



CASVA

Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts

Studies in the History of Art

In November 2010 the seventh International Fine Print Dealers Association Book Award for excellence in scholarship in the field of fine prints was presented to Peter Parshall, editor of *The Woodcut in Fifteenth-Century Europe*. This collection of essays was published as volume LII of CASVA Symposium Papers series and volume 75 in the larger series *Studies in the History of Art*. The symposium it records, which examined the technology, artistry, and economy of early printmaking, was sponsored by the Samuel H. Kress Foundation in honor of Franklin D. Murphy. This took place in 2005 during the groundbreaking exhibition *Origins of European Printmaking: Fifteenth-Century Woodcuts and Their Public*. The Gallery has had a deep interest in early printing since Lessing J. Rosenwald gave his collection to the nation in 1943, and both the exhibition catalogue and symposium volume are now indispensable for future research.

Romare Bearden, American Modernist, edited by Ruth Fine and Jacqueline Francis (*Studies in the History of Art*, volume 71), has just appeared. This brings new understanding of a great American artist who was the subject of a monographic exhibition and related CASVA symposium at the National Gallery some seven years ago. Such symposia, and their publication, bring international attention to the exhibitions they accompany, and expand greatly upon the information provided in exhibition catalogues.

Other models for CASVA symposia have evolved over the years. *The Mall in Washington, 1781–1991* (1991, republished in 2002), and *A Modernist Museum in Perspective: The East Building*

(2009) reflect CASVA's mission to study the built environment. *Art and the Early Photographic Album* (*Studies in the History of Art*, volume 77), also appearing this spring, is the first treatment of the important topic of how albums of photographs of works of art helped shape both art history and museums. This symposium grew out of the researches of Stephen Bann, former Edmond J. Safra Visiting Professor. The symposium also exploited the little-known riches of the Gallery's image collections, which Bann explored while in residence.

Due to appear in 2012 is *Orsanmichele and the History and Preservation of the Civic Monument*. A group of the most famous works of early Renaissance sculpture from Orsanmichele in Florence was loaned to the National Gallery in 2005 on the understanding that such a scholarly symposium would take place, and this event was an outstanding example of institutional, and international, collaboration. The volume will include papers from meetings held in Florence and Washington, and will consider the history and preservation of Orsanmichele as both oratory and museum.

The evolution of *Studies in the History of Art* and of the separately numbered CASVA Symposium Papers series within it reflects in many ways the wider development of publishing at the Gallery, and at CASVA in particular. During its first years, the Gallery did not publish an independent annual report. Instead, according to the statutory provisions of Congress, a short account, printed by the Government Printing Office, was included in the annual report of the Smithsonian Institution. Then, in 1966, in honor of the National Gallery's twenty-fifth anniver-

sary, the Trustees directed the Gallery to produce its own report with both narrative and statistical sections, given that the Gallery now had an education program, and was "a center for art historical research and publication, for the training of young scholars, and even for the sponsorship of basic scientific research into the problems of conservation." As a result, in 1967, the first *Report and Studies in the History of Art* appeared. Part One included a now classic article by then director John Walker on *Ginevra de' Benci*, and others by Kress Professors Jakob Rosenberg and René Huyghe, by three Samuel H. Kress fellows, and by Robert L. Feller, then senior fellow at the National Gallery Research Project. John Walker observed that in the future some of these articles would be concerned with aspects of the collection, but others would reflect the independent research of the community of scholars and conservators at the Gallery. Thus was *Studies in the History of Art* brought into being. Though the series went through many transformations, the philosophy was clear from the start: history and conservation were both important, and research should be independent as well as relevant to the collection.

The National Gallery of Art's annual report became a separate volume in 1970, and several issues of *Studies* appeared. With the opening of CASVA in 1979 things changed. *Studies in the History of Art*, volume 10, *Macedonia and Greece in Late Classical and Early Hellenistic Times* (1982), was also Symposium Papers 1. This recorded CASVA's very first symposium, held at the time of the exhibition *The Search for Alexander*. In his preface, then director J. Carter Brown announced three new

categories of Studies: symposium papers (principally sponsored by CASVA), monographs, and collected essays. The monograph series was inaugurated in 1985 with the publication of four volumes dedicated to checklists of stained glass in the United States. A second monograph series was launched as a group of publications devoted to conservation research, including studies of Bellini's *Feast of the Gods*, and of early modern tapestries. Several volumes published with the title *Conservation Research* under the late Ross Merrill's direction were intended to parallel the collected essay volumes of earlier years.

Most ambitious and coherent was the group of CASVA symposium volumes dedicated to Italian sculpture outlined by Henry A. Millon, then dean of the Center, in his preface to *Italian Medals* (1987), a volume also notable for its inclusion of both technical and historical material. Dean Millon announced the forthcoming publication of *Italian Plaquettes*, and promised future symposia on gems and cameos, small bronzes, and monumental bronzes. All of these took place, bringing international scholars and experts to the Gallery, and the symposium papers were all published, thanks to dedicated scholarly editors. The Samuel H. Kress Foundation supported the meetings in recognition of their importance for research on our permanent collection, and for the study of sculpture more generally.

The opening of the new sculpture galleries in 2002 with the display of the Robert H. Smith collection inspired a further symposium in 2003. *Collecting Sculpture in Early Modern Europe* (2008) marked Robert Smith's gift, the crowning glory of the Gallery's treasured Renaissance bronze collection. Though weighing in at 512 pages, *Collecting Sculpture* is not quite the largest volume in the symposium series: that honor goes to *Italian Panel Painting of the Duecento and Trecento* (2002), the publication of another joint research venture, this time with the Istituto Universitario Olandese in Florence. These

books have both become essential reading for the new scientific and historical material they contain.

Several earlier CASVA symposia, including *Pictorial Narrative in Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (1985), *Cultural Differentiation and Cultural Identity in the Visual Arts* (1989) and *Retaining the Original: Multiple Originals, Copies and Reproduction* (1989), were organized in collaboration with the department of history of art at the Johns Hopkins University. In retrospect these volumes reflect an important and vital response to the new art history, both comparative and global, and already questioning the status of originality and authorship.

Studies in the History of Art grew out of an annual report to become a complex publication program, presenting for a while something of a bibliographical conundrum. The Symposium Papers series has survived with a clear purpose of giving permanence to the research presented at CASVA symposia and making it available at a reasonable cost. Now produced by a team under the leadership of Therese O'Malley, associate dean of the Center, with the support of the National Gallery's publishing office, and distributed by Yale University Press, the series Studies in the History of Art, Symposium Papers, meets the most exacting standards and reaches an increasingly wide audience. This heightened quality of production cannot be taken for granted. A recent grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation is helping us continue our mission to disseminate new scholarship on the visual arts, from fifteenth century woodcuts to Romare Bearden and the early photographic album. The digital library is a reality and offers many advantages that we continue to explore. But the illustrated book has proven an efficient and durable medium since the earliest days of print. • Elizabeth Cropper, Dean, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts



Romare Bearden, American Modernist

Front cover *Studies in the History of Art*, vol. 71, edited by Ruth Fine and Jacqueline Francis, 2011



Art and the Early Photographic Album

Front cover *Studies in the History of Art*, vol. 77, edited by Stephen Bann, 2011