

BETA
LORE

"STAG AT SHARKEY'S"

By CHARLES GRANT, *Ohio State '05*

George Bellows, *Ohio State '05*, who died in 1925 at the age of 42, is steadily becoming recognized as one of America's great and representative artists. Last year he was accorded the honor of a large "one-man" memorial showing of his works at the Chicago Art Institute, and this showing was said to have been one of the most outstanding of its type in the history of American art. Bellows has been hailed as "the most eminent man produced by Theta Delta chapter and probably the foremost Ohio State alumnus."

On the following pages, the Beta Theta Pi is privileged to present an article originally written in 1936 by Charles Grant, *Ohio State '05*, for *Scribners*, and as yet hitherto unpublished. It is in the form of a letter to Charles B. Cornell, *Ohio State '02*, a third Theta Delta alumnus.

Mr. Charles Brown Cornell,
Prestyboy Dam,
Parkton, Md.

Dear Cotton:

Up over my desk there hangs a framed colored print showing a close-up of a boxing ring, with two pugilists trying to knock each other's ears off. There are a dozen other framed originals and copies in the room of enough merit or interest to attract occasional notice but the "fight" picture gets the most attention and comment. Usually people don't like it.

Sometimes, however, a visitor will look at it earnestly and exclaim, "Why, that's a Bellows, isn't it?" And then the hullabaloo begins—"I've never seen that one before—where did you get it—It's the only colored litho of his I've ever seen," etc., etc. And sometimes I tell them the yarn, as I am going to tell it to you now.

Back in 1906 when we were all still fresh out of school I got a job with a Cleveland

manufacturing company; a job which had the two qualities I was most concerned about at that time—a salary and a fat expense account. My travelling territory included all of the larger mid-western and eastern cities and I managed things so that I could get into New York for protracted stays. George Bellows was in New York and I had a lot of "unfinished business" to transact with Bellows.

Bellows had not been in New York for very long, when we had our first reunion but he had been there long enough to know his way around and had already established himself as a future factor in art circles. I found that he had adapted his deportment and mode of living to conform with his new environment but that he was still governed by the moral restrictions which had influenced his youth. He always was, I think.

His studio at that time was on the top floor of Blaney's Theatre building in Columbus Circle, an old office building on the first floor of which was the theatre operated

by Charles Blaney, playwright and manager, prominent in that period in the ten-twenty-thirty melodrama field. Blaney was, incidentally, from Columbus, Ohio, and was a brother of Harry Clay Blaney, actor and star in such blood-and-thunder thrillers as "The Limited Mail" and "Across The Pacific." It was in the latter that the machine gun, in the shape of an old-fashioned Gatling gun, was first introduced to the American stage. I saw (and heard) it from a ten cent seat in the gallery at the old High street theatre in Columbus and haven't had so much excitement at any time since for a hundred times the amount.

The top floor of Blaney's was divided into lofts which had been transformed into studios. Bellows' unit was a big barn of a room with a large skylight. A corner was curtained off for the "kitchen" (a gas burner and a sink). Besides the four or five cots along the walls, there was an upright piano, a dais for models, and the easels, frames and other paraphernalia of the painter. It was a sticky, untidy place under foot. The walls, however, were brilliant with paintings, sketches and sculpture—a riot of color and design.

George's high school nickname had followed him and he was "Ho" to everybody. His study was rendezvous for art students and young writers; in fact, there were so many they were a problem. There were four or five cots in the studio and they were always spoken for, sometimes by fellow workers in the art schools and frequently by visitors in town from "the provinces." New lodgers were always clamoring to get in. I remember a Sunday morning when a handsome, dark-haired youth lugged in a suitcase. After he had been given his split on the breakfast, "Ho" took me out in the hall for a conference. He told me that this candidate for bed and board had been flung out of the family domicile that morning on account of a paternal objection to his behaviour. His father, a highly successful actor of the period, had finally lost all patience and had ousted him. We were full at the time, short of room, so the newcomer's chances were not so good.

In crises like this it was our habit to adjourn to the hallway for a conference, the studio being usually too thickly populated for privacy. We talked this request over, discussing facilities. It was always hard for George to say "no" to anybody and in this case he seemed to be particularly reluctant. This jobbie must have quite a lot on the ball, I thought, or Bellows wouldn't be so strong for him. I liked the boy's looks and the



"THE GREATEST LITHOGRAPHER"
George W. Bellows, Ohio State '05.

hint of inebriacy which figured in the casting out was not without its appeal. "Ho" decided to let him stay. I think that if the applicant had been handed a season pass to Eden he wouldn't have been any happier. I watched him unpack the suitcase. He had a couple of shirts and a necktie or two. The rest was books. That doesn't seem so out of proportion now because he was Eugene O'Neill.

Some of Bellows' friends were scions of the wealthy. All of the studio crowd were not millionaires, however. Most of them were students and I think the word student is a good antonym for "millionaire." They were usually definitely broke. But not Bellows. He was an artist from all the usual angles except

improvidence. With all his astonishing depictive talent, he was a shrewd man about money and was always in funds. I don't know what his income from home sources was or whether he ever actually had any from there. Besides the considerable amount of work he put in at school and studio, he was always gainfully employed elsewhere. He capitalized on his outstanding athletic ability, playing baseball with summer resort teams during the season and basketball in town in the winter. He got as much as \$35 a week for this, a gratifyingly sufficient income for an art student.

George was provident, but he wasn't penurious. In our jaunts around town, when we dined, I usually shouldered the check. This was done and accepted on the theory that one of us was successfully launched in the business world, while the other was still an impecunious student, a theory that I can vow now was pretty cock-eyed. At all events that's the way we felt about it, and we never felt anything but good in those exciting days and nights. Bellows insisted on doing the honors occasionally. On one occasion he invited me to attend the theatre to see a new artist by the name of George Arliss, playing then in a comedy, "The Devil," by Ferenc Molnar. We had orchestra seats for which George had surrendered seven dollars. I made a noisy protest about the extravagance but "Ho" told me that I would find that the performance was worth it. It was. I had seen a lot of actors but I had never seen acting like this.

To me New York was at its best 25 years ago. The general tempo was considerably slower than it is now, but the ingredients for a good time were there in plethora. Maybe it seemed that way because we were 25. That's got a lot to do with it. The last time I was down there the old glamor was gone, somehow.

Our favorite dining place was Mouquin's, a French restaurant at that time on 6th avenue around 29th street, I believe. The food was good and the wine cheap, and the place drew an interesting clientele. Notables, from our viewpoint, were always there and the place had atmosphere. Occasionally

we went to Churchill's or Jack's and I recall an electrifying evening spent at the notorious Haymarket, then going full blast for the particular benefit of yokels like myself. We left it, convinced that we had tasted the last dreg of sophistication.

Hardly a day passed in "Ho's" big studio without its quota of excitement and novelty. An express package was delivered on one occasion. It was from the illustrator, Maxfield Parrish, from his country home in New England. It contained a gift picture by the sender, but the wrapper was what created a furore. On it was painted a little policeman, drawn in Parrish's quaint style, ostensibly to guard the package in transit. But that was not all. Examination revealed that the various labels with which the express company clerks plaster a package, such as the invoice, the prepaid tag, "fragile" and the other admonitions, were not the conventional express company stickers, but had all been painted on the package before it had been deposited for shipment, and so accurately that only close scrutiny revealed the humorous fraud. The express company had let it all ride just as it was.

Bellows worked with terrific speed. At the time I was observing him, he would start and finish a large canvas in six hours. He literally threw the paint at the canvas, and I never saw him change or correct anything after the paint was applied. His landscapes were never done on the scene. He would go out and look at what he wanted to paint, and then return to the studio and start work. I questioned the practicability and accuracy of this method, and he told me that his theory was that things happened only for an instant, and that if you did not get the scene at that instant you would never recapture it. One Sunday we took a walk up the river drive and he saw something that he liked. We went back to the studio and he started to work on a canvas approximately six feet square. He finished this landscape in an afternoon. It was one of his prize winners. I do not believe that he took more than two days for any canvas he ever did.

My own close association with George Bellows during high school days was

founded, I believe, on the fact that we had a number of tastes in common, and because I could be depended on for some help in the directions where he was deficient. Like most of his brother artists, Bellows was a bad speller. Anything he did with any lettering in it had to be edited carefully, because he was frequently wrong with the simplest

further ado, and in the back yard of the Bellows residence on Rich street, about seven blocks east of High street, we found George.

He had already grown tired of the railway business and was busy with another invention, but the railroad system was there, sprawling all over the yard, and it was something to look at for a boy of 14 with a



"STAG AT SHARKEY'S"

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words. Through no cultivation or effort on my part, I spelled accurately instinctively. George marvelled at and envied this knack. Also, if there was a caption to write or a joke or some descriptive matter to go with an illustration, he liked to unload that task on someone else. So we got into the habit of collaborating.

Although members of my family were old acquaintances of the Bellows family, we lived on different sides of the town and I did not encounter George until near the end of my grammar school days. On a vacation afternoon with another boy who liked adventure, I was prowling the town. My companion announced that he knew a boy on the East side who had built a miniature railway system. We turned in that direction without

nose for novelty. Here was an unusual achievement. Then and there I decided to cultivate Bellows.

Soon we were together in the Columbus Central high school, and George's room in the old house on Rich street became a rendezvous for our high school clique. The walls of the room were hung thick with framed and unframed examples of Bellows' skill with pencil, chalk and brush; most of them copies of C. D. Gibson and other current illustrators. We had a tremendous admiration for Gibson, then chief of the art staff of the old *Life*. Some of the copies of his drawings which "Ho" made at that time are treasured in Columbus homes now. He could copy with photographic accuracy. The floor of the room was a litter of easels, baseball bats, discarded

sweaters and miscellaneous athletic paraphernalia. It was the most fascinating chamber in the universe to me. It had just about everything in it that interested me at that time.

The Bellows home was a typical upper-middle class household of the period (about 1898), showing strong influences of its eastern background. Godliness got most of the breaks, and domestic management was sketchy. This was apparent to me by contrast, as I was reared in an establishment where the domestic routine had a strong European flavor with emphasis on the home arts. Disorder in any form was taboo. I therefore got extra enjoyment out of the abandon of George's dugout.

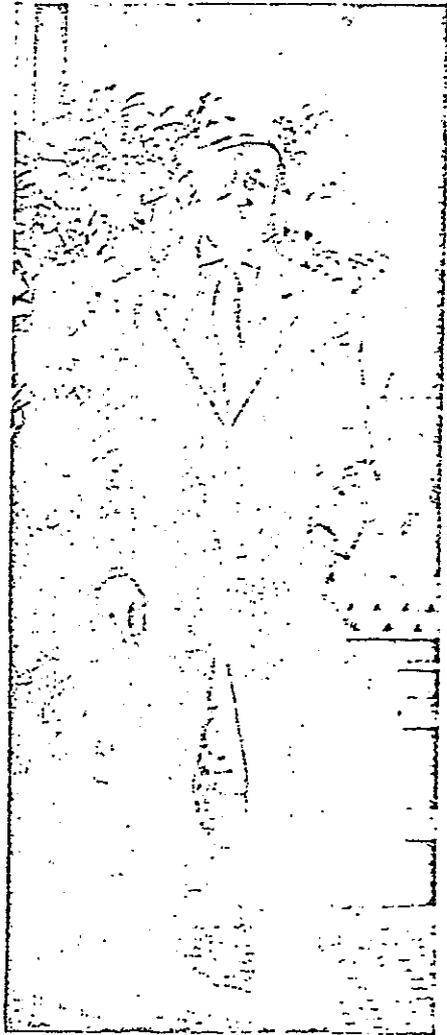
The B's were Methodists, the pater of the shouting type. George was required to accompany the rest of the family to church on Sundays, and on one occasion I yielded to his pleas to go along, for company. We sat in a back pew, and "Ho" improved the time by drawing caricatures of the pastor, the choir, and members of the congregation, in the blank pages of the hymn books. In time he had desecrated almost every hymnal in the place, and was eventually properly rebuked for it.

Those fly-leaves are prized now by those who salvaged them.

In high school Bellows earned the eminence and attention commanded by his talents, but paid the penalty which all champions pay, as they go along. His ability projected him into all of the school activities, but he never got there by popular vote. He was not a natural athlete, but had an absorbing interest in sports; and what he lacked in knack and coordination, he made up by sheer brains. He learned how to hit a baseball, and became the most spectacular high school second baseman I have ever seen. I believe that he was the best prep school basketball forward in America. He was mediocre as an end in football, probably because his quick intelligence and initiative were not of as much avail there as in the other floor and field games.

In the high school art classes his skill and precocity astonished the instructors, and he

was accepted spontaneously as a coming genius. He drew first page head decorations of great merit for the high school weekly, and was doing newspaper and commercial work before he graduated. Bellows was a good-



GEORGE BELLOWS IN NEW YORK

This photo was taken by the author in June, 1908 in front of the old Gilsey House on Broadway at 32nd.

natured lad at any time, but the instinctive knowledge of his own superiority over his school companions demonstrated itself inevitably, and an occasional overbearing attitude bred the customary resentment on the part of his inferiors.

C. Grant

There was a boys' Greek letter fraternity in the school at the time which included in its membership a dozen or so of the more or less prominent in school affairs. All of Bellows' immediate pals were members, but he was never invited. When his name was put forward, there was always a black ball there to mirror the ill-will of someone whom he had made feel inferior in class room or gym, or on the field. This gave him some concern at times, but he was silent about it. Occasionally he was wistful and wanted sympathy. The only way I could express myself on these occasions was by sharp criticism and a review of his shortcomings. All the time I regarded him as the greatest guy in the world; and he knew I did.

He had a voracious appetite for food, and was one of the most untidy men, personally, I have ever known. He had to be admonished about his appearance continually, or he would not even have met the careless dress standards of a small city high school.

In the fall of 1901 we entered the state university together. I recall the trip up to the campus on the High street car and the visit to the registrar's office. George was always buoyant and enthusiastic, and the prospect of college fun to come had him in high pitch of excitement. The fraternities fur-

nished the principal source of social contact and recreation in the state universities at that time, and George was looking forward with great anticipation to being a "fraternity man."

News of Bellows' skill in drawing had preceded him into college, and he became active in that direction immediately. He was appointed illustrator for the *Makio*, the college year book, and did all of the pictures and art work. I collaborated with him on captions, jokes and whatever other text he had to furnish with his stuff, and we had a lot of fun lampooning some of the profs we didn't like, although, as it turned out, they were all rather flattered at the attention.

The book, with Bellows' mark on it, was a sensation, and it started a revolution in the production of college annuals. Prior to this number of the *Makio*, all college year books had been illustrated with drawings done by students of little or no skill, and anyone who remembers some of the early publications will admit that they were pretty bad. The 1902 *Makio* was a sensation. Its pictures had punch and sophistication. It immediately got "Ho" a job illustrating the Kenyon College year book and some other like works. The improvement in college annuals all over America dates from that time, I believe.

THE BETA EXPERIENCE—XVI

Then there was that first intimate meeting with one of Beta's national leaders, when William Raimond Baird came to St. Louis to take some depositions in a patent case. For he was one of America's leading patent lawyers, just as he was America's authority on all college fraternities. He wanted to meet some of the Washington University chapter, and several of us went down to the Planters hotel, where he was staying and there in his room, from about seven in the evening to past three the next morning, we sat, listening to him tell of the fraternity, its founders, its chapters, and the men who had made them; of all those interesting things that only Baird knew at that time, of what we could and should do, finally ending up with that characteristic expression of his, "Why don't you do it?" For Baird was essentially a doer. And I think that meeting was what started me in as a Beta worker. (From a speech by GURDON G. BLACK, *Washington (St. Louis) '01*, made at a banquet given in his honor by the St. Louis Beta Theta Pi club on March 15, 1932.)

An Artist at Ohio State

Cleveland Plain Dealer 11 '57

By JOHN F. HUTH

WHEN college humor magazines were in their prime there was an oft-repeated gag about the "Big Man on the Campus" who was first base in the ball nine and second bass in the glee club. We don't know if "Ho" Bellows ever heard it, but he would have appreciated the wisecrack if he had, for it fitted him. He was a Big Man on the Campus at Ohio State University in the early years of the century, and he made his mark as second bass in the glee club and as short-stop on the varsity baseball team. He later made his mark elsewhere.

"Ho" became one of the great American artists, who created, in a short time, a marvelous span of oil paintings and lithographs. He was George Bellows, the late painter from Columbus, O., whose artistry and memory are being paid an unusual honor by a federal cultural agency in Washington. A one-man exhibition of more than 60 of his works opened yesterday in the National Gallery of Art. It will be displayed through Feb. 24, and then be shipped to

Columbus for exhibition in the Gallery of Fine Art, March 21 to April 21.

Among the pictures will be the famed "Stag at Sharkey's," loaned by the Cleveland Museum of Art.

The show, according to the Gallery's list of entries, amply reflects Bellows' three major interests: Life in America; his family, and sports and athletes. His interest in athletics was the one he acquired first, in school at Columbus. He cultivated sports, as a participant and as an observer, at Ohio State, and this provided the springboard for putting sports into art when he went to New York as a professional painter.

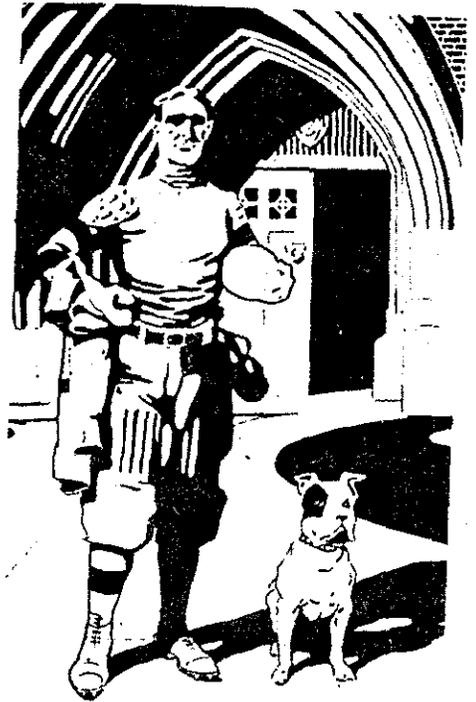
Cleveland's "Stag at Sharkey's" is only one of several of the type in the National Gallery exhibition. Among others are "Dempsey and Firpo," "Forty-Two Kids," "Tennis Tournament," "Ringside Seats," "Crowd—Polo Game," and "Both Members of This Club," which last is in the Gallery's own collection.

To show Bellows' early interest in athletics we are reproducing here some of his college illustrations which are not widely known. They are taken from the Ohio State yearbook, the 1904

"Maklo," for which he was art editor. The entire thick book is sprinkled liberally with his drawings, some fair, some excellent and indicative of the talent with which he was to startle the American art world in the two decades left to him after college.

The amount of his work in the Maklo suggests an enormous energy, a wide interest and a struggle to improve. He drew introductions for various parts of the yearbook, such as the faculty, scholastic, social, athletic and other extracurricular sections; he penned vignettes to "dress up" pages of type, and he did cartoons for wisecracks and of faculty members, some beloved, and some, we would judge, otherwise.

His industry and vitality and striving to learn by doing were his major traits, along with an ability to think for himself. As a classmate, Fred A. Cornell, author of "Carmen Ohio," wrote on Bellows' death, "He was rigid in the teachings of his parents. But, in the things that are of the mind, he stepped out for himself . . . He made good at



anything to which he turned his hand."

Another classmate, Robert H. Paterson, similarly wrote, "As a boy, George was not physically strong. He made his own opportunity in athletics as in everything he attempted to do. He served as official scorer and did the work so well that the boys were glad to have him at every game. One day there were only eight players and George was put in right field. He made good and left off keeping score forever—to score himself . . . His career as a basketball player shows the same development. (He was a forward on the OSU varsity.) . . . Wherever we went to engage in athletic contests George was sure to be doing one of three things



"Ho" Bellows at Ohio State, 1903.



THE GENUINE REAL

Sketches by courtesy of Ohio State University Libraries

—sketching, or singing, or kidding someone.”

Prof. “Joey” Taylor, whose classes Bellows attended, once recalled hearing, at an open session of the National Arts Club in New York, Joseph Pennell criticize Bellows for using as a picture subject the execution of Nurse Edith Cavell, because the artist had not been present at the event to obtain photographic reality.

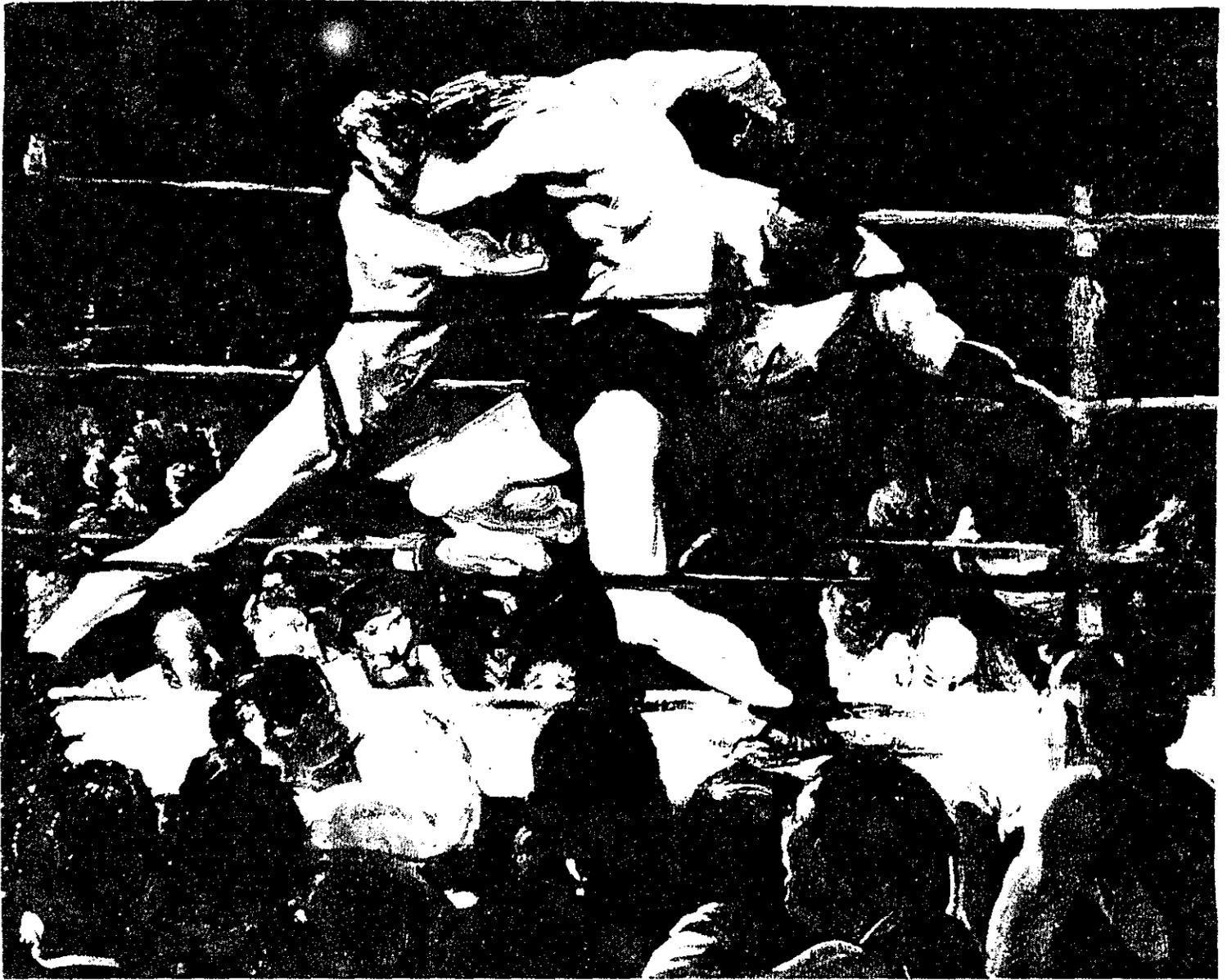
“When he rose to reply,” said Taylor, “he approached casually and with much leisure Mr. Pennell’s charge; then he answered it very suddenly. ‘No, I was not present at the murder of Edith Cavell,’ George Bellows said; ‘neither, so far as I have been able to learn, was Leonardo present at the Last Supper.’”

The world of art could well have used more of Bellows’ free-thought and solid accomplishments; it was a genuine tragedy when he died suddenly, after an emergency appendectomy, on Jan. 8, 1925. He was only 42 years old. He left his wife and two young daughters, the beloved Emma, Anna and “Lady” Jean whom he immortalized in his paintings. To think on what he might have done on canvas had he lived is but

to argue futilely with the incontrovertibility of death. We shall always have the rich heritage of his art and the recollection of a self-made man.



PSYCHOLOGICAL TERMS
: A Meeting of Minds :



"Stag at Sharkey's"

Courtesy Cleveland Museum of Art.

George Wesley Bellows, American, 1882-1925

Portrait of My Mother No. 1, 1920

Oil on canvas, 78¼ x 48¼ in.

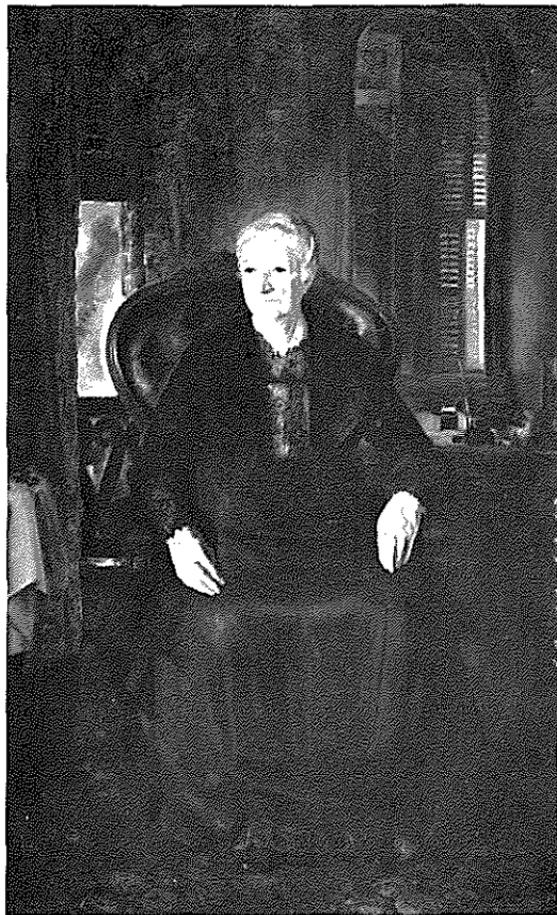
Gift of Emma S. Bellows; 30.6

Born in Columbus, George Bellows developed a strong interest in both art and sports during his youth. He left Ohio State University at the end of his junior year to study painting in New York and remained there, returning occasionally to Columbus to visit his family.

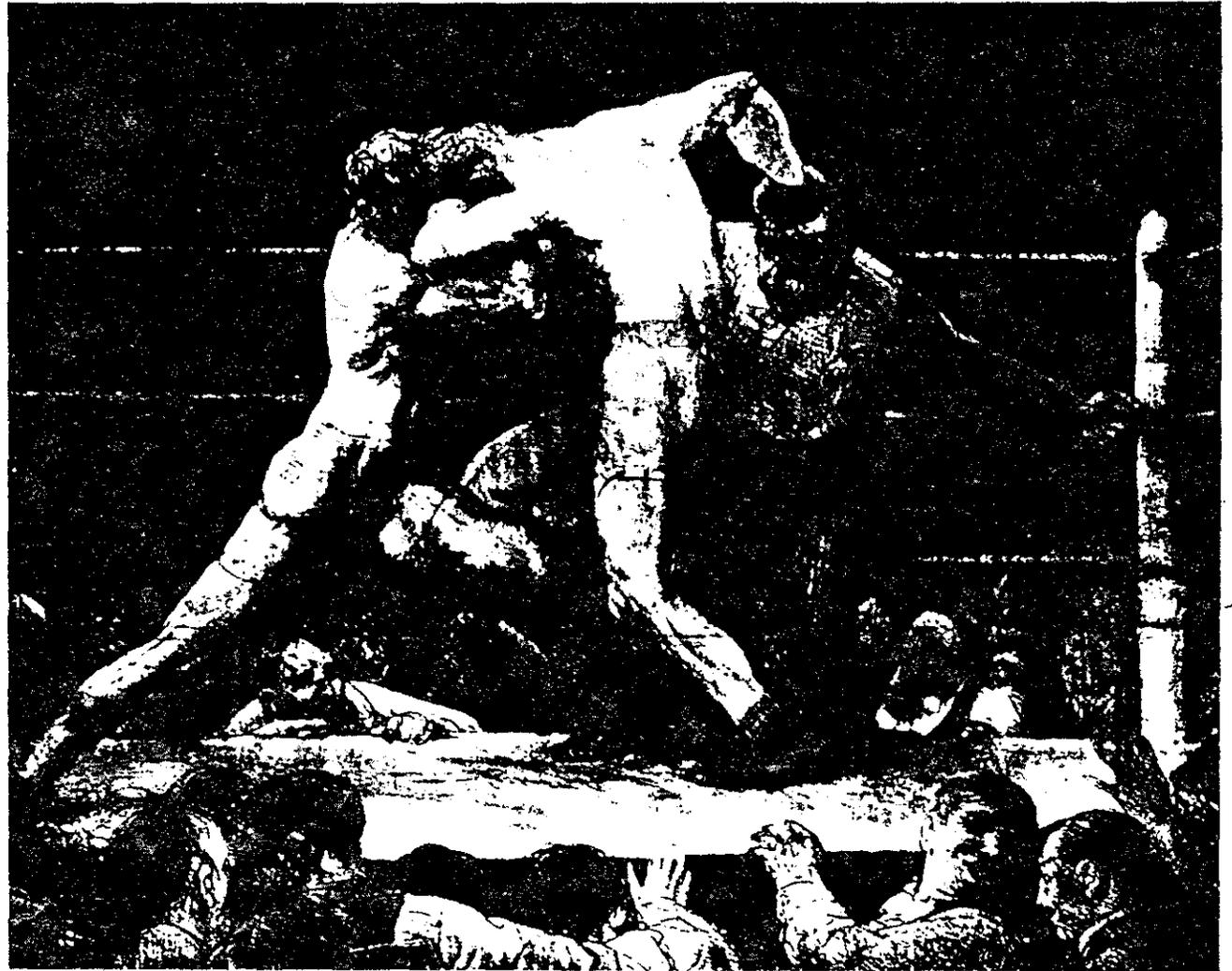
Although Anna Smith Bellows was forty-four when her only son was born, they enjoyed a close relationship that is said to have included much good-natured joking. His regard and affection for her are evident in this life-sized portrait. He depicted Anna Bellows seated in the house at 265 East Rich Street, where Bellows had grown up. Her face is gentle and worn, with a hint of humor; her hands are strong and capable. The highlighted areas of her face and hands form a strong triangular structure, conveying a sense of monumentality and stability in this very personal portrait.

Three years after this painting was completed, Anna Bellows died. The energetic and prolific career of her son was cut short little more than a year later, with his untimely death on January 8, 1925, at the age of forty-two.

BY GEORGE BELLOW'S



The Detroit News
Pictorial
MAGAZINE



"A STAG AT SHARKEY'S"—lithograph by George Bellows, is considered the greatest of all sport prints. Salsinger recalls that Bellows was an excellent boxer.

The Poetry of Motion

By H. G. SALSINGER

FEW OF THE WORLD'S leading artists—painters, etchers and lithographers—have turned to sport in search of subjects although nowhere else can be found comparable drama, color and the "poetry of motion."

An explanation that Sam Wood, a noted Hollywood director, once gave may be applied here. Asked why he did not produce pictures based on sport, Wood answered:

"Because athletes can't act and actors can't impersonate athletes. They lack the feel of the game."

Few of the great artists ever had the "feel of the game" and could transfer it to canvas, plate or stone.

One of the exceptions was George Bellows. He was a member of athletic teams at Ohio State University. He played guard on the varsity basketball team and his close friend, the late Dr. Roy Donaldson McClure, for years head of Henry Ford Hospital, was team manager.

Bellows had become established as one of

the leading painters of his time when the president of his alma mater retired. The university board of trustees decided it would be appropriate to have the retiring executive's portrait painted and one of them suggested that, since an alumnus named Bellows had quite a reputation as a painter, he be commissioned to do the portrait. The board agreed and Bellows was given the commission. In due time the portrait was finished and delivered, with a bill for \$15,000.

Bellows' charge all but caused general apoplexy among the trustees and Bellows was informed to drop around and pick up his canvas. Bellows gladly complied. He sold the portrait to a man who had never heard of the president of Ohio State University but who knew art and didn't mind paying Bellows \$75,000 for the canvas.

Bellows was deeply interested in sports and engaged in several. He was an excellent boxer. He knew anatomy, knew fight crowds, and his lithograph, "A Stag at Sharkey's," published in a very limited edition, is considered the greatest of all sport prints.

(Continued on Next Page)



"RUBY ROBERT" Fitzsimmons was
by Homer Davenport, one of
the best cartoonists. Daven-
port, a boxer, loved
to draw in action.

CONTINUED



CRITICIZED because Gericault depicts his four running horses with all 16 feet off the ground at the same time, this painting, "The Derby at Epsom" is nevertheless famous.

The Great



ECONOMY of treatment is shown in the painting, "Paddock," by post-impressionist Raoul Dufy. Along with others, Salsinger writes, he failed to "get the feel" of sports world subjects.

Some excellent artists devoted their time to sports prints in past centuries, particularly in England. These are almost solely collectors' items today and wall decorations for ye olde English inns.

One of the best of the painters was Jean-Louis-Andre Theodore Gericault, whose paintings of horse races hang in some of the leading museums. One of his most famous, "The Derby at Epsom," hangs in the Louvre and has been often criticized because the 16 feet of the four horses are all off the ground.

OLD ARGUMENT

Auguste Rodin, a great sculptor, came to Gericault's defense. "He has painted his horses galloping, fully extended, throwing their fore feet forward and their hind feet backward at the same instant," said Rodin. "It is said that the sensitive plate (photograph) never gives the same effect. And, in fact, in instantaneous photography, when the forelegs of a horse are forward, the hind legs, having by their pause propelled the body onward, have already had time to gather themselves under the body in order to recommence the stride, so that for a moment the four legs are almost gathered together in the air, which gives the appearance of jumping or of being motionless in

"Now I be'
right and
to run

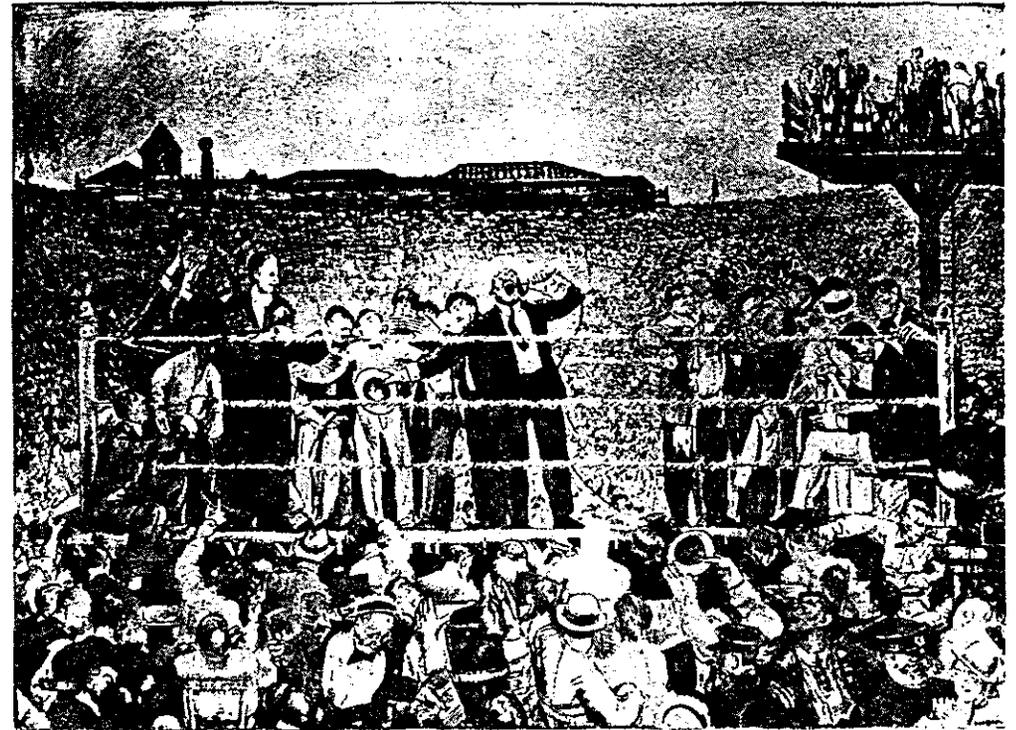


GEORGE BELLOWS, from a portrait by Robert Henri.

George Bellows' America



THE BIG DORY—Painted in 1913, this is a good example of Bellows' realistic treatment of scenes of muscular outdoor activity, vigorously presented.



INTRODUCING GEORGES CARPENTIER—One of many drawings and lithographs (this one was probably done in 1921) in which he turned to boxing for his theme.



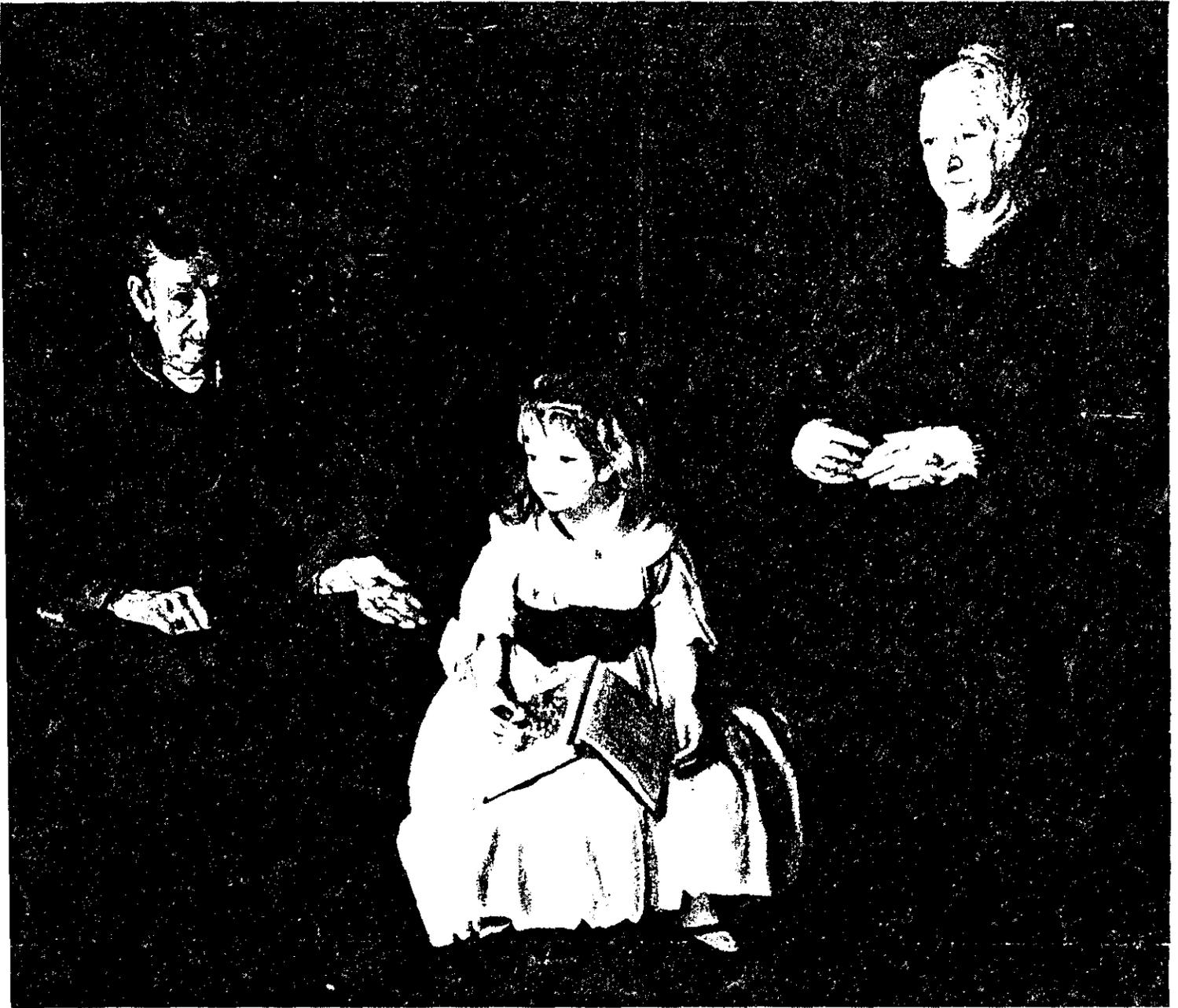
POLO AT LAKEWOOD—A painting done in 1910 which reveals Bellows' early and continued interest in sports and scenes of action. Theodore Roosevelt's phrase, "the strenuous life," which was in currency at the time, characterizes much of the artist's subject-matter.

THE National Gallery of Art in Washington, which houses the fabulous Mellon and Kress collections of European masterpieces, yesterday opened its first show devoted to the work of a single artist. It further extended its policy by electing to exhibit the work of an American—George Bellows.

The exhibition, which includes sixty-three paintings and eighty-nine drawings and prints, is the largest retrospective showing ever devoted to Bellows' work. In deciding to emphasize its American collection, the gallery could hardly have selected a more typically American painter—one who was, perhaps, the most popular artist of his day.

Bellows died in 1925 when only 42. He achieved fame early—recognized by the Carnegie International Exhibitions and elected an associate member of the National Academy of Design by the time he was 27. His subject-matter included Hudson River scenes, the teeming life of the city streets, boxing, horse racing, religious revivals, all of which he painted or included in his graphic work with vigor, exuberance and dash. Later he subdued his early flamboyant approach and produced some enduring portraits in which can be seen the sobering influence of Eakins.

Bellows' recognition is evidenced by the high percentage of his paintings, drawings and prints which have been purchased for museums and private collections. Five characteristic examples from the exhibition, revealing his illustrative approach to diverse subject-matter, are here reproduced.—H. D.



ELEANOR, JEAN AND ANNA—Here is a characteristic portrait in the artist's later manner [1920] in which he abandoned his somewhat flashy early preoccupation with action and turned to character and motivation of subject. The child, his daughter, sat for a later, famous portrait.



Left—
MEN OF THE DOCKS—This 1912 work is one of a number of paintings that Bellows did of city life, including scenes of parks, tenement districts, the waterfront—whatever attracted the artist's reportorial eye through picturesqueness of costume, character, grouping or activity.

INTEROFFICE MEMO

TO: Frank Tate, Managing Editor

FROM: Jack Fullen

DATE: Feb. 4, 1957

More on the Bellows story. Nelson Budd called me last night to say that he had been to the National Gallery and had received permission from the Director to take some pictures. We may only take those on permanent exhibit in the Gallery, but there happen to be two or three Bellows permanently there. Not, however, "Stag at Sharkey's" and perhaps several you see in the attached PLAIN DEALER piece.

We ought, therefore, to ask the Cleveland Museum of Art for a glossy of Stag at Sharkey's and this I am doing (see copy of letter attached). One or two others, I note, are courtesy the Ohio State Libraries and here you can go into action for copies of what they've got.

Particularly do I want "'Ho' Bellows" at Ohio State, showing him with his OSU monogram on his jacket.

About Washington, I asked Budd to group several well known Washington alumni around Bellows' pictures; in fact, I asked him to pick out one or two for each picture so that we could localize it. It happens that Dr. and Mrs. Joe Cowan were at the Gallery when Budd showed up. It further seems that Mrs. Cowan, an Ohio State gal, has done art and has written about it, so Nels asked her to do the piece and he will try to give it the news touch. It will not have Bellows' Ohio State background in it, and this we must insert ourselves. There is some good stuff in the PD.

I am thinking of 2 pages of pics and at least a page and a half of copy, and this ought to make quite a story.

cc: Nelson Budd



On The Aisle

Bellows Is Having His Say At The Art Gallery

By NORMAN NADEL

It is quiet in the Gallery of Fine Arts. The grey day outside and the E. Broad-st traffic could be a continent away; they are neither seen nor heard—nor felt.

At the moment, I share the five spacious rooms, that hold the exhibit of George Bellows paintings, with an elderly couple, a well-dressed, restless woman in a bright red coat, and a couple of dozen school children—close-packed, attentive, curious, awed. Usually it is busier, but the Gallery has just opened for the day. More people will come later.

TOGETHER or separately, we make almost no sound. Even the youngsters whisper, or talk softly, when they have anything to say.

But there is a bright clamor in these five rooms—an abundance of life that is projected from the 65 straightforward and vigorous paintings hung

there. George Bellows — born in Columbus in 1882, died in New York at the age of 42 in January of 1925—is having his say.

WHAT HE SAYS, substantially, is that life is a courageous, irrepressible forcé, and that there is no shutting our eyes to the beauty around us. At least, there was no shutting of eyes for George Bellows. He saw the vivid and vital world he lived in. He tasted it deeply and enjoyed it.

And painted it. Thank God for that.

Columbus-born, but Bellows painted New York. There is an almost painfully exquisite poetry to the way he saw a building excavation, or the glowing blue light of early morning over a construction job.

THE NORTH RIVER—which is what the Hudson is called

as it passes Manhattan Island—was his inspiration by day, by night, and in all kinds of weather. "Warships on the Hudson," painted in 1909, silhouettes the odd profiles of those fighting vessels—longer on the waterline than on deck. In the background are the Palisades—the sheer cliffs of the New Jersey shore—with the burning yellow of a late afternoon sun. On the Manhattan side, New Yorkers stand or sit on the grass, entranced by the majesty of the view.

SOME OF THESE paintings have been loaned to the Gallery, but it owns a few of the best. "Summer Night," with lamplight, darkness, shrubs, trees and embracing couples, is one of the Schumacher collection, and a jewel among paintings.

"The Snow Dumpers," showing men and horses disposing of snow in the East River, under Brooklyn Bridge, is another masterpiece—muscular and immediate—that has its home here.

SCENICS—beautiful and beautiful as they are—are only a part of Bellows. There are portraits—candid and direct. And perhaps best of all, there are the fight scenes, which Bellows did better than anyone else. "Stag at Sharkey's" remains the greatest boxing painting ever made.

All these I admired, yet I found myself returning to the winter scenes—in the Battery and along the North River.

AND I REALIZED that there is about those scenes, and about the exhibit in general, a poignant sense of identification with a past that, but for George Bellows and perhaps a few like him, would be irrevocably lost.

Perhaps that is a measure of true art. Not just to picture, but to evoke that inner sadness that seems a part of even happy recollections. Bellows does it.

The Bellows exhibit will be at the Gallery to April 21, and it's free for the looking. No matter how busy you might be, make time to visit it.

George Bellows' Paintings Show Unique Development

DISPATCH 12-27-70

By
MAHONRI SHARP YOUNG
Director of The Columbus Gallery
of Fine Arts

George Bellows' parents came from Sag Harbor, down on the end of Long Island, which was one of the great whaling ports in the old days. Bellows' father, who was in the building trade, was known as "Honest John" not a bad name for a contractor; he built the Franklin County Court House after they moved to Columbus. Bellows Senior always felt that his son should have followed his trade. Fortunately, he rebelled.

He was in his fifties when his son was born, and they were never very close. They lived in Rich Street, and for an idea of what Columbus was like in those days read Thurber, for he and Bellows were just about contemporaries.

BELLOWS WENT to Central High School, played a lot of baseball and drew on the side. When he went to Ohio State, the college in the cornfield, his baseball pulled him through and he finally made "Beta" which is success in American college terms, and he drew for the college year book in the manner of Charles Dana Gibson.

Professor Joe Taylor taught him to read; one good teacher is more than most people ever have. He must have played pretty good baseball because the professional clubs were after him, but he left college to go to New York and study painting.

When Bellows said his life began his first year at the New York School of Art under Robert Henri, he meant Columbus was not exactly a stimulating place for an artist. Henri practically invented the subject matter of the Ashcan School, which was

the streets of New York. Bellows' New York pictures are among the best of the School; indeed many people think they are the best things he ever painted.

IT IS HARD to believe that "River Rats" was painted two years after his "Makio" drawings were done at Ohio State University. The waterfront intrigued Bellows and "River Rats", which is in dark, Henri-like colours, has an air of brooding power that disappeared from his later, brighter pictures.

Dreiser puts it very well in his novel "The Genius."

"It was the great fresh squares, such as Washington, Union and Madison, the great streets, such as Broadway, Fifth Avenue and Sixth Avenue, the great spectacles, such as the Bowery at night, the East River, the waterfront, the Battery, all fascinated him with an unchanging glamour."

THIS IS A GOOD resume of Bellows' subjects: the first part of Dreiser's book effectively evokes Bellows world. Contrast "River Rats" with "Riverfront" and one can see what happened to his palette in nine years. This picture presents the daylight side of the old swimming hole which many of us remember. It was not exactly sanitary but it was obviously great fun.

Bellows was also an enthusiast for excavations, and indeed they have been continuous enough in New York. He painted the first stages of the construction of old Pennsylvania Station: the new building replacing it is already up.

But it was not only the harsh poetry of the slums that attracted Bellows. "Summer Night — Riverside Drive" is a hymn to the great park along the Hudson. It is one of his few night pictures and it ought to be called a nocturne.

I CAN'T PLACE the spot where "North River" was painted, now that the Hudson

from Hoboken and Weehawken is so built up, with apartment towers crenellating the Palisades. The North River is a stretch of the Hudson that runs to the Harlem River. One can make an interesting tour of New York in visiting the places Bellows painted. The scene in "Along the Battery — Blue Snow" looks much the same today as in his time, and the light on the snow has not changed.

Bellows was a much more original landscape painter than many others who carry the label; he never had time

to repeat himself, and his point of view is often startlingly unexpected, such as "Snow Dumpers." Snow removal is a problem today, but it was worse then; the snow is still dumped in the East River, but probably no one else has ever painted the subject.

Bellows painted portraits too, such as the one he did of his father on one of his many trips to Columbus. Bellows was exceedingly fond of his two families, the one that nurtured him and the one he founded.

BELLOWS laughed easily and often, but there is little humor in his painting. The lithographs, of which he did many, have much more wit and caustic bite, containing some of his best work, they were exceedingly popular during his lifetime. There are some wonderful Columbus scenes; going to church in East Gay Street, buy carriage; the dance in the madhouse, that's the old State Hospital out on West Broad; and of course, prints of his artist's life in New York.

These included billiards at the Club; the life class with the model looking like one of Renoir's most foolish fancies and the earnest artist squaring her off with his extended brush, when one may be certain there isn't a straight line in her body; and artists judging works of art, looking mighty silly. And Bellows' "Billy Sunday" is a great

deal funnier than is Billy Graham, but maybe he had more colorful material to deal with.

HE DID quite a few fight lithographs, but somehow they're not as fast-moving as his fight paintings. "Stag at Sharkey's" is his best-known work.

In his recent biography, Mr. Charles Morgan quotes Bellows as saying: "I don't know anything about boxing; I'm just painting two men

trying to kill each other." Simply stated, some of the figures are less than convincing, particularly "Dempsey and Firpo." Prize fights were outlawed in New York at that time, so they took place in bars which charged dues, and the fighters had to be, as in Bellows' classic title, "Both Members of this Club."

By now Bellows was engaged to a very proper girl: there was no doubt about that. She, too, was a student of William Merritt Chase at the New York School of Art. The female music or art student of those days was nothing if not high-minded, and Emma Story certainly qualified. She was from Montclair, New Jersey, a pleasant enough suburb, but for Emma it was a great height from which she could look down on George Bellows and Columbus, Ohio.

THIS WAS A PERIOD of long courtships and Bellows' course of true love did not always run smooth. Emma Story got her Christian Science power from her mother, and while she did not practice law, as did her sister, she certainly laid it down.

George was high-spirited, even raucous; what Columbus would call "outgoing." Emma thought he should be toned down. They fought, but he worshipped her, and that was the way she had to have it.

The places where Bellows spent his summers figure largely in his work. Carmel and Sante Fe were exotic interludes; but salt water had

side Drive"; one of his finest sport pictures, "Polo at Lakewood"; and one of his finest seascapes, "Island in the Sea".

Bellows is as well known for his lithographs as for his paintings, and the Columbus Gallery of Fine Arts' collection of both is the finest and largest in the country.

a continuous fascination for him. The most straightforward of men and painters, a realist if there ever was one, he certainly believed that things are what they seem, and not anything else. "An Island in the Sea" is unique among his paintings, for there is something wonderful about islands and sea, and he caught it.

HE SPENT a lot of time in Woodstock, not the rock festival scene, but the artist colony in the Catskills, and he liked it so well he built his family a house there. From these visits to this beautiful countryside stemmed a series of his most pleasing landscapes. In Bellows' youth Columbus was much closer to the country than it is now, and sometimes it is hard to believe that he was not thinking of Ohio when he painted New York State.

"The White Horse" in the Worcester Art Museum is no ordinary farm scene; it is touched with magic, and the white horse is a poetic symbol of an intensity that Bellows rarely attained and probably rarely wanted.

He painted best when the subject was close to his heart, and his family likenesses have great depth. "Children on the Porch" is one of his most charming pictures, perhaps because they were his own daughters who were around him as models all the time.

BELLOWS WAS a prodigious worker; one glorious October in Maine he painted forty-two canvases. He died of appendicitis on January 8, 1925, at the age of forty-two. Since his death his reputation has continued to grow.

The Columbus Gallery of Fine Arts is outstanding in its collection of George Wesley Bellows work; as we should, we lead the field. We have some of his finest family portraits, including the portrait of his father and his mother and his three daughters: some of his finest New York scenes, such as "River-



"ALONG THE BATTERY-BLUE SNOW," NEW YORK SCENE BY BELLOWS



"RIVERFRONT" (1915) TYPICAL OF PAINTINGS BY GEORGE BELLOWS

George Bellows Sketches On Loan To OSU Alumni House

By Carol Ann Lease

Of The Dispatch Staff
13 March 1979

Ohio State University's Alumni House has become a miniature George Bellows gallery, thanks to Beta Theta Pi fraternity.

The fraternity has loaned seven original sketches by the famous Columbus artist, believed done while he was a student at OSU in the early 1900s and a member of the Beta chapter

"THEY WERE discovered years ago in the house and hung on the walls for a long time," Beta and OSU alumnus J. Wallace Phillips said. He is a member of the Beta Theta Pi Building Association, which owns the sketches and operates the chapter house at 165 E. 15th Ave.

Phillips said fraternity members decided the sketches should be displayed where more people could see them. They made copies for the chapter house, and loaned the originals to the Alumni Association.

The sketches, all OSU-related, are hanging in the corridor leading to the Alumni Lounge from the Center for Tomorrow, 2400 Olentangy River Rd.

ONE, TITLED *The Pledge*, shows fraternity brothers standing in front of a mantel that used to be in the old 13th Ave. Beta house, which was torn down

Phillips said the mantel was moved to the new house where it now is in the basement. "You can see the similarity" between the mantel and the picture, he said.

An untitled sketch of a football player is believed to be of Laughy Bulen, who also was a Beta. Phillips said Bulen is dead but "people tell us that's what he looked like."

BELLOWS DIED in 1925 at the age of 42 following an emergency appendectomy.

He gained recognition while a student when his drawings were published in the student newspaper, the *Lantern*, as well as Columbus papers. He illustrated Makio, OSU's yearbook, in 1903 or 1905, and that book now is considered a collector's item.

In 1957, the National Gallery of Art selected

Bellows' works for the first one-man show in the gallery's history.

TO MODERN EYES, the people in the sketches are attired in quaint dress of the turn of the century

In *Cheerleader*, the girl is wearing bloomers with women behind her in middy blouses. *The Graduate*, a young woman with a pompadour under her graduation cap wears a long flowing dress. Today's graduates are more likely to be wearing bluejeans under their gowns.

Senior Prom shows a woman wearing a corsage and a man in top hat and white tie. An unnamed beach sketch, believed done at either Lakeside or Cedar Point on Lake Erie, shows the girl in a knee-length bathing dress with black stockings and the man with a block O on his swimming T-shirt.

THE YOUNG MAN in *Strolling on the Oval* is wearing a freshman beanie, which is unheard of today. Very faintly in the background is the tower of old University Hall.

The Betas have made additional copies of the sketches and are offering the copies to fraternity alumni in exchange for contributions to the Siebert Foundation, which provides scholarships for fraternity members. History Professor Wilbur H. Siebert, a Beta alumnus, died in 1961.

Phillips said the fraternity soon may offer copies to the public, also in exchange for contributions to the scholarship fund.



THE PLEDGE



Unnamed



STROLLING ON THE OVAL



SENIOR PROM



Unnamed



THE GRADUATE



CHEERLEADER

Bellows' works unveiled here

By Judy LaRotonda
26 March 1979

A collection of works by George Bellows, renowned American artist and OSU alumnus, will be on exhibit in Columbus in April.

Funded by the National Endowment for the Arts, "George Wesley Bellows: Paintings, Drawings and Prints," will be on display at the Columbus Museum of Art, April 1 through April 8.

OSU boasts its own per-

manent collection of seven sketches believed to have been done by Bellows in the early 1900s while he was a student and member of the Beta Theta Pi fraternity at OSU.

The sketches were found years ago in the chapter house of the fraternity. The Beta Theta Pi Building Association, which owns the sketches and operates the chapter house at 165 E. 15th Ave., loaned the sketches

to the Alumni Association to put on display and made copies for the chapter to hang in the house.

The original sketches, which hang in the hallway leading to the Alumni Lounge at The Fawcett Center for Tomorrow, 2400 Olentangy River Rd., are expressive of Bellows' look at campus life at OSU.

The sketches include such scenic views as: "The Pledge," a drawing depicting fraternity brothers at the old house on 13th Avenue; "Strolling on the Oval," a sketch of a young couple dressed in clothes of the early 1900s and "Cheerleader," which depicts an OSU cheerleader in bloomers and a letter sweater.

bus Museum of Art will consist of 80 of Bellows' works.

Fifty-four of the works are oil paintings which have never been on public exhibition in Columbus. Lithographs and drawings will make up the remainder of the exhibit.

The show will be open to the public on Sunday afternoon, when David W. Scott, planning consultant and former curator of the National Gallery of Art, will speak on "Bellows and Tradition."

Other sketches among the collection are: "Senior Prom," "The Graduate" and unnamed sketches of a football player and a couple sunbathing.

Copies of the sketches are now available to fraternity alumni in exchange for contributions to the Siebert Foundation, a fund which gives scholarships to fraternity members.

Bellows was born in Columbus in 1882. He has become known as the most popular American painter of the early 1900s.

His art is considered to be typically American because it strongly expresses the early 20th century American way of life.

Bellows gained recognition for his work after leaving OSU to study art in New York city in 1904.

The collection which will be on display at the Colum-



Lantern Photo by Marjean Murray

Bellows' unnamed sketch of an OSU football player hangs at the Fawcett Center for Tomorrow. A show featuring Bellows' work will open Sunday, April 1, at the Columbus Museum of Art.

26 March 1969



Lantern Photo by Marjean Murray

"Cheerleader," by George Wesley Bellows, is one of the artist's many original sketches hanging in the Alumni Lounge at the Fawcett Center for Tomorrow.

George Wesley Bellows

Centennial Exhibition

"THE CLINTONVILLE BOOSTER"

Columbus Museum of Art

28 March 1979

In celebration of the centennial year, on April 1 the Columbus Museum of Art will open an exhibition of the selected works of George Bellows — best known and most popular painter of the first quarter of this century, born in Columbus, Ohio, 1882.

Supported with funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, "George Wesley Bellows: Paintings, Drawings, and Prints" will be on exhibition in Columbus until May 8, at which time most of the

show will travel to museums in Iowa, Virginia, and Massachusetts.

On Sunday afternoon, April 1, at the public opening of the show, David W. Scott, planning consultant and former curator of the National Gallery of Art, will speak on "Bellows and Tradition," at 2 p.m., followed by a panel discussion and a reception hosted by the volunteers from the museum membership. A commemorative poster has been designed in

limited edition to be given to all persons attending the opening of the centennial exhibition.

Bellows is regarded as the most American of artists because he was so completely representative of American temperament of his day. He belongs to the 20's — and to the realism of the times which dealt often with social commentary.

The artist was deeply rooted in his own background — a true son of the Midwest. He grew up in Columbus, attended Central High School (designed and built by his father) and left Ohio State University just before his senior year.

Accepted and celebrated in his own lifetime, Bellows gained recognition only a few years after leaving Columbus to study art in New York City, in 1904. He is described as a healthy American type with an amazing zest for life. An outstanding athlete with professional status, he turned to the discipline of brush and pencil to report the realities of American life. He was a master of the translation of body action — and he believed that the American scene, its energy and its people, were the most appropriate subjects for art. Bellows's portraits, sporting scenes, landscapes, and



"Blue Snow, the Battery" George Bellows Columbus Museum of Art.



Columbus artist George Bellows in the late teens or early twenties.

city scenes made him one of the great names in American art, selected for the first, ever, one-man show at the National Gallery in 1957.

Fifty four of the 80 works in the centennial exhibition are oil paintings, a number of which have never been exhibited publicly in Columbus. Lithographs and drawings by Bellows are an important part of the show and of his art, although he did not begin working with the printing process until ten years before his early death from appendicitis in 1925.

Museum Opening Bellows Exhibition

DISPATCH 3-31-79

Last night the Columbus Museum of Art held a special member's reception/preview opening of its centennial exhibition, *George Wesley Bellows: Paintings, Drawings and Prints*.

Supported with funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, the show will continue until May at which time most of it will travel to museums in Iowa, Virginia and Massachusetts.

TODAY AT THE public opening of the show, David W. Scott, planning consultant and former curator of the National Gallery of Art, will speak on "Bellows and Tradition," at 2 p.m., followed by a panel discussion and a reception hosted by the volunteers from the museum membership.

Bellows grew up in Columbus, attended Central High School (designed and built by his father) and left Ohio State University just before his senior year. He gained international prominence for his portraits, sporting scenes, landscapes and city scenes.

One of the great names in American art, he was selected for the first ever, one-man show at the National Gallery, in 1957.

FIFTY-FOUR OF the 80 works in the centennial exhibition are oil paintings, a number of which have never been exhibited publicly in Columbus.

For the second consecutive year, students of the Columbus College of Art and Design have swept top honors in a national poster contest sponsored by the National Vocational Guidance Association. Tammy McComas was first place winner and Thomas Clair took second.

The Central Ohio Watercolor Society will open its *Spring Show '79* at a 2-5 p.m. reception today in Battelle Memorial Auditorium. The exhibit will run through April 27.



Artist's Family Gathers

DISPATCH APRIL 1, 1979

Nine descendants of George Bellows gather at the Columbus Museum of Art prior to the Sunday opening of an exhibition of the Columbus-born artist's works. Bellows and the exhibit are today's cover story of *The Columbus Dispatch Sunday Magazine*. The artist's daughter, Mrs. Jean Bellows Booth of Los Angeles, Calif., is seated in the center. At left are Mrs. Marianne

Kearney Blair, Bellows' granddaughter, and Katie Blair, his great-granddaughter. At right are two other granddaughters, Emily Booth and Laurie Booth. Standing, from left, are grandsons Philip Kearney, Michael Kearney, Peter Booth and Steven Booth. The Kearneys are the children of Bellows' late daughter Anne Bellows Kearney. (Dispatch Photo by Rob Rhees)

THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH
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The Best
Of Beliefs

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THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH
Sunday
MAGAZINE

HAL SCHELLKOPF, *Editor*

TOM O'DONNELL, *Art Director*



On The Cover

Her name is Lucie, and that's about all we know about her — except that she was painted in 1915 by Columbus-born and world-famous George Bellows. The oil painting is owned by Everett D. Reese, of Columbus, and is part of a prestigious showing which opens today at the Columbus Museum of Art. The story begins on Page 6.

By **BETTY DAFT**

April 1, 1979

THE LOCAL BOY who became a world-famous artist is being honored by the Columbus Museum of Art.

The most prestigious collection ever assembled of the art of George Wesley Bellows makes up what the museum calls its centennial exhibition. It opens today, Sunday April 1. A number of works never before shown publicly in Ohio are among the 80 pieces — lithographs, drawings and 54 canvases. The show runs through May 8.

The work of the Columbus-born painter, lithographer and illustrator hangs in the great galleries of the country. He portrayed the America of the early 1900s through the faces and figures of its people at work and at play, strolling in the parks, striving mightily in the prizefight ring and swimming naked in Manhattan's East River. His work is familiar to art lovers throughout the world.

But nowhere is his art more appreciated or better loved than in his hometown. And no artist would be more appropriate to honor on the museum's anniversary celebration, marking the start of its second century.

Bellows was born in 1882 at 265 E. Rich St., a few blocks away from what is now the museum site, just four years before the founding organizations of the museum were formed.

The Columbus Gallery of Fine Arts was organized in 1878. City fathers who were the original trustees were Judge Joseph R. Swan, Francis C. Sessions, Alfred Kelley, James A. Wilcox, William B. Hayden, William G. Deshler and Peletiah Huntington.

In the same year, the Columbus Art Association was formed, and the following year that group founded the Columbus Art School. The groups merged in 1923 and started planning for an art museum.

When the Gallery of Fine Arts — last fall renamed the Columbus Museum of Art — was formally opened at 480 E. Broad St. in 1931, a special exhibit of Bellows' canvases was part of the

inaugural exhibition. The man then being acknowledged as a master had been dead six years.

Also included in that exhibition was the major gift of the Ferdinand Howald collection and a loan collection from Frederick W. Schumacher. The Schumacher collection was given to the museum in 1957.

In 1938, Schumacher commissioned Robert Aiken to sculpt a frieze for the facade of the Italian Renaissance building. The frieze depicts artists from Dante to Bellows. The gallery, built at a cost of \$600,000, is on the site of the former Francis C. Sessions home.

The Columbus museum now owns 19 Bellows paintings, the largest holding of Bellows canvases of any museum in the world, Steven Rosen, museum curator, believes. The museum also has 44 lithographs and five drawings in its Bellows collection.

Probably the largest private collector of Bellows art is a local resident, Everett D. Reese, chairman of the board of Park National Bank of Newark and retired chairman of the boards of First Banc Group of Ohio Inc. and of City National Bank.

Reese has loaned four of his seven oils and one drawing for the exhibition. The museum's entire collection of 19 canvases is included in the show, and the others have been borrowed from public and private collectors.

The centennial show also will become the first major traveling exhibit of Bellows' work. All but four especially fragile pieces will be packed after the exhibit closes in Columbus and will be shown at the Richmond (Va.) Museum of Art, the Des Moines (Iowa) Art Center and the Worcester Art Museum.

Each piece in the show was chosen by the museum director, Budd Bishop, and by Rosen to show various facets of Bellows' artistry, from the "grandiose urban (scenes) to the pastorals, seascapes, the family" portraits, Rosen said.

The artist loved sports, and he painted prizefights, polo matches and tennis with all the vigor and vitality

(Continued)



Artists Judging Works Of Art, 1916; lithograph



Blue Snow. The Battery, 1910; oil



Riverfront No. 1, 1915; oil

+

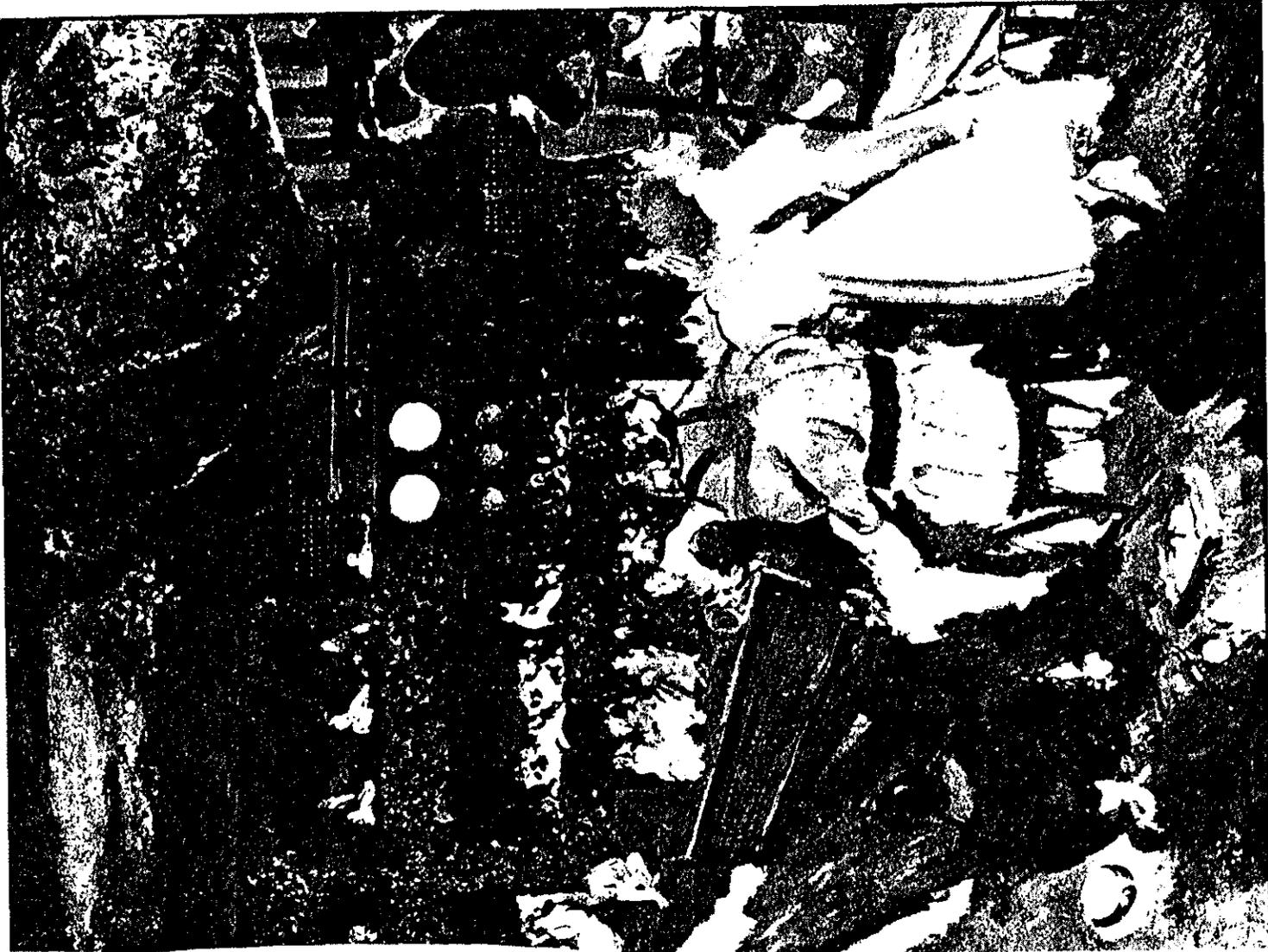


George Bellows

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY Photo

the best of **BELLAWS**

Hometown Boy's Work On Exhibit At Museum of Art



The Tournament — Tennis At Newport, 1912; oil; Everett D. Reese collection

BELLOWS

continued



Everett D. Reese, of Columbus, has probably the largest private collection of Bellows art. He has loaned four oil paintings and a drawing for the exhibition.



William Oxley Thompson, 1913; oil; Mr. and Mrs. Donald B. Shackelford collection

of an athlete. He loved to watch people, and he painted with strength and humor the rollicking scenes of New York streets, alleys and riverfronts. And he did landscapes and seascapes and portraits.

The lovely *Lucie*, pictured on the cover, a special Reese favorite, is among the four canvases he loaned for the exhibition. The portrait was purchased nearly 20 years ago, he said, along with *River Rats*, one of Bellows' most famous scenes, painted in 1906 and accepted the following year for the prestigious spring exhibition of the National Academy of Design, in New York City.

The others Reese loaned for the exhibition are *Man And Dog* and *The Tournament - Tennis At Newport*.

Reese also presented the painting *Boy And Calf, Coming Storm* to the museum in 1976. Reese also owns many Bellows lithographs and drawings.

The importance of Bellows' work and the fact that the artist was a Columbus boy are the reasons, Reese said, that he collects his art. Reese's brother, the late Gilbert Reese, was a classmate of Bellows at Central High School.

Reese's daughter, Mrs. Donald B. Shackelford, shares her father's love of Bellows art, and the Shackelfords have loaned two paintings for the exhibition. They are *Jeannette With Cat* and the portrait *William Oxley Thompson*.

Probably the most familiar Bellows painting for most Ohio residents is *Children On The Porch*, reproduced on the cover of the 1972-73 Ohio Bell telephone book. The original, owned by the museum, is included in the exhibition.

Mrs. Martin Lubow, a docent at the museum, was so charmed by that picture that she began studying Bellows' life. She now lectures on the artist.

"I fell in love with that cover picture and was dying to learn what happened to the girls," she said. She found that Jean Bellows, at left in the painting, now is Mrs. Earl Booth, and Mrs. Lubow has visited her in her Los Angeles home.

Before her marriage, Jean Bellows Booth was an actress, playing in summer stock and on Broadway. She traveled with a USO touring group during World War II. Her husband is an executive story editor at Columbia Pictures.

The oldest Bellows' daughter, Anne, the center figure in the picture, was a Powers model in New York City before her marriage to Maynard Kearney, a district manager with McGraw Publishing Co. She died in January 1975, in Upper St. Clair, Pa.

The third girl, at right, was Margaret Storey, a cousin of the girls. She never married, Mrs. Lubow said, and is now dead.

Mr. and Mrs. Earl Booth and their four children, and the late Mrs. Anne Bellows Kearney's three children, daughter-in-law, son-in-law and granddaughter, traveled from their homes in various parts of the country to Columbus for the exhibition opening.

The artist's father, also named George, was an architect and builder. He is credited with such

Columbus buildings as Central High School, the old Franklin County Courthouse and the Chittendon Hotel. He had hoped that his only son would be a banker.

His mother, a kindly, jovial woman, is said to have wished him to become a Methodist bishop.

But it was apparent while he was still a child that young George's talents were far from his parent's wishes. His love of drawing and sports, particularly baseball, grew apace with the man.

He was a star on the baseball teams of Central High School and of Ohio State University. During his junior year at OSU he was offered a contract with a professional baseball team. He also drew cartoons for university publications.

It was then that Bellows cast the die of his future. He left Columbus and headed for New York to study art seriously. It was 1904.

One of his teachers was Robert Henri, leader of The Eight, the American artists who were sweeping aside the idealized art concepts of the time and replacing them with the realism of New York and its working classes.

And Bellows began painting with candor all the things he saw and liked — the people, children at play, prizefights at Sharkey's and the riverfront scenes.

It was *Forty-Two Kids*, boys swimming naked along the riverfront, that sold first, in 1907. His paintings soon were selling well.

In 1916 he began experimenting with lithographs, "one of the earliest Americans to deal with lithography," Rosen said. "He was a phenomenal technician. He knew how to paint and paint well."

Bellows suffered appendicitis and died of peritonitis Jan. 8, 1925, at Post Graduate Hospital in New York, following surgery for a ruptured appendix. He was 42.

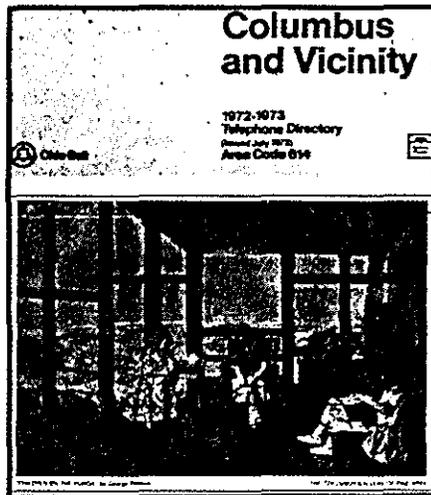
Three of the canvases painted during the last year of his life are in the exhibition at the Columbus museum. They are *Dempsey And Firpo*, dated June 1924, on loan from the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; *Mill Dam*, October 1924, loaned by the The Benton Collection, New York; and *Landscape - Old Lady's Home*, from the Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, a gift of Mr. and Mrs. Carl Dennison.

A former curator of the Columbus Museum of Art, David Scott, will lecture on Bellows at 2 p.m. Sunday. A reception for the public will be held from 3 to 4:30 p.m.

Museum hours are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Sundays; 11 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Wednesdays, and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturdays. The museum is closed on Mondays.

Admission is free on Tuesdays. On other days it is \$1.50 for adults, and 50 cents for children 6 to 17, senior citizens and students with identifications. Members are admitted free. ■

Betty Daft is a Dispatch staff member.



George Bellows' *Children On The Porch* was reproduced on the cover of the 1972-1973 Ohio Bell telephone book.



Portrait Of My Father, 1906; oil



The Tournament — Tennis At Newport, loaned by Everett D. Reese, is uncrated by Steven Rosen, left, curator of the Columbus Museum of Art, and Budd Bishop, museum director.

FRED SHANNON Photo

Library sleuths seek clues to Bellows' painting donor

By Leon Rublin

on Campus 6-5-80

If there are any amateur Dick Tracys, Hercule Poirots, or even Miss Marples on campus, Lucy Caswell could use your services.

Caswell, curator of the Milton Caniff Research Room in the School of Journalism, has a first-class mystery on her hands.

A few weeks ago, the Journalism Library received an unpretentious, somewhat battered package wrapped in brown paper. It was addressed, in large letters written in black magic marker, to "The Milton Caniff Library, Ohio State Univ., Columbus, Ohio 43200."

Inside, to the astonishment of Caswell and others, was a painting in an old wooden frame. Upon close inspection, the signature "Bellows" was evident at the bottom of the work.

A George Bellows painting had dropped, unheralded and unannounced, out of nowhere into Caswell's hands. The only clue to its origin was the Beverly Hills, Calif., postmark on the envelope. It had been mailed March 28.

Caswell, who admits she has felt a bit like Miss Marple herself recently, went to work to authenticate the painting and locate its donor. Barbara Groseclose, assistant professor of history of art, confirmed it was Bellows' work. The agent for the Bellows estate was informed of the find, and said he had no knowledge of the painting.

The police tried to trace the painting, but it was not listed on any roster of stolen or missing works. They did determine it had been framed in Columbus between 1910 and 1920 by checking into the name on a shop's sticker on the back of the frame.

Caswell also discovered where the painting had been used. It was the frontispiece for the Fraternities section of the 1903 Makio—the Ohio State yearbook. Bellows had done most of the illustrations for that and the following year's books.

Caswell hoped whoever sent the painting would somehow get in touch to reveal his or her identity. Since no one had done so, she now hopes to generate enough publicity about the mystery to inspire the donor to 'fess up.

"We want anybody who knows anything

about it to contact us," she says.

The painting is from a very early stage in Bellows' career, according to art historian Groseclose. She termed it "juvenalia and memorabilia," and said it is not particularly indicative of his later work.

Bellows left Ohio State in the beginning of his senior year in 1904 to study art in New York. He gained in popularity until his death at the age of 43 in 1925, and remains well-known.

Caswell said the painting hasn't been appraised yet. It also must be cleaned of the years' accumulation of dirt and dust. She doesn't have any idea of its value.

She remains amazed and excited by the extraordinary event, and continues to be puzzled by the circumstances of the painting's arrival.

"Things like this just don't happen," she says.



Bellows' painting a mystery "ON CAMPUS" 6-5-80

A PAINTING done by George Bellows while he attended Ohio State arrived in the mail at the Journalism Library. Who sent the painting and why is a mystery which Lucy Caswell, curator of the Milton Caniff Research Room, is trying to solve. The painting was used as an illustration in the 1903 Ohio State yearbook. from which this photograph was taken. The painting itself requires cleaning.

Anonymous Mailed Bellows Painting Mystifies OSU

6-10-80
By Gary Kiefer
Of The Dispatch Staff

An original George Bellows painting, anonymously mailed to Ohio State University, has provided researchers here with a mystery worthy of Sherlock Holmes.

It also poses an unusual legal problem, according to Lucy Caswell, curator of the Milton Caniff Research Room in the OSU School of Journalism.

"WE CAN'T prove ownership of the

painting, so we can't legally accept it as a gift," she said Monday. "All we can do for now is hold on to it and try to find out where it came from."

The Case of the Missing Donor," as the OSU staff members have playfully dubbed it, remains open. It is an intriguing little mystery, particularly exciting to employees in the research room, where, Ms. Caswell said, "Things like this just don't happen."

The story begins March 28 in Beverly Hills, Calif., where a unknown person hands over to the U.S. Postal Service a rather odd-shaped package wrapped in brown paper.

ADDRESSED TO "The Milton Caniff Library, Ohio State Univ., Columbus, Ohio," and carrying the wrong ZIP code, the package takes almost six

weeks to reach its destination, arriving slightly tattered from the trip.

Inside is an old wooden frame containing a macabre painting of a man kneeling before a giant skull, with the word, "Fraternities," above the scene.

Closer examination reveals the first clue: the signature, "Bellows," at the bottom of the painting.

AND THE amateur sleuths at the research room are off and running.

They first take the painting to Barbara Groseclose, assistant professor of art history. She confirms that it is, indeed, an early piece of work by Columbus-born artist George Bellows, who is no stranger to Ohio State University.

Bellows attended Ohio State and did many yearbook illustrations in 1903 and 1904 before departing for New York. There he gained attention as part of the so-called "Ashcan School" of artists who often used rather seamy street scenes as their subject matter.

BEFORE HIS death in 1925, however, Bellows had also earned acclaim for his sports action paintings — prize-fights in particular — and his portrait work.

As it turns out, the Bellows painting mailed to OSU was used in the 1904 yearbook, *The Makio*, to open the section on fraternities, although the meaning of the stark image has been clouded by time.

Also a mystery is what became of the painting after 1904, Ms. Caswell said.

SHE SAYS police can find no record that it was reported stolen or missing anywhere, and the agent for Bellows' estate tells OSU officials the painting is not listed among the artist's known works.

"It's a little hard to trace something when nobody seems to know it still exists," she says.

The only other clue researchers have is a small sticker on the frame indicating the painting was mounted by a long-defunct frame shop in Columbus, about 1910.

OHIO STATE'S art historians say the painting would not necessarily carry a high price tag, since it is not a major Bellows work, but it is nevertheless a valuable addition to Ohio State's collection.

"We still need a deed of gift or at least a letter from the donor," Ms. Caswell said. "We are asking anyone who knows anything about this to contact us."



MYSTERY IMAGE — The original George Bellows painting used to produce this illustration for Ohio State University's 1904 yearbook

has been mysteriously sent to the university. Officials are now searching for the anonymous donor

Bellows work revealed as rare painting in oil

6-24-80
By Rebecca M. Lusk

The saga of the George W. Bellows "Fraternities" painting continues, according to Lucy A. Caswell, curator of the Milton Caniff Research Room in the OSU School of Journalism, with no new leads as to its mysterious donor.

However, an intriguing twist has come to light. Until now, there was only one other known surviving example of Bellows' early work in oil, "... a dreary, dark-brown copy of a landscape ..." according to Charles H. Morgan, professor of art at Amherst College and author of Bellows' biography. Now, it seems there are two.

And there is an additional enigma surrounding the painting. There is no mention of it in Bellows' meticulous records, and a letter from the agent for the Bellows' estate claims that they have no knowledge of it.

The painting arrived rather unpretentiously in May, wrapped in plain brown paper, and addressed with a black magic marker to: "The Milton Caniff Library, Ohio State Univ., Columbus (sic), Ohio 43200."

The only clue to the sender, according to Caswell, is the Beverly Hills, Calif., postmark. It was mailed March 28.

The authenticity of the painting was verified by Barbara Groseclose, assistant professor of history of art at OSU.

Caswell described the painting as "very dark and dirty," but said that upon close inspection the Bellows signature is evident at the bottom of the work. She said the painting is now at the OSU College of the Arts awaiting arrangements for cleaning and restoration.

OSU cannot claim ownership of the painting, Caswell explained, "rather, we have possession of it." If a question should arise about our restoring the painting without actual ownership, she said, "we could prove that we have made every effort to find the actual owner."

The painting was used as the frontispiece to the fraternities section of the 1903 OSU yearbook, the Makio. It depicts a young man on his knees in a desolate setting, with a huge human skull looming over his head. The word "Fraternities" heads the canvas.

Morgan states in his book that Bellows was rejected by the Beta Theta Pi Fraternity in 1901, a crushing blow to the young freshman. Although he did gain admittance to the fraternity in his sophomore year due to his athletic accomplishments, the memory of his lonely freshman year remained with him.

Bellows was born in Columbus in 1882. He lived at 265 E. Rich St., and attended Sullivant School and Central High School, from which he was graduated in 1901.

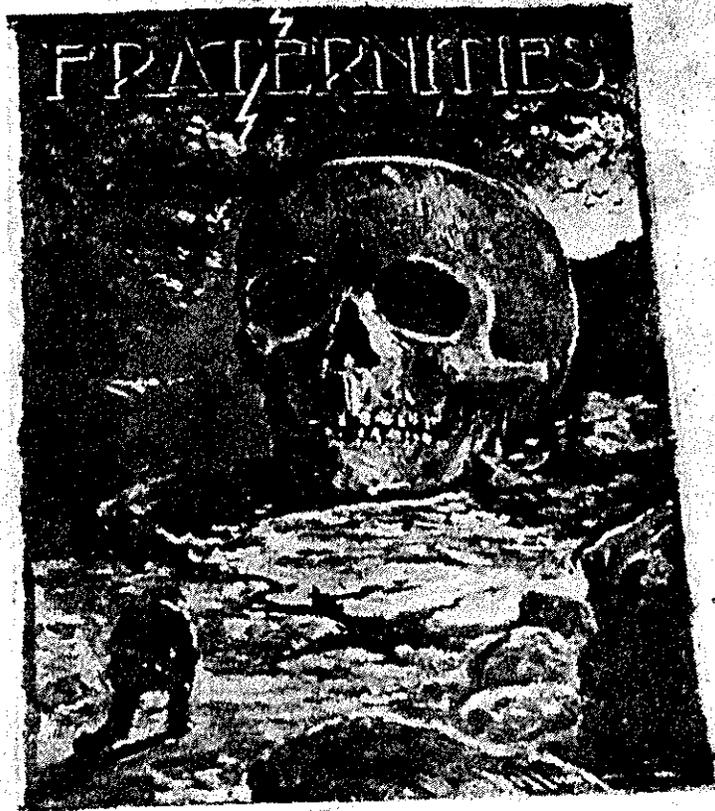
He attended OSU from 1901 to 1904, and was outstanding on the basketball and baseball teams. He did many of the illustrations for the Makio in 1903 and 1904, and took every art course OSU offered.

He aspired to be an artist from the time he was a boy; however, his father continuously admonished him to follow a "more suitable" career. In protest, Bellows refused to take his final

exams in his senior year, which barred him from returning to Ohio State and from receiving his degree.

In the fall of 1904, he went to New York to study art under Robert Henri. He became an almost instant success, combining study of the Old Masters and the modernist movement.

He remained an extremely popular and well-respected artist throughout the first quarter of this century; and although he died in 1925 at the age of 43, George Bellows remains one of this century's truly outstanding artists.



A MYSTERIOUS DONATION from an unknown source is the original painting of a frontis-

piece appearing in the 1903 "Makio, the OSU yearbook. "Fraternities," by George

The Lantern/Barbara A. Beatty
Bellows was painted after a fraternity rejected him in 1901

Columbus Museum of Art
March 1981

Bellows' Lithographs Travel to Indiana

An exhibition of 38 lithographs by George Wesley Bellows, selected from the permanent collection of the Columbus Museum of Art, is on view through March 15 at the Evansville Museum of Arts and Science, Evansville, Indiana. This is the first of a series of exhibitions, primarily drawn from the works-on-paper collection, which the Curatorial Department plans to organize and make available to other museums.

Columbus native George Bellows (1882-1925) took up lithography in 1916, and produced nearly 200 lithographs in the next eight years. As in his paintings, his subjects were taken largely from the world around him: family and friends, urban scenes, and sports events. Bellows produced a series of lithographs on war themes in 1918. In 1923 he received two large commissions to illustrate novels serialized for magazine publication. One of the first American artists to be involved seriously with lithography, George Bellows was a major force in generating interest among other artists in lithography as a fine arts medium.

Painting still a mystery

By Gregory Gilligan

Lantern staff writer 8-6-82

A George W. Bellows painting, entitled "Fraternities," arrived here two years ago from an unknown donor. The incident baffled OSU officials then, and it still does.

But now the painting is being cleaned and, according to Jonathan Green, director of the OSU galleries, there are plans to include it in OSU's collec-

tion.

The mystery surrounding the painting has drawn attention once again as the Columbus Museum of Art celebrates Bellows' 100th birthday with a special exhibit of his work. Bellows grew up in Columbus and attended OSU.

The exhibit, which opened Sunday and continues through Aug. 22, includes 19 paintings from the museum's own collection — one of the largest public

holdings of Bellows' work, according to Catherine Glasgow, associate curator at the museum.

Although the painting "Fraternities" is not part of the exhibit, it is an important piece because it is one of his earliest works done at OSU.

The saga of the mysterious painting began in May 1980 when a package arrived at OSU addressed to the Milton Caniff library at the School of Journalism.

The package contained only the painting — no letter or return address.

The only clue to its origin was a Beverly Hills, Calif. postmark, said Lucy Caswell, curator of the Caniff library.

To make sure the painting had not been stolen, Caswell notified the police. But they had no record of it.

She also contacted the Bellows' estate and his biographer, Charles Morgan. Neither estate trustees nor Morgan even knew the painting existed.

The painting had been used for an opening section of the fraternity pages of the 1903 Makio, the OSU yearbook. It depicts a man kneeling in front of a large skull with the word "Fraternities" written above.

Caswell verified the painting was the same one that appeared in the yearbook.

Bellows was born in Columbus on Aug. 12, 1882. He attended Central High School, which his father helped build, and OSU from 1901 to 1904.

"Bellows' first year at OSU wasn't a happy year because he couldn't take art classes and the fraternities didn't ask him to join them," said Diane Lubow, a Columbus Museum of Art guide who has done extensive research on Bellows.



Courtesy / Milton Caniff Research Room

This painting by George Bellows, which appeared in the OSU yearbook in 1903, was mysteriously sent to the university two years ago. Officials still don't know who sent the former OSU student's painting or why it was sent.

Bellows saluted in exhibition

DISPATCH 8-8-32

The Columbus Museum of Art is celebrating the 100th anniversary of one of Columbus' native sons in a special tribute exhibition entitled *George Wesley Bellows: A Centenary Celebration*.

It is a small but very cohesive exhibition consisting of the 19 oil paintings belonging to the museum's permanent collection and three crayon studies on paper displayed next to the final works for which they were used.

DESPITE ITS limited scope, the show offers visitors an excellent synopsis of Bellows' artistic evolution from 1906 with *Portrait of My Father* to 1921 with *Portrait of My Mother, No. 1*. Both works are not only moving testimonies of a son's affection but also reveal the difference in palette, execution and rendition between those two dates.

"Honest George," as Bellows' father was known in town, is represented with a few rich brushstrokes materializing from the anonymous darkness of the background.

In the 1906 portrait, Bellows was applying the teachings of Robert Henri who believed in the use of Hardesty Maratta's set formula of light to dark shades.

By the time Bellows painted the portrait of his mother, his understanding and manipulation of light to dark shades had come a long way. His approach became mature, his handling and modulations of light refined.

WHAT HIS BRUSHWORK had lost in spontaneity and richness it had gained in subtlety of depiction.

Bellows has never been admired as a colorist. He was at his best dealing with a fully loaded brush which captured the essence of his subject to modulations of light and shadow, or dark and light.

The technique can be seen in the marvelous 1913 portrait of *Mrs. A.B. Arnold (or Girl in Gold and Brown)*, which catches the lively and humorous twinkle

in the sitter's eye, and in *Polo at Lakewood* where the action and excitement of the game along with the thud of the horses' hooves seem to reverberate under huge gray skies.

After being exposed to European contemporary art at the 1913 Armory Show in New York, Bellows began brightening and expanding his palette. The quality of the results is debatable. His colors gained a peculiar electric vibrancy that even current tastes find uncomfortable. *Boy and Calf - Coming Storm* and *Arcady (or The Bay Near Newport, 1913)* are examples.

BELLOWS IS probably at his best capturing the human and seasonal aspects of New York City. In *Riverfront, No. 1*, he makes viewers feel the impact of swarms of youngsters caught in the summer heat of lower Manhattan.

Snow Dumpers makes the beholders witnesses to the contrast between pristine snow and teeming human activity. It is a superb painting with exquisite modulations of light and shadow moving from the foreground to the background, endowing the scene with amazing authenticity.

Children on the Porch (or On the Porch, July 1919) is a very special painting, quite different in concept and interpretation from most of Bellows' other works.

Children, especially his own, had always intrigued him. But the three little girls on the porch are visually separated from each other by the vertical supports of a screen. They seem framed, each in a world of her own.

Bellows attended Central High School, where he did pretty well academically and happily juggled basketball, baseball and drawing. In his junior year at Ohio State University he finally decided that art was more important.

But he proved that manipulating paint and brush does not prevent participation in more rugged activities. His *Polo at Lakewood* is depicted with a vitality and understanding of the sport that only a sportsman can capture.

The exhibition will continue until Aug. 22.



NEWS

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(LO,AW)

"OSU DAYS" AT COLUMBUS MUSEUM OF ART CELEBRATE BELLOWS EXHIBITION

COLUMBUS -- *The Paintings of George Bellows* will be exhibited at the Columbus Museum of Art from Oct. 11 to Jan. 3. In addition to being the most eloquent realist of his generation and considered to be one of the most powerful personalities in American art by his contemporaries, George Bellows was an alumnus of The Ohio State University. As a student, he was a varsity athlete, a glee club member and art editor of the yearbook.

In celebration of Bellows' Ohio State ties and the opening of the show, the museum and the university are presenting OSU Days on Sunday, Oct. 11, and Monday, Oct. 12. On these two days, all Ohio State Alumni Association members, faculty and staff will be admitted to the exhibition for \$2.25, which is half the regular admission price. Ohio State students may enter for only \$1, half the regular student admission. Ohio State identification cards or Alumni Association membership cards are required to receive the discount prices.

#

Contact: David Hoover, University Publications, 292-8177.

By Nancy Gilson
Dispatch Entertainment Reporter

BELLOWS' SUBJECT: American Life

Retrospective reveals impressive range
of Columbus native's paintings

Lean fighters with straining, sinewy muscles lock arms and heads. Outside the ring, hundreds of spectators focus on the combat. Smell the smoke; listen to the boxers' grunts. This is the art of George Bellows.

A demure young woman sits calmly, confidently, her solid gaze indicating absorption in inner thoughts. This also is Bellows.

Naked slum kids, in turn-of-the-century New York City, plunge from a rickety dock into the East River. Bellows again.

"I don't think a lot of people had any idea George Bellows did anything other than prizefights," his daughter Jean Bellows Booth said.

Americans are discovering the range of one of their most popular painters in the first retrospective exhibition of Bellows' works in more than a decade.

"The Paintings of George Bellows," with more than 60 works, opens next Sunday at the Columbus Museum of Art. The show was organized by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the Amon Carter Museum in Fort Worth, Texas, and has been seen in Los Angeles and New York City.

"Columbus people have always been more aware of Bellows, including the portraits, marine and New York City scenes," Booth said, "but I think this exhibition really opened the eyes of people in Los Angeles."

Booth, 77 and living in La Jolla, Calif., was 9 when her father died suddenly of an infection from a burst appendix. Until then, she had posed frequently for portraits and family scenes, and she vividly remembers a colorful family life.

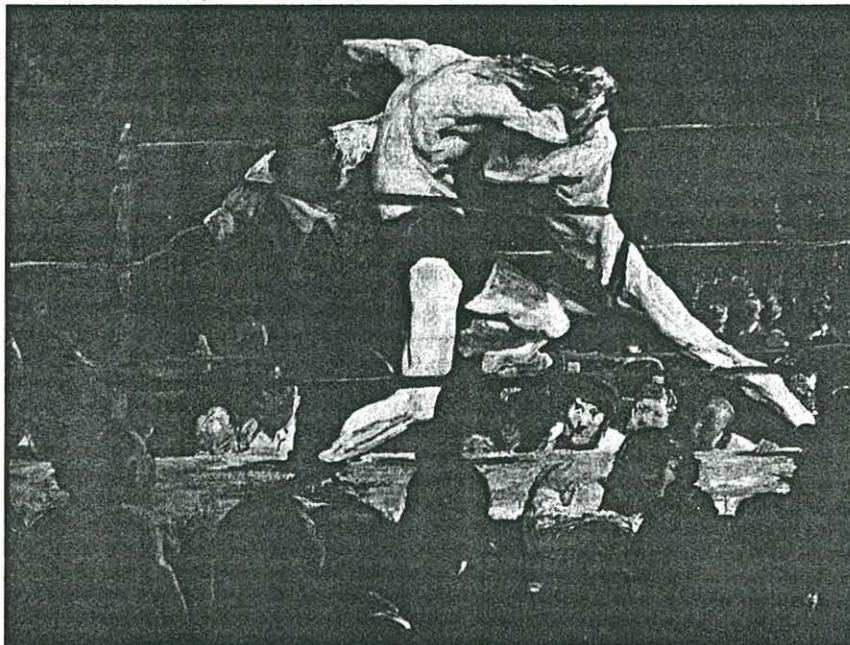
"My parents were always arguing," she said. "Arguing was what my mother did best. She loved it."

"My father was a devoted family man. . . . I would remember when he'd walk me to school. He took such huge steps; I'd have to run to keep up with him. . . . We would go on family picnics quite a lot. He was very gregarious and had lots of friends. He was very casual. Oh, he'd have his moments when he'd get mad, and when he got mad he'd roar, but I remember him as a very kind, happy man."

"It was easy to pose for him," said Booth, who, as a winsome child of about 6, appears in numerous portraits and family scenes. "He painted very quickly. He was very athletic, and he'd dash back and forth. He painted everything to be looked at from a distance. He'd go up to the painting, then back up and then dash back again."

"The Paintings of George Bellows" includes works for which the artist is most famous — the explosive boxing scene *Stag at Sharkey's*; *Cliff Dwellers*, depicting tenement life on New York's Lower East Side; and *The Circus*, an animated big-top scene with the central figure of a bareback rider.

Also in the exhibit are dozens of seascapes, city scenes and portraits, including *Katherine Rosen*, considered



Columbus Museum of Art

"The Paintings of George Bellows" opens next Sunday and continues through Jan. 3 at the Columbus Museum of Art, 480 E. Broad St. Though usually closed Mondays, the museum will be open from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Oct. 12. Regular museum hours are 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Tuesday-Friday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturdays and 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Sundays. Admission to the Bellows exhibit is \$4.50 for adults; \$2 for students, senior citizens and children. Combined admission to the Bellows and Sirak Collection shows is \$7 for adults; \$3.50 for students, seniors and children. Call 221-6801.

The famous *Stag at Sharkey's* (1909) is representative of the sports genre for which Bellows is best-known. Only six of his 600 paintings, however, are of prizefights.

Bellows' finest portrait, and the graceful *Anne in White*, depicting Booth's older sister.

"Michael Quick (curator) wanted an exhibit representative of every period in Bellows' life," Booth said. "This exhibit is quite comprehensive and exciting."

George Bellows was born and raised in Columbus. He was a capable athlete, distinguishing himself in baseball and basketball at Ohio State University, and considered a career in professional baseball. But he studied art and, after college, enrolled in William Merritt Chase's New York School of Art, where he met his mentor, Robert Henri.

Under Henri's influence, Bellows rejected idealized subjects for scenes of "real life." Although he was never completely aligned with the Ashcan School, he was linked with that group of American painters through his more realistic subjects, style and themes.

He plunged into painting pictures of New York City. He frequented athletic clubs, visited construction sites and familiarized himself with the lives of street urchins and immigrant families. Unlike many of the Ashcan painters, he achieved



The luminous *Katherine Rosen* (1921) portrays the daughter of artist Charles Rosen, a friend and neighbor.

Please see **BELLOWS** Page 2D

Special events

Events related to "The Paintings of George Bellows" exhibit. For information, call 221-6801.

PROGRAMS

- Educators' opening with overview and tours, Oct. 15 and 16. Fee: \$6 general, \$5 members.
- "George Bellows' New York," lecture by Columbia University Professor James Shenton with champagne reception, 7:30 p.m. Oct. 28. Fee: \$40 general, \$30 members, students, seniors.
- "George Bellows and His Era," adult class, Nov. 14, 21; Dec. 5, 12. Fee: \$45 general, \$35 members, students, seniors.
- "Big Apple Festival," family event re-creating the atmosphere of New York City during Bellows' lifetime, 1-4 p.m. Dec. 6. Admission: \$7 adults, \$4 children; \$5 adult members, \$3 child members.

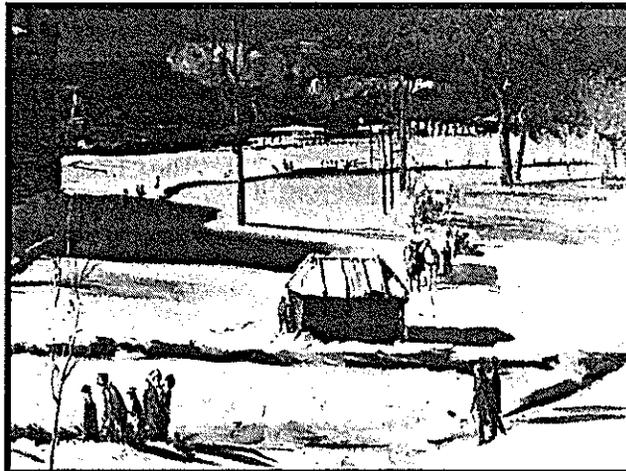
TOURS

- "The Ashcan School Artists," noon, Oct. 14 and 28. Free.
- "George Bellows Paints America," noon Oct. 16, 18, 22, 29; Nov. 11; Dec. 4, 6. Free with exhibition admission.
- "A Special Insight Tour of the George Bellows Exhibition," 2 p.m. Oct. 17 and Nov. 7. Free with exhibition admission.
- "George Bellows and the Sea," noon Oct. 20, 27; Nov. 3, 8, 19, 22. Free with exhibition admission.
- "George Bellows: Friends and Family," noon Oct. 23, 25; Nov. 10, 24. Free with exhibition admission.
- "Bellows' Contemporaries," noon Nov. 4, 18. Free.
- "George Bellows Portraits," family tour, 2 p.m. Nov. 21. Free with exhibition admission.

CATALOG: \$49.50 hardcover, \$29.95 softcover in museum shop.



Bellows resisted depicting idealized life in favor of scenes of New York City slums in paintings such as *Forty-Two Kids* (1907).



Blue Snow, The Battery (1910) marked a new direction in landscapes for Bellows. This painting is part of the Columbus Museum of Art collection.



In summer and fall 1913, Bellows completed about 120 paintings on Maine's isolated Monhegan Island.

A son of Columbus

Columbus retains connections to George Bellows.

Laurie Booth, his granddaughter, will join her mother, Jean Bellows Booth, and other Bellows' descendants at the opening of "The Paintings of George Bellows."

Jean Bellows Booth is loaning personal memorabilia, including sketches Bellows sent to her as a child when he was away.

The Columbus Museum of Art will show the related exhibition, "George Bellows: Lithographs," opening Tuesday. The free exhibit includes works from the museum's collection. Although he never returned to Columbus, Bellows was active in the Columbus art community and supported the development of the museum's collection.

The main exhibit also includes works from the museum's collection.

critical and popular success with his vivid depiction of American life.

In 1910 he married the strong-willed Emma Story, and several years later their daughters were born.

Bellows painted seascapes at Monhegan Island in Maine and a vast array of portraits at the artists' colony of Woodstock in New York's Hudson Valley.

He was enormously popular when he died in 1925 at age 42.

"I remember when he left for the hospital," Booth said. "Anne and I looked out the window and saw him getting into a taxi. He waved to us. He was in the hospital several days, but I remember when they told us we wouldn't have to go to school that day. We cried so hard when we found out why."

While critical acclaim for Bel-

lows' paintings has varied, his popular appeal has remained constant.

Writer Stephen May said in *Antiques & Fine Art* that Bellows "reflected his era's optimistic faith in America's destiny and his love of his fellow Americans. We may never see his like again."

"Starting out as a man's man of American art in a time of too many 'soft' painters, he ended up executing some of the most tender, evocative portraits ever created in this nation. His early work packed a wallop; his late images searched souls."

Booth describes her father's appeal more simply:

"It's such a relief for people to come to look at paintings they understand," she said. "I think it's terrible when you have to buy a book to understand what an artist is saying."



Columbus Museum of Art

George Bellows

Bellows' link to city's history to be explored

An afternoon of programs and activities today at the Ohio Historical Center and Ohio Village will celebrate the life and work of George Bellows.

Except where noted, events take place in the historical center:

■ "Broad & High: A Curator's Tour," 1 p.m., a look at Columbus

during Bellows' day.

■ Bellows slide lecture, 2 p.m.

■ Valley Dale dance demonstration, 3:30 p.m., Bob and Karynn Williams show how couples danced during the early 20th century.

■ Max Steam's "The Exhibit," silent films presented in a Columbus nickelodeon.

■ "Faces of Columbus," Columbus College of Art and Design students sketch portraits of famous Columbus people.

■ "Columbus Pleasures and Pastimes," games, crafts, trivia contest and other amusements.

■ 1860s baseball match, 3 p.m., Ohio Village.

VISUAL ARTS

Changing styles document Bellows' vision

Paintings created throughout career make rich exhibit

By **Jacqueline Hall**
Dispatch Art Critic

George Bellows (1882-1925) is one of Columbus' most famous sons. His work is widely represented in the Columbus Museum of Art's holdings and in various public and private collections around Ohio.

But rarely, if ever, has the public had a chance to see a major comprehensive survey of his short but prolific career.

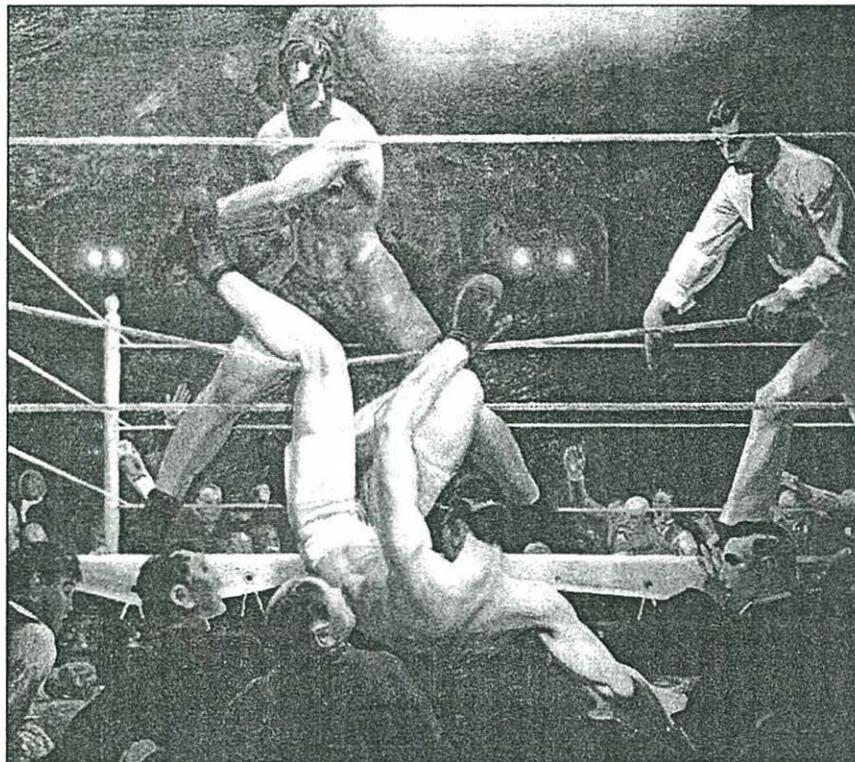
"The Paintings of George Bellows (1882-1925)," at the Columbus Museum of Art, offers such an opportunity. The exhibition was organized by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the Amon Carter Museum in Fort Worth, Texas. Its presentation in Columbus was made possible by a grant from Nationwide Insurance Cos.

With some 60 paintings lent by public and private collections around the country, the show is wonderfully buoyant and remarkably informative, following the artist through his careerlong stylistic experimentations and evolution.

The exhibition is presented in a loose chronological progression. But the paintings occasionally are grouped to emphasize Bellows' stylistic changes. Such is the case with his boxing scenes, which bring into proximity *Club Night* (1907), *Stag at Sharkey's* (1909) and *Dempsey and Firpo* (1924).

Dempsey and Firpo hardly seems the product of the same hand as the other two. *Stag at Sharkey's* is an exceptionally powerful image that captures the brutal, animallike vitality of the sport. The entangled figures, sketchily rendered in flowing strokes whose simple twists of the brush translate the bulges of straining muscles, stand highlighted against their dark surroundings.

The rather flat image is so expressive that it seems to echo with the grunts of the boxers and the thuds of their punches.



Above, *Dempsey & Firpo*, 1924; right, *Lady Jean*, 1924



By comparison, the action in *Dempsey and Firpo* appears frozen — the beautifully executed figures, monumental in their three-dimensionality, exude no conviction, and the carefully composed scene seems enacted by strategically placed dummies. The visceral quality of *Sharkey's* has been replaced by exquisite craftsmanship.

Those two paintings, displayed just a few paces into the exhibition area, epitomize the poles of Bellows' career. In between are the superb achievements and the experimentations that mark his continually changing style.

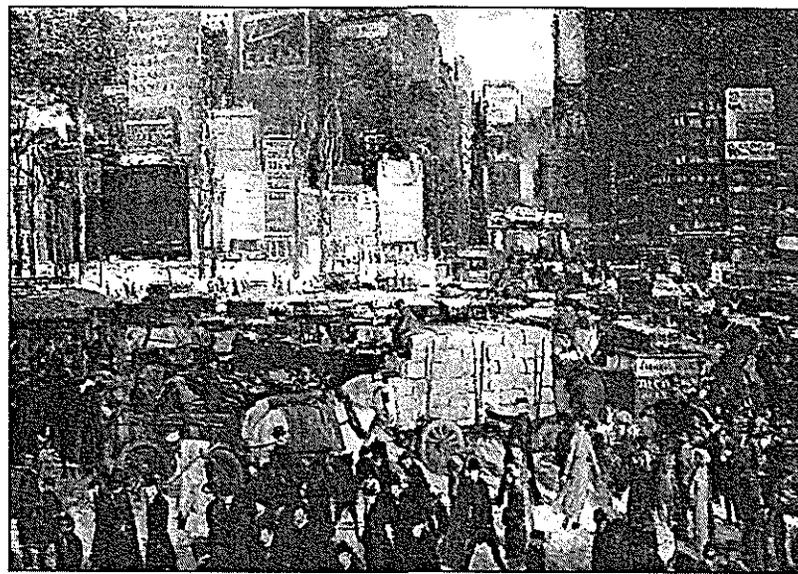
Bellows moved to New York in 1904 and came under the influence of Robert Henri (1865-1929), the leader of the realist "Ashcan School" movement, who quickly recognized the young man's talent. Bellows found that the movement's partiality to contemporary urban life with its prevailing social concerns suited his own temperament.

His palette at first emulated Henri's limited color range. His earliest works have a dramatic tenebrous quality, noticeable in *Portrait of My Father* (1906) and in *Club Night*.

One of the delightful discoveries of the show is that young Bellows quickly felt a need for less dimness and a richer palette. One surprising piece is *In Virginia*, which he painted in 1908 while teaching a summer course at the University of Virginia.

The outdoor scene, partly executed with a palette knife, suggests open space and haze and distant hills, definitely an impressionistic feeling. From then on, his urban landscapes and even indoor scenes, such as *Stag at Sharkey's*, present richer, brighter palettes.

New York, a composite view of the city in 1911, exhibits a range of light and delicate colors. Snow scenes also reveal sensitivity to textures that catch and reflect light



Left, *Aunt Fanny (Old Lady in Black)*, 1920; above, *New York*, 1911; below, *Polo at Lakewood*, 1910



differently, affecting local colors.

Bellows' interest in color led him to study Hardesty Maratta's system based on the mixing of adjacent and/or complementary colors with the three primary colors — red, blue and yellow. This helped him achieve a brighter palette. The discovery of European modernism at

the Armory Show in 1913 and of Gauguin's and Matisse's unorthodox use of intense hues prompted him toward more experimentations, with some doubtful results.

One experiment, however, is a brilliant success. In *Lucie* (1915), Bellows used an overabundance of intense green (even on the brow and

the decollete) with orange, pure red and bright blue. The results are realistic and surprisingly pleasing.

With its vivid palette, *Lucie* is a rare approach to portraiture for Bellows, who favored a somber and more character-revealing style. As indicated by the 17 portraits in the exhibition, portraiture was central to Bellows' art, a normal but far more personal extension of the social concerns of his urban paintings. One of his best portraits is that of *Aunt Fanny (Old Lady in Black)*, 1920, which captures the undaunted spirit of his frail relative.

Humanity pervades most of his representations of nature. In some works, such as *Fisherman's Family*, the human figure dominates the landscape; in others, the figures blend with their surroundings, as in *Summer Surf*, where they are barely discernible from the monumental rocks on which they stand. In other cases, only a lonely house in the manner of Edward Hopper or a sail barely seen on the horizon, as in *Beating Out to Sea*, suggests the human presence.

The sea fascinated Bellows.

GEORGE BELLOWS

■ "The Paintings of George Bellows (1882-1925)" will continue through Jan. 3 at the Columbus Museum of Art, 480 E. Broad St. Hours: 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Tuesday-Friday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday and 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday.

Sometimes he captured its awesome tranquillity, as in *An Island in the Sea* or *Evening Swell*, both of which show Rockwell Kent's influence. He also depicted its violence, as in *The Sea*, where hints of Winslow Homer's style appear, or in *Monhegan Island* (1913), when his palette was becoming more experimental.

Even a casual look around the exhibition reveals that Bellows' approach to his subject appears progressively more calculated, to become almost painfully so at the end of his career. However, his earlier works, which seem to have taken shape spontaneously under his brush, were just as meticulously and calculatedly composed.

We know that by 1909 Bellows had devised a geometry to create a firm armature under his most dynamic scenes. The magnificent *Polo at Lakewood* (1910), done during a visit to a patron in New Jersey, has the spontaneous quality of a scene sketched on the spot.

But a complex mixture of diagonals and triangles dictated the position of the horses and their riders. What partly gives the image its irresistible vitality is the brushwork — just a stroke is enough to create the leg, the arm of a player, to suggest the straining muscles of horses, to translate the quickness and activity of the game.

By 1902, Bellows' brushwork had lost that wonderful rapid, short-hand quality. It had become smooth, almost sleek; and the complex geometry of his compositions combined with such excellent craftsmanship contributed to the odd stillness that seems to pervade his late works.

Even *The Crucifixion*, in which every element is calculated to create intense drama and extreme pain, has a theatrical quality. The centurion to the far left appears frozen, condemned to hold his stance for eternity, as does the collapsing Mary to the right of the cross.

In his last years, Bellows was studying the Old Masters' works to develop a new style. *The Crucifixion* is a pastiche of El Greco's, complete with stormy sky and an elongated nude figure to the far right.

Titian's *Sacred and Profane Love* may have inspired one of Bellows' very last paintings, *Two Women* (1924). It is a startling image with a nude figure sitting next to a completely clothed one on a Victorian sofa, each seemingly absorbed in her own thoughts. It is a puzzling, even meaningless image, for all its superb craftsmanship.

Far more pleasing, and of the same period, is *Lady Jean*, in which Bellows' youngest daughter is represented in a turn-of-the-century costume. The portrait appears to emulate, in its simplicity, the American primitive school in the early 19th century.

Looking at those late works makes viewers wonder in which direction Bellows would have moved had he not died then. He certainly was at a crossroads in 1924-25.

The Columbus Museum makes the exhibition even more intriguing with a remarkable side show, with photographs, drawings and lithographs of Bellows' early years in Columbus. Many of those pieces are the property of the artist's younger daughter, Jean Bellows Booth.

Extra shows complement Bellows exhibit at art museum

To accompany its exhibition "The Paintings of George Bellows," the Columbus Museum of Art is marking the Columbus-born artist's career with two complementary exhibits.

The two shows highlight Bellows' drawings and lithographs and detail his life through photographs and memorabilia.

The exhibit "George Bellows: Lithographs and Drawings," on view through Jan. 3, demonstrates Bellows' contribution to the history of American printmaking.

It includes drawings and lithographs from

the museum's collection and from other Ohio collections, private and public.

Works include *A Stag at Sharkey's* and drawings for *Riverfront* and *Two Women*.

Among the lithographs are *The Sawdust Trail* and *Murder of Edith Cavell*.

A set of drawing studies related to two of Bellows' major paintings, *Girls on the Porch* and *Boy With Calf*, is displayed in American Gallery 8.

Paintings by Bellows' contemporaries place his works in the context of American painting at the turn of the century.

The exhibit "Columbus and Beyond" presents photographs from Bellows' childhood and college days at Ohio State University; family photographs from Bellows' days in Woodstock, N.Y.; and five amusing drawings that Bellows sent to his daughters while he was teaching art in Chicago.

Also featured are a series of Bellows' drawings from the Beta Theta Pi fraternity house at OSU.

Other mementos of Bellows' OSU years are copies of the 1904 *Makia*, the yearbook for which he was art editor, and the first-ever

pairing of a drawing for *Initiation to the Frat* with the corresponding lithography.

The materials for this exhibit are from the museum's collections as well as from the Amherst College Library, the Ohio Historical Society and OSU.

"Columbus and Beyond" will be on display through Jan. 3.

Admission to "Lithographs and Drawings" is free.

Admission to "Columbus and Beyond" is included with admission to "The Paintings of George Bellows."

VISUAL ARTS

Diversity bloomed in local art galleries

The past year in visual arts was one of diversity in central Ohio.

Some art institutions and galleries focused on AmeriFlora '92 rather than the Columbus Quincentennial. Approaches varied, but the results were the same — nature, especially flowers, were celebrated in art.

The Roberta Kuhn Gallery went right to the point with "AmeriFlora '92: From the Garden."

Floral themes also prevailed in exhibits at the Keny Galleries with "At the Garden Gate (1888-1961),"

the Riley Hawk Galleries with "Paul Stankard's Miniature Glass Flowers," the Riffe Gallery with "Fabric Gardens" and Studio B in Lancaster with "The Floral Art."



JACQUELINE HALL

The Columbus Museum of Art went far from American shores with "An English Arcadia 1600-1990."

In recognition of "The Year of the Woman," the Ruthven Gallery held "Vital Signs: Women Artists for the '90s," and the Festival Gallery hosted "Installation by Jenny Holzer," both in Lancaster.

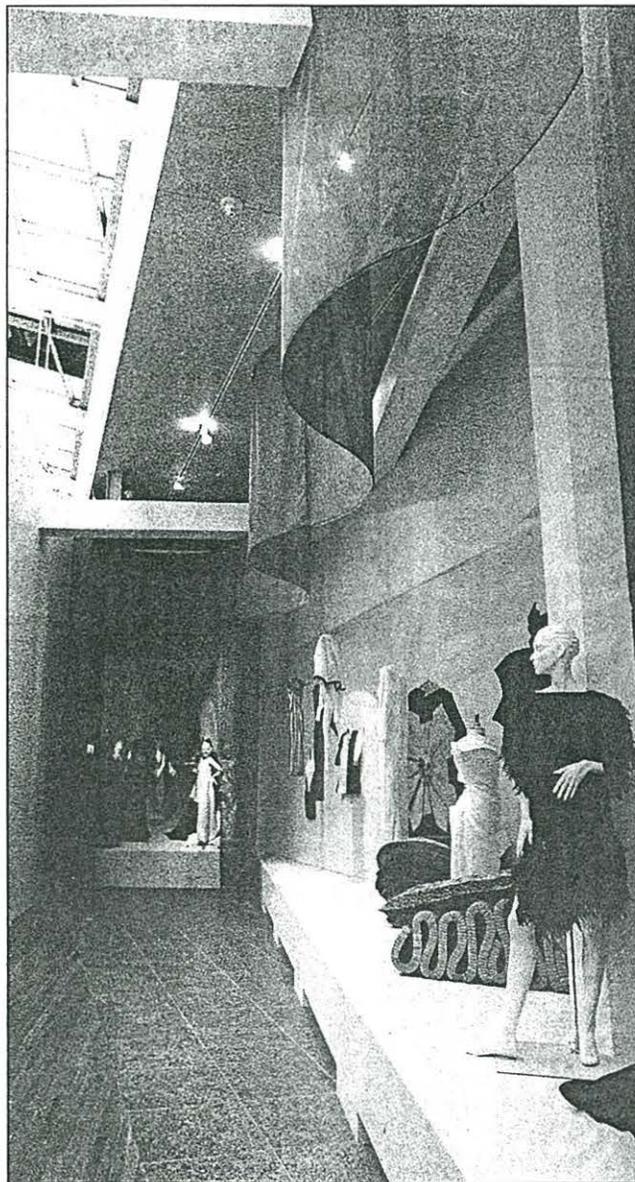
For the Lancaster Festival each year, the Festival Gallery brings in audacious exhibitions that would be perfectly at home at New York's Museum of Modern Art or the Wexner Center for the Arts in Columbus.

The Wexner Center also contributed to "The Year of the Woman" with its impressive "In Black and White: Dress From the 1920s to Today."

The imaginative presentation of costumes from the past 70 years transformed the awkward gallery space into a striking and inviting environment.

Most central Ohio exhibitions were not devoted to any particular celebration, but organized simply to promote art.

Increasing attention was paid in 1992 to quilting as a fine-art form.



"Fabric Gardens" at the Riffe Gallery demonstrated the unquestionable ability of artists from around the world in this medium.

Far more traditional were a number of noteworthy exhibitions at the Columbus Museum.

While "Masterpieces of Impressionism and European Modernism: The Sirak Collection," which opened



Left, serpentine mesh and fashions from "In Black and White: Dress From the 1920s to Today" at the Wexner Center for the Visual Arts; above, *The Sawdust Trail* from "The Paintings of George Bellows" at the Columbus Museum of Art.

in 1991, dominated, the museum presented other remarkable shows.

"The Paintings of George Bellows," through next Sunday, has been most popular with Columbus.

But "A Nation's Legacy: 150 Years of American Art From Ohio Collections," organized by the museum, was outstanding, bringing to life American art from 1838 to 1990.

Two small shows, "Stephen Longstreet: The Jazz Era" and "People, Places and Things: An African American Perspective," illus-

trate the museum's imaginative use of available material under a conservative budget.

Capital hosting Bellows exhibit

• Noted 'Ashcan' painter was native of Columbus

BY FRANCES B. MURPHEY
Beacon Journal staff writer

COLUMBUS: Earlier in the year I turned the television on to Charles Kuralt's *Sunday Morning*.

One of the segments on that particular day showed an exhibition of George Bellows' works in California. The narrator said the paintings were to be shown in the artist's hometown, Columbus.

Right then and there I promised myself that I would go see them when they came to the Columbus Museum of Art.

I have three weeks in which to fulfill that vow.

The exhibition, described as the most definitive collection of Bellows' work ever shown, is on through Jan. 3.

Then it moves to the Amon Carter Museum in Fort Worth, Texas, from Feb. 20 through May 9. That is the last stop.

The exhibition was organized by the Texas museum and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. It went from Los Angeles to the Whitney Museum in New York City before Columbus.

Bellows is represented in many museums, including the Butler Institute of American Art in Youngstown and Youngstown State University's gallery.

Out of the 'Ashcan'

Historian-author George Knepfer of the University of Akron, writing about *Ohio's Past* in 1985, referred to "Ohio's Robert Henri and George Bellows leading the Ashcan School of painters."

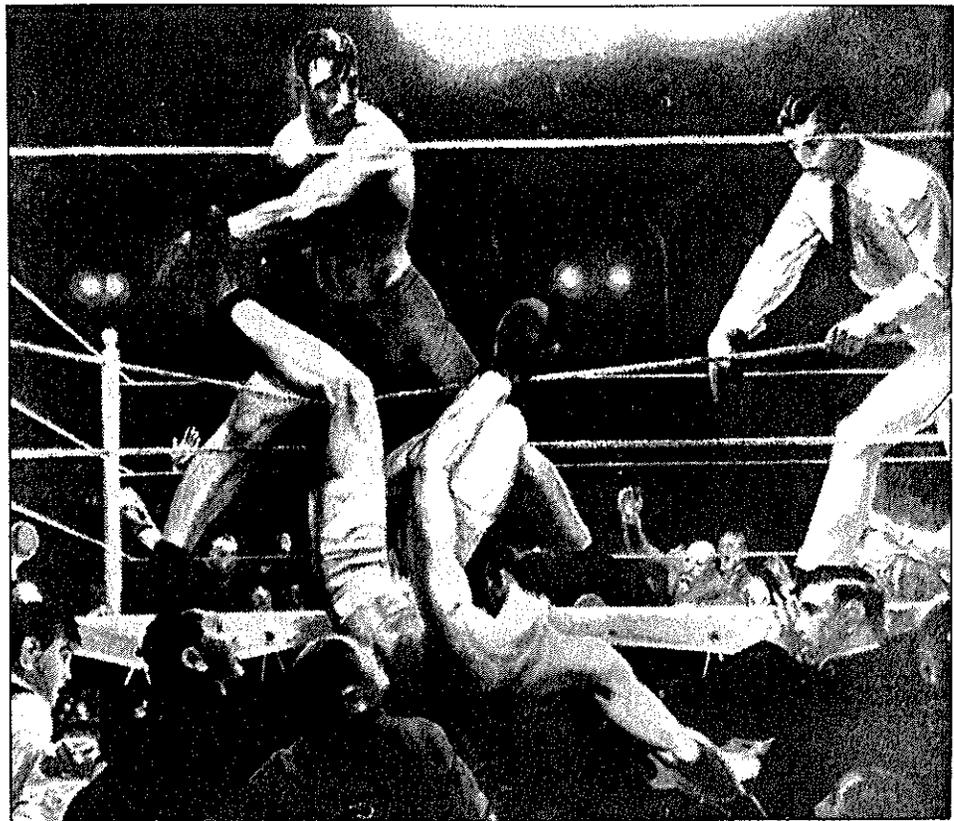
The Academic American Encyclopedia referred to George Wesley Bellows as "probably the best-known member of the group of American painters dubbed the Ashcan School for their honest and vivid depiction of seedy urban locales and their inhabitants."

Bellows was born in Columbus in 1882, attended Ohio State University and played semipro baseball.

He moved to New York City, where he established a studio in 1906. He died at the age of 42 in 1925, when an inflamed appendix ruptured.

Jean Booth, Bellows' daughter, came from La Jolla, Calif., for the Columbus opening in October. The artist's granddaughter, Laurie Booth, lives in Columbus, where she operates the Midwest Conservation Co.

During November, the museum had lectures and tours con-



George Bellows' *Dempsey and Firpo* is one of the paintings on display at the Columbus Museum of Art.



George Bellows

centrating on Bellows' varied works — portraits of family and friends, portrayals of Manhattan life and seascapes from summers spent along the New England coast.

The Columbus museum has the largest holdings of Bellows' works, both paintings and lithographs. These include *Blue Snow: the Battery* representing New York City and *Polo at Lakewood* in Ohio.

Known for fight scenes

The traveling show features two of the most famous Bellows paintings, both fight scenes. *Dempsey and Firpo* was loaned by the Whitney Museum and *Stag at Sharkey's*, by the Cleveland Museum of Art.

"We've heard nothing but praise for *The Paintings of George Bellows* exhibition," said Mary Ellison of the Columbus museum's public relations office.

A catalog of the exhibition, prepared in Los Angeles, is available in Columbus for \$29.95.

The Ohio Historical Society devoted its October-December edition of *Timeline to The World of George Bellows*.

The magazine chronicles his life and times in words and pictures. One article credits Bellows with "lifting American lithography from commercialism to artistic significance."

A copy of that *Timeline* may be obtained by sending \$7 to Ohio Historical Society, 1982 Velma Ave., Columbus, Ohio 43211.

Sirak show extended

Anyone going to the museum for Bellows might want to take in another outstanding display, *The Sirak Collection: Impressionism and European Modernism*.

The 78 works were given by a local heart surgeon, Dr. Howard Sirak, and his wife, the former Babette Lazarus of the department store family.

The Sirak exhibition was originally scheduled through October but has been held over through Feb. 14.

Hours are 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday; 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday; and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday. Closed on Monday.

Admission is free to the permanent exhibition but the special exhibits have fees.

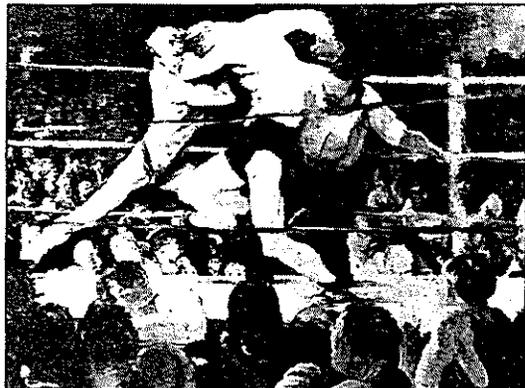
The Bellows and Sirak shows each cost \$4.50 for adults and \$2.50 for children 17 years and under, students and senior citizens, 60 and over. Children under 2 are free.

Both displays may be seen on a combined ticket for \$7 for adults and \$3.50 for the others.

The Columbus Museum of Art is at 480 E. Broad St., Columbus, Ohio 43215-9990.

The museum faces U.S. 40, between Ninth and Washington streets near Interstate 71. (614) 221-6801.

Akron Beacon Journal
ca. 1992



"Stag at Sharkey's," painted by George Bellows in 1909, was given to the Cleveland Museum of Art in 1922 as part of the Hinman B. Hurlbut Collection. It is given a place of honor in a survey of Bellows' art on view at the Columbus Museum of Art through Jan. 3.

Bellows exhibit does city proud

By STEVEN LITT
PLAIN DEALER ART CRITIC

COLUMBUS

Clevelanders ought to be proud. "Stag at Sharkey's," a George Bellows painting from the Cleveland Museum of Art, holds a place of honor at the entrance of the powerhouse survey of Bellows' art on view at the Columbus Museum of Art.

"Stag" is a stunner 83 years after Bellows painted it. Two boxers batter each other in a vortex of flesh and fury while shouting fans huddle in smoky darkness around the blinding light of the ring.

Form and content are beautifully fused in the picture. The brushwork stabs with pugilistic intensity, and the paint itself seems to glisten with blood and sweat. For any Bellows show, it is the picture to have.

The Cleveland museum initially refused to loan the picture to Columbus because it had agreed to send it to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York. Los Angeles and New York were the first two venues in a four-city tour of the traveling exhibition that was organized by the Los Angeles museum and the Amon Carter Museum in Fort Worth, Texas. After repeated requests from organizers, Cleveland generously relented and "Stag at Sharkey's" went to Columbus.

It's good that it did. The painting gives the Bellows show a sense of completeness it would have otherwise lacked. With more than 50 canvases, plus prints and drawings from the Columbus museum's collection, the exhibition is one of the most important in Ohio this year.

If Clevelanders have a right to feel pride about their museum's role in the event, Columbus ought to be

bursting. Bellows, after all, was a native. Born in Columbus in 1882, he graduated from Central High School in 1901 and spent three years at Ohio State University, where he played baseball and basketball and was a yearbook artist specializing in caricatures.

In 1904, his junior year, Bellows left Columbus and transferred his full energy from sport to art. He enrolled at the New York School of Art, falling under the powerful influence of William Merritt Chase and Robert Henri. He learned quickly, and soon became associated with the Ash Can School, a group of social realist painters including John Sloan, Everett Shinn, Robert Henri and George Luks. His career was launched.

Within three years, as the exhibition shows, Bellows was painting early masterpieces such as "Forty-Two Kids," which shows a crowd of gangly, naked boys cavorting on a broken dock on a grimy New York waterfront. The painting was shocking in its own day not only for its nudity, but for its frank depiction of life in the city's slums. Today the painting is admirable not only for its realism, but for its bold effects of light and shade and for the calligraphic agility of Bellows' brushwork.

But if Bellows' early work remains enormously impressive, much of his later work pales. After World War I, the artist's style lost its youthful edge. His rural landscapes and seascapes grew softer and sweeter in their effects of light and color.

Even so, Bellows excelled as a portraitist. His pictures of his mother, aunt and daughters, Jean and Anne, are taut and touching. The 1920 portrait of "Aunt Fanny" is one of the exhibition's masterpieces. In it, the artist's aunt grasps a crumpled hand-



"Cliff Dwellers," 1913, conveys the raucous vitality and claustrophobic congestion of life in a New York City slum.

■ "The Paintings of George Bellows" is on view at the Columbus Museum of Art, 480 E. Broad St., Columbus, through Jan. 3. Hours are Tuesday through Friday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is free to permanent collection; \$4.50 to Bellows show for adults, \$2 for children, students and seniors. Call (614) 221-6801.

kerchief with arthritic fingers and raises her eyes to meet the viewer with an intensity that belies her age.

Bellows' career was cut short when he died in 1925 of a ruptured appendix. He was 42. Had he lived, his art undoubtedly would have continued to evolve. Yet it was apparent by the 1920s that Bellows was at heart a conservative.

As noted scholar John Wilmerding points out in the exhibition's catalog, Bellows ignored the ideas of the European avant-garde, introduced in New York at the Armory Show in 1913. While his pictures documented urban poverty, Bellows turned away from women's suffrage and racial integration. And while Bellows emulated the heroic seascapes of Winslow Homer in his views of waves

crashing against the Maine coast, his paintings fail to match the epic power of Homer's.

"If it is obvious to conclude that Bellows was not an inventor, reformer or iconoclast," Wilmerding writes, "he did embody a broad exuberance and self-confidence central to his age and to the American character."

It is for this that Bellows is to be treasured. His art evokes a hale and hearty America synonymous with the blustery athleticism of Theodore Roosevelt, the jumpy vitality of ragtime music and the expansive social vision of documentary photographers such as Jacob Riis and Lewis Hine.

Paintings such as "Cliff Dwellers" (1913) and "Riverfront No. 1" (1915)

give sharp meaning to the phrase "huddled masses." "Cliff Dwellers," a masterpiece owned by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, shows hordes of immigrant poor spilling out of their tenements on a hot summer day. "Riverfront," from the Columbus museum's collection, likewise shows a riot of bodies compressed on a narrow sliver of beach against a backdrop of tugboats and sails.

Bellows had an eye for New York's sharp light and the overwhelming hugeness of a city on the rise. "Pennsylvania Station Excavation" of 1909 shows men and steamshovels working on a massive construction site in biting cold beneath a winter sky of electric blue.

A view of the same excavation at



George Wesley Bellows became one of the best known American painters of his generation

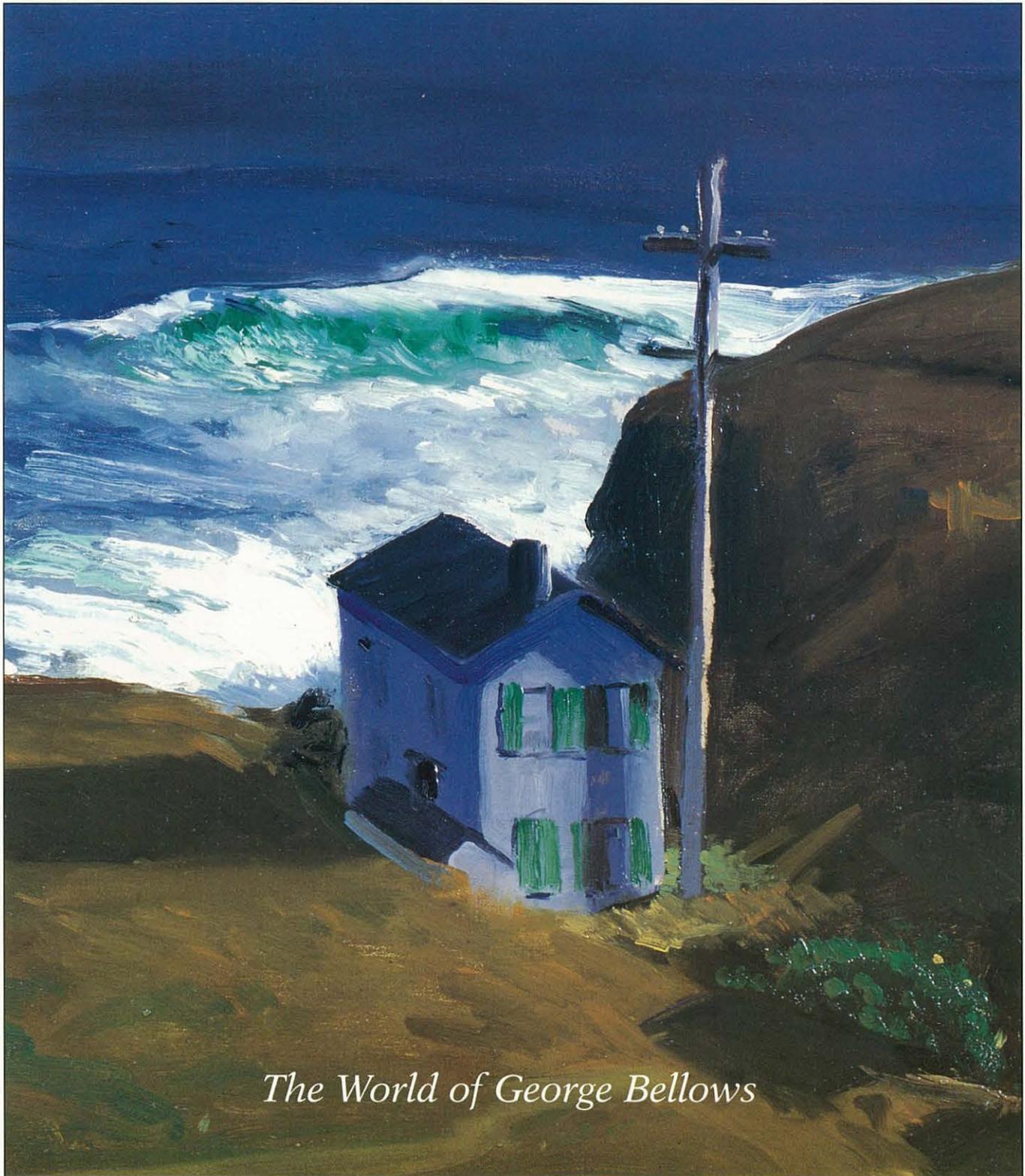
night is a tour de force, with antlike men clambering over enormous pipes in the depths of a construction pit as streetlights cast a brilliant glare over distant tenements.

Bellows' images of the ice-choked Hudson River, also well represented in the exhibition, are some of the most thrilling landscapes in all of American art. "Floating Ice," "Morning Snow — Hudson River" and "Blue Snow, the Battery," all painted in 1910, brim with the blinding light of winter so convincingly that they almost leave a viewer blinking.

Columbus is an especially good place to see such pictures because the museum's permanent collection is rich in the art of Bellows' contemporaries, including John Sloan, Rockwell Kent, Arthur Dove, Marsden Hartley and Charles Sheeler. A stroll through the galleries enables a viewer to place Bellows in the tradition of American realism, that stretches from Thomas Eakins and Winslow Homer to Edward Hopper. And it makes clear that Bellows had no intention of embracing European modernism, as did Dove, Hartley, Sheeler and others.

Still, when it comes to depicting the robust energies of America at the turn of the century, the art of Bellows hits a viewer as firmly as the blow of a boxer in "Stag at Sharkey's."

T I M E L I N E



The World of George Bellows

T I M E L I N E

*A Publication of the Ohio Historical Society
October • December 1992 • Volume 9/Number 5-6*

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BRIEF GARLAND A Life of George Bellows

by James M. Keny

In a brief, brilliant career, George Bellows rose to the pinnacle of the American art world. The Ohio-born artist was a complex and inherently interesting person — semiprofessional baseball and basketball player, committed advocate of liberal reforms, dynamic husband and father. His art, too, was varied, from stunning portraits of family members, to raw boxing scenes, to depictions of vibrant urban life.



Anneke College Library



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MASTER OF THE STONE The Lithography of George Bellows

by Nannette V. Maciejunes

George Bellows lifted American lithography from commercialism to artistic significance. Some critics went so far as to claim that Bellows's ultimate fame would rest upon his stunning lithographs. By demonstrating the medium's potential, Bellows inspired a generation of printmakers — and left us a breathtaking body of work.

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HOMETOWN Bellows's Columbus

by David A. Simmons

George Bellows was born in Columbus, Ohio, and there he spent his first two decades. He attended public schools, played on athletic teams, and, for a time, attended Ohio State University. Even after leaving Ohio in pursuit of an artist's career, Bellows returned to his hometown to visit family and friends. Here is the Columbus that Bellows knew.



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The full publication has been excluded because of copyright but is available at the Archives (2700 Kenny Rd., Columbus, OH 43210).

To request this file, please call (614) 292-2409 or email archives@osu.edu.

An impressionist imprint

**Kenys assemble a first for
a private gallery in central Ohio**



A Rainy Day, Paris (1889) by Childe Hassam

By Jacqueline Hall
Dispatch Art Critic

“Impressionism” is a rare treat for Columbus art lovers.

An exceptional exhibition, it draws together an outstanding selection of paintings by European and American masters of the turn of the century, including Renoir and Pissarro.

James and Timothy Keny, owners of the Keny Galleries, worked for more than a year with dealers and collectors in the United States and Europe to assemble more than 50 works of remarkable diversity. Until now, no private gallery in central Ohio had the means and contacts to put together such an impressive show.

The works' superb quality illustrates the many faces of impressionism and postimpressionism on both sides of the Atlantic. A walk through the exhibit is an enjoyable and aesthetically pleasing experience.

The portrait of *Madame Claude Monet* by Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841-1919) is a jewel. Executed in 1872, it has the wonderfully diffused quality peculiar to some of the best portraits done by the artist in the mid-1870s — with no modeling, no weight, hardly any substance, yet an exquisitely riveting vision.

The shimmering landscapes of Camille Pissarro (1831-1903) represent familiar delights to museum visitors but rarely are found on the market in the Midwest. *Le Pre a Eragny* (1895) is a sunny image, typical of the artist's work in his later years, and probably one of his last landscapes. After 1895, he gave up working outdoors because of his deteriorating eyesight.

REVIEW

Those two major French paintings beautifully complement works by American artists who visited or settled in France during the last decades of the 19th century.

Particularly notable are Mary Cassatt's *Lydia Seated in a Garden With a Dog in Her Lap*, circa 1880, and Childe Hassam's *A Rainy Day, Paris*.

Cassatt (1844-1926) painted her sister with her back to the viewer, surrounded by the rich vegetation of summer in a small garden near Paris. The painting, which has an appealing serenity, is one of a series featuring the artist's sister. Most of the works are in U.S. museums, but *Lydia Seated* had remained in Cassatt's family through her niece.

A Rainy Day, Paris, done in 1889 when Hassam (1859-1935) was painting under the influence of French impressionist artists, is a visual delight. The execution has a fluidity and buoyancy that seemed to have deserted the artist upon his return to America. The scene captures the dampness of the night and the richness of the lights, reflected in the wet pavement, with a joyous spontaneity.

“Impressionism” is on display through Friday at the Keny Galleries, 300 E. Beck St. Hours: 10 a.m.- 6 p.m., or by appointment. Call 464-1228.

The richness and diversity of other works are breathtaking, so what holds the attention depends greatly on personal preference.

Gloucester Harbor by Maurice Prendergast (1859-1924) is one of the few works in the famous tapestry series still in private hands. The monumental portrait of *Emma Atherton Lawrence* by Edmund Tarbell (1862-1938) is a remarkable example of Boston School painting in the early 1900s.

A Scheme in Reds and Greys by Robert Blum (1857-1903) is a lovely image with echoes of Whistler's Japanese visions. *On the Bay of Venice* by John Joseph Ennelcing (1841-1916) offers a silvery palette that also brings Whistler to mind. *Portrait of a Young Woman* by Belgian artist Alfred-Emile Stevens (1823-1906) makes spectators wish to see more of his work and his exquisite use of light and delicate modeling.



Madame Claude Monet (1872) by Pierre-Auguste Renoir

And the diversity goes on.

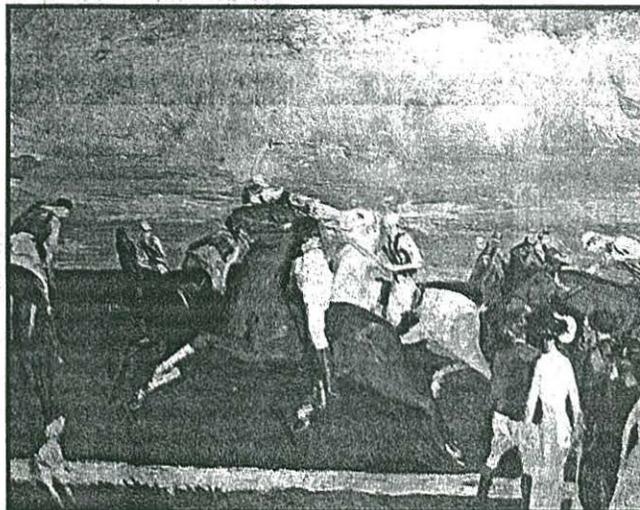
The painting that physically dominates the exhibition is *The Polo Game* by George Bellows (1882-1925). The work is a sister of *Polo at Lakewood* at the Columbus Museum of Art and of *Crowd, Polo Game*, owned by Mrs. John Hay Whitney. Contrary to the Columbus museum's scene, *The Polo Game* draws viewers close to the action, which remains on the surface of the canvas.

After the work was exhibited at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in 1911, Bellows applied gesso over the image and used the back of the canvas to paint a portrait of the prominent Judge Olney of New York. The polo scene was uncovered by a Minnesota collector, who acquired the painting from the artist's estate.

Remarkable in quality and in content, the show offers several unusually outstanding works, worthy of any museum.

Interesting to note is that the large watercolor *Behind the Salute* by John Singer Sargent (1856-1925) was bought by the Brooklyn Museum of Art in 1909, two years after it was painted. In the 1930s or '40s, the museum followed the trend of devaluing watercolors and sold *Behind the Salute*. Yet the painting is beautiful and vigorously executed, with as much presence as any major oils in the show, and would enhance any private or public collection.

Unfortunately, the Keny exhibit will not remain long in Columbus.



The Polo Game (circa 1911) by George Bellows



“ HO BELLOWS, ”

Short stop, 1902-3-4.
Double “O” man
V. O. A.

George Bellows (1882-1925), the most American painter, was born and raised in Columbus Ohio. He attended The Ohio State University from 1902-1904. During this brief period of time, he was the Makio art editor, member of the glee club, band musician, and played on the basketball and baseball teams. His love of sports marked him for life. Determined to become a professional artist, Bellows left Columbus in 1904 and enrolled at the New York School of Art.

As an artist, Bellows experimented with a variety of subjects, genres, and techniques. His paintings included an enormous range of subjects, from intimate scenes of family life to prize-fights and from portraits to landscapes. The most famous of his paintings are those that reflect the harshness of slums in New York City and those depicting the rough world of boxing.

Over the years, Bellows returned to Columbus many times to keep in touch with his past. His career was cut short by an early death at the age of 43, the tragic result of a ruptured appendix. Here then are his student days as he lived them and sketched them.

The above photograph and caption were used in a bulletin board display at the Main Library for Winter Quarter, 1993. Done by Jana Drvota.

RSS Feed: Library News
Posted on: Thursday, October 27, 2011 9:00 PM
Author: allen.916@osu.edu
Subject: OSU Libraries, Columbus Museum, Announce Bellows Acquisition

Full article link: <http://library.osu.edu/blogs/librarynews/2011/10/28/osu-libraries-columbus-museum-announce-bellows-acquisition/>

The Ohio State University Libraries (OSUL) and the Columbus Museum of Art (CMA) have partnered in the acquisition of the record books and ledger of internationally renowned artist and Columbus native George Bellows (1882 – 1925).

The acquisition was announced by Ohio State’s Director of Libraries Carol Pitts Diedrichs and CMA Executive Director Nannette V. Maciejunes.

Bellows, widely acclaimed as the greatest American artist of his generation, maintained meticulous records of his artistic production including sales and exhibition showings, including documentation of works that were destroyed. He augmented the record books with more than 200 thumbnail sketches of his original art.

“These documents are a unique research source for the study of the historical book market, and the taste and culture of early 20th century America,” Diedrichs said. “The acquisition of the books and ledger are in keeping with the Libraries’ special collections’ mission of acquiring and preserving primary research materials.”

Bellows’ connections to Columbus made retaining the volumes locally a desirable outcome, Diedrichs said. Bellows was born and raised in Columbus and attended The Ohio State University.

“This acquisition from the Bellows Trust is an important one for Columbus,” Maciejunes said. “The record books provide context for the Museum’s vast collection of paintings and lithographs by Bellows and play a major role in ongoing scholarship on the artist.”

As the joint owners of the record books, the Museum and the Libraries will collaborate on programming, exhibition and research availability of these unique resources.

In addition to storing the materials in the secure, atmospherically controlled Rare Books and Manuscripts Library, located in the Thompson Library, 1858 Neil Ave., Diedrichs said the Bellows documents will be available online through OSU’s Knowledge Bank, a digital repository.

The Bellows Collection was acquired from the Bellows Trust that assumed stewardship of the materials upon the death of the artist’s daughter, Jean Bellows Booth.

OSUL is ranked 12th among public university libraries by the Association of Research Libraries. The Libraries include nine special collections available for use by Ohio State University faculty, students, visiting scholars and the general public. The Columbus Museum of Art is committed to its mission of creating great experiences with art for everyone. The Museum’s collection has been celebrated as a treasure trove of European and American Modernism and includes important examples of Impressionism, German Expressionism, and Cubism. CMA also houses the world’s largest collection of paintings and lithographs by George Bellows.

COLUMBUS 201: ART EDITION

THE MASTER STROKES OF GEORGE BELLOWS

by **MARK J. LUCAS**



In an unsanctioned boxing ring in early 20th Century New York, two men brutally smash one another's faces in. With each punch, mists of their blood and sweat periodically wet the canopy of thick cigar smoke hanging over the ring and its screaming horde of spectators. They're two Romanesque sculptures doing battle, beautifully destroying each other for applause.

One spectator, a young man in his early 20s, steps out a side door and into the streets of Manhattan. He sees a city unlike any other before it. Masses of people, many filthy, crawl over each other in a rush to get where they're going, ants in their colony. Laundry hangs from lines over the streets. People shout from the sidewalks to other people leaning out of windows. The thick air smells of humans and machines. The young man nudges past them and into a building, up a flight of stairs and into a small studio apartment. There, he removes a number of

seen, his memory pulling out the sordid details of what it is to be a man animal in a sleepless city, and telling the story in a wash of colors on the canvas. After his death, he will be hailed as one of the most important American artists of his time.

His name is George Bellows, and he's from downtown Columbus.

"He rose in about five years from untrained student in the Midwest to the best of the best in his lifetime," said Melissa Wolfe, Curator of American Art at the Columbus Museum of Art, which houses the largest and most important collection of Bellows' work. "He led a revolution in subject matter. The subjects before were considered elevated subjects. The object [of fine art] was to elevate. He felt that any subject that was a part of life was a subject for fine art. Tenement buildings, street kids, boxers. The subject matter really troubled a lot of critics in his day. It

George Bellows was born in Sr., a well-known architect who lived in Columbus around town, and for whom the school in Franklinton is named. He was the daughter of a whaling captain. He was brazen, and he excelled in sports, playing basketball at Ohio State. He was elected to the university's yearbook, and he graduated from school before graduating to Manhattan, New York.

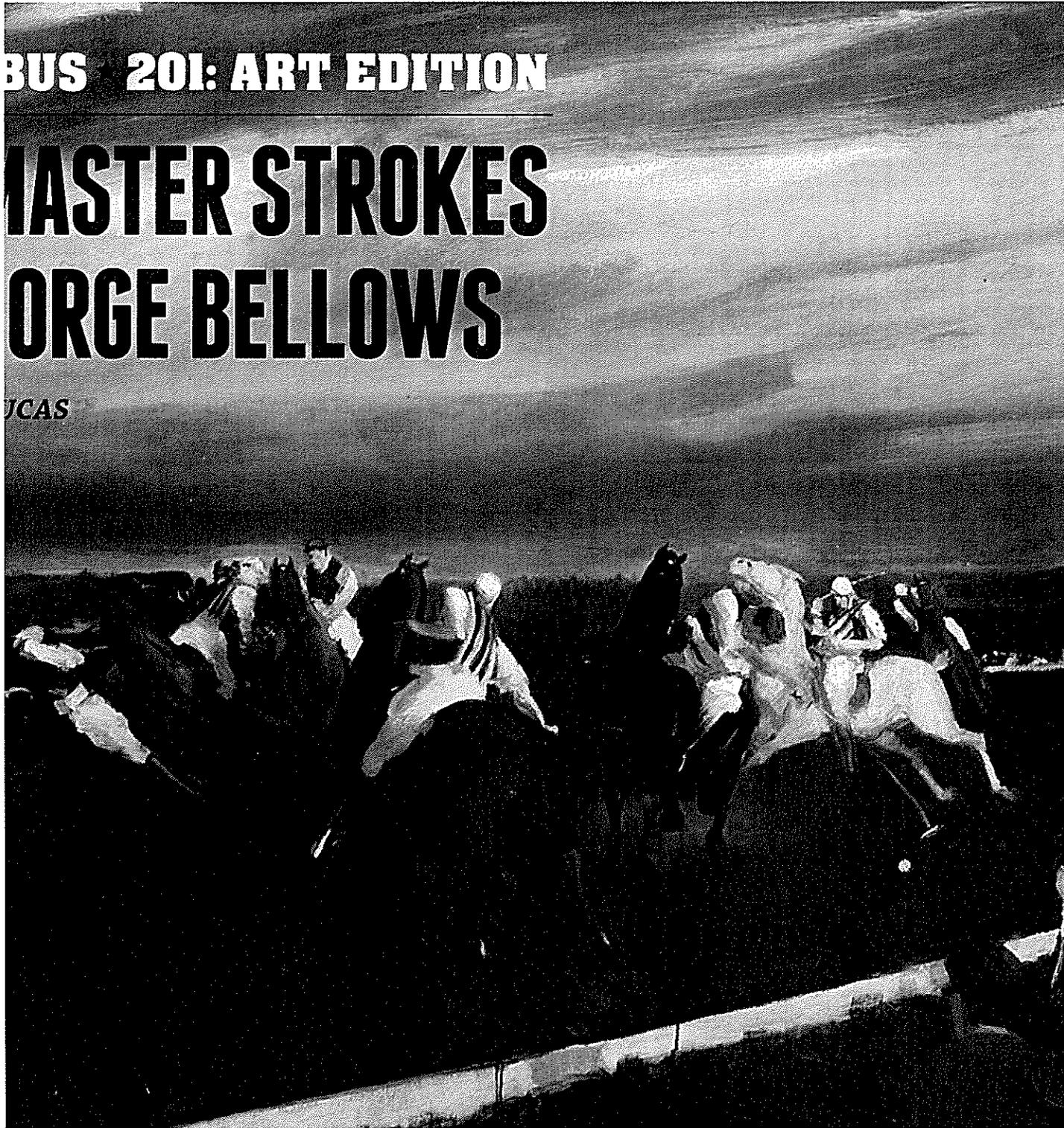
"He was one of a group called the Ashcan School," said Wolfe, referring to an art movement that took place in the early 20th Century. "He was a student of Henri, under whom Bellows studied."

"He led that group, and was a very dynamic painter," Wolfe said. "Very colorful and very dynamic. He was heuristics. He wanted and he

BUS 201: ART EDITION

MASTER STROKES GEORGE BELLOWS

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George Bellows was born in 1882 to George Bellows,
Sr., a well-known architect who designed several build-
ings around town, and for whom Bellows Elementary
School in Franklinton is named, and Anna Smith, the
daughter of a whaling captain. He was opinionated and
brazen, and he excelled in sports, playing baseball and
basketball at Ohio State. He also provided illustrations
for the university's yearbook, *Makio*, but ultimately left
school before graduating to make his way as an artist in
New York.

"He was one of a group called the Ashcan School,"
said Wolfe, referring to an artistic movement that took
place in the early 20th Century, bolstered by artist Robert
Henri, under whom Bellows studied.

"He led that group, and was just a really, really good
painter," Wolfe said. "Very confident in terms of color,
and very dynamic. He was headstrong and funny. Tem-

big voice and used it and had very strong ideas. The physicality and brushwork [in his work] sort of fit that personality."

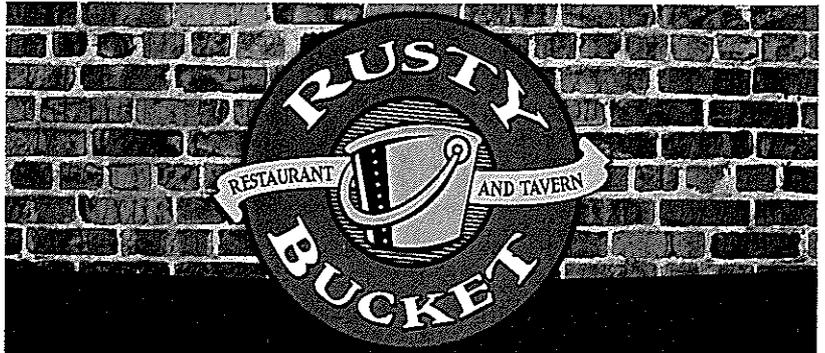
Bellows' choice of common cultural subject matter and virtuosity as a painter shot him up the ladder of the artistic world. It was a provocative move away from the clean, idealized fine art of the time, and stirred some. He wouldn't die a pauper, as did Van Gogh. He soon had a studio in New York. He did, however, dissent from his artistic peers in his support for U.S. intervention in WWI. Bellows' depictions of Germany's atrocities in Europe were considered overreaching by many, especially considering he'd not seen them with his own eyes. It was around this time that he began to make waves in yet another field: lithography.

"It was seen as a commercial art," explained Wolfe. "He was really the first one that looked at it as a fine art medium."

Eventually, Bellows would go on to teach at the Art Institute of Chicago, but would be in his grave only a few years later, due to a ruptured appendix. His work continues to be shown at galleries around the world, including the Royal Academy in London. One of his pieces, *Polo Crowd*, sold to Bill Gates for the whopping sum of \$27.5 million in 1999. Even the White House fancies Bellows' work, having acquired his 1919 painting *Three Children* in 2007, which hangs in the President's Green Room.

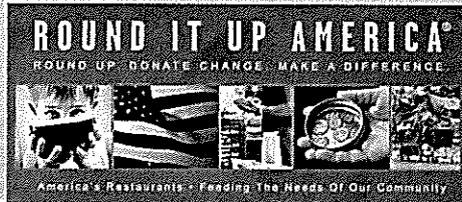
He is regarded today as one of the most influential painters in modern history, if not *the* most important contemporary American painter. He may be buried in Brooklyn, but he was a Columbus man, and a Buckeye by birth. ■

In preparation for their fall exhibit, George Bellows and the American Experience, a special presentation will be held by the CMA, 7 - 8 p.m. April 30 at the Grandview Heights Public Library. For more, visit www.ghpl.org.



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