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# Annual Report 1932

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Brown University Art Program  
and the Community Art Project in Providence  
under a grant from the Carnegie Corporation  
of February 26, 1932.

The following report is respectfully submitted:

Immediately after the receipt of a letter notifying President Barbour of the grant, a committee, representing Brown University and the Rhode Island School of Design, was organized for the effective administration of the grant: representing Brown University, Dr. A. D. Mead, Vice-President of the University (chairman); Dr. H. C. Bumpus, Secretary of the Corporation; Professor J. P. Adams, Vice-President of the University; and Professor Will S. Taylor, Chairman of the Department of Art; representing the Rhode Island School of Design: Mrs. Murray S. Danforth, President; Mr. L. Earle Rowe, Director of the Museum; and Mr. Royal B. Farnum, Educational Director.

The committee has proceeded upon the understanding that the grant should be used for two general purposes: (a) to strengthen the personnel, the physical equipment, and the curriculum of the Department of Art at Brown University; and (b) to develop the Art interests of the community. With respect to this second purpose, it has been the constant policy of the committee not only to promote new Art projects in Providence and the state of Rhode Island, but also to coordinate the rich Art resources of the community and to facilitate effective contacts between these resources and the people of Providence and neighboring towns.

ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF ART AT BROWN UNIVERSITY

I. Physical Equipment

Before the opening of the academic year 1932-1933, the physical equipment of the Department of art was considerably extended.

A two story apartment house, at 44 Benevolent Street, owned by the University, was given over to the use of the Department. The second floor apartment was completely renewed and is occupied by Professor and Mrs. Downing. The first floor apartment, partly redecorated, has lent itself admirably to use for offices of the Secretary of the Department and the faculty, a reading room in which the Carnegie Reference Library is housed, and storage space for slides and photographs.

Another building owned by the University, at 41 Benevolent Street, was reconstructed to provide an admirable studio for mural painting, for the use of Professor Taylor.

These changes released the old building, formerly occupied by both Professor Taylor and the laboratory classes in Art, for more efficient use. One room is allotted to laboratory work, the other has been converted into a lecture room, seating sixty-five students, and equipped with two projection lanterns and double screens for the study of slides by the comparative method.

The lecture room is used not only for the courses offered by the Department, but also, by special request, for the course in Archaeology offered by Professor C. A. Robinson, Jr.

The three buildings now used by the Department (i.e., the building used for lectures and laboratory classes, the building which houses the offices and reference library, and the Mural Studio) are closely related in situation. The garden which gives the class building a pleasant setting has been enlarged, through the generosity of Dr. Bumpus and Professor Hill of the Engineering Department, to surround the office building. The space in front of the Mural Studio will be landscaped this spring. Thus, these buildings, with the exhibition gallery, in Faunce House, form a satisfactory physical setting for the activities of the Art Department Community. The Department Community spirit is fostered in the fact that the homes both of Professor Taylor and Professor Downing are contiguous to the buildings used in the work of the Department.

The teaching equipment has been increased by the addition of 648 slides, 56 books, and a number of fine facsimile color reproductions.

## II. Personnel

The personnel of the Art Department has been enlarged by the appointment of Mr. George E. Downing as Assistant Professor of Art, to teach at Brown University and to assist in the work of the Community Art Project. Mr. Downing has received three Carnegie scholarships, two for study at Harvard University and one for study in Europe, and has taught for four years at the University of Chicago. Miss Margorie Holt was appointed full time Secretary of the Department at the beginning of the year, and her efficient work has relieved Professor Taylor's time, and has made possible the revision of the book, slide and photograph collection.

## III. Curriculum

The curriculum has been increased by the addition of a new course, "An Art Survey of European Culture", offered by Professor Downing, with an enrollment of 89 students, both for Brown University and for Pembroke College. The total enrollment for courses offered by the Department for the year 1932-1933 is 167.

## IV. Exhibitions

The exhibitions in the art gallery of Faunce House form an important phase of the resources of the Department, as well as of the community. The following exhibitions have been held: International Exhibition of Photography, Japanese Omi-ye, Modern American Painting, Third Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Prints, Old Chinese Prints, Background of American Painting, Six Expressionists of Modern Art, and Newspaper Photographs. The total attendance at these exhibitions from September 26 to March 6 has been 2758. Talks in the gallery have been given by Professor Taylor and Professor Downing. Interest in these exhibitions is evidenced not only by a few sales (to students as well as to members of the community), but also by the request for explanatory talks in the gallery before such talks are announced. The following exhibitions are scheduled for the remainder of the year: Chicago Architects of the 80's and 90's, the Student Picture-Lending Library (see below), Exhibition illustrating the lecture series "The Classical Point of View (see below), Work of Members of the Brown University faculty and their families (this exhibition will include non-professional work, as well as the work of the Art Department faculty.



ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMUNITY ART PROJECT

I. An Institute of Art, November 11 - 13, 1932.

To introduce the Community Art Project to the community, an Institute of Art was held at Brown University and the Rhode Island School of Design, November 11 - 13, 1932.

The program of the Institute was planned to suggest to the community the scope and purpose of the project to be carried on; the program was also arranged with the intention of beginning that coordination of community art interests which has been one of the constant purposes of the Community Art Project.

Four sessions constituted the principal part of the program. The first session, entitled "The Fine Arts", was given over to the creative phase of the fine arts, with practising artists as the speakers. The session was held in Faunce House Theater, Mr. Thomas Benton opened the session with an address "Mural Painting in Contemporary Art". Mr. Benton was followed by Mr. Frank Lloyd Wright, who spoke on "The Growth and Development of American Architecture". After the addresses, the speakers and the audience engaged in a stimulating discussion, which, with the addresses, was felt by the members to have opened the Institute in a spirit of candour and inquiry in accord with the purposes of the Community Art Project.

The second session, which also bore the title "The Fine Arts", dealt with the critical phase of the subject. The session was held in Alumnae Hall, Pembroke College in Brown University with Mrs. Murray S. Danforth President of the Rhode Island School of Design presiding. Addresses were given by Professor Frank Jewett Mather, Jr., ("The Art of Giving Art Collections"), Dean Everett Victor Meeks ("The Fine Arts in Education"), and Professor Kenneth John Conant ("The Contribution of Archaeology to Art").

The third session devoted to "Art in Industry", was felt to be particularly important for the Providence community, including as the community does important industries whose products, such as jewelry, demand fine designing. The session was held in Memorial Hall, The Rhode Island School of Design, with Dr. Margaret S. Morriss, Dean of Pembroke College, presiding. Addresses were given by Mr. Earnest Elmo Calkins ("The Next Step in Industrial Art") and by Mr. William Sloane Coffin ("Art in Industry and Commerce").

The fourth session, "Art in the Community" fittingly closed the sessions of the Institute. The session was held in Faunce House Theater, Brown University, with Dr. H. C. Bumpus, Secretary to the Corporation of Brown University, presiding. Professor George William Eggers spoke to the topic "The Stimulation of Community Interest in Art", drawing his illustrations from his rich experience in Chicago. The second address was given by Mr. Edward Beatty Rowan: "Art in a Middle Western Community". Mr. Rowan described the American Federation of Art experiment at Oedar Rapids, Iowa, in terms of the art possibilities in such a community. At the end of the session the chairman invited Mr. F. A. Whiting, of the American Federation of Arts, to make extended remarks of comment.

The program of the Institute included two other addresses, by Mr. Frederick Ellis Jackson and Dr. Charles Allen Dinsmore. Mr. Jackson, a member of the advisory committee to the City Planning commission of Providence, spoke at a dinner to Visiting Members of the Institute on the subject "Problems and Influences in Municipal Architecture". Mr. Jackson was invited to speak not only because of his qualifications as a leading Providence architect, but also in recognition of his impressive design for the recently completed County Court House in Providence. Dr. Dinsmore addressed the community on "The Principle of Beauty".

in Religion and Literature" at a church service in the First Baptist Meeting House, one of the finest Georgian buildings in Providence.

The art of music was represented at the Institute in actual performance, in an organ recital, by Fernando Germani under the auspices of the Brown University Lowmes Fund, in Sayles Hall, Brown University, and in a concert of chamber music, by the Musical Art Quartette, in the Museum of the Rhode Island School of Design. The drama found its place in the program in a performance, for Members of the Institute, by The Players, a community dramatic society, assisted by Sock and Buskin, the University dramatic society.

The exhibitions held in connection with the Institute were designed to indicate the variety of fields which are included within the scope of a broad art interest. The exhibitions were also important for their demonstration of the wealth of resources available in Providence to those who are either casually or professionally concerned with art. The art of the book was illustrated in the manuscripts in the collection of the John Carter Brown Library of Brown University, in the collection of Incunabula at the Annmary Brown Memorial, in the Audobon plates at the Providence Athenaeum, and in various exhibitions at the John Hay Library of Brown University. The work of local artists was represented in a Members' Exhibition at the Handicraft Club, in a Members' Exhibition at the Providence Art Club, and in the exhibition of Professor Taylor's Murals for the Museum of Natural History in New York. A relationship between art and science was suggested in the exhibition of work for the same museum by Mr. James L. Clark, a graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design. Art in Rhode Island was shown in an exhibition of the products of local manufacturers at the Providence Chamber of Commerce. The work of local craftsmen appeared in an exhibition of ship models at the Rhode Island Historical Society. Other exhibitions, not of a local nature, included an important showing of English Portraits at the Museum of the Rhode Island School of Design, American Painting in the Faunce House Art Gallery of Brown University, Fine Prints at the Tilden-Thurber Gallery, English Portraits at the Vose Gallery, and an exhibition of the private collection of Mr. and Mrs. William E. Brigham for Members of the Institute.

An important function in the program of the Institute was the special Convocation of the University, for the conferring of honorary degrees upon Mr. Henry Watson Kent, Mr. Walter Damrosch, and Mr. Oliver La Farge II. The special Convocation, a rare event at Brown, was held not only to honor these distinguished men in the field of the arts, but also to introduce into the program of the Institute that element of pageantry which forms one of the aesthetic aspects of University life.

Invitations to the sessions of the Institute were sent to over 650 persons outside of Providence, and to over 1100 local persons. The invitation list included artists, teachers, art critics, art editors, as well as persons generally interested in art and in the community. The Members of the Institute (i.e., those who were invited to participate in the discussions) included 74 Visiting Members from 12 states, as guests of the University and of the Rhode Island School of Design, and 141 Local Members from the Providence Community. The average attendance at the sessions of the Institute was 400, including Members of the Institute and the people of the community. 200 persons were present at the Dinner in Honor of Visiting Members, and 1600 attended the concert by the Musical Art Quartette in the Museum of the Rhode Island School of Design. The large attendance at the Institute was in part due to the publicity received through the enthusiastic cooperation of the Providence radio stations and the local newspapers.



## II. Publications

### A. The Addresses given during the Institute of Art

A typewritten copy of the addresses given during the Institute has been forwarded to the Carnegie Corporation. The Committee agreed that the widest circulation would be given the addresses if they were published not in a single volume, but, in various periodicals. The placement of the addresses with appropriate editors has been undertaken by the Committee.

### B. A Catalogue of the Art Treasures of Rhode Island

Shortly after the receipt of the Carnegie grant, the desirability of a compact but authoritative catalogue of works of art open to public inspection in Rhode Island was suggested to the Committee. Mrs. George Downing, was asked to begin work upon such a catalogue. The Committee agreed that the catalogue could best be published as a series of small volumes. The first, on the Architecture of Rhode Island, will be ready for publication in the late autumn of 1933. Mrs. Downing has proceeded on the assumption that the material collected upon each subject should be as complete as possible, and should be available in the files of the Art Department for the use of interested persons; and that the material actually published in a single volume of the catalogue should be brief enough to meet the demands of the casually interested person, and yet suggestive enough (through bibliographical material and lists of important monuments not discussed in the text) to be of value to the serious student. A report by Mrs. Downing on progress in this project is appended to this report.

### C. A Calendar of Art Events.

For the month of November, 1932, and for each succeeding month beginning January, 1933, a Calendar of Art events has been published, listing exhibitions for the month, lectures, recitals, dramatic performances, and other events. Copies of this calendar are appended to this report. The Calendar is issued as a special number of the Brown University Bulletin, and is mailed regularly to over 900 persons in the Providence Community.

## III. Lectures

A series of seven public lectures, inaugurated February 1, 1933, is now in progress. The lectures are given by members of the faculties of the Rhode Island School of Design and Brown University; the affiliations of the lecturers as well as the fact that some of the lectures are held at the Rhode Island School of Design, some at Brown University, emphasize the duality of administration of the Community Art Project. The lectures bear the general title "The Classical Point of View", and are oriented toward philosophy, history and literature as well as toward the visual arts. Although the lectures are arranged in historical sequence, their principal purpose is to illuminate a way of seeing and thinking which is well illustrated in the collections of the Rhode Island School of Design, in the historical architecture of Providence and Rhode Island, as well as in certain phases of the arts of today. A program of the lectures is appended to this report. To illustrate the theme of the lectures, an exhibition, frankly informative in purpose, and therefore composed of photographs and fine reproductions, as well as of original works of art, will be held in Faunce House Art Gallery, April 17 to May 6. The libraries of Providence have cooperated with the Community Art Project in reserving special shelves for books dealing with various phases of the topic "The Classical Point of View" during the period of the lectures. The lectures have to date been well attended; the series opened with an audience of about 500.

An experimental lecture-demonstration was given by Mr. George H. Opdyke, author of "Art and Nature Appreciation", to an audience composed of members of the Rhode Island Library Association, on March 5, 1933, at the Rhode Island School of Design. Mr. Opdyke applied the conclusions of one chapter in his recent book to the analysis of works of art in the collection of the Museum.

Another type of lecture project consists in the preparation of the text and lantern slides for a lecture on the life and work of the Rhode Island artist, Gilbert Stuart. The text is being written by Mr. Howard Preston, a competent authority. This lecture, with accompanying slides, will shortly be available to responsible groups in Providence and vicinity; the lecture may be given by a member of the group applying for the lecture, or arrangements may be made with the administration of the Community Art Project to have a lecturer furnished. Several requests for the lecture have already been received informally, although no announcement of its availability has been made. It is hoped that other such lectures may later be made available.

A set of slides on City Planning and Civic Improvement is being assembled for use in connection with lectures on these topics. Requests for such lectures have been received, and the first of these lectures sponsored by the Community Art Project will be given in Wickford, Rhode Island, on March 7 by Mr. John Cady, Providence architect, at the request of Wickford Chamber of Commerce.

#### IV. Exhibitions

In addition to the exhibition in connection with the Institute of Art and the exhibitions through the year in Faunce House, the Community Art Project sponsored an exhibition of Industrial Art at the Museum of the Rhode Island School of Design. The exhibition was assembled by members of the Utopian Club, an organization of designers, artists, and artisans in the Industrial Art field in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut; the exhibition was held February 15 to February 23. On Sunday, February 26, a "Design Clinic" was arranged in connection with the exhibition. The clinic was open to the public, and included discussions, from the standpoint of the designer, of the manufacturer, and of the consumer of the material exhibited.

#### V. Picture Lending Libraries

Plans have been made for the establishment of two picture lending libraries. The purpose of these libraries is to enable interested persons to have contact with works of art in a more informal and intimate way than is possible in the usual channels furnished by art museums and lectures.

One library will be administered by the Art Department of Brown University for the use of students. It will consist of fine reproductions, permanently and attractively framed in celluloid and passe-partout. A short discussion of each work will be permanently affixed to the back. The reproductions have been chosen with great care, on the principle that the reproduction should be sufficiently close to the original to have a real aesthetic interest, rather than simply an historical or archaeological value. Hence, the library is composed principally of reproductions of prints, drawings, watercolors, and miniatures -- works whose size and quality can be successfully and inexpensively reproduced. These reproductions will be loaned to students at a small rental fee, the fee to be used for the purchase of additions to the library. Reproductions which are a part of the stock of the library will not be sold, but students will be encouraged to buy new copies of such reproductions as interest them, and materials and instruction will be provided for students who wish to mount and frame the reproductions they purchase. The library will be opened with a stock of about thirty reproductions, as various as possible in order to feel the pulse of student taste. The



library will be inaugurated with an exhibition of the whole collection in Faunce House Art Gallery, April 10 - 15.

The other picture-lending library will be composed of original works of art, largely by Providence artists; it will be open to the Rhode Island community including students, and will be administered by a committee composed of representatives of Brown University, of the Rhode Island School of Design, local artists, and laymen. This committee has been appointed from a group of some thirty artists and laymen who met in Professor Taylor's studio at the invitation of the Community Art Project Committee, for a preliminary discussion of the picture-lending project. The plans of the committee are not yet complete. It may be said, however, that this library of pictures will be drawn upon to provide exhibitions for the smaller towns of Rhode Island where the opportunities for contact with works of art are not so great as they are in Providence. Moreover, pictures from this library will be loaned to individuals living in such towns, as well as to members of the Providence community.

#### VI. Instruction in Art

The presence of Mr. Robert Nisbet, of Kent, Connecticut, in Providence at the end of January gave an opportunity for a tentative experiment in conducting a class in art for members of the community. Mr. Nisbet offered a course of six lessons in Etching. The class was held in the laboratory of the Art Department, and was attended by fifteen persons, including members of the faculties of Brown University and the Rhode Island School of Design, the Art Chairman of the Providence Women's Club, and local business men. Thirty-two plates were produced by members of the class. The response to the experiment was sufficient to convince the Committee of the value of conducting other similar classes in the future.

#### VII. Other Projects

The success of the concert by the Musical Art Quartette during the Institute of Art warranted offering another concert, sponsored by the Community Art Project, in the Museum of the Rhode Island School of Design. On January 29, 1933, Mr. Putnam Aldrich of Providence and Boston and Mr. Alfred Zighers of the Boston Symphony Orchestra played a recital of 18th century music for harpsichord and viola de gamba. The concert was open to the public and was attended by over 1500 persons.

The Community Art Project will sponsor an exhibition in the Providence Chamber of Commerce at the end of April, in connection with the work of the Rhode Island State Committee for Better Homes in America. The exhibition will be assembled with the help of students at the Rhode Island School of Design and local merchants.

The Committee has been interested in the application of Better Homes problems to the University community. A vacant lot, owned by the University on Benevolent Street near the Art offices, has been landscaped by residents of Benevolent Street under the direction of Mrs. Howard Grose. For the inspection and instruction of students at the beginning of the next academic year, the Department of Art will furnish a model student's room on the campus, at a cost no higher than students ordinarily spend in furnishing their own rooms (dormitory rooms at Brown are furnished by the occupants). The Department of Art will at the same time advise students who wish guidance in furnishing their rooms.



The list of organizations which have cooperated with the Community Art Project, or with which the Committee has cooperated, gives a summary, in a sense, of the work of the Project to date: The Providence Chamber of Commerce, The Players, Sock and Buskin, the Providence Public Library, the Providence Athenaeum, the Rhode Island Library Association, the John Hay Library of Brown University, the John Carter Brown Library of Brown University, the Annmary Brown Memorial, the Rhode Island Historical Society, the Providence Art Club, the Handicraft Club, the Rhode Island Ship Model Society, the Junior League, the Tilden-Thurber Gallery, the Vose Gallery, the Utopian Club, the Providence Journal, the Evening Bulletin, the News-Tribune, Station WPRO, Station WEAN, the Wickford Chamber of Commerce

, J. C. G. King and Co., Hadley Co., Uncas Mfg. Co., Manville Jencks, Taylor Card and Box Co., Metalcraft and Supply Co., Davol Rubber Co., Crompton Co., White Thresher Co., Everett and Barrows, Foson Co., Young Brothers, Theodore Foster and Brothers Co., Ostby and Barton, Edmond Mills, U. S. Rubber Co., J. and P. Coats Inc., A. T. Cross Pencil Co., Gorham Mfg. Co., Brown and Sharpe Mfg. Co., Providence Novelities Co. Ind., Mason Mfg., B. B. and R. Knight Mills Inc., Puritan Life Insurance, and George F. Berkendar.

THE COMMUNITY ART PROJECT, under the auspices of Brown University and the Rhode Island School of Design.

The following report of the activities of the Art Caravan, by which exhibitions were circulated in Rhode Island, is respectfully submitted to the Carnegie Corporation of New York, October 16, 1936.

**Exhibitions** Two exhibitions were circulated in Rhode Island during the summer of 1936 in fifteen Rhode Island cities and towns. The normal period of exhibition in each town was three days. The schedule of exhibitions was arranged so that one exhibition immediately followed the other in each town. Such an arrangement was planned as an alternative to the arrangement of 1935, by which the Art Caravan visited each town twice with an interval of about a month between exhibitions. Apparently the schedule of 1936 was not conclusively superior to the schedule of 1935. The exhibitions circulated were:

(1) Models of Early Rhode Island Architecture.

Five models were exhibited, including the Eleazer Arnold House, Lincoln, R. I.; the Wanton-Lyman-Hazard House, Newport, R. I.; the Elder Ballou Meeting House, Cumberland, R. I.; and, for comparison, the Parson Capen House, Topsfield, Mass., and the Wyshart House, near Norfolk, Va. The models were constructed in the Department of Art, Brown University, under the direction of Professor Will S. Taylor, through funds made available by the National Youth Administration and the Rhode Island State Tercentenary Committee. The models were accompanied by photographs, plans, and blue-prints of the houses, as well as drawings and photographs (of other Rhode Island houses) to be used in the forthcoming Handbook of Rhode Island Architecture to appear in the Spring of 1937 under the auspices of the Community Art Project. This material was mounted on screens which served as gallery walls in the various places of exhibition. Gallery talks were given in several towns.

(2) Modern Landscape Painting and Its Origins.

Thirty-six color reproductions were exhibited, illustrating the development of landscape painting from Byzantine art to the present day; emphasis was placed upon modern landscape painting. The exhibition was assembled by Professors Will S. Taylor and George E. Downing of the Department of Art, Brown University. Some of the pictures were taken from the Community Art Project Student Picture Lending Library, others were purchased especially for the exhibition. Wall labels were written by Professor Downing, and the material for the labels was also typewritten in Gallery Books. A specimen label and a list of the pictures forming the exhibition is appended to this report. The exhibition was hung on portable screens which served as gallery walls. Gallery talks were given in several towns.

**Personnel** Mr. Fred J. Wallace, a graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design, was in general charge of the Art Caravan for the summer of 1936, as for the summer of 1935. He was assisted by Mr. William H. Kahler, Brown '36, who had done a large part of the work in the construction of the models, and by Mr. J. Wesley Nobel, R. I. School of Design, '36, who superintended the painting exhibition.