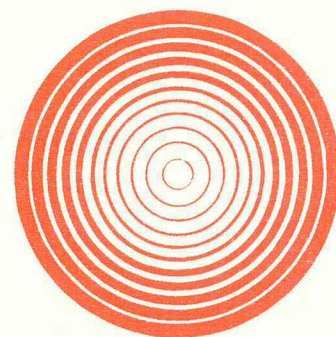


Unpacking the Vault: Hidden Narratives in the Bennington Art Collection



Feb. 27-April 15, 2018

A two-phase exhibition co-curated by students

Over seven weeks in fall 2017, students delved into the campus art-storage space known as "the vault." They researched objects familiar and unknown, seeking narrative strains connecting artworks to the college and to each other. The resulting exhibition is the first of college art holdings curated by a Bennington class. It reveals and honors the eclectic nature of a collection that, known for mid-century abstraction, also contains surprises from within and beyond that art-historical moment. More broadly, "Unpacking the Vault" identifies core themes and agents in the making, distribution, and acquisition of art.

Organized in thematic clusters, objects play a "six degrees of separation" game of individuals, institutions and modes of collecting. This strategy resists hierarchy and celebrates the miscellaneous, finding common ground for a range of styles, time periods, and artists. "Unpacking the Vault" also engages Bennington history by transforming Usdan Gallery into a hybrid gallery/classroom, symbolically fulfilling design plans from the 1960s envisioning a dedicated space, under the gallery and adjacent to the vault, for studying the art collection.

Because of the range of works owned by the college, the exhibition will evolve. "Phase one" opens with arrangements determined by the fall class. In spring 2018, a new class takes over to create "phase two," transforming the show with additional artworks and themes. An informal "catalog" of documents gives background on artists and donors, highlighting when possible how artworks entered the Bennington holdings. Like the show itself, this volume will grow as students continue to investigate the vault contents. A closing event marks the collaboration between the two classes, whose research joins a growing database of information about college-owned artworks.

The "Unpacking the Vault" class is taught by Usdan Gallery Director and Curator Anne Thompson, with vault manager Erin McKenny.

Thematic Categories and Associated Artists (Phase One)

Gallerist Betty Parsons

**Chryssa
Ralph Humphries
Agnes Martin
Tony Smith
Barbara Valenta**

The Art Students League

**Tadashi Asoma
Larry Poons
Robert O. Skemp
David Smith**

The Network

**Ben Benn
Douglas Brown
David Burliuk
Stanley Hayter
Stefan Hirsch
Hans Hofmann
Wolf Kahn
Karl Knaths
Isabella Lee
Lucy Lee
Marisol
Emily Mason
Hans Moller
Anne Poor
Diego Rivera**

Donors and Collectors

**Kenneth Anger
Anthony Caro
Steve Gianakos
Mel Hunter
Richard Lindner
Ken Noland
Lorna Simpson
Kiki Smith
Anne Truitt
Gloria Vanderbilt**

In the Library

**Jim Dine
Kione Kochi
Objects of incomplete provenance**

At the Doors

**Entering from VAPA: Holland Taylor
Leading outside: Mary Callery**

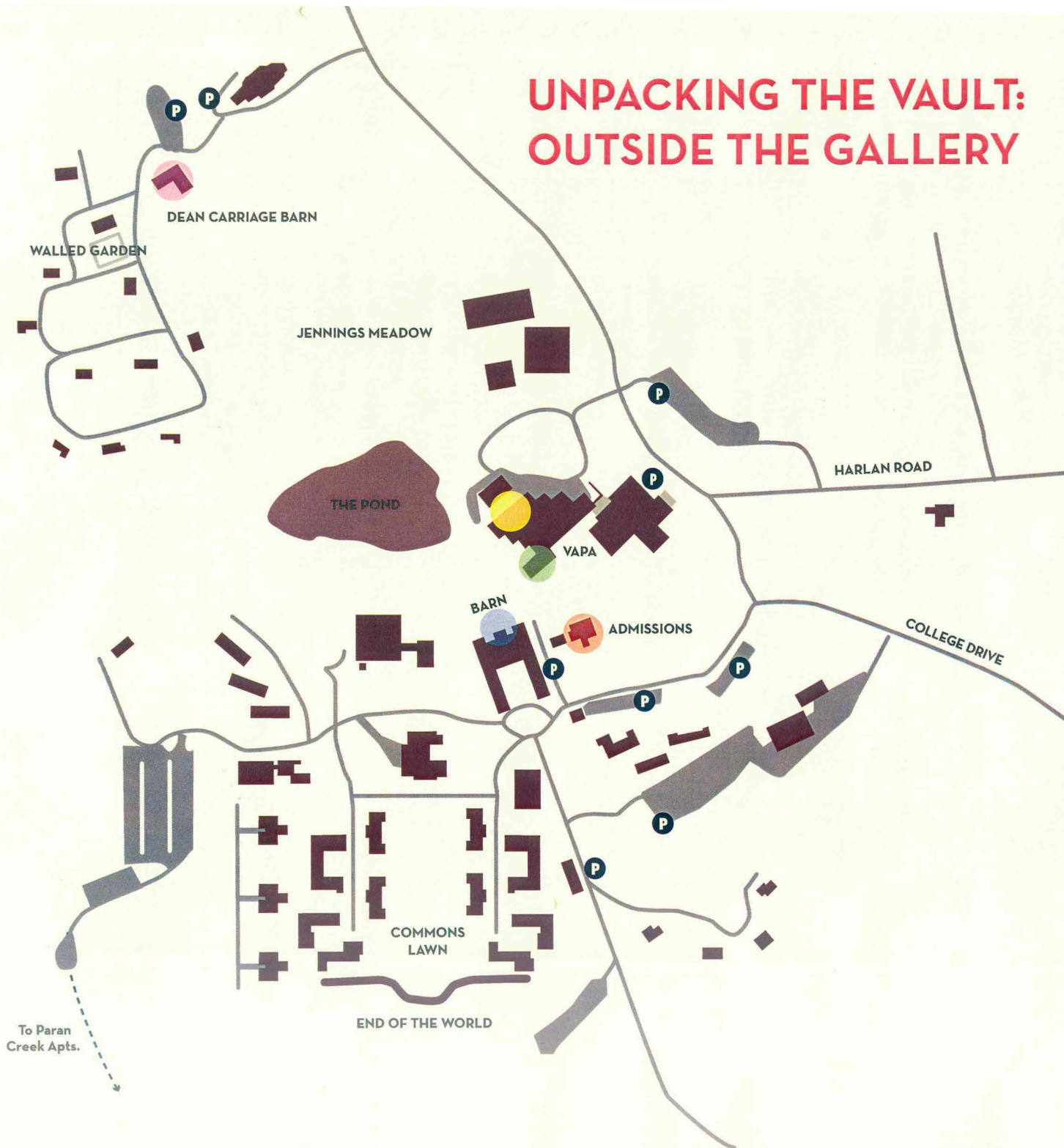
Works inside the gallery as part of "Unpacking the Vault" have connections to locations around campus. We encourage you go exploring!

The MAP on the back of this brochure gives directions to works by:


**Anthony Caro
Cora Cohen
Isabella Lee
David Smith
Andrew Spence**


All publications and signage for "Unpacking the Vault" are printed on a Risograph (RP3505UI), a digital duplicator first released in Japan in 1986 meant to help schools and other civic agencies print materials cheaply and quickly. The Riso (pronounced like "miso" soup) conceptually suits the pedagogical character of the exhibition. It also allows for easy label updates as the "Vault" show changes with ongoing student research.


UNPACKING THE VAULT: OUTSIDE THE GALLERY




- Suzanne Lemberg
Usdan Gallery**

- Inside the metal shop:
David Smith's anvil**


- Behind the Barn:
Isabella Lee squirrel
sculptures**


- Admissions:
Anthony Caro
sculpture**


- Dean Carriage Barn:
Paintings by Cora
Cohen and Andrew
Spence**


- P
Parking