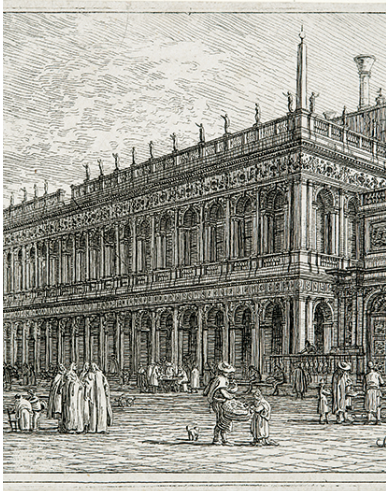


Canaletto's *Vedute* Prints:
An Exhibition in Honor of Adolph Weil Jr.

HOOD
MUSEUM OF ART
www.hoodmuseum.dartmouth.edu

News Release | Contact: Nils Nadeau, Head of Publishing and Communications | (603) 646-2095 | nils.nadeau@dartmouth.edu

New Hood Exhibition Reveals Another Side of Canaletto's Venice



Hanover, N.H.—July 13, 2015—Beginning August 1, 2015, the Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College, will present an exhibition of thirty etchings from the museum's collection that represent a nearly complete set of Venice-inspired prints by Giovanni Antonio Canal (1697–1768). Known as Canaletto, the artist is famous for his luminous, sweeping views of the Grand Canal and Piazza San Marco. The *Vedute*, a series of prints he made in the early 1740s, reveal another, often more modest, side of Venice. These scenes are intimate in scale and depict an extraordinary variety of subject matter, encompassing both real and imaginary views, from urban portraits to bucolic landscapes. This exhibition presents the full range of Canaletto's *Vedute* project while

celebrating the legacy of Adolph J. "Bucks" Weil, Dartmouth Class of 1935, an astute and generous collector who assembled this remarkable suite of etchings and over his lifetime amassed one of the most impressive collections of Old Master prints in the country.

Mr. Weil's many extraordinary gifts to the Hood include exceptional prints by such artists as Albrecht Dürer, Lucas van Leyden, Rembrandt van Rijn, Jacques Callot, and Francisco Goya. The *Vedute* etchings were donated to the museum by Jean K. Weil, following the wish of her late husband. Through this exhibition devoted to Canaletto, the Hood is honored to highlight an important facet of Mr. Weil's distinguished collection in recognition of the one hundredth anniversary of his birth.

It is difficult to imagine an artist more intimately associated with a city than Canaletto. For centuries, his name has been synonymous with topographical cityscapes of Venice known as *vedute* (views). His meticulously detailed paintings of such familiar vistas as the Grand Canal and Piazza S. Marco celebrate the city's stunning beauty and became coveted mementoes for English gentlemen to bring home from the Grand Tour. Given his fame as a landscape painter and the demand for his trademark Venetian scenes, it is remarkable that he turned, albeit very briefly, to a new medium and format for his art.

In the early 1740s, Canaletto embarked on a project to create a series of etchings dedicated to (and most likely financed by) Joseph Smith, the British consul to the Venetian Republic, who acted as his agent on behalf of foreign collectors. Unlike his painted views of Venice, the *Vedute* prints present an unexpected side of the artist and offer an alternate window into eighteenth-century Venetian life. Creative and at times

Canaletto's *Vedute* Prints:
An Exhibition in Honor of Adolph Weil Jr.

HOOD
MUSEUM OF ART
www.hoodmuseum.dartmouth.edu

News Release | Contact: Nils Nadeau, Head of Publishing and Communications | (603) 646-2095 | nils.nadeau@dartmouth.edu

whimsical, the scenes are often pastiches of real places and imaginary views. With few exceptions, they are not of the expected landmarks but show the more humble, everyday aspects of the city, such as modest dwellings and little byways; others are fantasies, ranging from elaborate caprices to intimate backyard scenes and wild landscapes. The *Vedute* prints thus reveal an unknown artist and a hidden city and its environs, beyond the vision packaged for tourists and outsiders.

Canaletto, after years of precisely transcribing the glory of Venetian tourist sites, clearly delighted in the creative freedom of this project, combining disparate elements to create a romantic portrait of the Venice he knew so well. With unfamiliar etching tools in hand, he flourished with newfound spontaneity and economy of line. Even in the few recognizable Venetian scenes included in the series—*La Libreria*, for example—Canaletto downplays the soaring architecture to focus on the activities of everyday Venetian life, such as children playing, nuns promenading, and merchants haggling.

Offering creative combinations of fantasy and reality, inventive confluences of the romantic past with a precarious present, and a peek at the domestic side of Venice, the *Vedute* represent a significant departure from Canaletto's previous work. Equally, they reveal an unexpected virtuosity in a medium that was entirely new to the artist. The reason for Canaletto's shift to printmaking at the peak of his fame as a landscape painter remains unclear. In part, the *Vedute* prints may have been an answer to the artist's critics and detractors, who favored a more imaginative, rather than topographical, approach. For all of their inventiveness and skillful yet spontaneous execution, they are now considered some of the finest examples of etching of the eighteenth century.

The Canaletto exhibition is complemented by an installation of eight late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century American etchings of Venice by James McNeill Whistler and his circle, all of them drawn from the Hood's collection. Whistler, who greatly admired Canaletto, was a major influence in the development of the late nineteenth-century American etching revival.

Canaletto's Vedute Prints will be on view at the Hood from August 1 through December 6, 2015. It is accompanied by a twenty-page booklet with essays by former Hood Assistant Curator for Special Projects Sarah G. Powers and Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts Curator of Collections Margaret Lynne Ausfeld. The booklet was co-published with the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, located in Mr. Weil's hometown of Montgomery, Alabama, where a version of the exhibition was on view in the spring of 2015. The MMFA also benefited from donations from Mr. Weil's outstanding collection of prints, including several impressions of Canaletto's *Vedute* etchings.

To celebrate the exhibition, Frederick Ilchman, Chair, Art of Europe, Museum of Fine

Canaletto's *Vedute* Prints:
An Exhibition in Honor of Adolph Weil Jr.

HOOD
MUSEUM OF ART
www.hoodmuseum.dartmouth.edu

News Release | Contact: Nils Nadeau, Head of Publishing and Communications | (603) 646-2095 | nils.nadeau@dartmouth.edu

Arts, Boston, will deliver a lecture titled “Viewing 18th-Century Venice with Canaletto and Casanova” in the Hood Museum of Art Auditorium on Friday, October 23, at 5:00 p.m. A reception will follow in Kim Gallery. Dartmouth College Studio Art Professor Louise Hamlin will also give a lunchtime gallery talk titled “Canaletto from an Artist’s Perspective” in the exhibition gallery on Tuesday, October 6, at 12:30 p.m.

This exhibition was organized by the Hood Museum of Art and the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, Montgomery, Alabama, and generously supported by the William Chase Grant 1919 Memorial Fund.

About the Hood Museum of Art

The mission of the Hood Museum of Art, as a teaching museum, is to create an ideal learning environment that fosters transformative encounters with works of art. This dynamic educational and cultural facility houses one of the oldest and largest college collections in the country, with more than 70,000 objects acquired since 1772. Among its most important works are six Assyrian stone reliefs that date from around 900 BCE. The collection also presents art from other ancient cultures, the Americas, Europe, Africa, Papua New Guinea, and many more regions of the world. The Hood seeks to inspire and educate through direct engagement with original works of art and offers access to the rich diversity of its collections through ongoing highlights displays, special exhibitions, an online collections database, and a wide array of programs and events.

About Dartmouth

Founded in 1769, Dartmouth is a member of the Ivy League and consistently ranks among the world’s greatest colleges and universities. Dartmouth has forged a singular identity for combining its deep commitment to outstanding undergraduate liberal arts and graduate and professional education with distinguished research and scholarship in the arts and sciences and its three leading professional schools—the Geisel School of Medicine, Thayer School of Engineering, and the Tuck School of Business.

Media Contacts:

Hood Museum of Art

Nils Nadeau: (603) 646-2095 • nils.nadeau@dartmouth.edu

Dartmouth College Office of Public Affairs

(603) 646-3661 • office.of.public.affairs@dartmouth.edu

Image caption: Giovanni Antonio Canal (Canaletto), *La Libreria. V. (The Library, Venice)* (detail), about 1740–44, etching on laid paper. Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College: Gift of Jean K. Weil in memory of Adolph Weil Jr., Class of 1935; PR.997.5.37.

Canaletto's *Vedute* Prints:
An Exhibition in Honor of Adolph Weil Jr.

HOOD
MUSEUM OF ART
www.hoodmuseum.dartmouth.edu

News Release | Contact: Nils Nadeau, Head of Publishing and Communications | (603) 646-2095 | nils.nadeau@dartmouth.edu

#####