

February 3, 2021

## **The Snite Museum of Art Announces Gifts of Six Important American and British Paintings from the late 18<sup>th</sup> to the early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries**

**Notre Dame, IN:** The Snite Museum of Art at the University of Notre Dame is delighted to announce that it is the recipient of six noteworthy paintings from the late 18<sup>th</sup> to the early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries that will significantly augment the Museum's holdings in American and British art. "The Museum is deeply grateful for these gifts, many by donors with long relationships to the Museum and Notre Dame," states Joseph Antenucci Becherer, Director of the Snite Museum of Art. "The importance of our 18<sup>th</sup>-, 19<sup>th</sup>- and 20<sup>th</sup>-century collections have been greatly enhanced with these works."

An important and generous gift from Ann Uhry Abrams, PhD, of a work by the American painter **John Twachtman**, leads this group of acquisitions. Born in Cincinnati to German parents, John Henry Twachtman became a student of Frank Duveneck, who he followed to Munich, where the younger artist continued his studies at the Academy of Fine Arts. He traveled with Duveneck and William Merritt Chase to Venice, eventually landing in Paris. While there, Twachtman met Theodore Robinson, and the two developed their brand of Impressionism. He returned to the United States in 1886 and, with Childe Hassam and Julien Alden Weir, co-founded the group "The Ten" to organize exhibitions of their work.

*The Chicago World's Fair, Illinois Building*, is from Twachtman's mature period. His subject matter was primarily landscapes, most often devoid of architecture. Here, he features an important historical event in American art and history by examining the relationship between the landscape in the foreground and the highly geometric, manmade environment beyond. His is an apt illustration of the White City with its glorification of commercial and imperial ambitions. Dr. Abrams, the donor, is a long-standing member of the Museum's Advisory Council.



John Henry Twachtman (American, 1853–1902)  
*The Chicago World's Fair, Illinois Building, ca. 1893*  
Oil on canvas  
Gift of Ann Uhry Abrams, PhD  
2020.029.001

This endearing work featuring three children is by the celebrated American Impressionist **Joseph Morris Raphael** (1869–1950). Associated with the California School of American Impressionism, Raphael spent a substantial portion of his career living and working in Belgium and the Netherlands, where he executed this painting.

Born in Jackson, California, and initially trained at the California School of Design, Raphael is one of the major figures of American Impressionism. He went to Paris in 1902 to continue his studies and remained in Europe until 1939. Upon arriving in Europe, Raphael quickly adopted the brushwork and palette of the French Impressionists. Although he would remain committed to the landscapes and domestic scenes favored by this group, his style expanded, becoming broader and more expressive under the influence of a variety of Post-Impressionist, Nabis, and Symbolist painters.





Joseph Morris Raphael (American, 1869–1950)

*Two Girls and a Baby* (also recorded as *Three Children, Laren, Netherlands*), ca. 1909

Oil on canvas

Gift of Brenden Beck, ND '90

2020.016

Although he developed a following of collectors in Europe, Raphael's principal market was in the United States and, in particular, in California. Throughout most of his time in Europe, he exhibited in San Francisco and influenced an entire generation of collectors and *plein air* painters. *Two Girls and a Baby* is a gift to the Museum from Brenden Beck, Class of 1990.

Two works by the celebrated painter **William J. Glackens**—*The Dressing Table* (1922) and *Sketch for a Girl in Pink* (n.d.)—have been donated to the Museum by the Sansom Foundation, Inc.

Glackens is among the pre-eminent figures in the history of early twentieth-century American painting and was among the most influential art advisors to American collectors. He is one of the founding figures of the Ashcan School—arguably among

the first genuinely American Modern art movements. Glackens is associated with a group of artists known as “The Eight” whose members included Robert Henri, George Luks, and John Sloan. Born and trained in Philadelphia, Glackens initially worked as an illustrator. He traveled to Europe in 1895 and was exposed both to Impressionism and Post-Impressionism. Upon returning to the United States, he settled in New York and became a prominent figure in the city’s burgeoning art world.

In the last decades of Glackens’s career, his palette lightened significantly, and brushwork became increasingly sketch-like. The impact of the French Impressionist Pierre Auguste Renoir is frequently cited as an inspiration for that change. Glackens came to know Renoir and his work well through the collection of Alfred Barnes, a high school friend who employed Glackens as an art advisor and agent. Both paintings contribute to the Museum’s holdings in American painting and early Modernism; each work is a beautiful example of Glackens’s repertoire in terms of subject matter and style. The Museum has been the grateful recipient of earlier gifts of the artist’s works by the Sansom Foundation.

An autumnal landscape by the celebrated American Impressionist **Mathias J. Alten** has been donated to the Museum by Anita M. Gilleo, the artist’s granddaughter.

Born in Germany, Alten trained at the Académie Julian and Académie Colarossi, Paris, and worked in the Netherlands before settling in Michigan. Alten’s earliest canvases are characterized by the more somber tones found in 19th-century Dutch and German painting; his later exposure to the work of the Spanish master Joaquín Sorolla opened his brushwork and lightened his palette.

*In Autumn Attire* portrays the shores of Lake Michigan and is the type of landscape painting that brought Alten great success during the second half of his career. Although he was also a successful portrait painter and creator of dazzling still life and floral imagery, Alten’s landscapes remained most in demand. They were widely collected, and the artist was a frequent presence in early 20th-century art communities like those in Old Lyme, Connecticut, and Taos, New Mexico. He probably completed this painting in the year following his induction into the National Arts Club in New York. It’s a valuable addition to the Museum’s holdings in American Impressionism, and reveals strong symbolic ties to the geographical region.

A second gift from Ann Uhry Abrams, PhD, the painting *Mrs. Sarah Siddons and Her Son in the Tragedy of “Isabella,”* 1784 is by the British artist **William Hamilton**. Trained as an architectural draftsman, Hamilton turned his attention toward figure drawing. He was a member of the Royal Academy and became best known for his depictions of scenes from popular plays. This painting is an example of Hamilton’s work at mid-career and represents the artist at his neoclassical best. The composition is simpler compared to his other paintings of theatrical performances; here, he has

pared the composition down to two main characters set on a terrace in a full-length, double portrait and costume piece.

Despite its muted color palette and the dearth of scenographic details, the painting expresses all of the drama expected from the genre. The portrait is of Mrs. Sarah Siddons, a famous actress in the late eighteenth century, who performed much of Shakespeare's and Milton's repertoire at the Drury Lane Theatre. Hamilton shows her playing the role of Isabella, the main character of a play entitled *The Fatal Marriage* originally written in 1694 by Thomas Southerne. In 1757, the actor-manager David Garrick rewrote and published the play as *Isabella, or the Fatal Marriage*, staging a production at Drury Lane in 1782 with Siddons as the lead.

**MEDIA CONTACT:** If you would like high-resolution images or in-depth information, please contact Gina Costa, Marketing and Public Relations Program Manager, (574) 631-4720, [gcosta@nd.edu](mailto:gcosta@nd.edu)

### **About The Snite Museum of Art, University of Notre Dame**

Considered one of the leading university art museums in America, the Snite Museum has a permanent collection of 30,000 works representing many cultures and periods of world art history. Exceptional holdings include the Jack and Alfrieda Feddersen Collection of Rembrandt Etchings, the Noah L. and Muriel S. Butkin Collection of 19th-Century French Art, the John D. Reilly Collection of Old Master and 19th-Century Drawings, the Janos Scholz Collection of 19th-Century European Photographs, the Mr. and Mrs. Russell G. Ashbaugh Jr. Collection of Meštrović Sculpture and Drawings, the George Rickey Sculpture Archive, and the Virginia A. Marten Collection of 18th-Century Decorative Arts. Other collection strengths include Olmec and Mesoamerican art, 20th-century art, and Native American art.

Sculpture is displayed in the Mary Loretto and Terrence J. Dillon Courtyard and in The Charles B. Hayes Family Sculpture Park.

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[nd.edu/visitors/directions](http://nd.edu/visitors/directions)

Hours:  
Due to restrictions by the University of Notre Dame during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Snite Museum of Art is currently open only to University of Notre Dame, Saint Mary's College, and Holy Cross College students, faculty, and staff.

Admission is free

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