

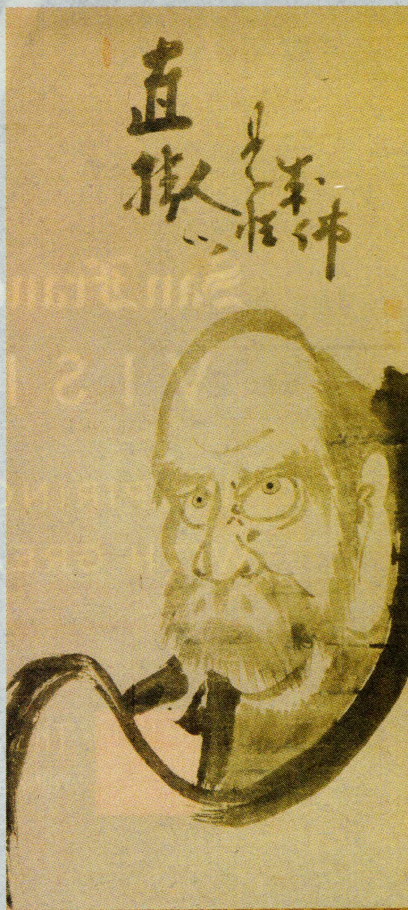
CHARLES
DESMARAIS *Art*

Major gift for Asian Museum

The Asian Art Museum is on a roll as it celebrates its 50th anniversary this year, with the recent unveiling of plans for a new temporary exhibition pavilion and, now, the announcement of a major gift of art. **George Gund III**, who died in 2013 at age 75, has left the museum a collection of 140 Japanese works in ink on paper, primarily from the Edo period (1615-1868).

The collection is rich in “zen-ga” and “literati” painting — pictures and calligraphy by Zen masters who were not academically trained as artists, and who made works generally characterized by bold, intuitive forms. Sometimes incorporating humor, such paintings have a popular appeal and accessibility

Desmarais continues on E5



Asian Art Museum

Hakuin Ekaku (Japanese, 1685-1768), “Bodhidharma”

VISUAL ART

Gund bequeaths Japanese works to Asian

Desmarais from page E1

that will make them a welcome Bay Area resource.

Gund was a prominent San Franciscan who played an important community role as a philanthropist. Among many other involvements, he was a supporter of the San Francisco Film Society and a hockey fan who once co-owned the San Jose Sharks.

Part of the credit for landing the gift belongs to the former director (now director emeritus) of the Asian Museum, **Emily Sano**. In 2001 she organized the exhibition "Zen: Painting and Calligraphy, 17th-20th Centuries." As she described it by phone, "I was in New York working on the exhibition when somebody said, 'You know, one of the great collections belongs to George Gund, and he lives right in San Francisco.'" Gund had developed a passion for the art of Japan when serving in that country as a U.S. Marine in the 1950s.

Sano, recently appointed Coates-Cowden-Brown senior adviser for Asian Art at the San Antonio Museum of Art, called the new acquisition "tremendously significant" for San Francisco for two reasons. "The paintings capture the best of the Edo period, and the collection captures the whole Zen movement," she said. Moreover, "Avery Brundage, whose collection formed the basis of the Asian Museum, was a fabulous collector of objects, but he did not collect painting, in general."

Stephen Addiss, author of "The Art of Zen: Paintings and Calligraphy by Japanese Monks 1600-1925," considered the standard text in the field, called the bequest "a major gift." "The best collections in America and the West are mostly in private hands," as museums outside Japan have tended not to focus on works that are sometimes considered religious teaching aids rather than art. "This is certainly the best collection given to a museum thus far," he said, though there are important collections that may one day find their way into public institutions.

A small selection of paintings from the Gund bequest will go on view at the museum beginning July 18.

San Francisco duchess in New York: The Legion of Honor's sumptuous painting "Marie-Claire de Croÿ With Her Son Philippe-Eugène" (1634), by Anthony van Dyck, rarely leaves San Francisco. But when the top-rank Frick Collection was assembling the first van Dyck exhibition in the country in nearly 25 years, the New York curators felt they had to have the work, and the Legion acquiesced.

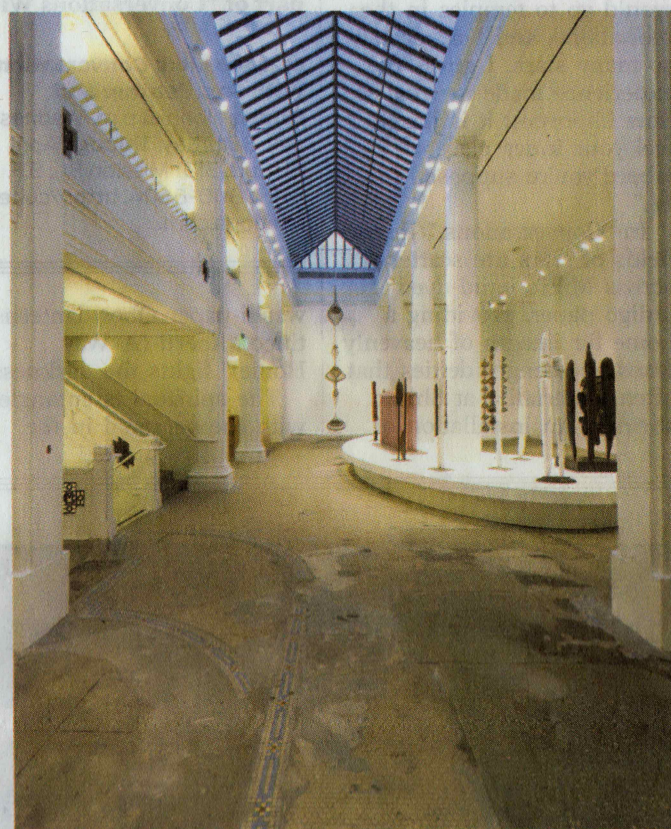
Adam Eaker, Frick guest curator (and newly appointed assistant curator of Northern Baroque paintings at the Metropolitan Museum of Art), said he is thrilled with the loan.

"Not only is it a splendidly preserved example of van Dyck's richly colored court portraiture, but it also reveals the tenderness with which he depicted children," he said by email. "In our exhibition, the portrait of the duchess, which has not been included in previ-



Michael Bodycomb / Frick Collection

The Legion of Honor's Anthony van Dyck painting, "Marie-Claire de Croÿ With Her Son Philippe-Eugène" at the Frick.

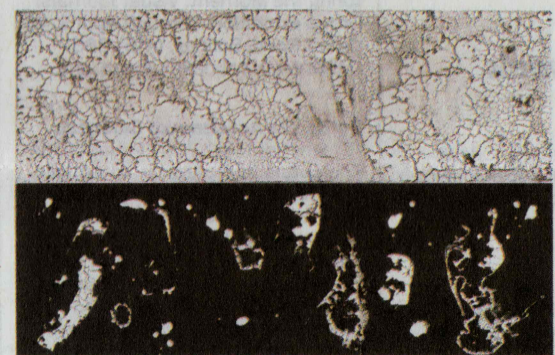


Joshua Targownik / Hauser Wirth & Schimmel

One of the main galleries at the 116,000-square-foot Hauser Wirth & Schimmel, which opened Sunday, March 13.



Scott Rudd / Hauser Wirth & Schimmel



Crown Point Press

Above: Gallery partners Paul Schimmel (left), Marc Payot, Manuela Wirth, Iwan Wirth. Left: Leonardo Drew's "CPP9" at Crown Point.

ous exhibitions on the artist, is for the first time reunited with van Dyck's depiction of the Abbé Scaglia adoring the Virgin and Child. Intriguingly, van Dyck used the duchess of Havré as his model for the Virgin in this latter work, as will be clear to viewers who see the two paintings hanging side by side for the first time."

"Van Dyck: The Anatomy of Portraiture" is on view at the Frick through June 5.

Big in L.A.: The opening of the nation's largest commercial art gallery last weekend in Los Angeles signals another long stride toward the conflation of for-profit and nonprofit exhibition programs. At 116,000 square feet, Hauser Wirth & Schimmel is equivalent in size to many significant museums (the new UC Berkeley Art Museum is nearly 30 percent smaller, with 83,000 square feet). More to the point, the gallery

is run by **Paul Schimmel**, a curatorial star who held the chief position at the Museum of Contemporary Art before founding the international gallery's L.A. branch as a business partner. It employs the only full-time head of education in a U.S. gallery among its staff of 22 (the widely respected Aandrea Stang).

Its opening exhibition, "Revolution in the Making: Abstract Sculpture by Women, 1947-2016," is on par with the best museum exhibitions in ambition and quality, comprising many rare, big and fragile objects on loan from some of the major museums of the world. The experience of a visit to the extraordinary new space is invigorating, and includes options for viewing lots of art, shopping an extensive bookstore selection, dining at a fine restaurant (opening this summer), and enjoying the sun on broad patios and in a public garden.

It would be hard to argue that visitors are not receiving an enormous benefit from the efforts of the gallery, educationally and aesthetically. The same must be said of the practice (no longer just a trend), recently discussed in an excellent piece by Robin Pogrebin in the New York Times, of nonprofit museums asking for-profit galleries to financially support exhibitions of work by their artists, with all the potential conflicts of interest that arrangement implies.

But the seemingly inexorable shift in the balance of power between the museum (with its public obligations and scholarly mission) and the private sales gallery (a business with profit as a central goal) raises many questions for audience and artist alike. One can bemoan those inevitable tensions, and many do, but the systems of art consumption and distribution have been shaken

before (see the waxing and waning of the Catholic Church's influence in the Renaissance, for instance). I put my faith in art and artists.

Last chances: "Particle and Wave," an intriguing look at light as a tool of art (at Hosfelt Gallery through Saturday, March 19) features strong works by Jay DeFeo, Adam Fuss, Gay Outlaw and a dozen others... "Eleven Etchings by Leonardo Drew," a small exhibition of very large prints recently produced at the incomparable (in San Francisco, at least) Crown Point Press, continues through April 2. But a "closing reception" on March 24, 6-8 p.m., provides an opportunity to meet the New York artist, best known for his grandly ruinous sculpture installations.

Charles Desmarais is The San Francisco Chronicle's art critic. Email: cdesmarais@sfgchronicle.com Twitter: @Artguy1