Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide

a journal of nineteenth-century visual culture

Anne Helmreich, Edward Sterrett, and Sandra van Ginhoven

Purpose Built: Duveen and the Commercial Art Gallery

Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide 20, no. 2 (Summer 2021)

Citation: Anne Helmreich, Edward Sterrett, and Sandra van Ginhoven, "Purpose Built: Duveen and the Commercial Art Gallery," *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide* 20, no. 2 (Summer 2021), <https://doi.org/10.29411/ncaw.2021.20.2.4>.

Published by: [Association of Historians of Nineteenth-Century Art](#)

Notes:

This PDF is provided for reference purposes only and may not contain all the functionality or features of the original, online publication.

License:

This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License](#) [Creative Commons License](#).

Abstract:

In late 1912, the Duveen Brothers opened their first purpose-built art gallery in New York City at 720 Fifth Avenue. Sited in a residential neighborhood favored by the Gilded Age elite and borrowing its architectural vocabulary from the Beaux-Arts tradition, it signaled the epitome of upper-class domesticity, but the building was also a finely tuned machine for the business of selling art. This article explores how these two distinct modes of operation were managed and integrated, utilizing a virtual reconstruction of the now demolished building developed from the original architectural plans recently discovered in the archives at the Getty Research Institute.

Purpose Built: Duveen and the Commercial Art Gallery

by Anne Helmreich, Edward Sterrett, and Sandra van Ginhoven

Scholarly Essay | [Project Narrative](#)

The Duveen Brothers, a firm of influential art dealers based in London, Paris, and New York that operated from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries, adopted a number of strategies to exert their influence in the marketplace. Chief among these was the built environment: that is, the physical context they created for displaying, buying, and selling works of art, which included not only individual objects but also whole rooms or ensembles. By the time the firm erected a purpose-built structure in New York in the second decade of the twentieth century, elite art dealers had recognized that the location and design of their premises could be carefully calibrated to achieve sales and distinction, two intertwined and interdependent goals. Such efforts were the culmination of a long trajectory, primarily over the course of the nineteenth century, whereby art merchants of the caliber and ambition of the Duveen Brothers, operating in metropolitan centers such as Paris, London, and New York, shed their artisanal origins as sellers of bric-a-brac and curiosities and positioned art as a luxury commodity worthy of significant investment. To do so meant adopting the trappings and locales of fashionable retail in combination with strategies for displaying works of art honed by art academies, artists' societies, and museums in order to sell an object and an experience. These dealers were also, in essence, trading their expertise, embodied not just in the catalogues and pedigrees that accompanied their wares, but also in the taste and discretion they exhibited in their choice of address and premises.^[1]

The Duveen Brothers' US venture was initiated by Henry J. Duveen (1854–1919), who arrived in the United States from Great Britain in the 1870s and began with what the *New York Times* described as “a small art shop in John Street, where he handled antique silverware, ivory carvings, rare porcelains, period furniture, and Oriental rugs.”^[2] As art historian Charlotte Vignon reveals, the premises, located in today's Financial District, were regarded as unpromising by his brother Joel Joseph Duveen (1843–1908), who later recounted, “But what a shock I got when I saw our business premises! They were in a bad neighbourhood, and the place was not much better than a storehouse.” Moreover, he opined, “Our beautiful stock was badly placed and badly lit, and the windows were not good enough for an old clothes shop.” To recompense took both time and money, and included relocating to Broadway and Nineteenth Street in the retail district known as “Ladies Mile,” the fashionable shopping district at the time. Joel Duveen was finally pleased that “I had everything in a really good place with ample room to show things and proper lighting.”^[3] The stakes of geography and design of the shop were clearly high.

In 1886, Henry Duveen moved the premises again to 262 Fifth Avenue, between Twenty-Eighth and Twenty-Ninth Streets, following the uptown move of upscale retail.^[4] Then, in 1889, according to Vignon, he opened a second gallery at 2 West Twenty-Ninth Street in what was then a primarily residential district for the wealthy classes of New York.^[5] In 1890, on the occasion of the reconciliation of the two brothers, who had worked separately in the preceding five years or so due to a disagreement, and the formal founding of the firm Duveen Brothers, the business moved to a new location at 302 Fifth Avenue in a brownstone

renovated by McKim, Mead, and White (fig. 1).^[6] When Joel Joseph Duveen died in 1908, his son Joseph (1869–1939) assumed his role in the partnership, having already been active in the firm, particularly in the running of operations in New York. Shortly thereafter he assumed the presidency of the firm, a role he occupied until 1939.^[7] In May 1910, they acquired the lease of a site on Fifth Avenue and Fifty-Sixth Street (720 Fifth Avenue) and, in September 1911, turned to the French architect René Sergent, who had designed the Paris gallery for the Duveen Brothers located in the Place Vendôme (1907–8; fig. 2), for plans to replace the existing house with a purpose-built gallery (figs. 3–5).^[8] On-site work was overseen by Horace Trumbauer, a US architect who had achieved renown through building residences for such wealthy clients as art collector P. A. B. Widener.^[9]

Fig. 1, Unknown photographer [?
[\[view image & full caption\]](#)

Fig. 2, Unknown photographer, Duveen Brothers' Paris office at 20 Place Vendôme, view from the building into the inner courtyard, n.d. [\[view image & full caption\]](#)

Fig. 3, Unknown photographer, Architectural model for 720 Fifth Avenue, n.d. [\[view image & full caption\]](#)

Fig. 4, Unknown photographer, Duveen Brothers, 720 Fifth Avenue, n.d. [\[view image & full caption\]](#)

Fig. 5, Mock-up for advertisement in *Art News*, ca. 1942. [\[view image & full caption\]](#)

By ca. 1909, the lead designer at Trumbauer's firm was Julian Frances Abele, who had studied at the Institute for Colored Youth in Philadelphia, the Pennsylvania Museum and School of Industrial Art (earning a certificate in architectural drawing), the University of Pennsylvania School of Architecture (earning a baccalaureate degree in architecture), and the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (earning a second degree in architectural drawing) and is regarded, in the words of his biographer Dreck Spurlock Wilson, as "a superbly trained *beaux arts architecte* [*sic*]." [10] Joining Trumbauer's practice in the spring of 1906, Abele eventually became first senior designer and helped Trumbauer's firm to increasingly adopt the design vocabulary of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century French classicism and to foster collaborations with interior designers Carlhian & Beaumetz, who also worked with the Duveen Brothers. [11] Abele, according to Wilson, designed the Duveen Brothers' gallery, work undertaken in and around the same time that he was planning the residence for James Duke (1909, now the home of the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, with interior designs undertaken by Alavoine et Cie of New York in collaboration with Joseph Duveen and André Carlhian), Adelaide Townsend Douglas's townhouse at 57 Park Avenue (1909, which currently houses the Permanent Mission of Guatemala to the United Nations), Henry Welsh Rodgers's townhouse at 58 Park Avenue (1909), and James Blanchard Clew's mansion at 1 East Eighty-Fifth Street (1911), to name some of Abele's commissions in New York City. [12] While the Duveen Brothers' building prominently bears the markings of Beaux-Arts architecture and thus the hands of Trumbauer's team of professional designers and draftsmen, Duveen biographer Meryl Secrest attributes the vision for the edifice to Joseph Duveen, who asked Sergent to model it "after the Ministry of Marine Building in the Place de la Concorde, designed by Louis XV's architect, Jacques-Ange Gabriel." [13]

Later, in 1951, the Duveen Brothers announced that they would depart their Fifth Avenue location in favor of the former home of Mrs. Stanley Grafton Mortimer, located at 18 East Seventy-Ninth Street, explaining publicly that their location at 720 Fifth Avenue had grown "too commercial." [14] But when the Duveens had originally announced their new gallery at 720 Fifth Avenue, they had positioned themselves as part of the ongoing migration of wealthy private residences from the Lower to the Upper East Side. In fact, the gallery stood on the former home of George Kemp, who had earned his fortune in pharmaceuticals, and was built opposite the house of financier Morton Plant also on Fifth Avenue (now the Cartier

store). The Morton Plant House, finished just a few years before Trumbauer and Sergeant began plans for Duveen's, shows an almost identical footprint and elevation (fig. 6).

Fig. 6, Wurts Bros., East Fifty-Second Street at the corner of Fifth Avenue, Plant House, ca. 1900.
[\[view image & full caption\]](#)

The Duveen Brothers' purpose-built gallery, now demolished, was finished in 1912. As Vignon explains, in order to achieve "the aspect of a stately private home," French decorator Lucien Alavoine was commissioned to design "elegant and refined eighteenth-century interiors."^[15] Edward Fowles, who directed the Paris branch of Duveen Brothers from 1917 to 1938, recalled, "All the stone and woodwork, together with such elements as chandeliers and Savonnerie carpets, and so forth were shipped from Paris."^[16] When the new building opened a few days before the end of the year, word came to Paris that its impact had been sensational. Faced in a creamy white-yellow Illinois limestone, it must have been a revelation of classical beauty among the remaining brownstones on Fifth Avenue. In the words of Edward Fowles: "The Building was a tremendous advertisement for Duveen's: we were both the source of beautiful objects, and proud creators of a building whose very ambience would serve to please and elevate both the casual observer and the dedicated collector."^[17]

This essay investigates the nature of this ambience, focusing primarily on the interior, asking how its organization and material manifestation aligned to its functions and how it shaped visitors' experiences and, concomitantly, the reputation of the firm. It builds on the insights of Vignon, who has persuasively argued that Joseph Duveen strove that both his Paris and New York galleries "resemble a temple of art by strategically avoiding anything that remind[ed] his clients of a commercial establishment in which the owner-dealer conducted business."^[18] While intended for the public, these temples also adopted strategies of domestic architecture in either their settings, in the case of the courtyard of the Paris house (fig. 2), or in their architectural vocabulary, as in the case of the New York house (fig. 4). But, of course, these galleries were built for business, and strategically so, as Vignon reminds us: anticipating the completion of the New York premises, Joseph Duveen had reported, "When [the New York gallery] is built . . . [the value of] the French objects will rise thirty to forty percent."^[19] In addition to showcasing luxury goods, such as the decorative arts (what had been known previously in the trade as curiosities),^[20] by the time the Duveen Brothers had embarked on the new gallery they had also committed themselves to selling fine art. For example, in the opening decade of the twentieth century, Joseph Duveen purchased the Rudolphe Kann (in partnership with Nathan Wildenstein) and Maurice Kann collections, a

well-known assembly of old master paintings that the brothers, whose fortune derived from South African diamond and gold mines, had put together with the advice of such experts as the German art historian and museum curator Wilhelm von Bode.^[21] The Duveen Brothers' activities in this area had also been stimulated by the lifting, in 1909, of the import duty on works of art more than twenty years old.

The Purpose-Built Commercial Art Gallery

Over the course of the nineteenth century, the concept of the commercial art gallery, as manifested in its physical premises, underwent a tremendous change. As the notion of the dealer professionalized—that is, it became recognized as requiring and possessing specialized expertise—the environment of the dealer likewise transformed. Whereas New York dealers' premises, at mid-century, most typically occupied repurposed spaces, either a former retail or domestic space, by the close of the nineteenth century many of New York's leading dealers, such as M. Knoedler & Co. and the Duveen Brothers, were investing in purpose-built spaces, which represented considerable investment of capital in terms of both the acquisition of land and the construction of the building.^[22] These purpose-built galleries reflected the multifaceted needs of these dealers, who by then had developed such practices as rotating exhibitions, client services, and a diverse stock, including prints, old and contemporary fine art, and the decorative arts. Such complex endeavors not only required designated spaces in which to showcase a variety of goods but also utilitarian spaces to support these activities. Therefore, while the architectural vocabulary of the exterior of such galleries as Duveen Brothers' derived heavily from elite residential architecture, the interior division of spaces had to handle a complex range of operations that departed significantly from the routines of domesticity.

While Joseph Duveen made his mark on the New York art market, it is worth remembering that his formative years were spent in London, where he attended school and learned the art trade from his father. Born in 1869, his birth nearly coincides with the pronounced "concentration" of commercial art galleries in London's West End, in streets such as Bond Street, Oxford Street, and Regent Street already associated with luxury shopping, and in close proximity to the Royal Academy of Arts.^[23] In the late 1870s and early 1880s, Joel Joseph Duveen's retail shop was located at 357 Oxford Street, which he advertised as carrying "antique works of art, decorative furniture, tapestry, embroidered silks, and general objects of decoration," adding "the authenticity of every object guaranteed."^[24] By the mid-1880s, they took premises on the upper floors of 175–81 Oxford Street, above the china manufacturers W. P. and G. Phillips, placing furniture in their windows just as their downstairs neighbors arranged china and glass on display in the manner of Victorian department stores (fig. 7).

Fig. 7, Bedford Lemere and Company, Exterior view of the premises of W. P. and G. Phillips, and of J. J. Duveen, at 175–81 Oxford Street, 1885. [\[view image & full caption\]](#)

A different model for the sale of luxury commodities was just a brief ten-minute walk away, at 135–37 New Bond Street, where, in 1877, Sir Coutts Lindsay and his wife, Blanche Lindsay, had founded the Grosvenor Gallery, which quickly earned a reputation as a “Temple of Art” (figs. 8, 9).^[25] As scholar Colleen Denney explains, the Neo-Renaissance façade and complementary interior; the large west gallery (over one hundred feet long and thirty feet wide, lit by a skylight or gaslight—later electricity—and framed by a decorated ceiling, each bay a deep blue highlighted by a phase of the moon and gold stars, and walls appointed with scarlet silk damask); the smaller east gallery lit by a velarium; the entertainment spaces, including a restaurant; and the “rich array of tasteful furnishings” led to a “striking effect, suggesting the kind of blinding opulence of a temple or cathedral.”^[26] Gallery manager Charles Hallé explained why Lindsay had invested so liberally in the space: “It was to maintain this decorative value of pictures that Sir Coutts built and furnished his gallery in a sumptuous manner, and had the pictures arranged for public exhibitions as nearly as possible as though they formed the decoration of the walls of the house he lived in, and could live in with pleasure.”^[27]

Fig. 8, Intended façade of the Grosvenor Gallery, New Bond Street—Mr. William Thomas Sams, Architect, Doorway by Palladio, 1877. [\[view image & full caption\]](#)

Fig. 9, The Grosvenor Gallery New Bond Street, London, built for Sir Coutts Lindsay, Bart.—Mr. William Thomas Sams, Architect, 1877. [\[view image & full caption\]](#)

While the Coutts could not financially sustain the Grosvenor Gallery, it nonetheless set a new standard for high-end commercial art galleries. Further along on Bond Street, at 39 Old Bond Street, Thomas Agnew and Sons erected a new purpose-built gallery, designed by Edward Salomons and Ralph Wornum in the newly fashionable Queen Anne style and containing “a large basement, with entrance from Albemarle-street, a saloon for general purposes, two sale-rooms, offices, and an exhibition gallery” (fig. 10).^[28] Further north, at 148 New Bond Street, the Fine Art Society, founded in 1876, underwent a series of renovations beginning with a redesign of the façade in 1881 by architect and designer E. W. Goodwin, whose charge from the firm was to “alter our front and make it rather less of a shop front” (fig. 11).^[29] Less than ten years later, architect George Faulkner Armitage redesigned the entrance gallery, taking his cues from Arts and Crafts domestic interiors so that, as Hilarie Faberman explains, “the public aspects of the commercial gallery” were “suppressed . . . creating instead a domestic environment in which the society’s upper-class clients would have been completely at ease” (fig. 12).^[30] In 1894, Joel Joseph Duveen joined this cohort, establishing his business at 21 Old Bond Street (fig. 13), neighbors to Lawrie’s Galleries at 15 Old Bond Street, founded in 1893, and whose opening exhibition featured paintings by Diego Velázquez, Thomas Gainsborough, George Romney, John Constable, Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, and Jean-François Millet, and whose clients included figures like Henry Clay Frick.^[31] In this environment, Joseph Duveen learned not only how to recognize significant works of art but also the significance of the context in which those works of art were presented. It is thus fitting that the design of Duveen’s first purpose-built gallery, which followed closely on the heels of his successful acquisition of the Kann collection, would display an extraordinary degree of care in shaping the context for his merchandise and, as Edward Fowles suggests, be a “tremendous advertisement for Duveen’s; we were both the source of beautiful objects, and proud creators of a building whose very ambience would serve to please and elevate both the casual observer and the dedicated collector.”^[32]

Fig. 10, Messrs. [\[view image & full caption\]](#)

Fig. 11, T. Raffles Davison, New entrance vestibule and gallery, 1881.
[\[view image & full caption\]](#)

Fig. 12, T. Raffles Davison, The Fine Art Society's gallery, designed and executed by George Faulkner Armitage, 1891.
[\[view image & full caption\]](#)

Fig. 13, Unknown photographer, Façade of Duveen Brothers in London during the celebrations for the coronation of Edward VII, 1902. [\[view image & full caption\]](#)

Ambience as Advertisement

To think about the purpose-built gallery as an ambient interior is to think about how ambience functions symbolically and experientially as a form of advertisement. The primary meaning of ambience, as defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED), is “environment, surroundings; atmosphere” with acknowledgement of its French derivation, which, when used in the context of art, refers to “the arrangement of accessories to support the main effect of a piece.”^[33] The first citation provided by the OED for that primary meaning comes from *Harper's Magazine*, September 1899, and effectively captures the spirit of the Gilded Age: “The form which we discern in the dreamy ambience is of supreme elegance.”^[34] In other words, the culture of the Gilded Age in the United States was well attuned to the signification of ambience.

In this essay, by symbolic ambience we refer to the ways in which the architectural vocabulary of the built environment could communicate visually to its audiences. This includes both the forms as well as the materials of the physical gallery. At the symbolic level, Duveen Brothers' gallery at 720 Fifth Avenue was designed to signify the highest echelons of late Gilded Age luxury. This was communicated in the façade of the building with its references to neoclassical architecture in the Beaux-Arts tradition, the preferred style of residential architecture for Duveen Brothers' wealthy clientele.

Symbolic ambience was also communicated by the chosen site of the building in the Upper East Side, a neighborhood dominated by the mansions of the Gilded Age elite, where newcomers to fortune sought a place. One need not have an actual experience of the building to understand these social associations; the photographic record of the building's façades and their use in promotional material attest to this (fig. 5). The building is prominently featured in the firm's print advertisements, made iconic through photographic means such as framing and lighting, as well as graphic techniques that erase the surrounding buildings and streets to ensure attention is directed primarily to the Duveen Brothers' building.

What we cannot see from this vantage point is how this ambience carried over into the interior, primarily in the spaces dedicated to public display. The neoclassical architectural vocabulary of the façade continued into the public interior spaces as did the attention to high-end materials (as in the use of marble in the hallways adjacent to the major display spaces) (fig. 14, detail 14a). And just as the firm recorded its exterior in its most-enhanced fashion in photographic advertisements, it similarly recorded its interior at its best, as manifested in several photographic albums that the firm carefully assembled to record particular displays (figs. 15, 16). These interior ensembles were calculated to appeal to the wealthy elite, a strategy that paid off in the practice of emulation by wealthy collectors such as Arabella Huntington, and resulting in complex decoration projects throughout the country, including Anna D. Dodge's Rose Terrace residence in Grosse Pointe Farms, Michigan (fig. 17), and Dana P. Pughi's in Duluth, Minnesota (fig. 18).[\[35\]](#)

Fig. 14, Carlhian (firm) and René Sergent, New building for Duveen Brothers, New York, first-floor plan, 1910.

[\[view image & full caption\]](#)

Fig. 15, Unknown photographer, Interior view of the Gabriel Room from the Inventories of Duveen showrooms, Gabriel Room, n.d. [\[view image & full caption\]](#)

Fig. 16, Page from the Inventories of Duveen showrooms, Gabriel Room, n.d. Duveen Brothers stock documentation from the dealer's library, 1829–1965 (2007.D.1), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles.

[\[view image & full caption\]](#)

Fig. 17, Page from the "Inventory of Antique Furniture and Objets d'Art" listing the many objects purchased by Mrs. Hugh Dillman to decorate her residence at Grosse Pointe, n.d.

Collector's files, Dillman, Anna Dodge, 1933–1939, Duveen Brothers stock documentation from the dealer's library, 1829–1965 (2007.D.1), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles.

[\[view image & full caption\]](#)

Fig. 18, Unknown photographer, Interior in the residence of Mrs. Dana P. Pughi at 109 Howell Street, Duluth, Minnesota, 1916.

[\[view image & full caption\]](#)

The dispensation of the interior would certainly have reinforced the kind of ambience sought by the Duveen Brothers as well as helped to demarcate the range of functions that the building had to serve in the context of the practical realities of dealing and collecting art. That is, one can easily distinguish, even from the visual record, between the experiential ambience of the storage basement, with its focus on practical exigencies (fig. 19), and that of the public display spaces, attuned to the symbolic potentialities that rich velvets, soft silks, textured woven patterns, and glimmering gilt details can create under warm diffused light (fig. 20).

Fig. 19, Unknown photographer, Basement, Duveen Brothers, New York, n.d.

[\[view image & full caption\]](#)

Fig. 20, Unknown photographer, Showroom, Duveen Brothers, New York, n.d.

[\[view image & full caption\]](#)

In sum, symbolic ambience can be conceived as a quality that emerges from the ambition, as Fowles puts it, to please and to elevate. The physical features designed to achieve these ends are transformed into what might be described, in today's language of marketing and communications, as functional brand identity. The ultimate purpose of the purpose-built space was undoubtedly to enact this transformation of the material and design of the

building into a crystalized experience of prestige—a kind of crowning achievement of what Joel Duveen might have imagined in his disappointment with the first space that the firm had occupied on John Street (recall that in his view the John Street gallery was in a bad neighborhood, the building little better than a storehouse, and the interior lighting and arrangement ill-suited to the beauty of the merchandise).^[36] This notion of symbolic ambience, as described thus far, is highly visual. However, it cannot be separated from the physical experience of entering and making one's way through the building.

The Problem of Reconstructing Ambience from the Archive

As art historians interested in experience and ambience, we must think carefully about the archival traces of such seemingly ephemeral phenomena. How might we recover the evidence for these essential components of the gallery viewing experience? In this, we turned to visitors' accounts, photographic evidence, and primary sources regarding the physical fabric of the building. While the construction and reception of the Duveen Brothers' gallery is captured in print culture of the period, reconstructing the visitor's experience from what remains in the Duveen Brothers' archive now held by the Getty Research Institute and marrying it to the symbolic raised a number of issues for our research team.^[37] Plans, elevations, and cross-sections seem to promise the possibility of a 3-D virtual reconstruction. Add to this a significant collection of photographs of rooms both furnished and unfurnished, as well as an immense collection of photographs of individual objects that would have been on display in these rooms, and we began to consider assembling all of this into a simulated visit to Duveen Brothers' gallery.

But further close examination of the extant documentary record uncovered more problems than solutions. Photographs cannot be easily mapped onto specific interior spaces, particularly because many of the documented ensembles were fitted into the existing spaces, akin to the process of building a theatre set, with the original walls serving as a shell or support framework for the displayed interior. In addition, the rooms of the Duveen Brothers' gallery are not labeled according to the same rubrics across the plans, inventories, photographs, and other documents, or over time. Thus, it becomes almost impossible to reconstruct a single complete version of Duveen Brothers' gallery at any one point in time. And all of this is complicated by questions of what kind of experience of ambience can actually be simulated in a virtual reconstruction, and what kinds of gaps and uncertainties in the documentary record must be erased in order to generate that simulation.

To return to the leading questions that inform this essay, we are seeking to understand the nature of the purpose-built gallery as an experience that is set within a particular architectural envelope or environment that both solves the practical problems of managing a particular form of business—buying and selling art objects—and the symbolic problem of communicating the appropriate messages, visually delivered, to potential clients. Much has been remarked about the control that Duveen himself exerted on the surroundings in which paintings and other artworks were going to be displayed.^[38] From reconsidering the color of the molding for a Japanese print of prominent architect and collector Carl Freylinghuysen Gould, to convincing Henry Clay Frick to transform an entire room interior into what he considered the appropriate setting for Jean-Honoré Fragonard's famous series *The Progress of Love*, no detail was too small or project too big for Joseph Duveen.^[39] The same can be said

for the dealer's own gallery and the ways in which the architects needed to deliver Duveen's strong vision. Borrowing from art historian Michael Baxandall's method of analyzing the Forth Bridge described in *Patterns of Intention: On the Historical Explanation of Pictures*, how might we understand the brief that the architects of the Duveen Brothers' gallery sought to fulfill on behalf of their client?[40]

The optimal spaces for the display of works of art were on the upper floors (four and five) of the vertical structure, where light could more easily enter (and be manipulated) through skylights or diffusing sashes indicated on the blueprints and meant to spread light from an ordinary skylight so that the entire room was daylit (figs. 21–24, details 21a, 21b and 22a). But visitors to the gallery, of course, entered on the first, or ground, floor. How might their experience be managed or curated from ground-floor entry to upper-level display spaces? And with this main objective in mind—directly connecting buyers and sellers to luxury commodities—how were the other functions and spaces of the structure arranged to facilitate but not interrupt that objective? How did symbolic and experiential ambience work in tandem in the particularized physical context of this purpose-built gallery?

Fig. 21, Carlhian (firm) and René Sergent, New building for Duveen Brothers, New York, fifth-floor plan, 1910.

[\[view image & full caption\]](#)

Fig. 22, Carlhian (firm) and René Sergent, New building for Duveen Brothers, New York, longitudinal section, 1910.

[\[view image & full caption\]](#)

Fig. 23, Application of three-way diffusing sash, 1915. [\[view image & full caption\]](#)

Fig. 24, Unknown photographer, Exhibition gallery with diffusing sash, Duveen Brothers, New York, n.d. [\[view image & full caption\]](#)

Circulatory Pathways and the Ambient Interior

Focusing primarily on the visitor's passage from exterior to interior and the interior itself, we turn our investigation to a concept of experience that comes from the discourse of architectural history and remains within the framework of the architectural plan: circulation. Rather than simulating an experience of the gallery, we assembled a three-dimensional representation of the building, which allows us to diagram the circulatory pathways and create volumetric representations in order to analyze the functional program of the building. These methods permit us to conceptualize how experience was structured and how symbolic communication was facilitated through that experience.

Circulation is generally understood to consist of the transitional spaces in a building, the pathways connecting programmed rooms. It also refers to the ways in which a building structures the experience of moving through the space. That experience allows for the encounter with the symbolic—and together these produce ambience. That is, form and perception thereof are inseparable in producing ambience; returning to *Harper's Magazine*, “the form which we discern in the dreamy ambience is of supreme elegance.”

But the Duveen Brothers' building was, in reality, not a dream but a business advertisement; recall Fowles's assertion: “The Building was a tremendous advertisement for Duveen's: we were both the source of beautiful objects, and proud creators of a building whose very ambience would serve to please and elevate both the casual observer and the dedicated collector.” In short, the main question we seek to answer is: How did circulation—the means by which the casual observer and the dedicated collector accrued symbolic and experiential ambience—“serve to please and elevate”?

Fowles's claim is revelatory not only because he emphasizes the role of ambience in conducting the business of an art dealer, but also because he recognizes that the dealer serves two audiences simultaneously—“the casual observer” and “the dedicated collector.”

Therefore, in exploring circulation, we are also seeking to understand how these audiences were distinctly and concomitantly addressed within the envelope of a single structure.

The Building as a Whole

The building's public face was presented along West Fifty-Sixth Street at Fifth Avenue, where the main entrance to the building was located (fig. 4). The lowest level of the façade was faced with rusticated stone and organized by repeating arches. The double-height middle tier was signaled by a switch to smooth stone, rectangular windows festooned with swags, and engaged Corinthian columns, whose verticality is reinforced by the vertical alignment of the windows. The pediment carried by this tier reinforces the classical associations of the design. The next level, the fourth floor, is likewise faced in smooth stone and deploys rectangular windows and is trimmed with a balustrade punctuated by stone decorations on the West Fifty-Sixth Street side. The top level transitions to a mansard roof that supports the skylights over the galleries on this level, as well as the light well that extends from the fifth to the fourth floors and is called out on the blueprints as the "light court" or "light well" (figs. 21, detail 21b, 22, detail 22b).

Animation 1, Elena Prado with Edward Sterrett, Sandra van Ginhoven, and Anne Helmreich, 3-D model of façade and entrance hall of Duveen Brothers, 720 Fifth Avenue (circulatory pathways), 2020. Modeled with Rhino and SketchUp. Comprised of Carlhian (firm) and René Sergent, New building for Duveen Brothers, New York, details from the first-, second-, third-, fourth-, and fifth-floor plans, façades, and longitudinal sections, 1910. Blueprints. Carlhian records, 1867–1975 (930092), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. © J. Paul Getty Trust; Unknown photographer, Details of Duveen Brothers, 720 Fifth Avenue, n.d. Photographs. Duveen Brothers stock documentation from the dealer's library, 1829–1965 (2007.D.1), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. [\[view online\]](#)

Circulatory Pathways

Visitors to the gallery would have entered through the center arch on the Fifth Avenue side of the building, through double doors that lead to a vestibule that then spills directly into a large, tall room (with a ceiling height of twenty feet), "Room A" on the plan (animation 1). The windows that flanked the center door were used as display vitrines, giving hints as to the contents of the building and enticing passersby. Room A and the adjacent Stair Hall, both laid with marble flooring, would have functioned as reception rooms and here the visitor

had to make a critical decision about how to proceed. The available options were to continue on the first floor, moving along the marbled-floor hall to either the side Hall or Room B at right—or perhaps to the toilet room, easily accessible from the Stair Hall and likewise with marble flooring—or to ascend the building. To accomplish the latter, the available routes were either via the stairway, which gave access to the second floor above, or the elevator, which ran the full length of the building. If the visitor chose the elevator route, they presumably would have encountered an attendant, who would have guided them, given that staffing elevators in public spaces was common practice at this time.

The Casual Observer

Animation 2, 3-D circulation diagram of Duveen Brothers, 720 Fifth Avenue (casual observer), 2020. Modeled with Rhino and SketchUp. Comprised of Carlhian (firm) and René Sergent, New building for Duveen Brothers, New York, details from the first-, second-, third-, fourth-, and fifth-floor plans, façades, and longitudinal sections, 1910. Blueprints. Carlhian records, 1867–1975 (930092), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. © J. Paul Getty Trust; Unknown photographer, Details of Duveen Brothers, 720 Fifth Avenue, n.d. Photographs. Duveen Brothers stock documentation from the dealer's library, 1829–1965 (2007.D.1), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. [\[view online\]](#)

The elevator thus emerges as a critical juncture of decision making and the place where Fowles's two audiences could begin to be distinguished. The “casual observer” was primarily addressed through the practice of rotating exhibitions, and the primary exhibition rooms are designated on the blueprints as located on the top or fifth floor of the building (fig. 21). Exiting the elevator on the fifth floor, the visitor entered the hall and could either turn to their left to enter the large exhibition room, designated “Porcelain” on the blueprints, or proceed to their right and enter a succession of Exhibition Rooms that wrapped around the light court (animation 2). Photographic evidence supports that these sky-lit rectangular rooms, or exhibition rooms, allowed for changing displays, including thematic content. In the case of the exhibition room in figure 20, the verso of the photograph indicates that this was regarded as the “Don Quixote” room. Silk embroidered sofas and armchairs, side tables, porcelain vases, and an antique rug set the stage for a cycle of four tapestries, on each of the four walls. In contrast to other showrooms in the Duveen gallery meant to display an ensemble of objects as part of a cohesive domestic interior (fig. 15), the objects are arranged on or alongside the walls according to gallery or museum display conventions to provide for optimal viewing and easy circulation of visitors (e.g., fig. 20). While the overall effect of this room is that of a permanent display space, it was, in fact, conjured up to showcase this

specific set of tapestries, which required precisely measuring the tapestries to be inset into the panels to achieve the overall decorative program. A closer look at the wall paneling also reveals that these panels were not meant to be permanent fixtures, but rather they were assembled into this space—like a theatre stage set—and could again be dismantled and adapted to other spaces. Exhibition catalogues and other printed ephemera, such as the card accompanying the Limoges enamels installation (which requested visitors return it to the gallery attendant when finished) (fig. 25), supported the experience of these visitors, suggesting that their engagement with the material on display was largely self-guided, with some prompting by the staff.

Fig. 25, Inventories of Duveen showrooms, Gallery map, Limoges enamels, left case, n.d. Duveen Brothers stock documentation from the dealer's library, 1829–1965 (2007.D.1), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. [\[view image & full caption\]](#)

The elevator was also required to access floors three and four. The fourth floor contained, according to the labels deployed in the blueprints, three tapestry rooms, two of which would have been only steps away from the elevator, as well as the English Art Room and Picture Gallery (fig. 26, details 26a–26c; animation 2). These designations—by medium (porcelain, tapestry, or pictures) or national school (English art)—reveals that the Duveen Brothers anticipated using their spaces on the fourth and fifth floors not only to serve the casual observer (and the dedicated collector) but also to establish their brand identity. That is, to establish visitors' expectations to always find these materials at the Duveen Brothers or, put another way, one would go to Duveen to see English art, tapestries, and porcelains. Moreover, the fact that the maid's closet, with a slop sink, is located on the fourth floor next to the service staircase suggests that this floor (and perhaps the one above) were anticipated to be high-traffic areas (fig. 26, detail 26d).

Fig. 26, Carlhian (firm) and René Sergent, New building for Duveen Brothers, New York, fourth-floor plan, 1910. [\[view image & full caption\]](#)

The Dedicated Collector

Animation 3, 3-D circulation diagram of Duveen Brothers, 720 Fifth Avenue (dedicated collector), 2020. Modeled with Rhino and SketchUp. Comprised of Carlhian (firm) and René Sergent, New building for Duveen Brothers, New York, details from the first-, second-, third-, fourth-, and fifth-floor plans, façades, and longitudinal sections, 1910. Blueprints. Carlhian records, 1867–1975 (930092), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. © J. Paul Getty Trust; Unknown photographer, Details of Duveen Brothers, 720 Fifth Avenue, n.d. Photographs. Duveen Brothers stock documentation from the dealer's library, 1829–1965 (2007.D.1), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. [\[view online\]](#)

Moving down through the building, to floors three and two (figs. 27, 28), these spaces seem to speak more—to create a specific ambiance for—the “dedicated collector” as opposed to the casual observer (animation 3). Floor three contains a series of rooms designated only by letters *H-J-K-L-M-O-N*, akin to floor two, which deploys a similar labelling system on the blueprints, with rooms labelled *C-D-E-F-G-I*. (Rooms A and B are on the first or ground floor). The photographic evidence found in the archive suggests that these letter rooms on the second and third floors were often used to house ensembles, what they referred to as “room exhibitions,” aimed at persuading potential clients as to how an individual room could be appointed with their stock (figs. 29–31).

Fig. 27, Carlhian (firm) and René Sergent, New building for Duveen Brothers, New York, third-floor plan, 1910.
[\[view image & full caption\]](#)

Fig. 28, Carlhian (firm) and René Sergent, New building for Duveen Brothers, New York, second-floor plan, 1910.
[\[view image & full caption\]](#)

Fig. 29, Unknown photographer, Showroom (probably Room E on second floor), Duveen Brothers, New York, n.d.
[\[view image & full caption\]](#)

Fig. 30, Cover page from "Room I" of the Inventories of Duveen showrooms, Queen Marie Antoinette Room, n.d. Mail list: I, II, IV, and VI, Duveen Brothers stock documentation from the dealer's library, 1829–1965 (2007.D.1), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles.
[\[view image & full caption\]](#)

Fig. 31, Page from “Room I” of the Inventories of Duveen showrooms, Queen Marie Antoinette Room, n.d. Mail list: I, II, IV, and VI, Duveen Brothers stock documentation from the dealer’s library, 1829–1965 (2007.D.1), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles.
[\[view image & full caption\]](#)

Passing from room to room, dedicated collectors viewed a variety of compositions of decorative arts, including tapestries, rugs, furniture, vases, statuettes, and lighting elements, as though passing through a constellation of stage sets, that they could contemplate purchasing in toto or piecemeal. For example, in the Gabriel Room (fig. 15), collectors could admire the carved, painted and gilt panels designed ca. 1775 by the celebrated French architect Jacques IV Ange Gabriel that once embellished the famous Palace of the Duc de Crillon in Paris. Gilt Corinthian columns, large mirrors and mirror recesses, panels enriched with formal egg-and-dart moldings, and double doors garnished with gilt-foliaged scroll friezes set the stage for an exquisite interior where Duveen presented Louis XVI–period tables with rosewood marquetry and inlaid painted Sèvres porcelain plaques, Louis XV sofas and armchairs covered with rose damask tapestry from the Gobelins Manufactory, hand-embroidered silk marquises, seventeenth-century Persian Polonoise carpets, porcelain vases, two-light wall appliques, candelabra, and crystal chandeliers not only as a cohesive whole but also as unique objects of remarkable artistry and provenance.^[41] It is also likely that these rooms could have been used to showcase individual works of art. Meryl Secrest expresses doubts about art historian Kenneth Clark’s recollection of visiting the gallery and only seeing “six small showrooms” given the “stately size of the four-storey building.” But Clark may have experienced floor two, which had six rooms; each, he recalled, “covered in a different color velvet, with velvet-lined cupboards and velvet-covered easels. The visitor proceeded from one room to the next by a circuitous route” and, Clark added, “when one returned to the first room the position of the easel had been changed, so that one didn’t know that one was back at square one till one had done the circuit several times.”^[42]

The layout of the building facilitated the ability of the staff to readily support their visitors, whether the casual observer or dedicated collector. Whereas visitors had to rely on the elevator to access all the floors, with the exception of the second floor, the staff could utilize a

series of staircases: from the first floor down to the basement, from the first floor to the offices in the mezzanine, and from the second floor to the roof, as well as an outdoor staircase and service elevator from the sidewalk to the basement. Like servants in wealthy homes, the staff could move through the structure (fig. 32), seemingly invisible to visitors until they appeared in public space. Clark's recollections reinforce this impression of the seeming invisibility of gallery staff until the appropriate moment. Through such modes of conduct, luxury retail shopping in the early twentieth century extended the practices of "polite consumption" that had emerged in the eighteenth century when well-to-do customers were invited by shopkeepers to partake in tea and conversation in antechambers or a side room before being guided to the goods in the shop, where shop assistants, exhibiting polite deportment, deployed both flattery and knowledge to entice potential customers.^[43]

Fig. 32, Carlhian (firm) and René Sergent, New building for Duveen Brothers, New York, Detail of longitudinal section with route taken by staff indicated in yellow, 1910.

[\[view image & full caption\]](#)

Animation 4, 3-D circulation diagram of Duveen Brothers, 720 Fifth Avenue (staff and public), 2020. Modeled with Rhino and SketchUp. Comprised of Carlhian (firm) and René Sergent, New building for Duveen Brothers, New York, details from the first-, second-, third-, fourth-, and fifth-floor plans, façades, and longitudinal sections, 1910. Blueprints. Carlhian records, 1867–1975 (930092), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. © J. Paul Getty Trust; Unknown photographer, Details of Duveen Brothers, 720 Fifth Avenue, n.d. Photographs. Duveen Brothers stock documentation from the dealer's library, 1829–1965 (2007.D.1), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. [\[view online\]](#)

The Duveen Brothers' staff offices were placed in close proximity to both the entrance, located just behind Room A, as well as along the mezzanine just below floor two. A small staircase of reinforced concrete connected the first floor with the upper offices, meaning that the offices were intended only for staff and were markedly separated from the spaces readily accessible to the dedicated collectors. More pointedly, the design of the mezzanine, wrapped around the entrance hall of the building and housing four spaces assigned as offices, suggests a desire by business functionaries to observe the flow of traffic and the appearance of both the casual observer and dedicated collector (animation 4). This is reminiscent of architectural devices adopted by other dealers to stay abreast of conversations taking place within the public spaces without being present or observed eavesdropping. At the Goupil Gallery in London, for example, the artist William Roberts recalled that

At the far end of the Goupil's main gallery, a stair led to an upper room also decorated in dark-toned crimson. It was here that selected paintings were shown to important clients. There was a small round window in this room that enabled Marchant [the owner of the gallery] to see and hear what went on [in] the gallery below, without being seen himself. He once referred to the Goupil gallery, demeaningly, as a "regular Whispering Gallery," and he was anxious not to miss a "Whisper."^[44]

From the first floor, staff had access to the basement levels of the gallery, lying below street level. These spaces facilitated the physical labor of the business, such as storage, packing, and shipping. But storage spaces were also distributed throughout the building, to presumably assist with rotating and give ready access to the stock. On the fifth floor, a store room can be found between two of the exhibition rooms (fig. 21); on the fourth floor it is located adjacent to the picture gallery (fig. 26); on the third floor it is tucked in next to the elevator (fig. 27), as on the second floor (fig. 28). Again, like the staff staircase, this allowed the business of the gallery to occur efficiently and without disruption to the main display areas aimed at the public.

Spaces

Animation 5, 3-D functionality diagram of Duveen Brothers, 720 Fifth Avenue (spaces), 2020. Modeled with Rhino and SketchUp. Comprised of Carlhian (firm) and René Sergent, New building for Duveen Brothers, New York, details from the first-, second-, third-, fourth-, and fifth-floor plans, façades, and longitudinal sections, 1910. Blueprints. Carlhian records, 1867–1975 (930092), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. © J. Paul Getty Trust; Unknown photographer, Details of Duveen Brothers, 720 Fifth Avenue, n.d. Photographs. Duveen Brothers stock documentation from the dealer's library, 1829–1965 (2007.D.1), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. [\[view online\]](#)

As suggested above, the circulatory pathways of the building not only supported the gallery's two main audiences mentioned by Fowles, but they also helped to distinguish between the public and private spaces of the building. To better understand the ratios of these spaces and assess their role within the overall scope of the building, we made a color-coded volumetric diagram of the different types of spaces established by the architecture of the building (private spaces in purple, transition spaces like stairs and hallways in teal, and public spaces for visitors in yellow). Private spaces, meaning for staff only, account for the entirety of the basement, half of the first floor, the mezzanine, and portions of the second, third, fourth and fifth floors. If we add the necessary transition spaces, this means that, by design, the Duveen Brothers dedicated at least one-third of the building to support their business activities. And these business spaces carefully, and unobtrusively, flank the public spaces (animation 5). A client, for example, could have entered the front entrance and be quickly whisked into an office space on the first floor for a discrete conversation, taken directly to the display spaces on the second floor, or guided to the rest of the showrooms and exhibition rooms via the elevator.

In sum, the building reveals that the architects' brief was to create a very controlled experience, whether for the casual observer or dedicated collector. Their designs invite a very orchestrated flow, with the dealer always in control and where privacy could be guaranteed. Ambience, rather than diffuse and atmospheric as the term may imply, was highly structured to produce a distinct visual display and physical experience aimed at distinct audiences.

Anne Helmreich is associate director of the Getty Foundation and former associate director of Digital Initiatives, Getty Research Institute, both of the J. Paul Getty Trust. Her current research focuses on the history of the art market and the productive intersection of the digital humanities and art history. She and Pamela Fletcher recently coauthored "Digital Methods and the Study of the Art Market," in *The Routledge Companion to Digital Humanities and Art History*, ed. Kathryn Brown (Routledge, 2020) and the epilogue to *Art Crossing Borders: The Birth of an Integrated Art Market in the Age of Nation States (Europe, c. 1780–1914)* (Brill, 2019). In 2019, she coedited, with Murtha Baca and Melissa Gill, a special issue of *Visual Resources* dedicated to digital art history. Her most recent monograph is *Nature's Truth: Photography, Painting, and Science in Victorian Britain* (Penn State University Press, 2016).

Email the author: [alhelmreich\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:alhelmreich[at]gmail.com)

Edward Sterrett teaches art history at Pepperdine University in Malibu, California, and Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan. His research and writing focuses on issues surrounding the collection and display of art from the eighteenth century to the present. He received his MA in art criticism, theory, and curatorial practice from the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California, and PhD in art history from the University of California, San Diego. He recently completed a postdoctoral research associateship at the Getty Research Institute, where he collaborated on a research project devoted to the development of the transatlantic art trade at the turn of the twentieth century. The related publication, *"Money in the Air": Art Dealers and a Transatlantic Market, 1890–1930*, is forthcoming from Getty Publications in 2022. He is currently at work on a book, titled *Object Games*, about the artistic practice and pedagogy of Haim Steinbach.

Email the author: [edward.sterrett\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:edward.sterrett[at]gmail.com)

Sandra van Ginhoven is head of the Project for the Study of Collecting and Provenance at the Getty Research Institute, where she oversees the development of the Getty Provenance Index® databases and related research projects. She has a background in economics and received her MA in liberal studies from Dartmouth College and PhD in art history from Duke University. Her research on the history of the art markets and the art trade between the southern Netherlands and Spanish America during the seventeenth century was published by Brill in 2016. Her current research interests focus on applying data analysis and visualization techniques to study the histories of collecting, provenance, and art markets.

Email the author: [sandra.vanginhoven\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:sandra.vanginhoven[at]gmail.com)

Notes

Acknowledgments: We would like to thank our colleagues in the Getty Research Institute for their support and assistance in this project. In particular, we would like to acknowledge Sally McKay, head of Research Services, for sharing her deep knowledge and enthusiasm for the archives of Duveen and Carlhian, and Ted Walbye, senior special collections assistant, for graciously managing our various image requests. We would also like to thank the editors of *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide* and our fellow contributors to this special issue on Ambient Interiors. The exceptional opportunity to workshop our work-in-progress together with the cohort of contributors, as well as the feedback received throughout the editorial process, sharpened our thinking and strengthened our research results.

[1] For introductions to these topics, see Nicholas Green, *The Spectacle of Nature, Landscape and Bourgeois Culture in Nineteenth-Century France* (New York: Manchester University Press, 1990); Robert Jensen, *Marketing Modernism in Fin-de-Siècle Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994); Charlotte Klonk, *Spaces of Experience, Art Gallery Interiors from 1800 to 2000* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009); Kenneth John Myers, "The Public Display of Art in New York City, 1664–1914," *Rave Reviews, American Art and Its Critics, 1826–1925* (New York: National Academy of Design, 2000), 31–51; Giles Waterfield, *Palaces of Art: Art Galleries in Britain, 1790–1990* (London: Lund Humphries Publishers, 1991); and Mark Westgarth, "'Florid-Looking Speculators in Art and Virtu': The London Picture Trade c. 1850," in *The Rise of the Modern Art Market in London, 1850–1939*, ed. Pamela Fletcher and Anne Helmreich (New York: Manchester University Press, 2011), 26–46.

[2] "Henry J. Duveen, Art Dealer, Dies," *New York Times*, January 16, 1919, n.p., Clipping File, Henry J. Duveen, 3 3032 003380965, Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, OH.

- [3] Joel Duveen quoted describing the situation to his nephew James in Charlotte Vignon, *Duveen Brothers and the Market for Decorative Arts, 1880–1940* (New York: The Frick Collection in association with D. Giles Limited, 2019), 37. The premiere department store Lord & Taylor, for example, was located at East Twentieth Street and Broadway from 1870 to 1914.
- [4] Lord & Taylor, for example, moved their store and headquarters to between East Thirty-Eighth and Thirty-Ninth Streets in 1914.
- [5] Vignon, *Duveen Brothers and the Market for Decorative Arts*, 38.
- [6] Vignon, *Duveen Brothers and the Market for Decorative Arts*, 33, 39.
- [7] Teresa Morales, Trevor Bond, and Jocelyn Gibbs, “Biographical/Historical Note,” n.d., Duveen Brothers Records, 1876–1981 Finding Aid, No. 960015, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles [hereafter GRI].
- [8] “The Real Estate Field,” *New York Times*, September 6, 1911, 16. See also Vignon, *Duveen Brothers and the Market for Decorative Arts*, 40.
- [9] Vignon, *Duveen Brothers and the Market for Decorative Arts*, 47.
- [10] Dreck Spurlock Wilson, *Julian Abele, Architect and the Beaux Arts* (New York: Routledge, 2019), 1. These biographical details are drawn from Wilson’s monograph.
- [11] Spurlock Wilson, *Julian Abele*, 80. “Horace Trumbauer,” *Philadelphia Architects and Buildings*, accessed December 6, 2019, <https://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/>. See also the related entry on Julian Francis Abele, *Philadelphia Architects and Buildings*, accessed December 6, 2019, <https://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/>.
- [12] Spurlock Wilson, *Julian Abele*, 77–80; see also 146–91, appendix B, “Office of Horace Trumbauer Building List,” which demarcates those designed by Abele.
- [13] Meryl Secrest, *Duveen, A Life in Art* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2004), 100. We have not been able to locate any archival evidence concerning the commissioning process for the New York gallery.
- [14] “Duveens Move Art Gallery Uptown; Find Fifth Ave. ‘Too Commercial,’” *New York Times*, August 21, 1951, 28. See also, “Uncommercial Duveen,” *Time*, October 8, 1951, Clipping File, Joseph Duveen, Baron, 1869–1939, 3 3032 003380957, Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, OH.
- [15] Vignon, *Duveen Brothers and the Market for Decorative Arts*, 47. As Vignon notes, the Carlhian firm had hoped to secure the commission of decorating the interior, and the Carlhian archive at the Getty Research Institution includes designs for the interiors signed by René Sergent (p. 250).
- [16] Edward Fowles, *Memories of Duveen Brothers* (London: Times Books, 1976), 75.
- [17] Fowles, *Memories of Duveen Brothers*, 75.
- [18] Vignon, *Duveen Brothers and the Market for Decorative Arts*, 47.
- [19] Vignon, *Duveen Brothers and the Market for Decorative Arts*, 47.
- [20] Westgarth, “Florid-Looking Speculators in Art and Virtue,” 26–46. The Duveen Brothers, in the UK, were variously classified in Trading Directories over time as “Antiques & Bric-a-Brac” (1900), “Antique Furniture Dealers” (1900), “Dealers in Works of Art” (1902), “Art Expert” (1920). “Antique Dealers Project Interactive Website,” “Antique Dealers: the British Antique Trade in the 20th Century,” University of Leeds, accessed August 25, 2019, <https://antiquetrade.leeds.ac.uk/>.
- [21] Vignon, *Duveen Brothers and the Market for Decorative Arts*, 288; and Fowles, *Memories of Duveen Brothers*, 36–42, 47–52. See also the forthcoming study “Charles Sedelmeyer’s ‘Coup de l’Americain,’” by Christian Huemer, which will be published by the GRI, in an edited collection titled “*Money in the Air: Art Dealers and a Transatlantic Market, 1880–1930*” (forthcoming in 2022).
- [22] Anne Helmreich, “Knoedler in the Art Market: Building Galleries, Business Strategies and the International Brand” (conference paper, “Art Dealers, America and the International Art Market, 1880–1930,” Getty Research Institute, January 19, 2018). This paper will be published by the GRI, in an edited collection titled “*Money in the Air: Art Dealers and a Transatlantic Market, 1880–1930*” (forthcoming in 2022).
- [23] Pamela Fletcher, “The Rise of the Commercial Art Gallery, 1850s–1890s,” in Fletcher and Helmreich, *The Rise of the Modern Art Market in London*, 49.
- [24] Advertisement, *Truth*, July 14, 1881, 67. For further analysis of the phenomenon of “art palaces” intended to display a “product range” rather than “a gallery-like representation of

‘artworks’” (p. 7), see Mieke Hopp, “Art Trade Palaces—Galleries of Art Dealers as Architectural Task and Their Reception in Munich around 1900,” *Journal for Art Market Studies* 1 (2018): 1–16.

[25] Colleen Denney, *At the Temple of Art, The Grosvenor Gallery, 1877–1890* (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2000), 15. For more on the socio-geography of the London art market, see Pamela Fletcher and David Israel, *London Gallery Project*, 2007 (rev. September, 2012), <http://learn.bowdoin.edu/fletcher/london-gallery/map>; Pamela Fletcher and Anne Helmreich, “Local/Global: Mapping Nineteenth-Century London’s Art Market,” *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide* 11, no. 12 (Autumn 2012), <https://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/autumn12/fletcher-helmreich-mapping-the-london-art-market>; and Anne Helmreich, “The Socio-Geography of Art Dealers and Commercial Art Galleries in Early Twentieth-Century London,” in *The Camden Town Group in Context*, ed. Helena Bonett, Ysanne Holt, and Jennifer Mundy, Tate Research Publication, 2012, <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/research-publications/>.

[26] Denney, *At the Temple of Art*, 19.

[27] Quoted in Denney, *At the Temple of Art*, 27.

[28] “Our Lithographic Illustrations, Messrs. Agnew’s New Premises, Old Bond-Street,” *The Building News* (London), October 19, 1877, 380.

[29] Hilarie Faberman, “‘Best Shop in London,’ the Fine Art Society and the Victorian Art Scene,” in *The Grosvenor Gallery*, ed. Susan P. Casteras and Colleen Denney (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996), 149.

[30] Faberman, “‘Best Shop in London,’” 150.

[31] Fletcher and Israel, “Lawrie’s Gallery,” *London Gallery Project*.

[32] Fowles, *Memories of Duveen Brothers*, 75.

[33] “Ambience, n.,” OED Online, Oxford University Press, September 2019, <https://www-oed-com.huntington.idm.oclc.org/> [login required].

[34] “Ambience, n.,” OED Online.

[35] Duveen’s inventory of 435 antique furniture and objets d’art sold to Anna Dodge includes many items similar to those listed in the inventory of the Gabriel Room, the inventory for which states that some of the furniture had been exhibited at the Toledo Museum of Art in Ohio in 1933, and the showroom was part of the *American Aid to France Exhibition* at the Duveen Galleries in New York in 1946–47. The picture of a room in Mrs. Pugh’s residence was found among photographs of Duveen’s interior decoration projects. A.N.2007.D.1, boxes 675 and 367–81, GRI. See also Nicholas Penny and Karen Serres, “Duveen and the Decorators,” *The Burlington Magazine* 149, no. 1251, Decorative Arts and Sculpture (June, 2007): 402–3; Shelley M. Bennett, *The Art of Wealth, The Huntingtons in the Gilded Age* (San Marino, CA: The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens, 2013), 153 *passim*.

[36] In sociological terms, symbolic ambience might be equated with “sign value” or “symbolic capital.” We draw on the work of Pierre Bourdieu for the concept of symbolic capital, see early articulation of this concept in Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, trans. R. Nice (London: Routledge, 1984), 291. Bourdieu’s 1984 text *Distinction* lays out an argument for symbolic capital as an overarching form of capital; for a fine-grained analysis of the overlapping forms of capital and their recuperation in the form of symbolic capital, see Pierre Bourdieu, *Language & Symbolic Power*, trans. G. Raymond and M. Adamson (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 1991), 164–70.

[37] For further detail regarding the Duveen Brothers records held by the Getty Research Institute, see the Duveen Brothers records, 1876–1981 (bulk 1909–1964) Finding Aid, Getty Research Institute, <http://archives2.getty.edu:8082/>. In addition to these records, the Getty Research Institute holds documentation related to the firm’s stock, see the Duveen Brothers stock documentation from the dealer’s library, 1829–1965 Finding Aid, Getty Research Institute, for further detail: <http://archives2.getty.edu:8082/>

[38] Penny and Serres, “Duveen and the Decorators,” 400–406.

[39] “Are you very keen on a black moulding for your Japanese print? I have given this matter quite a little thought and have come to the conclusion that a moulding, as per the sample herewith, would be preferable. It picks up the rouge de fer tone in the picture, and I think could be quite an effective frame,” wrote Joseph Duveen to C. F. Gould in 1926. See letter of January 7, 1926, Duveen Brothers records, Collectors’ files: Baxter, Mrs. Charles, ca. 1925–56, GRI. For the furnishing and decoration of the “Fragonard Room” in the Frick residence, see Duveen Brothers records, Collectors’ files: Frick: Fragonard Room, ca. 1915–17, GRI.

[40] Michael Baxandall, *Patterns of Intention, On the Historical Explanation of Pictures* (New Haven, CT: Yale University of Press, 1985), 12–40.

[41] Inventories of Duveen showrooms: A.N.2007.D.1, box 675, Gabriel Room, GRI.

[42] Kenneth Clark quoted in Secrest, *Duveen*, 102.

[43] Helen Barry, "Polite Consumption: Shopping in Eighteenth-Century England," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 12 (2002): 286.

[44] William Roberts, "Dealers and Galleries," in *Five Posthumous Essays* (Valencia: Artes Graficas Soler, 1990), quoted in Anne Helmreich, "The Goupil Gallery at the Intersection between London, Continent, and Empire," in Fletcher and Helmreich, *The Rise of the Modern Art Market in London*, 70.

Illustrations

Unless otherwise noted, all images are courtesy of the Getty Research Institute.

Fig. 1, Unknown photographer [?], McKim, Mead & White, Duveen Brothers, 302 Fifth Avenue, view of façade before alterations, 1906. Gelatin dry-plate negative. McKim, Mead & White collection (90.44.1.266), Museum of the City of New York, New York. Artwork in the public domain; courtesy of Museum of the City of New York. [\[return to text\]](#)

Fig. 2, Unknown photographer, Duveen Brothers' Paris office at 20 Place Vendôme, view from the building into the inner courtyard, n.d. Photograph. Duveen Brothers stock documentation from the dealer's library, 1829–1965 (2007.D.1), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. [\[return to text\]](#)

Fig. 3, Unknown photographer, Architectural model for 720 Fifth Avenue, n.d. Photograph. Duveen Brothers stock documentation from the dealer's library, 1829–1965 (2007.D.1), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. [\[return to text\]](#)

Fig. 4, Unknown photographer, Duveen Brothers, 720 Fifth Avenue, n.d. Photograph. Duveen Brothers stock documentation from the dealer's library, 1829–1965 (2007.D.1), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. [\[return to text\]](#)

Fig. 5, Mock-up for advertisement in *Art News*, ca. 1942. Photograph. Duveen Brothers stock documentation from the dealer's library, 1829–1965 (2007.D.1), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles.

[\[return to text\]](#)

Fig. 6, Wurts Bros., East Fifty-Second Street at the corner of Fifth Avenue, Plant House, ca. 1900. Gelatin dry-plate negative. Wurts Bros. collection (X2010.7.1.221), Museum of the City of New York, New York. Artwork in the public domain; courtesy of the Museum of the City of New York.

[\[return to text\]](#)

Fig. 7, Bedford Lemere and Company, Exterior view of the premises of W. P. and G. Phillips, and of J. J. Duveen, at 175–81 Oxford Street, 1885. Albumen print. Historic England Archive, Swindon (BL05816).
Artwork in the public domain; courtesy of Historic England Archive. [\[return to text\]](#)

Fig. 8, Intended façade of the Grosvenor Gallery, New Bond Street—Mr. William Thomas Sams, Architect, Doorway by Palladio, 1877. Published in *The Builder*, May 5, 1877, 453. Artwork in the public domain; image courtesy of Anne Helmreich. [\[return to text\]](#)

Fig. 9, The Grosvenor Gallery New Bond Street, London, built for Sir Coutts Lindsay, Bart.—Mr. William Thomas Sams, Architect, 1877. Published in *The Builder*, May 5, 1877, n.p. Artwork in the public domain; image courtesy of Anne Helmreich. [\[return to text\]](#)

Fig. 10, Messrs. Agnew's new premises, Old Bond-Street, 1877. Published in *Building News*, October 19, 1877, n.p. Artwork in the public domain; image courtesy of Anne Helmreich. [\[return to text\]](#)

Fig. 11, T. Raffles Davison, New entrance vestibule and gallery, 1881. Published in *The British Architect*, December 16, 1881, n.p. Artwork in the public domain; image courtesy of Anne Helmreich.

[\[return to text\]](#)

Fig. 12, T. Raffles Davison, The Fine Art Society's gallery, designed and executed by George Faulkner Armitage, 1891. Published in *British Architect*, January 2, 1891, n.p. Artwork in the public domain; image courtesy of Anne Helmreich. [\[return to text\]](#)

Fig. 13, Unknown photographer, Façade of Duveen Brothers in London during the celebrations for the coronation of Edward VII, 1902. Photograph. Duveen Brothers stock documentation from the dealer's library, 1829–1965 (2007.D.1), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. [\[return to text\]](#)

Fig. 14, Carlhian (firm) and René Sergent, New building for Duveen Brothers, New York, first-floor plan, 1910. Blueprint. Carlhian records, 1867–1975 (930092), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. © J. Paul Getty Trust.

Fig. 14a, Detail of Carlhian (firm) and René Sergent, First-floor plan with marble floor denoted, 1910. Blueprint. Carlhian records, 1867–1975 (930092), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. © J. Paul Getty Trust. [\[view online\]](#) [\[return to text\]](#)

Fig. 15, Unknown photographer, Interior view of the Gabriel Room from the Inventories of Duveen showrooms, Gabriel Room, n.d. Photograph. Duveen Brothers stock documentation from the dealer's library, 1829–1965 (2007.D.1), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. [\[return to text\]](#)

Fig. 16, Page from the Inventories of Duveen showrooms, Gabriel Room, n.d. Duveen Brothers stock documentation from the dealer's library, 1829–1965 (2007.D.1), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles.

[\[return to text\]](#)

Fig. 17, Page from the "Inventory of Antique Furniture and Objets d'Art" listing the many objects purchased by Mrs. Hugh Dillman to decorate her residence at Grosse Pointe, n.d. Collector's files, Dillman, Anna Dodge, 1933–1939, Duveen Brothers stock documentation from the dealer's library, 1829–1965 (2007.D.1), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. [\[return to text\]](#)

Fig. 18, Unknown photographer, Interior in the residence of Mrs. Dana P. Pugh at 109 Howell Street, Duluth, Minnesota, 1916. Photograph. Duveen Brothers stock documentation from the dealer's library, 1829–1965 (2007.D.1), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. [\[return to text\]](#)

Fig. 19, Unknown photographer, Basement, Duveen Brothers, New York, n.d. Photograph. Duveen Brothers stock documentation from the dealer's library, 1829–1965 (2007.D.1), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. [\[return to text\]](#)

Fig. 20, Unknown photographer, Showroom, Duveen Brothers, New York, n.d. Photograph. Duveen Brothers stock documentation from the dealer's library, 1829–1965 (2007.D.1), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. [\[return to text\]](#)

Fig. 21, Carlhian (firm) and René Sergent, New building for Duveen Brothers, New York, fifth-floor plan, 1910. Blueprint. Carlhian records, 1867–1975 (930092), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. © J. Paul Getty Trust.

Fig. 21a, Detail of Carlhian (firm) and René Sergent, Fifth-floor plan showing a diffusing sash in one of the exhibition rooms, 1910. Blueprint. Carlhian records, 1867–1975 (930092), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. © J. Paul Getty Trust. [\[view online\]](#)

Fig. 21b, Detail of Carlhian (firm) and René Sergent, Fifth-floor plan showing the light court, 1910. Blueprint. Carlhian records, 1867–1975 (930092), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. © J. Paul Getty Trust. [\[view online\]](#) [\[return to text\]](#)

Fig. 22, Carlhian (firm) and René Sergent, New building for Duveen Brothers, New York, longitudinal section, 1910. Blueprint. Carlhian records, 1867–1975 (930092), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles.
© J. Paul Getty Trust.

Fig. 22a, Detail of Carlhian (firm) and René Sergent, Longitudinal section showing a skylight, 1910. Blueprint. Carlhian records, 1867–1975 (930092), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. © J. Paul Getty Trust. [\[view online\]](#)

Fig. 22b, Detail of Carlhian (firm) and René Sergent, Longitudinal section showing the light well, 1910. Blueprint. Carlhian records, 1867–1975 (930092), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. © J. Paul Getty Trust. [\[view online\]](#) [\[return to text\]](#)

Fig. 23, Application of three-way diffusing sash, 1915. Published in *Sweet's Catalogue of Building Construction* (New York: Sweets Catalogue Service, Inc., 1915), 841. Artwork in the public domain; available from [Hathi Trust](#). [\[return to text\]](#)

Fig. 24, Unknown photographer, Exhibition gallery with diffusing sash, Duveen Brothers, New York, n.d. Photograph. Duveen Brothers stock documentation from the dealer's library, 1829–1965 (2007.D.1), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. [\[return to text\]](#)

Fig. 25, Inventories of Duveen showrooms, Gallery map, Limoges enamels, left case, n.d. Duveen Brothers stock documentation from the dealer's library, 1829–1965 (2007.D.1), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. [\[return to text\]](#)

Fig. 26, Carlhian (firm) and René Sergent, New building for Duveen Brothers, New York, fourth-floor plan, 1910. Blueprint. Carlhian records, 1867–1975 (930092), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. © J. Paul Getty Trust.

Fig. 26a, Detail of Carlhian (firm) and René Sergent, Fourth-floor plan showing the English Art Room, 1910. Blueprint. Carlhian records, 1867–1975 (930092), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. © J. Paul Getty Trust. [\[view online\]](#)

Fig. 26b, Detail of Carlhian (firm) and René Sergent, Fourth-floor plan showing the picture gallery, 1910. Blueprint. Carlhian records, 1867–1975 (930092), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. © J. Paul Getty Trust. [\[view online\]](#)

Fig. 26c, Detail of Carlhian (firm) and René Sergent, Fourth-floor plan showing a tapestry room, 1910. Blueprint. Carlhian records, 1867–1975 (930092), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. © J. Paul Getty Trust. [\[view online\]](#)

Fig. 26d, Detail of Carlhian (firm) and René Sergent, Fourth-floor plan showing the maid's closet, 1910. Blueprint. Carlhian records, 1867–1975 (930092), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. © J. Paul Getty Trust. [\[view online\]](#) [\[return to text\]](#)

Fig. 27, Carlhian (firm) and René Sergent, New building for Duveen Brothers, New York, third-floor plan, 1910. Blueprint. Carlhian records, 1867–1975 (930092), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. © J. Paul Getty Trust. [\[return to text\]](#)

Fig. 28, Carlhian (firm) and René Sergent, New building for Duveen Brothers, New York, second-floor plan, 1910. Blueprint. Carlhian records, 1867–1975 (930092), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. © J. Paul Getty Trust. [\[return to text\]](#)

Fig. 29, Unknown photographer, Showroom (probably Room E on second floor), Duveen Brothers, New York, n.d. Photograph. Duveen Brothers stock documentation from the dealer's library, 1829–1965 (2007.D.1), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. [\[return to text\]](#)

Fig. 30, Cover page from "Room I" of the Inventories of Duveen showrooms, Queen Marie Antoinette Room, n.d. Mail list: I, II, IV, and VI, Duveen Brothers stock documentation from the dealer's library, 1829–1965 (2007.D.1), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. [\[return to text\]](#)

Fig. 31, Page from “Room I” of the Inventories of Duveen showrooms, Queen Marie Antoinette Room, n.d. Mail list: I, II, IV, and VI, Duveen Brothers stock documentation from the dealer’s library, 1829–1965 (2007.D.1), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. [\[return to text\]](#)

Fig. 32, Carlhian (firm) and René Sergent, New building for Duveen Brothers, New York, Detail of longitudinal section with route taken by staff indicated in yellow, 1910. Blueprint. Carlhian records, 1867–1975 (930092), Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. © J. Paul Getty Trust. [\[return to text\]](#)