



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

MASSACHUSETTS ART COMMISSION

STATE HOUSE • ROOM 61-G

BOSTON • 02133

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State Library of Massachusetts
State House, Boston

ARLENE E. FRIEDBERG
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GAIL ROBIN CLARK
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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ART COMMISSION

YEAR-ENDING JUNE 30, 1989

ACCOUNT #1102-3290

August 30, 1989

The members of the Massachusetts Art Commission respectfully enclose the Annual Report for the year ending June 30, 1989. As the body charged with the "custody and care" of the State House art collection, as well as serving as advisors to the Governor (General Laws ch. 6, sec. 19 & 20), the Commission enjoyed another successful year of activities in the following areas of collections management: 1) conservation and preservation, 2) policy and growth of the collection, and 3) educational programs.

I. CONSERVATION and PRESERVATION

The Art Commission has completed the third year of a comprehensive conservation and maintenance program for the State House art collection. Funds appropriated under account #1102-3290 allowed the Art Commission to implement several major projects as we work toward our long-term goal to treat each object in the collection.

A Scope of Work and Request for Proposal is issued for each project. Bids are reviewed by the Commission, often with the assistance of outside professional conservation advisors. The Art Commission requires that all contractors adhere to the American Institute for Conservation's Code of Ethics and Standards for Practice, which specifies the stability and reversibility of all materials and procedures, and complete documentation by both written report and photograph of all treatments conducted.

The Art Commission has been fortunate to have been assisted by **Brigitte Smith**, Associate **Painting Conservator, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston**, who served as advisor to our easel painting and mural conservation projects for the second year without compensation. Her insight into our projects and her recommendations on treatments, materials, and procedures were extremely valuable to the members as we evaluated proposals for conservation. We extend to her our appreciation for her time and expertise.

A. Painting and Frame Conservation

Conservation of selected portraits was conducted at three studios this year. Some were unframed by the conservators, and the paintings and frames treated separately; others were treated by laboratories with in-house facilities for frame repair as well. All objects were wrapped and transported to and from conservation laboratories by insured carriers. The Art Commission requires both fine arts transporters and conservators to insure the objects while in their temporary custody.

All paintings sent out for treatment were photographed and examined under infrared and ultraviolet light. Varnish and paint analysis was conducted and thorough condition reports prepared before treatment commenced. All phases of conservation were recorded

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in writing and by photograph. A final treatment report, which describes all materials and procedures used in the treatment of each painting, was submitted with after-treatment photography for approval with the completed work. Similar examination and documentation procedures were followed for the treatment and repair of frames.

The following painting and frame conservators were contracted:

- **Carmichael and Cederholm, Associates, West Townsend, Mass.**

Conservation of two oil portraits: Frederic Cook, by Elmer Greene, 1947; and William Washburn, by Frank Benson, 1900, plus their frames.

- **Williamstown Regional Art Conservation Laboratory, Williamstown, Mass.**

Conservation of four oil portraits: Anson Burlingame, attributed to Matthew Brady, 19th century; William Douglas, by Arthur Hazard, 1912; Eugene Foss, by Howard E. Smith, 1922; and George Robinson, by Daniel Strain, 1900, plus their frames.

- **Lance Mayer and Gay Myers, Lyman Allyn Art Museum, New London, Conn.**

Conservation of seven oil portraits: Jonathan Belcher, by Frederick Wallace, 1924; Benjamin Butler, by Walter G. Page, 1900; John Davis, by unknown artist, 19th century; Eben Draper, by Joseph DeCamp, 1913; William Eustis, by Henry Williams, 1826; Spencer Phips, by Alice R. Sohler, 1930; and Samuel Shute, by Aiden L. Ripley, 1930.

- **James Barter, Franklin, Maine**

Conservation, repair and regilding of seven frames from the portraits treated by Mr. Mayer and Ms. Myers, listed above.

B. Mural Conservation

- **Williamstown Regional Art Conservation Laboratory, Williamstown, Mass.**

The Art Commission continued the conservation *in situ* of wall murals at the State House with treatment of the triptych: The Decoration of the Colors of the 104th Infantry, painted in 1927 by Richard Andrew. The Williamstown Regional Art Conservation Laboratory cleaned the mural of heavy layers of discolored varnish, repaired damages, revarnished the canvas, and inpainted small areas of loss.

This was the first part of a two-part project to conserve all the Andrew murals. The four-panel Sixth Regiment Memorial, awarded to the Williamstown laboratory on the same bid, has again been postponed due to budgetary constraints.

C. Sculpture Conservation

- **Museum of Fine Arts, Boston**

Due to high levels of dust and other pollutants in the State House, the monumental statue of George Washington, by Sir Francis Chantrey, 1826, had accumulated a significant layer of grime on its marble surface since its last treatment in 1985. A conservator from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Research Laboratory (initial conservators of the sculpture), cleaned the statue with solutions appropriate for porous marble objects.

- **Jean-Louis Lachevre**

The original plaster model for Winged Victory, a bronze turret ornament by Boston sculptor Bela Pratt for the first battleship Massachusetts, had been embedded in a wall of a basement office since 1907. Because of its size, weight, and fragility it was necessary to remove the life-size plaster relief from its flimsy packing crate. Victory was mounted on a sturdy panel, padded with foam, and moved to a protective storage area by trained art handlers under the supervision of a museum conservator.

D. Sculpture Maintenance

The conservation of art objects, especially outdoor bronze sculptures, implies a commitment to continued care and proper maintenance. Regular inspection, proper cleaning and renewal of the wax coating by a trained conservator is required at least once per year. Without proper maintenance, the acrylic Incralac coating, which serves as a protective barrier between the bronze and the corrosive environment, can be damaged and the deterioration process allowed to begin again.

Due to the construction in front of the east and west wings during spring 1988, scheduled maintenance of four of the statues was postponed until the fall. All six statues received their regularly scheduled maintenance again in June 1989.

- **Dennis and Craine Associates, Cambridge, Mass.**

Maintenance of General Joseph Hooker (fall 1988 and spring 1989); Daniel Webster and Horace Mann (spring 1989).

- **Center for Conservation and Technical Studies, Harvard University Art Museums, Cambridge, Mass.**

Maintenance of statues of Anne Hutchinson, Henry Cabot Lodge, and Mary Dyer (fall 1988 and spring 1989).

E. Collections Storage

As the Massachusetts State House continues to undergo historical renovation, construction and cosmetic treatments throughout the building necessitated the removal of many easel paintings from the public corridors to protect them from pollutants and accidental damage. The Art Commission has sent other paintings in need of stabilization and treatment to conservation studios over the past two years. It was deemed in interest of these paintings to delay their reinstallation until major renovations have been completed and they may be safely displayed

It is essential that art objects be stored in a secure, climate controlled space on a storage rack or shelving system. An appropriate storage area was therefore required to properly house the objects removed from view. As the project is expected to last several years, and there is no available space at the State House to correctly store and maintain the paintings for an extended period, the Secretary of State has generously donated the use of a room at the State Archives building to fulfill this temporary storage need.

The space designated to us was a vacant vault, and the art collection required a storage system. Therefore it was necessary for suitable racks to be designed and built. They were fabricated by the Art Collections Manager and museum storage consultant **Raymond Liddell**. The system was constructed with surplus angle iron donated by the Bureau of State Office Buildings, and is extremely sturdy. Lined with acid-free materials, the racks are designed to accommodate paintings of all sizes in their frames. The U. S. **Art Company** was hired to move all paintings stored in a temporary vault to the Archives under the Art Commission's supervision.

A recording hygromograph was purchased to monitor temperature and relative humidity in the storage area. The area is monitored regularly in consultation with the Archives Building Director and Chief Engineer to assure proper conditions are maintained for the objects.

II. POLICY AND COLLECTION GROWTH

A. Proposed Acquisitions

The Art Commission is also responsible for advising on the design and installation site of all art objects proposed for the State House collection. Members of the Commission currently serve on or advise acquisition committees for nine proposed additions to the collection, including:

- John F. Kennedy Memorial statue
- Edward J. King portrait
- Clock for Great Hall
- Policemens Memorial statue
- Samuel Koupcheck plaque
- Francis Slinger plaque
- Charles Stiller plaque
- Derne Street plaque
- Beirut Marines plaque

B. State House Art Acquisitions Guidelines

The Art Commission has grown increasingly concerned over the proliferation and quality of objects proposed for the State House art collection, and the absence of a standardized procedure by which objects are acquired. The members developed State House Art Acquisition Guidelines which were issued to legislators, personnel, and potential donors. Its dual purpose is to assist in the evaluation of criteria for objects proposed for the collection, and also to define the procedures by which an object is properly accessioned. The Commission is hopeful that these Guidelines will help to insure the proper growth and quality of the collection.

C. New Acquisition, 1988-1989

1988.1 Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr. Bronze bust cast in 1988 from an original clay modeled by Philip Sears in the 1930's. Presented by the Henry Cabot Lodge Memorial Commission, October 25, 1988. This fine bronze head represents Mr. Lodge during the time he served in the Massachusetts House of Representatives. It is installed opposite the bust of his father, Henry Cabot Lodge, Sr., also by Sears, in the foyer between Doric and Nurses Halls.

D. Massachusetts Art in Public Places Program

During the year, the Commission also discussed with the Division of Capital Planning and Operations and the Massachusetts Council on Arts and Humanities its role as advisors in the state-wide "One Percent for Art" program. At this time, all agencies have agreed on the manner by which the commission may fulfill its responsibility to advise on design and placement of art purchased for the Commonwealth.

III. EDUCATION

A. "The Art of Saving History"

"The Art of Saving History" is a 15-minute film produced by the Art Commission which provides an educational introduction and overview of the conservation and preservation of paintings, sculptures, and murals. Conservators from five laboratories describe the condition of objects, the causes of deterioration, and the various treatments they conduct to clean, conserve, and protect them. The film also includes the flag storage program at the State House.

During the year, this film was shown on the in-house "Gavel to Gavel" program, and WGBX Public Television, channel 44. The Commission has also established a complimentary loan program for this film with historical societies and other institutions committed to the preservation of our cultural and artistic heritage. They have expressed great interest in its use.

B. Cultural Resource Management Plan (CRMP)

The Art Commission continued to participate on the committee formed by the State House Project Office to develop a working management plan for all cultural resources at the capitol. A guide to the history, scope, function and care of the State House art collection, was requested by the Project Office for inclusion in the CRMP. This plan will be incorporated into the Master Plan for the State House to inform future users and caretakers of the building in the proper treatment and care of the art collection.

IV. MEMBERS and STAFF

- Chairman/Conservation Project Director - Arlene Friedberg

Authorized also under account #1102-3290, the Chairman also served part-time as Project Director to develop and oversee conservation and preservation projects for the collection.

- Art Collections Manager - Susan Greendyke

Continues as only staff person to assist the Commission in implementation of all programs as collections manager, objects registrar, secretary, treasurer and office manager. Provides oversight for collection on display and in storage.

An audit of the Commission's FY'87 records was completed this year by the State Auditor. Because of the demonstrated need for staff support for the Commission's programs the auditor recommended that the Art Commission be granted one full-time employee. The Commission plans to request this position in its FY'91 budget proposal.

- Former members

Finally, the members wish to acknowledge the valuable contributions of two members who have recently left the Commission. **Robin Clark Evans** was originally appointed in December 1982 and re-appointed in 1985. As one of the original members of the commission which developed the inventory, cataloguing, and publication programs for the collection, she has been integral in all of our activities. During her tenure with the Art Commission Mrs. Evans completed her degree at the Boston School of the Museum of Fine Arts, and brought her aesthetic sensitivity and artist's perspective to the Commission's many projects. Mrs. Evans has recently relocated to Washington, D. C.

Edward McManus, Objects Conservator for the National Park Service, was appointed in 1986. His expertise came at a crucial time for the commission as we embarked on a comprehensive conservation program for the State House collection. His insight into conservation issues and practices was extremely valuable in evaluating the needs of the collection, developing the overall program, and reviewing proposals submitted to treat the objects. Mr. McManus has been appointed as the first conservator at the National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

The Commission members consider it a privilege to care for this historic and irreplaceable collection, and to insure its preservation for future generations of Massachusetts citizens.

Respectfully submitted for the
Massachusetts Art Commission,

Arlene E. Friedberg
Chairman



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APPENDIX

SUMMARY OF

CONSERVATION PROJECTS BY FISCAL YEAR

1985

COLLECTION SURVEYS:

Inventory of collection
Photographic documentation
Easel painting condition evaluation
Sculpture condition evaluation
Mural condition evaluation
Historical survey

1986

STATUE:

George Washington (Funded by the Doric Dames, Inc., Bulfinch Restoration Foundation)

1987

EXTERIOR BRONZE STATUES:

Mary Dyer
Joseph Hooker
Anne Hutchinson
Henry Cabot Lodge
Horace Mann
Daniel Webster

MURALS:

Memorial Hall:

Pilgrims on the Mayflower
John Eliot Preaching to the Indians
Battle at Concord Bridge
Return of the Colors to the Custody of the Commonwealth

Third floor:

Marching Through Baltimore (repair only)

EXTERIOR SCULPTURE MAINTENANCE:

Daniel Webster
Horace Mann

FLAG STORAGE PROJECT: removal of 480 historic battle flags from Memorial Hall to State House basement storage vault.

SUMMARY OF CONSERVATION PROJECTS BY FISCAL YEAR - page 2

1988

APPRAISAL: Paintings, sculpture, frames

EASEL PAINTINGS:

Francis Bernard
William Burnet
Richard Coote
Thomas Hutchinson
John Leverett
Leverett Saltonstall
William Shirley
Charles Sumner
Increase Sumner
William Tailer
Artemas Ward
Emory Washburn

PAINTING FRAMES, from the portraits of:

Thomas Hutchinson
John Leverett
William Shirley
Charles Sumner
Artemas Ward
Emory Washburn

BUSTS:

Senate Chamber:
George Boutwell
Benjamin Franklin
Marquis de Lafayette
Abraham Lincoln
Samuel Francis Smith
Charles Sumner
Gardiner Tufts
George Washington
Henry Wilson

INTERIOR STATUES and BASES:

John Albion Andrew
Army Nurses Memorial
William Francis Bartlett
Roger Wolcott/Spanish War Memorial

Second floor:

John Adams
Oliver Ames
Frederic Greenhalge
Henry Cabot Lodge
Samuel McCall
William Russell
George Washington

INTERIOR BRONZE PLAQUES:

Thomas Dudley
Nelson Appleton Miles

Third floor:

Theodore Roosevelt

EXTERIOR SCULPTURE MAINTENANCE:

Daniel Webster
Horace Mann

SUMMARY OF CONSERVATION PROJECTS BY FISCAL YEAR - page 3

1989

EASEL PAINTINGS:

Jonathan Belcher
Anson Burlingame
Benjamin Butler
Frederic Cook
John Davis
William Douglas
Eben Draper
William Eustis
Eugene Foss
Spencer Phips
George Robinson
Samuel Shute
William Washburn

PAINTING FRAMES, from the portraits of:

Jonathan Belcher
Anson Burlingame
Benjamin Butler
John Davis
William Douglas
Eben Draper
William Eustis
Spencer Phips
George Robinson
Samuel Shute

MURAL:

Decoration of the Colors of the 104th Infantry

SCULPTURE:

George Washington
Winged Victory (crating and storage)
Anne Hutchinson plaque

EXTERIOR SCULPTURE MAINTENANCE:

fall 1988:

Mary Dyer
Anne Hutchinson
Henry Cabot Lodge
Joseph Hooker

spring 1989:

Mary Dyer
Anne Hutchinson
Henry Cabot Lodge
Horace Mann
Daniel Webster
Joseph Hooker