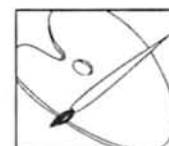
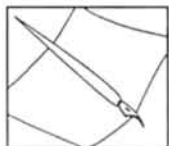


ASCR NEWSLETTER

Fall 1992

Keeping you up-to-date on the activities of
the Society, its artists and ateliers

Issue 4



Important Society News

Classical Realism Quarterly Loses Funding

The Classical Realism Quarterly has lost its primary source of financial support. Due to Richard Lack's retirement this year from teaching, the Gammell Trust, established by R.H. Ives Gammell to support his students in their teaching endeavors, turned down his request for continuing their financial support. This support has been discontinued for Lack's atelier, which his instructors Dale Redpath and Cyd Wicker are continuing, and also for the CRQ which the grant had helped to support for the last seven years.

I wrote the Trust a letter in September, in the hopes they would reconsider their position. They met early in November and made a final decision. I have included excerpts from my letter and their response below.

September 21, 1992

William B. Osgood
The R.H. Ives Gammell
Studio Trust
225 Franklin Street
Boston, MA 02110

Dear Mr. Osgood and Trustees:
We received your letter
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"Nude and Pan," oil on canvas, 36" X 48"

Combining Academic and Impressionist Traditions

A Conversation with
CARL SAMSON
by Peter Bougie



Carl Samson has trained extensively in The Boston School tradition. Besides studying with R.H. Ives Gammell in Boston in 1979-80 (he was one of Gammell's last students), Carl studied with Allan Banks from 1975 to 1979, again from '80 to '83, and at Atelier Lack from 1983 to 1985. He is a native of Sandusky, Ohio and currently resides in Old Milford, Ohio, near Cincinnati. Carl also lived in Washington D.C. for a time during the mid eighties.

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Special Achievements

The 3rd Classical Realism Salon & Conference

Richard Lack Retires From Teaching

Old Town, Alexandria, Virginia, provided the backdrop to the 3rd Classical Realism Conference and Salon held over Memorial Day weekend. The weekend event began with a preview of the Salon Friday evening by those attending the dinner dance. The dinner was given in honor of Richard Lack for 25 years of dedication to teaching the craft of fine picture-making through Atelier Lack.

Richard is retiring from teaching this year and will be concentrating on his own work. "I will especially miss teaching and working with the students with their questions and problems. But, I have made my contribution toward carrying forward the heritage and traditions of my craft. The mantle now rides on younger shoulders. I look forward now to finishing my own projects. I plan on landscape painting trips and concentrating on my imaginative painting," stated Richard.

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Editor's Corner

Our fourth issue of the ASCR NEWSLETTER is filled with news and information about the Salon and Conference held last Memorial Day weekend, with an update on the ateliers and an intriguing interview with Carl Samson.

This issue is a little late in getting to press. OK, it's real late. By now you are aware of the fact that we are losing the CRQ. In all honesty, my primary focus has been on resolving that issue and making appeals for funding in the hope we could keep it going. As a result, this issue sat in my computer half finished since last July! I apologize and hope our future issues more than make up for the delay in your receiving this one. Watch for the new expanded Newsletter due out next Spring.

Please send your comments to the ASCR NEWSLETTER, P.O. Box 1771, Minnetonka, MN 55345. And tell your friends about the Society!

Special Achievements - Conference & Salon continued from page 1

After dinner, there were numerous toasts by several of his prior students and friends, followed by a presentation by Jack Lynch of the Heritage Art Gallery of a painting from the Heritage Collection. The proceeds from the sale of the painting will go to the Atelier Fund in Richard Lack's name. The Atelier Fund was established this year by the Society to provide financial aid for the recognized and Guild-endorsed ateliers and studio schools around the country and in Florence, Italy. The Heritage Art Gallery also gave each person attending that evening a beautifully framed reproduction of a Richard Lack painting. They received either "The Flower

Seller" or "Sailboats: Puerto Vallarta," both very stunning works and beautifully reproduced.

Richard was presented two books signed by all of the members of the Guild, *The Lure of Paris*, which details the events and experiences of American artists who studied in Paris from the 17th through the 19th centuries, and *The Ten*, a new book about the famous group of Boston painters who had studied in Paris and formed the nucleus of what has come to be known as the Boston School. The Guild also awarded Richard and Robert Douglas Hunter Lifetime Honorary or emeritus status in the Guild. They are not required to pay any dues nor do they have to submit works through a jury for any guild exhibits.

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Richard Lack and Allan Banks conversing after dinner Friday night.

Carl Samson - continued from page 1

Beginning in 1986, Carl began a series of six trips to Europe. From April to October of 1988 he travelled widely around northern and western Europe, painting in Bruges, Giverny, and in Switzerland near Geneva. His journeys included a trip to Sweden, where he remarks, "Zorn and Kroyer were revelations." He returned to Giverny in 1990 with Allan and Theresa Banks and spent August through October painting there.

Carl's work is rooted in Academic and Impressionist traditions. It is truly American in its combination of the two traditions. His subjects find a full range of expression, from portraiture to landscape to figurative work.

P.B. - What was the first thing you wanted to do when you completed your training?

Carl - I think the very first thing that I really wanted to do was to go to Europe, and try to absorb that aspect of things - because I had heard so many great things about it. So my goal was to set aside a block of time in which I could go over and see some of the great works there.

P.B. - Do you think that had quite an effect on your work?

Carl - I think it did. I took in a wide scope - not so much the bigger names like Monet and so forth, but some people who gravitated around Bastien-Lepage as well. One was an artist by the name of Emile Friant, and I'm not sure that many people have even heard of him. He did some fabulous stuff. There was one painting of his that was pretty well known, called "On that way to All Saints Day" or something like that in which there's a group of people, and it almost looks like a parallel to today's economic times, with an indigent person accepting some money from some people as they're passing by. It was so beautifully done and it really attracted me. There were also people that were more or less influenced by Bastien-Lepage like the Scandinavian painter Kroyer that you don't hear too much about nowadays, and others like Zorn, etc. The artists who were around at that time were sort of an interesting blend of the academies and the impressionist approach.

P.B. - There were a number of American painters who were enamored by Bastien-Lepage too.

Carl - Yes. J. Alden Weir, Simmons, and some of those people.

P.B. - How about your long-range goals at that time? What were they, and how did they change after you went to Europe?

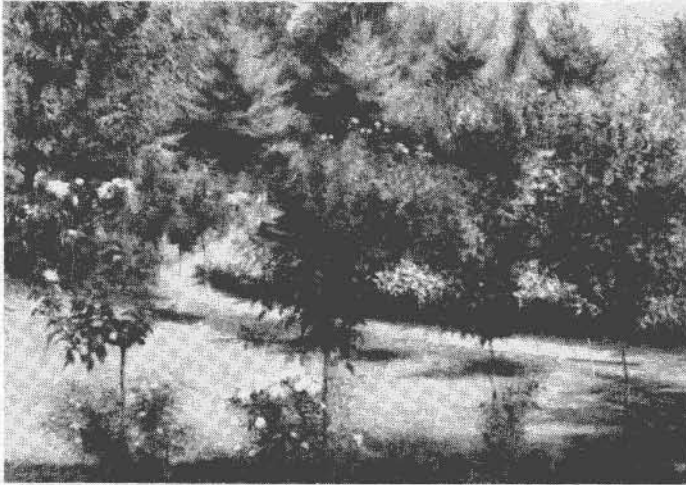
Carl - Well, I'll tell you one thing that I wanted to address right away. It's something that most students, when they come out of their training, have to address at one time or another, and I decided to face it squarely, and that was to be able to make a decent enough living so that I could afford to paint the kind of pictures that I wanted to paint. Initially it's obviously a struggle. But I think there are two mindsets you can have. You can try to be savvy with your business dealings and try to get ahead that way so that you can make time for yourself to paint, or you can put that side off but eventually you will have to address it. So my goal was to try as quickly as possible to do the best work I could, while at the same time remaining somewhat commercial. And occasionally your work is going to suffer a little bit, but also you're going to be able to make some operating capital. So I got started on it, and I think I've been criticized in some circles for doing these blasted rose garden paintings forever, but they were the one thing that was able to allow me to grow and develop in different areas. I think you have to strike a real good balance between being commercial and trying to be the best painter you can be.

P.B. - Well, that leads me into my next question, which is,



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"September Roses," oil on canvas, 36" x 50"

you've done a lot of gardens in your landscape work; was that a conscious choice and if so, why?

Carl - The thing was, even before I went to Minneapolis [to study at Lack's] I would often watch Allan Banks out painting similar scenes. And that got me started in that direction a little bit. And I began to see that really, as far as landscape is concerned, one of the most difficult things you could do is a rose garden or any kind of flower garden for that matter. The incredible variety of color and the variety of greens made me think that if I could tackle one of these I could do just about any landscape, because they're so complex. My idea was, number one, I enjoyed doing them. The color was a joy, especially in the middle of summer when most everything is different shades of green. If you can find either a public rose garden or a private garden of any kind, doesn't always have to be roses, and zero in on that kind of excitement and variety in color, that can get you through the summer, rather than painting the same greenish kind of things. So it was a nice balance. I enjoyed doing them and they sold well.

P.B. - Have you gotten away from it recently?

Carl - Yes, it was a stage I went through and I can't go back. There came a time when my heart wasn't in it as much as it initially was. So at that point you run the risk of being a Johnny-one-note if you keep on doing those same things. It was at that point that I decided I really ought to begin to stretch a little bit.

P.B. - Are you still doing landscapes of a different kind?

Carl - Yes, and I really shouldn't say that I've totally gotten away from the gardens because a couple of years ago when I went to Giverny [France] with Allan [Banks] we did a lot of that kind of thing. But that was really the last time I've done that and that's two years ago. I suspect that I'm probably going to do a little bit of it still but it won't be as much as I used to. So right now my focus would be ideally, to be the best figurative painter I could be, to try to introduce some figures into landscapes, and that's quite a challenge.

P.B. - How do you go about painting your landscapes? Do you work on them entirely on the spot, or do you take them back and forth from the site to the studio?

Carl - My general procedure is to do as much as I can on the spot on any given day, get as much information as possible while still keeping it unified and harmonious. Then I take it back to the studio and paint from memory. I find I do my best painting on landscapes in the studio away from nature. It's at that point that you begin to emphasize and select, and that's really where the art of it comes in, I think. Certainly you only remember that which is essential,

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so you tend to broaden things and get rid of some of the detail.

P.B. - What are some of the difficulties you've encountered traveling and painting? I'm thinking mainly of practical or technical difficulties.

Carl - First of all, a hatchback car is absolutely essential. Something cheap on gas to get you to and fro. And generally speaking you have to keep the paintings somewhat smaller. I think the biggest I did was 32 x 38 or something like that. I know it's not a good thing to do if a painting has had a chance to cure for some time, but I rolled the paintings up to send them back. I felt that since they were relatively freshly painted that it wouldn't hurt to roll them. So I did that and restretched them when I got home. What I would love to do is to have the luxury of spending a lot of time in one place and doing a very large, major piece, either in Europe or here; that's really where my heart is. But as far as the



National Arboretum

difficulties you run into, it had more to do with the fact that you really need a home base. I remember one trip I made where I thought I was going to be able to hop around down through the south of France and just kind of pick and choose as I went along. But I found that not having that home base that I could go back to every night was a hindrance. I just couldn't get up to speed. The one time I felt that the work really shot ahead was when I did have a home base near Giverny with a British couple I knew. They had a large studio space where I could take the painting back in and paint away from nature and clean things up.

P.B. - What was the attitude of Europeans towards what you were doing?

Carl - Real positive. Europeans in general seem to have a greater appreciation for painting that could be called representational, generally speaking. They've lived with it for so long, they're so familiar with it in terms of the whole thing having more or less started there that you don't get the odd looks you get here. You're sort of the exception in the States. The other thing was - how many times have you been out painting when someone will come up and say, "Oh, my Uncle paints." We all get that. But in Europe when somebody comes up and says, "My Uncle paints," generally they've studied under someone who studied under someone who worked at the turn of the century. And the Sunday painters there are incredible. I mean, they're not always professional quality but it's amazing how close they come. I guess what I'm trying to say is there's a more general appreciation. They've done it for

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"Dawn and Meridith," oil on canvas, 40" X 52"

many years, they're appreciative of it. They have a good collective eye there. The average Joe on the street is pretty sharp, for the most part. Now in Paris, you know, you have the avant-garde and they still suffer from a sort of "ism infatuation" as I like to call it. They're really interested in the cutting edge and that sort of thing. But the average person out in the countryside really gravitates towards the person who's out there painting from life.

P.B. - Are you still doing a lot of portraits? Is that a still significant part of your work?

Carl - At one point it was about 50-50, but lately the portrait market has kind of slowed down for me, here in Cincinnati. I think I did two last year and none so far this year (May 92). So, I'm looking at other things, getting back to the landscape and some more personal things. I guess the one thing I finished recently that I'm most excited about was the figure painting, "Nude and Pan." I want to start doing a lot more figurative works, specifically nudes, of that nature. Maybe more symbolic.

P.B. - Tell me more about "Nude and Pan"?

Carl - What it came down to was I had this statue for a number of years and I kept looking at it and thinking, "Man I've got to use this in a painting some day." And I had this recurring vision of this particular statue, because of the greenish cast of it, playing off the nude flesh tones. So really more than the subject matter it was the abstract quality of the colors playing off of each other that interested me the most. And initially I thought that a model with reddish hair would have been interesting. I think when people look at it, at least my experience here in Cincinnati has been that they tend to read more into the subject matter than really is there. Although as I began to develop the subject I thought,



"Elizabeth," oil on canvas, 36" x 84"

"Well it is kind of an interesting side note," but it really wasn't the major thing in my mind. I just wanted to do a good solid nude that I could spend a lot of time on, hire a model and not have to worry about insufficient sittings and so on.

P.B. - That's always a problem with portraits isn't it, not getting enough sittings.

Carl - Boy, it certainly is. For the most part I've been fairly lucky that way but there are some people that are just too busy.

P.B. - Are you teaching at all?

Carl - Just today and last Saturday I gave two all-day seminars on portrait and landscape. I'm giving these with the intention of gauging the response. So far it's been fairly positive. I've been in Cincinnati now for six years and I'm finally beginning to make a little bit of headway in terms of people wanting to find out more about the approach that we've all learned, and being interested in it. I think it's really possible that something kind of exciting could happen that way in the next year or two.

P.B. - Do you mean you'll be teaching on a more regular

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basis?

Carl - Yes, perhaps even eventually establishing some kind of an atelier here as well. One of my passions here in Cincinnati is its artistic heritage, and I think you'll see this with the article in the CRQ (Volume VI, Issue 3) called "Cincinnati: Past and Present." It really points out the fact that Cincinnati at one time was second only to New York in terms of the number of good quality painters that were here. Duveneck, DeCamp, Kenyon Cox, Pothast, were all here in Cincinnati. One thing that I really get excited about is seeing a return to fine painting in Cincinnati, and working to help make that happen. Duveneck willed so many of his paintings to the Cincinnati Art Museum in 1915 and that's a tremendous thing in that students for generations to come can go to study those. And build upon what it is that he knew how to do so well.

P.B. - We just had that show from the Cincinnati Art Museum here. I went several times and everyone I went with remarked on how great it was to see Duveneck's work because you just don't get a chance to see them that often here.

Carl - Well, the Cincinnati Museum has 165 of them. It's just a fabulous collection. Duveneck had just legions of students over the early part of this century. He really was, I think, a very gifted teacher and the evidence of that is still around today. I mean works of his former students that are hanging in private collections and museums.

P.B. - Do you get a basically positive response to what you're doing in the Cincinnati community?

Carl - Yes, so far the art establishment hasn't been so interested. But the interesting thing is that it really almost doesn't matter. As in I guess a lot of cases. Minneapolis is probably the same way. But what I've found is, this town having the history it has, people are more accustomed to fine painting. For example, it's not unusual to run into a collector who may have purchased my work who will say, "My father or my grandmother bought Duveneck," or "My aunt owns a Twachtman," or "Fred over here owns a DeCamp." There's a really interesting group of collectors here who really take pride in the heritage that Cincinnati has. The response from that particular group of people has been really strong. And as far as just bare bones economics, it's a very good market here.

P.B. - Do you have any parting thoughts?

Carl - I guess that one thing which I'm beginning to see more and more in my own work is the importance of training the visual memory. It's something that I feel I'm lacking in at this point. I can remember very early on Gammell saying, when I was 18 years old, "If you do your memory drawing for five years, you'll have the world in your hands." And sure enough I didn't do it consistently. And I'm really beginning to feel that deficiency right now. So those people who do it are way ahead of the game and to those who don't you'd better start because as you go down the line you begin to realize how important training the visual memory is.



Peter Bougie maintains a studio in River Falls, Wisconsin, is the cofounder and Director of the Bougie Studio of Fine Art in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and is an Associate Guild Member of the Society.