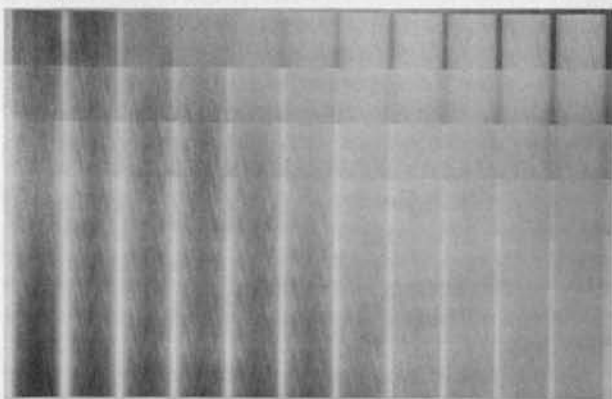
The initial exhibition of the 1977/1978 season, a "Milton Avery Retrospective," will be previewed at a reception for members from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on September 23. Sally Avery, widow of Milton Avery, who is also an artist, will attend this opening.

Avery, whose career spanned the mid 1920's to the mid 1960's, created a body of work that is today deemed unique in American art. He was a colorist who achieved extraordinary subtleties of value and had the ability to distill nature's moods through these color relationships.

Avery's spare and formal art concerns itself with the essence of the human figure or a landscape. He flattened the picture plane into a few expressive forms.

His work is at once witty and serene, rugged and poetic. Avery achieved the fame that his highly original art merited during the 1940's, and in 1958 was given a major retrospective exhibition at the Whitney Museum in New York.

Harvey S. Shipley Miller, Curator of Museum Collections at The Franklin Institute, will lecture on Avery's work on September 26 in the Asolo Theater at 8 p.m.



Mediterranean, 1969, acrylic by Richard Anuszkiewicz, lent by Jacksonville Art Museum, gift of Broward Memorial Fund and National Endowment for the Arts

RICHARD ANUSZKIEWICZ RETROSPECTIVE

The work of another great colorist and the prime exponent of "op" art will be shown at the Ringling Museum of Art this autumn. A "Richard Anuszkiewicz Retrospective" will open at a mem-

bers' preview and reception on November 8, from 8 to 10 p.m., with the artist in attendance.

Ever fascinated by the way in which the eye sees, Anuszkiewicz juxtaposes complementary colors that blend in the viewer's perception to create yet another hue.

For Anuszkiewicz, color is the dynamic element that determines the geometric form characteristic of his work. In his hand, color and form become one, a carefully structured and rhythmic whole.

While at Yale, Anuszkiewicz was deeply influenced by Joseph Albers, who stimulated his interest in color. Anuszkiewicz's highly personal and unique style evolved during the early 1960's, and in 1965 his work was featured in the important op art exhibition, "The Responsive Eye," at the Museum of Modern Art in New York and on the cover of **Life International**.

On November 10 at 8 p.m. in the Asolo Theater Richard Anuszkiewicz will lecture on his painting and philosophy and will present a brief professional film showing him at work in his studio.

A new book on Anuszkiewicz's work by Karl Lunde is being published by Abrams. Lavishly illustrated with 202 illustrations, 64 of them in full color, this beautiful book is priced at \$45. The artist will be available to autograph copies at the opening of the exhibition and after the lecture.

CIRCUS SCULPTURES

"Circus Sculptures by Frank Eliscu" will open at the Museum of the Circus on October 11, with a preview and reception for members from 8 to 10 p.m. Mr. Eliscu, a Sarasota resident, will be present at this opening.

Eliscu's sculptures in bronze and slate have covered numerous themes, and he is the recipient of many honors and awards. His commissions have included the design of inaugural medals for President Ford and former Governor Nelson Rockefeller.

CIRCUS MUSEUM LECTURES

Harold Ronk, Singing Ringmaster of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey, will be the first speaker in the "Circus People Look at the Circus" lecture series at the Museum of the Circus. His talk will take place on November 1 at 10:30 a.m.

WEDU-TV LECTURE SERIES

WEDU-TV taped our Visiting Lecturer Series that took place here at the Museums during the 1976/1977 season. These edited lectures, with additional material filmed in the galleries, will be shown on Channel 3 in a series of one-hour broadcasts on Tuesdays at 8 p.m.

- Sept. 6 Earl Morse, "In Pursuit of Antiquity: Chinese Painting (1500-1800 A.D.)"
- Sept. 13 John David Farmer, "Northern European Painting, 15th Through 17th Centuries"
- Sept. 20 Barbara Wriston, "Bath: 18th-Century Center of Wit and Society"
- Sept. 27 Charles Scribner, III, "Rubens's **Eucharist** Tapestries and the Cartoons in Sarasota"

COURTYARD PARTY BENEFIT

The Ringling Museums Members Council gala courtyard party is planned for 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 30. This year's theme will be "La Noche de Ronda," or "Evening Serenades," and guests are invited to join hosts and hostesses in wearing 16th-through 18th-century Spanish costumes.

Mrs. William C. Strode is Chairwoman and Mrs. J. B. Goldsmith Co-Chairwoman. Invitations will be sent to members early in October. Tickets for this benefit will be \$20 per person, the proceeds to be used toward Museums projects.

The courtyard party is always a popular event. Cocktails, dinner, dancing, and professional entertainment in the Museums' beautiful courtyard offer a delightful evening.

RINGLING MUSEUMS SIXTH ANNUAL CRAFTS FESTIVAL

The Ringling Museums Crafts Festival, attended each year by thousands of visitors, has been set for November 18, 19, and 20. Florida's finest craftsmen are chosen to exhibit and sell their work here.

This year, in addition to the \$1,500 in prizes awarded by the Members Council, the Ringling Museum of Art Foundation has announced a special purchase prize.

While enjoying the array of original craft work, visitors will be entertained by live folk music and demonstrations by participating craftsmen. The delicious Left Bank lunch again will be served.

The Ringling Crafts Festival is sponsored by the Ringling Museums Members Council. Mrs. Kent J. Bartruff is Chairwoman and Mrs. Richard Hoefler is the Co-Chairwoman.

HERALD-TRIBUNE "SPECTRUM"

Have you seen the Ringling Museums weekly column, "Spectrum" written by Marsha Fottler, in the Sunday or Monday **Sarasota Herald-Tribune**? The column is devoted entirely to the Ringling Museums and its activities and people.

FALL GIP TRAINING

The 1977/1978 General Introductory Training Program begins October 13, continuing through March 23. Classes meet every Thursday from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., with a hiatus during the holiday season. Graduates of this course become docents, who conduct tours in the Ringling Museums.

LIBRARY

The Ringling Museums Art Library acknowledges with much gratitude recent gifts of books, periodicals, and catalogues from the Bradenton Public Library, Arden McKenney, Mr. and Mrs. Harold C. McNulty, Mrs. Irving G. Snyder, and Mrs. Esther R. Levine in memory of her daughter Janice. Many thanks to these generous friends for their continuing help to the library.

Our knowledgeable librarian, Val Schmidt, has been invited to speak at the Bradenton Public Library's Book Review Series on October 20.

