

YALE CENTER FOR BRITISH ART PRESS RELEASE

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Yale Center for British Art to Conserve Iconic Louis I. Kahn Building, and Close Temporarily in 2015

*Highlights from the Center's collection will be exhibited at the Yale University Art Gallery in a co-organized exhibition, **The Critique of Reason: Romantic Art, 1760–1860**, and throughout the European galleries.*

Select access to the Center's collections and resources will continue by appointment until the building's reopening in spring 2016.

NEW HAVEN—In January 2015, the Yale Center for British Art will close for a year to implement the second phase of the interior conservation of its landmark building, designed by Louis I. Kahn (1901–1974). When complete, the renovation will allow the Center's renowned collection of more than five centuries of British art to be experienced in the building as Kahn originally envisioned it, and will bring vital systems, spaces, and amenities within the Center to state-of-the-art standards.

While the Center undergoes this transformation, works from the collection will be presented across Chapel Street at the recently expanded Yale University Art Gallery, from March 6 to July 26, 2015, in ***The Critique of Reason: Romantic Art, 1760–1860***, the first major exhibition to be co-organized by the Gallery and the Center. Additional highlights from the Center will be integrated into the European displays at the Gallery, allowing British art to be seen in a broader context. Following standard practice, the Center also will lend works to exhibitions at a number of other institutions, including the Hôtel de Caumont, Aix-en-Provence; Minneapolis Institute of Arts; Norton Museum of Art, West Palm Beach; San Diego Museum of Art; Art Institute of Chicago; Brooklyn Museum; and Wallace Collection, London.

Given the complexity and scope of the renovation—which will focus on the refurbishment of all public galleries and the Lecture Hall, and improvements to accessibility, fire prevention systems, and patron amenities, as well as extensive mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and telecommunications upgrades—the Kahn building will be closed to the public from January 1, 2015, through spring 2016. During this period, the Center will be committed to preserving access to its resources for patrons on a limited basis, contingent on the construction schedule. By special advance arrangement, students, scholars, and interested members of the public will be able to gain access to the Reference Library and to works from the Prints & Drawings and Rare Books & Manuscripts



collections in the Study Room. The Museum Shop, which will be open Monday through Saturday from 10 am to 5 pm, will be accessible via its High Street entrance. The Center will continue to offer public and education programs at other venues. Information will be available on the Center's website at calendar.yale.edu/cal/ycba.

"This second phase of our building conservation project allows us to refresh public spaces, including the galleries and Lecture Hall, and to make important behind-the-scenes improvements. We are taking advantage of this opportunity to rethink the installation of our magnificent collection, as well. This will include the reconfiguration of the Long Gallery on the fourth floor, restoring the original conception of the space as a teaching and study gallery, as formulated by the Center's founding Director, Jules Prown, and as designed by Kahn. The plan also creates the addition of a much needed, adjacent collections seminar room," said Director Amy Meyers.

When the Center reopens in spring 2016, its unparalleled collection of paintings and sculpture, largely the gift of the institution's founder, Paul Mellon (Yale College, Class of 1929), will be completely reinstalled in the stunning sky-lit galleries on the fourth floor and in the beautiful galleries on the second floor. Also, an exhibition featuring a significant new gift of modern British paintings, sculpture, and works on paper from the collection of Rhoda Pritzker, donated by the Libra Foundation, from the family of Nicholas and Susan Pritzker, will be on view in the elegant third-floor galleries.

For this project and earlier building conservation projects, the Center has benefitted from the expertise and dedication of its partners in the Yale Office of Facilities; Knight Architecture LLC, New Haven; Peter Inskip + Peter Jenkins Architects, London; and Turner Construction Company; as well as the talents and hard work of numerous other collaborators.

Further information about the building conservation project may be found online at britishart.yale.edu/bcp.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

This project follows more than a decade of research on the history of the design, construction, and renovation of the Center's landmark building, as well as the publication in 2011 of *Louis Kahn and the Yale Center for British Art: A Conservation Plan* by the Center in association with Yale University Press. Written by Peter Inskip and Stephen Gee, in association with Constance Clement, the Center's Deputy Director, this book details the conservation plan and proposes a series of policies for the building's maintenance in the years ahead.

The first projects to be guided by the conservation plan were the rehabilitation of the Center's Lower Court and extensive repairs of the Lecture Hall Lobby, located off the courtyard. These were followed by a two-phase project to address the building's interior spaces, the first phase of which was undertaken in 2013 to refurbish the departments of Prints & Drawings and Rare Books & Manuscripts, which had not been renovated since the museum opened to the public in 1977. As part of this project, the Center increased storage capacity for works on paper, reconfigured offices to accommodate staff more effectively, replaced carpeting and wall coverings, and renewed finishes.

In 2005 the Center received the prestigious Twenty-five Year Award of the American Institute of Architects, which each year honors a single architectural landmark, completed twenty-five to thirty-five years prior, that has withstood the test of time.

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