

EXHIBITION OF SKETCHBOOKS AT HARVARD'S FOGG ART MUSEUM PROVIDES A GLIMPSE OF THE ARTIST AT WORK

Rarely Displayed Sketchbooks from the 18th Century to the Present Include Drawings, Studies, Copies After Old Masters, and Notes



John Singer Sargent (American, 1856–1925), *Study for the Prophet Obadiah*. Boston Public Library (Sketchbook: Studies for Frieze of the Prophets, Boston Public Library, page 4), 1890–95. Charcoal on off-white wove paper, 36.7 x 25.3 cm. Fogg Art Museum, HUAM. Gift of Mrs. Francis Ormond, 1937.7.32.4. Photo: Allan Macintyre © President and Fellows of Harvard College.

CAMBRIDGE, MA (May 4, 2006)—*Under Cover: Artists' Sketchbooks*, an exhibition of over 70 sketchbooks and 45 drawings that were originally part of sketchbooks, will be on display at Harvard's Fogg Art Museum from **August 1 to October 22, 2006**. The exhibition will feature works from the Fogg collection of nearly 150 sketchbooks, ranging in date from the eighteenth century to the 1990s. Intact sketchbooks from this remarkable collection will be displayed by means of a single opening of each, including those by Jean-Honoré Fragonard, Jacques-Louis David, Sanford Gifford, Edward Burne-Jones, John Singer Sargent, Henri-Edmond Cross, Reginald Marsh, George Grosz, and Christopher Wilmarth. Also on view will be drawings that were removed from sketchbooks before they were acquired by the Fogg by artists such as John Constable, Paul Cézanne, Henry Moore, and Brice Marden, as well as sketchbooks and drawings on loan from Harvard's Houghton Library and Museum of Comparative Zoology.

The exhibition was organized by Miriam Stewart, Assistant Curator in the Department of Drawings. "It's almost as if we're catching the artist unaware," said Stewart. "In many cases, these sketchbooks resemble a diary. One can follow the artists on their travels or trace the progression of an idea. While the sketchbooks range in date, their use has remained surprisingly

unchanged. Artists from all eras have confided their travel sketches, figure studies, and notes of every kind to their sketchbooks.”

Designed to be easily portable, sketchbooks are often kept in artists' pockets and many reflect that in the permanent curvature of their covers. These distinctive characteristics, along with the nature of the drawings themselves, document an unusually personal view of the artist at work. The drawings and notes in these sketchbooks vary from nature and figure studies, to travel sketches, copies after old masters, expense accounts, and lists of pictures. Some sketchbooks are self-conscious and conceived as a whole, with every page signed, while others are more spontaneous and filled with a random assortment of hastily drawn sketches and doodles.

Intact sketchbooks are uncommon, as over the years the majority of them have been disbound and sold as individual sheets. Many of the sketchbooks in the Fogg collection may not be loaned or made available for study due to their fragility. *Under Cover: Artists' Sketchbooks* gives visitors, students, and scholars an opportunity to see a selection of these unique works that are not often put on view.

“Sketchbooks have rarely been the sole subject of an exhibition, and ours have never been exhibited together,” said Thomas W. Lentz, Elizabeth and John Moors Cabot Director of the Harvard University Art Museums. “The Fogg has an important collection of sketchbooks that has been built over the past century, and we think audiences will find them fascinating. Much time has been devoted to the proper cataloguing and conservation of these works that play such a significant role in teaching, particularly in relation to artists' working methods and investigations into artistic process.”

The exhibition comes on the heels of an extensive five-year cataloguing project in the Department of Drawings. Most of the sketchbooks in the Fogg collection have been carefully catalogued in the Harvard University Art Museums' collections management database, including detailed descriptions of every page and any relevant research on the role of the sketchbook in the artist's career. Some of the larger sketchbooks have over 50 pages, and others contain numerous tangential items such as photos or notes, making the cataloguing process a time-consuming but important project.

Notable Works

The exhibition includes several outstanding sketchbooks, including Jean-Honoré Fragonard's *Sketchbook from the First Italian Period* (c. 1756–61), Jacques-Louis David's two sketchbooks for *The Coronation of Napoleon* (1805–6), George Grosz's *Sketchbook: Manhattan Skyline and Mice* (1950–51), and a selection of sketchbooks by Edward Burne-Jones, Sanford Gifford, and John Singer Sargent. Also featured are exceptional "orphans," drawings formerly part of sketchbooks, including Jan van Goyen's *Three Studies of a Cow and Landscape with Cottages and Figures* (c. 1650), John Constable's *Warwick from Priory Park* (1809), Edouard Manet's *Study for "Interior at Arcachon"* (1871), Paul Cézanne's *Corner of the Studio and Portrait of a Man (Emile Zola?)* (c. 1877–84), Brice Marden's *Untitled Work Book Drawings* (1983–84), Henry Moore's *Ideas for Sculpture* (1940), and several pages from a disbound sketchbook by David Smith, including studies for sculptures *Pillar of Sunday*, *The Billiard Player*, and *Home of the Welder* (1945).

Website

The exhibition will be further enhanced by an interactive website that will focus on about ten sketchbooks, allowing users to scroll through images of every page along with accompanying text. The website can be found at: www.artmuseums.harvard.edu/sketchbooks

Exhibition Programming

Gallery Talks:

Fogg Art Museum

Free with the price of admission.

Saturday, September 9, 11:30 a.m.

Saturday, October 14, 11:30 a.m.

Miriam Stewart, assistant curator of drawings

Sunday, September 24, 2:00 p.m.

Prudence Peiffer, Ph.D. candidate, History of Art and Architecture

Saturday, September 30, 11:30 a.m.

*Willemijn Lindenhovius, Lynn and Philip A. Straus curatorial intern,
Drawing Department*

The Harvard University Art Museums

The Harvard University Art Museums are one of the world's leading arts institutions, with the Arthur M. Sackler, Busch-Reisinger, and Fogg Art Museums, the Straus Center for Conservation, the Center for the Technical Study of Modern Art, the HUAM Archives, and the Archaeological Exploration of Sardis, in Turkey.

The Harvard University Art Museums are distinguished by the range and depth of their collections, their groundbreaking exhibitions, and the original research of their staff. As an integral part of the Harvard community, the three art museums and four research centers serve as resources for all students, adding a special dimension to their areas of study. The public is welcome to experience the collections and exhibitions as well as to enjoy lectures, symposia, and other programs.

For more than a century, the Harvard University Art Museums have been the nation's premier training ground for museum professionals and scholars and are renowned for their role in the development of the discipline of art history in this country.

Location and Hours

The Fogg Art Museum and the Busch-Reisinger Museum are located at 32 Quincy Street, Cambridge. Adjacent to them is the Arthur M. Sackler Museum, located at 485 Broadway. Each museum is a short walk through Harvard Yard from the Harvard Square MBTA station.

Hours are Monday through Saturday, 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Sunday 1:00–5:00 p.m.; closed on national holidays.

Paid admission includes entrance to all three art museums, including study rooms, public tours, and gallery talks. General admission is \$9; \$7 for senior citizens; and \$6 for students. Admission is free for Harvard students and affiliates, Members of the Art Museums, Cambridge Public Library Cardholders, and children under 18. Admission is free to all on Saturdays before noon. More detailed information is available at 617-495-9400 or on the Internet at www.artmuseums.harvard.edu.

The Harvard University Art Museums receive support from the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

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For more information on this exhibition or the Harvard University Art Museums, please contact:

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