RESEARCH ARTICLE

"Gambling, Fencing and Camouflage: Homer Saint-Gaudens and the Carnegie International 1922 - 1950"

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". ... This is not an age of a unified and glorious art on either side of the Atlantic, but it is an age of exciting exploration, adventure, and youth. Our Carnegie International will mirror that."

Homer Saint-Gaudens (1880-1958) wanted to believe that "aesthetics should be divorced and remain divorced from all the turmoil of the rest of the world." Yet as director of the Carnegie Institute's Department of Fine Arts and organizer of the International Exhibition from 1922 to 1950 Saint-Gaudens knew well that the opposite was true. During the years that he directed the exhibition, he had to deal continually with chaotic political conditions abroad, and resistance and outrage at home.

Saint-Gaudens was responsible for creating the only annual exhibition in the United States that attempted an international perspective on contemporary art, in a period when such an undertaking was problematic to say the least. In the 1920s and 1930s especially, it was hard to make artistic selections based on particular national characteristics as governments swiftly came and went, geographical boundaries shifted, dictators invaded and annexed their neighbors, and artists emigrated from one country to another. An additional challenge was posed by the city of Pittsburgh itself- a city marked by extremes of wealth and poverty. Culture, sponsored by the wealthy, was a Sunday-afternoon recreation. Related to that, the local press was mainly interested in telling dramatic stories, not educating its audience and New York writers who could be lured to Pittsburgh were inclined to see the entire operation as provincial just because of its location.

Faced with this daunting combination of circumstances, Saint-Gaudens not only survived, he succeeded. He made the Carnegie International into a widely reviewed, albeit always controversial, exhibition. He increased its attendance and interest, its scope and importance. Amazingly, Saint-Gaudens accomplished all this without any previous training as either an art historian or as a museum administrator. He succeeded because his skills were in gambling as a hobby, fencing as a sport, and camouflage as an art. As director of the International exhibition, Saint-Gaudens would "play the odds," parry and thrust with the many different constituencies that he needed to satisfy, and disguise radical styles in the midst of bland examples in order to avoid attacks.

Homer Saint-Gaudens arrived in Pittsburgh as Assistant Director of the Department of Fine Arts in the summer of 1921. His duties were immediately extensive. He was given full responsibility for assisting in the formation of exhibitions, catalogues, educational work, shipping arrangements, publicity and even the architectural remodeling of the exhibition galleries of the Department of Fine Arts itself. By the fall of 1921 he was already consumed with planning his first International Exhibition. A year later he was appointed director.

At first, his most useful attribute was his name. As the son of America's most famous sculptor, Augustus Saint-Gaudens (1848-1907), he was immediately able to command respect, particularly in Europe and among the conservative businessmen that

served on the board of the Carnegie Institute. But more than that, Homer Saint-Gaudens grew up learning about the complex politics of art by observing his father's successful career during the late nineteenth century, the infamous Gilded Age. Perhaps for this reason Homer Saint-Gaudens believed that "there are no standards of art. Art must justify itself; must be measured by its effect on the social orders; both of its own particular day and all the days in the past, not by conforming just to this or that rule or ideal." He had good reason to feel this way. Augustus Saint-Gaudens' reputation, along with many artists of his generation, was rapidly eclipsed in the early twentieth century by the rise of modernism.. Consequently his son saw himself as a gambler that played the odds. As he put it "Picking favorites in the art world is like picking them on the Belmont Park track. Just when a painter reaches the peak of his career depends entirely on the judgment of your favorite critic."

As a result, Saint-Gaudens believed that art required social approval He looked as much at a given artist's status as at his style. Although he held firm opinions about which painting he wanted to show, those choices were based more on keeping everyone happy than an aesthetic philosophy. In his exhibitions, he tried to present a balance of different artistic positions and perspectives although his choices were heavily weighted to the conservative. In partnership with that he positioned himself near the top of the social ladder in the art world, working with well-heeled advisors, such as Arnold Palmer, the son of a Lord, in England, and Guillaume Lerolle, an academician's son in France. At the same time though he did not forget to invite the views and court the enthusiasms of the average person by, for example, establishing a Popular Prize voted on by visitors to the exhibition. He avoided radical confrontation in the social sense, and hence avoided radical work in the artistic arena. Social acceptance was crucial because it was directly linked to the exhibition's success in sales. The more acclaim he garnered, the more sales were generated.

The Formative Years

Homer Saint-Gaudens had learned to be alert to role of social approval in art as a child and young adult. He once referred to himself as "virtually born in a studio." He was actually born in Roxbury, Massachusetts at the home of his maternal grandparents, but he spent much time in his early years in the company of artists, poets, and writers. His education for the future director of the Carnegie Institute was mainly provided by the milieu in which he spent his childhood.

His mother, Augusta Homer Saint-Gaudens (1848- 1926) was severely hearing impaired and a difficult person as a result. She had been an artist before she married, but painted little following Homer's birth . As a child, Homer spent many months each year traveling with her pursuing cures for her condition. When he was eight he met Robert Louis Stevenson, while his father was working on a sculpture relief of the writer. Stevenson wrote to the young Homer : " you were ...(to my European view) startlingly self-possessed. " The following year he was painted by Sargent (as an artist's exchange for a sculpture of Sargent's sister, Violet). In contrast to the languid Brahmin children and elegant, self-assured women of Sargent's usual portraits, Homer sits at an angle on a chair, alone and bored, and dressed in ornate clothes, while his mother hovers in the darkness behind, reading to him.

The Saint-Gaudens family was not wealthy, but they provided their only son with the sophisticated education that Augustus Saint-Gaudens - an immigrant who had begun

working for a living at age thirteen- never had. Homer attended Lawrenceville and Harvard, graduating in 1903. Although he was an indifferent student, one useful result of his Harvard years was that he became an accomplished fencer, even serving as captain of the school's team.

In 1905 he married his first wife, Carlota Dolley, a sculptor and painter, as well as suffragist. There were also many other artists in the family. Homer's paternal uncle and aunt, Louis and Annette were sculptors. His cousin Louisa was an opera star. Practically all of Augustus Saint-Gaudens' friends were creative, some of them eminently so, such as the architect Stanford White, his father's closest friend. Their milieu was the Players Club on Gramercy Park, a quintessential turn of the century bohemian men's club.

Most formative of all for Homer Saint-Gaudens, though, as an example of art embedded in social life, was the community of the successful artists of the American Renaissance who gathered in Cornish, New Hampshire near his family's home. These artists, that included Abbott and Emma Thayer, Louise and Kenyon Cox, Thomas and Maria Dewing, and Everett and Florence Shinn, talked, read and created elaborate masques, according to the then fashionable invocation of Greek and Renaissance culture. It was by no means an avant-garde environment, but neither was it entirely an academic one. The classical was adulated, but in spirit, not as a formula. These artists were part of the genteel generation, that group against whom the more radical modernists would soon react. They were the bohemian fringe of the upper classes of the Gilded Age; they spoke with horror of Bolshevism and its wild radical ideas. Saint-Gaudens would maintain a residence in Cornish for the rest of his life.

Saint-Gaudens also became familiar with a far less refined scene. He worked as a journalist and editor in New York. In 1903 he became assistant editor of The Critic and in 1905 managing editor of the Metropolitan Magazine. He got to know a number of artists, including the urban realists who collectively came to be known as the Ash Can school and wrote an article about Alfred Stieglitz and the PhotoSecession. At the same time, Homer spent several years editing his father's reminiscences after he died in 1907.

In these same years he also embarked on a new career. Perhaps to escape the genteel world of his youth, perhaps to prolong its sense of freedom, he went on the road as a stage manager for the famous actress, Maude Adams. Maude Adams was a spectacular performer. Born to the stage, she was a child star who evolved into a much adored adult performer. Her most famous part was in the first stage version of James M. Barrie's Peter Pan in 1905, a role that served her for several seasons and that she later revived. Saint-Gaudens worked with her for fourteen seasons until her retirement in 1918. In this job, he learned more about how the tides of critical fortune flowed and ebbed, as motion pictures began competing with the stage for public favor. He learned how to promote a big public event, how to organize logistics while traveling, and how to reach an audience with what they wanted. It was grueling work. He has described traveling for weeks on a "broken-down old sleeping car . . . as we went through eight weeks of one-night stands ." It was the ideal apprenticeship for his annual trips to Europe to organize the Carnegie International exhibition.

During World War I Saint Gaudens served in the United States Military as director of the first camouflage units. Camouflage, or protective coloration, was based on the principle of matching an object to its environment. The idea developed from a study

by a family friend and painter, Abbott Thayer, based on his observation of the ways that birds matched their coloring to their environment. Following the Army, Saint Gaudens managed Maude Adams' last season, and assisted his mother with the logistics of showing his father's sculpture. When he organized a display of his father's work for the 1921 Carnegie International, he was invited to direct the entire exhibition.

The " Well-Oiled Machine"

He immediately set out to revise a cumbersome system. The Carnegie procedure that he inherited for the Annual Exhibition, as it was called for many years, included a complicated two tiered system. Some artists received direct invitations to participate and others were invited to submit to a jury. The juried group from Europe was asked to send their work all the way to the United States to be judged, and then sometimes rejected. Understandably this process built up a considerable amount of ill-will. Consequently juries were set up in Europe for the1922 International and Saint-Gaudens was authorized to go there himself- to establish personal and diplomatic relationships with both the jurors and the artists. He immediately urged, unsuccessfully, the elimination of the jury system entirely. By 1926 there was simply an advisory committee in Europe that drew up a list of recommended artists. European jurors were selected only to give awards at the exhibition itself. The European agents and Saint-Gaudens visited as many of the recommended artists as possible in order to select specific work. They constantly juggled artists, according to who or what was available to meet a quota already set for each country by the Carnegie Institute board.

On his first trip to London and Paris in the winter of 1921-1922, Saint-Gaudens encountered hostility on all sides from the artists who had been insulted by the Carnegie Institute juries in the United States. His immediate conclusion was that he needed to start appeasing people by telling the artists in each country that they should be making their own choices as to which artworks to send. His first International show had a small number of works from Europe, and even those he characterized, in line from a speech that he wisely canceled out, as an "expanse of mud." He was referring to poor works, included in the interests of compromise and diplomacy, and to mediocre works that major artists had sent out of anger at the International. Nevertheless the new curator stated hopefully, "Ten years from now what has struck us as mad and disrespectful will have produced a fresh and vital attitude which no assiduous carping of old masters could ever attain."

Saint-Gaudens, it appears, was already beginning to understand the excitement of modern art, although, most of his arguments centered on the political need to be open to the recommendations of artists in Europe. As he wrote in a letter during his second trip in November 1923," We should not bring over a few pictures that represent our point of view and then call it that of the French. We must not fall into the popular modern sport of assuming knowledge of a situation that we have not got and then of resenting the truth when it comes in quite a different aspect." With that virtual order to his recalcitrant board of directors, he introduced Picasso, Derain and Matisse.

To a certain extent Saint-Gaudens' lack of knowledge of contemporary art made him more willing to compromise with the various political factions with whom he had to work. On the other hand, his initial predisposition and loyalty to the turn of the century genteel figurative tradition or most radically, the ash can school, made it difficult for him

to understand modernism in his first years. Before judging him too harshly, however, it is necessary to note that no major museums were showing modernism in the early 1920s. The Metropolitan Museum of Art held a "modern" exhibition in 1920 that mainly included Impressionism, only to be greeted with great hostility. By 1929 the Museum of Modern Art inaugurated its new museum by showing the Post-Impressionists. During that decade only individual pioneers like Katherine Dreier and Jane Heap were sponsoring the German expressionists, the Russian Constructivists, and the Surrealists.

Saint-Gaudens included regular well-disguised forays into daring contemporary art. Disguise was accomplished by choosing the most innocuous examples of the work of a radical artist. In making such choices, he typically gravitated toward portraiture, for example Picasso's neoclassical portrait of Mme Picasso, correctly seeing it as a more familiar format for viewers terrified of modernism. Through this procedure he gradually and subtly educated the Pittsburgh audience, as well as himself, to modern art.

This procedure, which could be seen as a type of camouflage, built on his real experience in camouflage in World War I. The art of camouflage was based on fooling the enemy into thinking there was nothing there. At the Carnegie, Saint-Gaudens camouflaged not only radical art, but the political balancing act he was playing by saying blandly, year after year, that his exhibition was simply "a report on contemporary picture-making, its immediate past, its present, and its possible future; a report devoid of bias or special pleading for young or old, conservative or advanced." He wanted to speak to as many audiences as possible. By placing the responsibility for judgment in the hands of the audience, he side-stepped responsibility when critics complained that the show was either too boring or too radical.

He was, needless to say, acutely aware of the "battleground of modernistic and academic ideas." He referred to the idea of sheep (conservatives) and goats (radicals) in art throughout his career, although from the beginning he saw the contrast as murky: "The trouble was that the public...could never tell whether they were looking at old sheep and new goats or old goats and new sheep. Nor did the sheep, or perhaps it was the goats, know which way to go once they hopped their fences; for in the increasing turmoil the dust of loose conversation effectually shrouded this ever-growing battleground of modernistic and academic ideas."

He learned to effectively exploit this ambiguity in organizing the Carnegie. In addition to juggling artists, according to their willingness to participate and the availability of particular works, he also tried to constantly keep in mind a balance between conservative, "medium" and "advanced" or what he called in the early years "wild " works. Saint-Gaudens wrote to Edward Balken, Acting Director, in 1923 that he had included 21 per cent "wild" in the British and French sections, "higher than our committee wants. We will try to soften it somewhat ??"

A key issue was, of course, what was his starting point, from whom did he obtain his advice? Saint-Gaudens gathered recommendations from artists and curators in the United States, as well as well-established (usually academic) artists in Europe. In addition, however, he planned his trip to attend the large regular European exhibitions such as the Salon d'Automne in Paris, the Venice Biennale (most comparable to the Pittsburgh exhibition), and the Royal Academy exhibition in London.

Perhaps his most pivotal act and one that would determine the conservative bias of the International exhibition throughout his tenure at the Carnegie Institute, was the

appointment of Guillaume Lerolle, an academic painter, as the "European Representative" starting in 1923. He would continue with Saint-Gaudens to the end, in 1950. Lerolle was apparently an excellent diplomat, much needed when Saint-Gaudens took the reins, but he was also firmly entrenched in the conservative side of the French art world and detested modernism. Fortunately Saint-Gaudens' philosophy of presenting all aspects of the art world led to the inclusion of artists such as Picasso and Matisse that balanced Lerolle's position.

The situation in Germany was exactly the reverse. Whereas in France, Saint-Gaudens insisted on including modernists, in Germany, he had to be convinced to include German Expressionism by his representative, Charlotte Weidler. Weidler was an accomplished and established art critic; in this she was unique among his European advisers. She immediately realized how conservative Saint-Gaudens was, but did succeed in persuading him to include several German Expressionists in 1925 the first year that the director visited Germany and created a German section. Saint- Gaudens response was characteristically diplomatic. Schmidt-Rottluff was included as an advanced artist, but with a painting of a woman combing her hair. He did become dramatically more receptive as the years went on. By 1938 he was saying that "any competent museum director " could make a selection from the exhibition of modernist art created by Hitler that would be a "stimulating show, somewhat modern in its tendency but not unduly so."

In England Saint Gaudens seems to have come closest to his ideal of representing a wide spectrum of work. Organized by Arnold Palmer, the English section contained a cross section of contemporary art, ranging from the work of the Royal Academician William Orpen, to the eccentric but now acceptable Augustus John, and the cubist-influenced Duncan Grant and Vanessa Bell. It was William Nicholson, Ben Nicholson's father who was the juror, along with Laura Knight, a well-respected painter who was not permitted to join the Royal Academy because she was a woman.

Saint-Gaudens first traveled to Spain in 1923. Margaret Palmer, a well-heeled American ex-patriot who moved in embassy circles, had been the Carnegie's representative there for a year. She encouraged the selection of artists best known among the social elite, such as Ignacio Zuloaga and Hermenegildo Anglada y Camarasa, both of whom proved difficult to work with. The preeminent Spanish -born modernists of Spain, Picasso and Miro, had already moved to Paris. Picasso showed primarily with the French section. Intriguingly artists in Spain themselves recommended that the International include Jose Guttierez Solana. While Solana was not receiving the approbation of the embassy set, he made extraordinary and haunting works that appeared in several exhibitions at the Carnegie Institute. He had a one-person exhibition in 1936, the year that the Civil War broke out.

Saint-Gaudens also went to Italy and Austria, and as early as 1923, the newly re-established country of Czechoslavakia. In 1925 he added Poland, also newly independent, Germany, fraught with complexity because of German hostility from the war, Sweden and Holland. In 1926 Hungary and Rumania were included. Predictably, given the upper-class bias of the Carnegie Institute, the radical Soviet Union was represented by Russian émigrés in Paris except in the early 1930s when Lerolle briefly braved the USSR (about which more below).

As before Saint-Gaudens arrival, the largest number of works always came from the United States, but the percentage of American works relative to the total number of works in the exhibition began decreasing. In 1925 the exhibition opened for the first time in the fall, mainly to avoid logistical conflicts with major spring exhibitions in Europe.

By 1925 Saint-Gaudens letters from abroad began to be filled with characterizations of the different cultures, a factor that he saw as vital to appreciating their art. In this respect, Saint-Gaudens lack of art training was again an advantage, because he saw the art in a cultural context. This was an unusual perspective to take at a time when the dominant emphasis in aesthetics was formalism or intuition. He often characterized cultures in a way that revealed his down-to earth method of analysis. For instance, he commented on the Italians that they had "a disregard for death and suffering all mixed in an extraordinary mixture that makes you think of their food - it's vital - and you admire it- even the vitality of death. It's so different from our endless tepid evasion of the uncomfortable and the unfortunate."

Saint-Gaudens wrote that he preferred the French to the English because in France he could eat in a cafe in Montmartre "where everyone is talking too much in order to choke off the blows of thought . . ." He wrote amusingly from England, " I have seen the soul of England. It sat under the umbrellas round a bowl of beautifully mown grass sprinkled with crimson and gold uniforms so well turned out you know." He contrasted the Spanish and Italian approaches to religion: "The Italian churches are not as inspiring as Spanish ones. You feel that now they are mortuary enclosures used to fleece Cook tourists- successfully! You don't get the feeling of their being used, of a permeating faith in a gorgeous, agonizing soul stirring legend, such as you have in Spain, that really inspires my agnostic spirit."

The following year though he was more inspired in Italy." It was never like this at the First Presbyterian Church of Winsor, Vermont... It had none of the aridity. Obviously there were styles of faith and somewhere I felt in a stumbling way that there must be a parallel between that and styles in art."

Only rarely, as in a 1925 comment about Contantin Brancusi, does Saint-Gaudens analyze an artist's work. He described one of the artist's sculptures as an "egg shaped as would be the egg if the hen had lived on the seeds of violets, and yet, who, by tender care, had grown to the size of an ostrich."

By the third exhibition in 1925 Saint-Gaudens had what he later referred to as a "well-oiled machine" already in place; he had selected permanent agents in England, France, Spain, Italy and Germany. He added what he called minor agents in other countries who selected smaller groups of works. The agents all overseen by Lerolle, organized Saint-Gaudens' travels, the local juries, the shipping of all works through designated central agents, the invitation of prize juries to come to the United States, and all last minute questions as to which works to send. In 1923 the Carnegie began to hang the galleries by countries. The number of works from each country, the political balance of the work (radical to conservative) , the political balance of the jurors who would come to the United States to give awards, the personality of the jurors, the transportation of the jurors to Pittsburgh, the official connections that needed to be cultivated to get the works out of the country, all were on-going topics of intense discussion in the voluminous correspondence that the Carnegie agents carried on with each other and with the Museum in Pittsburgh. In addition to all of these political issues, there were logistical

questions about shipping to and from the United States, questions of availability of particular works and finally, the obvious need to keep all the artists happy.

The procedures that Saint Gaudens put in place lasted until 1939 and then, after World War II were re-activated once, in 1950. The calendar was set in a yearly rhythm: advisory groups recommended artists in the winter, Saint Gaudens traveled in the early spring often with his agents to visit studios, the works were shipped in July, and the jurors(usually two from Europe) arrived in late August to award prizes. The show opened in October. In November the cycle immediately began again, with the schedule for Saint-Gaudens tour set in December. While this schedule was established in the 1920s, the difficulties created by political upheaval in Europe often altered the procedure in the 1930s. Moreover, beneath the surface of this structure roiled a day-to-day chaos and complexity that Homer Saint-Gaudens chronicled in his many letters back to the Carnegie Museum. He sometimes wrote letters up to ten pages long as often as half-a dozen times in one day. The lynchpins of the operation were his agents. At one point he declared "You know we have an extraordinary set of persons working for us. I have not the faintest notion where we could find their like again."

Along with this organization, Saint-Gaudens orchestrated and courted the press, the public, the artists, and the Museum board. He redesigned and enlarged the size of the innocuous catalog, putting a more contemporary image by Rockwell Kent on the cover, and expanding it with essays and many more photographs. In 1924 he ambitiously commissioned essays from eleven critics including writers from Poland, Czechoslavakia, Belgium, Holland, Spain, and Sweden. He also began to send the International segment of the exhibition to other American cities (nine cities in 1924) and to send press clippings and catalogues back to the participating artists in Europe. The local support staff in Pittsburgh, particularly John O'Connor orchestrated the local and national press as well as the American section of the exhibition. He also arranged a lecture series by visiting critics included his old friend, the arch conservative critic Royal Cortissoz, and the moderate Forbes Watson, who supported modernism. The press and the invited lecturers created dramatic arguments about the exhibition.

His early experience as a journalist undoubtedly helped him in his dealings with the press. In 1924 the New York newspapers already began to increase their coverage of the International. That year Homer Saint-Gaudens appeared on the cover of Time Magazine. Each year he created a news item- a change in the format of the exhibition or a highlighted event, for example the arrival of celebrity jurors such as Matisse in 1930- that the press could publicize. In addition, his curatorial proclivity to present a broad sampling routinely sparked controversy among the critics. Complaints were frequent and praise was rare.

Saint- Gaudens was also adept at using the press in his effort to adapt to the volatile realities of Europe in the 1920s. Rather than avoiding powerful political forces that affected his endeavor, he dealt with them subtly and diplomatically. Indeed, he needed to be on good terms with whoever ruled a given country in order to continue exporting works from the country. One such ruler was Benito Mussolini. In the first years of the fascist dictator's reign, Saint Gaudens felt that Mussolini's leadership had stimulated the production of contemporary art in Italy. "Art in Italy," he stated, " is passing through a new Renaissance under the inspiration that Mussolini has given to the whole national life."

In 1927 Saint Gaudens was granted an interview with Il Duce, after which the curator issued a widely published press release in which he quoted Mussolini as supporting the policy of including various styles and schools in the International. According to Saint-Gaudens, Mussolini asserted that , " All these men that you have chosen are important, each in his own way. Art is one thing for one man, another thing for another. Nowadays everyone fights and misunderstands, but there is no harm in that , providing art is genuine and stirs someone' s emotions. Art is just as important as it ever was. It is always basically essential because the fruit of our imaginations is the only thing worth while in life." Saint- Gaudens' ability to generate and effectively disseminate such publicity evidently had an effect. The same year as the Mussolini interview he was able to report that the European leaders were all "taking an extraordinary interest in the coming international."

Art Meets Politics

In the 1930 International Saint-Gaudens for the first time included works from the Soviet Union. Guillaume Lerolle went to Moscow to choose the works. He first attended large museum exhibitions to determine which artists he liked, then visited them in their studios. The situation was in flux as Stalin was increasingly assuming control. Lerolle reported to Saint-Gaudens of several groups "which I told you about don't exist anymore." Not surprisingly, Lerolle, the bourgeois academic, was utterly bewildered by what was designated as revolutionary in Soviet Russia : " a cashier at his desk is not revolutionary, but a mechanic hammering on a piece of steel is revolutionary. A man playing golf is anti-revolutionary, but a man playing football is revolutionary." He nonetheless braved his confusions and the bureaucratic difficulties, and came up with a small group of works.

In 1931, in the depths of the Depression, the Carnegie International hit a peak of attendance, sales, and publicity. That peak can be attributed to the notoriety of the First Prize going to a little-known American artist, Franklin Watkins. His work provocatively titled, Suicide in Costume, depicted a dead clown, symbolizing, as Watkins said, the world-wide Depression. Saint Gaudens many years later, in writing a history of American art, celebrated the controversy saying (rather melodramatically and self-servingly) that the Carnegie Institute was "the laboratory wherein was touched off the fuse that exploded the charge that within the last two decades blew up the illusions of self-contented ignorance."

Despite the success of the 1931 exhibition, Saint-Gaudens was already keenly feeling the pressure of international economic conditions. He began trying to get the European governments to contribute to the costs, or to hire out his team to other museums, with little success. The 1932 exhibition was cancelled for financial reasons. In that year the College Art Association attempted to mount its own International, but the effort was disastrously disorganized. The College Art Association experience underlined Saint-Gaudens' superb organization.

The necessity of working with European governments and receiving their support was to be the major source of tension for Homer Saint Gaudens during his second decade as director of the International. As the rule of fascism tightened in Italy, Hitler took control of Germany, and the Civil War erupted in Spain, it was increasingly difficult for Saint-Gaudens to achieve his ends through good public relations and personal diplomacy.

In 1933, the year Hitler came to power Saint-Gaudens had to negotiate with the Nazis to protect Charlotte Weidler from harassment.. In that year, when the new government's policy on the arts was still in flux with respect to German Expressionism, he included several avowed Nazi artists in the International and was able to show works by Jewish artists as well. His letters to the Museum expressed shock and disgust with Germany which he saw as being in "just as bad shape as it can possibly be."

The next year Saint-Gaudens again was able to see his principles honored. He agreed to Weidler's plan of include Nazi artists in order "to placate the powers that be," despite the fact that he found these artists' work unacceptable. But once more he insisted on including work by Jewish artists, too. "If they stop the German Section on that point," he stated," why there it stops. " German nationalist pride paired with the prestige of the exhibition led the government to accede to Saint-Gaudens demand- for the last time.

In 1935 economic constraints kept Saint-Gaudens from traveling in Europe. The exhibition was arranged entirely through correspondence with his agents. Mexican artists were shown by arrangement with the United States Embassy in Mexico City as well as artists from Argentina, Brazil and Chile, and Canada.

In 1936 Homer again set out to brave the difficult conditions in Europe. His letters from abroad during the next three years document the march of Nazism across the continent. In 1936 he reduced the European representation to only eight countries but the first prize went to Jewish artist, Leon Kroll, perhaps in explicit refutation of Hitler's policies. The Third Reich responded by terming the International a "Jewish propaganda show." In 1937 the Nazis prevailed; thirty government sanctioned pictures were shown. However Saint-Gaudens also featured work by officially unacceptable artists like Otto Dix and Oscar Kokoschka, and diplomatically dismissed the majority of works from Germany by stating that "the Nazi regime is pushing [the German painters] more and more into what might be called a heroic style."

Weidler took Saint-Gaudens to the Degenerate Art Exhibition in Berlin the following year. The German government had mounted this large-scale show in order to cast its official ridicule on modernism, and by extension, Jewish artists. An exhibition of "approved" German art was on view at the same time. The former show proved far more popular, and was met with long lines and crowds for the length of its run. Saint-Gaudens attended the Degenerate exhibition mainly because there was virtually nothing else to see. Even the German academy had closed down. Of the "Exhibition of Forbidden Art " as it was also known, he wrote: " I see no reason for taking the exponents of these various expressions of colour and sound by the scruff of the neck and throwing them into a ditch, especially when the painting or music that replaces their efforts isn’t only utterly dreadful of its sort, but lacks the backing of any aesthetically intelligent social order. The only way art can advance is to fight out the situation on its own. Art is certainly not going to develop in any kind of prison." Saint-Gaudens' belief that art expressed the society in which it was embedded meant that, in his mind, the Nazi's official art was automatically invalidated.

That same year Saint-Gaudens visited Austria shortly after the Anschluss, and commented on its effects on the country: "From the moment we stepped off the train we were surrounded by Nazi flags and German troops; ... The Ring was full of parades, soldiers, brown shirts, school boys, labour battalions. ... Heels clicked, medals flashed, hands made Nazi salutes." Acknowledging that he could not have a separate Austrian

section, he took the Austrian quota and divided it between Italy and Germany. With an eye at the two dictators ruling those countries, he carefully added the same number to each country to keep the nationalist pride in balance. Saint-Gaudens looked at the two dictators on either side of Austria, and carefully added the same number to Germany and Italy to replace the Austrian quota in order to keep the numbers even and the nationalist pride in balance. In his annual report he pointedly noted including the work of "what had been Austria" in his comments.

Despite the bleak German situation, Saint Gaudens strove to stay positive: " in these difficult times German art needs every ounce of encouragement we can give it. We are working not only for the present exhibition but for artists and art lovers as a whole. That is why in these dark days we should plug along to keep alive an understanding of and a discussion of visual aesthetics." In December 1939 having worked heroically to represent the International in Germany, Charlotte Weidler left for the United States; Saint Gaudens helped her get there. After receiving a warm reception in Pittsburgh, she went on to settle in New York where she continued her efforts to help artists in Germany.

In Spain Margaret Palmer, confronted equally challenging problems although in different political circumstances. During the early 1930s as the king was toppled in Spain and the Republic began to emerge as a coalition of Socialists, Communists, and Democrats, both Saint-Gaudens and Palmer regretted the passing of the familiar old order within which they had worked. Yet, their need to rely on the given power structure was reflected by the fact that they soon adjusted to the new Republican government. Indeed, Palmer became an avid partisan. She continued assembling work for the International, even in the midst of the Civil War which broke out in July 1936. Through miraculous luck, Palmer managed to get the paintings out of Spain.

In the following year occurred one of the most dramatic incidents in the history of the Carnegie International. Palmer returned to Spain from Paris in the summer of 1937 to assemble the paintings for the next International. In Madrid she stayed at the American Embassy where she supervised the loading of the canvases for the Spanish section. She discovered that the same truck was secretly being loaded with the Prado Museum's most valuable treasures, which were being sent away to be stored out of harm's way. As the truck bearing the precious cargo departed Madrid in the dark of the night, a driver declared, "Never in your lives have you carried so rich a burden as tonight - you have with you no less that Don Francisco Goya, the honor and dignity of Spain." Palmer also continued in valiant service to the Carnegie Institute for the duration of the Civil War, although she was forced to base her work from Paris.

By the end of the decade, the military and political chaos into which Europe had fallen had wrecked havoc with Saint-Gaudens' concept of presenting the International in neatly defined national sections. So many artists were now émigrés that he agreed to set up a section devoted to their work as a whole. The section included twenty six artists from twenty six countries, including Germany, Russia, Italy, Poland, Czechoslavakia and the Netherlands. In that same year , 1939, most of the awards went to American artists, with the First Prize going to Alexander Brook, for a somber depiction of a desolate share cropping scene called Georgia Jungle. The International could no longer celebrate an international art scene. Brook's depressing painting seemed to capture the mood of the times.

The exhibition as it appeared in Pittsburgh, only subtly reflected the on-going drama behind the scenes. Continuity, in fact, became increasingly important as a statement of opposition to the political harassment in Europe. While during the 1920s Saint-Gaudens had worked to strike a balance among styles in the late thirties he was forced to use a political and racial yardstick, Nazis, Jews, Communists, etc. This agenda is pointed up in a letter Margaret Palmer wrote to Saint-Gaudens in 1937:

You spoke of not showing political partiality for one group of painters above another. The Spanish painters are not divided into well-defined groups, such as Nazis and Jews, or as Russian proletariat and expatriated artistocrat. This is not a class war, pure and simple, as in Russia, or a racial antagonism as in Germany. I know Spaniards of wealth . . . who are "red"; I know servants who are "white". If we send the same painters as have always gone to Pittsburgh, and are to be expected, I cannot see why the question of politics should come up. For the most part, they have kept out of politics, and they would be the last to wish to be labeled as belonging to any political party. With but one or two exceptions, I do not myself know their political views, though I am quite sure that not many are fascists, and not many are communists. I think most of them would like to live in a mildly liberal Republic, and to be allowed to paint.

The exhibitions perhaps said more than was intended. The late 1930s shows cumulatively mirror the anguish experienced by the artists who were included - a quality that only rarely appears in the prizes. This anguish pervades the works from Italy, Spain, and Germany in particular, irrespective of their stylistic, political, or social position. Whether Saint-Gaudens sensed this quality himself is difficult to determine, but its presence is unmistakable.

The 1940s

In 1940 with World War II raging and cutting off the possibility of organizing true Internationals, Saint -Gaudens bowed to the inevitable and mounted a survey of American art. As ambitious as the Internationals, it proved much more difficult to assemble without his hard working agents doing all the preliminary work for him. The survey was fairly predictable. A contemporary section ranged from the elderly artists that Saint-Gaudens had first known as a child such as George de Forest Bush to the well-established modernists Charles Sheeler and Georgia O'Keeffe. For the accompanying catalogue, Saint-Gaudens wrote a lengthy autobiographical introduction, which developed into a book on the history of American art laced with personal anecdotes.

From January 1941 until late 1945 Saint-Gaudens was in the Army as Chief of the Camouflage Section in Europe. The fortunes of his faithful European agents varied. During World War II and its aftermath, Saint-Gaudens followed up on their loyalty by assistance both financial and logistical. At the outset of World War II, he continued their salaries even when the show had to be cancelled. Lerolle, as he wrote to Saint-Gaudens, used it to buy food to give to refugees. Weidler, as noted, emigrated to the United States in 1939. The same year Margaret Palmer returned to the United States. Following the fall of Paris, Guillaume Lerolle was imprisoned briefly then released, but endured the deprivations of occupied France for five years. Ilario Neri, the Italian agent, narrowly escaped being sent to a death camp, and his son spent two years in a concentration camp. The Carnegie Institute stored the paintings from the 1939 International at its own expense throughout the war.

During the war years and in the director's absence, John O Connor organized annual exhibitions of Contemporary American Art. But these shows did not have the luster of the International . On his return to the museum in 1945, Saint Gaudens put together four more American art surveys between 1946 and 1949. He gradually increased the expressionist and even abstract work. He kept hoping to resume the International. In those years he also considered, but never realized, an exhibition of war-related paintings and a show of Augustus Johns works in American collections. As anti-Communism heated up in the postwar year, it began to encroach on his American art exhibitions. Accusations from viewers declared that too many of his artists were "red" or "pink." He longed each year to return to Europe.

Finally in 1950 his wish came true. With renewed funding from the Andrew Carnegie Foundation, he put together one more International with his old team. Lerolle almost refused to work for him because of the tiny salary he was offered. Weidler, still in New York, went to Germany for the summer to assist in the preparations, and Palmer, also living in New York, likewise returned to Spain. The new exhibition included a higher than usual proportion of abstract modernist work.

Gordon Bailey Washburn, who became director of the Museum in 1950, accompanied Homer Saint-Gaudens, now director emeritus, as an observer in order to see what sort of organization was in place for the exhibition. Although Washburn would shift its focus toward the Abstract Expressionists, he retained some of the veteran agents, notably Charlotte Weidler for Germany and Ilario Neri in Italy. John O'Connor continued as associate director until 1952. Saint-Gaudens retired in 1950. He was to live only eight more years, dying unexpectedly in 1958 in Miami, Florida.

Although Saint-Gaudens rarely admitted it, he found the Byzantine intricacies of the political shoals of exhibition preparation extremely difficult. His clearest statement of that was shortly after he left the U.S. Army following World War II when he said that he preferred the military to his job at the Carnegie Institute because he always knew where he stood in the Army. On another occasion he said that a battlefield was like a Quaker meeting when compared to the running of an art gallery. He warned his successor, Gordon Washburn :" You may think life has treated you rough, but just wait. You don't even know what trouble is."

The difficulties of the exhibition were, of course, a product of a world vastly different from the turn-of-the-century art colony in which Homer Saint-Gaudens had grown up. In one essay he summarized that world in terms of "the radio, Boulder Dam, thirty-one million automobiles, the American Scene, Leopold and Loeb, abstract photography, Gertrude Stein, setback skyscrapers, bombing planes, modernism, and this terrific military and social struggle [that] have all been thrown pell-mell into the news of the day." He understood that he lived in an age of accelerated social change, of political upheaval. He saw artistic experiments conducted in response to that change and upheaval that he could not explain or justify.

But above all, Saint-Gaudens saw the forum of the Carnegie International exhibition as a means to promote understanding and communication between the United States and Europe. Saint-Gaudens' vision for the International was very much in tune with the purpose of the International as first conceived of by Andrew Carnegie. At a time when we were obsessed with isolationism and with nationalism, and when Europe was

collapsing into strife, Saint-Gaudens provided a model through art of international communication and cooperation.