

YALE CENTER FOR BRITISH ART

A Decade of Gifts and Acquisitions



A Miscellany of Historic Drawings

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A Decade of Gifts and Acquisitions

The Yale Center for British Art opened to the public forty years ago, on April 19, 1977. The Center's building, collections, and the endowments on which it operates were Paul Mellon's greatest gift to Yale University, from which he received his bachelor of arts degree in 1929. Throughout his life, Mr. Mellon continued to add to the Center's collections, and after his death, in 1999, hundreds of additional works were bequeathed, along with final monetary donations of substantial proportions. In the forty years of the Center's existence, the collections have grown considerably, not just through Mr. Mellon's immense generosity but through that of many other benefactors. In celebration of the institution's fortieth anniversary, this suite of small exhibitions highlights some of the splendid gifts and acquisitions that have enriched and expanded the Center's collections over just the past decade. It includes a display of the final works from Mr. Mellon's collection, which came to the Center after the death of his wife, Rachel Lambert Mellon, in 2014.

As part of Mr. Mellon's provisions for the ongoing maintenance of the building and its contents, and the support of its staff and programs, he left an endowment for growth of the collections. Many works purchased with this Paul Mellon Fund are included in the small exhibitions that make up this presentation. It is intended as a celebration of both the legacy of Mr. Mellon's gift of the Center to the university and other donors and supporters who have contributed to the project of presenting the richness and complexity of British art to our multiple audiences.

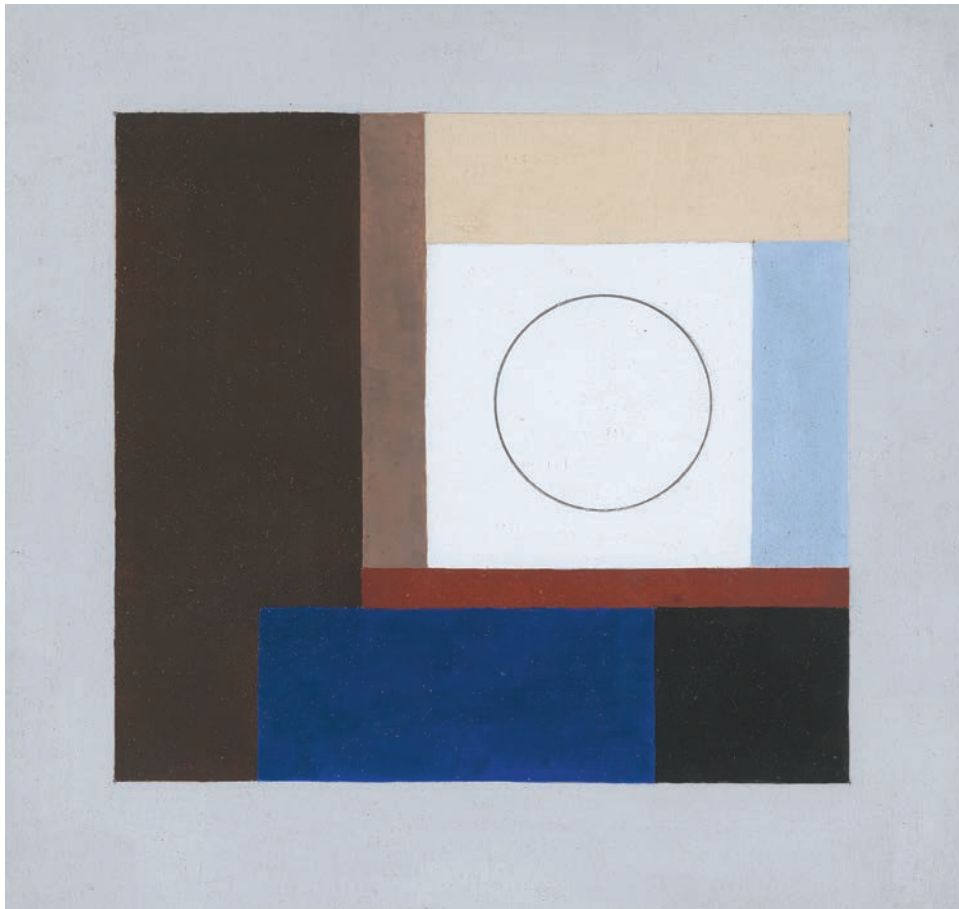
In addition to the exhibitions on this floor, which are listed at left, works that have entered the collections through gift or purchase, and which are displayed throughout the galleries of the third and fourth floors, have been marked with special labels. Our profound thanks are given to all who have helped the collections grow in such impressive ways over the years.

A Miscellany of Historic Drawings

The Center is home to one of the greatest collections of historic British drawings anywhere in the world. Thanks to Paul Mellon, the collection is truly comprehensive in its scope, and it continues to grow, both through purchases made with Mr. Mellon's endowment and through the generous gifts of others. This opening gallery highlights some of the most important additions in the realm of historic drawings from the last decade. Some drawings build upon the existing strengths of Mr. Mellon's foundational gift, such as a masterpiece by Thomas Girtin, while others extend the collection into areas less fully represented in the Mellon Collection, such as life drawings by James Barry and John Constable. The selection also includes drawings made in a variety of media and ranges from major exhibition watercolors to small studies by some of the most important artists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.



Thomas Girtin, *Jedburgh Abbey from the South East*, 1800, watercolor, gouache, and graphite on paper
Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Fund



Paul and Bunny Mellon: The Final Gift

Paul Mellon (1907–1999) married Rachel Lambert Lloyd (1910–2014) on May Day of 1948, and together Paul and “Bunny” Mellon would become the quintessential American collectors of the twentieth century. They not only formed an outstanding collection of British, French, and American art, as well as rare books and manuscripts, but also shaped the taste of an entire generation. Known for their preference for understated elegance and informality—Bunny Mellon’s motto was “nothing should be noticed”—few couples have ever been so influential in defining style in art and life. As a celebrated collector in her own right, Bunny Mellon was also a distinguished garden designer, gifted with a discerning eye and exquisite taste. Paul and Bunny Mellon both shared a taste for small objects, especially small oil paintings and drawings, which were hung in their various houses in elegant arrangements with masterpieces placed alongside smaller, more personal objects. When Paul Mellon died he left his wife a life interest in many works of art with which they had lived together for over fifty years, and which Mrs. Mellon chose to retain for her own enjoyment—the so-called “life-interest works.” This final gift from Paul Mellon came to the Center upon Bunny Mellon’s death in 2014 at the remarkable age of 103. Other paintings and sculpture with which Mrs. Mellon lived till the end of her life are displayed elsewhere on this floor and are incorporated into the galleries on the third and fourth floors. It is thanks to Mr. Mellon’s generous endowment that the Center has been able to continue to build the collection after his death, and many of the new acquisitions included on all floors of the building have been made possible through his enduring legacy.



above:
Paul Sandby, *Study of Cow Parsley*, undated, graphite and watercolor on paper
Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection

left:
Augustus Edwin John, *Dorelia in the Garden at Alderney Manor, Dorset*, ca. 1911, oil on panel
Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection

Joseph McCrindle and Brian Sewell: Art and Friendship

For over forty years, the American philanthropist and publisher Joseph McCrindle (1923–2008; Yale LLB 1948) and the British art critic Brian Sewell (1931–2015) maintained a close transatlantic friendship shaped by their love of art. The two came to know each other in the early 1960s, when Sewell was working in London as a specialist at Christie's and McCrindle would visit to bid for objects for his collection. After leaving Christie's in 1967 and working as an art dealer, Sewell effectively became, as he himself described it, the curator of McCrindle's art collection, maintaining an inventory of works and arranging their display in McCrindle's homes on both sides of the Atlantic. As time went on, Sewell amassed his own considerable collection, consisting, like that of McCrindle, primarily of paintings and works on paper from the sixteenth to twentieth centuries. After becoming the art critic for the *Evening Standard* in 1984, and thanks to frequent television appearances in the 1990s, Sewell became a household name in Britain. Yet, despite his celebrity, the deep friendship between the two men endured until McCrindle's death in 2008. Days later, Sewell eulogized "Joe" in his newspaper column with the headline "Farewell to the friend who taught me the most." While the McCrindle and Sewell bequests to the Center were made independently and differ in size and scope, both reveal the friends' overlapping interests, particularly in British art of the first half of the twentieth century.



above:
Eliot Hodgkin, *Painswick Churchyard No. 1*, 1947, tempera on board
Yale Center for British Art, Estate of Brian Sewell

left:
Eliot Hodgkin, *Bundle of Asparagus*, 1962, oil on board
Yale Center for British Art, Bequest of Joseph F. McCrindle, Yale LLB 1948

John Golding: From the Artist's Estate

John Golding (1929–2012) was an art historian: an outstanding teacher, writer, and curator. He was, however, first and foremost a painter. Born in Sussex, he was raised in Mexico, and educated in Canada. A PhD dissertation on cubism at the Courtauld Institute of Art in London in 1957 became the basis for his seminal *Cubism: A History and an Analysis, 1907–14*, published in 1959. But by that point he had already been given a one-man show in Mexico City. His early work as an artist reflects his Mexican background with self-conscious echoes of José Clemente Orozco (as well as of Francis Bacon).

Teaching and painting formed parallel tracks throughout his life. From the mid-1960s his art traced a rigorous and individual development of abstraction. In 1989 the Yale Center for British Art presented *John Golding: Works from a Decade*. It was an important exhibition for Golding, which was acknowledged after his death by the gift to the Center from his estate of a representative group of his works. Much of this gift is presented here, including several paintings that were part of the exhibition in 1989.

Duncan Robinson, the director of the Yale Center for British Art at the time of the first exhibition, has written an introduction to Golding's work in the form of a booklet accompanying the present display. It is published with a full checklist of the works that have come to the Center from the artist's estate.



John Golding, *H.20 (Veronese Blue)*, 1983–84, acrylic on canvas
Gift of the John Golding Artistic Trust, 2017

Pastels and Portraits

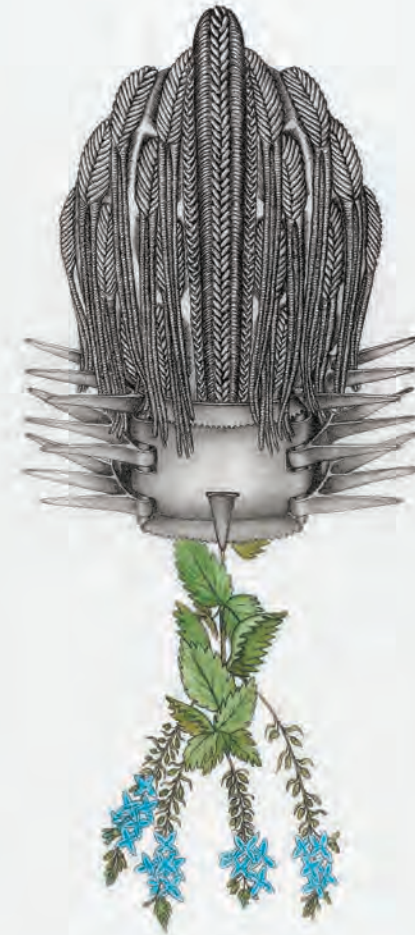
The Continental use of natural chalks for drawing began to gain wider use in seventeenth-century Britain, introduced by the Netherlandish artists who dominated the art market in the period. Natural black, white, and red chalks all derived from the earth were blended by artists like Sir Peter Lely, whose work in chalk is shown here, to make drawings *aux trois crayons* inspired by the most fashionable Flemish art of the period, especially the work of Sir Peter Paul Rubens. By the eighteenth century, natural chalks were being superseded by pastels, crayons manufactured from fine chalk pigments bound with gum arabic and pressed into soft sticks. These new pastels were of finer quality than their natural chalk predecessors, could be worked rapidly by artists to make richly sensuous drawings, and were ideal for capturing the warmth and softness of flesh. In Britain, where the most popular form of art was the portrait, pastel portraits flourished from the mid-eighteenth century. Many British patrons had first discovered pastels in Italy while they were on the Grand Tour, and the demand for the new medium encouraged British artists to specialize in pastel, including professional women artists such as Katharine Read, whose work is shown here. This bay highlights some of the Center's most important acquisitions in the field of pastels over the last decade, as well as a number of portrait miniatures in a variety of media, testifying to the popularity of these small, portable portraits from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries.



Archibald Skirving, *Lady Pringle, née Emilia Anne Macleod*, 1815, pastel on paper
Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Fund, in honor of Jane and Richard C. Levin,
President of Yale University (1993–2013)

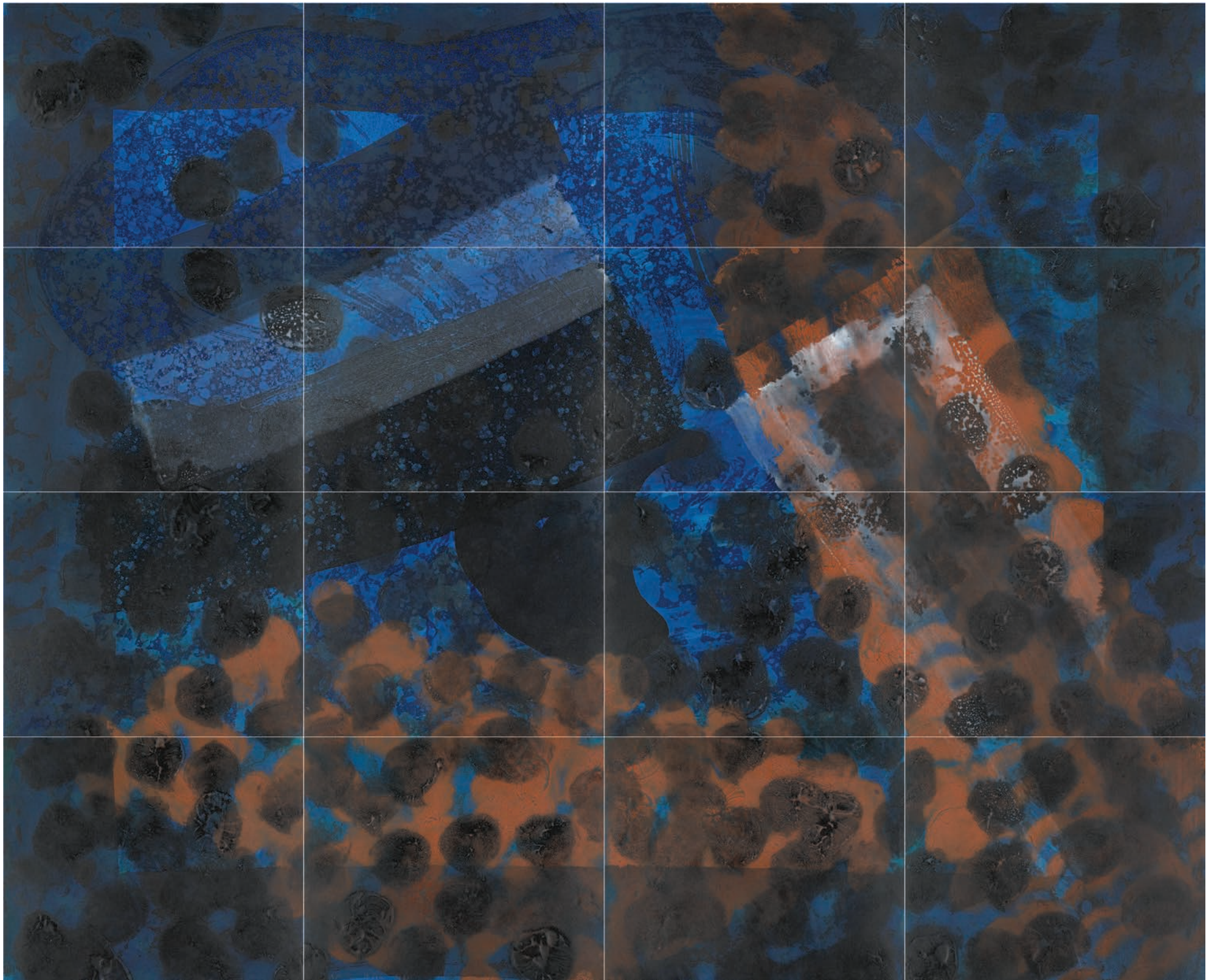
Modern and Contemporary Prints

Some of the Center's most important acquisitions of modern and contemporary art in the last decade have been prints. Among those acquisitions, two outstanding print portfolios by leading British artists are shown in their entirety for the first time: *Shadow IV*, by Anish Kapoor (born 1954), and *Thirty Pieces of Silver*, by Cornelia Parker (born 1956). In addition, the Center has greatly strengthened its holdings of British pop art through gifts by Barbara Sunderman Hoerner; and thanks to the generous support of the Friends of British Art, and Mr. and Mrs. James Duncan, the acquisition of more prints by pop art pioneer Richard Hamilton (1922–2011) has enriched the collection, highlighted by his series *Ulysses*, all eight prints of which are shown here. Recently the Center has partnered with the Yale University Art Gallery to acquire jointly the portfolio *Creole Portraits III* by Joscelyn Gardner (born 1961), a series that explores the experience of slavery in Jamaica under British rule, while the John O'Brien Fund has allowed the Center's student guides to participate in the acquisition process, bringing the work of contemporary printmakers Marie Harnett (born 1983) and Gordon Cheung (born 1975) into the collection.



Joscelyn Gardner, *Veronica frutescens (Mazerine)* from *Creole Portraits III*:
"Bringing Down the Flowers," 2009, hand-colored lithograph on frosted Mylar
Yale Center for British Art, Friends of British Art Fund, © The Artist

following spread:
Sir Howard Hodgkin, *Venice, Evening*, 1995, etching, aquatint, and hand coloring on sixteen sheets
on Velin Arches 300gsm white wove paper, Yale Center for British Art, Gift of Marla Price





above: "A School Room," from *Album of Domestic Interiors and Figures in Fashionable Dress*, ca. 1860, watercolor, pen and black ink, Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Fund

right: Clara de Chatelain, *Lilliputian Library: New Series*, London, Joseph, Myers & Co., ca. 1850, 4 vols. covered in patterned papers, with hand-colored lithographs in publisher's original decorative box, Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Fund

Instruction with Delight

At the turn of the eighteenth century in Britain, parents and teachers embraced a suggestion made by the philosopher John Locke (1632–1704): "Learning might be made a Play and Recreation to Children." Artists and publishers leapt at the chance to supply books and games for "instruction with delight," as John Newbery put it in *A Little Pretty Pocket-book* (1744), one of the first children's books ever published. There was growing recognition of childhood as a special time of life, ripe with creative energy and potential. Adults also found value in childhood and play for its own sake. Authors and publishers took full advantage of continuous developments in printing and manufacturing when designing works specifically for use by children. Books could be scaled up or down to accommodate novice readers or small hands and were illustrated with eye-catching color. Pedagogical works were often printed on sturdier materials, such as linen or board, to help them survive vigorous use. Fortunate children had the benefit of instruction in a wide range of subjects and skills, including drawing, painting, and natural history, as well as reading, writing (including handwriting), and arithmetic. In 1870, the first of a series of Education Acts was passed in Great Britain, insuring that all children would have access to primary instruction. Nonetheless, child labor and poverty were constants throughout the Industrial Revolution and the expansion of the British Empire. The works on display here document adults' hopes and ambitions for the next generation as much as they recall actual children's experience.



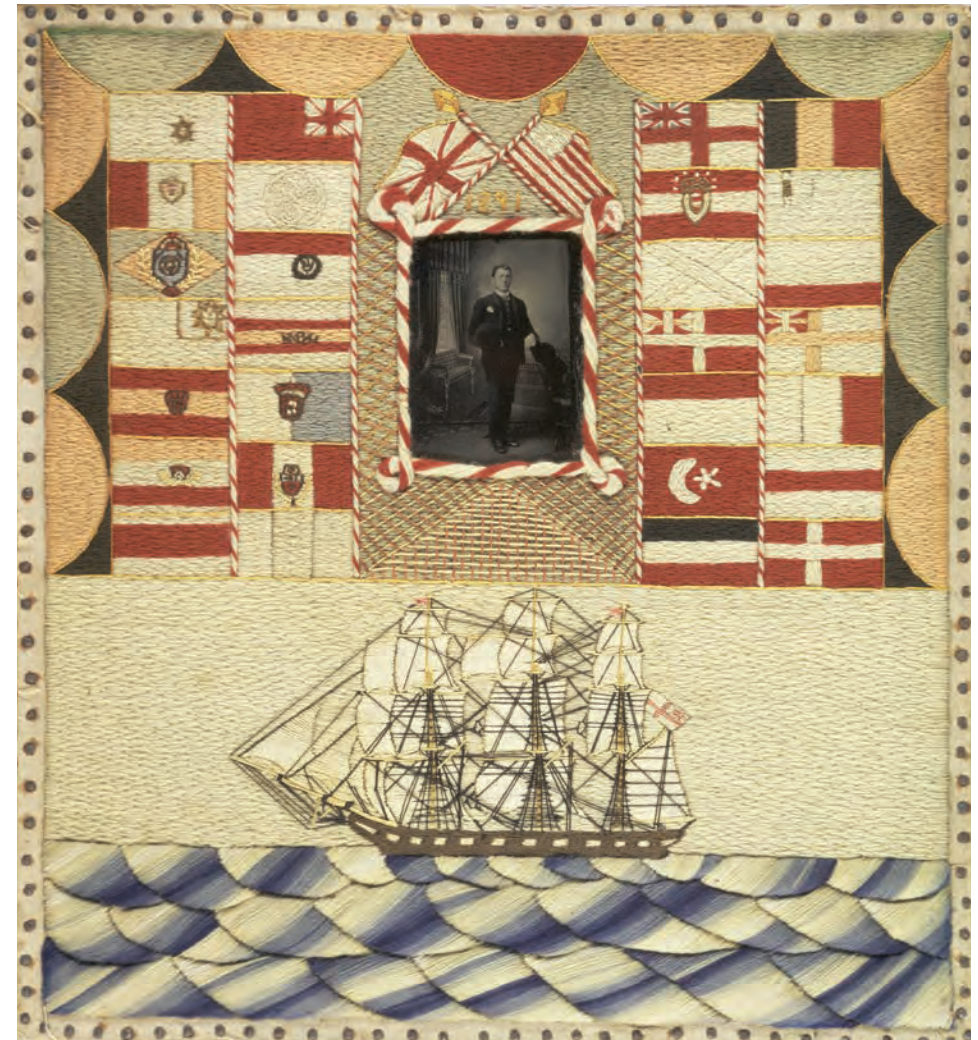
War and Conflict

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.

—LAURENCE BINYON, *FOR THE FALLEN* (1914)

Written at the start of the First World War, *For the Fallen* expressed the sense of loss for the many thousands already bereaved. After the war, the fourth stanza became the single most recited verse in Britain during commemorations of the war dead. The lines are still recited on Remembrance Day every November 11 at the Cenotaph in London.

Binyon's words also underlie the selection of works in this section: prints, drawings, photographs, poetry, letters, medals, and ephemera focused on the material culture of war and conflict that date from the Napoleonic Wars of the early nineteenth century to the Second World War of 1939-1945. They include the delicate drawing of a warship by a French naval officer who took part in the Battle of Trafalgar (1805), a sketch of men suffering from the effects of gas at the western front (1918), and photographs by Bill Brandt showing the devastation of the German bombing in Britain during 1942. These works combine to connect us to past events in a powerful way, allowing us to remember the fallen. We also may understand better the conflicts of the twentieth century that required the mobilization of an entire population.



Naval Woolwork, 1891, embroidered panel incorporating a tintype, wool, and silk on linen backing
Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Fund

Postcard, France, 1915, embroidered silk on embossed paper
Yale Center for British Art, Friends of British Art Fund



The British Empire in India

The story of art in Britain is inseparable from the history of the British Empire; and of all Britain's imperial territories none was more important than India. This bay showcases some of the important gifts and acquisitions of the last decade that document the experience of British India. Paul Mellon's gifts were especially rich in art and books that had their origins in the empire, some of which remained with Mrs. Mellon until her death in 2014 and are shown here for the first time. Over the course of the eighteenth century, the British East India Company gradually seized control of the Indian subcontinent, home to some of the oldest civilizations in the world, until its mismanagement forced the British government to bring rule in India directly under the Crown in 1858. British artists who journeyed to India provided Britons, and other Europeans, with the first visual record of the unfamiliar people and places of the subcontinent. These representations shaped the way Britons understood their empire and the people they colonized. But Britain was also changed forever by its colonies, and the exposure to the cultures of India profoundly affected all aspects of British life. India's independence in 1947 began the period of decolonization after the Second World War and marked Britain's decline as a global power.



The Inexhaustible Regions of Nature

The works on display in these two bays touch upon the ways in which self-taught naturalists and artists recorded and observed the natural world around them, from the eighteenth century to the present. Drawn from the Center's collections and acquired through gift and purchase over the past few years (building upon the exhibition "Of Green Leaf, Bird, and Flower": *Artists' Books and the Natural World* of 2014), the selected works suggest a continuity of past and present aesthetics by juxtaposing historic works with those of contemporary artists who reveal a shared impetus to document, interpret, and celebrate nature. The exhibition focuses on the flora and fauna of the British countryside, with the odd diversion to those creatures like the dodo in Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1907) that exist only in our imagination. Photography takes center stage with a number of contemporary artists, including Barbara Ciurej and Lindsay Lochman, whose portfolio of cyanotype prints (*Natural History*, 2014) was inspired by the work of the nineteenth-century naturalist Anna Atkins. A beautiful set of watercolors, drawn on parchment, by the naturalist James Bolton (1735-1799), from the natural history cabinet of noted botanist and collector Anna Blackburne (1726-1793), is also on display. These are all, in the words of another naturalist, John Knapp (1829), "a mere outline of rural things; the journal of a traveler through the inexhaustible regions of Nature."



James Green, *Sciagraphs of British Batrachians and Reptiles*, Wallington, Surrey, 1897, albumen prints mounted on card, Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Fund



James Bolton, ?House wren (*Troglodytes aedon*) and eggs, with a specimen from the rose family (*Rosaceae*), Peacock butterflies (*Nymphalis io*), both closed and open, and butterfly chrysalis, larva caterpillar, daddy longlegs, spider (*Phalangida*) egg case, and snout beetle, from the natural history cabinet of Anna Blackburne, ca. 1768, watercolor and gouache over graphite on parchment, Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Fund, in honor of Jane and Richard C. Levin, President of Yale University (1993-2013)

Photography

Over the last decade, the Center has begun to expand the breadth and depth of its photographic holdings, acquiring works through gift and purchase that range from the earliest technical experiments from the 1830s to significant examples of contemporary innovation. Building on the foundations laid by Paul Mellon, whose own gifts to the Center included early photographic prints and rare books with photographic illustrations, the Center has made important additions that complement the rich collection of historic drawings, especially those made with optical devices such as the camera obscura and camera lucida, which both played a key role in the birth of photography. These additions include gifts of photographs by some of the British pioneers of photography such as Hugh Owen (1808–1897) and Roger Fenton (1819–1869). Gifts and purchases of twentieth-century photographs also have transformed the scope of the Center’s holdings. These include a major archive of photographs by Lewis Morley (1925–2013) capturing the world of antiestablishment culture in 1960s London, as well as photographs by Bill Brandt (1904–1983), Cecil Beaton (1904–1980), John Coplans (1920–2003), Bruce Davidson



(born 1933), and Jem Southam (born 1950), Britain’s preeminent landscape photographer today. Most recently, the Center acquired a print from the *Fake Death Pictures*, by Yinka Shonibare MBE (RA) (born 1962), which brings the photographic collections up to the present moment.

above: Lewis Morley, *Christine Keeler*, 1963, printed later, gelatin silver print
Yale Center for British Art, Gift of Dr. J. Patrick and Patricia Kennedy

left: Yinka Shonibare MBE (RA), *Fake Death Picture (Death of Chatterton—Henry Wallis)*, 2011,
digital chromogenic print, Yale Center for British Art, Dr. Lee MacCormick Edwards Charitable
Foundation and Friends of British Art Fund, © Yinka Shonibare MBE (RA)

cover: James Seymour, *The Chaise Match Run on Newmarket Heath on Wednesday the 29th of August, 1750* (detail), 1750, oil on canvas, Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection

A Decade of Gifts and Acquisitions has been curated by Elisabeth Fairman, Chief Curator of Rare Books and Manuscripts; Matthew Hargraves, Chief Curator of Art Collections; Lars Kokkonen, Assistant Curator of Paintings and Sculpture; and Sarah Welcome, Assistant Curator of Rare Books and Manuscripts; under the direction of Scott Wilcox, Deputy Director for Collections.

The exhibition will remain on view through August 13, 2017.

A DECADE OF GIFTS AND ACQUISITIONS

