

Art and the American Revolution in the Newberry Collection

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John Singleton Copley and His Art

Amory, Martha Babcock. *Domestic and artistic life of John Singleton Copley, R.A. With notices of his works, and reminiscences of his son, Lord Lyndhurst, Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain. By his granddaughter, Martha Babcock Amory.* Boston, New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1882. Written by Copley's granddaughter, this work includes a life of Copley and also of his son Lord Lyndhurst, Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain, as well as copies of letters. **Call #: W 01 .C809**

Bayley, Frank. *Five colonial artists of New England: Joseph Badger, Joseph Blackburn, John Singleton Copley; Robert Feke, John Smibert.* Boston: Priv. print, 1929. Treats Copley alongside his contemporaries to contextualize his work and assist in identification of portraits. **Call #: W 683 .08**

Cunningham, Allan. *The lives of the most eminent British painters, sculptors, and architects.* London : J. Murray, 1829-33. The 13-page biography included among those of other painters such as Hogarth, Reynolds, Gainsborough, West, and Blake, and architects Indigo Jones and Sir Christopher Wren is

purportedly the first published biography of Copley. Includes an engraved portrait, noted "from the original in the possession of Lord Lyndhurst," Copley's son (163). **Call #: W 045 .2 (Vol 5).**

Metropolitan Museum of Art. *Exhibition of paintings by John Singleton Copley, in commemoration of the two-hundredth anniversary of his birth, held in the Metropolitan museum of art, New York, December 22, 1936 to February 14, 1937.* [New York, c. 1936]. With black and white plates, this catalog of an exhibition held at the Met in 1936/1937 included both portraits, such as *The Boy with a Squirrel* (1765), and history paintings, such as *The Death of Major Pierson* (1783). **Call #: W 01 .C8097**

Perkins, Augustus Thorndike. *Sketch of the life and a list of some of the works of John Singleton Copley.* Boston : J.R. Osgood & Co., 1873. Perkins dedicated this work to daughter, Elizabeth Greene Perkins, Copley's great-great-granddaughter. It contains short biographies of Copley's sitters alongside physical descriptions of paintings. **Call #: W 01 .C81**

Primary Sources from Copley's World

Letters & papers of John Singleton Copley and Henry Pelham, 1739-1776 in *Massachusetts Historical Society ... Collections*, v. 71. [Boston]: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1914. With transcriptions of letters, as well as images of paintings,

drawings, and letters. The table of contents includes a summary of each letter's subject. The original letters and documents are held in London. **Call #: F 844 .553 v. 71**

Du Fresnoy, Charles Alphonse. *The art of painting*. Translated into English verse by William Mason, M.A., with annotations by Sir Joshua Reynolds. Dublin, 1793. A later edition of Du Fresnoy's 1668 *De Arte Graphica*. Copley may have had access to treatises of this sort of in the early years of his career (Kamensky, 47). This edition includes printed annotations by the painter Sir Joshua Reynolds. **Call #: W 6. 24**

Royal Academy of the Arts. *Exhibition of the Royal Academy*. [London : The Academy] , 1st-192nd; 1769-1960. Copley's name appears among those of other exhibitors in these printed catalogs; entries include brief descriptions of the content of each painting. The 10th exhibition, 1778, describes *Watson and the Shark*, "65. A boy attacked by a shark, and rescued by some seamen in a boat; founded on a fact which happened in the harbour of the Havannah." (p.7). **Call #: W1145.76; Newberry holds v.1 (1769) to v.76 (1844)**

Smibert, John. *The notebook of John Smibert. With essays by Sir David Evans, John Kerlake, and Andrew Oliver, and with Notes relating to Smibert's American portraits by Andrew Oliver*. Boston : Massachusetts Historical Society, 1969. Facsimile of the journal of painter John Smibert, an early Boston contemporary of Copley. **Call #: 5A 3351**

Vesalius, Andreas. *De hvmani corporis fabrica libri septem. : Cum indice rerum & uerborum memorabilium locupletissimo*. Venetiis : Apud Franciscum Franciscium Senensem & Ioannem Criegher Germanum, 1568. This anatomical work provided inspiration for the young Copley as he learned to render the human form (Kamensky, 45). The Newberry holds this reprint of the original 1543 text, as well as a 2014 annotated translation of the 1543 and 1555 editions. **Call #s: Case folio QM21 .V48 1568; Wing Oversize ZPP 2038 .M45**

Prints and Paintings

While not explicitly related to Copley, these are examples of prints and paintings from this period

Collection of eighteenth and nineteenth century English caricatures. This is a collection of some 2000 prints of political satire published between the 1720s and the 1840s. It includes work by artists such as James Gillray, Thomas Rowlandson, and George Cruikshank. Many of the prints can also be found in the collection of the British Museum. **Call #: Case Oversize W 778 .186**

Des Barres, Joseph F. W. (Joseph Frederick Wallet), *The harbour and part of the town of Havannah [graphic]*. [London: J.F.W. Des Barres, between 1774 and 1781]. This is a print (aquatint and etching) of the harbor at Havana where Watson was attacked by the shark as depicted in Copley's painting. This was engraved by Des Barres and appeared in *The Atlantic Neptune*, published for the use of the Royal Navy of Great Britain. **Call #: map 4F G3320 no. 176**

[Portrait of Benjamin Franklin] [graphic] [between 1800 and 1819]. This is a small unsigned portrait of Benjamin Franklin on parchment. It is probably based on a well-known portrait done by Joseph Siffre de Duplessis in Paris in 1778 when Franklin was at the French court. It may also have been inspired by a print made after that portrait. This parchment portrait was originally it was owned by R.R. Donnelley & Sons. **Call #: Vault Oversize Wing MS 191**

Portraits of English nobility, artists and bookmen [graphic] [ca. 1700-ca. 1880]. Varying in size and composition are seven prints dating from the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Sitters include: the Earl and Countess of Bridgewater (1798), Jane Lady Caesar (1810), William Earl of Bedford and Lord Russel, Mrs. Beale and her son Charles, Baptist May and Mary Beale; George Vertue, and Thomas Bewick. **Call #: Case Wing broadside N7598.2 .P67**

To find visual materials in the online catalog, use keywords "Pictorial Works," engraving, drawing, print, cartoon, broadside, (chromo)lithograph. Also "set more limits" to search for format "Artwork/Chart" (omits images in books).

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- American Revolution (1775-1783)Copley, John
- Art, American
- Boston (Mass.)—History—Colonial period, ca. 1600-1775
- Boston (Mass.)—History—Revolution, 1775-1783.
- Color in art
- Copley, John Singleton, 1738-1815
- United States—History—Revolution, 1775-1783

This Quick Guide was created for a Colonial History Lecture by **Jane Kamensky, *A Revolution in Color: The World of John Singleton Copley***, held at the Newberry on June 3, 2017.