The Art Institute of Chicago

CARL O. SCHNIEWIND
1900-1957

BY FREDERICK B. ADAMS, JR.
CARL O. SCHNIEWIND

1900-1957

Commemorative Address by Frederick B. Adams, Jr.

Catalogue of the Carl O. Schniewind Memorial Exhibition of Prints and Drawings

THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO
Frontispiece: Photograph by Marcel Sternberger, 1950

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Anonymous German, 15th century. The Crucifixion with Mary and St. John
Master E. S., St. John on Patmos
FOREWORD

On January 22, 1958, a group of friends of the late Carl Schniewind came together in the Print Galleries of the Art Institute for a brief program commemorating his achievements and contributions during the seventeen years that he was Curator of Prints and Drawings at the Institute. On that occasion the principal address was given by Frederick B. Adams, Jr., Director of the Morgan Library. It is printed here as an understanding and sympathetic record of Mr. Schniewind's career.

In a few preliminary remarks, made by Frank B. Hubachek, Chairman of the Trustees' Committee on Prints and Drawings, Mr. Hubachek pointed out that "we were impressed by Carl Schniewind's knowledge and delighted with the man himself. Then as the years went by and the collection grew in scope and quality, we knew that Carl was a great curator as well as a great scholar. He was also a great teacher. He had that rare quality of being able to instruct without condescending and he fulfilled one of the most important functions of a curator—to elevate the taste of the community in which he serves."

I added a few personal reminiscences, stressing Carl Schniewind's true passion for graphic art, his accomplishments in finding and acquiring great prints and drawings and his partiality for the painter-draughtsman rather than for the narrower, specialist printmaker.

After Mr. Adams' eloquent profile of Carl Schniewind, it was announced that through the generosity of the many friends of our late curator, a fund had been established to acquire a great print or drawing which would serve as a permanent expression of our affection and respect. Messages were read from three of Mr. Schniewind's associates, Jean Goriany of Lima, Madame Bouchot-Saupique, Curator of the Department of Drawings at the Louvre, and Marcel Duchamp.

The galleries were hung with a special selection from the notable prints and drawings acquired during Mr. Schniewind's curatorship. This exhibition, of which a catalogue is printed here, was shown in Gallery 12 of the Department of Prints and Drawings from January 22 to March 3, 1958.

Daniel Catton Rich
When I was first asked to speak at this afternoon’s meeting, my immediate reaction was that, though I had long respected his accomplishments, I did not know Carl Schniewind well enough. We had some brief and friendly contact over his notable 1955 show of Masterpieces of French Drawings, and a much closer rapport developed when the Morgan Library’s Fiftieth Anniversary Exhibition came to Chicago last March. Discussing a thousand and one details as Carl hobbled around the galleries on his cane, and dawdling over our lunches in the cafeteria as we exchanged anecdotes and ideas, we quickly developed a firm bond of sympathy. One afternoon, he got all your best drawings down off the racks and my wife and I spent several happy hours going through them—he made it an unforgettable experience. His conversation was gay and witty, one might almost call it Gallic; it made a sparkle in the workaday world. I felt there was nobody else quite like him in Chicago.

Did such brief knowledge justify my accepting the invitation? Perhaps not; but I did so, for one compelling reason. The impact of Carl’s personality was immediate and intense. I wanted to make some return for the unreserved gift of his friendship. What I have to say was written in the realization that I could never have known him as well as I should have liked.

In the Cézanne sketchbook which the Art Institute acquired in 1951, there is an uncompromising self-portrait in which the artist appears all but overcome by the hopelessness of life. Carl Schniewind’s comment on the bleak expression is that “no human being can face such adversity as did Cézanne without its leaving a telling mark on his appearance.” Carl himself had faced adversities enough to embitter him permanently in his human relations and his aspirations, but what one saw in his face was the expression of a man who has met adversities and quietly triumphed over them. Though he must often have been discouraged, he was never sour nor vindictive. His bright spirit was imprisoned in a body that constantly thwarted and betrayed him, and everything that he accomplished was a victory over a lifetime of illness and the frequent frustration of cherished plans.
His father, who died when Carl was thirteen, was a successful chemical engineer, president of the United Coke and Gas Co. He had contracted to build a great coke oven of his own invention for an American client, and had spent a small fortune on the designs at the time of his death in 1914. Then the client cancelled the contract and the plant was never built. Carl's mother took him to Germany to visit his father's family and there he became seriously ill. The doctors discovered that Carl had tuberculosis. After surgery of a drastic nature he was sent to Leysin in Switzerland, then the most famous of the Swiss centers for the sun treatment of tuberculosis. He arrived in July, 1914, and stayed until 1919, through all his adolescent years condemned to an invalid's existence, and isolated from the wartime experiences of his generation.

He studied with a tutor named Kurt Kauenhoven, a young man from a professorial family, with whom he concentrated on chemistry and medicine. Kurt became both counsellor and friend. Carl told me that after some years at Leysin the doctors sent him down to Vevey on the shores of Lake Geneva, on the pretext that a change in altitude and climate might be beneficial. He had not been at Vevey long before he learned that they feared that he would die at Leysin, and had sent him away in order not to damage the high reputation of Leysin for effecting cures.

He became well enough to attend the University in Bern, and later to go to Heidelberg to finish his medical education. Unfortunately while at Heidelberg in 1924 he became ill again, and this time he went to Gstaad, where it took him four years to recuperate. He now had to reconcile himself to the knowledge that the strenuous career of a medical practitioner was out of the question, and in any case he was not well enough to pursue a rigorous course of study. His friend Kurt, recognizing Carl's natural enthusiasm for the products of man's creative spirit, urged him to turn to the study of art, with the idea of making that his profession.

Carl wrote to three eminent art historians, explaining his predicament and asking how he might go about preparing himself for a career in art. One professor did not bother to answer at all. A second assured him that the only thing to do was to study for an advanced degree at the German university. The third responded with a list of books to study and advised him to spend as much time as possible examining original works of art. This third art historian always held a special claim to Carl's affection, and Carl occasionally consulted him when he needed advice on difficult problems. His name was Erwin Panofsky.

He began seriously to collect while recovering at Gstaad. His first love was Daumier. His mother sent him a new print every Sunday, and the post bearing this weekly gift must have been eagerly awaited. What would be the subject, and what
1 Anonymous Flemish, 15th century. Portrait of a Young Man
Anonymous Florentine, 15th century. Judith
the quality of the impression. Now he could study the thing itself with undisturbed intensity, and in due course check it in the reference books. He began to accumulate the remarkable library of catalogues and monographs that ultimately lined the walls of his large office at the Art Institute, where he at least could find the answer to almost any question one could pose about a print or a drawing.

When Carl at last won his release from Gstaad in 1928, he traveled through Europe visiting the big museums, and making detailed studies in the print cabinets of London, Paris, and Amsterdam. At this time, he married. His mother was quite wealthy and was prepared to do everything in her power to advance Carl in his choice of a new career. Realizing that now he needed practical experience most of all, he became an unpaid apprentice in the printselling firm of Gutekunst and Klipstein in Bern. After a year of apprenticeship, Carl arranged to buy a partnership in the firm, with money advanced to him by his mother.

Almost immediately the depression descended like a vicious whirlwind on all these happy arrangements. Carl's mother's money vanished before the onslaught. The buyers of prints became an extinct species and Carl was unable to carry out the terms of the partnership purchase. There was a violent quarrel which ended his business career forever. His first marriage also dissolved. And in the general collapse of values, Kurt joined the Nazis and Carl never had anything more to do with him. Carl was left with nothing but his Daumier collection, a small reference library, and a good working knowledge of the field of prints.

The Daumier collection, which included a broad range of lithographs, woodcuts, and drawings, was sold at auction in Leipzig in May, 1933. It was, in trade terms, a slaughter. But the proceeds enabled Carl and his new wife, Hedi, to live for two years in Paris on a very economical standard. When the money was gone, they came to Carl's native America, where he had not lived for twenty-one years. He took a job in the Brooklyn Museum as librarian and head of the print department. After he had been there a month he received the first salary check he had ever earned; his associates remember it as quite a momentous occasion. The Brooklyn Museum library was large and badly organized; the print collection was tiny. In the five years that he stayed there, Carl managed to reorganize the library and to maneuver the trustees into acquiring a good basic collection of prints. So firm a foundation did he lay that today, under his successor, Una Johnson, the Brooklyn Print Department is one of the most active in the country.

In March, 1940, Carl and Hedi came to Chicago, bringing with them a wire-haired fox terrier who, because he was black and white, was naturally called "Print." Here Carl found a sound collection of prints and a small and rather undistinguished
collection of drawings to work with. Within a very short time a new group of friends interested in drawings began to form at the Art Institute, inspired by Carl's contagious enthusiasm. Some of the best drawings that came on the market began to disappear unexpectedly in the direction of Chicago, and in 1946 a small exhibition of "Drawings Old and New" indicated the magnitude of the new star in the west. Carl's foreword pointed out a new trend in policy, towards the "acquisition of drawings of real importance which are truly significant for the artists who made them and for the period in which they were created." He added that "such a collection need not be vast, but it must be good above all else," and "it must never be dormant."

Needless to say, it has never been dormant in the past fifteen years. Carl found in Mrs. Tiffany Blake a donor who could share his enthusiasm for great drawings, whether by Fragonard, Watteau, Gauguin, Guardi, Rembrandt, or Van Gogh, and she found in Carl a curator whose keen eye and unfaltering taste she could trust without hesitation. They were a cheerful pair of pirates, and it was a pleasure to applaud each capture of a new prize, of which the last was also one of the best: the portrait head of a young man by a Flemish artist of the fifteenth century, whose draughtsmanship brings him very close to Rogier van der Weyden.

Mrs. Blake's shining example also stimulated generosity in others. I need not parade their names or their fine gifts: they are well known—in fact, they are you, and a number of Carl's most discriminating purchases have been made with the collective backing of the Committee on Prints and Drawings now under the leadership of Frank Hubachek. One of my personal favorites, to which I return again and again with joy and admiration, is an acquisition of Carl's first year at Chicago, the sheet of sketches of ballet dancers in red crayon by Jacques Callot, so vivid and spontaneous that you wonder if they will still be on the paper the next time you look. I cannot think of this sheet without recalling Carl's few sentences about reasons why drawings make so great an appeal to us. "Often drawings alone," he wrote, "can convey the deepest insight into a work of art and its creator.... In the finished work of art, the artist most frequently has consciously and unconsciously covered up much that he previously revealed about himself in his drawings. A drawing is as revealing as his handwriting: it is his handwriting. We must only learn to read it." Masterly as his etchings are, the true predecessors of Rembrandt's, Callot presented in them only the public aspect of his private nature.

Stefan Zweig was an insatiable collector of literary autograph manuscripts. He never bought final drafts—for him it was essential to have the "werkhandschrift," the groping towards the final artistic expression, rather than the final expression it-
9 Fragonard. The Letter
36 Watteau, Studies of Italian Comedians
self. In the same way, Carl especially sought out sketches, and it was one of his regrets, in selecting contemporary drawings from twelve countries for the exhibition here in 1952, that so many of the submissions were end products, pictorially complete. He admitted that these were impressive exhibition pieces, but he considered them rather as paintings in black and white than as true drawings. He dearly loved the sketchbooks he was able to gather of Cézanne, Toulouse-Lautrec, Redon, Ensor, and Gabriel de Saint-Aubin.

Carl’s expertness in the field of prints was phenomenal. He seemed to have seen everything and remembered it all. He recognized the merits of widely divergent schools and media. His connoisseurship was equal to the problems of sober Gothic woodcuts of the fifteenth century and the non-objective symphony of lines and masses produced by some of the printmakers of our own day. His success in building up the Institute’s collection of nineteenth-century French prints, especially the work of Toulouse-Lautrec, Daumier, and Gauguin, was a memorable achievement.

Carl liked and was liked by young artists, and he always tried to help them if he thought they had talent and were sincere about their work. He assisted them in getting loans and scholarships, he showed their work in the museum galleries, he tried to straighten out their confusions when they needed advice on techniques, and he was constantly encouraging them to study the print collections in the museum. He did not hesitate to exhibit the prints of an unknown if he thought the quality of his work deserved public notice. He was never stuffy with artists, never the lofty museum curator looking down on the struggles of the beginner who was still groping.

He was equally generous with his time and his knowledge when curators and collectors came to him with questions. He held himself all too expendable in a good cause. What he could not abide was the flâneur, the dilettante, a type that plagues us all, and he was equally impatient with people who took up museum work as a career without having any deep-seated love for their work or reverence for the objects that were under their care. Carl was sensitive and excitable; the bore and the impostor aroused in him only impatience and a fury of frustration.

A curator, like a college professor, is supposed to publish what he knows. Carl did remarkably, considering that any writing at all was difficult for him. He had not had much formal schooling before he left America, and his later education, when he was tutored in the sanitorium, and lectured at in the university, was all in German. Like Robert Louis Stevenson, the only place where he could concentrate on his writing was in bed. He liked to do his reading in bed, too. Accustomed to it from his invalid years, he found in it his comfortable and sure retreat. He was a perfectionist, and his strictly scholarly output was limited. He had been working for
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fectionist, and his strictly scholarly output was limited. He had been working for
twenty years at least on a definitive catalogue of Gauguin's prints, and even last summer examined a collection which he knew existed but had never before been able to locate. Whenever Carl visited a dealer or a private collection, Hedi accompanied him and made factual and descriptive notes while Carl absorbed visual impressions. So the fruits of each summer's travels in Europe were preserved on paper and in the mind's eye. The Gauguin catalogue is almost ready to be published, and I hope it can be completed and issued. Carl's similar work on Matisse was abandoned in favor of a member of the family who was working on a similar project. A catalogue of the prints of Rodolphe Bresdin also exists in manuscript, but Carl did not consider it ready for publication.

What was lost to us when Carl died last August in Florence is all too clear. He had a rare ability to fulfill the four functions of a curator: first, to fill out the collections; second, to publish them; third, to display them in exhibitions; and fourth, to preserve them for posterity. Carl's technical knowledge, by the way, and his interest in the latest conservation practices were of unusual value, and derived in part from his early studies in chemistry and medicine. I shall never forget my surprise at my first sight of the little laboratory next to his office.

Carl's work was the most important thing in the world to him. It filled his conversation in the museum and at home. He was not a methodologist. The words connoisseur and amateur were not cuss-words with him. He believed that the best way to know art was to experience it. He believed in looking, looking, looking—and not at reproductions. Cocksure judgments of certain art historians that were largely based on the study of photographs perplexed and bewildered him. He respected their knowledge, and regretted his own lack of academic art training, but he could not wholly approve their methods.

It makes me very happy to know that the Art Institute acquired at a Sotheby auction last November an exceedingly fine landscape by Fra Bartolommeo. This sheet would have given Carl particular joy, with its drawings so light and exquisite that they seem, as Berenson says, to be breathed onto the paper. Such a purchase helps to carry out his dream for the collection, that it should grow in stature and in grace, and in the ability to give joy and knowledge equally. How better could you serve his memory and your museum than by saying to yourselves, as you consider each new purchase, and plan each new exhibition in these galleries, "Does this measure up to Carl Schniewind's standards? Is it something he would have enjoyed?"

Frederick B. Adams, Jr.

January 22, 1958
Rembrandt. Study of a Nude
Goya. The Caprices, Plate 74
48  Degas. Portrait of a Woman
CATALOGUE

Drawings


   A study for the lithograph, Roger-Marx 78.


8. THÉODORE CHASSÉRIAU, French. 1819–1856. PORTRAIT OF BARONESS CHASSÉRIAU. Pencil. The David Adler Collection: Given by His Friends in 1950.

   Formerly in the collections of Jean-Baptiste Pierre Lebrun, Duc de Montesquiou-Fezensac, D. David-Weill.

10. PAUL GAUGUIN, French. 1848–1903. BATHER IN BRITTANY. Charcoal and pastel crayon. 
    Given in Memory of Charles B. Goodspeed by Mrs. Gilbert W. Chapman. 
    Formerly in the P. Durrio Collection.

    Formerly in the collection of John L. Senior, Jr.


13. TAHITIAN WOMAN. Pencil, charcoal, and pastel. Gift of Tiffany and Margaret Blake. 
    Formerly in the collections of Alphonse Kann and Joseph Stransky.

14. CLAUDE GELLÉE (called Le Lorrain), French. 1600–1682. ITALIAN LANDSCAPE (TIVOLI). 
    Pen and ink. The David Adler Collection.
15 **TWO SHIPS.** Black chalk with pen, brush, and sepia. The Charles H. and Mary F. S. Worcester Collection.

16 **VINCENT VAN GOGH,** Dutch. 1853–1890. **WORKING WOMAN.** Pencil, brush, and wash, with black and white chalk. Given in Memory of Tiffany Blake.

17 **TREE IN A MEADOW.** Charcoal (?) under ink with reed pen. Gift of Tiffany and Margaret Blake.

18 **JEAN-BAPTISTE GREUZE,** French. 1725–1805. **THE PRODIGAL SON** (?). Pen and wash. Gift of Mrs. Leigh B. Block.


22 **PIERRE-PAUL PRUD’HON,** French. 1758–1823. **SHEET OF STUDIES.** Black ink wash with brush, Chinese white, and crayon. Print and Drawing Purchase Fund.


24 **WOMAN IN ROCKING CHAIR.** Charcoal and pencil. The Samuel P. Avery Fund.

   *Formerly in the collections of J. P. Zoomer, J. G. Verstolk van Soelen, Jacob de Vos, F. Seymour Haden, and A. Strölin.*

26 **NOAH’S ARK** (ca. 1660 or later). Brown ink with reed pen and brush. The Clarence Buckingham Collection.
   *Formerly in the collections of M. G. T. de Villenave, Alliance des Arts, Marquis de Biron, Paul Mathey, and A. Strölin.*

27 **NUDE WOMAN SEATED ON A STOOL** (ca. 1658–1660). Brownish ink with pen and brush. The Clarence Buckingham Collection.
   *Formerly in the A. Strölin Collection.*

28 **STUDY OF A NUDE** (ca. 1660). Pen and brush. Gift of Tiffany and Margaret Blake.


   *Formerly in the David-Weill Collection.*

31 **FOUR STUDIES OF A YOUNG GIRL.** Pencil and black crayon. Gift of David Adler.
   *Formerly in the collections of D. Destailleur, Baron Pichon, D. David-Weill.*
6  Daumier, Fatherly Discipline
Formerly in the collection of Dr. H. Wendland.


Formerly in the collections of Miss James and Camille Groult.

37 Spring. Red crayon. Gift of Tiffany and Margaret Blake.

Prints

38 Anonymous German (Ulmi). 15th Century. The Man of Sorrows (ca. 1460). Woodcut, colored by hand. Given by Mrs. Tiffany Blake, Mr. Thomas E. Donnelley, Gift in Memory of Mrs. Emil Eitel, Mr. and Mrs. Edwin W. Eisendrath, Mr. William B. Eisendrath, Mr. and Mrs. William N. Eisendrath, Jr., Mrs. Carolyn Morse Ely, Mr. Alfred E. Hamill, Mrs. Arnold Horween, Mr. Frank B. Hubachek, Mrs. Potter Palmer, The Robert A. Waller Fund.
This is a unique impression.

This is the only known impression of this print. From the Library of the Benedictine Abbey of St. Gall in Switzerland.

This is the only known impression of this print. Originally pasted in a missal printed in Magdeburg in 1480, it has been in the collections of the University Library, Königsberg, and Dr. J. Hirsch, New York.

41 Anonymous Florentine. 15th Century (Otto Group). Judith with the Head of Holofernes—The Larger Plate (ca. 1465–1480). Engraving. Hind A. iv. 1. The Mr. and Mrs. Potter Palmer Collection. Only two impressions are known. This one was formerly in the collections of von Stosch, Otto, J. F. Bause, Georg Keil, Block, Lord Overstone, Lady Wantage, and A. Thomas Loyd.


According to Roger-Marx, this impression is one of two or three trial proofs before the addition of the figure of a pedestrian. The figure behind the bench is entirely drawn by hand. A trial proof of the lithograph Maison dans la Cour (Roger-Marx 59) is on the reverse of this sheet.

44 GIULIO CAMPAGNOLA, Italian. ca. 1511-1563. THE PENANCE OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM. Engraving. Hind 16, only state. The Clarence Buckingham Collection.

This is the only known impression. It was formerly in the collection of the Prince of Liechtenstein.


This is a trial proof of the fifth state before extensive modifications of color. It was formerly in the collection of Ambroise Vollard, Paris.

46 HONORÉ DAUMIER, French. 1808-1879. Rue Transnonain, April 15, 1834. Lithograph. Delteil 135, only state. The Charles Deering Collection.

This impression was formerly in the N. A. Hazard and H. J. Thomas collections.

47 EDGAR DEGAS, French. 1834-1917. TWO PRINT CONNOISSEURS. Monotype. The Clarence Buckingham Collection.


Formerly in the Mariette, F. Seymour Haden, and J. P. Morgan collections.


Formerly in the Von Lanna Collection.


Formerly in the Seagood Collection.


Formerly in the J. H. de Bois and H. Stinnes collections.


Formerly in the P. Durrio and Walter Geiser collections.

   *This is an extremely rare, pre-first edition, impression. According to Mariano Ballester, the title and numbers are written in Goya's handwriting.*

56 AUGUSTIN HIRSCHVOGEL, German. 1505–1553. RIVER LANDSCAPE WITH LARGE TREE IN FOREGROUND (1546). Etching. Schwarz 73. The Clarence Buckingham Collection.
   *Formerly in the Andreas Bohnenberger and Bernhard Keller collections.*


58 ERNST LUDWIG KIRCHNER, German. 1880–1938. MUTTER MÜLLER or OLD WOMAN. FROM THE GRISONS, SWITZERLAND (1918). Woodcut printed in black, red, and blue. Schiefler 351, first or second state of four. Gift of The Print and Drawing Club.

   *Formerly in the collection of the Prince of Liechtenstein.*

   *According to Guérin, this is the only known impression of the first state, formerly in the collections of Philippe Burty, Edgar Degas, A. J. Hachette, Henri Thomas.*

61 MANTEGNA SCHOOL, Italian. Late 15th–early 16th Centuries. THE FLAGELLATION WITH THE PAVEMENT (ca. 1500). Engraving. Hind 8, only state. The Clarence Buckingham Collection.
   *Of the forty-three impressions of this plate which are known, two are in the collection of the Art Institute. This was formerly in the collection of Rudolph von Gutmann, Vienna.*

62 MASTER E. S. South German or Swiss. Active ca. 1450–1468. ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST ON THE ISLE OF PATMOS. Engraving. Lehrs 151. The Mr. and Mrs. Potter Palmer Collection.
   *Only two impressions are known; the other is in Vienna. This one, unknown to Lehrs, probably came from the Angiolini Collection, Milan.*

63 MASTER FVB. Lower Rhine, Netherlands or Germany. Active ca. 1490. THE JUDGMENT OF SOLOMON (before 1488). Engraving. Lehrs 2, first state of two. The Clarence Buckingham Collection.
   *According to Lehrs, eighteen impressions of this plate exist. Of the seventeen examined by him only the one shown here, and three others, were found to be uncut and unrestored. This impression was formerly in the collection of Friedrich August of Saxony.*


This impression was the definitive proof for the edition.


Formerly in the J. Webster and Gabriel Cogniacq collections.


Dacier knew of only two impressions where both these compositions were shown on one sheet. This was formerly in the collection of the Prince of Liechtenstein.


The Art Institute’s set of Schongauer’s Passion was formerly in the collection of Prince Waldburg Wolfegg.

73 HERCULES SEGHERS, Dutch. 1589-1590, died after 1635. THE LAMENTATION OF CHRIST. Etching (partly softground). The Clarence Buckingham Collection.

Five impressions of this plate are known, three of these being printed in blue and colored by hand. This was formerly in the collections of Friedrich August of Saxony and R. Weigel.


Only twenty impressions were printed and this one was formerly in the Herbert C. Coleman and G. Pellet collections.
Cézanne. Self Portrait from the Sketchbook
74 Toulouse-Lautrec. The Clowness at the Moulin Rouge
Picasso. Head of a Woman
An edition of one thousand copies of this memorial booklet has been designed by Suzette M. Zurcher,
set in Bembo types and printed by The Stinehour Press, Lunenburg, Vermont,
with colotype illustrations by The Meriden Gravure Company, Meriden, Connecticut.