A watercolor illustration of a stone archway, possibly a well or a small bridge. The arch is made of reddish-brown bricks or stones. To the left, a wooden ladder is leaning against the arch. Two figures are visible: one sitting on the ground in the foreground, and another standing further back, holding a long pole or stick. The background shows a blue sky with white clouds. The overall style is soft and painterly.

VARIETIES *of* ROMANTIC EXPERIENCE

*Drawings from the Collection
of Charles Ryskamp*



VARIETIES *of* ROMANTIC EXPERIENCE

British, Danish, Dutch, French, and German Drawings
from the Collection of Charles Ryskamp

Matthew Hargraves

PREFACE BY CHARLES RYSKAMP

YALE CENTER FOR BRITISH ART | NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT



This publication accompanies the exhibition *Varieties of Romantic Experience: British, Danish, Dutch, French, and German Drawings from the Collection of Charles Ryskamp*, organized by the Yale Center for British Art, on view at the Yale Center for British Art, New Haven, Connecticut, February 4–April 25, 2010.

Published by the Yale Center for British Art
P.O. Box 208280
1080 Chapel Street
New Haven, CT 06520-8280
www.yale.edu/ycha

Distributed by Yale University Press
P.O. Box 209040
302 Temple Street
New Haven, CT 06520-8280
www.yalebooks.com

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Hargraves, Matthew, 1978–
Varieties of romantic experience : British, Danish, Dutch, French, and German drawings from the collection of Charles Ryskamp / Matthew Hargraves ; preface by Charles Ryskamp.

p. cm.

Issued in connection with an exhibition held Feb. 4–Apr. 25, 2010, Yale Center for British Art, New Haven, Connecticut.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-3001529-2-0

1. Drawing, European—18th century—Exhibitions.
2. Drawing, European—19th century—Exhibitions.
3. Romanticism in art—Europe—Exhibitions. 4. Ryskamp, Charles—Art collections—Exhibitions. 5. Drawing—Private collections—United States—Exhibitions. I. Yale Center for British Art. II. Title. III. Title: British, Danish, Dutch, French, and German drawings from the collection of Charles Ryskamp.

NC225.H37 2009

741.94—dc22

2009040168

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

The paper in this book meets the guidelines for permanence and durability of the Committee on Production Guidelines for Book Longevity of the Council on Library Resources.

VARIETIES *of* ROMANTIC EXPERIENCE

*It is time to show that the arts are cosmopolitan and that
all national prejudice is foreign to them.*

DAVID WILKIE TO THE COMTE DE FORBIN, 25 JULY 1824



Director's Foreword

VARIETIES OF ROMANTIC EXPERIENCE highlights drawings and a number of associated prints from the collection of Charles Ryskamp, Professor Emeritus of English Literature at Princeton University and Director Emeritus of the Pierpont Morgan Library and the Frick Collection. Charles has a long and abiding relationship with Yale University, from which he received his MA in English literature in 1951 and his PhD in 1956, as well as with the Yale Center for British Art, which was founded by Charles's close friend, Paul Mellon (Yale College, Class of 1929). A dedicated teacher who remained in the classroom through his tenure at both the Morgan and the Frick, Charles has continued this practice in retirement. Most recently, several generations of the Yale Center's Student Guides have had the great privilege to benefit from his broad-ranging knowledge of the history of art and culture. With unbounded enthusiasm and unusual largesse, Charles has served as their mentor, teaching them from his rich collection of European drawings and prints and introducing them to the magnificent holdings of the Yale Center, which he knows so well.

Indeed, Charles has involved the Student Guides in *Varieties of Romantic Experience* and advised a small group that has organized an accompanying exhibition entitled *Art in Focus: John Flaxman Modeling the Bust of William Hayley*. This exhibition examines the Center's full-length portrait by George Romney, which portrays the sculptor Flaxman modeling a bust of the poet William Hayley, along with Thomas Alphonso Hayley, the poet's son and Flaxman's apprentice, and Romney himself. The exhibition features two gifts to the Center from

Charles: a rare terracotta medallion by Thomas Hayley, one of two surviving works by this artist, a prodigy who died at the age of twenty, as well as William Hayley's published life of his late son. We are deeply grateful for these gifts, as well as others Charles has made that speak to the subject of the current exhibitions, and which honor his friendship with Mr. Mellon.

Varieties of Romantic Experience, the exhibition which this book complements, was conceived by Charles in order to show together, for the first time, drawings from across Britain and the Continent that evoke the spirit of Romanticism. Charles undertook his initial forays into collecting drawings purely for pleasure; but over time he realized that, by chance, his collection was beginning to represent draftsmanship from across the Romantic world in ways unlike any other private or museum collection. Since that time, individual drawings have occasionally been sought deliberately to enhance this aspect of the collection, and Charles gratefully acknowledges the assistance of particular dealers who have helped him find certain objects, especially W. Mark Brady and Laura Bennett, Thomas Le Claire, and Martin Moeller-Pisani. Over the years, Charles has made important gifts from his collection to the Morgan Library in honor of friends, fellow collectors, and important colleagues, and we at the Yale Center are extremely grateful for our sister institution's magnanimity in lending a number of these works to this exhibition. Special thanks are due to Patty Reyes and other members of the Morgan's staff for their assistance with these loans and with the project more generally.

Charles undertook the selection of works for *Varieties of Romantic Experience* in collaboration with Matthew Hargraves, Assistant Curator for Collections Research at the Yale Center. Matthew also wrote the essays for this associated publication, which elucidate recurrent themes in Romantic drawings from across Europe. Together, Charles and Matthew would like to express their gratitude to Adam Eaker (Yale College, Class of 2007) for his tireless and enthusiastic research assistance, his formidable knowledge of European languages, and his many valuable insights into the drawings themselves. Adam wrote the majority of the biographies of artists that appear at the end of this publication, and appreciation is extended to the staff of the Frick Art Reference Library for facilitating his extensive research and to undergraduates in the Student Guide Program who wrote the remaining biographies.

Charles and Matthew also would like to acknowledge their debt to all those who generously have shared their knowledge of Romanticism, patiently answered questions, and offered invaluable suggestions; they include Laura Bennett, W. Mark Brady, Philippe Bordes, Tobias Capwell, Stephen Duffy, Duncan Givans, Alex Kidson, Lowell Libson, Jan Gorm Madsen, John Marciari, Francis Marshall, Philippa Martin, Marcia Pointon, Mark Pomeroy, Alicia Weisberg-Roberts, Stéphane Roy, Greg Smith, Patrick Sweeney, Richard Thomson, Chris Townend, and Andrew Wyld. Special thanks are extended to curatorial colleagues at the Yale Center for British Art who shared their ideas, advice, and expertise, especially Cassandra Albinson, Jo Briggs, Gillian Forrester, Angus Trumble, and Scott Wilcox.

Additional gratitude is offered to members of the Center's staff and several outside consultants for supporting the logistical execution of the exhibition and its attendant publication. Eleanor Hughes, Associate Curator and Head of Exhibitions and Publications, and Anna Magliaro, Publications Assistant, worked tirelessly to coordinate all aspects of the project. Production of the publication was overseen with supreme professionalism by Miko McGinty, while Elisa Urbanelli edited the manuscript with the greatest care, and Susan Marsh crafted the most beautiful design for the book. Melissa Fournier, Associate Museum Registrar,

oversaw the publication's photography, ably executed by Richard Caspole. Theresa Fairbanks-Harris, Chief Paper Conservator; Dong Eun Kim, Associate Paper Conservator; and Sarah Bisi, Postgraduate Research Associate, answered technical questions with patience and unfailing good humor. Special appreciation goes to Mary Regan-Yttre, Conservation Assistant, for skillfully preparing all of the drawings and prints for exhibition. We also thank Mark Aronson, Chief Conservator of Paintings; Jessica David, Postgraduate Research Associate; and Eric Stegmaier, Conservation Assistant, who attended to the preparation of works that are oil-on-paper.

Gratitude is extended to Tim Goodhue, the Center's expert Registrar, and Corey Myers, Assistant Registrar, for coordinating the loan of works from Charles's collection and from the Morgan Library, and to Richard Johnson, Installation Manager, and his entire team for installing the exhibition with customary professionalism and expertise. Additional thanks are due to Beth Miller, Associate Director for Advancement and External Affairs, and her staff: Amelia Toensmeier, Senior Administrative Assistant; Julianne Richardson, Special Events Coordinator; Amy McDonald, Public Relations and Marketing Manager; and Ricardo Sandoval, Public Relations Coordinator, for orchestrating the numerous events surrounding the exhibition; and to Senior Graphic Designer, Lyn Rose, and Graphic Designer, Elena Grossman, for conceiving its elegant design.

Finally, our warmest thanks are given to Charles and Matthew, who have worked as the most extraordinary intellectual partners. Indeed, the pleasure they have taken in their collaboration has lent enjoyment to us all. Of course, our greatest appreciation is extended to Charles, whose generosity has enabled us to mount for our audience of students, scholars, and the wider public a large number of the most exciting works from his collection in this special project, examining Romanticism as an international phenomenon, as seen through drawings practice.

AMY MEYERS

Director, Yale Center for British Art



Why I Collect

CHARLES RYSKAMP

MY TITLE IS STOLEN from my favorite essayist, George Orwell. His essay "Why I Write" begins: "From a very early age, perhaps the age of five or six, I knew that when I grew up I should be a writer." At the same age I did not know that I would be a collector, but collecting was becoming an essential part of my daily life. Unlike Orwell, who, between the ages of seventeen and twenty-four, abandoned his idea of being a writer, I never gave up collecting.

As much as possible I have devoted my life to the appreciation, study, and teaching of art and literature; to those pursuits I must add, and with equal conviction, collecting. First of all, I was concerned with building my personal library. But my passion for art began well before my commitment to literature. At a very young age I studied the family copy of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* and read hundreds of biographies of artists from all ages and from every country in Europe. My earliest recollection of anything at all (when I was about three) is of a book and its engravings: it was Stubbs's *Anatomy of the Horse*. It was not until I was nearly forty years old that I was able to acquire that large volume, a very fine and rare contemporary copy that had belonged to the Grosvenor family, among Stubbs's most important patrons.

Beginning in my days in graduate school at Yale I bought books and manuscripts of British eighteenth-

century literature, as well as rare materials that related to geography, topography, periodical literature, and biography in support of those primary texts. I was encouraged in this collecting by eminent Yale scholars like Chauncey Brewster Tinker, Wilmarth S. Lewis, and Herman W. Liebert. Afterward I became even more persistently a collector because of the many days and months I spent with Sir Geoffrey Keynes, the distinguished surgeon and collector of Blake and of English books and art, in London and at his home in Brinkley, near Newmarket. When I was thirteen I had bought a few modern etchings, and just before I went up to Cambridge, I acquired one or two prints by Dürer and Rembrandt for my rooms in college. After meeting Keynes, who had a remarkable group of engravings after Pieter Bruegel the Elder, I was also encouraged to buy those prints and many others.

I have never formally studied art or art history. Mine was self-education in museums and principally in the great print rooms, first of all at the British Museum, but later at the Fitzwilliam, the Ashmolean, the Albertina, Berlin, Munich, Yale, Princeton, and the Fogg. They were my haunts, and their curators became my good friends. The print rooms gave me what was the traditional and classic curriculum for scholars, curators, collectors, and dealers, although this was not my purpose in studying there. It was sheer joy.

FIG. 1. Corner of the library in Charles Ryskamp's New York apartment, with a 1969 portrait of him by Cecil Beaton



FIG. 2. The living room in Charles Ryskamp's New York apartment, with two drawings by Edward Lear over the sofa

By the time I was in my late twenties I found that the Old Master prints I admired had grown too expensive for me, and I increasingly sought out drawings. I felt that their immediate, graphic qualities were more to my taste. My reasons for this new, absorbing interest were similar to those well expressed by Goethe, the towering presence dominating much of the literature and philosophical thought of the Romantic period. He particularly appreciated drawings and collected them. Goethe believed that drawings were "invaluable, not only because they give, in its purity, the mental intention of the artist, but because they bring immediately before us the mood of his mind at the moment of creation" (from Goethe's conversations with Eckermann). Goethe discovered in drawings the clearness and "the quiet, serene resolution, in the mind of the artist; and this beneficial mood is extended to us while we contemplate the work." This "beneficial mood" became all

important for me in my ordinary daily life, as well as in my hours of scholarship, writing, and teaching.

FOR SOME YEARS, aside from books and the occasional manuscript, I only collected English drawings. It seemed a small step from English literature to English art; above all, it was William Blake and his followers—every aspect of their art and letters—that attracted me. Gradually I looked for the whole range of English draftsmanship from 1700 to 1850, from Skelton to Stubbs to Palmer and Linnell. The artist I was especially excited about was Cornelius Varley.

I first strayed from buying British drawings exclusively because of my discovery of the outstanding department of drawings at Colnaghi's in London. (I had frequented the print department there since the summer before I went up to Cambridge.) The July exhibition at the gallery each year was more wonderful



FIG. 3. The library in Charles Ryskamp's New York apartment

than I could imagine. Before long I tried to buy a late-sixteenth-century colored drawing of the Castle of Tervueren (most frequently attributed to Jan Breughel the Elder). I could not afford it, so I decided to buy it with a very close friend, Eliza Lloyd. We were, however, unsuccessful in our acquisition; thus, my earliest attempt to collect drawings by masters was a failure. But the story has a happy ending. Later this drawing was bought by my friend Miss Alice Tully, and I often saw it in her magnificent apartment in New York. She knew how much the drawing meant to me and bequeathed it to me; today it hangs in my New York apartment.

Patience is more than a virtue when it comes to collecting drawings; it is a necessity. I waited years to acquire works by artists significant to me. For example, I had to wait decades before I was able to buy a work by Corot.

Collecting became a way of extending my knowl-

edge. I bought works by uncommon artists and also uncommon works by celebrated draftsmen. I was attracted to sketches showing aspects of a well-known artist's work that I had not hitherto seen. Collecting gradually became an essential part of my education. It was not so much about ownership as about the opportunity to know. I searched for works that represented little-known corners of my favorite artists' work. I wished to know types of draftsmanship I could not see in the great collections of the Morgan Library or the Metropolitan Museum. I looked for English drawings that even Paul Mellon, in his wide-ranging collection of British drawings, did not have. I had grown to know his drawings as he acquired them one by one, or when he bought whole collections; but now I looked for subjects and themes not often represented in museums and collections.

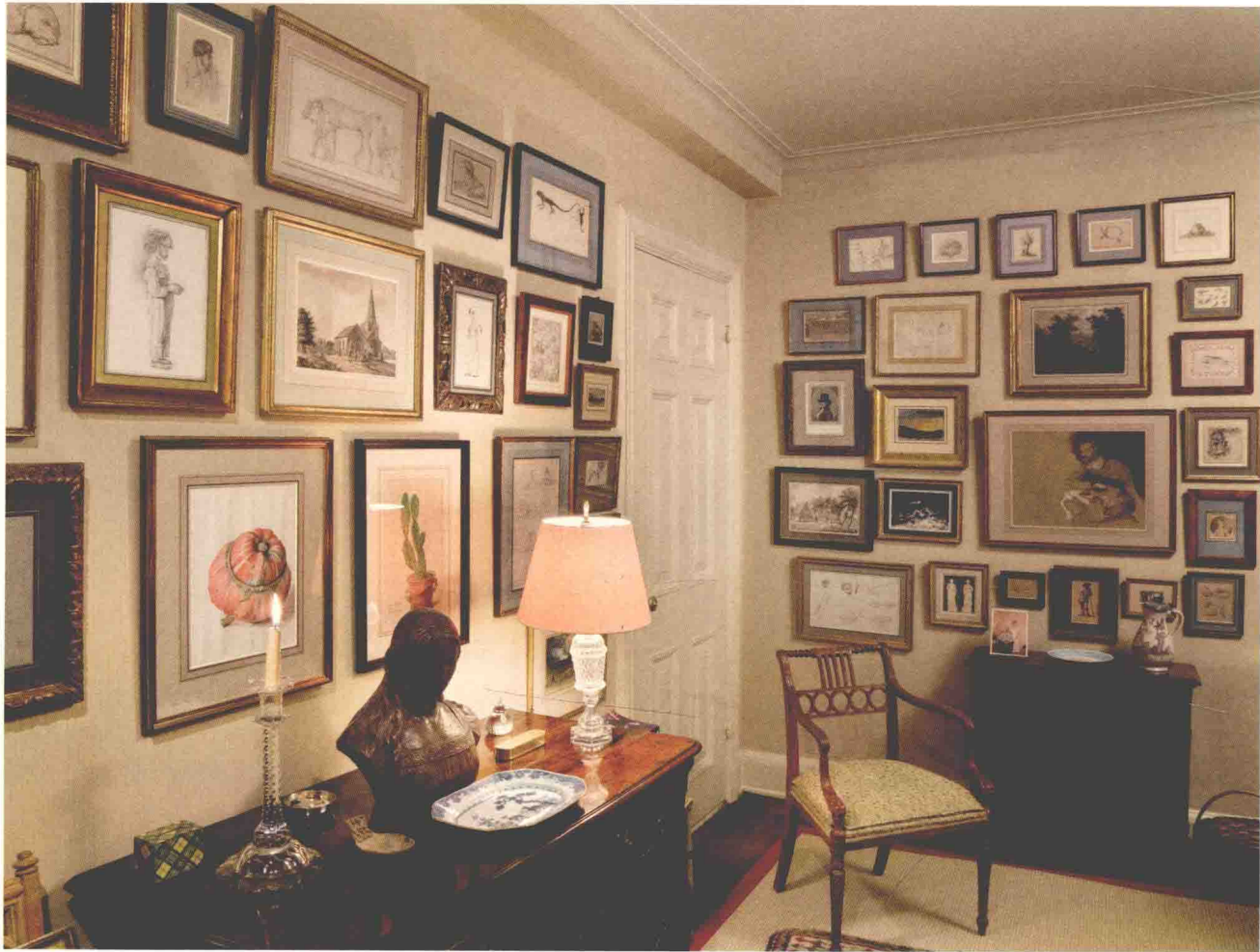


FIG. 4. The bedroom in Charles Ryskamp's New York apartment

BEFORE MY TENURE at the Morgan Library I had given all of my time to teaching English at Princeton, often combining in my classes the art of Blake, Turner, Constable, and their contemporaries with the literature of their time. Only later in life did I have a little more time for collecting and a bit more money than I had from my teacher's salary. Even then, my finest drawings most often had to be acquired through exchange of two or more lesser works that I had purchased many years earlier. During my years as director of the Morgan Library (1969–87) I had to avoid any conflict of interest. But in those years I also had little opportunity to build my personal collection. I had to spend more than half of each year in fund-raising. I also did some

teaching—in many years giving a graduate seminar at Princeton; and I was coeditor of ten volumes of English literature of the late eighteenth century for the Clarendon Press, Oxford.

For my literary research I traveled all over Britain, working in private libraries, county record offices, and large and small university and town libraries. Wherever I went I would try to find a little time for bookshops, antique shops, and galleries. Many dealers, especially those in London, became friends, and I depended on them as much as I had on my teachers and fellow students for my knowledge of literature and art. I was fortunate to be able to make expeditions with celebrated collectors like Geoffrey Keynes and

A. N. L. Munby, the distinguished librarian of King's College, Cambridge.

There were shops close at hand for more numerous visits. One such place was just outside the gates of the British Museum, where I spent hundreds of hours studying, usually in the summer months. At the end of many days there I frequented the old-fashioned dealer in prints Craddock and Barnard, in Museum Street. When I was at Cambridge, I often stopped at Gabor Cossa's antiques shop, across the street from the Fitzwilliam Museum, after the study rooms there had shut. I bought my first drawings from Cossa: two large pen-and-wash drawings by Edward Lear depicting the Bay of Naples, from the sea and from land. They have always hung over the sofa in my living room in any home that I have had.

If I visited dealers or auction houses with another collector, I resolved to buy nothing myself so that there could not possibly be any rivalry between us. Most of the time this could not happen anyway, for my friend was looking for art or books that I could never afford. I often went to galleries with Paul Mellon. I still have a vivid recollection of going to introduce him to a new young dealer who had temporarily taken a flat in London several flights up a steep staircase. This was Bill Drummond, whose galleries—especially the Covent Garden Gallery—later gave us so much pleasure. Most of the drawings we saw in that first visit were very inexpensive, and Paul was like a small boy in a candy shop, buying one after another. I watched with a little envy: for once I could have afforded one or two drawings. Our strong interests in English drawings were also shared with John Baskett, then beginning as a dealer in London. In my first years of collecting drawings I never had a friendship with dealers on the Continent comparable to that which I found in London with Bill Drummond, John Baskett, and Richard Day.

AFTER SOME YEARS of collecting only English drawings, I turned first to German Romantic art, a world that had fascinated me but was scarcely represented in American museums. A little later I also began to buy Danish drawings, for no one I knew had even thought of buying them. Beginning with my first trip to

Copenhagen, I was in love with Danish art of the Golden Age (1800–1850), and drawings from that country and era have given an unusual focus to my collection. I was fortunate above all to be able to find so many examples of the draftsmanship of Eckersberg and Købke. When I saw a drawing that truly excited me, like Købke's portrait of Sophie Frimodt, it took me less than a minute to decide to buy it. I could act just as quickly when I saw a striking drawing by an unknown artist; so many in my collection are by artists whose works I had never seen before and have never seen again, like the drawing of a seated man by Hilaire Le Dru, which I purchased in an instant. Most of these are early-nineteenth-century French works, not Danish or British or German.

My own perspective on drawings broadened with the wide range of fields I grew to know at the Morgan Library; I found my old outlook too narrow. I might have partially agreed with Orwell, although I would never have put my beliefs so strongly: he objected to "the insularity of the English, their refusal to take foreigners seriously" (from "The Lion and the Unicorn"). I would certainly have seconded what David Wilkie wrote in a letter of 1824 to the comte de Forbin: "It is time to show that the arts are cosmopolitan and that all national prejudice is foreign to them." That time had come for me.

THE FIVE OR SIX HUNDRED drawings I own or have owned fall into three periods: 1500–1790, 1790–1850, and 1850–the present. Almost all of them are European drawings, chiefly British, French, German, Danish, and Dutch. For the Romantic period represented in this volume, more than one-third (over seventy) are British; the next largest group is French (forty-nine); and there are about the same number (approximately twenty-five) for both the Germanic and Danish schools. I have had the most difficulty finding Dutch drawings of this period that were attractive to me; there are only eleven Dutch works in this volume. There are also a handful of prints, in part because of my early collecting, but chiefly to reflect the importance of this form of graphic art in the spread of Romanticism. Some of the impressions have never been exhibited before, while others, especially the Danish prints by Købke,

are almost unknown outside their countries of origin. Two of the prints, by Stubbs and Turner, are masterpieces of British printmaking. They all enforce important aspects of Romanticism.

The chronological limits in this book are essentially between two revolutions: those of 1789 and 1848. There are two or three works from before 1790, and a few more from after 1848. Some of the drawings illustrative of the major themes were created in the 1850s, and one or two as late as 1870. The Romantic period was not only a time of change and ferment, but also one with peaceful interludes. It also produced a wide variety of styles: Gothic, Troubadour, Biedermeier, rustic, courtly, sentimental, classical, Neoclassical, and finally the beginnings of Realism. Chronologically the volume ends with an important and beautifully preserved drawing by Daubigny of a beached boat on the shore at Étapes.

The year 1848 remains key for reasons artistic as well as political. It is represented here by full-length portrait drawings by Bonvin and Menzel. These works show a new realism, which may be owing to the changing political and social movements. Certainly this difference was true in the case of the young Menzel, whose drawings of 1848 begin to stretch beyond his previous boundaries of genre. The many portraits from this era may be seen as an affirmation of the individual, as has been claimed, in such turbulent times.

Among the drawings here are one of an Austrian soldier (by Adam) and a Danish soldier (by Sonne). There are, however, no depictions of the horrors of war, no dead and decaying bodies, as in Menzel's drawings of the Prussian-Austrian war of 1866. Wars and revolutions not only define the beginning and end of this Romantic period, they also dominate the middle year of 1830, which saw the March Revolution in Berlin and the July Revolution in France. Yet you will not find in this book sketches of riots or of crowds suffering food shortages. There are no views of turmoil in the cities or of a bleak existence in the face of industrialization. Such works of art are rare in the early nineteenth century, and most drawings are without political

commitment. My drawings show the people and their landscapes in peace and in permanence. They often visualize the essence of things rather than transience and conflict. They are not reportage, nor are they characterized by stark realism; they are transmutations of an object into art.

The themes of this volume seem to me to be pervasive in northern Europe in the Romantic era. The solitary tree, the blasted tree, the tree stump with a few sprigs emerging; these may imply death or they may suggest new growth, new life. Individual watercolor studies of fruit or leaves may be essentially botanical, but usually they are portraits of inanimate objects. There are many beached boats and studies of small skiffs. There are plain, direct images of men and women that may make you think of early photography. There are standing figures that, like single trees separated from forests, may suggest loneliness. As Paul Nash wrote about his paintings of trees, "True, I have tried to paint trees as though they were human beings" (to Gordon Bottomley, August 1912). One will find also human figures turned away and seen from the back (*Rückenfiguren*) or in deep sleep. The Romantic artist may have found his source in seventeenth-century Dutch drawing (in works, for example, by Lievens—I own one portrait of a girl by him—or Rembrandt or Van Goyen). But inspiration may just as well have come from daily life in his home country or in his travels.

Almost all of the single motifs from nature shown here were considered necessary to the ideals of landscape art and were emphasized in plein-air sketching of the early 1800s. The treatise that was most important in establishing these goals (particularly for French landscape painters) was Pierre-Henri de Valenciennes's huge work of nearly 650 pages, *Éléments de perspective pratique à l'usage des artistes* (1800). Valenciennes also stressed observing the sky at different times of the day, and such studies from several countries are illustrated here.

There was an artistic bond between England and France from time to time in the early years of the nineteenth century. British artists like Bonington and Francia (French-born) did much of their finest work across

FIG. 5. A corner of the living room in Charles Ryskamp's New York apartment, looking toward a small hall



the Channel. Constable received some of his important early recognition in France, especially from Géricault and Delacroix. Although a few English Romantics like Coleridge may be indebted to Germany and German thought, generally the philosophical and religious worlds did not engage the English unless they were searching for the sublime or profound. And—much as I have tried—I have found it almost impossible to acquire such works or dark, tragic drawings, whether English or Continental.

If I could have afforded it, I would have wished above all to have bought a tragic scene by Géricault. I have never found such a drawing by him, and if I had, I would have acquired it for the Morgan Library during the eighteen years I was there. Romantic drawings of a bold and somber nature are rare, and so the extremes of experience are rarely seen in my drawings. Most of them reveal a sunnier view of life; that is, until artists like Fuseli, Blake, and Delacroix portray a world that grows out of their inner visions. In some cases man and nature are drawn from a spiritual impulse, what G. F. Kersting recognized as the “inner eye” of his friend Caspar David Friedrich. I believe the pre-eminent moment of Romanticism—at least French Romanticism—is represented by the lion hunts of the early 1850s by Delacroix. The lion hunt illustrated here portrays the ultimate tangle of man and beasts, in one wild jumble, where it is scarcely possible to determine what is animal and what is human. There is also a large double-sided study by Fuseli showing the naked Job subjected to a blistering plague, while the verso of the drawing derives from the beginning of the *Nibelungenlied* as Siegfried fights the serpent, which has half devoured the hero's horse. Both of these drawings, which seem to me ultimate visionary depictions, represent terrific aspects of Romanticism and conclude this volume.

IF I DID NOT have to be concerned about conflicts of interest with my professional life, and if I were not originally confined in my collecting to what I could spare from my salary, I would have tried to buy more sixteenth-century Italian and seventeenth-century Dutch drawings. I have only been able to acquire a

small collection of Dutch works of that time, principally of the school of Rembrandt, and a scattering of drawings from earlier than 1750 of other European schools. I had hoped also to find more drawings by Northern artists while they were working in Italy. Longing for Italy and then savoring every bit of the Italian sun, the light, the warmth, and the sweep of the landscape were fundamental to the lives of most of the Romantic artists. Over the years I have been able to buy a few such drawings, and, fortunately, as this text was going to press, I bought a watercolor by an obscure Danzig artist showing Ariccia, one of the favorite Romantic Italian retreats, with the large sky deep orange from the setting sun. The town and countryside are in darkness, and the dome of the great Bernini church is silhouetted against the fading light.

I collected Romantic drawings because they made me happy and often pictured man and nature in rapport. I wish I could have bought a great abstract watercolor by Turner, one where he has burned through outward forms to the essence of land and sea and air. I should have liked to have one of the sublime cavern interiors by Cozens. These drawings have always been far beyond my means. At the opposite extreme from either the completely abstract or the truly terrible, there are a few humorous drawings here; but very few. I have always looked for drawings that are witty, but not caricature—not the bolder humor of Gilray or Rowlandson or Daumier. I have found two or three that are delicately humorous, with slight exaggeration, or that grow out of amusing episodes.

One of the drawings that gives me much pleasure is German—utterly German, yet playful and provoking laughter. It is by Friedrich Voltz and shows the performers in a *Schubertiad*, or home concert. I like to associate this drawing with Weimar, although I have no evidence that it was produced there. Another German drawing is also humorous. The artist may be either Franz or Johannes Riepenhausen, and the subject may be an actor from the end of Schiller's drama *The Robbers* (1781). This also has associations for me with Weimar, which is above all the city of Goethe and Schiller, who still seem to live in its buildings and streets. From the time of Bach it became the home of many composers