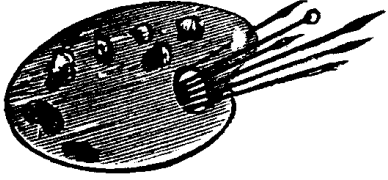


# ALBANY INSTITUTE OF HISTORY & ART



## CONDUCTING ART-RELATED RESEARCH AT THE ALBANY INSTITUTE LIBRARY

The Albany Institute Library is an excellent resource for art-related research. With a collection of approximately one million items, the Library's extensive holdings include photographs, manuscripts, architectural drawings, broadsides, ephemera, maps, scrapbooks, biography and subject vertical files, periodicals, and books. Whether you are interested in learning more about a particular artist, a specific work of art, or a general movement in the arts, the Library has a variety of resources for your research. This guide is not an exhaustive list of our resources, but it will help you get started with your art-related research.

### WHERE DO I BEGIN?

As with any research, begin your art-related research by collecting as much preliminary information as possible to help formulate your research questions and strategy. Typically, it is best to begin with general reference sources that will lead to more specific resources.

### HOW DO I LEARN MORE ABOUT A SPECIFIC WORK OF ART?

If you are interested in learning more about a specific piece of art, begin by gathering as many details about the piece as possible. Be sure to examine all sides of the piece, including the back and/or bottom, as well as the frame and stretcher, if appropriate. Note its physical characteristics including dimensions, medium, and distinguishing marks, such as stencil marks on the back of the canvas or the artist's signature. Information regarding the artist, the title of the piece or variations of the title, its country of origin, art genre or movement, and the like are helpful, as well. While not all of these details can be determined by an examination of the piece, they will provide the necessary background for your research.

The next step is to consult some general reference sources to gain more detailed information about the piece. Start with the information you have in hand about the piece, however little, and try to fill in any gaps in the information. The following resources may be helpful.

#### Artcyclopedia

<http://www.artcyclopedia.com>

Index of over 700 arts websites offering access to 125,000 historic and contemporary great works through searches by artist name, artworks by title, or art museums by name or location. It also offers site browsing of artists by name, medium, subject, nationality, gender, and art movement.

#### Artifact

<http://www.artifact.com>

Provides an artist directory and "Fine Art Style Guide" at no charge. The artist directory covers approximately 50,000 American and international artists providing biographical data, auction houses that recently sold works by the artist, pricing metrics, related artists, and links to other free resources

available online. The “Fine Art Style Guide” defines and illustrates more than forty art genres and movements with dates of the movement, its prominent artists, examples of works, auction houses that recently sold the style, and links to related content.

Index to Two-dimensional Art Works REF 750 KOR IND 1981  
Provides an artist index that lists the works created by a particular artist, as well as a title-subject index that can lead to identifying an artist if the title or the subject of the piece is known.

World Painting Index REF 750 HAV WOR 1977  
Includes an index of paintings by unknown artist, a list of painters and their works, and an index of titles of paintings and their painters.

If the artwork you are researching possesses a distinguishing mark, such as a signature, symbol, or monogram, the following directories may help to determine the artist of the piece:

The Classified Directory of Artists Signatures, Symbols, and Monograms REF 702.78 CAP CLA 1976  
Directory with illustrations of the markings associated with a large number of artists from around the world.

The Classified Directory of Artists Signatures, Symbols, and Monograms: REF 702.78 CAP CLA 1987  
American Artists  
Identical to the directory listed above but for American artists.

The Dictionary of Signatures and Monographs of American Artists REF 702.78 FAL DIC 1988  
Similar to the directory listed above.

American Artists’ Materials Suppliers Directory, Volumes 1 and 2 REF 338.7 KAT 1987  
These directories are useful if your piece contains a label or marking that refers to a supplier of artists’ materials, such as brush makers. Determining the source of the artists’ materials may aid in dating a piece. Volume 1 of this directory lists nineteenth century sources of artists’ materials for Boston and New York City by supplier name. Volume 2 is a comprehensive guide to stretchers, panels, millboards, and stencil marks.

Once you have more in-depth information about an artwork, you can use specific resources to learn more about the artist of the piece (see below), the art movement or genre it is part of, its exhibition history, and the like. These resources are obviously contingent upon the artwork, but the following resources illustrate some of the more specific resources available in the Library for art-related research. You can find additional resources by searching the Library’s catalog for books and manuscript materials.

American Landscape and Genre Paintings REF 759.1 NYHS 1982  
Encyclopedia of 20<sup>th</sup> Century American Folk Art and Artists REF 709.2 ROS MUS

Additionally, art-related information is frequently contained within exhibition catalogs that are frequently indexed. The following resource is an example of such an index:

Index to American Art Exhibition Catalogues REF 707.4 NMAA EXH 1986

## HOW CAN I DETERMINE THE MONETARY VALUE OF A SPECIFIC WORK OF ART?

Due to legal and ethical considerations, museums, libraries, and archives are unable to provide value appraisals for art and may not recommend specific appraisers (please see the Library's "Choosing an Appraiser" brochure for more information). There are, however, a variety of resources that can help you determine the monetary value of a piece of art.

Price indexes can be consulted to determine the sale price of similar works, works by the same artist, or works from the same art movement. The Library has several such indexes in its collection:

Art Price Index International	REF 700 A77
Art Sales Index	REF 703 HIS ANN
Auction Prices of American Artists	REF 700 AUC 1978
Davenport's Art Reference & Price Guide 2001/2002	REF 702.9 DAV 2000
Hislop's Official International Price Guide to Fine Art	REF 707.5 HIS 2002
International Auction Records	REF 700 INT
Mayer International Auction Records	REF 700 INT
Silver Auction Records	739.23075 SIL

Additionally, auction houses publish catalogs prior to their sales which can be useful resources. Frequently these catalogs are themed, such as Sotheby's "Important Americana," therefore it is useful to search the Library's catalog for particular auction themes. The Library holds the auction catalogs of **Christie's**, **Northeast Auctions**, and **Sotheby's**. Auction results are often posted on the Internet.

Christie's	<a href="http://www.christies.com">http://www.christies.com</a>
Northeast Auctions	<a href="http://www.northeastauctions.com">http://www.northeastauctions.com</a>
Sotheby's	<a href="http://search.sothebys.com">http://search.sothebys.com</a>

The Library also holds a number of relevant periodicals concerning different aspects of the art world. Titles in the Library's holding include:

<i>American Art</i> , 1987 -	<i>Art News</i> , 1942 -
<i>American Art Review</i> , 1973 -	<i>Art Quarterly</i> , 1956 - 1979
<i>American Artist</i> , 1992 - 1998	<i>Arts Magazine</i> , 1977 - 1992
<i>American Magazine of Art</i> , 1923-1936	<i>Folk Art (Clarion)</i> , 1977 -
<i>Archives of American Art Journal (Smithsonian)</i> , 1988 -	<i>Image</i> , 1984 - 1996
<i>Art and Antiques</i> , 1978 -	<i>Imprint</i> , 1979 -
<i>Art + Auction</i> , 1986 -	<i>Magazine of Art</i> , 1937 - 1953
<i>Art and Understanding</i> , 1991 -	<i>Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin</i> , 1912 - 1989
<i>Art Documentation (ARLIS Journal)</i> , 1982 -	<i>New Art Examiner</i> , 1988 - 1999
<i>Artforum</i> , 1986 -	<i>Philadelphia Museum Bulletin</i> , 1941 - 1979
<i>Art in America</i> , 1957 -	<i>Sculpture Review</i> , 1984 -

There are also several Internet-based databanks that maintain sales information about artworks. These typically require registration and a fee, including the following examples:

**Artifact**

<http://www.artfact.com>

Archive of prices paid for antiques, art, and collectible objects sold by prominent auction houses. The "Fine Art Features" is a selection of the auction results for approximately 50,000 American and international artists organized by artist and style. In order to access the "Fine Art Prices" section, registration is required. This feature allows searching by artist from the database of over six million auction results.

**Artprice**

<http://www.artprice.com>

Maintains reference databanks on the art market. Covers artists from the 4th century to the present in several mediums including drawing, watercolor, painting, tapestry, prints, posters, sculpture, installation, photography, audiovisual, and multimedia. The data derives from nearly 2,900 auction houses worldwide to comprise a data bank of 21 million auction prices and indices, detailed auction results, and 306,000 artists. This site requires registration.

**HOW DO I LEARN MORE ABOUT A PARTICULAR ARTIST?**

If you are interested in learning more about a particular artist, be sure to determine the correct spelling of the artist's full name and dates of birth and death. This information can be determined using:

**Getty Union List of Artist Names (ULAN)**

[http://www.getty.edu/research/conducting\\_research/vocabularies/ulan](http://www.getty.edu/research/conducting_research/vocabularies/ulan)

Website available free of charge which allows researchers to search for the authoritative spelling of an artist's name, the birth and death dates, the artist's nationality, and the artist's role (painter, sculptor, photographer, etc.). ULAN also provides a browsable index organized by surname, and the ability to search for artist by role or nationality.

When you have determined the correct name of the artist, there are a variety of biographical resources for artists in the Library. Biographical works about specific artists can be located by searching the Library's catalog. For example, if you search the catalog for information on the sculptor John Quincy Adams Ward, the following books are identified:

John Quincy Adams Ward: An Appreciation.	730.92 WAR ADA 1912
A Catalogue of the Works of the American Sculptor John Quincy Adams Ward, 1830-1910.	730.92 WAR SHA 1980
John Quincy Adams Ward, Dean of American Sculpture: With a Catalogue Raisonne.	730.92 WAR SHA 1985

In addition, there are many general biographical arts references in the Library's collection, such as the following:

American Women Artists	REF 704.042 COL WOM 1973
A Biographical Index of American Artists	REF 703 SMI BIO 1930
Book of the Artists	REF 703 TUC BOO 1966
Dictionary of Contemporary American Artists	REF 703 CUM DIC 1977
Dictionary of Women Artists: An International Dictionary of Women Artists Born Before 1900	REF 709.2 PET DIC 1985
Index to Artistic Biography	REF 703 HAV IND 1973
Mallett's Index of Artists: International-Biographical including Painters, Sculptors, Illustrators, Engravers and Etchers of the Past and the Present	REF 703 MAL MAL 1935
Mantle Fielding's Dictionary of American Painters, Sculptors & Engravers	REF 703 FIE MAN 1983
The New-York Historical Society's Dictionary of Artists in America, 1564-1860	REF 703 GRO NEW 1957
Olana's Guide to American Artists	REF 700.016 OLA BIB
Who Was Who in American Art	REF 703 WHO 1999

The Library's Vertical Files contain more than 20 linear feet of clippings, research papers, and other information resources focusing on local topics and people. These are also a resource for information about specific artists, exhibits, and general arts information. The biography files are arranged alphabetically by artist's surname. Examples include:

Cole, Thomas	VF-Biography Files-Cole
Durand, Asher B.	VF-Biography Files-Durand
Ward, John Quincy Adams	VF-Biography Files-Ward

The subject files are arranged alphabetically by subject. Examples related to artists include:

Artists-New York (State)	VF-Subject Files- Artists-New York (State)
Artists-New York-Albany	VF-Subject Files- Artists-New York-Albany
Artists-United States [A-L]	VF-Subject Files- Artists-United States [A-L]
Artists-United States [M-Z]	VF-Subject Files- Artists-United States [M-Z]

Women Artists-United States	VF-Subject Files-Women artists-United States
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The Library's Ephemera Collection contains more than 1,000 items including trade cards, menus, advertising pamphlets, brochures, and memorabilia from 1830 to the present, including information on particular artists and exhibits:

Albany Artists Group (Albany, N.Y.)-1946-1963	EPH-Albany Artists Group (Albany, N.Y.)-1946-1963
Art-Exhibitions	EPH-Art-Exhibitions
Artists-New York State	EPH-Artists-New York State
Artists-New York-Albany	EPH-Artists-New York-Albany
Exhibitions-NY-Albany- Art Catalogues	EPH-Exhibitions-NY-Albany- Art Catalogues
Folk Art-United States	EPH-Folk Art-United States

The Library also has archival materials, including photographs, letters, and diaries, by or about many artists. The Library's catalog can be searched by artists' surnames to determine whether the Library has archival materials related to specific artists. Examples include:

Cole, Thomas, Papers, 1801-1966.	CV 553
John Quincy Adams Ward, Papers, 1830-1910.	CM 544
Palmer, Erastus Dow, Papers, 1846-1959.	AQ185

Lastly, there is also a wide range of biographical resources for artists available on the Internet:

AskART <http://www.askart.com>  
 Resource for information about 35,000 American artists searchable by surname or browsable through an alphabetical index. Each entry provides an "Artist's Summary Page" which contains information, when available, such as a biography, artworks for sale, museums for the artist, books on the artist, upcoming auctions, etc.

the-artists.org <http://www.the-artists.org>  
 Extended database of 20th Century and contemporary visual artists represented with their portrait, dates and places of birth and death, and links to other Internet-based resources.

<b>HOW DO I LEARN ABOUT A SPECIFIC ART MOVEMENT OR MEDIUM?</b>
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While the Albany Institute of History & Art Library focuses primarily on American art, specifically that of the Upper Hudson Valley Region such as the Hudson River School, it also has resources on international art and artists in addition to general art history references. The Library's catalog can be searched by a specific art movement to determine what books and archival materials are available. For example, a search on "Impressionism" yields over twenty resources including the following results:

Impressionist Art, 1860-1920	759.13 IMP 1993
Masterpieces of Impressionism & Post-Impressionism	759.4 BAI MAS 1989
Monet's Giverny: An Impressionist Colony	709.44 GER 1993
Paths to Impressionism: French and American Landscape Paintings from the Worcester Art Museum	759.1307401 WOR PAT 2003

There are also a variety of international art references such as the following:

Dictionnaire Critique et Documentaire des Peintres, Sculpteurs, Dessinateurs et Graveurs de tous les Temps et de tous les Pays	REF 703 BEN DIC 1976
The Dictionary of British Artists, 1880-1940: An Antique Collectors' Club Research Project Listing 41,000 Artists	REF 759.2 JOH DIC 1976

Additionally, the Vertical and Ephemera Files contain general information about art movements and media. For example, the following topics were located when browsing the Vertical and Ephemera Files for items on painting techniques and art movements involving painting:

Glass Painting and Staining	VF-Subject Files-Glass Painting and Staining
Hudson River School of Landscape Painting	VF-Subject Files-Hudson River School of Landscape Painting
Hudson River School of Landscape Painting	EPH-Hudson River School of Landscape Painting
American Landscape painting	VF-Subject Files-Landscape Painting, American
American Marine Painting	VF-Subject Files-Marine Painting, American

Mural Painting and Decoration  
Mural Painting and Decoration-New York–  
Albany  
Dutch Painting  
Painting-New York (State)

VF-Subject Files-Mural Painting and Decoration  
EPH-Mural Painting and Decoration-New York–Albany  
VF-Subject Files-Painting, Dutch  
VF-Subject Files-Painting-New York (State)

#### WHAT OTHER GENERAL ART-RELATED RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE?

There are many general art-related resources, each with a different focus. The following resources are a sample of some of the resources available in the Library:

Illustrated Dictionary of Art Terms: A Handbook for the Artist and Art Lover  
McGraw-Hill Dictionary of Art

703.21REY 1984  
REF 703 MCG 1969

There are also a variety of general art-related subjects in the Vertical and Ephemera Files. Here are some examples:

Art	VF-Subject Files-Art
Art, American	VF-Subject Files- Art, American
Art-Censorship	VF-Subject Files-Art-Censorship
Art-Exhibitions	VF-Subject Files-Art-Exhibitions
Art-Forgeries	VF-Subject Files-Art-Forgeries
Art-New York (State)-Exhibitions	VF-Subject Files- Art-New York (State)-Exhibitions
Art-New York-Albany	VF-Subject Files- Art-New York-Albany
Art-New York-Albany-Exhibitions	VF-Subject Files- Art-New York-Albany-Exhibitions
Folk Art-United States	VF-Subject Files-Folk Art-United States

There is also a wealth of general art-related resources available on the Internet. The following are just a few of the more prominent resources:

Art History Resources on the Web <http://witcombe.sbc.edu/ARTHLinks.html>  
Comprehensive art history resource that organizes links by civilization and subheadings. Provides a straightforward taxonomy through time, place, and types of artistic expression.

ArtLex Art Dictionary <http://www.artlex.com>  
Provides definitions for more than 3,600 cross-referenced terms used in discussing art with supporting images and pronunciation notes.

ArtNet <http://www.artnet.com>  
Resource for images, artist biographies, auction results, art books for sale, galleries and museum exhibitions, and art research resources with a focus on contemporary art and artists.

Index of Art History Departments' Websites Around the World <http://www.unites.uqam.ca/dhistart/index.html>  
Index maintained by the Department of Art History at the University of Quebec that provides a list of university and college art departments around the world.

International Directory of Art Libraries <http://artlibrary.vassar.edu/ifla-idal>  
Directory to nearly 3,000 libraries and library departments with specialized holdings in art, architecture, and archaeology throughout the world. Maintained by the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions.

Mother of All Art and Art History Links Page

<http://www.art-design.umich.edu/mother>

Gateway to art history departments, research resources, resources for visual collections, image collections and online art, online exhibitions, fine art schools and departments, art museums, textual and linguistic resources, and new media art resources. Maintained by the University of Michigan Museum of Art.

SIRIS: Smithsonian Institution Research Information System

<http://www.siris.si.edu/saam.htm>

Provides specialized art databases and photographic archive collections maintained by the Smithsonian American Art Museum. Includes access to inventories of American painting and sculpture with over 360,000 works in public and private collections nationwide, the "Peter A. Juley & Son Collection" which is comprised of 127,000 negatives of American art and artists photographed between 1896 and 1975, and the "Art Exhibition Catalog Index" which has descriptive information on nearly 136,494 art works shown in over 1,057 exhibitions held in North American through 1876.

#### **WHAT OTHER ART LIBRARIES ARE IN THE AREA?**

The following libraries have particularly strong art history and visual art reference collections. Most libraries allow public researchers to use their collections, however you should call ahead to make sure that you would be able to conduct research at these sites:

#### **Canajoharie Library and Art Gallery**

Erie Boulevard  
Canajoharie, NY 13317  
<http://www.clag.org/>  
518-673-2314

#### **Sage College of Albany Library**

140 New Scotland Avenue  
Albany, NY 12208  
<http://library.sage.edu/index.html>  
518- 292-1945

#### **Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Architecture Library**

Greene Building  
110 Eight Street  
Troy, NY 12180  
<http://www.lib.rpi.edu/architecture/index.htm>  
518-276-6465

#### **Skidmore College Scribner Library**

815 North Broadway  
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866  
<http://www.skidmore.edu/library/>  
518-580-5503

#### **FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Albany Institute of History & Art  
Library  
125 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12210  
(518) 463-4478  
[library@albanyinstitute.org](mailto:library@albanyinstitute.org)  
[www.albanyinstitute.org](http://www.albanyinstitute.org)