



The New York Public Library

MID-MANHATTAN LIBRARY ART COLLECTION

HOW TO RESEARCH AN ARTWORK

SEARCH STRATEGIES:

LEO CATALOG

In beginning your research on a specific work of art, first consult the LEO Catalog to see if the Branch Libraries have a book (also called a monograph) about the artist.

Search by Name (Alphabetical by last name): Cleve, Joos van

If the artist's name does not appear in the catalog, the artist may be included in a more general work. Try a Subject Keyword search using a variety of terms that describe the artist's nationality, movement, style, and/or medium. Different search terms will provide different results.

Search by Subject Keyword: 16th Century Flemish Painting
Northern Renaissance Painting
Belgium Painting

When you find a book of interest, examine the catalog record for the subject headings. Clicking on these links will lead you to books with related subject areas.

If you know the museum that owns the work, many museums publish catalogs to their collections (located at Call No. 708). The information about a specific work may be brief, but it will help you establish facts about the work for further Subject Keyword searching, and may also reproduce an image of the work.

Search by Subject Keyword: Metropolitan Museum of Art Catalog

It may also be productive to go directly to the shelf containing Flemish painting (Call No. 759.94) and browse for books about your topic. Consult the index to see if the particular work you are interested in is included.

DICTIONARIES, ENCYCLOPEDIAS, AND INDEXES

Use these reference sources to obtain general information on an artist, movement, or technique. Many contain bibliographies that list other relevant book and periodical sources for information on your topic.

Dictionary of Art. New York: Grove's Dictionaries, 1996. 34 vols.
[703 D Special Collection] (located near the art reference desk)

An encyclopedia with articles on major movements and figures in architecture, photography, painting, sculpture, decorative arts, performance art, and multimedia installation.

The Encyclopedia of Sculpture. Ed. Antonia Boström. NY: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2004. 3 vols.
[735.2303 E Closed Shelf Reference] (located behind the art reference desk)

A three-volume reference that lists artists, individual works and monuments, styles and periods, countries and geographies, materials, forms and techniques, and critical concerns.

Halvick, Patricia Pate. World Painting Index. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1977. 2 vols. with supplements.

[016.75 H Closed Shelf Reference] (located behind the art reference desk)

Volume 1 lists painters and their works, including a bibliography. Volume 2 lists titles of works and their painters.

Wright, Christopher. The World's Master Paintings. New York: Routledge, 1992.
[750.74 W Closed Shelf Reference] (located behind the reference desk)
Lists works and their locations for 1,300 painters from the Renaissance to the 20th Century.

ELECTRONIC RESOURCES/PERIODICALS

(<http://www.nypl.org/databases/>)

Periodical index databases can help you locate pertinent articles on an artist or object that you are researching. Enter the artist's name and the title of the work in the search box. A successful search will produce a list of related articles.

ARTbibliographies Modern

The bibliography contains abstracts of the current literature of modern art, photography and design. It includes an international scope of periodicals, monographs, dissertations, and exhibition catalogs. Nineteenth-century art developments that continue into the twentieth century are also included.

Art Full Text

This database contains an international selection of art and architecture periodicals indexed from 1984 through the present with full-text coverage from 1997 to the present. Indexes reproductions of works of art that appear in indexed periodicals.

Grove Dictionary of Art

An electronic encyclopedic alternative to the Dictionary of Art. Includes full-text articles, links to full-color images, and over 500,000 citations.

Index to Christian Art

Produced by Princeton University, this index is a growing iconographic database of art from apostolic times through 1400. Covering Western and Eastern Orthodox Christianity primarily, the term Christian is broadly interpreted and includes Jewish, Islamic, and non-ecclesiastical subjects as well.

Keep in mind that full text articles are not available for every search in these databases. You may need to note the citation and check the 4th floor periodical holdings. The Humanities and Social Sciences Library (42nd St. and 5th Ave.) will also have many art periodical holdings and electronic database resources.

INTERNET RESOURCES

Many scholarly, art history-related websites contain image databases and biographical information on artists, as well as links to museum collections.

Getty Provenance Index

http://www.getty.edu/research/conducting_research/provenance_index/

Indexes information related to the history of collecting and the provenance of individual works of art; gathered from sales catalogues, archival records, and museum files. Can also be accessed through www.nypl.org/databases.

The Mother of All Art History Links Pages

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

A comprehensive listing that includes museums and art history departments, image collections, and online exhibitions.

Art History

<http://witcombe.sbc.edu/ARTHLinks.html>

An exhaustive collection of art history related websites containing links to art movements by century and country, as well as artists and images.

Artcyclopedia

<http://www.artcyclopedia.com>

Searchable by artist, title, and museum, this site provides links to image collections, museums, and articles.

The Bridgeman Art Library

<http://www.bridgeman.co.uk>

The Bridgeman Art Library collects fine art images from museums and galleries throughout the world.

VERTICAL FILES

These files contain folders of ephemera and biographical information including reproductions of artwork, exhibition announcements, gallery show catalogs, and newspaper clippings on artists.

To locate which artists are included in Mid-Manhattan Library's Vertical Files check the *Artist's File Online* at <http://www.nypl.org/branch/central/mml/art/index.html> and then ask at the art information desk for the file.

AUCTION CATALOGS

Auction catalogs will help you to locate sales information about an artwork.

Art Price Annual. St. Roman au Mt d'Or, France: Artprice, 1999-2004.

[700.29 A; 702 A; 707.5 A Special Collection] (located near the art reference desk)

Prices for over 1,500 sales from about 350 auction houses representing 27 countries.

Mayer International Auction Records. Zurich: Edition M., 1968-2004.

[708.051 I Special Collection] (located near the art reference desk)

Prices from more than 3,000 public auction sales held around the world.

Electronic resources for auction sales can be utilized in the Art and Architecture Collection at the Humanities and Social Sciences Library (Room 300, 42nd St. and 5th Ave.) These include:

Art Sales Index – (Only available in HSSL Room 300)

Includes auction sales results from 1980-89, searchable by artist's name, dates, nationality, century, the title, description, medium, or dimensions of a picture, the auctioneer, date of sale, lot number, sale estimates, and the hammer price in pounds, dollars or local currency.

ADEC: Art Prices – (Only available in HSSL Room 300)

Contains records from 1987 to early 2000 drawn from over 750 European and American auction houses. Painting, drawings, watercolors, prints, posters and sculpture are included.

Artnet – (Only available in HSSL Room 300)

Contains fine arts auction records -- many with images --from international and national auction sales. Database is updated daily with records from 1989 to present, searchable by artist's name.

GENERAL RESOURCES FOR REPRODUCTIONS AND CRITIQUES

These books contain reproductions of a wide range of artwork accompanied by commentary concerning that particular work of art.

Africa: the Art of a Continent. Ed. Tom Phillips. NY: Prestel, 1999.

[709.6 A]

Covers Ancient Egypt to the 20th Century with color illustrations, bibliographic references, and some provenance and exhibition information.

The Art Book. London: Phaidon, 1994.

[700.92 A]

An A-Z guide of 500 painters and sculptors from medieval to modern times. Includes full color illustrations and a directory to museums and galleries.

Contemporary Artists. Chicago: St. James Press, 2002

[927 C Closed Shelf Reference] (located behind the art reference desk)

Offers comprehensive profiles of over 800 artists that include biographical data, exhibition, and collection information, works by the artist, a bibliography, and a critical essay.

Lee, Sherman E. A History of Far Eastern Art. NY: Harry N. Abrams, 1994.

[709.5 L]

A general survey of Asian art that is illustrated and contains an extensive bibliography.

The Oxford History of Western Art. Ed. Martin Kemp. NY: Oxford University Press, 2002.

[709 O]

This richly illustrated, scholarly chronology covers from classical Greece to postmodernism.

Zuffi, Stefano. Modern Painting: The Impressionists—and the Avant-Garde of the Twentieth Century.

Hauppauge, N.Y.: Barron's, 1998.

[759.05 Z]

Arranged chronologically by artistic period with several reproductions for every artist accompanied by dimensions, dates, and locations for each work.

Searching the following subject headings in the LEO Catalog may also be useful:

Art, [nationality] e.g., American, French, Chinese
Art, [country] e.g., United States, France, Puerto Rico
Art, [geographic location] e.g., Latin America, Europe
Art, [style] e.g., Baroque, Greek, Modern, Abstract
Art – Dictionaries
Art, Modern, 20th century – Dictionaries
Art, Modern, 20th century – Themes, motives
Artists – [country]
Artists – Dictionaries
Artists – Biography

Painters, [country]
Painting, [style]
Painting, European – Catalogs
Painting, Modern – 19th century
Sculpture, [country] or [style]
Sculpture, Buddhist – [country]
Aesthetics, Painting – Appreciation
Art criticism

Please see an art librarian for help with any of these Search Strategies.

Prepared by: Jessica Cline, Librarian, 11/05