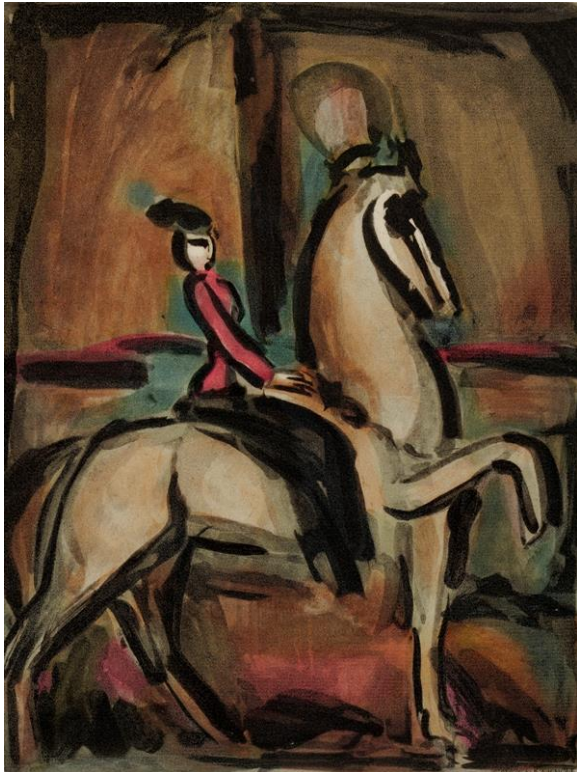


Recent Acquisition: The Stahl Collection of European and American Art



The Hood Museum of Art recently received a remarkable gift of 118 works of art originally collected by the late Barbara J. and David G. Stahl, Dartmouth Class of 1947, and donated in their memory by their children, Susan E. Hardy, Nancy R. Wilsker, Sarah A. Stahl, and John S. Stahl. Assembled over a period of thirty years, the works range from Old Master prints and drawings to works on paper, paintings, and ceramics by twentieth- and twenty-first century American artists, many of whom the Stahls knew personally. Taken as a whole, the collection expresses some of the chief interests, preoccupations, and viewpoints of the collectors, including an empathetic exploration of the human condition, a love for music, a commitment to social justice, curiosity about the spiritual—especially as expressed through their own Jewish faith, and an abhorrence of war, social intolerance, and totalitarianism. Aided by the mentorship of dealers and museum professionals as well as hours of

close examination of original works of art, the Stahls developed discerning connoisseurship skills and a broad knowledge of art history, particularly in the area of prints. The high quality of the works they collected, combined with their strong thematic links to a wide range of academic fields, make these new acquisitions prime candidates for the interdisciplinary, object-based teaching that is central to the Hood Museum of Art's mission.

Highlights from the collection include Old Master prints by Albrecht Dürer, Jacque Callot, Rembrandt van Rijn, and Wenceslaus Hollar; wide-ranging prints from the nineteenth century, including depictions of opera subjects by Henri Fantin-Latour; images of social unrest by Käthe Kollwitz; and satirized political figures by Honoré Daumier. An especially strong component of the Stahl collection is German Expressionism, which is represented by bold, socially critical prints by early twentieth-century artists Max Beckmann, Erich Heckel, Conrad Felixmüller, Ludwig Meidner, and Emil Nolde.

A centerpiece of the collection is a complete set of the eight color aquatints that comprise George Rouault's series *Le Cirque (The Circus)*, from 1930. The Stahls were particularly drawn to Rouault's work and purchased two prints from this series as their first art acquisitions. For over three decades they worked to complete the set, and in 2006, David acquired the last outstanding

image from the series, that of the mounted rider. The acquisition of the entire set was a particular source of pride and pleasure for him as a collector. Through the *Cirque* prints Rouault evokes a sense of human vulnerability and suffering that lies beneath the circus's festive façade. Like the prostitutes he also portrayed frequently, Rouault viewed circus performers as marginalized, tragic figures who stood for an eroding human society.

The earliest American works in the collection date to the early twentieth century, beginning with a 1910 social realist drawing of a street peddler by William Glackens, and continuing with Regionalist imagery from the 1930s and 1940s, including Howard Norton Cook's 1936 etching *Southern Mountaineer*, Bernard Brussel-Smith's 1941 wood engraving *Bowery*, and drawings by Peggy Bacon and Don Freeman. With later twentieth-century art, the Stahls continued to collect figural subjects and social commentary, but they also began to acquire works by artists with ties to New England, including Sigmund Abeles, Ivan Albright, James Aponovich, Peter Milton, and pioneering New Hampshire ceramicists Edwin and Mary Scheier and Gerry Williams, who died on August 29 of this year.

Both Barbara (1930–2004) and David Stahl (1926–2013) were passionately committed to education and supported the visual and performing arts—especially music—in their community of Manchester, New Hampshire, and beyond. Barbara was a renowned paleoichthyologist and longtime professor at Saint Anselm College, while David maintained a dental practice for over fifty years. He was a devoted and generous supporter of his alma mater, Dartmouth College, and, together with Barbara, keenly followed the activities of the Hood Museum of Art from its opening in 1985. He was particularly impressed by the extent to which the museum had fostered curricular ties through its diverse exhibition program and interactive instruction in its Bernstein Study-Storage Center, where original works of art are pulled for courses taught by faculty in nearly every academic department and program at Dartmouth. During a recent nine-week period, for instance, one thousand works of art were pulled for 39 different courses that made 57 visits to the museum's Bernstein Study-Storage Center.

A selection of highlights from this generous gift from the children of Barbara and David Stahl will be on view in the museum from August 29 through December 6, 2015.

About the Hood Museum of Art

The mission of the Hood Museum of Art, as a teaching museum, is to create an ideal learning environment that fosters transformative encounters with works of art. This dynamic educational and cultural facility houses one of the oldest and largest college collections in the country, with more than 70,000 objects acquired since 1772. Among its most important works are six Assyrian stone reliefs that date from around 900 BCE. The collection also presents art from other ancient cultures, the Americas, Europe, Africa, Papua New Guinea, and many more regions of the world.

The Hood seeks to inspire and educate through direct engagement with original works of art and offers access to the rich diversity of its collections through ongoing highlights displays, special exhibitions, an online collections database, and a wide array of programs and events.

About Dartmouth

Founded in 1769, Dartmouth is a member of the Ivy League and consistently ranks among the world's greatest colleges and universities. Dartmouth has forged a singular identity for combining its deep commitment to outstanding undergraduate liberal arts and graduate and professional education with distinguished research and scholarship in the arts and sciences and its three leading professional schools—the Geisel School of Medicine, Thayer School of Engineering, and the Tuck School of Business.

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Image caption: Georges Rouault, *Amazone (Equestrian)* from *Le Cirque (The Circus)*, 1930. Color aquatint. Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College: Gift of Susan E. Hardy, Nancy R. Wilsker, Sarah A. Stahl, and John S. Stahl in memory of their parents, Barbara J. and David G. Stahl, Class of 1947; 2014.73.105