

Bulletin

OF THE DETROIT INSTITUTE OF ARTS
OF THE CITY OF DETROIT

VOLUME XXI

OCTOBER 1941

NUMBER 1



PORTRAIT OF LUCY BRADLEY
BY RALPH EARL, AMERICAN, 1751-1801
Gift of Dexter M. Ferry, Jr., 1941

TWO AMERICAN PORTRAITS

THE AMERICAN section has been greatly enriched through the addition of two paintings by early American artists not heretofore represented in the collection, namely, Ralph Earl (1751-1801) and John Wesley Jarvis (1780-1839). These examples of native portraiture come to us as a gift of Dexter M. Ferry, Jr., whose paramount interest in American art has been largely instrumental in the building of a well-rounded collection in this field.

LUCY BRADLEY BY RALPH EARL¹

The earliest of these is a portrait of Miss Lucy Bradley by Ralph Earl, to whom time has assigned an important place among the American painters of the late eighteenth century. Born in Worcester County, Massachusetts, in 1751, Earl had already begun his career as an artist prior to the Revolution. While little is known of this period of his life, it is believed, from early works ascribed to him in the collection of Yale University, that he was already doing portraits in Connecticut in the 1770's. In 1778 or 1779, Earl went to England, and like a large coterie of his fellow artists from the Colonies, he was befriended by and studied with his well-established compatriot, Benjamin West. During the seven or eight years of his sojourn in London he was an exhibitor at the Royal Academy (1783-1785), and it is not unlikely that a number of his portraits of this period repose in English family collections. Upon his return to America in 1786 he seems to have found a ready patronage, particularly in Connecticut, and it is from the descendants of one of his most assiduous patrons that our picture comes.

As a part of the celebration of the Connecticut Tercentenary in 1935, the Gallery of Fine Arts of Yale University assembled an exhibition of Connecticut portraits by Ralph Earl and this exhibit did much towards documenting his work and revealing the character of his painting. The exhibition catalog lists six portraits of the Bradley family, four of which were painted by Earl in 1788; the other two, a portrait of Miss Lucy Bradley, now in the Detroit Institute of Arts, and a companion piece of her sister, Miss Huldah Bradley, now in the collection of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts,² were painted in 1794. For about one hundred and thirty years these portraits remained on the walls of the same house until 1918, when the property was sold out of the family.

Our portrait of Lucy Bradley, executed when she was twenty-six years of age, shows her in relation to her surroundings as Earl was wont to do with his subjects. She is seated against a Connecticut landscape true to the locale of Greenfield Hill, Fairfield, where she was born, and where her entire life was spent. While her face, set off by dark tresses, is not too prepossessing, there is a strong delineation of character in the firmness of her features and the wistfulness of her expression. In the painting of her billowing gown of rose pink and the fichu about her shoulders, and in the fan held so naturally in her hand, the artist reveals his talent for the portrayal of accessories in which he is hardly excelled by any artist of his period. Her florid complexion and the warm tones of the gown are carried into the sky of the sympathetically painted landscape. The picture is signed at the lower left "R Earl Pinxt 1794."

Published monthly, October to May inclusive, at the Detroit Institute of Arts of the City of Detroit, 5200 Woodward Avenue, Detroit, Michigan. Entered as second class matter at the post office at Detroit, Michigan, under date of October 29, 1934. Subscription price \$1.00 per year.



PORTRAIT OF JACOB HOUSEMAN
BY JOHN WESLEY JARVIS, AMERICAN, 1780-1839
Gift of Dexter M. Ferry, Jr. 1941

Born January 18, 1768, Lucy Bradley was the daughter of Squire Samuel and Sarah Wakeman Bradley. Her father, a well-to-do ship owner and merchant, was engaged in a coastwise trade with Boston, and Lucy frequently accompanied him on these trips. Throughout her life she remained a spinster, living at the family home at Greenfield Hill until her death in 1823.

JACOB HOUSEMAN BY JOHN WESLEY JARVIS³

In Jacob Houseman by John Wesley Jarvis, we have an unusually attractive example of portraiture by an artist who was quite the fashion a century ago and whose faithful likenesses of the political and social leaders of his day have survived to give us a biographical picture of his time. Among the Jarvis portraits in the City Hall of New York are those of Commodores Perry, Hull, Bainbridge and McDonough, and General Brown. Among his portraits in the New York Historical Society are to be found those of DeWitt Clinton, John Randolph and Robert Morris, to mention but a few of his more notable works.

John Wesley Jarvis, named after his uncle, the founder of Methodism, was born at South Shields, England, in 1780, but was brought by his parents to Philadelphia at the age of five and grew up here. Apprenticed by his father to the engraver and painter Edward Savage, he was, at the age of twenty, one of the accomplished wood engravers and etchers of Philadelphia. In 1800 he went with Edward Savage to New York and two years later we find him in partnership with Joseph Wood, sharing a prosperity derived in large measure from

the silhouette likenesses cut from black paper then in vogue. Through the generous advice and instruction of Malbone, Jarvis and Wood gave up their renumerative silhouette cutting for the more serious and lasting medium of miniature painting; and Jarvis, accustomed as an engraver to detail, so easily acquired an aptitude for the new technique that he did not lack for sitters from fashionable New York families who paid high fees for their likenesses. This soon led to the demand for larger portraits and Jarvis found himself not only equal to the task but showing a rare faculty for catching a vivid and animated likeness of his sitters with a freedom of technique and feeling for decorative effect that would have done justice to his English contemporaries.

Jarvis was a Bohemian by nature, a good story-teller, original and sometimes eccentric in dress, and his celebrated midnight studio parties made him a leader among his set and brought him a patronage that rivalled that of Gilbert Stuart. His popularity spread and he found a host of clients awaiting him in Boston, Baltimore, Washington and New Orleans when he visited these cities. Henry Inman became one of his apprentices in 1814, assisting in the painting of backgrounds and draperies. He accompanied Jarvis to New Orleans and from him learned the profession which was to make him one of the outstanding portrait painters of the succeeding generation. So far as money was concerned, it was easy come, easy go with Jarvis. His take from portrait commissions was enormous, but with the lavish entertainment of his clients and his other extravagances, his income was quickly dissipated. As a result of his improvident way of life, his last years were full of trouble. Partly paralyzed and impoverished, his sister had to care for him in his declining years until his death in 1839.

The portrait of Jacob Houseman is a good example of his early works, the color being unusually fine. It is fully signed in the lower right "Jarvis Pinxt 1809 New York." The subject of the painting, Jacob Houseman, was a merchant listed in the New York directory as having an establishment on Front Street about 1800. He is a handsome gentleman with curly hair, wearing a black coat with a white jabot and buff trousers. He is seated in a red chair which is set off against a gray-green background.

CLYDE H. BURROUGHS

¹Accession Number 41.4. Oil on canvas: Height: 44 $\frac{1}{8}$ inches; Width: 31 $\frac{5}{16}$ inches.

²*Bulletin*, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Vol. 38, No. 228, August 1940, pp. 53-55.

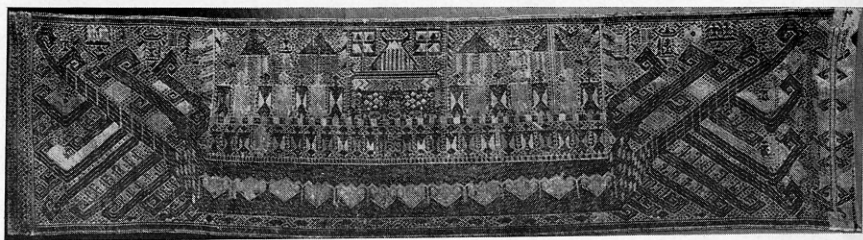
³Accession Number 41.55. Panel: Height: 34 inches; Width: 26 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

THE SHIP OF THE DEAD

OF THE THREE TYPES of Indonesian textiles, *batik*, *ikat*, and *tampam*, the last is perhaps least well known. It is a kind of brocade, woven of fine, yellowish cotton with supplementary floated wefts of heavy, untwisted, blue, red, and yellow cotton, sometimes enriched with inwoven strips of tin sheet. *Tampam* is woven in several of the islands; but to the district of Kroë, the Toba-batak land of South Sumatra, is reserved the most beautifully designed, most interesting both technically and ethnologically, *tampam djung galub*, picturing a ship, the native junk, flat bottomed with square bows and high stem and stern. A very fine specimen of this type, mellow with age, has reached the textile department, as the gift of Mrs. Kate Schaeffer of New York.¹

These last survivors of a long lost craft were used by the nobility at rare occasions: as wall decorations at important festivals, and as bier covers at funeral ceremonies. They picture the Ship which ferries the souls of the Dead across the sea to the Spirit-Island. The personages, standing in stiff rows, are

thought to be, not the ship's crew, but the souls of ancestors come to honor a member of their clan. His bier rests beneath an elaborate open pavilion. Four masts with lug sails, and two flag poles with fluttering pennons are akin with that oldest, and widest spread symbol of immortality, the Tree of Life, which in many myths grows from the ocean itself, and thus becomes associated with the Ship of the Dead. Small barges fill the empty spaces, a spiritual convoy. The ocean is summarily represented by a multitude of dots, shiny spray topping the waves; sometimes sequins are sewn to the finished fabric.



THE SHIP OF THE DEAD
SOUTH SUMATRA, EIGHTEENTH CENTURY
Gift of Mrs. Kate Schaeffer, 1941

Another Ship fabric, gaily colored and sumptuous with metal strips, shows the ancestors riding on elephants; it belongs to the fine collection of textiles, embroideries, and laces, lent to the textile department by Mrs. E. S. Fehimer. Wayang puppets and masks, lent by Miss Helen Reisdorf and Mr. Paul McPharlin, have been placed with the textiles from Sumatra, Java, and Bali, to bring to our mind a somewhat nostalgic picture of the civilizations of Insulinde.

ADELE COULIN WEIBEL

¹Accession Number: 41.19. Length: ~~46~~₆₉ inches; Width: 18 inches.

ACCESSIONS IN THE PRINT DEPARTMENT

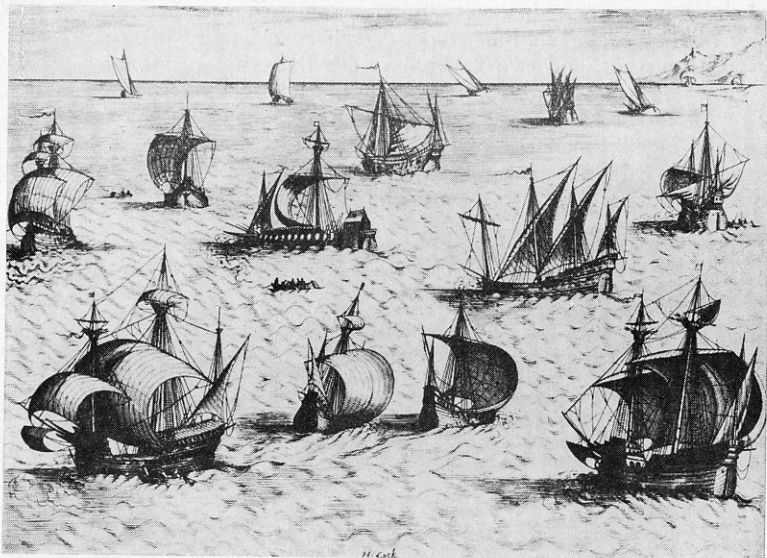
THE GENEROUS gifts of Mrs. Lillian Henkel Haass and Albert Kahn have added to the Print collection a group of modern drawings and prints and a number of etchings and engravings by Dutch and Flemish masters of the seventeenth century.

Drawings by Auguste Renoir, Auguste Rodin, Georges Braque, Aristide Maillol, Ernst Barlach, Gerhardt Marcks, Pedro Pruna, Rockwell Kent, John Flanagan and Diego Rivera are included in the gift of Mrs. Haass. The importance of this collection lies in the fact that it gives us our first representation of some of these modern masters.

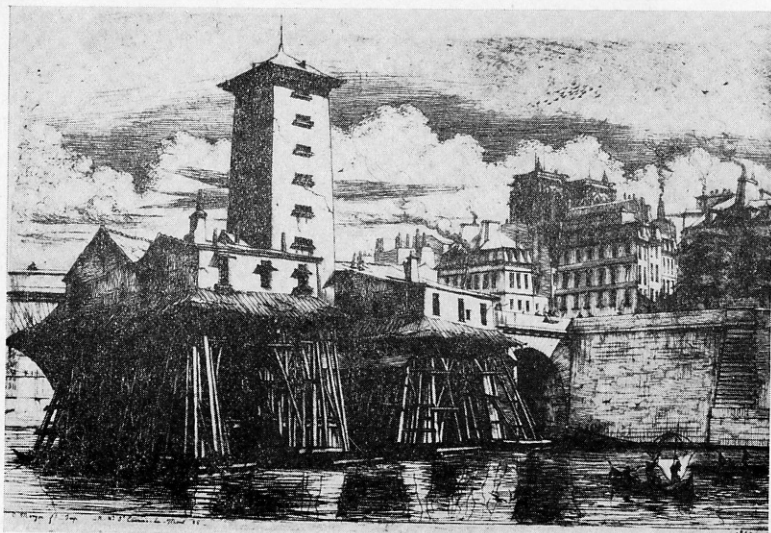
The Maillol drawing,¹ here reproduced, is a beautiful example of his classical style. Having been a painter and designer of tapestries, Maillol at forty turned to sculpture, and this drawing has the sculptor's feeling for the round. The outlines are vigorous, the modelling simple but strong, the color rich in effect.

Mr. Kahn's gift includes three engravings by Hendrik Goltzius, eight etchings by Adriaen van Ostade, two etchings by Jan van de Velde, an etching by Daniel Hopfer, an etching by Hieronymus Hopfer, and an engraving by Hieronymus Cock after Bruegel.²

Bruegel, who made designs for the great publishing house of Cock, was one of the first artists who made drawings to be copied by other engravers and



STUDY OF SHIPS
BY HIERONYMUS COCK, FLEMISH, 1510-1570
AFTER PIETER BRUEGEL, FLEMISH c. 1525-1569
Gift of Albert Kahn, 1940



THE PUMP, NOTRE DAME
BY CHARLES MERYON, FRENCH, 1821-1868
Gift of The Founders Society, 1941

etchers. The *Study of Ships* is a flat composition showing various types of ships. The lines are so precise, the studies so accurate, that the print may well have served as models for the designers in the ship yards of Antwerp.

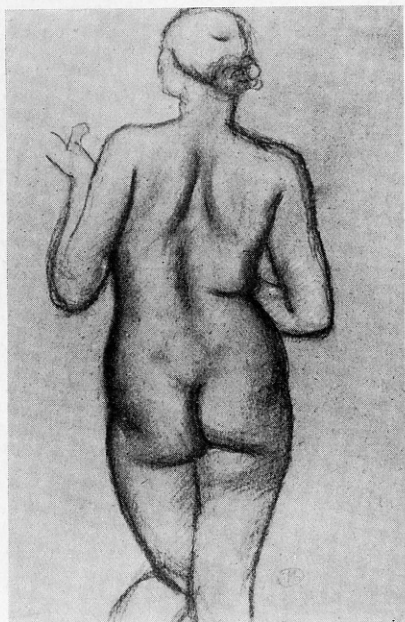
The etching, *The Pump, Notre Dame*, by Charles Meryon,³ purchased by the Founders Society, is an accession of the greatest importance. One of the famous set of the *Etchings of Paris*, it is a study of the pump which once supplied water to the city of Paris. The light and darkness playing on the various masses of buildings give us the feeling of brooding melancholy with which Meryon drew the buildings of old Paris.

ISABEL WEADOCK

¹Accession Number: 40.150. Conté crayon on yellow paper: Height: 14 inches; Width: 10½ inches.

²Accession Number: 40.10. Engraving: Height: 8 inches; Width: 11¾ inches.

³Accession Number: 41.41. Etching on gray paper: Height: 6 inches; Width: 9¾ inches.



NUDE FIGURE
BY ARISTIDE MAILLOL, FRENCH, 1861-
Gift of Mrs. Lillian Henkel Haass, 1940

MUSEUM NOTES

John S. Newberry, Jr., has temporarily left his position as Curator of the Russell A. Alger Branch Museum to serve in the United States Naval Reserve. Mr. Robinson will assume Mr. Newberry's duties until his return.

John D. Morse has resigned as Museum Instructor in order to pursue graduate study in fine arts at New York University. Joyce Black Gnau, of the Museum staff, has been appointed to succeed Mr. Morse.

Dr. Sherman E. Lee, formerly affiliated with the Cleveland Museum of Art, has been appointed to the curatorial staff to fill the vacancy created by Mr.

Newberry's absence. He will be Curator of Far Eastern Art, and will assist Mr. Robinson at the Russell A. Alger Branch Museum.

Elizabeth Payne has been appointed Museum Instructor. Miss Payne received a Master's Degree in Art History at the University of Chicago. Until her recent appointment, Miss Payne was Assistant to the Director at the Smith College Museum of Art.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR OCTOBER

EXHIBITIONS

Sept. 12 to Oct. 26: *Walt Disney Retrospective Exhibition.*

Oct. 1 to Nov. 30: "*Rich with little store.*" *Objects of art from all periods, \$10-\$100, for the new collector.* Alger House.

TUESDAY EVENING LECTURES

Given by the museum in cooperation with the Archaeological Society of Detroit at 8:30 p.m. Admission free.

Oct. 7: *Gods and Men in Ancient Mexico*, by Francis W. Robinson.

Oct. 24: *Significance of the Minoan Culture in Crete*, by Professor George Karo, Oberlin College. (Note that this one lecture is on Friday evening.)

Nov. 4: *Modern American Art* by Daniel Catton Rich, Director of The Art Institute of Chicago. (Metropolitan Art Association; Admission to the public, 50c.)

FRIDAY EVENING LECTURES

Eight talks on the *Theory of Art Criticism*, by E. P. Richardson at 8:30 p.m., Sept. 26, Oct. 3, 10, 17, 31, Nov. 7, 14, 21.

SUNDAY AFTERNOON LECTURES (Alger House)

Six lectures on the *Relationship between Art and Society in Italy from the XIV to XVIII Centuries*, by Dr. Sherman E. Lee at 3 p.m., Alger House. Oct. 5, 12, 19, 26, Nov. 2, 9.

SUNDAY AFTERNOON TALKS

In the Lecture Hall, 2:30 p.m.

Sept. 28: *What's New in the Museum Galleries*, by Joyce Black Gnau.

Oct. 5: *Animals in Art*, by Marion Leland Heath.

Oct. 12: *How to Enjoy Paintings*, by Joyce Black Gnau.

Oct. 19: *Seeing History through Sculpture*, by Marion Leland Heath.

Oct. 26: *Furniture of Today*, by Joyce Black Gnau.

Nov. 2: *Rivera's Murals in Mexico and Detroit*, by Marion Leland Heath.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON TALKS

An Introduction to Art. In the Galleries, 3:00 p.m.

Sept. 30: *The American Galleries.*

Oct. 7: *Painters of Rembrandt's Day.*

Oct. 14: *The Beginnings of Art.*

Oct. 21: *Art of the Ancient World.*

Oct. 28: *China and Japan in our Museum.*

Nov. 4: *The Medieval Galleries.*

THURSDAY AFTERNOON COURSE

A Guide to Interesting Interiors, by Joyce Black Gnau, 3:00 p.m.

Oct. 2: *Design in Decoration.*

Oct. 9: *Origins of our Earliest American Furniture.*

Oct. 16: *The Decoration of French Palaces.*

Oct. 23: *From Queen Anne to Duncan Phyfe.*

Oct. 30: *The Victorian House.*

Nov. 6: *Modern Designs.*

HOURS OF ADMISSION

The Detroit Institute of Arts, 5200 Woodward Avenue at Kirby, is open free daily except Mondays and Christmas Day. Visiting hours: Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 1 to 5 and 7 to 10; Wednesday, 1 to 5; Saturday, 9 to 5; Sunday, 2 to 6. The Russell A. Alger Branch Museum, 32 Lake Shore Road, Grosse Pointe Farms, a museum for Italian Renaissance Art and temporary exhibitions, is open free daily except Mondays from 1 to 5. Telephones: Detroit Institute of Arts, COLUMBIA 0360; The Russell A. Alger Branch Museum, TUxedo 2-3888; Detroit Museum of Arts Founders Society, COLUMBIA 4274.